

**COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP TRENDS  
BETWEEN TEACHERS AND  
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY  
RESEARCHERS**

**JANNA MAREE BEUKES**

**2010**



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP TRENDS  
BETWEEN TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL  
PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHERS**

by

**Janna Maree Beukes**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

**MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS  
(EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY)**

in the  
Department of Educational Psychology  
Faculty of Education  
University of Pretoria

**SUPERVISOR:**  
Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn

**CO-SUPERVISOR:**  
Dr. Ronél Ferreira

**PRETORIA**

August 2010

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

My sincerest appreciation and thanks go to:

- ❖ Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn who guided and supported me through the research process. Your wisdom, expertise and enthusiasm are inspirational. Thank you for developing and nurturing the scholar in me.
- ❖ Dr. Ronél Ferreira, for the endless lessons which you have taught me. I have truly learnt so much.

My special thanks go to:

- ❖ My parents, Jeanne and Berand Beukes for your unconditional love and support throughout my studies. Thank you for the excellent example which you set for me and for your belief that I could conquer anything.
- ❖ My boyfriend, Robby De Gouveia for walking this path with me. In many ways, you are the reason I have come so far and I can only hope that one day I will be able to be as strong and motivational for you, as what you have been for me. Your patience and optimism are your most endearing characteristics.
- ❖ My friends, for your motivational words and calm approach to life.

Thanks also to:

- ❖ The educational psychology researchers who allowed me to make use of data which they had generated for analysis in this study. Being able to observe and listen to other professionals in the field of educational psychology has left me with a world of knowledge.
- ❖ To Hennie Symington and Adrie Van Dyk for exemplary work in the language and technical editing respectively.



I, Janna Maree Beukes (student number 25096738) hereby declare that all the resources consulted are included in the reference list and that this study titled:

Collaborative partnership trends  
between teachers and educational psychology researchers

is my original work. This thesis was not previously submitted by me for any degree at another university.

---

Janna Maree Beukes

August 2010



**COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP TRENDS BETWEEN TEACHERS  
AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHERS**

by

**Janna Maree Beukes**

**Supervisor:** Prof Liesel Ebersöhn

**Department:** Educational Psychology

**Degree:** MEd Educational Psychology

The purpose of this descriptive and exploratory study was to obtain insight into collaborative partnership trends between educational psychology researchers and teachers, in order to inform participatory theory and practice in future methodology studies. The Community of Practice Framework theoretically framed the study, describing professional communities and the way in which meanings, beliefs and understandings are negotiated and reflected in communal practices. Five symposium and two reflection session presentations were purposefully selected and transcribed for qualitative content analysis in terms of a trend analysis. Findings indicate that collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers differ from other partnerships in that collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers appear to be directed by an overarching philosophy of “care”. Also, collaborative partnership studies between teachers and educational psychology researchers favour methodologies encouraging participation in identifying and addressing school-community issues. In this way, knowledge exchange and the co-creation of knowledge is promoted. These partnerships focus on how education, as well as teacher and learner experiences can be enhanced and be meaningful, rewarding, enabling and supportive. Finally, benefits and challenges in collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers are similar to those experienced by other professionals participating in collaborative partnerships.

**Key Words:**

- |                             |                                     |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ❖ Collaborative research    | ❖ Reflective practice               |
| ❖ Participatory methodology | ❖ Content analysis                  |
| ❖ Collaborative partnership | ❖ Trend                             |
| ❖ Community of practice     | ❖ Educational psychology researcher |
| ❖ Situated learning         | ❖ Teacher                           |

	Page
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	
<b>CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY</b>	
<b>1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE</b> .....	1
<b>1.2 CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY</b> .....	2
<b>1.3 LITERATURE OVERVIEW</b> .....	2
<b>1.4 PURPOSE</b> .....	4
<b>1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b> .....	4
<b>1.6 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS</b> .....	5
1.6.1 COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH .....	5
1.6.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS .....	6
1.6.3 EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHERS .....	6
1.6.4 PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY .....	6
1.6.5 TEACHERS .....	7
1.6.6 TRENDS .....	7
<b>1.7 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE</b> .....	7
1.7.1 METATHEORETICAL PARADIGM .....	7
1.7.2 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM .....	8
1.7.3 THEORETICAL PARADIGM .....	9
<b>1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS</b> .....	9
<b>1.9 QUALITY CRITERIA</b> .....	11
<b>1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS</b> .....	11
<b>1.11 OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS THAT FOLLOW</b> .....	11
1.11.1. CHAPTER 1: CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY .....	11
1.11.2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	11
1.11.3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH PROCESS .....	12



1.11.4.	CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY, INTERPRETATION AND LITERATURE CONTROL	12
1.11.5.	CHAPTER 5: FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	12
<b>1.12</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>12</b>



**CHAPTER 2**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

<b>2.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	13
<b>2.2</b>	<b>PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATION</b> .....	13
<b>2.3</b>	<b>FROM PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH TO COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS</b> .....	16
2.3.1	CONCEPTUALISING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS AS AN EXTENSION OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH .....	16
2.3.2	TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS .....	17
2.3.3	REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS .....	19
2.3.4	CHALLENGES OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS .....	19
2.3.5	BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS .....	21
2.3.6	PREDICTORS OF SUCCESS IN COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS .....	22
<b>2.4</b>	<b>THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b> .....	24
2.4.1	COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK .....	24
2.4.2	PURPOSE OF COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE .....	26
2.4.3	BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK .....	26
2.4.4	THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK .....	27
	2.4.4.1    Situated Learning .....	27
	2.4.4.2    Reflective Practice .....	28
2.4.5	DEVELOPING AND NURTURING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE .....	29
<b>2.5</b>	<b>THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS</b> .....	31
<b>2.6</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	32



**CHAPTER 3**  
**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

<b>3.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	34
<b>3.2</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF THE STUDY</b>	34
<b>3.3</b>	<b>PARADIGMATIC ASSUMPTIONS</b>	34
3.3.1	METATHEORETICAL PARADIGM	35
3.3.2	METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM	36
<b>3.4</b>	<b>RESEARCH DESIGN</b>	37
<b>3.5</b>	<b>DEFINING THE SAMPLE</b>	39
<b>3.6</b>	<b>RESEARCH PROCESS</b>	41
3.6.1	DATA GENERATION	42
3.6.2	DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	43
3.6.3	REFLECTING ON MY ROLE AS RESEARCHER	44
<b>3.7</b>	<b>ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	45
3.7.1	INFORMED CONSENT AND VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION	46
3.7.2	ANONYMITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY	46
3.7.3	PROTECTION FROM HARM	47
<b>3.8</b>	<b>QUALITY CRITERIA</b>	47
3.8.1	CREDIBILITY	48
3.8.2	TRANSFERABILITY	49
3.8.3	DEPENDABILITY	49
3.8.4	CONFIRMABILITY	50
3.8.5	AUTHENTICITY	50
<b>3.9</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	50



**CHAPTER 4:  
DATA ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION OF RESULTS  
AND LITERATURE CONTROL**

<b>4.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	51
<b>4.2</b>	<b>RESULTS OF THE TREND ANALYSIS</b> .....	51
<b>4.3</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	86



**CHAPTER 5  
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>5.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	88
<b>5.2</b>	<b>REVISITING THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK</b> .....	88
5.2.1	THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS .....	88
5.2.2	THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK .....	89
<b>5.3</b>	<b>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b> .....	91
5.3.1	HOW MIGHT COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP TRENDS INFORM PARTICIPATORY THEORY AND PRACTICE IN FUTURE PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY RESEARCH STUDIES? .....	91
5.3.2	HOW MIGHT INSIGHT INTO COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP TRENDS BETWEEN TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHERS INFORM PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY? .....	93
<b>5.4</b>	<b>LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY</b> .....	94
<b>5.5</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	95
5.5.1	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH .....	96
5.5.2	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE .....	96
5.5.3	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING .....	97
<b>5.6</b>	<b>CONCLUDING REMARKS</b> .....	97





## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

	Page
TABLE 1.1: Research Design and Methodology.....	10
TABLE 3.1: Outline of presentations which contributed to the generation of data.....	40
TABLE 4.1: Results of the trend analysis indicating trends and sub-trends which emerged.....	51
TABLE 4.2: Sub-trends, indicators and exclusions related to the trend <i>Core characteristics of collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers</i> .....	52
TABLE 4.3: Indicators and exclusions related to the trend <i>Ways in which teachers and educational psychology researchers collaborate</i> .....	67
TABLE 4.4: Indicators and exclusions related to the trend <i>Focus of educational psychology researcher studies</i> .....	71
TABLE 4.5: Sub-trends, indicators and exclusions related to the trend <i>Benefits of collaborative partnerships</i> .....	74
TABLE 4.6: Sub-trends, indicators and exclusions related to the trend <i>Challenges of collaborative partnerships</i> .....	78
---◆---	
FIGURE 3.1: Research Process.....	41
---◆---	
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES</b> .....	99
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	112



## **1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE**

Given the burgeoning contemporary social challenges such as homelessness, economic development and job training, society is required to deal with social problems which require the commitment and cooperation of more than one division within and across the traditional domains of the private and public sectors (Hood, Logsdon & Thompson, 1993). Gray (1989) in Jamal and Getz (1995:11) refers to such operations as collaborations which he defines as: “a process of joint decision-making of a problem domain about the future of that domain”. In the context of the research sector, collaboration and collaborative partnerships have historically been associated with the co-construction of knowledge between researchers and practitioners<sup>1</sup> with a view to integrating the two traditions. As such, collaboration in the context of research is often perceived as an endeavour which could ultimately lead to more informed practice (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007) based on the sustained interaction, shared decision-making and mutual respect by which collaborative research is essentially characterised (Sylva, Taggart, Melhuish, Sammons & Siraj-Blatchford, 2007).

One of the endeavours intrinsic to collaborative research between researchers and practitioners has been its ability to reframe professional practice and the professional development of practitioners and teachers (Buysse, Sparkman & Wesley, 2003) through what has been coined “communities of practice” (Wenger, 2003). The concept of communities of practice in effect stems from a convergent interaction between competence and experience which involves mutual engagement. Through communities of practice, those involved are typically given the opportunity to negotiate competence through an experience of direct participation in the research process whilst being afforded the opportunity of simultaneously teaching and learning (Wenger, 2003).

In literature dealing with collaboration (and collaborative research), it appears that long-term collaborations do not always come with the structure of authority or norms for interactions among participants from different societal sectors, with the result that collaborations often

---

<sup>1</sup> In the context of this study practitioner refers specifically to teachers collaborating with researchers in an attempt to co-construct knowledge in various research studies.

have difficulty getting started, developing goals and programmes, maintaining support over time as well as implementing programmes (Hood *et al.*, 1993). Also, there seems to be a trend in reported partnership studies of focusing primarily on the potential benefits collaborative partnerships may have for the practitioners involved, not for the researchers (Grundy, Robison & Tomazos, 2001; Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007; Van Zee, Lay & Roberts, 2003). From the above, it would seem that studies focusing on the process of collaboration are limited, mainly because of the challenges inherent in this kind of study.

Having engrossed myself in an examination of existing literature on participatory studies and collaborative partnerships (Smith, 2001), I concluded that one of the aims of the aforementioned research methodologies might be to facilitate change for and with research participants. My interest in collaborative partnerships and participatory methodologies was stimulated even more whilst attending a symposium<sup>2</sup>, where the data for the current study was collected. From my examination of existing literature and the symposium I attended, I developed a strong desire to explore the findings of researchers dealing with collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers and how these trends might inform participatory methodology.

## **1.2 CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY**

At the abovementioned symposium, papers were presented by twelve educational psychology researchers from five South African universities involved in collaboration and research. Thus, the data for the current study was generated by various educational psychology researchers who presented their experiences of being involved in collaborative partnerships with teachers.

## **1.3 LITERATURE OVERVIEW**

Based on an in-depth examination of existing literature (Boddy, Macbeth & Wagner, 2000; Balach & Szymanski, 2003; Tett, Crowther & O'Hara, 2003; Foskett, 2005; Hall Jackson, Dinkar & DeFranco, 2005; Warren & Peel, 2005; Burn, 2006; Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007; Casey, 2008; Katsouyanni, 2008; Baldwin, Johnson & Benally, 2009; Mitchell, Reilly & Logue, 2009), it is evident that collaboration and collaborative partnerships

---

<sup>2</sup> The symposium was titled 'Partners in education research and practice: collaboration between teachers and education researchers' and was held on 1-3 March 2009. Twelve education researchers from five South African universities presented papers at this symposium within the context of collaboration and research. The symposium was hosted by the UP Unit for Education Research in AIDS, and funded by the Foschini Group CSI & the UP Department of Community Engagement.

generally exist under the auspices of practices requiring partners to work together to solve problems. Whereas in the past collaborative partnerships have been associated with a linear process where knowledge was passed on from researcher to practitioner (Christie Cassidy, Skinner, Coutts, Sinclair, Rimpilainen & Wilson, 2007; Sylva *et al.*, 2007), collaborative efforts are currently regarded as a practice where the various members of a partnership possess shared power and value based on their contribution to the group (King, 2002; Loughran, 2003; Schneider & Pickett, 2006). Furthermore, in contemporary research collaborative partnerships are associated with knowledge exchange (Clark, Moss, Goering, Herter, Lamar & Leonard, 1996; Warren & Peel, 2005; Burn, 2006; Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007; Casey, 2008), where members of a partnership typically co-construct new knowledge.

Despite the potential advantages inherent in collaborative partnerships (Balach & Szymanski, 2003; Foskett, 2005; Warren & Peel, 2005; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009), which appear to emphasise professional development of the various partners as well as capacity building, the debate pertaining to the functioning of organisations is continuing. However, researchers and practitioners have been able to identify several aspects of a collaborative process which are likely to influence its success, as well as various features of collaboration which need to be nurtured.

The aspects referred to above, pertain to potential resources available in a partnership, the ability of the various partners to define the problem to be resolved by means of partnership, setting mutual goals (Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005), and a comprehensive knowledge of the culture of the population, systems operation and sources of power residing within a given partnership (Hanson, Skager & Mitchell, 1991). Emphasis on contextualisation (Schneider & Pickett, 2006) and socially relevant collaboration (Sowa & De La Vega, 2008) also appear to play an important role in the success of any collaborative partnership. In addition, various partners involved in partnerships seem to face challenges related to roles that have not been clearly defined and relationship issues among team members (Van Zee *et al.*, 2003; Kim, Haak Fluskerud, Koniak-Griffin & Dixon, 2005; Warren & Peel, 2005; Witte, Martinez Witte, Saltiel, Hackett, Hesler & Johnson, 2005; Christie, Cassidy, Skinner, Coutts, Sinclair, Rimpilainen & Wilson, 2007; Horns, Czaplijski, Engelke, Marshburn, McAuliffe & Baker, 2007; Scharfenberger, Furman, Rotella & Pfeifer, 2008; Baldwin *et al.*, 2009; Smith, Blake, Curwen, Dodds, Easton, McNally, Swierczek & Walker, 2009).

To summarise, it appears as if collaborative partnerships consist of various parties working together to co-create and exchange knowledge with regard to various problems which usually stem from common goals. Inherent in the partnership efforts are certain benefits and challenges which need to be taken into consideration throughout the collaborative partnership process. However, little mention is made of whether the practices mentioned above apply to collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers, and whether the processes or guidelines which typically govern collaborative partnerships operating in various alternative domains within the field of education, can be employed in developing and maintaining collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers. It might therefore be necessary to explore the nature of collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers against the backdrop of trends which emerge from the collaboration between the parties referred to previously, so as to inform future participatory theory and practice in this specific domain within the field of education.

#### **1.4 PURPOSE**

The purpose of the current study is to explore (Babbie, 2005; Cohen Manion & Morrison, 2007; Mouton, 2008) and describe (Babbie, 2005; Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Mouton, 2008) collaborative partnership trends between teachers and educational psychology researchers in an attempt to inform participatory methodology. My intention was to identify trends which emerged when educational psychology researchers talked about their participatory studies. I also aimed at gaining insight into how collaborative partnership trends may inform participatory theory and practice in future participatory methodology research studies.

#### **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In light of the rationale and purpose of this study as described above, the primary research question is posed as follows:

- ❖ *How might insight into collaborative partnership trends between teachers and educational psychology researchers inform participatory methodology?*

In an attempt to generate an in-depth response to the primary research question, the following secondary research questions were explored:

- ❖ *Which collaborative partnership trends emerge when educational psychology researchers and teachers talk about their participatory studies?*

- ❖ *How might collaborative partnership trends inform participatory theory and practice in future participatory methodology research studies?*

In order to address research questions posed by this study, it is necessary to clarify key concepts, as indicated below.

## **1.6 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

The following section provides a brief summary of each concept contained in the primary research question of this study to familiarise the reader.

### **1.6.1 COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH**

According to Savoie-Zjac and Descamps-Bednarz (2007), collaborative research implies doing research ‘with’ rather than ‘on’ participants. Thus, collaborative research resulting in partnerships aims to bring the world of research and practice closer together as well as to mediate between the traditions of research and practice so that new knowledge may be constructed and in turn inform practice. Collaborative research is further described as a process where specific items of knowledge relating to practice are shared and constructed together. Therefore, it is presupposed that a common object from which an investigation can be launched be identified, from which shared results can be yielded and “paired with a double diffusion process for the research and practice communities” (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007:578).

Finally, collaborative research is based on the respective contributions of the various parties involved, where the practitioner is not seen as merely a co-researcher, but as a co-constructor of knowledge which is generated as part of a team. In the current study, collaborative research resulting in collaborative partnerships refers to a relationship between a group of people, in this case educational psychology researchers and teachers, who are working together to create or produce something. In the context of the current study, the educational psychology researchers and teachers are working together to create new knowledge which can be used to inform participatory methodology.

### **1.6.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS**

Content analysis is defined as “a collection of techniques used in qualitative research for the systematic and objective description and classification of the manifest or latent subject matter of written or spoken verbal communication, usually by counting the incidence or coincidence of utterances falling into several (usually predetermined) categories” (Colman, 2006:167). Content analysis as a research design usually involves the analysis of various types of text such as speeches and annual reports and is usually inductive and a-theoretical (Mouton, 2008). This definition reflects the underlying principles of content analysis in the current study as well.

### **1.6.3 EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHERS**

According to Coleman (2006:238) Educational Psychology is a “field of psychology devoted to education”. The work of an educational psychologist involves the diagnosis of support for educational, emotional and behavioural problems in children and adolescents.

Research is defined by the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary as “a careful study of a subject, especially in order to discover new facts or information about it” (Hornby, Cowie & Gimson, 2006:999). Therefore, in the context of the current study, educational psychology researcher refers to an educational psychologist in the context of the aforementioned definition, participating in some form of research where the aim is to gain new information or to discover new facts about a given topic.

### **1.6.4 PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY**

Research employing participatory methodology can be considered as research involving community members, organisational representatives as well as researchers in every phase of the research process. Participatory methodologies offer a critical way of engaging practitioners in research, encouraging reflection on their own practices and taking action (Chappell, 2000; De Lange, Olivier & Wood, 2008).

In participatory methodology, the research problem may be identified by the practitioners or researchers, after which the aforementioned practitioners and researchers typically work together to achieve a collective analysis of the research problem. Alliances may subsequently be formed between practitioners, researchers and other experts (Cocks & Cockram, 1995). In

accordance with this definition, the concept of participatory methodology stems from the principles underlying participatory action research, and refers to a type of research where the researchers and participants collaborate in defining the research problem, choosing an appropriate methodology and way of doing data analysis, and disseminating the findings, with a view of co-constructing knowledge (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007).

### **1.6.5 TEACHERS**

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a teacher is defined as "a person whose job is teaching, especially in a school" (Hornby *et al.*, 2000:1228). In the context of the current study, teacher refers to an individual who teaches at a school as a means of employment.

### **1.6.6 TRENDS**

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary states that a trend is "a general direction in which a situation is changing or developing" (Hornby *et al.*, 2000:1278). In the context of the current study, a trend entails the general direction which appears to be developing with regard to the way in which collaborative partnerships may benefit the various parties involved, as well as the general direction which the various parties appear to follow when utilising participatory methodology.

## **1.7 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE**

In this section, I provide an overview of the metatheory and methodological paradigm that directed my study.

### **1.7.1 METATHEORETICAL PARADIGM**

The paradigm, or broad theoretical orientation, by which the current study is steered, is constructivism. Constructivism is based on the principle that the human or social world is different from the physical world in that human beings have developed the capacity to interpret and construct reality (Patton, 2002). Constructivists study multiple realities that are constructed by people as well as the implications for the lives of people and their interactions with others. The findings of a qualitative, constructivist study cannot be generalised from one context to another. Therefore, such findings simply represent another human construction

which needs to be taken into account in the move towards consensus on one issue or another (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Based on the nature of the current study, with its emphasis on the co-construction of knowledge through collaboration, I regarded constructivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Patton, 2002) as a suitable metatheoretical paradigm. This approach resonates with the focus of the current study, bringing to the fore those assumptions most closely held by constructivists, as well as the way in which they and others make meaning and construct reality in their own unique worlds (Charles, 2002; Babbie & Mouton, 2004). Using the constructivist approach, it was also my intention to learn which new knowledge was co-constructed through the collaborative process of various research projects as well as how this knowledge might promote and inform better participatory practices based on educational psychology researchers' unique experience of collaborative processes. Lastly, from a constructivist viewpoint, I intended to gain insight into the general trends which emerged through the collaborative partnership process with regard to the co-construction of knowledge between educational psychology researchers and teachers.

### **1.7.2 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM**

I followed a qualitative methodological approach (Creswell, 2005), denoting a process of inquiry and understanding where, as researcher, I sought to explore the research setting in order to obtain a rich, in-depth understanding of the way things are, what the reasons are, and how participants perceive reality (Charles, 2002). I chose this methodological approach based on the fact that I wanted to obtain a deeper understanding of the process of collaboration, and in particular how the process may unfold when teachers and educational psychology researchers work together. I also aimed to investigate the process of collaboration in its natural setting, where I would be able to develop a holistic picture of participatory methodology and collaborative partnership work (Ivankova, Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Therefore, by employing a qualitative paradigm (Charles, 2002), I attempted to describe and provide insight into how the participants believe and feel about the way things are, with regard to collaborative research between educational psychology researchers and teachers. Furthermore, I endeavoured to undertake sustained in-depth, in-context research which would allow me to uncover subtle, less overt, personal understandings of collaborative research and participatory methodology. Hence, I collected text pertaining to the central phenomenon of

collaboration between educational psychology researchers and teachers which could potentially emerge in the setting of everyday life (Ivankova *et al.*, 2007).

### **1.7.3 THEORETICAL PARADIGM**







The theoretical framework from which the current study was conducted is the community of practice framework (Lave 1988, 1991, 1997; Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger, 1998). The community of practice framework emphasises a description of professional communities and the way in which meanings, beliefs and understandings may be negotiated and reflected in communal practices (Buysse *et al.*, 2003). What seemingly distinguishes communities of practice from previous attempts to introduce the concept of community into research-practice efforts is “the development of self through participation in the community” (Barab & Duffy, 2000:35) as well as the importance of legitimate participation as part of a community in the development of the self.

One of the most important purposes of a community of practice is to establish a learning community across levels of expertise rather than within them (Pugach, 1999). Thus, this framework views teaching and learning as bidirectional, regarding these two practices as equal contributors to the professional community’s knowledge base. The community of practice framework also recognises that knowledge is generated and shared within a social and cultural context.

## **1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Table 1.1 provides a visual overview of the research process, as will be discussed in depth in Chapter 3. More specifically, this table illustrates the research design that I selected for the purpose of this study, as well as the research process related to the various research questions. Data-documentation methods and rigour are also represented.

**TABLE 1.1: Research Design and Methodology**

Research Design: Qualitative Content Analysis					
Trend analysis of six transcribed presentations on collaborative partnerships between educational psychology and teachers		Promote knowledge and inform participatory practices		Explore various collaborative partnership trends which emerge with regard to the collaboration process between educational psychology researchers and teachers	
Qualitative Content Analysis		Constructivism: Co-construction of knowledge through collaboration		Qualitative: Multiple realities and truths	
Community of Practice: Professional communities; negotiation and reflection of meanings, beliefs and understandings communal practices; establishment of learning communities across levels of expertise			Purposefully selected documents: Generated at a symposium		
Research Design: Qualitative Content Analysis					
<p><i>What is participatory research and collaborative partnerships? (Literature review and contextualisation of study)</i></p> <p><i>Attendance of a symposium where papers on collaborative partnerships and participatory research were presented (Data generation)</i></p> <p><i>Transcription of the papers presented at the symposium into verbatim text</i></p> <p><i>What does the data generated at the symposium tell us about collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers? How does this new knowledge regarding collaborative partnership trends inform participatory theory and practice? (Data analysis, interpretation and literature control)</i></p>					
Data Gathering Methods			Rigorous Study		
					
<b>Literature Study</b>	<b>Two-Day Symposium</b>	<b>Audio-Visual Methods</b>	<b>Field Notes and Reflective Journal</b>	<b>Member Checks</b>	<b>Supervision</b>
<p>What is participatory methodology?</p> <p>What are collaborative partnerships?</p>	<p>Six papers on participatory research and collaborative partnerships presented</p> <p>Generation of data for this study</p>	<p>Video camera, Dictaphone</p> <p>For visual and audio presentation of the papers presented and the data generated</p>	<p>Detailed notes on what occurred at the symposium</p> <p>Reflections of transcription and data analysis process</p> <p>Documentation of data analysis process</p>	<p>Verify with the participants that they agree with the results of the data analysis process</p>	<p>Meetings with research supervisor and co-supervisor regarding results of the data analysis process</p>



## 1.9 QUALITY CRITERIA

The current study attempted to address criteria of credibility, transferability, confirmability, dependability and authenticity (Denzin, 2005; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Various methods served as the means by which I guarded myself against a biased description of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1994; Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007) and aimed to ensure that the content of the text was reported in a responsible way (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). The quality criteria of the current research study are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

## 1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007), it is imperative that in conducting qualitative studies of social issues, that a researcher employ various methods in order to ensure the trustworthiness of a given study. The ethical guidelines which this study had to contend with relate to informed consent and voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality and privacy, as well as trust and protection from harm (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Mouton, 2008). The aforementioned ethical principles are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

## 1.11 OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS THAT FOLLOW

### CHAPTER 1: CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

Chapter 1 provided a broad overview of the current study. A rationale and introduction were provided followed by a section contextualising the study. An overview of existing literature regarding collaboration and collaborative partnerships and a discussion regarding the purpose of the study set the scene for the research questions. Important concepts referred to throughout the study and an indication of the methodology through which the study was conducted were summarised. Finally, ethical guidelines and quality criteria which were addressed in the current study were outlined.

### CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework for the current study. This includes relevant and authoritative literature on participatory methodology, collaborative partnerships, communities of practice, knowledge exchange and university faculty-teacher collaboration. The nature of studies between teachers and researchers with regard to the type of methodological designs and approaches that are typically employed is also discussed. Throughout, I aim to identify limitations and potential gaps in the current knowledge base. I conclude the chapter with a

presentation of the communities of practice framework, forming the theoretical backdrop for data analysis of this study.

### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH PROCESS**

Chapter 3 provides an outline of the research design, research methodology and research process I applied in this study. The methods of data collection, data analysis and interpretation are also outlined and justified. I conclude by discussing quality criteria and the ethical guidelines I followed.

### **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY, INTERPRETATION AND LITERATURE CONTROL**

Chapter 4 entails a presentation and discussion of the data obtained during this study. After presenting the results, a detailed discussion of the findings follows. Finally, I present my interpretation of the results. I also address one of the sub-questions of this study in this chapter.

### **CHAPTER 5: FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Chapter 5, the concluding chapter, links the results of this study to the research questions posed in Chapter 1 and the findings of this study as related to existing literature in Chapter 2. I present potential contributions as well as the challenges I faced in completing this research. I conclude with recommendations for further research, practice and training.

## **1.12 CONCLUSION**

Chapter 1 introduced the research process and provided a brief discussion of the chapters to follow. In Chapter 2, I commence by presenting a comprehensive literature review of subject matter related to my study. The subject matter, as outlined in this chapter, includes Participatory Methodology and a discussion on collaborative partnerships involving university faculty researchers and practitioners. I also present the community of practice framework.



## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, I review literature on participatory research, communities of practice, knowledge exchange and university faculty-teacher collaboration in an attempt to gain insight into collaborative partnerships, and the nature of studies between teachers and researchers with regard to the type of designs and approaches that can be employed. Furthermore, I consult literature referring to the prevalence of collaboration and partnerships, and research tendencies with regard to the focus of knowledge generation. I structure my reasoning by discussing existing literature, as well as limitations in the current knowledge base. I conclude the chapter with a presentation of the communities of practice framework which forms the theoretical framework of the current study.

## **2.2 PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATION**

Participatory methodologies (such as participatory action research) can be regarded as integrated activities that combine social investigation, educational work and action (Holman, 1987). According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2005), participatory research is an alternative philosophy of social research associated with social transformation. It is characterised by shared ownership of a research project, community-based analysis of social problems and an orientation towards community action. Bhana (2002) states that participatory research insists on communal participation in the process of knowledge creation. Furthermore, participatory methodologies focus on the involvement and participation of the various role-players in a given research project, where researchers and practitioners are regarded as being equally involved in the research process, and take equal responsibility for the outcome of a given project (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2005).

Participatory methodologies essentially involve collective production, transformation and control of knowledge which may lead to the planning, development and achievement of jointly set objectives (De Vos *et al.*, 2005). According to Patton (2002), the aforementioned process of inquiry generally involves participants in learning inquiry logic and skills, and encourages participants in the research process to take ownership of the inquiry. Participatory research also fosters a critical method of engaging practitioners in research which encourages

reflection on their own practices and taking action (Chappell, 2000; De Lange *et al.*, 2008). Thus, participatory research functions not only as a potential means of knowledge, but also as a tool for action (Gaventa, 1991).

Participatory action research in particular, is based on the premise that authentic knowledge of the human and social world can only be gained through the process of attempting to change that world. Moreover, authentic change is believed to be possible only when it is accompanied by shifts in the knowledge bases of those involved (Bhana, 2002). Participatory methodologies may be described as an attempt to contribute to the practical concerns of people in an immediately challenging situation as well as to the larger goals of social science. Furthermore, participatory research emphasises both rigour and relevance and typically converts knowledge into professional services (De Vos *et al.*, 2005). According to Bhana (2002), participatory research encourages egalitarian research relationships involving those being researched in every aspect of a project. In addition, participatory research attempts to know “with” rather than “about” participants, and endeavours to reconceptualise and foster knowledge as something that exists among people, rather than seeing it as a barrier dividing people (Bhana, 2002). Since participatory research has the purpose of effecting change for and with research participants (Smith, 2001), the research problem may be identified by either the practitioners or researchers, after which the two parties work together to achieve a collective analysis of the research problem. Thus it makes it possible for all aspects of the inquiry to be undertaken in ways that are understandable and meaningful to participants. Participants are given the opportunity of being authentically involved in making major decisions on focus and design and are encouraged to draw conclusions from a study as well as apply them. This approach allows inquiry facilitators the choice of placing active emphasis on recognising and valuing the perspectives and expertise put forward by participants, while working to help participants recognise and value their own as well as the expertise of others (Patton, 2002).

Contrary to literature on research partnerships (Christie, Cassidy, Skinner, Coutts, Sinclair, Rimpilainen & Wilson, 2007; Sylva *et al.*, 2007) suggesting that research and practice consist of a linear relationship where knowledge is simply transferred from one world to another, participatory research suggests that working in partnerships is characterised by a process of knowledge exchange rather than knowledge transfer (Sylva *et al.*, 2007). Research, where collaboration plays an integral role may therefore also be characterised by a process of

knowledge exchange. Through this process, both researchers and practitioners may have the opportunity to work together in shaping, implementing and disseminating research findings.

Partnerships where participatory methods form an integral part of the process, are regarded as unique. Such partnerships do not entail one world of work using another for its own gain, but two cultures working together to create and evaluate knowledge. Christie *et al.* (2007) elaborate on this explanation, suggesting that not only is knowledge exchanged, but also co-created or co-generated by researchers and practitioners. The collaborative nature of partnerships and participatory methods clearly indicates that, by engaging or participating in partnerships with other practitioners, knowledge can be created, thereby going beyond the typical situational constraints which apply in one professional context (King, 2002; Loughran, 2003). Such generation of knowledge may be further enhanced by the additional perspectives associated with those usually involved in partnerships, as practitioners who have the potential to bring expertise to the playing field where other researchers are involved as co-researchers and co-constructors of knowledge.

Schneider and Pickett (2006) comment on the possibility that situations where knowledge is co-constructed and exchanged, can be brought together by shared interest and diverse backgrounds. As such, partners may combine their individual expertise in such a way that higher-quality products can be created. In this way, each partner may also be able to contribute to and benefit from the relationship (Schneider & Pickett, 2006). Adding to this, Clark, Moss, Goering, Herter, Lamar and Leonard (1996) state that, in order for this type of working relationship to be possible, communication needs to be successfully developed. This implies that a shared understanding of the processes taking place in any partnership must be present, and that it is necessary for partners to be able to share, justify and refine their ideas with others in order to support learning and knowledge construction. However, since partners usually come from differing backgrounds, it cannot be assumed that the various partners will automatically communicate at an optimal level from the onset. Differences of opinion and interests, professional language and the professional culture of those involved in partnership work need to be bridged in order to be able to share ideas and build joint understanding. There is no doubt that establishing partnerships which place emphasis on mutual participation is challenging and evidently requires a great deal of effort to maintain. Within the context of the current study, where partnerships are assumed to be collaborative, it is therefore predicted that the core elements of participatory research as discussed above, will probably show up in the trends which emerged between educational psychology researchers and teachers.

## 2.3 FROM PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH TO COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

In this section, I discuss how collaborative partnerships can be conceptualised as an extension of participatory research. I also comment on the nature of collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers in particular. In addition, I discuss some requirements and predictors for success in collaborative partnerships and conclude the section with a discussion of some benefits and challenges of collaborative partnerships.

### 2.3.1 CONCEPTUALISING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS AS AN EXTENSION OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

There seems to be a substantial amount of research focused on the conceptualisation of partnerships (Callahan & Martin, 2007; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009; Moran, Abbott & Clarke, 2009); on relationships between partners; points of view and power relations, as well as teamwork occurring within collaborative partnerships between university faculties and schools (Miller, Williamson McDiarmid & Luttrell-Montes, 2006; Alpert & Bechar, 2007; Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009). In addition, a growing number of studies have been completed on new models and approaches for carrying out collaborative partnerships, and how these models might best be put into action (Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006). Yet, studies on what may be learnt from those involved in collaborative partnerships still seem to be emerging, thereby highlighting the potential value of the current study in terms of existing literature on participatory research and collaborative partnerships.

Since participatory research ultimately implies that various stakeholders come together to form a partnership (Katsouyanni, 2008), it stands to reason that the term “collaborative partnership” compliments an understanding of participatory research between stakeholders, or between researchers and practitioners. According to Moyles and Stuart (2003:3-4) the term partnership is “still open to diverse interpretations” and an “in-depth conceptualisation ... is [still] required”. Burn (2006) concurs by stating that, despite the fact that theorists have come up with several prescriptions and divisions in terms of responsibilities in partnership work, very little conceptual clarity exists in terms of what may constitute a partnership. In addition, it appears as if not many, if any, universally accepted definitions exist for partnerships and collaboration (Tett *et al.*, 2003). Foskett (2005) maintains that such lack of clarity can be traced back to the principles of the Conservative Governments of the 1980s and 1990s, and the subsequent belief in the abilities of organisations operated and run by the private sector.

This first reported major definition of partnership by the Conservative Governments was one which is now considered to be controlling and centralised. Essentially, the aforementioned definition of partnerships entailed a process where one partner was viewed as the expert, and the other partner was regarded as not having much to offer (Foskett, 2005).

Currently, partnerships are common in government and institutional life, and are implemented through a process of relationship building and characterised by shared goals, common purpose, mutual respect, a willingness to negotiate and co-operate, informed participation, information giving and shared decision making (Casey, 2008). However, a multitude of definitions and applications of the term partnership still appear to exist. Boddy *et al.* (2000:1004) define a partnership as “a situation in which there is an attempt to build close, long-term links between organisations...that remain distinct, but which choose to work closely together”. In this context, partnership work is regarded as enhancing organisational learning and encompassing the belief that more valuable knowledge can be created than if each organisation were to work in isolation. Foskett (2005) concurs by explaining that partnership work is essentially about working together with at least one other person or group. Hall Jackson *et al.* (2005) add to this explanation, emphasising that group organisations, known as collaborative partnerships, have recently gained importance due to the fact that when collaborating, the function of that community interdependence can bind the various stakeholders or participants to a greater goal. Furthermore, “collaboration is initiated through appreciation of the interdependence which exists and the need for joint ‘appreciation’ among stakeholders of the nature and substance of their interdependence” (Gray, 1985:921).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, collaborative partnerships in the current study refer to a relationship between a group of people, in this case educational psychology researchers and teachers, who are working together to create or produce something. In the context of the current study, the educational psychology researchers and teachers are working together to create new knowledge which can be used to inform participatory methodology.

### **2.3.2 TEACHERS AND RESEARCHERS IN PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

Many studies (James & Worrall, 2000; Van Zee *et al.*, 2003; Warren & Peel, 2005; Burn, 2006; Evoh, 2007; Sylva *et al.*, 2007) have focused on what is to be gained by teachers or practitioners by being part of so-called communities of practice (Grundy *et al.*, 2001; Van Zee

*et al.*, 2003; Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007). The results of several studies undertaken by researchers in this area of interest (Tsui & Law, 2007; Goduto, Doolittle & Leake, 2008; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009; Vogel & Avissar, 2009) confirm that up until now, many studies have viewed the researcher as the one who holds the power to empower and enable the practitioner. As such, the idea of a researcher being the provider of resources and knowledge, may lead to the perception that, although various role-players involved in participatory research and collaboration are equally able to make a valuable contribution, the researcher continues to be viewed as the partner empowering the practitioner to develop professionally.

However, the teacher in a research partnership is not the only one who typically benefits from a process of collaboration. Grundy *et al.* (2001) emphasise that teachers and university academics often share theory-practice stories about each other. In these stories, academics are generally viewed as individuals inherently in possession of knowledge and the ability to reflect, whilst teachers are typically located in positions of action. Findings in this regard reinforce the seemingly separate worlds of teachers and researchers. Therefore, if not carefully monitored, communities of practice could widen the distance between research and practice, rather than acting as agents to integrate and narrow this gap. The aforementioned gap may be further widened through the reinforcement of the seemingly powerful relationship which researchers still appear to hold over teachers or participants.

Upon review of various research studies between university faculties and teachers it appears as if such projects tend to focus on analysing teacher education, professional development and building the capacity of those involved in partnerships (Mule, 2006; Kuter & Koç, 2009; Murray, Campbell, Hextall, Hulme, Jones, Mahony, Menter, Procter & Wall, 2009; Levine & Marcus, 2010). For example, in the current study, partnerships seemed to emphasise issues and concerns which hamper teaching and learning, and how teachers give meaning to their teaching lives and the educational landscape. Further participatory studies appear to have highlighted teacher enablement and support, and the augmentation of teaching capacity through research. Another area which regularly receives attention relates to the improvement and enhancement of specific school subjects such as mathematics and science, and the implementation of these subjects on a practical level (Saito, Imansyah, Kubok & Hendayana, 2007; Sutherland, Howard & Markauskaite, 2010).

### **2.3.3 REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

Although there seems to be no consensus on what exactly constitutes a collaborative partnership, Hall Jackson *et al.* (2005) highlight several requirements of partnerships, as well as requisite criteria for a community intervention to be regarded as successful. The authors (2005) emphasise that collaboration is important for a community intervention to be successful. In this regard, it seems necessary for collaborative partnerships to rely on various resources that may not necessarily be found in a single organisation working in isolation. Defining the problem is regarded as another necessary step since any collaborative partnership evidently requires stakeholders who agree to work towards a mutual goal (Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005). Consequently, knowledge pertaining to the culture of a population, systems operation and sources of power are viewed as important in planning effective intervention strategies (Hanson *et al.*, 1991).

Sowa and De La Vega (2008) elaborate on so-called culturally relevant collaboration. According to these authors (2008), contextualisation is a key factor in any collaborative process. It is suggested that when partners initiate collaboration, a sociocultural approach could be followed, and that stakeholders, in this case teachers and university faculty members, need to be flexible in allowing for cultural and ideological differences (Rueda, 1998). Essential to such a sociocultural approach is the building of trust, rapport and communication through culturally respectful interaction in order to establish strong partnerships. In terms of partnerships between teachers and university faculty members and researchers, Schneider and Pickett (2006) recommend that individuals can opt to undertake their projects in such a relationship, stating that if teachers and faculty members collaborate, learning could be enhanced, curriculum development supported and research facilitated.

### **2.3.4 CHALLENGES OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

In the light of the suggested requirements for success in collaborative partnerships and the wide variety of participatory practices that appear to have been successful<sup>3</sup> (Van Zee *et al.*,

---

<sup>3</sup> Success in collaborative partnerships in the context of this discussion refers to collaborative partnerships which have been effective in the development and maintenance of the partnership itself, the realisation of common goals established by the various partners, as well as the ability to manage change, communication and interaction within partnerships (Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005; Casey, 2008, Sowa & De La Vega, 2008).

2003; Kim *et al.*, 2005; Warren & Peel, 2005; Witte *et al.*, 2005; Christie *et al.*, 2007; Horns *et al.*, 2007; Scharfenberger *et al.*, 2008; Baldwin *et al.*, 2009; Smith *et al.*, 2009), collaborative partnerships, specifically those between university researchers and local school faculties appear to face various challenges unique to a collaborative, participatory environment (Witte *et al.*, 2005). Researchers may for example encounter certain dilemmas when roles are not clearly defined and when relationship challenges for team members influence the task of implementation and assessment (Goldstein, 2000).

However, when dealing with these challenges, it would appear as if collaborative academic and school-based partnerships can be instrumental in gaining access to resources that may not otherwise have been available (Witte *et al.*, 2005). Mitchell *et al.* (2009) confirm this contention, stating that many challenges in participatory research may pose a threat to successful collaboration. These challenges could be related to the partner initiating the collaboration, the reasons underlying the inquiry, the resources available, teacher workload, the avenues for partners to communicate and expectations on the frequency of communication. Having potential problem-solving strategies in place to resolve conflict is also mentioned as a pre-determining factor for the success of a given partnership project. Ansari, Phillips and Zwi (2002) further state that effective collaboration for implementation and maintenance are not merely dependent on motivation and involved members, but also on the skills or ‘capacity for participation’ to operate effectively.

Specific challenges which have often been experienced in community-partnered participatory research (Kim *et al.*, 2005) relate to the identification of potential partners and the establishment of collaborative relationships among community organisations and research teams. Despite a monumental need for services and resources within given communities, some established community organisations may exhibit indifference towards change or even suspicion of the efforts made by researchers in developing partnerships (Kim *et al.*, 2005). Another challenge relates to some researchers being unfamiliar with the communities where they will be working and possibly also being viewed as outsiders who are not necessarily welcome in the research community.

The aforementioned challenges can be related to an argument stated by Casey (2008), Clegg *et al.* (2005) as well as Huxham and Vangen (2000) with regard to the importance of choosing suitable researchers to perform certain partnership-related tasks in order to develop a sense of ownership and a sense of belonging within the collaborative partnership relationship. The

aforementioned tasks include entering certain communities, developing a relationship of trust in order to gain entrance and encouraging community members who are to be viewed as partners. Mitchell *et al.* (2009) concur, maintaining that the challenges often faced in collaborative partnerships can be addressed by attending to the school or community context and building interventions on the teachers' or community members' experiences; by generating and maximising resources; maintaining efficient dialogue and envisioning multiple solutions for conflict resolution.

### **2.3.5 BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

Apart from benefits such as achieving enhanced unity between disciplines, a greater sense of empowerment or enablement, and a heightened sense of responsibility for one's school, institution or area of common interest (Warren & Peel, 2005), a study (Foskett, 2005) on collaborative partnerships indicates that the benefits of participatory research fall mainly into two broad categories. Intrinsic benefits pertain to benefits coming from within a partnership environment, whilst extrinsic benefits originate in the external environment. Within these two categories, benefits appear to relate mainly to mission, development and the business or process of establishing and maintaining a partnership. Mission benefits relate to the mission of a partnership to provide services, whereas developmental benefits imply benefits that entail a developmental or change management aspect for the partnership itself or for the people who work within it. Business benefits involve benefits concerning the sustainability of a partnership (Foskett, 2005).

With regard to intrinsic benefits, it appears as if strategic focus and core attitudes and values that may be developed through partnerships are often perceived as benefits relating to the mission of the partnership. Staff development, workforce modernisation, flexibility and improved quality of work pertain to development, while recruitment, retention and financial gain in the context of business may be additional benefits stemming from the business domain (Foskett, 2005). In terms of extrinsic mission benefits, social inclusion, widening participation, prestige and reputation are regarded as important, whilst skills agenda, accreditation of qualifications, professionalisation and career enhancement are viewed as development benefits specifically related to the external environment (Foskett, 2005).

With reference to potential partnerships between university faculties and teachers, Mitchell *et al.* (2009) emphasise that the development of intellectual capacity (Balach & Szymanski,

2003), a sense of identity as specialists and an increase in teacher levels of self-efficacy are important pull factors in partnership work. Mitchell *et al.* (2009) also comment that one of the strongest benefits of teacher-university faculty partnerships is the power and voice given to teachers, with specific reference to teachers at the start of their career, to inform their practice. Applying this belief to the context of the current study, suggests that the teachers involved in collaborative partnerships with educational psychology researchers may experience similar benefits; for example, the development of community networks, the development and enhancement of skills and resources within the community, as well as how teachers and other members of the community perceive the work that is done by teachers and others participating in collaborative partnership projects.

### **2.3.6 PREDICTORS OF SUCCESS IN COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

Theorists generally agree that specific characteristics can be identified as important in predicting the success of any given partnership. Brown, White and Leibrandt (2006) identify some of these characteristics, as being appropriate reasons, high stakes, suitable people, appropriate leadership, strong balanced relationships, trust and respect, communication and formalisation. In essence, Brown *et al.* (2006) suggest that, if the purpose of a partnership has not been clearly defined, networks tend to fall apart or become less, or even ineffective. As such, it is important that an agreed vision of what is to be achieved, or of what partners are attempting to achieve, be formulated. Partnerships need to include the best possible individuals for a given collaborative effort (Huxham & Vangen, 2000; Clegg, Kronberger & Pitsis, 2005). Such an inclusion would involve the allocation of sufficient resources, such as time, and would imply that individuals are expected to participate in collaborative arrangements.

Casey (2008) concurs that when working in accordance with the principles of the sociocultural approach, it seems important to get to know partners in order to be successful. In addition, valuing partners, developing trust, and establishing a sense of ownership and belonging are regarded as critical aspects for the success of a partnership. Casey (2008) views trust and honesty as being at the centre of good management practice and as a necessary requirement for developing a partnership relationship. These characteristics are also prerequisites for developing sufficient levels of communication which may serve to facilitate the sharing of knowledge. Without trust, a barrier to effective collaboration may prevail and cause the dissolution of a partnership as well as limited levels of participation or involvement

by partners. According to Mitchell *et al.* (2009), while it is important to establish trust and rapport in the field with teachers, researchers also have a responsibility to remain detached in order to stay as unbiased as possible.

Dana (1992) comments that traditionally, researchers conducting qualitative studies have been cautioned that a distinction between friendship and rapport is necessary due to the potential challenge of sample bias if the primary roles become merged. However, more recently, the researcher as human being has been conceptualised as one of the most important identities of a qualitative researcher, especially in the context of collaboration with teachers or other practitioners (Connelly & Reilly, 2007). Within the context of the current study, this view implies that whilst it is important that educational psychology researchers form stable, relationships of trust with teachers, it is vital that the distinction between individuals as supportive structures or life-long companions be retained, and that the boundary between the two remains uncrossed. Furthermore, within the context of educational psychology and research, it seems important that educational psychology researchers are able to negotiate their ethical role as researchers in communities without adopting multiple other roles such as that of psychologist.

Hall Jackson *et al.* (2005) describe additional criteria which may predict the success of collaborative partnerships, referring to the fact that stakeholders could be included in the process of setting goals. Goal setting is regarded as one of the most important aspects of partnership work and as such, it seems necessary to ensure that partners collectively buy in to the vision of collaboration. Furthermore, it seems important that stakeholders or partners agree on the measures for success. Once stakeholders have gone about collectively setting goals, it may be necessary for the various partners to understand and articulate the benefits of a partnership as they relate to the target market and their individual organisations (Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005).

The articulation of benefits is viewed as important in reinforcing the acknowledgement of the resources brought to collaboration by the various partners (Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005) and typically serves to enhance the motivation of partners. Mutual benefit for the various partners is further commented on by Sowa and De La Vega (2008) as crucial to collaborative partnerships. The presence and mutual benefits of collaboration in the experience of these authors (2008) have proven to be a catalyst for change in that they have been available to share information, answer questions and contribute to the development of both pre- and in-

service teachers in their research. Other features of successful partnerships relate to effective leadership and the ability to manage change; the development of a partnership framework; communication and interaction within partnerships, equity and involvement in decision making, and power (Casey, 2008). In the following section, I focus my discussion on the Communities of Practice Framework (Lave, 1988; 1991; 1997; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) which formed the theoretical backdrop for data analysis of my study.

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Following the line of current literature on collaboration and based on the nature of this study and its research questions, I relied upon a theoretical framework where the process of collaboration is transferable to collaborative partnerships in the research setting. I selected the community of practice framework (Lave & Wenger, 1991) since it seemed to embody many of the underlying principles of collaborative partnerships which I anticipated in undertaking this study.

### **2.4.1 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK**

In elaborating on the idea that collaborative partnerships may benefit the various partners by enhancing the quality of work that they may have done in isolation, Savoie-Zajc and Descamps-Bednarz (2007) argue that participatory research can renew the relationship between partners, specifically researchers and practitioners, especially with regard to research done on teaching practice. One viewpoint regarding this perception maintains that participatory research typically acknowledges the discrepancy between the culture of professional practice and research in specific areas. As such, studies on participatory research indicate that different cultures or entities involved in the research process may be able to enlighten the other with some form of knowledge not previously acquired (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007). This type of research approach typically involves the bringing together of what Lave and Wenger (1991) refer to as communities of practice within which researchers and practitioners jointly operate. It follows that communities of practice highlight the importance of “those two worlds and the cross-fertilization between them, in order to construct knowledge leading to an informed, even enlightened, practice, and perhaps the emergence of a new community” (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007:580).

Lave and Wenger (Lave 1988, 1991, 1997; Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger, 1998) were initially interested in describing professional communities and the way in which meanings,

beliefs and understandings are typically negotiated and reflected in communal practices (Buysse *et al.*, 2003). These authors suggest that learners usually enter a community at the periphery and then move closer over time to full, legitimate participation as they gain knowledge, learn a community's customs and rituals, and start viewing themselves as members of the community. What distinguishes communities of practice from previous attempts to introduce the concept of community into research-practice efforts is “the development of self through participation in the community” (Barab & Duffy, 2000:35) and the importance of legitimate participation as part of a community in the development of the self. The greater part of previous collaborative partnerships attempted to facilitate the development of the individual through research-practice efforts, thus primarily focusing on practice fields and the settings in which learners may apply new knowledge, rather than emphasising learners' connections and patterns of participation in practice communities (Buysse *et al.*, 2003).

Closely related to the notion of community of practice is the increasing need to integrate research and practice within professional development in education (Buysse *et al.*, 2003). To illustrate this point, the following example is mentioned. Prior to entering a workforce, a student is expected to know how to apply research-based knowledge to problems without ever having acquired an understanding of how to participate in and evaluate research. Furthermore, students are usually expected to apply their knowledge without having had many opportunities for supportive, reflective research-based experiences in the field. Various approaches, each with its own ideas on how the challenge of integrating theory and practice may be overcome have been put forward as a means of addressing the need for research. However, the approach pertaining to the building of communities of practice, appears to be well-suited for scrutinising and potentially improving education as well as integrating research and teaching practice (Buysse *et al.*, 2003).

According to Wenger (2003), communities of practice stem from a convergent interaction between competence and experience which ultimately involves mutual engagement. It offers an opportunity to the people involved to negotiate competence through an experience of directly participating in the active research process whilst simultaneously being awarded the opportunity to learn and teach. Within the context of the current study, communities of practice refer to various individuals or groups of individuals, namely teachers and educational psychology researchers, working collaboratively to combine their shared knowledge in a constructive manner, in order to initiate some sort of change in the community. The

development and establishment of teacher supportive structures in the context of dealing with HIV/AIDS in the classroom, is one example of an initiative undertaken by a collaborative partnership in order to effect change in a community.

#### **2.4.2 PURPOSE OF COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE**

One of the most important purposes of a community of practice is to establish a learning community across levels of expertise rather than within the various levels (Pugach, 1999). Within this framework teaching and learning are viewed as bidirectional, while these two practices are seen as equal contributors to the professional community's knowledge base. The community of practice framework recognises that knowledge is generally generated and shared within a social and cultural context. Therefore, researchers choosing to work within this framework are required to make a shift from working *on* to working *with* the world of practice (Waddock, 1999). As such, the notion of a community of practice challenges the one-sided view of learning where researchers tend to be regarded as experts and the generators of knowledge, and where practitioners are seen as the novices and translators of knowledge (Palincsar, Magnusson, Marano, Ford, & Brown, 1998).

According to Smith (2003, 2009), communities of practice are usually formed by people who engage in processes of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. These people form part of a group that shares a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it in a better way by interacting regularly (Wenger, 2007). Wenger (2007) defines communities of practice functioning in terms of three dimensions, namely what they are about, how they function and what capability is produced. Essentially, communities of practice are part of a joint enterprise which is understood and continually recognised by its members. It involves relationships which are regarded as mutual engagements that bind members together into a social entity, and comprises a shared repertoire of communal resources which are developed by its members over time (Wenger, 2008).

#### **2.4.3 BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK**

According to Smith (2003, 2009) communities of practice consist of certain basic elements which can be differentiated from other organisational units. The first essential characteristic of a community of practice is that it views learning as a social phenomenon. People organise their learning around the social communities to which they belong. Thus, schools for example, can only be powerful learning environments for those students whose social

communities coincide with that school. Secondly, knowledge appears to be integrated into the life of communities that share values, beliefs, languages and customs. Hence, knowledge is integrated into practices, social relations and the expertise of given communities (Smith, 2003, 2009). In addition, processes of learning and memberships in a community of practice are regarded as inseparable. Smith (2003, 2009) explains that since learning is intertwined with community membership, community members are afforded the opportunity to belong to and adjust their status within a given group. As might be expected, as people change their learning, their identities and relationships to the group might change too.

Just as learning and membership are seen as inseparable, knowledge is regarded as inseparable from practice. Therefore, members of a community of practice are often of the opinion that it is not possible to know without doing, based on the belief that learning takes place by carrying out actions in a meaningful way. Finally, empowerment, or the ability to contribute to a community, may also create the potential for learning. Smith (2003, 2009) emphasises that the circumstances in which people engage in action and which could result in consequences for both the individual and the community, have the potential to create the most powerful learning environments.

In this study, the basic elements of communities of practice included learning as a social phenomenon, the integration of knowledge into the life communities, and the inseparability of knowledge from practice. A process of life-long learning and knowledge exchange also appears to be a value embedded in the various communities. Through this process, it may be possible for community members to enable or be enabled by knowledge that is passed on or exchanged and in turn, create further potential for learning.

#### **2.4.4 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK**

Communities of practice are underpinned by two basic principles, firstly that knowledge is generally situated in experience, and secondly that experience is normally understood through critical reflection with others who share the experience.

##### **2.4.4.1 Situated Learning**

According to Hummel (1993), situated learning refers to knowledge being obtained from and applied to everyday situations. Contrary to more traditional approaches to teaching and learning, situated learning maintains that activity and perception precede conceptualisation

instead of the other way around (Carr, Jonassen, Litzinger & Marra, 1998). As a structure for understanding how learning might occur, “situated learning is considered to be a sociocultural phenomenon, rather than an isolated activity where the individual acquired knowledge from a decontextualized body of knowledge” (Buysse *et al.*, 2003:267).

Communities of practice reflect situated learning in a number of important ways. In a community of practice, shared inquiry and learning generally centre on challenges, dilemmas and ambiguities that emerge from actual situations which take place in authentic practice settings, instead of formal content driven coursework. The application of new knowledge rather than whether or not one is able to retain the knowledge, is regarded as the benchmark for evaluation of the effectiveness of a community of practice approach (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In addition, creating meaning from activities and situations derived from lived experiences is typically reinforced by the fact that a community of practice may closely resemble the environment where actual practice takes place. Finally, as mentioned earlier on, learning may occur within a context of social relationships with other members of a community who have similar concerns originating in the sphere of practice (Buysse *et al.*, 2003).

In the current study, situated learning was possible due to the fact that knowledge was shared and acquired from a variety of individuals experiencing similar challenges related to the common goals of the various collaborative partnerships they were involved in. Learning of individuals and community members was typically based within the areas or communities where problems were being experienced. This implies that in addition to having each other to learn from and gain support, the various partners ostensibly had the opportunity of learning and acquiring new knowledge in an environment similar to their own unique set of circumstances. In being granted the opportunity to participate in activities and workshops geared towards forming the foundation for their conceptualisation of various community concerns, community members seemed to be able to also approach and address challenges from a holistic point of view as opposed to addressing the aforementioned challenges in isolation.

#### **2.4.4.2 Reflective Practice**

One of the foundations of the community of practice approach is ongoing reflection with others about the connection between professional knowledge and experience (Buysse *et al.*,

2003). In this regard, reflection refers to “the ongoing process of critically examining current and past professional practices against an overarching philosophy as a method of improving future practices and increasing knowledge” (La Bosky, cited in Buysse *et al.*, 2003:267). According to Watson and Wilcox (2000), reflection is an essential step in the lifelong process of learning for both personal and professional experiences. In order to understand these experiences, a person may reflect in a variety of ways.

Hatton and Smith (1995) describe four forms of reflection, all of which can be applied in communities of practice by the various members in collaboration with peers. The first form of reflection relates to the technical examination of one’s immediate skills and competencies in specific settings, while the second form entails a descriptive analysis of one’s performance in a professional role. Thirdly, the option of dialogic exploration of alternative ways to solve problems in a professional situation can be employed. Lastly, the option to think critically about the effects one’s actions may have on others, taking into consideration social, political and cultural forces (Hatton & Smith, 1995) may be utilised.

Alternatively, Watson and Wilcox (2000) suggest two methods of reflecting. The first method of reflection invites practitioners to read their narratives of practice and to examine how they made sense of their professional experience. The second method of reflecting encourages practitioners to read their conventions of practice and examine how they give meaning to their professional experiences through certain strategies, approaches and routines. Generally, reflection is especially valued in the context of a professional environment since the act of reflection may hold the potential to enhance learning in the midst of practice (Watson & Wilcox, 2000). When a practitioner is able to reflect, he may be regarded as building up a repertoire of examples, images, understandings and actions that may be useful for examining new problems (Schön, 1983). In a community of practice framework, new knowledge generated through collaborative reflection, observation and systematic inquiry could be used by professionals not only to extend their understanding and command of their own work situations, but also to advance the knowledge base of the field as a whole (Buysse *et al.*, 2003).

#### **2.4.5 DEVELOPING AND NURTURING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE**

According to Wenger (2008), communities of practice develop around aspects of life and the environment which are important to people, with the practices of a community reflecting each

member's own understanding of what is important. Naturally, external constraints can influence this understanding; however, even then members usually manage to develop practices that are their own personal responses to external influences. In this sense, communities of practice can be regarded as self-organising systems (Wenger, 2008).

In applying the stages of development in communities of practice to the current study, it needs to be kept in mind that the papers presented at the symposium centred on only a few aspects of life which may be regarded as important to the various communities, namely the support of teachers in vulnerable communities and in various contexts. Within the various collaborative partnerships discussed during the data generation phase of the study, it appeared as if the majority of the partnerships found themselves in the active, dispersed or memorable stages of development in relation to communities of practice. It was apparent that partners were either still actively engaged in developing practice, or they were in the process of moving from a position where they were no longer intensely engaged in communities of practice to a space where the community was no longer central, but where the various partners might still remember it as a significant part of their identities.

Wenger (2008) maintains that, just because communities of practice usually arise naturally, it does not necessarily imply that nothing can be done by collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers in this study, to influence its development. Some communities may benefit from organisational attention, yet may need to be seeded and nurtured. However, it is important to note that care needs to be taken not to smother a community's self-organising drive.

The first way in which a community of practice can be nurtured is through legitimising participation. This implies that communities of practice can be supported by recognising the work of sustaining them, by giving members time to participate in activities and by creating an environment in which the value that the community brings to the collaborative partnership is appreciated (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Secondly, it is vital that collaborative partnerships are attuned to real practices, thereby leveraging existing practices. In doing so, partners are generally able to achieve competence in more areas of practice much faster than they would have through traditional training. This step can be regarded as valuable since the knowledge that practitioners or teachers may need is usually already present in the collaborative partnership or institution where the aforementioned practitioners work, in some

form. Therefore, the best place to start is to foster the formation of communities of practice that can leverage already existing potential (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

From the aforementioned argument with regard to communities of practice, although communities of practice do not necessarily require strong infrastructures or management to flourish, their members apparently need time and space to collaborate and could benefit from some form of leadership. It is also important that the learning that takes place conforms to the collaborative partnership environment. According to Wenger (2008:9), “the art is to help such communities find resources and connections without overwhelming them with organisational meddling”. Such a need for balance reflects the following paradox: “No community can fully design the learning of another; but conversely, no community can fully design its own learning” (Wenger, 2008:9).

## 2.5 THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

Based on my review of existing literature and the chosen theoretical framework, namely the community of practice framework (Lave 1988, 1991, 1997; Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger, 1998) I approached my study with certain theoretical assumptions concerning collaborative and participatory research and collaborative partnerships. Firstly at the onset of study, I assumed that participatory research was based on the contributions of those involved in the partnership, and that the practitioner could be regarded not only as a co-researcher but as a co-creator of knowledge which was generated as part of a team (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007). Secondly, I assumed that researchers and practitioners involved in collaborative partnerships would interact about certain aspects of the research problem which represented common interests for the purposes of co-constructing new knowledge as part of the research study (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007). My third theoretical assumption relates to partnerships being characterised by a process of knowledge exchange rather than transfer and that throughout this process, both the researcher and the practitioner would be afforded the opportunity of working together in shaping, implementing and disseminating the research findings (Sylva *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, I assumed that collaborative partnerships typically present with benefits and challenges which could shape the way in which a partnership is established, maintained and sustained (Balach & Szymanski, 2003; Foskett, 2005; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009), and that in order for collaborative partnerships to be conducted successfully, various requirements for success needed to be

fulfilled throughout the process of collaboration (Hanson *et al.*, 1991; Rueda, 1998; Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005; Schneider & Pickett, 2006; Sowa & De La Vega, 2008).

Guided by the community of practice framework (Lave 1988, 1991, 1997; Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger, 1998), other theoretical assumptions I kept in mind throughout the current study were that communities of practice are generally described as professional communities within which meanings, beliefs and understandings are negotiated and reflected in communal practices (Buysse *et al.*, 2003). Communities of practice stem from a convergent interaction between competence and experience which ultimately involves mutual engagement. Furthermore, communities of practice usually offer an opportunity to members involved to negotiate competence through an experience of directly participating in the active research process, whilst at the same time being afforded the opportunity to learn and teach.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991), an essential characteristic of a community of practice is that it views learning as a social phenomenon. Thus, knowledge seems to be integrated into the life of communities that share values, beliefs, languages and practices. In addition, communities of practice regard enablement, or the ability to contribute to a community, as creating the potential for learning. Finally, communities of practice typically develop around aspects of life and the environment which are important to people, with the practices of a community reflecting each member's own understanding of what is important (Wenger, 2008). Naturally, external constraints can influence this understanding. However, even then members usually manage to develop practices that are their own personal responses to external influences. Wenger (2008) maintains that, just because communities of practice arise naturally, does not necessarily imply that nothing can be done by an organisation or collaborative partnership, to influence its development.

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter allowed me to position my study within a theoretical framework and existing literature. I commenced the chapter by exploring various aspects of collaboration in terms of different definitions of collaboration and current debates in this area. Thereafter, I discussed collaboration in the research setting, and the phenomenon of collaborative partnerships. I paid specific attention to collaborative partnerships which may occur between university faculties and teachers, and highlighted the phenomena that studies between universities and schools generally tend to focus on, in terms of research and the generation of new knowledge.

Based on my discussion of existing literature, it appears that collaboration and collaborative partnerships have existed for some time, under the auspices of practices which require various parties to work together to solve problems. Whereas in the past collaborative partnerships have been associated with a linear process where knowledge was passed on from researcher to practitioner, collaborative efforts are currently regarded as a practice where each member of the partnership possesses shared power and value in terms of potential contributions to the group. Furthermore, collaborative partnerships are generally associated with knowledge exchange in contemporary research, where members of a partnership co-construct new knowledge.

Despite the benefits of collaborative partnerships, the debate pertaining to the functioning of such participatory efforts is ongoing. However, researchers and practitioners seem to have been able to identify several aspects of a collaborative process which are likely to influence its success, as well as various features of collaboration which seemingly require nurturing.

In the next chapter, I discuss the empirical study that I conducted based on the theoretical framework outlined in this chapter. I explain the methodological choices I made within the context of this study.



### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter two I provided a theoretical framework for my study. In this chapter I discuss the purpose of my study by discussing paradigmatic assumptions within the parameters of my research question. I explain the methodological choices I made and explore the strengths and limitations of these choices, stating my attempts to address the identified challenges. Furthermore, I explore the role that I assumed in my research study, the ethical guidelines I considered and the quality criteria I strived to adhere to, in an attempt to enhance trustworthiness.

### **3.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of my study was to explore (Babbie, 2005; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Mouton, 2008) and describe (Babbie, 2005; Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Mouton, 2008) collaborative partnership trends between teachers and educational psychology researchers. The study was exploratory based on my aim to examine a new area of interest (Babbie, 2005), since collaborative partnerships may be regarded as a persistent phenomenon (Babbie, 2005). Most typically, exploratory studies are undertaken in order to satisfy a researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding, to test the feasibility of taking on a more extensive study and to develop the methods to be employed in a subsequent study (Babbie, 2005).

My study also incorporates a descriptive component as I set out to describe a certain process or environment (Babbie, 2005), namely the trends which emerged when educational psychology researchers and teachers collaborate on co-constructing knowledge. In describing these trends I anticipated that, some contribution to knowledge about participatory methodology and educational psychology research could be made.

### **3.3 PARADIGMATIC ASSUMPTIONS**

A research paradigm may be regarded as a fundamental model or frame of reference employed as a means of organising observations and ways of reasoning (Babbie, 2005). Paradigms also allow researchers to form a better understanding of the views and actions of

others while at the same time observing new ways of seeing and various events, situations and points of view (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). I chose to rely on a constructivist metatheory and a qualitative methodological paradigm in carrying out my research. The various paradigmatic assumptions through which the current study was conducted will now be discussed in more detail.

### **3.3.1 METATHEORETICAL PARADIGM**

Since my study was aimed at providing a rich description, as well as an in-depth understanding of the trends which emerged when selected educational psychology researchers and teachers collaborated, I opted for constructivism as an appropriate metatheoretical paradigm. According to Patton (2002), constructivism is based on the principle that the human or social world differs from the physical world in that human beings possess the capacity to interpret and construct reality. The constructivist paradigm studies multiple realities constructed by people, as well as the resulting implications for the lives of people and their interactions with others (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Jansen, 2007).

By choosing constructivism as metatheoretical paradigm, I hoped to gain an understanding of multiple realities experienced by educational psychology researchers and teachers as they collaborated in constructing new knowledge. In my view the process which typically emerges during collaborative partnerships is one which emulates the constructivist paradigm since those involved in collaborative partnerships are faced with situations where informed constructors may find it necessary to come up with a common consensus whilst taking into account the multiple realities of each partner (Neimeyer, 1993; Crotty, 1998). Despite the varied cultural and historical backgrounds of each individual involved, partners need to work together to draw meaning from their joint work, and construct and interpret their experiences accordingly (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

The constructivist paradigm stipulates that cause and effect does not necessarily apply except by imputation and that phenomena can only be understood within the context of investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Patton, 2002; Jansen, 2007). This implies that the findings of a qualitative, constructivist study cannot be generalised from one context to another, nor can solutions or problems be generalised from one setting to another (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The findings of a constructivist study therefore simply represent a human construction which needs to be taken into consideration when moving towards consensus on a given issue (Guba

& Lincoln, 1989; Jansen, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In accordance with this explanation by Guba and Lincoln (1989), the aim of my study was to report on the occurrences and phenomenon of one study which cannot necessarily be generalised with regards to the greater population (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). However, it was my intention that individuals wishing to participate in future collaborative research partnerships or wishing to become involved in participatory methodology would discover through this study some ideas within my findings that could be of use to them.

### **3.3.2 METHODOLOGICAL PARADIGM**

I followed a qualitative methodological approach, where the goals of my study aligned with the goals of qualitative research (Creswell, 2005). A qualitative approach implies a process of inquiry and understanding whereby the researcher attempts to develop a complex and holistic picture by analysing words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducting a study in a naturalistic setting. It seeks to explore the research setting extensively in order to obtain a rich, in-depth understanding of the way things are, what the motivations are, as well as how participants perceive reality (Charles, 2002).

Although many studies (Clark *et al.*, 1996; Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005; Mule, 2006; Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007; Casey, 2008; Kuter & Koç, 2009; Murray *et al.*, 2009; Levine & Marcus, 2010) have provided insight into various aspects of collaborative partnership work and collaboration in general, my aim was to come to a deeper understanding of what the process of collaboration entails and exactly how the process unfolds when teachers and educational psychology researchers in particular choose to work together. Of course it was important to situate my investigation into the process of collaboration in its natural setting where I would be afforded the opportunity of developing the holistic picture referred to earlier on, and subsequently analysing my data and reporting on the views and experiences of the participants in a meaningful way (Ivankova *et al.*, 2007). In line with qualitative research my purpose was not merely to describe the way things are, but also an attempt to provide insight into the participants' beliefs and perceptions of collaborative research occurring between educational psychology researchers and teachers. In order to achieve this, I endeavoured to undertake sustained in-depth, in-context research which would allow me to uncover subtle, less overt, personal insights (Charles, 2002). To achieve this aim, I collected text pertaining to the central phenomenon of collaboration between teachers and educational psychology

researchers, from those immersed in the setting of everyday life within which the study is situated (Ivankova *et al.*, 2007).

One of the key advantages of a qualitative approach is its potential for providing a researcher with a comprehensive perspective of the phenomenon under study. This enabled me to access the central phenomenon directly, to observe it as fully as possible, and to develop a deeper, more complete understanding thereof (Babbie, 2005). A qualitative approach implied the further advantage of being able to capture data in the form of attitudes and behaviour which might otherwise have escaped me as researcher. Since my study focused on researchers' experiences and insights into collaborative partnerships with teachers, as well as the way in which they perceive their relationship with teachers, I found the qualitative approach the most appropriate vehicle for the exploration and description of this topic.

Despite the many strengths inherent in the qualitative methodological approach which was thoroughly dealt with in the arguments mentioned above, it does have certain limitations which I needed to address. According to Mead (1934), it has been argued that researchers adopting a qualitative approach such as constructivism, which is in complete contrast to positivist approaches, run the risk of discarding the scientific procedures of verification and abandoning the hope of discovering useful generalisations about human behaviour (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). A possible limitation that I needed to address concerned the subjective meaning a researcher might attach to the situation being interpreted and defined (Layder, 1994; Cohen *et al.*, 2007). I needed to be aware of the danger of imposing my own definitions and subjective interpretations onto the situations and participants in my study when analysing and interpreting the data. To address this challenge, I employed a research journal to monitor and take account of any subjective presence in my study. In addition, debriefing sessions were conducted by my supervisor while educational psychology researchers who contributed to the generation of data for the current study were invited to participate in a member-checking exercise.

### **3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

I made use of qualitative content analysis (Mouton, 2008) to explore the trends which emerged from collaborative partnerships between selected teachers and educational psychology researchers and how these might inform participatory methodology. This research design is best described by Mayring (2000) as an approach which is an empirical,

methodological and controlled analysis of texts within the context of communication. According to Cohen *et al.* (2007:475), qualitative content analysis is a “technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use”. Therefore, this design afforded me the opportunity of analysing various different levels of text including the themes and main ideas of five symposium presentations and two reflection sessions as primary content and contextual information as latent content (Forman & Damschroder, 2007).

Krippendorp (2004) reflects that qualitative content analysis is perhaps most successful when it results in a researcher breaking down facts which are constituted through words into attributes, social relationships, public behaviours and institutional realities. By conducting a qualitative content analysis of data, my purpose was to explore and describe the various trends which emerged when selected educational psychology researchers and teachers collaborate with the aim of informing participatory methodology. The text I analysed was based on five symposium presentations and two reflection sessions. The texts were audio-recorded and transcribed for data analysis purposes.

Qualitative content analysis which has its origins in the analysis of mass media and public speeches implies various benefits which I observed during my investigation. However, it is now commonly applied in the examination of any form of communicative material, either structured or unstructured (Morgan, 1993; Mayring, 2000; Cohen *et al.*, 2007). It is possible to apply qualitative content analysis to a substantial number of issues or problems relating to the intersection of culture, social structure and social interaction. I found this research design extremely useful since it can be applied to any form of written material such as documents or interview transcriptions as well as media products, and is a useful way of analysing large quantities of text given its systematic, rule-based nature (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Forman & Damschroder, 2007). As a novice researcher, I found the systematic nature of content analysis comforting since it provided me with some sort of structure from which I could begin my analysis and refine my findings. I also found this design to be unobtrusive since the data collection and analysis process allowed me to observe the research setting and participants during the recording of the presentations, and again at a later stage by means of video and audio recordings from which the text was originally derived (Robson, 1993; Krippendorp, 2004; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Furthermore recording data and transcribing the text was beneficial as it allowed me to start the process of familiarising myself with the data and making deductions from a very early stage in the research process, as

opposed to starting only once the data collection and transcription processes had been completed.

Using qualitative content analysis within the context of my study did, however, present some challenges. Since qualitative data analysis is inevitably an interpretive process, it was important that I acknowledged from the start that such an analysis could yield a less accurate representation of the content of the text, and a more reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the decontextualised data, which in itself is an interpretation of a social encounter (Mayring, 2000; Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Forman & Damschroder, 2007). Therefore, through my reflective journal, debriefing sessions with my supervisors and member-checking interventions, I needed to remain aware of the fact that I could be bringing my own preconceptions, interests, biases, preferences, biography, background and agenda to the data (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) and that this could cause me to be selective in my focus on various aspects of the investigation. As a result, one needs to take into account that the research findings, which can be regarded as a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge, as such, could be subjectively influenced.

Another potential limitation of a content analysis design relates to the transcriptions of text which constitutes the primary method of data collection. According to Cohen *et al.* (2007), transcriptions imply the potential of loss of data, distortion and reduction in complexity. In light of this, the transcriptions used as part of the data generation phase of my study merely serve as a record of data rather than a record of a social encounter. As such, it is possible that important contextual information such as non-verbal communication may have been neglected or omitted. Following suggestions by Cohen *et al.* (2007), different kinds of data were recorded in the transcripts. During the process of transcription, I was careful to include what was being said as well as the tone and style of the speaker, and how many other people were speaking at the same time. Since I video-recorded the presentations as an additional documentation measure, I was, able to comment on non-verbal communication that took place at the time of recording (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

### **3.5 DEFINING THE SAMPLE**

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007), it is possible to employ the same type of sampling strategies on documents, as one would on people. Hence I chose a non-probability, purposive sample of documents, which is often used in naturalistic research and exemplifies qualitative

research studies (Krippendorp, 2004; Cohen *et al.*, 2007). This type of sample is used when a researcher targets a particular group or type of text with the understanding that it does not represent the wider population. Maree and Pietersen (2007) maintain that this type of sample is typically employed when a sample is done with a specific purpose in mind. More specifically, it is often used on the basis of the knowledge of a population or the content of a text regarding a specified research topic, its elements as well as the purpose of the study (Babbie, 2005).

The documents comprising my sample consisted of a series of texts which were generated by educational psychology researchers involved in collaborative partnerships with teachers, for presentation at the symposium previously indicated. As such, my sample included the data generated by the aforementioned researchers. The aforementioned data was recorded, transcribed and sampled for data analysis. The educational psychology researchers who generated the data from which the aforementioned texts were derived, originated from various institutions around South Africa, and are involved in research on HIV/AIDS in collaboration with teachers. Five papers and two reflection sessions were presented by twelve educational psychology researchers from various South African universities currently participating in various participatory methodology studies. In Table 3.1 I provide an outline of the presentations which contributed to the generation of data for my study.

**TABLE 3.1: Outline of presentations which contributed to the generation of data**

Day	Presentation	Title	Speaker	Role	Gender	Institution
1	1	In humble dedication: How David makes meaning	9	Researcher	Female	6
1	2	Learning about care and participation in vulnerable school communities	4	Researcher	Female	4
			8	Researcher	Female	4
1	3	Participatory research in education: Taking hands against AIDS	3	Researcher	Female	3
2	4	Teachers and researchers piloting a PRA intervention: Asset-based psychosocial support in the context of HIV&AIDS	2	Researcher	Female	2
			7	Researcher	Female	2
1	5	Discussion and Reflection Session	1	Discussant	Female	1
2	6	Discussion and Reflection Session	5	Discussant	Female	5

The educational psychology researchers, whose texts were sampled, fit the following criteria:

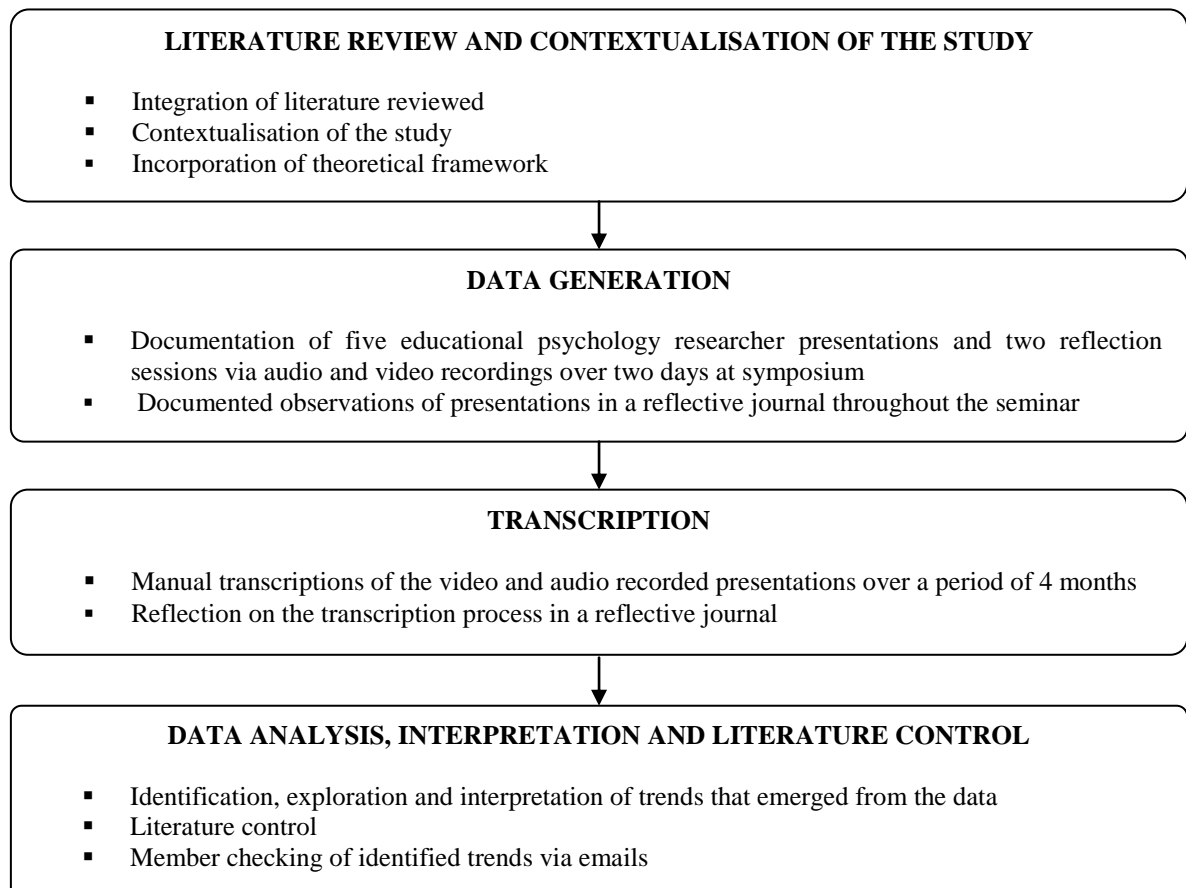
- ❖ Researchers were educational psychologists involved in collaborative partnerships with teachers through participatory methodology
- ❖ Researchers experience working with and co-researching educational psychology issues in a collaborative manner with teachers from various parts of South Africa
- ❖ Researchers presented papers at the aforementioned symposium on collaboration between teachers and educational psychology researchers

The researchers who contributed to the generation of data for use in my study were emailed invitations to participate voluntarily (refer to Appendix J: Email Requesting Informed Consent) which required them to provide informed consent (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) via email prior to the commencement of the symposium.

### 3.6 RESEARCH PROCESS

In Figure 3.1 I summarise the research process of my study. This figure describes the process that I followed when conducting my research.

**FIGURE 3.1: Research Process**



### 3.6.1 DATA GENERATION

As stated, data for my study was purposely sampled from papers presented at a symposium (refer to Appendix A: An Example of a Transcribed Presentation). As indicated in Table 3.1, researchers presented papers on issues such as the challenges and opportunities of engaging in partnerships with teachers, what can be learned with regard to care and participation in vulnerable school communities and participatory research in education. In addition, papers commented on piloting interventions such as participatory reflection and action interventions, as well as asset-based psychosocial support in the context of HIV/AIDS. The presentations were audio and video recorded for quality assurance purposes (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) and transcribed (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) into verbatim text at a later stage.

I experienced the process of data generation followed as advantageous since the data collection process was not labour intensive since I was not in charge of the primary data generation. My role in the data collection process was to audio-visually record the various presentations on collaborative partnerships presented by the various educational psychology researchers attending the symposium. As a result I had the opportunity to make use of material pertaining to collaborative partnerships as an existing resource (Krippendorp, 2004). To be able to make use of these presentation data sources, I was required to obtain informed consent (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992; Ruane, 2005; Cohen *et al.*, 2007) from various educational psychology researchers. The various educational psychology researchers also needed to be given the opportunity to participate in member-checking (Nieuwenhuis, 2007) in order to rectify or prevent any misunderstandings or misinterpretations on completion of my first round of data analysis.

The process of data generation also presented some challenges. Firstly, because the data which was analysed during the course of the study had been generated by other researchers, I found it difficult to interpret the data in depth (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). It took me much longer than I had anticipated to transcribe and analyse the data, since my primary role during the presentation of the papers was to make sure that they had been properly recorded (Krippendorp, 2004). When I finally sat down to begin the process of transcription, I was for a large part, listening attentively to the presentations for the first time. It also took me much longer to engage with the material since I did not consult with the educational psychology researchers who wrote the presentations. Robson (1993) regards this challenge as one of the difficulties which is often experienced when conducting content analysis. In some cases the

texts that had to be analysed were not written with a specific researcher in mind and may also have been written for a very different purpose other than a specific research study. Hence, as researcher, I occasionally surmise about the intentions of the text (Robson, 1993; Cohen *et al.*, 2007). This method also implies the possibility of documents being incomplete, limited, partial, selective, biased and non-neutral simply because they were intended for a different purpose (Weber, 1990). In my study, one of the implications of observing and analysing texts which may have been created for a different audience was that I had to guard against becoming too subjective in my interpretation of the presentations (Mayring, 2004). I tried to remember what each educational psychology researcher had attempted to convey to the delegates, and in doing so, I attempted to provide as accurate a picture of the nature of the discussion of collaborative partnerships as possible.

### **3.6.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

I used trend analysis as content analysis methodology. Trend analysis is similar to thematic analysis (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) in that the researcher, rather than searching for broad themes, identifies more specific trends which emerge through the text (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Given the similarity between trend and thematic analysis, it follows that the same procedure may be applied when conducting a trend analysis, except that the researcher would ideally be searching for trends rather than themes. Therefore, when analysing, I had to be alert to any actions or procedures which appeared to take place across various collaborative partnership efforts that might have suggested trends unique to collaboration in participatory methodology between educational psychology researchers and teachers. I was guided through the process of data analysis by my research questions which considered how insight into collaborative partnership trends between teachers and educational psychology researchers might inform participatory methodology. Working assumptions flowing from theoretical insights also helped to direct my analysis along the appropriate course, as stated in Chapter 1.

In my analysis I followed the steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) in conducting trend analysis. As a first step, I familiarised myself with the data through an in-depth reading of the texts, documenting my initial thoughts and ideas throughout the process. As a second step, I generated some Initial Codes for use during further data analysis through the use of key words relating to possible trends emerging in the text, as well as various colours corresponding to the various codes (refer to Appendix B: Example of Initial Codes). In this stage I attempted to identify and document repeated patterns of meaning which emerged across the texts. I was

required to collect data relevant to each code in the form of quotations. Thirdly, I searched for themes or trends (refer to Appendix C: Collation of Codes into Trends). During this stage, I collated my codes into potential trends and then gathered the data relevant to each trend. Once this step had been completed, I developed a trend chart in order to map the prevalence of trends across texts (refer to Appendix D: Trend Chart). Once I had completed the process of reviewing the prevalence of trends across the various presentations, I was required to define and name the trends. This involved continuous analysis of the emergent trends in order for the trends to be clearly identified. Finally, I had to produce a report (refer to Appendix E: Trend Analysis Report). This step formed the final stage of the data analysis and included examples, analysis of extracts and relating the analysis back to the research question and literature, whereafter I compiled a report.

In doing this, I linked the trends that were identified with the literature which was consulted and plotted each trend on a trend chart in order to map the prevalence of each trend (refer to Appendix D: Trend Chart). This allowed me to reveal the content of each presentation comprehensively within each specific text (Neuman, 2003). Once I had mapped the trends appearing across the majority of the transcribed presentations, I extracted certain passages which provided evidence of the aforementioned potential trends (refer to Appendix C: Collation of Codes into Trends for examples of supporting extracts). I highlighted and colour-coded the passages according to potential categories for easy identification. A thorough analysis of the ideas and extracts highlighted was conducted, after which I copied the prevalent trends and pasted these into another Word document for revision and definition at a later stage (refer to Appendix F: First Draft of Data Analysis Results). The aforementioned revision and definition of all the trends and extracts copied from the test involved sorting each possible trend into meaningful categories. During the phase of revision of trends into categories and sub-categories, I conducted a thorough examination of each trend in order to condense trends so that the essence of each was captured (refer to Appendix G: Final Draft of Data Analysis Results). Lastly, I developed inclusion and exclusion criteria which guided the constitution of each trend (refer to Appendix H: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria).

### **3.6.3 REFLECTING ON MY ROLE AS RESEARCHER**

Throughout the research process, I made use of my reflective journal (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999) to reflect on my observations regarding the symposium, as well as the research process and my experiences (refer to Appendix I: Reflective Journal). My field notes in my reflective

journal provided me firstly with a historical record (Mouton, 2008) of the research process to which I was able to refer back at any given time. Secondly, this documentation process served as a form of quality assurance, since keeping record of the main decisions and events which occurred during fieldwork enabled me to construct a historical record of the complete process (Mouton, 2008). Throughout the data generation process, it was important for me to reflect on exactly what my role was as part of the data generation. In this study, I was not the primary generator of knowledge, but was given the opportunity to employ an existing resource as a means of gaining access to valuable information which could be analysed.

According to Parahoo (2006), the process of reflexivity relates to the process of reflection by a researcher in terms of the own values, preconceptions, behaviour or presence as well as those of the participants in a study, which may affect the interpretation of responses during data collection. Researchers must therefore, realise that they are part of the social world under study and that they could influence the findings of a given study. Jootun and McGhee (2009) add that by reflecting on the process of one's research and trying to understand how one's own values and views could possibly influence findings, adds credibility to the research.

In order to remain true to the process of reflexivity in research, Speziale and Carpenter (2007) suggest that when researchers embark on research studies, it is in their best interests to clarify personal thoughts, ideas, suppositions or presuppositions about the research topic and possible personal biases. In doing so, researchers should be able to bring to consciousness and reveal what they believe about a topic, implying that the researcher would be in a better position to approach the topic honestly and openly. By exploring personal beliefs, the researcher may also be more aware of the potential judgements which may occur during data collection and analysis based on the personal belief system rather than on the actual data collected from participants (Speziale & Carpenter, 2007). The process of reflection is therefore typically used to separate personal views and preconceptions from the phenomenon under study.

### **3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

During the study, I was aware of the fact that some negative outcomes may occur in the course of the research process. As such, I acknowledged potential risks and took the relevant steps recommended by the American Psychological Association as outlined by Elmes, Kantowitz and Roediger (1999), in terms of conducting ethical research.

### 3.7.1 INFORMED CONSENT AND VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

In order to obtain informed consent, participants were notified of the research study which I would be conducting, and were invited in February 2009 to participate in the study by presenting their papers at the symposium (refer to Appendix J: Email Requesting Informed Consent) (Elmes *et al.*, 1999; Mauthner, Mauthner, Birch, Jessop & Miller, 2002). According to Halai (2006), the principle of informed consent and voluntary participation relates to respecting participants, so that they are not coerced into participation and have access to relevant information prior to providing consent. Since this study formed part of a larger study for which informed consent had already been obtained, it was my responsibility to obtain a formal letter from the founder of the study regarding my participation therein, as well as informed consent from my potential participants. The participants were provided with detailed information explaining what was expected of them during the course of the study. This involved explaining and obtaining consent to make use of the audio and video recordings of the presentations (Mauthner *et al.*, 2002; Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001). I also informed participants of the purpose of my study, the fact that it formed part of a larger study, the procedures that would be followed, and their right to anonymity and confidentiality. Lastly, I emphasised the fact that I would include transcriptions only of presentations given at the symposium, and that the researchers themselves would not have to be involved in the study after the symposium had taken place (Elmes *et al.*, 1999; Orb *et al.*, 2001).

### 3.7.2 ANONYMITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

To protect the participants from harm, I was careful to observe the principles of confidentiality and privacy throughout the research process (Elmes *et al.*, 1999). The principles of confidentiality and privacy are concerned with providing respect and protection to research participants by assuring the confidentiality of information shared as well as anonymity by not revealing the identity of the individuals and institutions involved (Halai, 2006). In ensuring confidentiality, I took upon myself the responsibility of not reporting private data that would identify participants (SA HealthInfo, 1999). According to SA HealthInfo (1999), one of the safest ways to ensure anonymity is not to record the names of the participants at all and to provide an information sheet that asks for verbal rather than signed consent. However, for the purposes of my study, informed consent was obtained via a secure email account which could only be accessed by the primary researcher. Participants' names were not provided. In referring to participants in the transcripts, participants, places and delegates were named either *speakers*, *places* or *people* respectively (Halai, 2006). In the

transcripts, I numbered each person who spoke or place which was mentioned according to order of appearance. Participants were also assured that all data collected would be securely stored at the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria (Orb *et al.*, 2001) for a period of 15 years.

### **3.7.3 PROTECTION FROM HARM**

According to Babbie (2005), social research should cause neither physical nor emotional harm (Strydom, 2005) to the participants of a study, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study or not. Therefore, I, as a researcher, undertake and am ethically obliged to change the nature of my research rather than expose participants to any possibility of physical and/or emotional harm of which I may be aware (Strydom, 2005). It is important not to reveal information that may embarrass participants, or endanger their home life, work life or friendships. It is vital that informed consent be obtained when the risks of research are greater than the risks a participant might face in everyday life (Mouton, 2008). Even where modest risk or harm is anticipated, it is important that informed consent be obtained. Since the current study addressed a variety of transcribed texts as a means used by its research participants, and did not comprise any form of experimentation, I did not anticipate that many forms of harm would be anticipated in the course of the study. However, informed consent was obtained from the educational psychology researchers who contributed to the generation of data for the current study through the papers they presented at the symposium. Furthermore, the various educational psychology researchers were made aware of the reasons for conducting the current study and what was expected of each educational psychology researcher throughout the research process (Mouton, 2008). The aforementioned educational psychology researchers were also thoroughly informed of the potential impact of the study (Strydom, 2005).

### **3.8 QUALITY CRITERIA**

Given the nature of the constructivist approach which aims to explore the co-constructed reality established by the participants involved, the aim of my study was not to discover the ‘ultimate truth’ with regard to collaborative partnership trends in participatory methodology. Rather, my intention was to gain insight into how collaborative partnership trends between educational psychology researchers and teachers might inform participatory methodology and then report this information in the form of rich, dense descriptions. In keeping with the quality criteria described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as well as Denzin (2005), I employed various

strategies pertaining to credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity in order to ensure the quality of my study.

### **3.8.1 CREDIBILITY**

Internal validity, or credibility, is described by Mays and Pope (2000) as the accurate presentation of a particular context or event as it is described by the researcher. It is explained by Van der Riet and Wassenaar (2002) as the assurance that a researcher's conclusions stem from the data generated. Typically, a researcher is able to establish credibility by applying techniques of triangulation to the methods of data collection and data analysis, in order to determine if there are any discrepancies in the findings (Creswell, 2005).

I documented the transcription and data analysis stages of my study thoroughly by recording every major action and event that occurred throughout the aforementioned processes. By developing a trend chart on which I plotted the prevalence of trends, I was also able to ensure that I reported on those trends which were in fact prevalent across texts. Apart from serving as a historical record for oneself and other possible researchers, Mouton (2008) maintains that keeping track of one's fieldwork also serves as a form of quality control. By keeping an accurate record of the main decisions and events which occurred during the research process, one is able to construct a historical record of the research process to which one can return at a later stage if necessary. Mouton (2008) suggests several types of data which may be recorded in order to form accurate field notes. As part of my documentation process, I consistently recorded the dates when access to the field was gained, information on the educational psychology researchers who generated the data for this study, a record of who participated in the fieldwork, factors which may have had an influence on the fieldwork and the results of the study, as well as response rates to participate in the study (Mouton, 2008).

I also kept a reflective journal (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999) in order to clarify my own assumptions as well as the views and theoretical orientation which I brought to the study, throughout the data generation, analysis and interpretation process (Merriam, 1998). The rationale behind reflecting in a reflective journal, stemmed from comments by Hertz (1997), that in embarking on a process of reflexivity, I would be able to make a shift in my understanding of the data and the collection thereof, which would involve detachment, internal dialogue and constant scrutiny of what it is that I know, and how I have come to know it. Therefore, by embarking on this process, I was able to make sure that I entered my

investigation with the right mindset for analysis, ignoring any preconceived ideas about my topic. Furthermore, I was able to enhance the quality of my research, since the process of reflexivity encouraged me to gain an understanding of how my position and interest as researcher may have affected each stage of the research process (Primeau, 2003) whereby I was able to present my findings in as accurate a light as possible.

### **3.8.2 TRANSFERABILITY**

In qualitative studies, generalisability refers to the degree to which generalisation can be made from the data and context of the research study to the wider population and research settings (Van der Riet & Wassenaar, 2002). Transferability is recognised as the manner in which a reader is able to take the findings of a study and transfer them to other contexts. I attempted to use densely compiled descriptions of the aforementioned presentations and the contexts within which each study was conducted, by supplying a large amount of clear and detailed information about how the various partners participated in collaborative partnerships in various settings, in order to ensure transferability of my study (Mays & Pope, 2000; Creswell, 2005). Since interpretive and constructivist studies aim to provide rich descriptions of the perceptions of selected participants, the aim of my study was not necessarily to generalise the findings of my study (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

### **3.8.3 DEPENDABILITY**

According to Van der Riet and Wassenaar (2002:64), “dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher says they did”. I aimed at providing dependable findings as stated in the research report, by means of a process of peer examination (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007) and participating in in-depth discussions on the findings of my study with my research supervisors. This process involved both me and my supervisors reviewing and discussing the findings of the study in order to clarify potential misinterpretations and provide suggestions for further analysis. Each educational psychology researcher who presented at the symposium was provided with a copy of the transcribed text of her presentation, as well as the research findings based on the analysis of the data as an additional effort to clarify potential misinterpretations or misunderstandings (Creswell, 2005). During the process of obtaining informed consent from the researchers, there were several requests that this process of member-checking be followed. Therefore, in adhering to my ethical responsibility as researcher, it was important that member-checking be carried out before the findings of the study were officially reported.

### **3.8.4 CONFIRMABILITY**

According to Babbie and Mouton (2004), confirmability is defined as the degree to which the findings are a direct result of a study and not the researcher's personal biases. Furthermore, confirmability implies that the research procedures and results are free from bias (Poggenpoel, 1998). Seale (1999) emphasises the value of auditing in order to establish confirmability. In this light, I documented the data analysis process and reflected on this process in a reflective journal (Merriam, 1998; Bringle & Hatcher, 1999). I also attempted to understand and interpret the intentions and meanings that underlay the various papers presented at the symposium as fully as I could in order to ensure the appropriateness of my findings (Babbie & Mouton, 2004).

### **3.8.5 AUTHENTICITY**

Authenticity is linked to the credibility of a study and involves the portrayal of research that reflects the meanings and experiences that are lived and perceived by the participants of a given study (Sandelowski, 1986; Whittemore, Chase & Mandle, 2001). In an attempt to remain true to the phenomenon under study (Hammersley, 1992; Lincoln, 1995) I participated in in-depth discussions of the results of my study and the interpretation thereof with my research supervisors, and reflected on issues surrounding the analysis of the data in my reflective journal (Merriam, 1998; Bringle & Hatcher, 1999). In doing so, I aimed to process and address any personal biases or assumptions which I may have held regarding the results and findings of the study, whereby I would be able to confront the true nature of the results and the intentions of the various educational psychology researchers through their presentations (Bailey, 1996).

## **3.9 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I discussed the procedures I followed and the way in which the research process developed through the course of my study. I explained the paradigmatic approaches which directed the manner in which I carried out my investigation, as well as the strategies I relied upon in generating and analysing data, which could assist me in reaching the findings of my study. Throughout, I reflected on the strengths and limitations of my various methodological choices and how I attempted to address these. Lastly, I explored my role as researcher and paid attention to the ethical considerations and quality criteria applicable to my study. In Chapter 4, I present the results and findings of my research.

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, I start off by answering my secondary research questions in a detailed discussion of the trends which emerged subsequent to a trend analysis of the data collected during my study. I also engage in literature control which involves an exploration of the results of my study against the backdrop of existing literature. In short, I was able to distinguish five major trends based on the collaboration between educational psychology researchers and teachers I analysed. These trends pertain to the core characteristics of collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers, methodologies of collaborative partnerships, benefits and challenges of collaborative partnerships, as well as the focus of educational psychology researcher studies.

#### **4.2 RESULTS OF THE TREND ANALYSIS**

Table 4.1 outlines the results of the trend analysis conducted. I discuss each trend and its related sub-trends in detail in the sections that follow, supported by statements made by educational psychology researchers and teachers talking about their participatory studies.

**TABLE 4.1: Results of the trend analysis indicating trends and sub-trends which emerged**

<b>TREND 1:</b>	
<b>Core Characteristics of Collaborative Partnerships between Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers</b>	
<b>Sub-Trends:</b>	
1.1.	Common goals of educational psychology researchers and teachers
1.2.	Contextual nature of collaborative partnerships
1.3.	Process-oriented emphasis of collaborative partnerships
1.4.	Knowledge exchange and subsequent development of knowledge networks
1.5.	Overarching philosophy of “care” in collaborative partnerships
<b>TREND 2:</b>	
<b>Methodologies in Collaborative Partnerships between Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers</b>	

<b>TREND 3:</b> <b>Focus of Educational Psychology Researcher Studies</b>	
<b>TREND 4:</b> <b>Benefits of Collaborative Partnerships</b>	
<b>Sub-Trends:</b>	
4.1.	Teacher benefits
4.2.	Researcher benefits
<b>TREND 5:</b> <b>Challenges of Collaborative Partnerships</b>	
<b>Sub-Trends:</b>	
5.1.	Gaining access to communities
5.2.	Sustainability of collaborative partnership work
5.3.	Influence of external factors

<b>TREND 1:</b> <b>Core Characteristics of Collaborative Partnerships between Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers</b>
--

Certain core characteristics consistently emerged in all seven of the papers presented on collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers. This trend in turn, is characterised by six sub-trends i.e. (1.1.) Common goals of educational psychology researchers and teachers, (1.2.) Contextual nature of collaborative partnerships, (1.3.) Process-oriented emphasis of collaborative partnerships, (1.4.) Knowledge exchange and subsequent development of knowledge networks, and (1.5.) Overarching philosophy of “care” in collaborative partnerships. In Table 4.2 I provide the sub-trends, indicators and exclusions that were applied in the data analysis to determine the constituencies of this trend. I then discuss each sub-trend which emerged within trend 1.

**TABLE 4.2: Sub-trends, indicators and exclusions related to the trend *Core characteristics of collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers***

<b>Sub-trends</b>	1.1. Common goals of educational psychology researchers and teachers in collaborative partnerships 1.2. Contextual nature of collaborative partnerships 1.3. Process-oriented emphasis of collaborative partnerships
-------------------	--

	1.4. Knowledge exchange and subsequent development of knowledge networks 1.5. Overarching philosophy of “care” in collaborative partnerships
<b>Indicators</b>	Data pertaining to the nature of collaborative partnerships in various contexts and amongst different researchers and practitioners. For example, all major processes which emerged during collaboration, goals and aims of collaboration, and focus on collaborative partnerships.
<b>Exclusions</b>	Data related to the needs, barriers, challenges or benefits identified by researchers and practitioners in collaborative partnerships.

### **SUB-TREND 1.1:**

#### **Common Goals of Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers**

In this sub-trend, collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers appear to constitute various common goals. Data reflects that both educational psychology researchers and teachers appear to have strived towards common goals when entering into the aforementioned partnerships. Furthermore, both the teachers and educational psychology researchers seem to agree that additional common goals were developed and achieved throughout the collaborative process. Amongst the goals which educational psychology researchers and teachers appear to strive towards, is capacity building and community development, as indicated by the following statements:

- ❖ *‘...the researchers and the universities though are also pressurised to do research; but that must not just be for the sake of research, it must really be for making a difference’ (Speaker 5, Presentation 4, Line 108).*
- ❖ *‘...spoke at length this morning about us being here as partners from diverse contexts, but I think what unites us, is that we are here to augment relationships towards change’ (Speaker 1, Presentation 3, Line 27).*

Another goal seems to be that of life-long learning and the co-creation of new knowledge and knowledge exchange. The following extracts indicate reflections of educational psychology researchers on the goal of life-long learning and knowledge exchange:

- ❖ *‘I think we also committed to life-long learning’ (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 34).*
- ❖ *‘A lot has been said this morning about how research and research partnerships engender new knowledge, and co-create knowledge. But that wouldn’t happen if we weren’t committed to a continued emphasis on continued learning’ (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 34).*

- ❖ ‘...so they work hand in glove with us and to add more on that even on the project that we are doing all the educators after school they flock in one class so that now we are going to expand to another class because we can see that they are very much helpful’ (Speaker 10, Presentation 4 , Line 1390).
- ❖ ‘We have to have team-work; we have to work as teams. We have to set common goals and visions and we have to look at the good that we can accomplish together’ (Speaker 4, Presentation 2, Line 483).

The notion of life-long learning and knowledge exchange corroborates existing literature which comments on common goals within collaborative partnerships. Jamal and Getz (1995:11) refer to Gray’s definition of collaboration, emphasising that it is “a process of joint decision making of a problem domain about the future of that domain”. This statement implies that a collaborative partnership essentially entails a process where specific items of knowledge relating to practice are shared and constructed together. Therefore, it is presupposed that a common object or goal from which an investigation can be launched is identified when embarking on such an effort, and from which shared results can be yielded and “paired with a double diffusion process for the research and practice communities” (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007:578). Hall Jackson *et al.* (2005) concur with the above, stating that when working collaboratively, partners need to agree to work towards a common, ultimate goal. According to Clark *et al.* (1996) this type of agreement implies a shared understanding of the processes taking place in the partnership, and that it is necessary for partners to be able to share, justify and refine their ideas with others in order to support learning and knowledge construction. With regard to the setting of common goals during the collaborative process, Hall Jackson *et al.* (2005) emphasise that goal setting may be regarded as one of the most important aspects of partnership work and as such, it is necessary to ensure that all partners collectively buy in to the vision of collaboration. Furthermore, stakeholders or partners should agree on the criteria for success. As mentioned earlier, partnerships appear to be characterised by shared goals and a common purpose (Casey, 2008). With regard to partnerships between university faculties and schools, it appears as if some of the goals shared by these two entities include teacher education, professional development and capacity building (Mule, 2006; Kuter & Koç, 2009; Murray *et al.*, 2009; Levine & Marcus, 2010).

Based on the findings above, I concluded that shared goals between educational psychology researchers and teachers could have two specific purposes. On the one hand, the aforementioned common goals may be seen as leading to collaborative partnerships in that the

various partners may decide to approach one another in order to address a community dilemma which concerns all of them. On the other hand, common goals may be regarded as a result of collaborative partnerships, since educational psychology researchers and teachers seem to agree that additional common goals were developed and realised through the process of collaboration.

### **SUB-TREND 1.2:**

#### **Contextual Nature of Collaborative Partnerships**

This sub-trend relates to the idea that collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers are typically forged within a specific context. For example, given the nature of the symposium where the data for my study was generated, the focus was primarily on supporting teachers working in vulnerable communities. One context within which many teachers appear to be working is that of dealing with and supporting learners and other community members affected by and infected with HIV/AIDS. The following statements provide an indication of the necessity to view collaborative partnerships within a specific context:

- ❖ *'We work from the assumption that we can't just work with individual people. It's important to understand the school, it's important to understand the community, it's important to really understand the dynamics in the school and deal with those dynamics and not to focus on one teacher because it often makes it difficult for that teacher on the staff who is singled out when we work with those teachers, so we also work from not a whole school evaluation perspective but a whole school developmental perspective' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 386).*
- ❖ *'Partnerships are forged within contexts. I think it will be ridiculous to try and see a partnership outside of a context. It must be embedded in the context, and we are in a South African context' (Speaker 5, Presentation 6, Line 52).*

With reference to existing literature (Grundy *et al.*, 2001; Van Zee *et al.*, 2003; Witte *et al.*, 2005; Burn, 2006; Paul, 2006; Schneider & Pickett, 2006; Tsui & Law, 2007; Evoh, 2007; Horns *et al.*, 2007; Moore & Sampson, 2008) on collaborative partnerships between university faculties and schools, a similar trend emerges. It appears as if it is not possible for a partnership which is collaborative by definition, to be developed without being forged within some type of context, since ultimately it is the context within which the partnership is forged, that necessitates such partnerships in the first place. Thus, I found that collaborative

partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers appear to be in line with other collaborative partnership studies. Partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers seem to indicate similar experiences with regard to the notion that partnerships cannot be forged in isolation, since they appear to be embedded in, and developed within specific contexts which make those studies relevant.

### **SUB-TREND 1.3:**

#### **Process-oriented Emphasis of Collaborative Partnerships**

From the data it appears that educational psychology researchers emphasise the process of collaborating with teachers. Ultimately, emphasis on the process of collaborating includes various instances of activities where attention is paid to an actual process which may be followed in a collaborative partnership, in order for the process to be more effective. One example of a process-oriented activity is the building of relationships with communities where educational psychology researchers wish to work, as indicated by the following statements:

- ❖ *‘So they had to negotiate all these diversity issues in terms of relationships, in terms of language, in terms of their curriculum material, and that created a very good opportunity for us as researchers because we had to negotiate our own roles also in terms of that in working with the teachers’ (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 372).*
- ❖ *‘In the beginning, as a researcher, if you can’t deal with these types of things, if you scared of building these types of relationships, you would run and you would never go back to that school. Because these things serve as a medium to build relationship and understanding and it shouldn’t be threatened’ (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 820).*
- ❖ *‘...I had to learn about gender, I was a woman and thankfully at the primary school, women were working in the primary school but you know there were, and I knew them, a number of men working at the primary school where I worked at, and the men usually sit in the back and they don’t really participate in the beginning. So it was important to also build relationships with them and to accept who they are but also to deal with gender aspects and how they view women, and to respect that’ (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 802).*

Another process-oriented activity, which reportedly receives a great deal of attention in the initial stages of establishing collaborative partnerships, is that of gaining access to

communities. The following statement illustrates an instance where educational psychology researchers learned about the process of gaining access in a community:

- ❖ *'We learned a lot about gaining access, getting in and staying in when we work in communities. Relationship-building; I think that was a message since the first minute this morning. A very strong theme in our research itself and then people use different words' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 212).*

The identification of common ground on which a collaborative partnership can be built, also appears to be important in the process of establishing a collaborative partnership. The following extracts provide examples of instances where the identification of common ground among partners seemed essential to the process of collaboration:

- ❖ *'What I heard in all the presentations was that the partnerships were collaborative. I didn't, I didn't hear, and you can differ from me and we can discuss it, but I didn't hear examples of researchers coming in, with a power, with a knowledge and raising partners up if you like. I heard about collaboration, people working together' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 232).*
- ❖ *'...they really are interested in engaging in research partnerships that allow researchers to care for the participants and the participants then to kind of in a ripple effect spread or allow this care to spread to the community, and to people from the community' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 89).*
- ❖ *'...OK, commitment from both parties, but how are we going to implement the action plan if we don't work together and put it into practice. It's also a question of mutual commitment and mutual responsibility' (Speaker 4, Presentation 2, Line 510).*

Furthermore, involving participating teachers in every step of the collaborative process seems to be an aspect of collaborative partnerships which is often emphasised. In the following statements, educational psychology researchers reflect on the process of involving the various partners such as teachers, in the establishment of collaborative partnerships:

- ❖ *'...she would come up with new ideas the whole time how to integrate everybody's expectations into the intervention' (Speaker 2, Presentation 4, Line 346).*
- ❖ *'...so part of this then as it evolved, I don't think initially it was necessary, it was more in terms of us understanding, coping and later on acknowledging the really the difficulties of being a teacher and having to implement policy but not having strategies to implement that policy. So our idea was then to research this idea where you have to partner with teachers' (Speaker 2, Presentation 4, Line 207).*

Finally, it also seems as if emphasis is placed on monitoring and nurturing a collaborative process. Collaborative processes seemingly emerge to create optimally valuable, constructive experiences for the various parties involved, as indicated by the extracts that follow:

- ❖ *'...and what we also really embrace is to get to learn the culture of the school and the values at the school' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 394).*
- ❖ *'Something that was very interesting to us, our personal experiences as researchers, was the needs that we discovered. And I think that you teachers maybe can say the same thing, when we entered the schools it was very, the first day, it was very interesting to identify our own identity as researcher. How do I deal with this when I enter the school, because people think, and they said to us OK we come from the university, what are you going to teach us? Are you coming with a program, are you going to help us? And you started talking about learning so when we learn these things, what are you going to do with our work? What are you going to do with our practices? Are you going to recognise us at the university? So, as the researcher, it was very important to become part of the teachers because it's for the teachers. So we explained to the teachers that you know, we're also teachers, we just work with older children, and we're all in the business of learning, all in the business of learning and education, it's just working in a different environment' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 783).*
- ❖ *'There were a number of other things, our previous profession and experience, it might have for instance, I have been a teacher for many years, and I worked at a number of different types of special schools. So, it's important that people know that because I look at disability in a certain way, and I have experienced disability and specific training and I was a trained educational psychologist so these people, when teachers hear that, then they say you know, I've got this child in the school, what can I do with this child? Can you come and help us with the SGB, can you come and help us with that? So how as the researcher, how do I deal with that? Because I'm a researcher, I'm here to learn, I'm here to learn about the school but now they want me to come and help them with these things' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 794).*
- ❖ *'...so those things actually served as learning experiences for me as a researcher but also hopefully for every single teacher that sat there because people have to think about these things. Why do I think this way? Why do I think the university comes from there?' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 811).*
- ❖ *'...and the intervention was an emerging intervention, so as the agendas were shared between teachers and us as researchers, the phases evolved. So this wasn't something*

*that Person 7 decided on pre-intervention. It was very emerging, it was a process where we had to adapt the whole time' (Speaker 2, Presentation 4, Line 338).*

From examining Gray's (1989) collaboration theory, it is clear that theoretically, the act of monitoring and evaluating the process through which a collaborative partnership develops, forms an integral part of the collaboration itself. Gray (1989) views collaboration as a means of effectively resolving conflict or advancing shared visions where the various parties involved may be regarded as able to recognise the potential advantages of working together. He defines collaboration as "a process of joint decision making among key stakeholders of a problem domain about the future of that domain" (Gray, 1989:187). In his theory, Gray outlines five key characteristics of the collaboration process and proposes a three-stage model through which collaboration develops (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

According to Jamal and Getz (1995), Gray regards the fact that the various stakeholders are independent as the primary characteristic of the collaboration process. Solutions are seen to be the result of dealing constructively with differences, while joint ownership of decisions is seen to be part of the collaboration process. The remaining two characteristics of collaboration refer to the fact that stakeholders assume collective responsibility for the ongoing direction of the domain, and that collaboration should be seen as an emergent process (Jamal & Getz, 1995). In terms of his three-stage model, Gray (1989) proposes that the first stage entered into by stakeholders or collaborators is that of problem-setting. During this stage, key stakeholders and issues are identified. The second stage entails direction-setting where future collaborative interpretations are shared and identified, and a sense of common purpose is appreciated. The last stage, the implementation stage, relates to the institutionalisation of shared meanings that emerge as a domain develops (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

Similarly, the data gathered in this study is significant with regard to goals in establishing partnerships, and as such, corresponds to the various characteristics that Gray proposes in the development of collaborative partnerships. Each successive stage presents itself with its own unique facilitating conditions and actions which need to be taken into account in order for collaboration to take place successfully (Gray 1985; 1989). It appears as if the amount of time and energy spent in developing a collaborative partnership is almost equal to the time spent on the process of the collaboration itself. It was found that collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers are similar to other types of collaborative

partnerships, in terms of the attention given to the process of developing and maintaining a collaborative partnership (Gray, 1985; 1989).

#### **SUB-TREND 1.4:**

#### **Knowledge Exchange and Subsequent Development of Knowledge Networks**

This sub-trend relates to the exchange of knowledge and the subsequent development of knowledge networks through collaborative partnerships. This result implies that when educational psychology researchers and teachers collaborate, knowledge is exchanged between partners in a way that entails each partner sharing knowledge which may be of use to other partners, and *vice-versa*. In this way, the various parties involved not only learn from each other but also allow each one to participate in a process of co-constructing new knowledge based on their respective areas of expertise. In exchanging and co-constructing new knowledge, educational psychology researchers seem to experience the development of a knowledge network, whereby partners can add to their repertoires of professional skills and services, as well as additional sources which may be of use to them, as indicated by the following statements:

- ❖ *‘The teachers also applied skills related to networking, negotiation and collaboration. We’ve spoken about that quite a bit. “I phoned a certain guy at the municipality and then that man said he’s going to send someone here at school; then they said I must write a letter, then I wrote a letter”’ (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 818).*
- ❖ *‘If you just reflect back on ...’s presentation this morning, for me the main theme in her presentation is the way that networks were established. And ... is a care worker in the schools so the idea isn’t that teachers need to do all of this. Teachers have demonstrated how they network with people in their community to establish networks and things like that’ (Speaker 2, Presentation 4, Line 824).*

The process and outcome of developing knowledge networks may be beneficial in that it offers the possibility of enhancing the sustainability of collaborative partnerships, since partners and community members may have begun the process of expanding their resource base. In this way new resources can be utilised after the formal collaborative partnership has been terminated, and the community is left to run further projects on its own. The following statements support this argument:

- ❖ *'...and that's also fallen into place so nicely because at the moment the teachers at ... has got a system in place where they know exactly, they've got the psychologist's telephone number. They've got the social worker they have got all the numbers that they can phone and you did that' (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 912).*
- ❖ *'...the knowledge of the teachers it's like a huge web of knowledge and also it's a knowledge network for us as researchers and with our postgraduate students and in terms of publications. And there you can see how everybody benefited, both teachers in terms of knowledge and researchers in terms of knowledge' (Speaker 2, Presentation 4, Line 1213).*
- ❖ *'...so theoretically what emerged then is that dynamic knowledge networks started. We were just one network for knowledge. There were many other networks that the teachers identified and accessed and mobilised to get knowledge that they felt OK if we get this information we can do this and we were one of that knowledge sources' (Speaker 2, Presentation 4, Line 570).*

A result of the aforementioned knowledge networks appear to be the development of platforms for communication between parties involved in collaborative partnerships. These newly established platforms (for communication) seem to gain strength for a number of reasons. Firstly, it seems as if educational psychology researchers feel that in providing platforms for communication between partners, knowledge may be exchanged on a broader level which creates the possibility for the various parties involved in a collaborative partnership, to raise issues which are of concern to them, as well as to theorise about how they could best be resolved. The following contributions were made in this regard:

- ❖ *'...but I think in terms of generating knowledge now, it's important that, these forums are important so that we share the diversity of many contexts and build up a knowledge base that way' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 744).*
- ❖ *'It's also about knowledge creation; realising that our context is unique, that we need a home-grown theory of practice. We can't look north and try and borrow from them, I think we have to make our own indigenous theory of practice; building relevant theories and practices for South Africa, and of course important there again goes back to my first slide of knowing the context, building theory on practice but acknowledging the role of the teachers in all of that. So the partners are co-constructors of knowledge. You contribute richly, and without you, we cannot do anything' (Speaker 5, Presentation 6, Line 194).*

In addressing concerns on a broader level, it would seem that providing platforms for communication also serves to raise awareness and sensitivity towards community issues. This discussion is reflected in the statements that follow:

- ❖ *'...but in this thing we identified teachers that really have brilliant ideas, teachers that support the children if they do not pass on the expectations of the school that supported children in a particular way. That really benefits those children and it often went unrecognised. Unrecognised maybe by some of the teachers in their school, unrecognised by the principal the district officers did not always necessarily know about these things. And then maybe we must go back to the policy makers and say well all these IQs are scores of you, how do you also include these things? So that was one of our motivating factors because we thought well as researchers we can then create a platform so that teachers also can get ... so that they can showcase their practices. That was the one reason' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 296).*

It is also possible that the various partners involved in similar partnerships or studies to the one under discussion, could be made aware of potential dilemmas which they might come across at a given stage, which would afford them the opportunity to prepare for and address such dilemmas should the need arise. In this respect, the referred to previously, have the added advantage of showcasing the work in process or that which has been completed. When presented with the fruits of their labour, educational psychology researchers tend to be inspired to believe that hope, encouragement and motivation are engendered, and that a space for participatory reflection can be created:

- ❖ *'Yesterday we also heard partnerships is about sensitivity; gender sensitivity, cultural sensitivity, ethnic sensitivity, and I think we need to be aware of how we name things and explain things and how that can actually make us complicit in advancing stereotypes' (Speaker 5, Presentation 6, Line 171).*
- ❖ *'...and then I think in sustaining the partnership, across from the university staff to the teacher staff, I think there is need for affirmation' (Speaker 5, Presentation 6, Line 18).*

This sub-trend is supported by literature which states that collaborative research is based on the respective contributions of the various parties involved, where both researcher and practitioner may be regarded as co-constructors of knowledge which is generated as part of a team (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007). Furthermore, this sub-trend corresponds with existing literature (Christie *et al.*, 2007; Sylva *et al.*, 2007) which suggests that the

relationship between research and practice does not occur in a linear fashion where knowledge is transferred from one partner to another, but is characterised by a process of knowledge exchange. It appears therefore, that the process of knowledge exchange mentioned above, and the development of knowledge networks converges with one of the aims of collaborative research (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007), namely bringing the world of research and practice closer together, and mediating between the two traditions so that new knowledge may be constructed and in turn inform practice. As a result researchers and practitioners can subsequently attempt to bridge the gap which exists between theory and practice in a way which is meaningful to the various partners involved (Ansari *et al.*, 2002; Goduto *et al.*, 2008; Smith *et al.*, 2009; Vogel & Avissar, 2009).

Although a wide variety of sources were consulted with regard to the necessity of creating platforms for communication between partners, it would appear that literature on research partnerships (Christie *et al.*, 2007; Sylva *et al.*, 2007), mostly refers to the exchange of knowledge and communication between partners within the context of individual partnerships and not across a variety of partnerships. According to Christie *et al.* (2007), King (2002) and Loughran (2003), the engagement of partners in collaborative partnerships could allow for the creation of knowledge, which goes beyond the normal situational constraints of one professional context. Generation of knowledge may also be enhanced by additional perspectives associated with those involved in a collaborative partnership, as practitioners offer the possibility of bringing expertise to a playing field where other researchers are also involved as co-researchers and co-constructors of knowledge. Sylva *et al.* (2007) emphasise that engagement in a collaborative partnership can spontaneously provide those involved with supportive organisational structures, with a two-way exchange of information and decision-making. However, there seems to be very little research available on how creating platforms between partners from different collaborative partnerships may be useful or not.

In this sub-trend, I found therefore that collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers seem to follow a similar path in terms of knowledge creation and exchange, when compared to that of partnerships between researchers and practitioners that have different foci. It would appear as if educational psychology researchers and teachers also typically aim to bridge a gap between theory and practice through knowledge exchange, and in doing so, construct new knowledge which could inform practice and lead to new questions for theoretical inquiry. However, educational psychology researchers and teachers working collaboratively, appear to be unique in the sense that such

researchers and practitioners tend to extend the practice of knowledge exchange and knowledge creation to a level where platforms for communication are created. These platforms for communication (which may serve as a means through which knowledge can be shared with a wider audience), may in turn result in solutions to community problems from various other sources over and above those identified by partners themselves.

**SUB-TREND 1.5:**

**Overarching Philosophy of “Care” in Collaborative Partnerships**

Educational psychology researchers seem to agree that an overarching philosophy of “care” directs the way in which partnerships are forged. The attention paid to the aforementioned philosophy of “care” is indicated in the following statements:

- ❖ *‘Whatever what we are thinking that community, it’s because of care. We’ve all seen it the lecturers there, the lecturers talk about care, so it’s that care because we care about the learners, we care about the parents, and the commitment that we’ve got. Because we made a pledge that we are going to serve the community no matter what, so we have to commit, we committed ourselves that is commitment mostly that make us not panic or even feel stressed’ (Speaker 10, Presentation 4, Line 1510).*
- ❖ *‘...and so care stands for an emphasis on collaborating, which implies equal partnerships; accessing, gaining entrance, and there were a number of challenges that we heard about there; that care is impossible without relationship building, but I think what we heard very clearly is that relationship building is a process and that it doesn’t happen overnight and that it needs to be sustained for us to have partnerships. And then we heard the whole emphasis on enabling rather than empowering’ (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 92).*

Essentially, this philosophy implies delivering and fostering the enablement of partners, and may result in the development of a sense of purpose, pride and self-esteem. In the following extracts, various educational psychology researchers and teachers reflect on occasions and instances where they were reportedly able to profit from the caring nature of collaborative partnerships in a variety of contexts:

- ❖ *‘At that time, the teachers’ spirits were down, teachers were frustrated because their learners and parents were infected by HIV and AIDS and thus the teachers were affected. They were frustrated because they couldn’t, they didn’t know how to help the learners because of lack of knowledge. So anybody who came around I would use*

*the word that I heard today that we should move away from using it, they came and they empowered us. They say today we must use a better word enable, but I am of, maybe I don't move away from the past, but I like this one from old school. They empowered us and made a way' (Speaker 3, Presentation 3, Line 405).*

- ❖ *'With enablement, it's the 'able'. The ability is recognised already. There's not the one has power, the other does not have power. The one is giving power, the one is receiving power. In fact, there is able ability and because of a process, there's then shared enablement and it's becoming more able, if you want. The researcher becoming more able, the teacher becoming more able, but the ability is there already. It's not a power that some had power, others didn't have power' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 172).*
- ❖ *'The positive experience of being enabled, you voiced that in the focus groups and you were willing to act as facilitators and take this process forward, further to two other schools and now you are already planning where now, because the ... teachers has already indicated to us that they want to go now to these two schools. They've already mentioned that. And ... is another example saying that she's gonna take it to the care-workers. OK so these are some of the excerpts of what the teachers said: "You know what it was something that I was thinking about it but I didn't know how to start it. What I was doing for the community, there was nothing I was doing, now I feel proud that there's something I am doing for the community. I am the light here in the community now"' (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 525).*
- ❖ *'...yes, that we saw with you wearing the name tags with such pride. Early in the process we made the nametags with your names and that HIV and AIDS sign on but you started wearing them and you wear them with pride. Your general posture and self-confidence we could observe that it had increased' (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 522).*

In addition, a belief in and an acknowledgement of the abilities of partners are implied. For example, when educational psychology researchers embarked on the process of developing collaborative partnerships with teachers, they might have assumed that the various teachers already had the knowledge and experience necessary to participate and contribute meaningfully towards the partnership process. This belief is indicated in the statement below:

- ❖ *'...at that stage we had the working assumption that you already have got the knowledge and if we weren't going to present workshops and you beautifully reflected on it, the teachers, at the end of the process. But by the end of the second*

*intervention session already that was field visit one on the third day there was already an awareness and you said things like, “We can do this we can do this and I think we must contact blah blah blah” (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 489).*

“Care” furthermore implies commitment to the various partners and a given collaborative partnership project as well as an agreement that the nature of the partnership is mutual and reciprocal. In the following extracts it seems evident that commitment, passion and a sense of hope are some of the aspects implied in the philosophy of “care”:

- ❖ *‘What I heard in all the presentations was that the partnerships were collaborative. I didn’t, I didn’t hear, and you can differ from me and we can discuss it, but I didn’t hear examples of researchers coming in, with a power, with a knowledge and raising partners up if you like. I heard about collaboration, people working together’ (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 232).*
- ❖ *‘Partnerships also require commitment. Teachers and the schools have to extend themselves to participate as a partner. We heard that yes, we are over-worked and under-paid, but we are committed, we are enthusiastic, we have the passion. So do not say well because the teachers are over-worked, uh they won’t have energy for this partnership work. And that was refreshing to hear that you still have this drive to continue, in spite of all of that. And that is the persons that sit here. The researchers and the universities though are also pressurised to do research; but that must not just be for the sake of research, it must really be for making a difference. And we have seen this commitment over the two days from the teachers and the education researchers, and the huge gains made by most’ (Speaker 5, Presentation 6, Line 103).*
- ❖ *‘Ja, we sometimes feel overworked and tired but the most important thing is passion and if you are passionate about something you don’t care about anything else, even recognition for that matter, if no one recognises you, the passion is driving you to do it’ (Speaker 10, Presentation 4, Line 1502).*
- ❖ *‘...she leaves with the hope, it lies in her, that ..., as a colleague will be able to sustain the good work in the school that they have started and the community’ (Speaker 4, Presentation 2, Line 517).*

With regard to existing literature, this sub-trend appears to correlate with much of what is published in terms of a sociocultural approach (Rueda, 1998). According to a sociocultural approach, the building of trusting relationships, rapport and communication is vital to the

establishment of strong partnerships. In addition, Casey (2008) maintains that valuing partners, developing a sense of ownership and belonging are crucial to partnership work. She views honesty and trust as being central to good management practice, and the requirements for developing a strong partnership relationship. Without traits such as these, Casey (2008) emphasises that it is possible that a partnership could dissolve or that partners may lose interest in participating or being involved in partnership work. Thus, I found that educational psychology researchers and teachers usually pay active attention to actions and behaviours which are encompassed by the word “care” as indicated by the approach educational psychology researchers generally adopt when working with communities. This approach is one which encompasses attributes of constructive collaboration, gaining appropriate access to communities, building trusting relationships with community members as well as enabling community members and collaborative partnership partners.

**TREND 2:**

**Methodologies in Collaborative Partnerships between Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers**

The ways in which educational psychology researchers and teachers collaborate include service-learning experiences, visual participatory methodology, and participatory reflection and action. Table 4.3 provides an indication of the indicators and exclusions related to this trend.

**TABLE 4.3: Indicators and exclusions related to the trend *Ways in which teachers and educational psychology researchers collaborate***

<b>Indicators</b>	Data which suggest or describe the variety of ways that teachers and educational psychology researchers have discovered or recognised as successful or potentially successful ways of collaborating.
<b>Exclusions</b>	Data which suggest or describe the benefits and challenges of the various ways of collaboration or describe the process involved in each method.

Service-learning experiences refer to situations where student teachers, counsellors and educational psychologists are given the opportunity to enter various communities to gain hands-on experience working with teachers. Through this type of experience it is apparent that students are given an opportunity to learn and exchange knowledge directly from the source of that knowledge, and in turn, present teachers with fresh new ideas which may be of value to them in a classroom setting as well (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). Instances of service-

learning as part of the collaborative partnership process are illustrated in the following statements:

- ❖ *'...she explained that their research is focussed on a service-learning approach. And that a service-learning approach is really about community service being integrated into academic work and research' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 42).*
- ❖ *'...they were learning in situ if you like, experiential learning is what they were gaining' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 49).*
- ❖ *'The other reason was we then can also send students to those teachers, fellow-students and learners because you know first year to fourth year students also want to do practical work and they're very scared to go to the schools, they're very scared to be in the teachers' classrooms because they also think teachers know everything. They don't realize that teachers are also... (very unclear) so the best way to teach a student is to send a student to a teacher to learn from a teacher, not necessarily from us at the university in the classroom from a book' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 307).*
- ❖ *'I think ... referred to it previously and I'm sure you also work the same and I am sure that Place 9 and also Place 10, at all the universities academics has to integrate their teaching, their community interaction and their research and ... because of the fact that we can't order all these books from ... and from ... and just teach from those books' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 178).*

Visual participatory methodology (Chambers, 1994; Pain & Francis, 2003; Burke, 2007), where researchers and teachers work together to create visual presentations of various issues through acting, dance and mime, were also implemented in collaborative partnerships. By using this methodology, core issues are addressed and teachers are equipped with various mediums through which they may express themselves. In one case, for example, teachers were encouraged to make use of photo voice, a technique where participants are, given point-and-shoot cameras to capture images related to a certain topic. The rationale behind encouraging participants to capture such images is to provide them with a way of “seeing for themselves” as well as showing others how they respond to issues such as HIV and AIDS in their communities (Mitchell, De Lange, Moletsane, Stuart, Buthelezi; 2005). The productions were then video recorded and used as a tool for discussion with participants at a later stage. The following statements provide examples:

- ❖ *'The concreteness of the visuals, the visual documentary we still think opens up the space to talk about the things and I think that's the benefit of having a video*

*documentary, it's not the truth it's the perceptions and the perspectives of the participants at that particular moment' (Speaker 3, Presentation 3, Line 390).*

- ❖ *'...but what we then as researchers pick up is exactly how they see it as teachers. Perhaps they now think we must pressure them because it ends in them, you know, and that kind of thing. So I think the whole process needs to be there so that we get the change that we are hoping for there in the last ...' (Speaker 3, Presentation 3, Line 374).*
- ❖ *'...so in the beginning the beauty of this for me is that in the beginning you get an image of the description, a rich description of a person's perceptions' (Speaker 3, Presentation 3, Line 364).*
- ❖ *'...so what we also wanted to just say although this is a pilot, from this we've gone into a phase of dissemination research where the pilot, the intervention, is disseminated into other projects to see to what extent the intervention holds is valid, and will do what needs to be done and all the simultaneously in the event, is it sustainable in the actions of researchers, how can it be carried on' (Speaker 3, Presentation 4, Line 410).*

Lastly, participatory reflection and action (Chambers, 1994) in collaborative partnerships have also become a methodology which is often used. In participatory reflection and action (PRA), it is thought that various data collection strategies can be used to uncover indigenous people's knowledge and skills, as a means of learning about their local conditions, identify challenges and plan how these challenges might best be addressed. The development of PRA has been strongly influenced by concepts such as capacity building and enablement of people, through their own active participation and involvement in their development (Chambers, 1994). The following excerpts illustrate the aforementioned discussion:

- ❖ *'...it was initially called participatory rural appraisal, but I opted for using the participatory reflection and action because I believe that's a more true reflection of what it is because it is participation and you continuously reflect and you continuously take action, both of the partners' (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 299).*
- ❖ *'...some techniques seen in there, group discussion, informal interactions, we focused a lot on mapping, diagramming and modelling. All of the educators, the teachers that's been involved in this project will know, every time we see you, you work; you make maps and you draw and you have focus groups and you discuss and you present. So it's like basically an interactive working mode of techniques, activities that take place' (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 305).*

- ❖ *'We analyse this and we take it back to the teachers and say "How did you portray say for instance the teacher's role?", "How did you portray AIDS through others, what is the messages?", so we don't tell them, they generate themselves and through that they change. Through their reflection I think and then that is the new kind of information that they work with when you know the first thing carries on' (Speaker 3, Presentation 3, Line 370).*

Existing literature (James & Worrall, 2000; Ansari *et al.*, 2002; Van Zee *et al.*, 2003; Warren *et al.*, 2005; Witte *et al.*, 2005; Burn, 2006; Paul, 2006; Callahan & Martin, 2007; Evoh, 2007; Tsui & Law, 2007; Goduto *et al.*, 2008; Gorodetsky & Barak, 2008; Moore & Sampson, 2008; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009; Murray, Nuttal & Mitchell, 2008; Smith *et al.*, 2009; Vogel & Avissar, 2009) appears to focus mostly on service-learning as a manner in which university faculties and teachers may be able to collaborate. Many studies appear to focus on sending pre-service or student teachers into communities and schools in order to learn directly from teachers and other members of a given partnership, as well as to provide in-service or qualified teachers with additional information and insight into theory behind teaching in an effort to exchange knowledge. Therefore, if one considers the commonalities between the various methods through which educational psychology researchers and teachers collaborate, it appears as if partners choose methods of collaboration through which entrance into the community can be gained, and where an environment where partners can learn from each other in an experiential manner is constructed. Hence, the methodologies employed in collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers mirror the notions of trend 1.

Partners may choose to employ a variety of mediums such as visual stimuli (Chalfen, 1991; Ewald, 1992; Hubbard, 1994; Karlsson, 2004; Mitchell *et al.*, 2005), and practical activities similar to those employed in participatory reflection and action (Chambers, 1994; Burke, 1998) to encourage participation with the aim of identifying and addressing community issues while promoting knowledge exchange and the co-creation of knowledge. Finally, partners appear to opt for methods of collaboration which acknowledge the context, the process of collaboration, knowledge exchange and knowledge construction, as well as capacity building of individuals and communities.

**TREND 3:**

**Focus of Educational Psychology Researcher Studies**

It appears that educational psychology researcher studies focus on various issues related to teacher support and the educational landscape. Topics which appear to receive attention include (3.1.) Issues and concerns which hamper teaching and learning, (3.2) Teacher experiences and how teachers give meaning to their teaching lives and the educational landscape, (3.3) Teacher enablement and support, and (3.4) Support of teaching capacity by research. Table 4.4 provides the indicators and exclusion criteria which were employed in data analysis to determine the constituencies of this trend.

**TABLE 4.4: Indicators and exclusions related to the trend *Focus of educational psychology researcher studies.***

<b>Indicators</b>	Data which suggest or describe the essential knowledge that educational psychology researchers set out to reveal or co-create in terms of the primary research question. Data which suggest or describe the research questions created by educational psychology researchers at the onset of the given studies.
<b>Exclusions</b>	Data which suggest or describe any additional knowledge that educational psychology researchers set out to reveal or co-create which was not included in the primary research question of each study. Any research questions which may have been researched as a result of the initial research question of a study.

The issues and concerns which were specifically focused on during the symposium were those which could be seen as hampering teaching and learning, as well as learning experiences. A presentation dealing specifically with the aforementioned topic presented experiences during the first phase of a project where the focus was on how to adopt an approach geared towards supporting teachers working in difficult school environments by focusing on teamwork and team support. The participant stated:

- ❖ *‘The focus of these projects were teacher learning and at this stage we in the first phase of the project that focuses on team support factors of teachers working in school environments that are very very difficult to work in’ (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 33).*

Another presentation attempted to document how teachers appear to give meaning to their teaching lives and the educational landscape in a variety of contexts dealing with a variety of difficult issues such as poverty on a daily basis. Furthermore, the presentation focused on how teachers in given school environments, operating under the current educational landscape,

occasionally forge identities for themselves, and make their work meaningful and fulfilling for their learners as well as for themselves. Finally, attention was paid to precisely what the educational landscape in schools where educational psychology researchers conduct studies, entails. The following statements illustrate one such focus of educational psychology researcher studies:

- ❖ *'Okay, what I thought of doing, and by the way this is an article that was recently published and what I actually did was, let me just take you two steps back as I talk if I may. What I did in this particular research, or in this inquiry is that we wanted to understand how teachers make meaning. Does that make sense? How do they make meaning of their teaching lives? And let me just try and sum it up in one sentence... And it basically has to do with this... Teachers shape or forge identities, make their meaning, okay? Not necessarily only of what with that which happens at the school, it's way beyond of what happens at the school' (Speaker 9, Presentation 1, Line 116).*
- ❖ *'...so we're trying to understand school, we're trying to understand the educational landscape, and then also the classrooms, and the way teachers make sense of all this' (Speaker 9, Presentation 1, Line 135).*

Another pertinent focus of studies conducted by educational psychology researchers appears to be that of teacher enablement and support. The possibility of specifically supporting teaching practices through research was also highlighted. The focus, therefore, seems to be on how teachers can be supported and enabled in their teaching environments using resources which they already have, as well as by investigating how the process of conducting research in a school or community can contribute to the support which teachers receive in terms of their personal and professional development. Examples of such projects are reflected in the statements below:

- ❖ *'Ja, it started with me and then as we spoke yesterday as soon as there's a need that arises we do something to address that need. So it started out with the initial project then after we've identified the assets and the strengths in the community, the next step was what to do with it' (Speaker 7, Presentation 4, Line 73).*
- ❖ *'...so it was literally in the beginning we didn't set out to have a participatory necessary process, it was more a well initially actually a case study design which evolved into an action research design and then just a feeling that it should be more participatory, so as the agenda of the teachers became apparent, as the teachers said*

*this is needed within the place where we are. Trying to see how research could support the capacity in terms of practice' (Speaker 2, Presentation 4, Line 98).*

In each of these foci, various methodologies (mentioned under trend 2) were employed. According to my review of various research studies between university faculties and teachers it appears that existing collaborative research projects tend to focus on analysing teacher education, professional development and building the capacity of those involved in partnerships (Mule, 2006; Kuter & Koç, 2009; Murray *et al.*, 2009; Levine & Marcus, 2010). Aspects which are also frequently emphasised are the improvement and enhancement of specific school subjects such as Mathematics and Science, the implementation of such subjects on a practical level (Saito *et al.*, 2007; Sutherland *et al.*, 2010) as well as the examination of the conceptualisation of partnerships (Callahan & Martin, 2007; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009; Moran *et al.*, 2009). Education researchers also seem to focus their studies on an examination of relationships between partners, partners' points of view and power relations, as well as teamwork occurring within collaborative partnerships between university faculties and schools (Miller *et al.*, 2006; Alpert & Bechar, 2007; Bartholomew & Sandholtz, 2009). Finally, there are a growing number of studies which describe and illustrate contemporary models and approaches for carrying out collaborative partnerships, as well as how these models might best be put into action (Korthagen *et al.*, 2006).

In the context of South African educational psychology researchers and teachers, I found in the current study that many studies may focus on issues unique to the South African context and educational landscape, such as obstacles which may affect teaching and learning, how teachers create meaning of their work in such situations, and how teachers can be enabled and supported. Consequently, studies on collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers in South Africa appear to have a much wider focus on how education and the experience of being a teacher or a learner can be enhanced and improved in order for participants be able to experience their work as meaningful and rewarding, as well as enabling and supportive. If one considers the common goals highlighted by sub-trend 1.1, I found also that the focus of studies on collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers appears to link with the goals most commonly identified by teachers and educational psychology researchers, for a collaborative partnership, namely capacity-building, community development, life-long learning, the co-creation of new knowledge and knowledge exchange, teacher education and professional development.

**TREND 4:**

**Benefits of Collaborative Partnerships**

In Table 4.5 I provide the sub-trends, indicators and exclusions relied upon during data analysis in order to determine the constituencies of this trend. There seemed to be consensus in the generated data regarding benefits for teachers and educational psychology researchers involved in collaborative partnerships.

**TABLE 4.5: Sub-trends, indicators and exclusions related to the trend *Benefits of collaborative partnerships***

<b>Sub-Trends</b>	4.1. Teacher benefits 4.2. Researcher benefits
<b>Indicators</b>	Data which suggest or describe the benefits of participating in or being involved in a collaborative partnership, with regard to teachers and educational psychology researchers.
<b>Exclusions</b>	Data which suggest or describe the benefits of any other practice which could arise from participation in a collaborative partnership, for example, the benefits of communicating <i>via</i> a platform.

**SUB-TREND 4.1:**

**Teacher Benefits**

With regard to teachers participating in collaborative partnerships with educational psychology researchers, it appears that the most prevalent benefits may be the development of a positive self-image through involvement in partnership work, the development of professional skills and competencies as a result of participation in collaborative partnerships, as well as the generation of a positive image of the work being done by teachers in communities. With regard to work that is undertaken by teachers in communities, teachers seemed to be of the opinion that by collaborating with researchers, co-constructing knowledge and disseminating the findings of various projects and studies, outsiders can be made more aware of the positive work being done in communities where teachers are stereotypically assumed not to have the resources, skills and potential to develop young minds. Embedded in the aforementioned benefits which teachers (as practitioners) seem to experience, are the development of a sense of agency and a sense of hope, as indicated by the following statements:

- ❖ *'The teachers benefitted because there was acknowledgement of teachers, we heard voices, the teachers' voices came across clearly, we saw a positive image of teachers, and much of the research I think lead to teacher development, whether it was development of skills, whether it was development of competencies, but there was teacher development' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5. Line 246).*
- ❖ *'...it gave the participants a sense of agency, there was something that they could do, and that they could use again as a teaching tool and that it allowed them to raise awareness' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 187).*
- ❖ *'...I think looking at the drawings that you made just in the session before this one, it also indicated I believe, how you have developed and how you have grown; professionally but also personally, because you cannot go away untouched when you are so close with so many people who are so precious. You cannot remain untouched or unchanged' (Speaker 5, Presentation 6, Line 13).*
- ❖ *'...and the benefits of course, in this partnership, is huge; the spin-offs for the students who are learning how to teach in a different context, and then also the spin-off for the teachers, who are in the schools, who are, which are oftentimes under-resourced; the teachers are unmotivated and confronted with a whole range of difficulties' (Speaker 5, Presentation 6, Line 89).*
- ❖ *'...findings that engender hope and maybe we need to start thinking about doing research which really encourages hope...' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 483).*
- ❖ *'We heard that as well when ... spoke about David's story and how his narrative encouraged hope because it gave us positive images of teachers' (Speaker 1, Presentation 1, Line 484).*

The abovementioned benefits of collaborative partnerships between researchers and practitioners are reiterated throughout existing literature studies (Grundy *et al.*, 2001; Van Zee *et al.*, 2003; Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005; Mule, 2006; Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007; Kuter & Koç, 2009; Murray *et al.*, 2009; Levine & Marcus, 2010), and relate mostly to the development and capacity building of teachers or practitioners. Thus, I found that the nature of collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers appear to be similar to collaborative partnerships between researchers and practitioners in varying fields. The shared benefits may, for example, include the development of professional skills related to the various fields of interest.

## SUB-TREND 4.2:

### Researcher Benefits

According to the data I obtained, educational psychology researchers also seem to gain when participating in collaborative partnerships with teachers. It appears as though educational psychology researchers experience collaborative partnership work as beneficial since it is an experience where they are given the opportunity to grow and develop as professionals and researchers, as captured in the following contribution:

- ❖ *'If I just reflect on who I was as a researcher when ... and I first started the partnership in 2003, and who I am as a researcher in 2009, it could not have had happened if it was not in partnership with teachers' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 268).*

Educational psychology researchers therefore appear to have found that throughout their collaborative partnership projects in various communities, they have been able to grow and develop not only as professionals, but as individuals too. The following statement indicates that researchers seem to benefit from participation in collaborative partnerships in terms of personal growth and identity development within their chosen field:

- ❖ *'It was a process of building relationships, not just in terms of the partnerships, but also in terms of relationships with the self, the researcher's relationship to herself in the research' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 292).*

Participation in collaborative partnerships may also present an opportunity to expand a researcher's repertoire of academic or research skills and to learn through the partnership-related experiences with which they are presented. In some instances, it appears that educational psychology researchers believe that, had they not been involved in collaborative partnerships with teachers, they might not have been able to expand their scope of expertise and the methodologies with which they feel comfortable. A reflection pertaining to the aforementioned discussion is provided in the extract that follows:

- ❖ *'...so the development of my identity as researcher and also I think my scope of my tool kit, my methodology would not have happened if it hadn't been for the partnership in research.' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 273)*

Finally, participation in collaborative partnerships with teachers may present educational psychology researchers with situations which are challenging. Such situations require

researchers to deal with issues and situations which may be unpleasant, but which could promote growth in their field. Examples of where the aforementioned growth may have occurred, are provided in the following statements:

- ❖ *'...so those things actually served as learning experiences for me as a researcher but also hopefully for every single teacher that sat there because people have to think about these things. Why do I think this way? Why do I think the university comes from there?' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 811).*
- ❖ *'In the beginning, as a researcher, if you can't deal with these types of things, if you scared of building these types of relationships, you would run and you would never go back to that school. Because these things serve as a medium to build relationship and understanding and it shouldn't be threatened' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 820).*

Although the benefits of collaborative partnerships for practitioners seem to dominate literature (Grundy *et al.*, 2001; Van Zee *et al.*, 2003; Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007), it appears as if researchers participating in collaborative partnerships experience similar benefits. These benefits seem to relate to personal and professional development within one's broader field of expertise. Both parties apparently experience development in terms of their own professional skills, as well as personal growth and identity development through the work which they conduct together. Furthermore, teachers in particular appear to be instilled with a sense of hope and a sense of agency that the various roles which they fulfil within the school environment can be beneficial to their communities, and that they can in fact impact on the lives of others through community projects and collaborative partnerships in which they choose to participate.

**TREND 5:**  
**Challenges of Collaborative Partnerships**

In Table 4.6 I provide the sub-trends, indicators and exclusions used during data analysis to determine the constituencies of this trend. The majority of the papers presented highlighted some challenges typically associated with collaborative partnerships. This trend deals with three major challenges of collaborative partnerships: (5.1.) Gaining access in communities, (5.2.) Sustainability of collaborative partnership work, and (5.3.) Influence of external factors.

**TABLE 4.6: Sub-trends, indicators and exclusions related to the trend *Challenges of collaborative partnerships***

<b>Sub-Trends</b>	5.1. Gaining access to communities 5.2. Sustainability of collaborative partnership work 5.3. Influence of external factors
<b>Indicators</b>	Data which suggest or describe the challenges one may be confronted with when participating in or being involved in a collaborative partnership, with regard to teachers and educational psychology researchers.
<b>Exclusions</b>	Data which suggest or describe the challenges of any other practice which arises from participation in a collaborative partnership, for example, the challenges arising from visual participatory methodology.

**SUB-TREND 5.1:  
Gaining Access to Communities**

The first major challenge of trend 5 suggests that when participating in a collaborative partnership, one may be confronted with the issue of gaining access to the community where one wishes to work. Researchers seem to experience this task as challenging since not all communities are open to researchers entering their communities and appear not to always trust researchers wanting to conduct research studies within their communities, as indicated by the statements below:

- ❖ *'...the teachers were reluctant to buy into the project, because they had the idea that we coming there as researchers to do research on them. Until we after time, had convinced them that we are not there to research about them, we are actually there to learn from them and to use that information so that we can have some output together' (Speaker 9, Presentation 1, Line 369).*
- ❖ *'...to them in the beginning it was we checking you, are you honest, is that what you really want to do because they went through a process where other schools and districts came to their school where they took their work to other schools and showcased their work at other schools without acknowledging them, where their focus on their practices, they took photos, they took examples of their work and they shared it with other schools without acknowledging these teachers' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 354).*
- ❖ *'There've been a number of people who have come into their schools and almost demanded information, and so when researchers come in there's a sense of "What*

*do you want from us, and are you going to treat us as badly as we've been treated in the past?' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 108).*

Furthermore, researchers often appear to experience practical and logistical problems when attempting to gain access to communities; for example, not being able to make contact with appropriate community members in order to negotiate the terms of the partnership, as well as not being able to connect with relevant authorities in order to obtain permission to enter into communities and schools for the purposes of research. The following two statements provide examples of practical and logistical problems experienced by educational psychology researchers attempting to gain access to communities:

- ❖ *'Access is very important for us and it's still very fresh in our memories because it really took longer than we anticipated. It actually asked much more than we anticipated. It is important in the beginning to get the blessings of the officials. At our university we had to apply for permission, and let's say they don't accept the project, then we can't continue with the project. We had to apply to the rep at the Education Department, and you can only access that person by email so if he's somewhere at a conference, he doesn't read his emails, it often takes months before he replies. And we're not allowed in the school unless... So it was important to do the first step to get in to the schools. That first part and how you do it, establishes the group rapport' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 538).*
- ❖ *'Not long after that, I can't remember when, I think it was in June, the teachers' strike... The year before? Ja, that was part of our experience, we went to the schools and we had all these scheduled meetings, and the department was there because of the strike. This was the first time we realised we really had to negotiate this as well, and especially at the right schools, because it could really damage the relationship at that particular school. We built a really a very good relationship with the whole staff, and just because of the fact that they had two few teacher unions they were divided in the end. So again there was mistrust on the staff, and we had to work with that and through that again' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 598).*

The presentations given at the symposium also reflected that the act of gaining access to a community in order to collaborate and form a partnership is often experienced as vastly different from textbook definitions regarding this practice. Very little attention seems to be paid to gaining entry into communities for research and partnership purposes, given that this

is probably the most important aspect of collaboration as a whole. One of the speakers commented as follows:

- ❖ *'...don't think we just got into the schools. It took us quite a long time, because what we did is, a small committee of us, myself, the dean and ... who is our community engagement officer, we took a year to get to know the schools, to go to them, to set up appointments, introduce them to the whole idea of the partnership, then after that made another appointment with them to see do they want to come, don't they want to come in, is there anything they don't understand. Then they had to come to the university to sign a memorandum to say they understand. So it's not an easy-peasy kind of thing, it takes quite a while to get to that. But it's rewarding and it's worthwhile' (Speaker 4, Presentation 2, Line 576).*

In existing literature specific challenges which have been experienced in community-partnered participatory research (Kim *et al.*, 2005) relate to the identification of potential partners and the establishment of collaborative relationships among community organisations and a research team. It seems as though some established community organisations are indifferent towards change or even suspicious of the efforts of researchers at developing partnerships despite a monumental need for services and resources within given communities (Kim *et al.*, 2005). Another challenge that is reported on relates to some researchers being unfamiliar with the communities where they will be working and possibly being regarded as outsiders who are not necessarily welcome. This challenge could make it especially difficult to implement a collaborative project.

The aforementioned challenges link to what is highlighted by Casey (2008), Clegg *et al.* (2005) as well as Huxham and Vangen (2000) with regard to the importance of choosing suitable researchers to enter certain communities and developing a relationship of trust in order to gain entrance. Encouraging community members who are seen to be partners, and developing a sense of ownership and a sense of belonging within a collaborative partnership relationship may also be regarded as essential in gaining entrance into a community. Mitchell *et al.* (2009) concur with this idea, maintaining that challenges encountered throughout collaborative partnerships can be addressed by attending to the school or community context, and building interventions based on teacher's or community members' experiences in the following ways: by generating and maximising resources; maintaining efficient dialogue and by envisioning multiple solutions for conflict resolution.

I found that the difficulties experienced by educational psychology researchers of gaining access to communities is experienced by researchers in other fields and collaborative partnerships as well. Specific issues that need to be taken into consideration can be identified before and during the process of attempting to gain entrance into a community, in order to make this process more feasible. These challenges pertain to the degree of trust which can be expected of community members at the onset of the development of a collaborative partnership; preconceived ideas that community members may hold regarding researchers entering their communities for the purpose of research; previous experiences of community members regarding collaborative partnership and research efforts in their communities, and steps that may be taken in order to assist community members in feeling more at ease with the research and collaboration process.

#### **SUB-TREND 5.2:**

#### **Sustainability of Collaborative Partnership Work**

I found that the second major challenge experienced by educational psychology researchers seems to relate to sustaining partnerships. Although collaborative research partners can find workable ways of sustaining the work done through collaborative partnerships, once an official research project has come to an end appears to be difficult. It seems as if the dilemma that researchers face in terms of sustainability has to do with whether or not teachers will continue with partnership initiatives once researchers exit. The following excerpt provides an example of this challenge:

- ❖ *'A big challenge is the implementation of our research and the sustainability of research. Then the researchers leave, what then?' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 297).*

An apparent concern amongst researchers is whether (former) partners will be able to extend and expand on the initial projects of researchers in a field, as opposed to simply carrying on with projects at a basic level. Ultimately, it would seem that when researchers make a decision to enter a community for the purpose of research and collaboration, their goal is not only to have their projects benefit communities in terms of capacity building and development on a short-term scale, but also to equip community members with resources and skills to carry on with projects and to develop projects even further so as to have a long-term impact on the community, as reflected in the following statement:

- ❖ *'...then the fiscal ability of the intervention, we heard wonderful stories here. I am not too sure if this is such a good story, we started off with how many did we say? About 28 teachers in.... We ended with eight, you know so you see how they well, and then to sustain it I am very pushy and we are now waiting for another event but because they so busy it is not coming forth yet, but we hope that we can sustain this' (Speaker 3, Presentation 3, Line 267).*

Based on the presentations given at the symposium, educational psychology researchers seem to give a lot of attention to the dilemma of sustainability through papers they write and present, and whenever an opportunity presents itself. At symposiums or conferences, for example, a platform is provided for sharing such challenges and making recommendations as summarised by one of the speakers:

- ❖ *'...and then we talk about, if you want to talk with academic jargon, we talk about social and educational transformation and we talk about sustainability; people taking the project further when the researchers are pulling out because they will at some stage have to pull out. And what happens then? Those are the big questions I've got' (Speaker 4, Presentation 2, Line 520).*

Although literature (Huxham & Vangen, 2000; Kim *et al.*, 2005; Clegg *et al.*, 2005; Witte *et al.*, 2005; Casey, 2008; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009) regards the process of gaining access to a community as a potential challenge for researchers wishing to enter new communities, sustainability is not directly identified as a potential challenge for partners working in collaborative partnerships. However, if one were to consider the arguments of various studies in terms of pre-requisites and indicators for success in collaborative partnerships, sustainability of collaborative partnerships may be a challenge which should be addressed and may be explored further. Mitchell *et al.* (2009) are of the opinion that there are many matters in collaborative research which pose a threat to successful collaboration, namely who initiates the collaboration, the reasons underlying the inquiry, available resources, teacher workload, pathways for partners to communicate and expectations for how often communication should occur. Ansari *et al.* (2002) state that effective collaboration for implementation and maintenance do not merely involve motivation and involved members, but also the skills or 'capacity for participation' to operate effectively. Therefore, it could be argued that if the various pre-requisites and indicators for success in collaborative partnerships are not addressed appropriately, partnerships may not be sustained as effectively. Casey (2008), Clegg *et al.* (2005) as well as Huxham and Vangen (2000) support this argument by referring

to the importance of choosing appropriate researchers to enter certain communities, developing a trusting relationship in order to gain entrance and encouraging community members who are to be seen as partners, in an attempt to develop a sense of ownership and a sense of belonging within any collaborative partnership relationship.

Therefore, I found that although sustainability is not widely mentioned in existing literature as a possible challenge of collaborative partnerships, it seems possible that, if other aspects such as the establishment and implementation of collaborative partnerships are not completed as planned, sustainability could be influenced. At this point this is purely hypothetical and would require further investigation

**TREND 5.3:**  
**Influence of External Factors**

Educational psychology researchers collaborating with teachers seem to find that, in addition to challenges such as gaining access to communities and sustaining partnerships, they also have to provide for the possibility that their research projects and collaborative efforts may be curtailed by external factors not under their control. For example, some of the educational psychology researchers who presented papers at the symposium, commented that quite often when they arrive at rural schools, teachers and school communities might have had bad experiences related to past research projects. Therefore, communities were occasionally hesitant to accept and invite more researchers into their environment; probably for fear that they will be exploited again. For this reason, an underlying mistrust was reportedly a reality, when researchers would approach communities and schools in order to do research. This potential for mistrust is indicated by the following statement:

- ❖ *‘There’ve been a number of people who have come into their schools and almost demanded information, and so when researchers come in there’s a sense of “What do you want from us, and are you going to treat us as badly as we’ve been treated in the past?’ (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 108).*

Researchers furthermore appear to face challenges related to the context in which they choose to work. The most often mentioned challenge regarding the context in which educational psychology researchers and teachers could collaborate relates to the fact that the milieu in which the majority of educational psychology research projects are conducted is mostly quite different to the context with which the researchers themselves are familiar and comfortable.

The following statements reflect two instances in which educational psychology researchers dealt with contexts that they were not familiar with:

- ❖ *'So we had to learn in the process. And we had to change and the students also benefited from that...What we also found very very helpful and useful is that we can learn from you to also take that back to train the undergraduate students, because they also get trained from the books providing all the answers on all the glossy papers but it's different to go back into a classroom and to know what you have to do, especially in the diverse classroom. You get thrown down with all these policy documents. You can't even make sense of the policy document, what about the implementation of all these things. You know all the acronyms for these things but it doesn't say anything about the practice, the how to, and how do we share these things. And what we've learned from teachers, because of the fact that teachers are always evaluated, and we're also teachers when we talk about teachers because when we had our theory we just talked about the way that they evaluate us every year in terms of output. And we know you go through the same process, so it's often difficult to also share what you know with other teachers because maybe if I share things that I know that somebody else will be assessed in a better way. So there must be a better answer and a better way of dealing with these things. And we have learned from teachers how to do that better, but it often goes unrecognised' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 99).*
- ❖ *'And race, I was a white person coming into a diverse group, and talking about whiteness, talking about racial issues because they put it on the table the day we came there' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 808).*

In addition, it appears as if, when educational psychology researchers and teachers attempt to establish collaborative partnerships, the various partners may be confronted with challenges such as a lack of communication and contextual barriers. For example, some educational psychology researchers expressed that although various appropriate protocols are generally followed (for example, authorities are usually contacted, and meetings are scheduled), researchers would at times arrive at schools and find organisers unaware of arranged meetings, teachers absent from school, or labour actions in progress (such as, strikes). This implies that scheduled meetings would then be cancelled, with collaborative projects not following scheduled planning. The following excerpt reflects this idea:

- ❖ *'Not long after that, I can't remember when, I think it was in June, the teachers strike... (discussion in panel about dates etc) The year before? (more inaudible*

*discussion). Ja, that was part of our experience, we went to the schools and we had all these scheduled meetings, and the department was there because of the strike. This was the first time we realised we really had to negotiate this as well, and especially at the right schools, because it could really damage the relationship at that particular school. We built a really a very good relationship with the whole staff, and just because of the fact that they had two few teacher unions they were divided in the end. So again there was mistrust on the staff, and we had to work with that and through that again' (Speaker 8, Presentation 2, Line 598).*

Lastly, it appears that when teachers and educational psychology researchers are able to commence with their partnerships, fatigue might play a role in the degree of participation in studies. Teachers may be tired after a long day of teaching when arriving to participate in research projects. In addition, teachers may have to deal with emotional challenges during projects or throughout the day. Thus, researchers reportedly find that they become care-worn, as a result of dealing with challenges faced by the various partners on a daily basis. The challenge of researchers becoming care-worn is indicated by the following statements:

- ❖ *'A challenge of doing research is that many of our researchers become care worn' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 296).*
- ❖ *'She mentioned how overwhelming it is for her as a researcher, to work with communities and with schools and teachers and learners who are impacted by the challenges of our contexts' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 54).*
- ❖ *'Other challenges like working with research participants who are fatigued...' (Speaker 1, Presentation 5, Line 107).*

The influence of external factors on the efficiency of collaborative partnerships does not seem to be commonly regarded as a potential challenge in the development and maintenance of collaborative partnerships in varying fields (Huxham & Vangen, 2000; Kim *et al.*, 2005; Clegg *et al.*, 2005; Witte *et al.*, 2005; Casey, 2008; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009). However, it appears as if various collaborative partnership factors are often not approached appropriately. Some factors which may play an influential role in the effectiveness of a partnership include knowledge pertaining to the culture of the population, systems operation and sources of power, which refer to important aspects in planning effective intervention strategies (Hanson *et al.*, 1991). Oketch (2004) as well as Demir and Paykoç (2006) reflect a similar notion regarding general challenges in the field of education. It would seem that amongst the challenges faced in the field of education issues such as opposition and political interference,

financial pressure, equity, efficiency and quality can be mentioned. Furthermore, economic disparities and ethnic difference may result in the interference of providing quality education (Demir & Paykoç, 2006). Bennell (2003; 2005a; 2005b), as well as Louw, Shisana, Peltzer and Zungu (2009) identify additional challenges which may be faced in the field of education, pertaining to phenomena such as teacher absenteeism, labour actions in education, as well as the high level of demands which are placed on teachers on a daily basis. Sowa and De La Vega's (2008) explanation of culturally relevant collaboration aligns with the aforementioned argument in that these authors (Sowa & De La Vega, 2008) suggest that when partners initiate collaboration, a sociocultural approach needs to be followed, and that stakeholders, in this case teachers and university faculty members, need to be flexible and allow for cultural and ideological differences (Rueda, 1998). In following a sociocultural approach, it may be possible to ameliorate many external influences such as teachers who are overloaded and do not have energy to participate effectively in partnerships, or poor attendance at partnership meetings due to challenges such as a lack of transport or a strike.

Therefore, it appears as if the way in which potential issues and concerns surrounding collaborative partnerships are addressed and provided for, may have an effect on the prevalence and awareness of the influence of external factors on the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships. Furthermore, it seems that collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers imply certain challenges, such as a potential lack of communication and contextual barriers relating to the landscape of education and schools that are synonymous with challenges in the field of education.

### **4.3 CONCLUSION**

Findings of the current study supports existing knowledge, that collaborative partnerships have certain core characteristics. The first core characteristic of collaborative partnerships relates to common goals identified by various partners involved in projects. Similarly, the current study supports research that partnerships are embedded in specific contexts of a given community (or school). Furthermore, partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers revealed the process-oriented nature of collaborative partnerships, as well as knowledge exchange and the subsequent development of knowledge networks through collaborative partnerships. As in other studies on collaborative partnerships, findings indicate benefits and challenges when educational psychology researchers and teachers partner in research. These benefits included development in terms of professional skills, as well as

personal growth and identity development through the work which is conducted as part of a team, and is reflected in current discourses. The following challenges mirror factors documented in collaborative partnerships: lack of communication and contextual barriers related to the landscape of education and schools.

Contrary to existing literature on collaborative partnerships within the field of education, educational psychology researcher studies tend to emphasise how education and the experience of being teacher or learner can be enhanced and improved so that participants may experience their work as meaningful and rewarding, as well as enabling and supportive. When taking into account that educational psychology researchers and teachers tend to identify common goals when establishing a collaborative partnership, it would seem as if the focus of collaborative partnership studies parallels the various common goals identified by partners in the development of a partnership.

New insights into existing literature on collaborative partnerships and participatory methodology show that collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers are directed by an overarching philosophy of care. Essentially, this philosophy implies delivering and fostering enablement of partners, which may result in the development of a sense of purpose, pride and self-esteem specifically for teachers involved in such partnerships. Furthermore, “care” entails a belief in and an acknowledgement of the abilities of partners. Commitment to the various partners and a given collaborative partnership project may also result. Lastly, a philosophy of care may entail an agreement that the nature of the partnership is mutual and reciprocal. The findings of this study also indicate that various methodologies of collaboration are employed by educational psychology researchers and teachers. Partners choose collaboration methods to gain access to a community, and to create an environment where partners can learn from each other in an experiential manner. Partners also appear to opt for methods of collaborating which acknowledge the context, process of collaborating, knowledge exchange and knowledge construction, as well as capacity building of individuals and communities. In the next chapter, I conclude the current study by answering my primary research question as well as my second sub-question. I also provide a discussion regarding the possible contributions of this study and make recommendations for future research, practice and training.



## **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter 4, the secondary question namely “Which collaborative partnership trends emerge when educational psychology researchers and teachers talk about their participatory studies?” was addressed. I now draw the current study to a conclusion and answer the primary and remaining secondary research question. Finally, I discuss the limitations and contributions of the current study and conclude the chapter with recommendations for further research, practice and training.

## **5.2 REVISITING THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK**

As previously stated, I made use of various aspects of the community of practice framework (Lave 1988, 1991, 1997; Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger, 1998), in order to gain an understanding of the findings of the current study in a manner meaningful to the research questions. I also approached my study with certain theoretical assumptions concerning participatory research and collaborative partnerships.

### **5.2.1 THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS**

Findings support the notion that participatory research is based on the contributions of those involved, and that the practitioner may be regarded not only as a co-researcher but as a co-creator of knowledge which is generated as part of a team (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007). Secondly, the fact that researchers and practitioners involved in collaborative partnerships interact on certain aspects of the research problem which represent common interests for the purposes of co-constructing new knowledge as part of the research study (Savoie-Zajc & Descamps-Bednarz, 2007), appeared to be supported by the finding that one of the core characteristics of collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers refers to common goals pursued by the various parties involved in the aforementioned collaborative partnerships. Thirdly, the assumption that partnerships are characterised by a process of knowledge exchange rather than transfer, and that throughout this process, both the researcher and the practitioner are afforded the opportunity to work

together to shape, implement and disseminate the research findings (Sylva *et al.*, 2007) was supported by the finding that collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers are seemingly characterised by a process of knowledge exchange and the subsequent development of knowledge networks. Moreover, the notion that collaborative partnerships present with benefits and challenges which may shape the way in which a partnership is established, maintained and sustained (Balach & Szymanski, 2003; Foskett, 2005; Mitchell *et al.*, 2009) is supported by the findings that collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers entail various benefits and challenges. Lastly, the assumption that it is necessary for various requirements to be adhered to throughout the process of collaboration for collaborative partnerships to be conducted successfully, (Hanson *et al.*, 1991; Rueda, 1998; Hall Jackson *et al.*, 2005; Schneider & Pickett, 2006; Sowa & De La Vega, 2008) is also supported by the findings of the study, and is discussed in more detail in a later section.

### **5.2.2 THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FRAMEWORK**

With regard to the theoretical framework from which the current study was conducted, certain characteristics emerged from communities of practice which have a bearing on collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers. Firstly, communities of practice are described as professional communities where meanings, beliefs and understandings are negotiated and reflected in communal practices (Buysse *et al.*, 2003), and which stem from a convergent interaction between competence and experience which ultimately involves mutual engagement. Secondly, communities of practice can offer an opportunity to members involved to negotiate competence through an experience of directly participating in the research process, whilst at the same time being offered the opportunity to learn and teach. Thirdly, communities of practice view learning as a social phenomenon (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Thus knowledge seems to be integrated into the life of communities that share values, beliefs, languages and customs. In addition, communities of practice regard enablement, or the ability to contribute to a community, as creating the potential for learning. Finally, communities of practice typically develop around aspects of life and the environment which seem important to people, with the practices of a community reflecting each member's own understanding of what is important (Wenger, 2008). Naturally, external constraints can influence this understanding. Nevertheless, members manage to develop practices that are their own personal responses to external influences. Wenger (2008) maintains that, despite the fact that communities of practice arise naturally, this does not necessarily imply that nothing

can be done by an organisation to influence its development. Some communities may benefit from organisational attention, yet may need to be seeded and nurtured.

Based on the abovementioned characteristics of communities of practice, communities of practice shared by educational psychology researchers and teachers may be characterised as individuals or groups of individuals (namely teachers and educational psychology researchers), working together to combine their shared knowledge in a constructive manner, in order to initiate some sort of change in a community (for example, the development and establishment of teacher support structures in a classroom in the context of dealing with HIV/AIDS). Through participatory methodology practices, teachers and educational psychology researchers are afforded the opportunity to negotiate competence in various domains by directly participating in the research process of the various studies in which they were involved, whilst simultaneously being able to teach and learn from one another.

Therefore, the basic elements of communities of practice between educational psychology researchers and teachers include learning as a social phenomenon, the integration of knowledge into the life communities, and the indivisibility of knowledge and practice. Typically, communities involved in collaborative partnerships in the current study adopted an attitude where membership of a specific community afforded the opportunity to learn from others in the community. In return, each individual in the collaborative partnership community took on the shared responsibility of passing on knowledge to other community members. Thus, a process of life-long learning and knowledge exchange appears to be a value embedded in communities of practice in this study. Through the process of sharing knowledge, it may be possible for community members to enable or be enabled by knowledge exchanged and in turn, create further potential for learning. Lastly, it was possible that communities of practice established between teachers and educational psychology researchers could also face external constraints, and that strategies for addressing or overcoming such constraints would need to be identified and implemented if such collaborative partnerships were to be successful. However, such constraints did not emerge as a prevalent trend. Enquiry into situations or partnerships where external constraints are regarded as prevalent, merits further investigation.

### **5.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In this section, I address the primary research question as well as the remaining secondary research question based on the findings of the current study.

#### **5.3.1 HOW MIGHT COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP TRENDS INFORM PARTICIPATORY THEORY AND PRACTICE IN FUTURE PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY RESEARCH STUDIES?**

The notion that both the researcher and practitioner participating in a collaborative partnership should be regarded as being equal in terms of power and ability to contribute towards a given project is useful for participatory methodology theory, since the question of power relations, roles and responsibilities which can be adopted by various partners in a collaborative partnership project still seems to be debatable. In light of this, the manner in which teachers and educational psychology researchers appear to interact on aspects of a research problem, for example how teachers can be supported in dealing with HIV/AIDS in the classroom may be seen as confirmation that it is in fact possible for equal power relations and roles to be assumed. The roles and responsibilities which partners choose to adopt, whilst simultaneously developing and maintaining successful collaborative partnership projects may serve as further evidence of the above discussion.

The finding that partners participate in a process of knowledge exchange rather than knowledge transfer confirms the nature of knowledge transactions in existing literature with regard to participatory methodology theory. The current study seeks to expand on this notion. The findings indicate that engagement with, and exchange of knowledge seemingly creates knowledge networks which may culminate in partnerships. Finally, based on the findings of this study, educational psychology researchers and teachers appear to anticipate various benefits and challenges when collaborating. Potential benefits include development in terms of professional skills, as well as personal growth and identity development through work which is conducted as part of a team. Likewise, challenges which need to be anticipated and planned for in research strategies include lack of communication and contextual barriers related to the landscape of education and schools.

With regard to participatory methodology practice, the current study confirms requirements for successful participatory research with regard to teachers and educational psychology researchers. Requirements include: emphasis on the process-oriented and contextual nature of

collaborative partnerships, as well as the attention paid to the overarching philosophy of care which appears to be prevalent in such partnership projects. Knowledge related to the aforementioned requirements for success of partnerships may provide valuable insights into preferred ways of collaborating, or suggest specific ways of collaborating which have been regarded as successful in the past.

This study indicates the following methodologies as feasible for participatory research between educational psychology researchers and teachers: methods where access to a community can be gained, methods which create an environment where partners can learn from one another in an experiential manner, and methods which acknowledge the context of partnerships, the process of collaboration, knowledge exchange and knowledge construction, as well as capacity building of individuals and communities.

Taking into account the cultural and social context within which partnerships are forged, may significantly enhance the value of partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers, as the majority of partnership studies focused on how education and the experience of being teacher or learner can be enhanced and improved so that participants may experience their work as meaningful, rewarding, enabling and supportive. Smith (2003, 2009) emphasises that the circumstances in which people engage in action and which may have consequences for both the individual and the community, have the potential of creating the most powerful learning environments. Thus, by participating in partnerships which hold such strong implications for the professional and personal lives of the people involved, teachers and educational psychology researchers are equipped with the ability to not merely change their own lives, but to significantly contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding participatory research where common goals are identified with a view to initiating social change or social awareness.

Since communities of practice are centred on the principle of situated learning which may be regarded as a sociocultural phenomenon (Buisse *et al.*, 2003), situated learning between educational psychology researchers and teachers was made possible due to the fact that knowledge was shared and acquired from a variety of individuals dealing with similar problems or challenges related to the common goals of various collaborative partnerships. Some of the aforementioned problems include the need for support or supportive structures when dealing with HIV/AIDS in the classroom. Given that the learning of individuals and community members was typically based within the areas or communities where problems

were being experienced, the various partners had the opportunity to learn and acquire new knowledge in an environment similar to their own unique set of circumstances. In being granted the opportunity to participate in activities and workshops geared towards forming the foundation of their conceptualisation of various issues, community members were also able to approach and address issues from a holistic point of view as opposed to addressing issues in isolation.

### **5.3.2 HOW MIGHT INSIGHT INTO COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP TRENDS BETWEEN TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHERS INFORM PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGY?**

The findings of this study indicate that when educational psychology researchers and teachers collaborate, the nature of their interaction has specific features that could be useful to other researchers and practitioners wishing to embark on similar endeavours. The fact that at least five specific core characteristics related to the aforementioned collaborative partnerships may be meaningful for future researchers and potential partners wishing to learn more about collaborative partnerships. These characteristics include: common goals of educational psychology researchers and teachers; the contextual nature of collaborative partnerships; the process-oriented emphasis of collaborative partnerships; knowledge exchange and the subsequent development of knowledge networks, and an overarching philosophy of “care” in collaborative partnerships. Knowledge of the various core characteristics of collaborative partnerships may also be beneficial to potential partners considering the possibility of initiating a partnership with a given community or school. It is possible that knowledge and an understanding of such characteristics may also inform the way in which future researchers and potential partners choose to develop and establish participatory practices, since they may be able to prepare themselves for some of the aspects that a collaborative partnership may entail. In turn, the various partners could address any issues related to a partnership which may be encountered through a collaborative process. Similarly, insight into the methodologies typically employed in collaborative partnerships may inform future studies and participatory practices, since an understanding of the core attributes of the various methodologies may lead to future studies where researchers and practitioners are able to collaborate effectively, by implementing methodologies which have been used in the past, as well as developing new methodologies with their own unique characteristics.

By gaining insight into the focus of current educational psychology researcher studies, future researchers may be presented with opportunities for further research based on the findings of prior studies. Findings of this study with regard to the benefits and challenges of collaborative partnerships seem to mirror the efforts of other studies on collaborative partnerships by enlightening future researchers in terms of how they may benefit from involvement in a participatory study, as well as how they may be challenged at different stages of the collaborative partnership process. By taking note of the benefits that previous educational psychology researchers and teachers have experienced through their participation together (namely personal and professional development and the development of a sense of agency and hope), potential partners may be more inclined to consider the possibility of collaboration. By taking into consideration the challenges (such as lack of communication and contextual barriers related to the landscape of education and schools), it is possible that future researchers may gain an understanding of some of the preparation that needs to be done before embarking on a participatory study, and in the process avoid or reduce the possibility of being confronted with similar challenges.

#### **5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

One of the limitations of this study which needs to be taken into consideration relates to the sampling strategy that was employed. I made use of a non-probability, purposeful sample of documents. Thus, I employed a set of documents (transcribed presentations from a symposium), in order to obtain knowledge and information on a specified topic. However, in doing so, it was not possible for me to collect additional data or probe deeper into the topic under study, since I had only a set of audio recordings and transcriptions to work with. Although I did endeavour to engage the educational psychology researchers who presented the aforementioned papers in member-checking activities, I still maintain that I might not have had access to the same amount of rich, meaningful information as I might have had, if this study had sampled people.

In addition, I was confronted with the possibility that transcriptions may imply the potential loss of data, distortion and reduction in complexity (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). In light of this, I decided to use the transcriptions merely as a record of data rather than a record of a social encounter. One specific challenge that I faced with regard to the transcription process was the fact that some of the audio recordings that I transcribed were of poor quality which may have affected my ability to capture accurately what each participant was saying. Among the

implications of poor quality recordings was likelihood of a loss of quality in the information that was produced, given that much of the non-verbal communication was not able to be captured. In addition, I faced the risk of the audio and/or video files becoming corrupt, rendering the data inaccessible. Where one of the audio files was indeed corrupted, I attempted to address this issue by means of member-checking (Mare & Van der Westhuizen, 2007).

Another challenge with which I was confronted during the course of this study relates to the type of data analysis that I chose to employ. Since qualitative data analysis is an interpretive process, it was important to keep in mind that, by making use of a qualitative data analysis strategy, my results could yield a less accurate representation of the content of the text, and a more reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher (being me) and the decontextualised data which is already an interpretation of a social encounter (Mayring, 2000; Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Forman & Damschroder, 2007). It was therefore essential that I engage with my reflective journal and attend debriefing sessions with my research supervisors in an attempt to remain aware of my own preconceived ideas regarding the text I was in the process of analysing. I also involved the educational psychology researchers who contributed to the generation of data in member-checking activities in order to prevent any misunderstandings or misinterpretations which might have occurred in the data analysis process.

Finally, as a researcher conducting a qualitative study, the risk of researcher bias was a challenge as this study relied primarily on my personal constructions and interpretations of the papers presented at the symposium and the knowledge which was generated through each presentation. On the other hand, the possibility of the study being approached from a subjective point of view embraces the essence of qualitative research which is to gain a rich in-depth understanding of the participants' life worlds and experiences. Nevertheless, I addressed this challenge by continuously reflecting in my reflective journal and discussing with my supervisors my thoughts, feelings and actions throughout the research process (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999).

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following section presents recommendations for future research, practice and training within the field of educational psychology and education in general.

### **5.5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the findings discussed in Chapter 4, as well as the theoretical assumptions from which this study was approached, I recommend the following investigations:

- ❖ Further research on how collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers can be sustained on a long-term basis.
- ❖ In-depth studies of the various methodologies employed by educational psychology researchers in collaboration with teachers, and the rationale behind these methodologies.
- ❖ Exploratory studies with regard to new techniques and designs emerging from participatory methodology in educational psychology researcher studies.
- ❖ In-depth studies of the various contexts in which educational psychology researchers find themselves working, and why they choose certain contexts over others despite the need for research and collaboration in various other contexts.
- ❖ Exploratory and descriptive enquiries into the prevalence of pre-requisites and predictors of success in collaborative partnerships between educational psychology researchers and teachers.

### **5.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

It seems evident that researchers and practitioners involved in the field of education and educational psychology could benefit from an understanding of the various aspects of collaborative partnerships and participatory research specifically between teachers and educational psychology researchers, as well as the processes which appear to be generally followed when such studies are conducted. Moreover, insight into how these findings complement and contrast various theories and existing literature on collaborative partnerships and participatory methodologies may provide practitioners and researchers with an enriched understanding of how participatory projects may be established and sustained in the long term. Placing emphasis on the contextual nature of collaborative partnerships and participatory studies between educational psychology researchers and teachers could furthermore enhance one's practices with regard to the way in which one may decide to approach the issue of conducting a participatory study, and the perceptions that one may have upon embarking on such an endeavour. Insight into the methodologies employed in collaborative partnerships may provide researchers and practitioners with important

information which assists in the efficacy of a collaborative partnership, as well as offering new ideas or methods to an already effective partnership project.

### **5.5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING**

The findings of this study could be beneficial to training programs in the fields of research and education since these findings may provide valuable insights into research and teaching methodologies which students may otherwise have overlooked. Students or individuals participating in training programs may benefit from the vast range of information regarding collaborative partnerships, how participatory methodologies can be of use in partnerships, the typical focus of educational psychology researcher studies as well as the benefits and challenges of collaborative partnerships and participatory research, which the findings of my study offer. The aforementioned information may also serve to complement an individual's existing understanding of participatory research, and possibly result in an increased interest in this unique way of working with and learning from professionals in various fields of expertise.

Since my study paid a great deal of attention to the researcher's experience of participatory research, teachers or practitioners wishing to adopt the role of researcher, or to sustain an already established participatory study, may benefit from the knowledge which could be gained from such a focus. Individuals may be made aware of some of the processes which tend to be followed as well as some of the experiences that they as future researchers may expect. Knowledge of the researcher's experience could in turn contribute to the training and preparation of such individuals wishing to enter the field of education or educational psychology. Current researchers from various fields may also benefit from an understanding of the experience of educational psychology researchers and the unique aspects of collaborative partnerships and participatory studies between educational psychology researchers and teachers. This understanding may offer researchers valuable insights into alternative methods of conducting partnerships and research studies, with regard to the emphasis placed on context, the process of collaborating, as well as the focus of educational psychology researcher studies.

## **5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Various trends seem to emerge when educational psychology researchers and teachers participate in collaborative partnerships. It is evident that such partnerships consist of several

characteristics which possibly make them unique, as well as specific methodologies, benefits and challenges that might contribute to the effectiveness, vision and mission of each individual partnership project. Through a qualitative content analysis design, this study explored the trends which emerged when educational psychology researchers talk about their participatory studies, as well as how knowledge and an understanding of such trends might inform participatory methodologies. The results indicate that at least five trends emerged when educational psychology researchers participating in this study talked about their participatory studies, resulting in some unique participatory conditions and environments relative to each individual partnership project. Researchers and practitioners already involved or wishing to become involved in such projects, could benefit from an understanding of the various trends emerging from teacher-educational psychology researcher partnerships, and may in turn apply the aforementioned findings in the effective establishment, implementation and maintenance of their own future participatory methodology studies.



- Alpert, B. & Bechar, S. (2007). Collaborative evaluation research: a case study of teachers' and academic researchers' teamwork in a secondary school. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 33(3-4), 229-257.
- Ansari, W.E., Phillips, C.J. & Zwi, A.B. (2002). Narrowing the gap between academic professional wisdom and community lay knowledge: perceptions from partnerships. *Public Health*, 116, 151-159.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. (2004). *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Babbie, E. (2005). *The basics of social research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Canada: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Bailey, P.H. (1996). Assuring quality in narrative analysis. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 18, 186-194.
- Balach, C.A. & Szymanski, G.J. (2003, April). *The growth of a professional learning community through collaborative action research*. Paper presented at the 2003 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.
- Baldwin, J.A., Johnson, J.L. & Benally, C.C. (2009). Building partnerships between indigenous communities and universities: lessons learned in HIV/AIDS and substance abuse prevention research. *American Journal of Public Health*, 99(1), 77-82.
- Barab, S.A. & Duffy, T.M. (2000). From practice fields to communities of practice. In D.H. Jonassen & S.M. Land (Eds.), *Theoretical foundations of learning environments* (pp. 25-55). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bartholomew, S.S. & Sandholtz, J.H. (2009). Competing views of teaching in a school-university partnership. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(1), 155-165.
- Bennell, P. (2003). The AIDS epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa: are teachers a high-risk group? *Comparative Education*, 39(4), 493-508.
- Bennell, P. (2005a). The impact of the AIDS epidemic on teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Development Studies*, 41(3), 440-466.
- Bennell, P. (2005b). The impact of the AIDS epidemic on the schooling of orphans and other directly affected children in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Development Studies*, 41(3), 467-488.

- Bhana, A. (2002). Participatory action research: a practical guide for realistic radicals. In M. Terre Blanche & K. Durrheim (Eds.). *Research in practice* (pp. 429-442). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Boddy, D., Macbeth, D. & Wagner, B. (2000). Implementing collaboration between organisations: An empirical study of supply chain partnering. *Journal of Management Studies*, 37(7), 1003-1017.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bringle, R.G. & Hatcher, J.A. (1996). Implementing service learning in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education*, 67(2), 67-73.
- Bringle, R.G. & Hatcher, J.A. (1999). Reflection in service learning: making meaning of experience. *Educational Horizons*, 77(4), 179-185.
- Brown, D., White, J. & Leibrandt, L. (2006). Collaborative partnerships for nursing facilities and health service providers: what can nursing learn from business literature? *Journal of Nursing Management*, 14, 170-179.
- Burke, B. (1998). Understanding and practicing participatory evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 80, 43-56.
- Burke, C. (2007). The view of the child: releasing “visual voices” in the design of learning environments. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 28(3), 359-372.
- Burn, K. (2006). Promoting critical conversations: the distinctive contribution of higher education as a partner in the professional preparation of new teachers. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 32(3), 243-258.
- Buysse, V., Sparkman, K.L. & Wesley, P.W. (2003). Communities of practice: connecting what we know with what we do. *Council for Exceptional Children*, 69(3), 263-277.
- Callahan, J.L. & Martin, D. (2007). The spectrum of school-university partnerships: a typology of organisational learning systems. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(2), 136-145.
- Carr, A.A., Jonassen, D.H., Litzinger, M.E. & Marra, R.M. (1998). Good ideas to foment educational revolution: the role of systemic change in advancing situated learning, constructivism, and feminist pedagogy. *Educational Technology*, 38(1), 5-15.
- Casey, M. (2008). Partnership – success factors of interorganizational relationships. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 16, 72-83.
- Chalfen, R. (1991). *Turning leaves: the photograph collections of two Japanese American families*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

- Chambers, R. (1994). Participatory rural appraisal (PRA): analysis of experience. *World Development*, 22(9), 1253-1268.
- Chappell, A.L. (2000). Emergence of participatory methodology in learning difficulty research: understanding the context. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 28, 38-43.
- Charles, C.M. (2002). *Introduction to educational research*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Christie, D.C., Cassidy, C., Skinner, D., Coutts, N., Sinclair, C., Rimpilainen, S. & Wilson, A. (2007). Building collaborative communities of enquiry in educational research. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 13(3), 263-278.
- Clark, C., Moss, P.A., Goering, S., Herter, R.J., Lamar, B. & Leonard, D. (1996). Collaboration as dialogue: teachers as researchers engaged in conversation and professional development. *American Educational Research Journal*, 33(1), 193-231.
- Clegg, S., Kronberger, M. & Pitsis, T. (2005). *Managing and organisations: an introduction to theory and practice*. London: Sage.
- Cocks, E. & Cockram, J. (1995). The participatory research paradigm and intellectual disability. *Mental Handicap Research*, 8, 25-37.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Colman, A.M. (2006). *Oxford Dictionary of Psychology* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press Inc.
- Connelly, K. & Reilly, R.C. (2007). Emergent issues when researching trauma: a confessional tale. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13(4), 522-540.
- Creswell, J.W. (2005). *Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative approaches to research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Pearson Education.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: meaning and perspective in the research process*. London: Sage.
- Dana, N. (1992, November). *Discovering researcher subjectivities, perceptions and biases: a critical examination of myths, metaphors, and meanings inherent in university-school collaborative action research projects*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Research on Women in Education Conference, University Park, Pennsylvania.
- De Lange, N., Olivier, T. & Wood, L. (2008). Participatory video documentary: just for whom? *Education as Change*, 12(2), 109-122.

- De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. (2005). *Research for grass roots. For the social science and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Demir, C.E. & Paykoç, F. (2006). Challenges of primary education in Turkey: priorities of parents and professionals. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 26(6), 640-654.
- Denzin, N.K. (2005). Emancipatory discourses and the ethics and politics of interpretation. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln. (Eds.). *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (pp. 933-985). California: Sage Publications.
- Elmes, D.G., Kantowitz, B.H. & Roediger, H.L. (1999). *Research methods in psychology*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Evoch, C.J. (2007). Collaborative partnerships and the transformation of secondary education through ICTs in South Africa. *Educational Media International*, 44(2), 81-98.
- Ewald, W. (1992). *Magic eyes: scenes from an Andean girlhood*. Seattle: Bay Press.
- Forman, J. & Damschroder, L. (2007). Qualitative content analysis. *Advances in Bioethics*, 11, 39-62.
- Foskett, R. (2005). Collaborative partnership between HE and employers: a study of workforce development. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 29(3), 251-264.
- Frankfort-Nachmias, C. & Nachmias, D. (1992). *Research methods in the social sciences*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Gaventa, J. (1991). Towards a knowledge democracy: viewpoints of participatory action research in North America. In O. Falsborda & M.A. Rahman (Eds.), *Action and knowledge: breaking the monopoly with participatory action research* (pp.121-131). New York: Apex Press.
- Goduto, L.R., Doolittle, G. & Leake, D. (2008). Forming collaborative partnerships on a statewide level to develop quality school leaders. *Theory into Practice*, 47, 345-352.
- Goldstein, L.S. (2000). Ethical dilemmas in designing collaborative research: lessons learned the hard way. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13(5), 517-530.
- Gorodetsky, M. & Barak, J. (2008). The educational-cultural edge: a participative learning environment for co-emergence of personal and institutional growth. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 1907-1918.
- Gray, B. (1985). Conditions facilitating interorganizational collaboration. *Human Relations*, 38, 911-936.
- Gray, B. (1989). *Collaborating: Finding common ground for multiparty problems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Grundy, S., Robison, J. & Tomazos, D. (2001). Interrupting the way things are: exploring new directions in school/university partnerships. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 29(3), 203-217.

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Halai, A. (2006, November). *Ethics in qualitative research. Issues and challenges*. Paper presented at Karachi University, Pakistan.

Hall Jackson, F., Dinkar, R. & DeFranco, A. (2005). Collaborative partnerships in an urban environment: working together to benefit all. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(7), 600-613.

Hammersley, M. (1992). *What's wrong with ethnography? Methodological explanation*. London: Routledge.

Hanson, C.E., Skager, R. & Mitchell, R.R. (1991). Counsellors in at-risk prevention services: an innovative program. *Journal of Mental Health Counselling*, 13(2), 253-263.

Hatton, N. & Smith, D. (1995). Reflection in teacher education: towards definition and implementation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 11(1), 33-49.

Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W. & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Hertz, R. (1997). *Reflexivity and voice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Holman, B. (1987). Research from the underside. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 7(6), 669-683.

Hood, J.N., Logsdon, J.M. & Thompson, J. (1993). Collaboration for social problem solving: a process model. *Business and Society*, 32, 1-17.

Hornby, A.S., Cowie, A.P. & Gimson, A.C. (2000). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press Inc.

Horns, P.N., Czaplinski, T.J., Engelke, M.K. McAuliffe, M. & Baker, S. (2007). Leading through collaboration: a regional academic/service partnership that works. *Nurse Outlook*, 35(2), 74-78.

Hsieh, H. & Shannon, S.E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277-1288.

Hubbard, J. (1994). *Shooting back from the reservation*. New York: New Press.

- Hummel, H.G.K. (1993). Distance education and situated learning: paradox or partnership? *Educational Technology*, 33(12), 11-22.
- Huxham, C. & Vangen, S. (2000). Ambiguity, complexity and dynamics in the membership of collaboration. *Human Relations*, 53(6), 771-806.
- Ivankova, N.V., Creswell, J.W. & Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). Foundations and approaches to mixed methods research. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 254-283). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Jamal, T.B. & Getz, D. (1995). Collaboration theory and community tourism planning. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 22(1), 186-204.
- James, M. & Worrall, N. (2000). Building a reflective community: development through collaboration between a higher education institution and one school over 10 years. *Educational Action Research*, 8(1), 93-114.
- Jansen, J.D. (2007). The language of research. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 15-23). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Jootun, D. & McGhee, G. (2009). Reflexivity: promoting rigour in qualitative research. *Nursing Standard*, 23(23), 42-46.
- Karlsson, J. (2004, May). *Photo-exhibition: education in a decade of democracy*. Paper presented at the Education in a Decade of Democracy Conference, Braamfontein.
- Katsouyanni, K. (2008). Collaborative research: accomplishments and potential. *Environmental Health*, 7(3).
- Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. (2005). Participatory action research: communicative action and the public sphere. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 559-604). (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). California: Sage Publications.
- Kim, S., Haak Flaskerud, J., Koniak-Griffin, D. & Dixon, E.L. (2005). Using community-partnered participatory research to address health disparities in a Latino community. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 21(4), 199-209.
- King, M.B. (2002). Professional development to promote schoolwide inquiry. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18(3), 243-257.
- Korthagen, F., Loughran, J. & Russell, T. (2006). Developing fundamental principles for teacher education programs and practices. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(8), 1020-1041.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Kuter, S. & Koç. (2009). A multi-level analysis of the teacher education internship in terms of its collaborative dimension in Northern Cyprus. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 29(4), 415-425.
- Lave, J. (1988). *Cognition in practice: mind, mathematics, and culture in everyday life*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Lave, J. (1991). Situating learning in communities of practice. In L.B. Resnick, J.M. Levine & S.D. Tesley (Eds.), *Perspectives in socially shared cognition* (pp. 63-82). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Lave, J. (1997). The culture of acquisition and the practice of understanding. In D. Kirshner & J.A. Whitson (Eds.), *Situated cognition: social, semiotic, and psychological perspectives* (pp. 63-82). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: legitimate peripheral participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Layder, D. (1994). *Understanding social theory*. London: Sage.
- Levine, T.H. & Marcus, A.S. (2010). How the structure and focus of teachers' collaborative activities facilitate and constrain teacher learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(3), 389-398.
- Lincoln, Y.S. (1995). Emerging criteria for quality in qualitative and interpretive research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3, 275-289.
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1994). Judging the quality of case study reports. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 3(1), 53-59.
- Loughran, J. (2003). Exploring the nature of teacher research. In A. Clarke & G. Erickson (Eds.), *Teacher Inquiry: Living the research in everyday practice* (pp.181-189). London: Routledge Falmer.
- Louw, J., Shisana, O., Peltzer, K. & Zungu, N. (2009). Examining the impact of HIV&AIDS on South African educators. *South African Journal of Education*, 29(2), 205-217.
- Maree, K. & Pietersen, J. (2007). Sampling. In K. Maree. (Ed.) *First steps in research* (pp. 172-182). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Maree, K. & Van der Westhuizen, C. (2007). Planning a research proposal. In K. Maree (Ed.) *First steps in research* (pp. 24-46). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Mauthner, M.L., Mauthner, M., Birch, M., Jessop, J. & Miller, T. (2002). *Ethics in qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.

- Mayring, P. (2000). Qualitative content analysis. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 1*(2).
- Mayring, P. (2004). Qualitative content analysis. In U. Flick, E. Von Kardoff & I. Steinke (Eds.), *A Companion to Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Mays, N. & Pope, C. (2000). Assessing quality in qualitative research. *British Medical Journal, 1*(320), 50-52.
- Mead, G.H. (1934). *Mind, self and society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Miller, M., Williamson McDiarmid, G. & Luttrell-Montes, S. (2006). Partnering to prepare urban math and science teachers: managing tensions. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 22*(7), 848-863.
- Mitchell, C., De Lange, N., Moletsane, R., Stuart, J. & Buthelezi, T. (2005). Giving a face to HIV and AIDS: on the uses of photo-voice by teachers and community health care workers working with youth in rural South Africa. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 2*(3), 257-270.
- Mitchell, S.N., Reilly, R.C. & Logue, M.E. (2009). Benefits of collaborative action research for the beginning teacher. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*, 344-349.
- Moore, L. & Sampson, M.B. (2008). Field-based teacher preparation: an organisational analysis of enabling conditions. *Education, 129*(1), 3-16.
- Moran, A., Abbott, L. & Clarke, L. (2009). Re-conceptualising partnerships across the teacher education continuum. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(7), 951-958.
- Morgan, D.L. (1993). Qualitative content analysis: a guide to paths not taken. *Qualitative Health Research, 3*(1), 112-121.
- Mouton, J. (2008). *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies. A South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Moyles, J. & Stuart, D. (2003). Which school-based elements of partnership in initial teacher training in the UK support trainee teachers' professional development? In: *Research Evidence in Education Library*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education.
- Mule, L. (2006). Preservice teachers' inquiry in a professional development school context: implications for the practicum. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 22*(2), 205-218.
- Murray, J., Campbell, A., Hextall, I., Hulme, M., Jones, M., Mahony, P., Menter, I., Procter, R. & Wall, K. (2009). Research and teacher education in the UK: building capacity. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(7), 944-950.

- Murray, S., Nuttal, J. & Mitchell, J. (2008). Research into initial teacher education in Australia: a survey of the literature 1995-2004. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 225-239.
- Neimeyer, R.A. (1993). Constructivism and the cognitive psychotherapies: some conceptual and strategic contrasts. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 7(3), 159-171.
- Neuman, W.L. (2003). *Social research methods – qualitative and quantitative approaches* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed). Boston: Pearson Education Inc.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2007). Introducing qualitative research. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 47-69). Pretoria: Van Schaik, 47-66
- Oketch, M.O. (2004). The emergence of private university education in Kenya: trends, prospects and challenges. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 24(2), 119-136.
- Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L. & Wynaden, D. (2001). Ethics in qualitative research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 33(1), 93-96.
- Pain, R. & Francis, P. (2003). Reflections on participatory research. *Area*, 35(1), 46-54.
- Palincsar, A.S., Magnusson, S.J., Marano, N., Ford, D. & Brown, N. (1998). Designing a community of practice: principles and practices of GIsML community. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 14, 5-19.
- Parahoo, K. (2006). *Nursing Research: Principles, Process and Issues* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: Sage.
- Paul, E.L. (2006). Community-based research as scientific and civic pedagogy. *Practice, Winter*, 12-15.
- Poggenpoel, M. (1998). Data analysis in qualitative research. In A.S. De Vos (Ed.), *Research at grass roots: a primer for the caring professions* (pp. 334-356). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Primeau, L.A. (2003). Reflections on self in qualitative research: stories of family. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 51(1), 9-16.
- Pugach, M.C. (1999). The professional development of teachers from a “communities of practice” perspective. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 22(4), 217-233.
- Robson, C. (1993). *Real World Research*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ruane, J.M. (2005). *Essentials of research methods: a guide to social science research*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Rueda, R. (1998). *Standards for professional development: a sociocultural perspective*. Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence. Retrieved from <http://www.crede.berkeley.edu/research/>

SAHealthInfo. (1999). *Ethics in health research*. Retrieved from <http://www.sahealthinfo.org/ethics/ethics.htm/>

Saito, E., Imansyah, H., Kubok, I. & Hendayana, S. (2007). *International Journal of Educational Development*, 27(2), 194-204.

Sandelowski, M. (1986). The problem of rigor in qualitative research. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 8, 27-37.

Savoie-Zajc, L. & Descamps-Bednarz, N. (2007). Action research and collaborative research: their specific contributions to professional development. *Educational Action Research*, 15(4), 577-596.

Scharfenberger, J., Furman, C., Rotella, J. & Pfeifer, M. (2008). Meeting American Council of Graduate Medical Education guidelines for a palliative medicine fellowship through diverse community partnerships. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, 11(3), 428-430.

Schneider, R. & Pickett, M. (2006). Bridging engineering and science teaching: a collaborative effort to design instruction for college students. *School Science and Mathematics*, 106(6), 259-266.

Schön, N.D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.

Seale, C. (1999). *The quality of qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.

Smith, C., Blake, A., Curwen, K., Dodds, D., Easton, L., McNally, J., Swierczek, P. & Walker, L. (2009). Teachers as researchers in a major research project: experience of input and output. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 959-965.

Smith, M.K. (2003). *Communities of practice*. The Encyclopaedia of Informal Education. Retrieved from [http://www.infed.org/biblio/communities\\_of\\_practice.htm/](http://www.infed.org/biblio/communities_of_practice.htm/)

Smith, M.K. (2009). *Communities of practice*. The Encyclopaedia of Informal Education. Retrieved from [http://www.infed.org/biblio/communities\\_of\\_practice.htm/](http://www.infed.org/biblio/communities_of_practice.htm/)

Smith, S. (2001). Doing qualitative research: from interpretation to action. In M. Limb & C. Dwyer (Eds.), *Qualitative methodologies for geographers: issues and debates* (pp. 23-40). London: Arnold.

Sowa, P.A. & De La Vega, E. (2008). One corner at a time. Collaborating for educational change in the UAE. *Childhood Education*, Winter, 102-106.

Speziale, H.J.S. & Carpenter, D.R. (2007). *Qualitative research in nursing: advancing the humanistic perspective* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Strydom, H. (2005). Ethical aspects of research in the social sciences and human service professions. In A.S. De Vos, H. Strydom, C.B. Fouché & C.S.L. Delpont (Eds.), *Research at grassroots for the social sciences and human services professions* (pp. 62-91). (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Sutherland, L., Howard, S. & Markauskaite, L. (2010). Professional identity creation: examining the development of beginning preservice teachers' understanding of their work as teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(3), 455-465.

Sylva, K., Taggart, B., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P. & Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2007). Changing models of research to inform educational policy. *Research Papers in Education*, 22(2), 155-168.

Tett, L., Crowther, J. & O'Hara, P. (2003). Collaborative partnerships in community education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18(1), 37-51.

Tsui, A.B.M. & Law, D.Y.K. (2007). Learning as boundary-crossing in school-university partnership. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23, 1289-1301.

Van der Riet, M. & Wassenaar, D. (2002). Putting design into practice: writing and evaluating research proposals. In M. Terreblanche & K. Durrheim (Eds.), *Research into practice: applied methods for the social sciences* (pp. 80-111). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Van Zee, E., Lay, D. & Roberts, D. (2003). Fostering collaborative inquiries by prospective and practicing elementary and middle school teachers. *Science Teacher Education*, 87(4), 588-612.

Vogel, G. & Avissar, G. (2009). "It enables me to realise my fantasies regarding the practicum": a preliminary study of an academic-school partnership in Israel. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 134-140.

Waddock, S.A. (1999). Paradigm shift: toward a community-university-community community of practice. *International Journal of Organisational Analysis*, 7, 244-302.

Warren, L.L. & Peel, H.A. (2005). Collaborative model for school reform through a rural school/university partnership. *Education*, 126(2), 346-352.

Watson, J. & Wilcox, S. (2000). Reading for understanding: methods of reflecting on practice. *Reflective Practice*, 1(1), 57-67.

Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic Content Analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). California: Sage Publications.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge, Ma: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. (2003). Communities of practice and social learning systems. In D. Nicolini, S. Gherardi & D. Yanow (Eds.), *Knowing in organisations. A practice-based approach* (pp. 76-89). New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Wenger, E. (2007). *Communities of practice. A brief introduction* Retrieved from <http://www.ewenger.com/theory/>

Wenger, E. (2008). Communities of practice: Learning as a social system. *Systems Thinker, June*, 1-10.

Whittemore, R., Chase, S.K. & Mandle, C.L. (2001). Validity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research, 11*(4), 522-537.

Witte, J.E., Martinez Witte, M., Saltiel, I., Hackett, P.T., Hesler, K. & Johnson, M. (2005). A collaborative partnership evaluation project: assessing middle school initiative. *Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies, 5*(1), 91-98.



## ***LIST OF ADDITIONAL SOURCES CONSULTED***

---

Carrington, S. & Sagers, B. (2008). Service-learning informing the development of an inclusive ethical framework for beginning teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(3), 795-806.

Clegg, S. & McNulty, K. (2002). Partnership working in delivering social inclusion: Organisational and gender dynamics. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 17(5), 587-601.

Hoshmand, L.T. & O'Byrne, K. (1996). Reconsidering action research as a guiding metaphor for professional psychology. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 24, 185-200.

Jones, K. & Bird, K. (2000). 'Partnership' as strategy: Public-private relations in education action zones. *British Educational Research Journal*, 26(4), 491-506.

Mitchell, C. (2006). Taking pictures, taking action: Visual arts-based methodologies in research as social change. In T. Marcus & A. Hofmaenner (Eds.), *Shifting the boundaries of knowledge* (pp. 227-241). Pietermaritzburg: UKZN Press.

Pugach, M.C. & Blanton, L.P. (2009). A framework for conducting research on collaborative teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(4), 575-582.

Rapaport, R. (1970). Three dilemmas in action research. *Human Relations*, 23, 499-513.

Saleh, A.M.J. & Al-karasneh, S.M. (2009). Visionary leadership as an approach to social studies teacher preparation programmers' reform: Participants' perspectives. *Procedia- Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 1(1), 877-889.

Sobredo, J., Kim-Ju, G. Figueroa, J., Yee Mark, G. & Fabionar, J. (2008). An ethnic studies model of community mobilization: Collaborative partnership with a high-risk public high school. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 34(3), S82-S88.

Wilson, E.K. (2006). The impact of an alternative model of student teacher supervision: Views of the participants. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(1), 22-31.





## APPENDICES

- Appendix A: An Example of a Transcribed Presentation
- Appendix B: Example of Initial Codes
- Appendix C: Collation of Codes into Trends
- Appendix D: Trend Chart
- Appendix E: Trend Analysis Report
- Appendix F: First Draft of Data Analysis Results
- Appendix G: Final Draft of Data Analysis Results
- Appendix H: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria
- Appendix I: Reflective Journal
- Appendix J: Email Requesting Informed Consent



1 **Presentation Five**

2 **HIV/AIDS Symposium March 2009**

3 *Speaker 1:*

4 Or perhaps we didn't hear that loudly enough. And then talk about the way forward in  
5 terms of teacher-researcher partnerships and research in our country, and I want to  
6 emphasise that although I'm talking, I would appreciate it if you would stop me. If you  
7 think that I perhaps didn't emphasise something or I forgot something, or you noticed  
8 something that impacted on you that I didn't, stop me, and then we can add it so we can  
9 have a more complete record to our day's events.

10

11 So I want to start by saying wow, and I think you'll agree with me, we need to give a  
12 round of applause to the people who presented today. I certainly heard things that gave  
13 me gooseflesh, I heard things that made me so excited about what we can do when we  
14 are partners, thanks *Person 1*, teachers and researchers, working together for a common  
15 cause. So I think, starting with what *Person 2* said this morning, right until what we  
16 heard, our last speaker was *Person 3*, was just wow!

17

18 If I summarise what we heard about the context, from the word go the emphasis was  
19 made that HIV and AIDS is part of our context. It's one of the many challenges in our  
20 educational landscape. And a number of us spoke about HIV and AIDS today, but a  
21 number of people who were talking spoke about other challenges issues, poverty was  
22 mentioned a lot, but certainly the challenges for teachers in terms of policy, in terms of  
23 how they have to adapt, and so it was clear from the outset that HIV and AIDS is only  
24 part of the challenging context which we as researchers and teachers, need to make  
25 sense of.

26

27 *Person 4* spoke at length this morning about us being here as partners from diverse  
28 contexts, the fact that many of us, or all of us are teachers, but many of us are still  
29 teaching in a school context, that many of us are researchers, some of us are from  
30 funding agencies; so we are here from different parts of the country, but also as

31 representatives from different organisations in our country. But I think what unites us, is  
32 that we are here to augment relationships towards change. I think that's our common  
33 goal; that we want to see positive change take place, and that we well aware that we  
34 can't do that on our own. I think we also committed to life-long learning. A lot has been  
35 said this morning about how research and research partnerships engender new  
36 knowledge, and co-create knowledge. But that wouldn't happen if we weren't  
37 committed to a continued emphasis on continued learning. And then I love *Person 4's*  
38 words, that we here to have serious fun together, so that we can share and create  
39 knowledge.

40

41 So within that context, we had three speakers, and the first of our, four speakers. Sorry  
42 we had two from *Place 1*, the first of our speakers was *Person 5* from *Place 1*, and she  
43 explained that their research is focussed on a service-learning approach. And that a  
44 service-learning approach is really about community service being integrated into  
45 academic work and research. And she spoke about *Place 1* having twelve partnership  
46 schools, and that it was quite difficult to access these schools and two community  
47 organisations that they work with. And then she gave us a range of benefits. There were  
48 benefits for the students, who were really learning a, well it was called place-based  
49 learning. They were learning in situ if you like, experiential learning is what they were  
50 gaining. There were benefits to the learners themselves, there were to the teachers,  
51 there were benefits to the communities, and I think she convinced us that when  
52 researchers and teachers and communities join in hands, we progress together. And  
53 there are only winners. And then she mentioned something which I would like to just  
54 touch on again at the end; she mentioned how overwhelming it is for her as a  
55 researcher, to work with communities and with schools and teachers and learners who  
56 are impacted by the challenges of our contexts. And so I think sometimes when we talk  
57 about the research process, we don't think enough about how it impacts on researchers,  
58 and we'll talk about that again at the end.

59

60 Was there something from *Place 1* that somebody else would like to add? In addition to  
61 what I've summarised on that slide? I'll give you a moment to go through it. *Person 5*?  
62 Fine?

63 *Speaker 2:*

64 They are busy with the photocopies.

65

66 *Speaker 1:*

67 Oh is it, I'll send it to you, if I don't lose it.

68

69 Then we heard from *Person 6*, who is also from *Place 1*, and she spoke about a very  
70 different form of research. She spoke about research which is essentially ethnographic,  
71 and narrative-based, and so we heard David's story. And basically, what *Person 6* was  
72 sharing with us is how teachers make meaning of their working lives, or how they form  
73 identities as teachers in the very challenging context in which South African educators  
74 teach. And the lessons that she learnt amongst others, were that commitment to  
75 excellence is a choice, and I thought that that could be a very encouraging finding for us  
76 to share with our communities. That educational landscape shapes classroom practice,  
77 and then something that I think should be put in bold, we really do have some  
78 wonderful teachers. Her challenge, that she noted, we implied, was that a female  
79 researcher in a Black school context, is not always easy. And so again, raise the notions  
80 of access and sustainability. *Person 6* is there anything you would add to that slide?  
81 Anything anybody else would like to add?

82

83 Our third set of speakers were our speakers from *Place 2*, where we heard about  
84 ethnographic learning and collaborative partnerships that are emerging. I think this,  
85 what made *Place 2* research that we heard today a little bit different from the other the  
86 research projects is that both *Person 7* and *Person 8* emphasised that they're in, it's in  
87 the initial stages still, that I understand that correctly. But they could give us an acronym  
88 that summarised their experiences so far, and that the acronym was "CARE". And I think  
89 that their acronym also summarises their focus; that they really are interested in  
90 engaging in research partnerships that allow researchers to care for the participants and  
91 the participants then to kind of in a ripple effect spread or allow this care to spread to  
92 the community, and to people from the community. And so care stands for an emphasis  
93 on COLLABORATING, which implies equal partnerships; ACCESSING, gaining entrance,

94 and there were a number of challenges that we heard about there; that care is  
95 impossible without relationship building, but I think what we heard very clearly is that  
96 relationship building is a process and that it doesn't happen overnight and that it needs  
97 to be sustained for us to have partnerships. And then we heard the whole emphasis on  
98 ENABLING rather than empowering.

99

100 Their focus is on teacher support and development and part of this teacher support and  
101 development is an understanding that the theories that we have in our country are not  
102 necessarily relevant to the challenges or the context of our country. And so part of the  
103 research that they do, is to identify issues that are important and then engage with  
104 research participants to help find or generate theories and practices that will answer  
105 these challenges, and I think that's a tough one.

106

107 And then they spoke at length about other challenges like working with research  
108 participants who are fatigued, there've been a number of people who have come into  
109 their schools and almost demanded information, and so when researchers come in  
110 there's a sense of "What do you want from us, and are you going to treat us as badly as  
111 we've been treated in the past?" and so that's a different kind of relationship that needs  
112 to be built, a relationship of trust. *Person 8* and *Person 7*, would you add anything? Is  
113 there anybody else who would like to add anything, was there something that struck  
114 you possibly, that I haven't, that I haven't noted? Ok we can always come back, as we go  
115 on.

116

117 Yes?

118

119 *Speaker 3*:

120 Sorry *Person 9*, what struck me was that they have formed relationships in the centre in  
121 that one little team of theirs, and to lead that core is important, in the structure, so to  
122 me that stood out.

123

124 *Speaker 1:*

125 I agree *Person 3*, I tried to make it stand out with the red. But yes, that is the core, we  
126 need to emphasise that. That care can't exist without having a relationship.

127

128 *Speaker 3:*

129 So maybe in the relationship those elements, the multiple layers of elements in the  
130 social identity that serve as a catalyst to all of us to re-grow.

131

132 *Speaker 1:*

133 Yes, the whole emerging me of the researcher.

134

135 *Speaker 3:*

136 Ja, and of the participants. Everyone involved in that relationship.

137

138 *Speaker 2:*

139 And of the us.

140

141 *Speaker 3:*

142 Ja.

143

144 *Speaker 1:*

145 Yes that's lovely.

146

147 *Speaker 3:*

148 Absolutely.

149

150 *Speaker 4:*

151 I just want to say that I think, we didn't get round to the part on enabling, the "E" of  
152 the "CARE", we such a lot to say but there's I think, one of the teachers in the project  
153 told that if ever I want to sort of, I wanted to see the outcomes of the learning process  
154 and our sharing and I want to see the outcomes in the classrooms and so forth, and  
155 she said I should be patient and she used the metaphor of a tree, that's what I  
156 understood and it's one of the things that I wanted to say. That you've got this seed  
157 and then the branches and then later on you've got this tree. And she said it also  
158 differs from participant to participant and from researcher to researcher. And then the  
159 other words or the metaphor that she used is that some of us change like it's cotton,  
160 and some of us are slow-brewing coffee and so forth. So that's some of the examples I  
161 wanted to share.

162

163 *Speaker 1:*

164 And they're all enabling, because there's change.

165

166 *Speaker 2:*

167 I quickly wanna show something there that I sometimes, if I explain to our Ed Psych  
168 students, the empowerment and enablement quandary. It lies in that, that when, if  
169 *Person 10* comes to me and say, "Ag shame *Person 4*, I'm *Person 10*, I'm coming to  
170 empower you" then it's here's poor *Person 4*, powerless. *Person 10* has all the power,  
171 she's coming to bestow that power on me. And then suddenly, because of this  
172 wonderful person, I now have power. So that was the empowerment. With enablement,  
173 it's the able. The ability is recognised already. There's not the one has power, the other  
174 does not have power. The one is giving power, the one is receiving power. In fact, there  
175 is able ability and because of a process, there's then shared enablement and it's  
176 becoming more able, if you want. The researcher becoming more able, the teacher  
177 becoming more able, but the ability is there already. It's not a power that some had

178 power, others didn't have power. So that is, in the end it's just words, pick one you're  
179 comfortable with and that is, and use that. But be aware of what the meanings are  
180 related to certain words.

181

182 *Speaker 1:*

183 Thank you. With *Place 3*, I first had the heading "What we heard" but I changed it  
184 because I think it was "What we saw" because what we saw was powerful. I think that  
185 we all witnessed, what participatory visual research is about. When *Person 3* showed us  
186 the video documentary, and the significance, although I have listed the significances that  
187 we discussed, the fact that it gave the participants a sense of agency, there was  
188 something that they could do, and that they could use again as a teaching tool and that  
189 it allowed them to raise awareness, and *Person 4's* point that it provided us with an  
190 insider perspective rather than an outsider perspective, as so much research sometimes  
191 does. That significance was clear from what we saw. So words are kind of superfluous I  
192 think to summarise here, what we saw. But two of the issues that were raised, is that it's  
193 a process, a participatory process which has very stringent ethical issues, and that we  
194 have to really, if we're going to engage in visual methodology, that we really have to  
195 spend a lot of time thinking carefully about the ethical ramifications of our research. And  
196 then that it's a research that has possible more challenges than other forms of research  
197 in terms of teachers having to learn how to use video cameras, in terms of the cost, and  
198 so those were kind of, they changed the context. We saw this incredibly powerful  
199 research, but we were left with remember, that when you're engaged with partnerships  
200 between teachers and researchers where you use visual participatory methods, there  
201 needs to be a certain measure of training, and there needs to be ethical mindfulness.

202 *Person 3* would you like to add?

203

204 *Speaker 3:*

205 No that's perfect, I just want to mention one other challenge that I can't remember that  
206 I mentioned and that is working with the videographer. It is very challenging, because  
207 they promise, and then we arrange sessions with the teachers and then we wait and  
208 wait and wait and they delay the process. Because they're also busy people, so there are  
209 many challenges, it's not just easy as pie.

210

211 *Speaker 1:*

212 *Person 1?*

213

214 *Speaker 5:*

215 Inaudible – small joke related to what *Person 3* has just said.

216

217 *Speaker 1:*

218 Ah, I like that! Is there anything else anyone would like to add?

219

220 If I summarise, from those four presentations, what I think were common strands, then  
221 the first common strand was that our educational landscape is a very challenging one.  
222 And that's part of what necessitates our teacher/researcher partnerships, and as I  
223 mentioned right at the beginning when we recapped about what our context is, this  
224 challenging educational landscape is not only an HIV/AIDS altered landscape. We have a  
225 very complex South African context, in which we need to enable one another, and in  
226 which we need to do research.

227

228 I think a second point that emerged so strongly was that teachers want and deserve  
229 recognition. We'll change it, we'll put it in red! And so I think that that is something that  
230 as partners we need to be mindful of; that it's not just about disseminating our findings,  
231 but that it's also about giving voice to our teachers and recognition to our teachers.  
232 What I heard in all the presentations was that the partnerships were collaborative. I  
233 didn't, I didn't hear, and you can differ from me and we can discuss it, but I didn't hear  
234 examples of researchers coming in, with a power, with a knowledge and raising partners  
235 up if you like. I heard about collaboration, people working together. Especially because,  
236 in the research it was discussed there was definite place of context or consciousness, so  
237 it was specific to the context and the place and the participants that were being  
238 discussed, and that in most cases, if not all, the research was directed by a needs

239 assessment. So I heard the presenters saying things like, “We spoke to the teachers” or  
240 “We first did a survey” or “We heard our students saying” or “We were aware that”. So  
241 there was a sense that the research was based on understanding “What are the needs of  
242 teachers that possibly need to be addressed in a research partnership?”

243 And then I also heard that collaborative approaches have mutual benefits. I didn’t hear  
244 that it was only the researchers who were benefitting, or only the teachers that were  
245 benefitting. If I just list some, certainly these are not all but if I list some of the benefits,  
246 the teachers benefitted because there was acknowledgement of teachers, we heard  
247 voices, the teachers’ voices came across clearly, we saw a positive image of teachers,  
248 and much of the research I think lead to teacher development, whether it was  
249 development of skills, whether it was development of competencies, but there was  
250 teacher development. Partnerships definitely benefitted whole school communities; I  
251 thought there of the example in *Person 5’s* research when she described the support  
252 systems that were focussed on. But it was certainly not only in Helen’s discussion, there  
253 was a benefit to learners, that they were supported better either by the students or by  
254 the teachers who were more aware of how learners were impacted or more aware of  
255 what they could do to enable learners. Certainly when students were involved, we heard  
256 about benefit for students, in place-based learning and the integration of theory and  
257 practice, and then definitely there were benefits for researchers as well. In the whole  
258 idea of knowledge co-creation and of relevant theories and relevant practices that can  
259 be developed for our country. Would you add anything?

260

261 *Speaker 2:*

262 I’d add development of researchers.

263

264 *Speaker 1:*

265 Yes!

266

267 *Speaker 2:*

268 If I just reflect on who I was as a researcher when *Person 11* and I, first started the  
269 partnership in 2003, and who I am as a researcher in 2009, it could not have had  
270 happened if it was not in partnership with teachers. If there was something that  
271 happened and we didn't know what is this, then we'd go back to methodology books  
272 and try to see, ok this is happening, what do the books say what can you do. And then  
273 together with the teacher partners try and see ok what can we do. So the development  
274 of my identity as researcher and also I think my scope of my tool kit, my methodology  
275 would not have happened if it hadn't been for the partnership in research.

276

277 *Speaker 1:*

278 And then in a sense that tool kit is shaped by a context.

279

280 *Speaker 2:*

281 Yes. The relevant...

282

283 *Speaker 1:*

284 So it's a relevant tool kit. And so there's researcher development and development of a  
285 relevant tool kit. Anything else?

286

287 We heard about challenges. I think the challenge possibly came through most was  
288 possibly the challenge of access. And the challenge of access wasn't just in gaining  
289 access to a research community or to a community of people via a gate keeper, but also  
290 once you had gained access there were challenges of being patient, and challenges of  
291 understanding that this is a process, and that it takes time; that research is not an  
292 overnight quick fix, instant phenomenon. It was a process of building relationships, not  
293 just in terms of the partnerships, but also in terms of relationships with the self, the  
294 researcher's relationship to herself in the research.

295

296 And then *Person 5's* point, that a challenge of doing research is that many of our  
297 researchers become care worn. And then a big challenge is the implementation of our  
298 research and the sustainability of research. When the researchers leave, what then? And  
299 then, something that I heard, and it may be my perception, and you can correct me if  
300 my perception is not one hundred percent what happened in practice, but I seemed to  
301 hear that in most instances with the exception of *Person 3, Person 3's* research, that the  
302 researchers identify the partner schools.

303

304 *Speaker 3:*

305 I think also on that, schools, some of the schools actually came to us.

306

307 *Speaker 1:*

308 OK. I think that that's a message that needs to be given loudly because, when I think  
309 what we did not hear loudly, possibly if we talk about partnerships, that we need to talk  
310 about is partnerships that work from both sides. We perhaps need to say more loudly  
311 "How can schools initiate research partnerships? How can teachers initiate research  
312 partnerships?"

313

314 *Speaker 2:*

315 "Maybe ... can write a paper on that"... inaudible.

316

317 *Speaker 1:*

318 But I think that that would be enabling for us as a research community; that more South  
319 Africans are aware that you, research is not something that is university-generated  
320 necessarily, or a research body-generated necessarily phenomenon.

321

322 I think something else that we did not always hear loudly enough, and this was *Person*  
323 *3's* question, is for whom is the research? There was evidence that these collaborative

324 partnerships in which we engage have mutual benefits. Very definitely, but I think we  
325 need to think a little more about who defines the goals of the partnership. And what  
326 was the process of defining those goals, and perhaps we need to articulate that, so that  
327 equal partnerships are encouraged.

328

329 There was some discussion of how relationships of trust were developed, we did hear in  
330 the presentations that researchers negotiated their role, and we did hear that  
331 researchers learn from teachers and that they acknowledge teachers in their research,  
332 but what else is done? Given that we are part of a really complex educational landscape,  
333 where our teachers are fatigued, we heard about a drop-out rate of about 28 initially,  
334 and 8 at the end, and that's commonplace. I think all of us can testify to similar  
335 examples. What can we do to develop relationships of trust within our partnerships?

336

337 We perhaps didn't hear loudly enough how power relationships between researchers  
338 and partners were equalled out. We heard about peer-like relationships, we heard  
339 about muffins and tea, or muffins and coffee, but what else is done in a country where  
340 we have a history of hierarchy, where we have a history of unequal power relationships  
341 and disempowerment so that researchers and partners are on equal footing.

342

343 Then were new partner needs introduced into the research process? I didn't hear much  
344 about that, and if so, how were these addressed? Because I think that speaks to the  
345 question of for whom is the research. And then how will the research results be  
346 disseminated to partners? We spoke about, there was a book published using the  
347 photographs from some of the research and the video certainly went back to the  
348 partners, but if we're in partnership, then we need to do more than disseminate our  
349 findings to an academic community. And so perhaps we need to talk a little bit more  
350 about how our research results will be disseminated to partners.

351 And then I missed some comment on what researchers would do differently if they had  
352 the opportunity to do this all again. Are there other questions? Are there other... *Person*  
353 5?

354

355 *Speaker 6:*

356 I would just really like to hear what teachers' questions are raised from their side,  
357 because then we would really be able to compare... (inaudible).

358

359 *Speaker 7:*

360 I didn't hear you earlier; you answer how can schools initiate the partnerships.

361

362 *Speaker 1:*

363 No, I'm not answering, I'm raising the question. I would like us as a group to think about  
364 answers.

365

366 *Speaker 7:*

367 OK.

368

369 *Speaker 2:*

370 I think one way would be *Person 12*, in the way that *Place 4* identified *Place 5* at....

371 Where it was a participant-partner link, where we said you know what these schools

372 would also appreciate the experience of a partnership in their schools. Instead of *Person*

373 *11* and myself deciding, we now it was *Place 4* and we think that school looks nice, and

374 we think that school would be appropriate. So that that would be one example. Another

375 example would be I've told this story many times so forgive, you are having to listen to it

376 over and over again, but this telephone call I think 2003/2004 that I got at my little

377 office, at the university and it said "Hello my name is *Person 13*... I am an educator at a

378 school close to the *Place 6* if you ever feel that you want to collaborate with us, we've

379 got a wonderful school, and we'd really like to do that so when at a stage it was possible

380 for us we said well, we developed the research project in a way that that partnership

381 could be part. But I think there are many this is just anecdotal examples.

382

383 *Speaker 8:*

384 Another example was that the principal of ... contacted us over the last couple of  
385 months because he's aware of the project that's been going on in *Place 7* and he  
386 contacted us and asked if we can't just come to my school as well. And that's based on  
387 *Person 14* telling him about the project.

388

389 *Speaker 1:*

390 That's word of mouth. That's word of mouth, yes.

391

392 *Speaker 7:*

393 What I can say is that teachers are always initiatives because we are having difficulties in  
394 our schools. Another thing we advise is the high school. That high school, there are so  
395 many drop-outs and we advise them that these learners, they need to reach out. Maybe  
396 if we can take care of them then they can ... Now they want to form the partnership  
397 with us. So we are always initiating something.

398 *Speaker 1:*

399 So those kind of initiatives maybe need to have a kind of platform, that more people can  
400 hear about them. Is that what you're saying? That people don't necessarily know about  
401 the partnerships that teachers initiate anyway.

402

403 *Speaker 7:*

404 Ja.

405

406 *Speaker 2:*

407 And that, and the partnership, *Person 15* help me out if I'm wrong with this, this is  
408 based on what *Place 4* has acted as facilitators to other schools and they identified the  
409 next school with whom they would want to work as their neighbourhood high school in

410 order to also partner with them with a specific intervention. Because they see that the  
411 kids from their school go to the secondary school, and then they are concerned about  
412 the levels of care and support in the secondary school.

413

414 *Speaker 1:*

415 Ripple effect.

416

417 *Speaker 2:*

418 Ja.

419

420 *Speaker 1:*

421 Ja, ja. And it would be wonderful if we could wait, well if we could, if we could initiate  
422 partnerships before the ripple effects takes place, so that we don't need to wait for that.  
423 It would be wonderful if we as South Africans could initiate research partnerships even  
424 before the effect takes place.

425

426 *Speaker 2:*

427 If we knew, if we knew in advance where it would be, it would be wonderful if we could  
428 start the partnerships already, from the beginning with *Place 5...*

429

430 *Speaker 1:*

431 If we could be so sensitive to our context that we could almost foresee. Are there other  
432 comments? Especially from teachers, I know tomorrow is devoted to the teachers'  
433 experience so I think that we'll get a much fuller picture when we've listened tomorrow.

434

435 *Speaker 2:*

436 Ja I also, I also think remember at the beginning of the day, the focus, the partnerships,  
437 a next point would be a fully integrated representative, I wouldn't even know if it was  
438 integrated or fully representative, but the focus of the November symposium was  
439 specifically on the teachers' voices. And what the teachers experienced as well, were  
440 what they experience as partners in terms of their views of researchers and also of  
441 project work, and then the, now the glass has shifted a bit, or the lens has shifted a bit  
442 to look at what researchers' experiences and voices are. So, the teachers may look quiet,  
443 you know, but they are not. They also had a specific focus there, and I do think that it  
444 would be wonderful if we had a next one, where we co-represent, co-present in terms  
445 of our experiences.

446 *Speaker 1:*

447 Maybe I should go to the next slide, and if there are more issues arising from the next  
448 slide we can add them because the next slide kind of looks to what is the way forward.  
449 Yes there's a comment.

450

451 *Speaker 7:*

452 If I can just go back to the...

453

454 *Speaker 1:*

455 Sure.

456

457 *Speaker 7:*

458 OK, I just wanted to put in that how relationships of trust just develop. With ... there  
459 were 28 teachers during the year, now they are out because of their reasons, but I think  
460 when the HIV and AIDs term, it's a sensitive one. I might join the group because I want  
461 to I dunno for many reasons but, somewhere somehow I'm having the problem that you  
462 are talking about. Then, my colleague here is my colleague and my colleague can go  
463 through. This issue is sensitive to me, I rather withdraw from it because I am just  
464 angered. So, I think that in that particular instance you must use in this project the one

465 who is willing and want to help, instead of needing and calling to childs because there is  
466 this project and call to teachers who are willing and will run the race until the end.

467

468 *Speaker 1:*

469 I think that's a very valuable input, that in order for trust to be heightened we really  
470 need to work with volunteer participants, that nobody should be coerced, ja. And that  
471 perhaps what you're saying and that we need to take note of is that because our  
472 educational landscape is such a complex one, we have to work even harder at  
473 developing relationships of trust. Thank you. Any other input?

474

475 If we look at the way forward in terms of our partnerships, just some thoughts and  
476 they're not complete; again I invite anybody to add to them please, but possibly what  
477 we need to think of in our way forward is how can schools and teachers initiate research  
478 partnerships, we've spoken about that; and then how can research partnerships not  
479 stigmatise non-White schools? Or non-White participants? I think we need to give that  
480 some serious thought.

481

482 The gentleman over there when we spoke during one of the discussions spoke about  
483 findings that engender hope and maybe we need to start thinking about doing research  
484 which really encourages hope. We heard that as well when *Person 6* spoke about David's  
485 story and how his narrative encouraged hope because it gave us positive images of  
486 teachers.

487

488 What can we do to care for our researchers? I've specifically said researchers because  
489 today was dedicated to the researchers' experience. I believe very strongly that we need  
490 to do a lot to encourage our teachers too. Both teachers and researchers need care. The  
491 way forward needs to include consideration of visual methodologies. I think I'm  
492 preaching to the converted, the researchers who are here are aware of, or many of  
493 them are aware of visual methodologies and use them. But we experienced as a group  
494 this afternoon how powerful visual methodology can be. And so in terms of our

495 partnerships and of giving our partners something concrete to take back to use in  
496 disseminating research findings we need to think more about visual methodologies.

497

498 And then it was also a comment made by the gentleman on my left that perhaps when  
499 we talk about disseminating findings, they first need to be collaboratively discussed.  
500 That we can come to some sort of consensus on what the findings mean, so that the  
501 partnership, the views of the partnership are reflected when we make meaning out of  
502 the research findings. And then we need to think about how we can effectively  
503 disseminate our findings to partners. I was at Sand Play meeting in *Place 8* in I think it  
504 was September or October last year and one of the delegates said that of the most  
505 powerful ways of disseminating research findings is to make a T-shirt, and I noted the  
506 beautiful T-shirts that so many of the teachers are wearing this morning. And she said in  
507 her project they made, and they weren't expensive, they made T-shirts and they put a  
508 slogan onto the front of the T-shirt and the back that summarised the core finding. And  
509 she said it didn't matter where they were, people would stop them and say "Hey!  
510 What's that? Tell me more!" I had never thought of that personally, it wasn't discussed  
511 enough how we could disseminate findings so that our South African context is enabled,  
512 and that idea was put forward. So maybe, *Person 4* and *Person 11*, maybe we need a  
513 symposium which just focuses on what we can do to disseminate findings.

514

515 In another project that I'm working in we had researchers come from *Place 9*, and when  
516 they arrived they said well, how do you suggest that we disseminate these findings and  
517 we said we go back into the community and we have an imbido. We get together, we  
518 have lots of food and we talk. And they scratched their heads, and they frowned at us,  
519 and they kind of had the attitude of you guys don't know what you're talking about. And  
520 then we went into the communities, and we spoke with our partners, NGOs and  
521 teachers, and youth, and we said to them well please will you tell our research partners  
522 from *Place 9* how you would like the findings disseminated. And one and all said orally,  
523 around food, we need to get together and communicate. So I think if we are going to be  
524 partners, if we are going to work together as we do, and if we are going to do that  
525 powerfully, we need to talk together about how we disseminate our findings.

526

527 And then my last slide, just to summarise, we've heard clearly that life, especially life in  
528 South Africa is tough. And one way that we can protect ourselves against this tough life  
529 is to wear a helmet. And that's a metaphor if you like, for our partnerships. I believe we  
530 enable one another, and I believe that is something we need to continue doing, against  
531 all odds. And that's my final point. Is there anything else anybody would like to add?

532

533 *Speaker 2:*

534 *Person 9!*

535

536 *Speaker 8:*

537 Thank you, I believe also being a discussant is tough this afternoon.

538

539 Delegates and other discussants thank *Speaker 1* and clap.

540



541

542 **Presentation Three Key**

543 **HIV/AIDS Symposium March 2009**

544 *Speaker 1: Linda Theron* *Place 1: University of Johannesburg*

545 *Speaker 2: Liesel Ebersöhn* *Place 2: Stellenbosch University*

546 *Speaker 3: Tilla Olivier* *Place 3: NMMU*

547 *Speaker 4: Marietjie Oswald* *Place 4: Sebulihle School*

548 *Speaker 5: Naydene De Lange* *Place 5: Charles Duna*

549 *Speaker 6: Helen Krige* *Place 6: Swaziland Border*

550 *Speaker 7: Delegates* *Place 7: Port Elizabeth*

551 *Speaker 8: Ronél Ferreira* *Place 8: Durban*

552 *Place 9: Canada*

553 *Person 1: Naydene De Lange* *Person 8: Marietjie Oswald*

554 *Person 2: Irma Eloff* *Person 9: Linda Theron*

555 *Person 3: Tilla Olivier* *Person 10: Patience*

556 *Person 4: Liesel Ebersöhn* *Person 11: Ronél Ferreira*

557 *Person 5: Helen Krige* *Person 12: Chine*

558 *Person 6: Brigitte Smit* *Person 13: Henry*

559 *Person 7: Estelle Swart* *Person 14: Thembi*

560 *Person 15: Zoleka*

561

562

563

1 **Presentation Five**

2 **HIV/AIDS Symposium March 2009**

3 *Speaker 1:*

4 Or perhaps we didn't hear that loudly enough. And then talk about the way forward in  
5 terms of teacher-researcher partnerships and research in our country, and I want to  
6 emphasise that although I'm talking, I would appreciate it if you would stop me. If you  
7 think that I perhaps didn't emphasise something or I forgot something, or you noticed  
8 something that impacted on you that I didn't, stop me, and then we can add it so we can  
9 have a more complete record to our day's events.

10

11 So I want to start by saying wow, and I think you'll agree with me, we need to give a  
12 round of applause to the people who presented today. I certainly heard things that gave  
13 me gooseflesh, I heard things that made me so excited about what we can do when we  
14 are partners, thanks *Person 1*, teachers and researchers, working together for a common  
15 cause. So I think, starting with what *Person 2* said this morning, right until what we  
16 heard, our last speaker was *Person 3*, was just wow!

17

18 If I summarise what we heard about the context, from the word go the emphasis was  
19 made that HIV and AIDS is part of our context. It's one of the many challenges in our  
20 educational landscape. And a number of us spoke about HIV and AIDS today, but a  
21 number of people who were talking spoke about other challenges issues, poverty was  
22 mentioned a lot, but certainly the challenges for teachers in terms of policy, in terms of  
23 how they have to adapt, and so it was clear from the outset that HIV and AIDS is only  
24 part of the challenging context which we as researchers and teachers, need to make  
25 sense of.

26

27 *Person 4* spoke at length this morning about us being here as partners from diverse  
28 contexts, the fact that many of us, or all of us are teachers, but many of us are still  
29 teaching in a school context, that many of us are researchers, some of us are from  
30 funding agencies; so we are here from different parts of the country, but also as

31 representatives from different organisations in our country. But I think what unites us, is  
32 that we are here to augment relationships towards change. I think that's our common  
33 goal; that we want to see positive change take place, and that we well aware that we  
34 can't do that on our own. I think we also committed to life-long learning. A lot has been  
35 said this morning about how research and research partnerships engender new  
36 knowledge, and co-create knowledge. But that wouldn't happen if we weren't  
37 committed to a continued emphasis on continued learning. And then I love *Person 4's*  
38 words, that we here to have serious fun together, so that we can share and create  
39 knowledge.

40

41 So within that context, we had three speakers, and the first of our, four speakers. Sorry  
42 we had two from *Place 1*, the first of our speakers was *Person 5* from *Place 1*, and she  
43 explained that their research is focussed on a service-learning approach. And that a  
44 service-learning approach is really about community service being integrated into  
45 academic work and research. And she spoke about *Place 1* having twelve partnership  
46 schools, and that it was quite difficult to access these schools and two community  
47 organisations that they work with. And then she gave us a range of benefits. There were  
48 benefits for the students, who were really learning a, well it was called place-based  
49 learning. They were learning in situ if you like, experiential learning is what they were  
50 gaining. There were benefits to the learners themselves, there were to the teachers,  
51 there were benefits to the communities, and I think she convinced us that when  
52 researchers and teachers and communities join in hands, we progress together. And  
53 there are only winners. And then she mentioned something which I would like to just  
54 touch on again at the end; she mentioned how overwhelming it is for her as a  
55 researcher, to work with communities and with schools and teachers and learners who  
56 are impacted by the challenges of our contexts. And so I think sometimes when we talk  
57 about the research process, we don't think enough about how it impacts on researchers,  
58 and we'll talk about that again at the end.

59

60 Was there something from *Place 1* that somebody else would like to add? In addition to  
61 what I've summarised on that slide? I'll give you a moment to go through it. *Person 5*?  
62 Fine?



63 *Speaker 2:*

64 They are busy with the photocopies.

65

66 *Speaker 1:*

67 Oh is it, I'll send it to you, if I don't lose it.

68

69 Then we heard from *Person 6*, who is also from *Place 1*, and she spoke about a very  
70 different form of research. She spoke about research which is essentially ethnographic,  
71 and narrative-based, and so we heard David's story. And basically, what *Person 6* was  
72 sharing with us is how teachers make meaning of their working lives, or how they form  
73 identities as teachers in the very challenging context in which South African educators  
74 teach. And the lessons that she learnt amongst others, were that commitment to  
75 excellence is a choice, and I thought that that could be a very encouraging finding for us  
76 to share with our communities. That educational landscape shapes classroom practice,  
77 and then something that I think should be put in bold, we really do have some  
78 wonderful teachers. Her challenge, that she noted, we implied, was that a female  
79 researcher in a Black school context, is not always easy. And so again, raise the notions  
80 of access and sustainability. *Person 6* is there anything you would add to that slide?  
81 Anything anybody else would like to add?

82

83 Our third set of speakers were our speakers from *Place 2*, where we heard about  
84 ethnographic learning and collaborative partnerships that are emerging. I think this,  
85 what made *Place 2* research that we heard today a little bit different from the other the  
86 research projects is that both *Person 7* and *Person 8* emphasised that they're in, it's in  
87 the initial stages still, that I understand that correctly. But they could give us an acronym  
88 that summarised their experiences so far, and that the acronym was "CARE". And I think  
89 that their acronym also summarises their focus; that they really are interested in  
90 engaging in research partnerships that allow researchers to care for the participants and  
91 the participants then to kind of in a ripple effect spread or allow this care to spread to  
92 the community, and to people from the community. And so care stands for an emphasis  
93 on COLLABORATING, which implies equal partnerships; ACCESSING, gaining entrance,



94 and there were a number of challenges that we heard about there; that care is  
95 impossible without relationship building, but I think what we heard very clearly is that  
96 relationship building is a process and that it doesn't happen overnight and that it needs  
97 to be sustained for us to have partnerships. And then we heard the whole emphasis on  
98 ENABLING rather than empowering.

99

100 Their focus is on teacher support and development and part of this teacher support and  
101 development is an understanding that the theories that we have in our country are not  
102 necessarily relevant to the challenges or the context of our country. And so part of the  
103 research that they do, is to identify issues that are important and then engage with  
104 research participants to help find or generate theories and practices that will answer  
105 these challenges, and I think that's a tough one.

106

107 And then they spoke at length about other challenges like working with research  
108 participants who are fatigued, there've been a number of people who have come into  
109 their schools and almost demanded information, and so when researchers come in  
110 there's a sense of "What do you want from us, and are you going to treat us as badly as  
111 we've been treated in the past?" and so that's a different kind of relationship that needs  
112 to be built, a relationship of trust. *Person 8* and *Person 7*, would you add anything? Is  
113 there anybody else who would like to add anything, was there something that struck  
114 you possibly, that I haven't, that I haven't noted? Ok we can always come back, as we go  
115 on.

116

117 Yes?

118

119 *Speaker 3*:

120 Sorry *Person 9*, what struck me was that they have formed relationships in the centre in  
121 that one little team of theirs, and to lead that core is important, in the structure, so to  
122 me that stood out.

123

124 *Speaker 1:*

125 I agree *Person 3*, I tried to make it stand out with the red. But yes, that is the core, we  
126 need to emphasise that. That care can't exist without having a relationship.

127

128 *Speaker 3:*

129 So maybe in the relationship those elements, the multiple layers of elements in the  
130 social identity that serve as a catalyst to all of us to re-grow.

131

132 *Speaker 1:*

133 Yes, the whole emerging me of the researcher.

134

135 *Speaker 3:*

136 Ja, and of the participants. Everyone involved in that relationship.

137

138 *Speaker 2:*

139 And of the us.

140

141 *Speaker 3:*

142 Ja.

143

144 *Speaker 1:*

145 Yes that's lovely.

146

147 *Speaker 3:*

148 Absolutely.

149

150 *Speaker 4:*

151 I just want to say that I think, we didn't get round to the part on enabling, the "E" of  
152 the "CARE", we such a lot to say but there's I think, one of the teachers in the project  
153 told that if ever I want to sort of, I wanted to see the outcomes of the learning process  
154 and our sharing and I want to see the outcomes in the classrooms and so forth, and  
155 she said I should be patient and she used the metaphor of a tree, that's what I  
156 understood and it's one of the things that I wanted to say. That you've got this seed  
157 and then the branches and then later on you've got this tree. And she said it also  
158 differs from participant to participant and from researcher to researcher. And then the  
159 other words or the metaphor that she used is that some of us change like it's cotton,  
160 and some of us are slow-brewing coffee and so forth. So that's some of the examples I  
161 wanted to share.

162

163 *Speaker 1:*

164 And they're all enabling, because there's change.

165

166 *Speaker 2:*

167 I quickly wanna show something there that I sometimes, if I explain to our Ed Psych  
168 students, the empowerment and enablement quandary. It lies in that, that when, if  
169 *Person 10* comes to me and say, "Ag shame *Person 4*, I'm *Person 10*, I'm coming to  
170 empower you" then it's here's poor *Person 4*, powerless. *Person 10* has all the power,  
171 she's coming to bestow that power on me. And then suddenly, because of this  
172 wonderful person, I now have power. So that was the empowerment. With enablement,  
173 it's the able. The ability is recognised already. There's not the one has power, the other  
174 does not have power. The one is giving power, the one is receiving power. In fact, there  
175 is able ability and because of a process, there's then shared enablement and it's  
176 becoming more able, if you want. The researcher becoming more able, the teacher  
177 becoming more able, but the ability is there already. It's not a power that some had

178 power, others didn't have power. So that is, in the end it's just words, pick one you're  
179 comfortable with and that is, and use that. But be aware of what the meanings are  
180 related to certain words.

181

182 *Speaker 1:*

183 Thank you. With *Place 3*, I first had the heading "What we heard" but I changed it  
184 because I think it was "What we saw" because what we saw was powerful. I think that  
185 we all witnessed, what participatory visual research is about. When *Person 3* showed us  
186 the video documentary, and the significance, although I have listed the significances that  
187 we discussed, the fact that it gave the participants a sense of agency, there was  
188 something that they could do, and that they could use again as a teaching tool and that  
189 it allowed them to raise awareness, and *Person 4's* point that it provided us with an  
190 insider perspective rather than an outsider perspective, as so much research sometimes  
191 does. That significance was clear from what we saw. So words are kind of superfluous I  
192 think to summarise here, what we saw. But two of the issues that were raised, is that it's  
193 a process, a participatory process which has very stringent ethical issues, and that we  
194 have to really, if we're going to engage in visual methodology, that we really have to  
195 spend a lot of time thinking carefully about the ethical ramifications of our research. And  
196 then that it's a research that has possible more challenges than other forms of research  
197 in terms of teachers having to learn how to use video cameras, in terms of the cost, and  
198 so those were kind of, they changed the context. We saw this incredibly powerful  
199 research, but we were left with remember, that when you're engaged with partnerships  
200 between teachers and researchers where you use visual participatory methods, there  
201 needs to be a certain measure of training, and there needs to be ethical mindfulness.  
202 *Person 3* would you like to add?

203

204 *Speaker 3:*

205 No that's perfect, I just want to mention one other challenge that I can't remember that  
206 I mentioned and that is working with the videographer. It is very challenging, because  
207 they promise, and then we arrange sessions with the teachers and then we wait and  
208 wait and wait and they delay the process. Because they're also busy people, so there are  
209 many challenges, it's not just easy as pie.



210

211 *Speaker 1:*

212 *Person 1?*

213

214 *Speaker 5:*

215 Inaudible – small joke related to what *Person 3* has just said.

216

217 *Speaker 1:*

218 Ah, I like that! Is there anything else anyone would like to add?

219

220 If I summarise, from those four presentations, what I think were common strands, then  
221 the first common strand was that our educational landscape is a very challenging one.  
222 And that's part of what necessitates our teacher/researcher partnerships, and as I  
223 mentioned right at the beginning when we recapped about what our context is, this  
224 challenging educational landscape is not only an HIV/AIDS altered landscape. We have a  
225 very complex South African context, in which we need to enable one another, and in  
226 which we need to do research.

227

228 I think a second point that emerged so strongly was that teachers want and deserve  
229 recognition. We'll change it, we'll put it in red! And so I think that that is something that  
230 as partners we need to be mindful of; that it's not just about disseminating our findings,  
231 but that it's also about giving voice to our teachers and recognition to our teachers.  
232 What I heard in all the presentations was that the partnerships were collaborative. I  
233 didn't, I didn't hear, and you can differ from me and we can discuss it, but I didn't hear  
234 examples of researchers coming in, with a power, with a knowledge and raising partners  
235 up if you like. I heard about collaboration, people working together. Especially because,  
236 in the research it was discussed there was definite place of context or consciousness, so  
237 it was specific to the context and the place and the participants that were being  
238 discussed, and that in most cases, if not all, the research was directed by a needs

239 **assessment**. So I heard the presenters saying things like, “We spoke to the teachers” or  
240 “We first did a survey” or “We heard our students saying” or “We were aware that”. So  
241 **there was a sense that the research was based on understanding “What are the needs of**  
242 **teachers that possibly need to be addressed in a research partnership?”**

243 And then I also heard that collaborative approaches have **mutual benefits**. I didn’t hear  
244 that it was only the researchers who were benefitting, or only the teachers that were  
245 benefitting. If I just list some, certainly these are not all but if I list some of the benefits,  
246 **the teachers benefitted because there was acknowledgement of teachers, we heard**  
247 **voices, the teachers’ voices came across clearly, we saw a positive image of teachers,**  
248 **and much of the research I think lead to teacher development, whether it was**  
249 **development of skills, whether it was development of competencies, but there was**  
250 **teacher development. Partnerships definitely benefitted whole school communities;** I  
251 thought there of the example in *Person 5’s* research when she described the support  
252 systems that were focussed on. But it was certainly not only in Helen’s discussion, **there**  
253 **was a benefit to learners, that they were supported better either by the students or by**  
254 **the teachers who were more aware of how learners were impacted or more aware of**  
255 **what they could do to enable learners.** Certainly when students were involved, **we heard**  
256 **about benefit for students, in place-based learning and the integration of theory and**  
257 **practice,** and **then definitely there were benefits for researchers as well.** In the whole  
258 idea of knowledge co-creation and of relevant theories and relevant practices that can  
259 be developed for our country. Would you add anything?

260

261 *Speaker 2:*

262 **I’d add development of researchers.**

263

264 *Speaker 1:*

265 Yes!

266

267 *Speaker 2:*

268 If I just reflect on who I was as a researcher when *Person 11* and I, first started the  
269 partnership in 2003, and who I am as a researcher in 2009, it could not have had  
270 happened if it was not in partnership with teachers. If there was something that  
271 happened and we didn't know what is this, then we'd go back to methodology books  
272 and try to see, ok this is happening, what do the books say what can you do. And then  
273 together with the teacher partners try and see ok what can we do. So the development  
274 of my identity as researcher and also I think my scope of my tool kit, my methodology  
275 would not have happened if it hadn't been for the partnership in research.

276

277 *Speaker 1:*

278 And then in a sense that tool kit is shaped by a context.

279

280 *Speaker 2:*

281 Yes. The relevant...

282

283 *Speaker 1:*

284 So it's a relevant tool kit. And so there's researcher development and development of a  
285 relevant tool kit. Anything else?

286

287 We heard about challenges. I think the challenge possibly came through most was  
288 possibly the challenge of access. And the challenge of access wasn't just in gaining  
289 access to a research community or to a community of people via a gate keeper, but also  
290 once you had gained access there were challenges of being patient, and challenges of  
291 understanding that this is a process, and that it takes time; that research is not an  
292 overnight quick fix, instant phenomenon. It was a process of building relationships, not  
293 just in terms of the partnerships, but also in terms of relationships with the self, the  
294 researcher's relationship to herself in the research.

295



296 And then *Person 5's* point, that a challenge of doing research is that many of our  
297 researchers become care worn. And then a big challenge is the implementation of our  
298 research and the sustainability of research. When the researchers leave, what then? And  
299 then, something that I heard, and it may be my perception, and you can correct me if  
300 my perception is not one hundred percent what happened in practice, but I seemed to  
301 hear that in most instances with the exception of *Person 3*, *Person 3's* research, that the  
302 researchers identify the partner schools.

303

304 *Speaker 3:*

305 I think also on that, schools, some of the schools actually came to us.

306

307 *Speaker 1:*

308 OK. I think that that's a message that needs to be given loudly because, when I think  
309 what we did not hear loudly, possibly if we talk about partnerships, that we need to talk  
310 about is partnerships that work from both sides. We perhaps need to say more loudly  
311 "How can schools initiate research partnerships? How can teachers initiate research  
312 partnerships?"

313

314 *Speaker 2:*

315 "Maybe ... can write a paper on that"... inaudible.

316

317 *Speaker 1:*

318 But I think that that would be enabling for us as a research community; that more South  
319 Africans are aware that you, research is not something that is university-generated  
320 necessarily, or a research body-generated necessarily phenomenon.

321

322 I think something else that we did not always hear loudly enough, and this was *Person*  
323 *3's* question, is for whom is the research? There was evidence that these collaborative

324 partnerships in which we engage have mutual benefits. Very definitely, but I think we  
325 need to think a little more about who defines the goals of the partnership. And what  
326 was the process of defining those goals, and perhaps we need to articulate that, so that  
327 equal partnerships are encouraged.

328

329 There was some discussion of how relationships of trust were developed, we did hear in  
330 the presentations that researchers negotiated their role, and we did hear that  
331 researchers learn from teachers and that they acknowledge teachers in their research,  
332 but what else is done? Given that we are part of a really complex educational landscape,  
333 where our teachers are fatigued, we heard about a drop-out rate of about 28 initially,  
334 and 8 at the end, and that's commonplace. I think all of us can testify to similar  
335 examples. What can we do to develop relationships of trust within our partnerships?

336

337 We perhaps didn't hear loudly enough how power relationships between researchers  
338 and partners were equalled out. We heard about peer-like relationships, we heard  
339 about muffins and tea, or muffins and coffee, but what else is done in a country where  
340 we have a history of hierarchy, where we have a history of unequal power relationships  
341 and disempowerment so that researchers and partners are on equal footing.

342

343 Then were new partner needs introduced into the research process? I didn't hear much  
344 about that, and if so, how were these addressed? Because I think that speaks to the  
345 question of for whom is the research. And then how will the research results be  
346 disseminated to partners? We spoke about, there was a book published using the  
347 photographs from some of the research and the video certainly went back to the  
348 partners, but if we're in partnership, then we need to do more than disseminate our  
349 findings to an academic community. And so perhaps we need to talk a little bit more  
350 about how our research results will be disseminated to partners.

351 And then I missed some comment on what researchers would do differently if they had  
352 the opportunity to do this all again. Are there other questions? Are there other... *Person*  
353 5?

354

355 *Speaker 6:*

356 I would just really like to hear what teachers' questions are raised from their side,  
357 because then we would really be able to compare... (inaudible).

358

359 *Speaker 7:*

360 I didn't hear you earlier; you answer how can schools initiate the partnerships.

361

362 *Speaker 1:*

363 No, I'm not answering, I'm raising the question. I would like us as a group to think about  
364 answers.

365

366 *Speaker 7:*

367 OK.

368

369 *Speaker 2:*

370 I think one way would be *Person 12*, in the way that *Place 4* identified *Place 5* at...

371 **Where it was a participant-partner link, where we said you know what these schools**

372 **would also appreciate the experience of a partnership in their schools.** Instead of *Person*

373 *11* and myself deciding, we now it was *Place 4* and we think that school looks nice, and

374 we think that school would be appropriate. So that that would be one example. Another

375 example would be I've told this story many times so forgive, you are having to listen to it

376 over and over again, **but this telephone call I think 2003/2004 that I got at my little**

377 **office, at the university and it said "Hello my name is *Person 13*..." I am an educator at a**

378 **school close to the *Place 6* if you ever feel that you want to collaborate with us, we've**

379 **got a wonderful school, and we'd really like to do that so when at a stage it was possible**

380 **for us we said well,** we developed the research project in a way that that partnership

381 could be part. But I think there are many this is just anecdotal examples.

382



383 *Speaker 8:*

384 Another example was that the principal of ... contacted us over the last couple of  
385 months because he's aware of the project that's been going on in *Place 7* and he  
386 contacted us and asked if we can't just come to my school as well. And that's based on  
387 *Person 14* telling him about the project.

388

389 *Speaker 1:*

390 That's word of mouth. That's word of mouth, yes.

391

392 *Speaker 7:*

393 What I can say is that teachers are always initiatives because we are having difficulties in  
394 our schools. Another thing we advise is the high school. That high school, there are so  
395 many drop-outs and we advise them that these learners, they need to reach out. Maybe  
396 if we can take care of them then they can ... Now they want to form the partnership  
397 with us. So we are always initiating something.

398 *Speaker 1:*

399 So those kind of initiatives maybe need to have a kind of platform, that more people can  
400 hear about them. Is that what you're saying? That people don't necessarily know about  
401 the partnerships that teachers initiate anyway.

402

403 *Speaker 7:*

404 Ja.

405

406 *Speaker 2:*

407 And that, and the partnership, *Person 15* help me out if I'm wrong with this, this is  
408 based on what *Place 4* has acted as facilitators to other schools and they identified the  
409 next school with whom they would want to work as their neighbourhood high school in

410 **order to also partner with them with a specific intervention**. Because they see that the  
411 kids from their school go to the secondary school, and then they are concerned about  
412 the levels of care and support in the secondary school.

413

414 *Speaker 1:*

415 Ripple effect.

416

417 *Speaker 2:*

418 Ja.

419

420 *Speaker 1:*

421 Ja, ja. And it would be wonderful if we could wait, well if we could, if we could initiate  
422 partnerships before the ripple effects takes place, so that we don't need to wait for that.  
423 It would be wonderful if we as South Africans could initiate research partnerships even  
424 before the effect takes place.

425

426 *Speaker 2:*

427 **if we knew, if we knew in advance where it would be, it would be wonderful if we could**  
428 **start the partnerships already, from the beginning** with *Place 5...*

429

430 *Speaker 1:*

431 **if we could be so sensitive to our context that we could almost foresee**. Are there other  
432 comments? Especially from teachers, I know tomorrow is devoted to the teachers'  
433 experience so I think that we'll get a much fuller picture when we've listened tomorrow.

434

435 *Speaker 2:*

436 Ja I also, I also think remember at the beginning of the day, the focus, the partnerships,  
437 a next point would be a fully integrated representative, I wouldn't even know if it was  
438 integrated or fully representative, but the focus of the November symposium was  
439 specifically on the teachers' voices. And what the teachers experienced as well, were  
440 what they experience as partners in terms of their views of researchers and also of  
441 project work, and then the, now the glass has shifted a bit, or the lens has shifted a bit  
442 to look at what researchers' experiences and voices are. So, the teachers may look quiet,  
443 you know, but they are not. They also had a specific focus there, and I do think that it  
444 would be wonderful if we had a next one, where we co-represent, co-present in terms  
445 of our experiences.

446 *Speaker 1:*

447 Maybe I should go to the next slide, and if there are more issues arising from the next  
448 slide we can add them because the next slide kind of looks to what is the way forward.  
449 Yes there's a comment.

450

451 *Speaker 7:*

452 If I can just go back to the...

453

454 *Speaker 1:*

455 Sure.

456

457 *Speaker 7:*

458 OK, I just wanted to put in that how relationships of trust just develop. With ... there  
459 were 28 teachers during the year, now they are out because of their reasons, but I think  
460 when the HIV and AIDs term, it's a sensitive one. I might join the group because I want  
461 to I dunno for many reasons but, somewhere somehow I'm having the problem that you  
462 are talking about. Then, my colleague here is my colleague and my colleague can go  
463 through. This issue is sensitive to me, I rather withdraw from it because I am just  
464 angered. So, I think that in that particular instance you must use in this project the one

465 who is willing and want to help, instead of needing and calling to childs because there is  
466 this project and call to teachers who are willing and will run the race until the end.

467

468 *Speaker 1:*

469 I think that's a very valuable input, that in order for trust to be heightened we really  
470 need to work with volunteer participants, that nobody should be coerced, ja. And that  
471 perhaps what you're saying and that we need to take note of is that because our  
472 educational landscape is such a complex one, we have to work even harder at  
473 developing relationships of trust. Thank you. Any other input?

474

475 If we look at the way forward in terms of our partnerships, just some thoughts and  
476 they're not complete; again I invite anybody to add to them please, but possibly what  
477 we need to think of in our way forward is how can schools and teachers initiate research  
478 partnerships, we've spoken about that; and then how can research partnerships not  
479 stigmatise non-White schools? Or non-White participants? I think we need to give that  
480 some serious thought.

481

482 The gentleman over there when we spoke during one of the discussions spoke about  
483 findings that engender hope and maybe we need to start thinking about doing research  
484 which really encourages hope. We heard that as well when *Person 6* spoke about David's  
485 story and how his narrative encouraged hope because it gave us positive images of  
486 teachers.

487

488 What can we do to care for our researchers? I've specifically said researchers because  
489 today was dedicated to the researchers' experience. I believe very strongly that we need  
490 to do a lot to encourage our teachers too. Both teachers and researchers need care. The  
491 way forward needs to include consideration of visual methodologies. I think I'm  
492 preaching to the converted, the researchers who are here are aware of, or many of  
493 them are aware of visual methodologies and use them. But we experienced as a group  
494 this afternoon how powerful visual methodology can be. And so in terms of our

495 partnerships and of giving our partners something concrete to take back to use in  
496 disseminating research findings we need to think more about visual methodologies.

497

498 And then it was also a comment made by the gentleman on my left that perhaps when  
499 we talk about disseminating findings, they first need to be collaboratively discussed.  
500 That we can come to some sort of consensus on what the findings mean, so that the  
501 partnership, the views of the partnership are reflected when we make meaning out of  
502 the research findings. And then we need to think about how we can effectively  
503 disseminate our findings to partners. I was at Sand Play meeting in *Place 8* in I think it  
504 was September or October last year and one of the delegates said that of the most  
505 powerful ways of disseminating research findings is to make a T-shirt, and I noted the  
506 beautiful T-shirts that so many of the teachers are wearing this morning. And she said in  
507 her project they made, and they weren't expensive, they made T-shirts and they put a  
508 slogan onto the front of the T-shirt and the back that summarised the core finding. And  
509 she said it didn't matter where they were, people would stop them and say "Hey!  
510 What's that? Tell me more!" I had never thought of that personally, it wasn't discussed  
511 enough how we could disseminate findings so that our South African context is enabled,  
512 and that idea was put forward. So maybe, *Person 4* and *Person 11*, maybe we need a  
513 symposium which just focuses on what we can do to disseminate findings.

514

515 In another project that I'm working in we had researchers come from *Place 9*, and when  
516 they arrived they said well, how do you suggest that we disseminate these findings and  
517 we said we go back into the community and we have an imbido. We get together, we  
518 have lots of food and we talk. And they scratched their heads, and they frowned at us,  
519 and they kind of had the attitude of you guys don't know what you're talking about. And  
520 then we went into the communities, and we spoke with our partners, NGOs and  
521 teachers, and youth, and we said to them well please will you tell our research partners  
522 from *Place 9* how you would like the findings disseminated. And one and all said orally,  
523 around food, we need to get together and communicate. So I think if we are going to be  
524 partners, if we are going to work together as we do, and if we are going to do that  
525 powerfully, we need to talk together about how we disseminate our findings.

526

527 And then my last slide, just to summarise, we've heard clearly that life, especially life in  
528 South Africa is tough. And one way that we can protect ourselves against this tough life  
529 is to wear a helmet. And that's a metaphor if you like, for our partnerships. I believe we  
530 enable one another, and I believe that is something we need to continue doing, against  
531 all odds. And that's my final point. Is there anything else anybody would like to add?

532

533 *Speaker 2:*

534 *Person 9!*

535

536 *Speaker 8:*

537 Thank you, I believe also being a discussant is tough this afternoon.

538

539 Delegates and other discussant thank *Speaker 1* and clap.

540



541	<b>Presentation Three Key</b>	
542	<b>HIV/AIDS Symposium March 2009</b>	
543	<i>Speaker 1: Linda Theron</i>	<i>Place 1: University of Johannesburg</i>
544	<i>Speaker 2: Liesel Ebersöhn</i>	<i>Place 2: Stellenbosch University</i>
545	<i>Speaker 3: Tilla Olivier</i>	<i>Place 3: NMMU</i>
546	<i>Speaker 4: Marietjie Oswald</i>	<i>Place 4: Sebulihle School</i>
547	<i>Speaker 5: Naydene De Lange</i>	<i>Place 5: Charles Duna</i>
548	<i>Speaker 6: Helen Krige</i>	<i>Place 6: Swaziland Border</i>
549	<i>Speaker 7: Delegates</i>	<i>Place 7: Port Elizabeth</i>
550	<i>Speaker 8: Ronél Ferreira</i>	<i>Place 8: Durban</i>
551		<i>Place 9: Canada</i>
552	<i>Person 1: Naydene De Lange</i>	<i>Person 8: Marietjie Oswald</i>
553	<i>Person 2: Irma Eloff</i>	<i>Person 9: Linda Theron</i>
554	<i>Person 3: Tilla Olivier</i>	<i>Person 10: Patience</i>
555	<i>Person 4: Liesel Ebersöhn</i>	<i>Person 11: Ronél Ferreira</i>
556	<i>Person 5: Helen Krige</i>	<i>Person 12: Chine</i>
557	<i>Person 6: Brigitte Smit</i>	<i>Person 13: Henry</i>
558	<i>Person 7: Estelle Swart</i>	<i>Person 14: Thembi</i>
559		<i>Person 15: Zoleka</i>
560		
561		
562		

## Presentation 5

### Prevalent Trends

#### Collaborative Partnerships between Teachers and EP Researchers have Specific Characteristics

##### Partnerships occur within a Context

*"We have a very complex South African context, in which we need to enable one another, and in which we need to do research"*

##### They have Common Goals

- **Bring about positive change**

*"Person 4 spoke at length this morning about us being here as partners from diverse contexts, but I think what unites us, is that we are here to augment relationships towards change"*

- **Commit to life-long learning/emphasise continued learning**

*"I think we also committed to life-long learning"*

*"A lot has been said this morning about how research and research partnerships engender new knowledge, and co-create knowledge. But that wouldn't happen if we weren't committed to a continued emphasis on continued learning."*

##### There is a process which is followed in the development and practice of collaborative partnerships

- **There is a process of caring for participants and a resultant ripple effect that allows care to spread to the wider community**

*"They really are interested in engaging in research partnerships that allow researchers to care for the participants and the participants then to kind of in a ripple effect spread or allow this care to spread to the community, and to people from the community"*

- **The various parties collaborate and in doing so imply equal partnership**

*"What I heard in all the presentations was that the partnerships were collaborative. I didn't, I didn't hear, and you can differ from me and we can discuss it, but I didn't hear examples of researchers coming in, with a power, with a knowledge and raising partners up if you like. I heard about collaboration, people working together"*

- **Access must be gained into the community**
- **Relationships of trust have to be built with the communities and community members**
- **There is an emphasis on enabling participants as opposed to empowering participants**

*"And so care stands for an emphasis on COLLABORATING, which implies equal partnerships; ACCESSING, gaining entrance, and there were a number of challenges that we heard about there; that care is impossible without relationship building, but I think what we heard very clearly is that RELATIONSHIP BUILDING is a process and that it doesn't happen over night and that it needs to be sustained for us to have partnerships. And then we heard the whole emphasis on ENABLING rather than empowering"*

*“With enablement, it’s the able. The ability is recognised already. There’s not the one has power, the other does not have power. The one is giving power, the one is receiving power. In fact, there is able ability and because of a process, there’s then shared enablement and it’s becoming more able, if you want. The researcher becoming more able, the teacher becoming more able, but the ability is there already. It’s not a power that some had power, others didn’t have power”*

- **A needs analysis is undertaken and a relevant theory found or generated by which the challenge can be understood and solutions found**

*“And so part of the research that they do, is to identify issues that are important and then engage with research participants to help find or generate theories and practices that will answer these challenges”*

*“The research was directed by a needs assessment”*

*“There was a sense that the research was based on understanding “What are the needs of teachers that possibly need to be addressed in a research partnership?”*

### **Emphasis on the Importance of Relationship-Building**

- **Without the development of a strong, trusting relationship, collaboration cannot occur**

*“They have formed relationships in the centre in that one little team of theirs, and to lead that core is important, in the structure”*

*“Care can’t exist without having a relationship”*

- **Relationship-building is important because it has the ability of serving as a catalyst for change**

*“So maybe in the relationship those elements, the multiple layers of elements in the social identity that serve as a catalyst to all of us to re-grow”*

- **It is important therefore to acknowledge that relationship-building is a process which differs from person to person and it that needs to be nurtured in order for it to be sustained**

*“One of the teachers in the project told that if ever I want to sort of, I wanted to see the outcomes of the learning process and our sharing and I want to see the outcomes in the classrooms and so forth, and she said I should be patient and she used the metaphor of a tree, that’s what I understood and it’s one of the things that I wanted to say. That you’ve got this seed and then the branches and then later on you’ve got this tree. And she said it also differs from participant to participant and from researcher to researcher. And then the other words or the metaphor that she used is that some of us change like it’s cotton, and some of us are slow-brewing coffee and so forth”*

- **Relationships of trust are developed in different ways**
  - **Researchers negotiating their role**
  - **Researchers learn from teachers**
  - **Researchers acknowledging teachers in their research**

*“There was some discussion of how relationships of trust were developed, we did hear in the presentations that researchers negotiated their role, and we did hear that researchers learn from teachers and that they acknowledge teachers in their research”*

- **Through an emphasis on the voluntary nature of participation in research projects**

*“OK, I just wanted to put in that how relationships of trust just develop. With ... there were 28 teachers during the year, now they are out because of their reasons, but I think when the HIV and AIDs term, it's a sensitive one. I might join the group because I want to I dunno for many reasons but, somewhere somehow I'm having the problem that you are talking about. Then, my colleague here is my colleague and my colleague can go through. This issue is sensitive to me, I rather withdraw from it because I am just angered. So, I think that in that particular instance you must use in this project the one who is willing and want to help, instead of needing and calling to child's because there is this project and call to teachers who are willing and will run the race until the end”*

### **Collaborative Partnerships are Mutual and Reciprocal in Nature**

- **Schools as well as Research Institutions initiate collaborative partnerships**

*“Some of the schools actually came to us”*

- **Schools initiate research partnerships in various ways**

- **Participant-partner links**

*“Where it was a participant-partner link, where we said you know what these schools would also appreciate the experience of a partnership in their schools”*

*“Another thing we advise is the high school. That high school, there are so many drop-outs and we advise them that these learners, they need to reach out. Maybe if we can take care of them then they can. Now they want to form the partnership with us. So we are always initiating something”*

*“This is based on what Place 4 has acted as facilitators to other schools and they identified the next school with whom they would want to work as their neighbourhood high school in order to also partner with them with a specific intervention”*

- **Inviting researchers to collaborate with their schools**

*“Another example would be... this telephone call I think 2003/2004 that I got at my little office, at the university and it said “Hello my name is Person 13. I am an educator at a school close to the Place 6 if you ever feel that you want to collaborate with us, we've got a wonderful school, and we'd really like to do that so when at a stage it was possible for us we said well, we developed the research project in a way that that partnership could be part”*

- **Word of mouth**

*“The principal of ... contacted us over the last couple of months because he's aware of the project that's been going on in Place 7 and he contacted us and asked if we can't just come to my school as well. And that's based on Person 14 telling him about the project”*

### **There is an equal power relationship that exists between researchers and research participants**

*“Power relationships between researchers and partners were equalled out”*

### **Teachers and EP Researchers have Identified and Put into Practice, Various Ways of Collaborating**



## Service-Learning

*"She explained that their research is focussed on a service-learning approach. And that a service-learning approach is really about community service being integrated into academic work and research"*

*"They were learning in situ if you like, experiential learning is what they were gaining"*

## Ethnographic, Narrative-Based Research Participatory Visual Research

### Collaborative Partnerships entails many Benefits

#### General Benefits

- Sense of Agency

*"It gave the participants a sense of agency, there was something that they could do, and that they could use again as a teaching tool and that it allowed them to raise awareness"*

- Engendering new knowledge and the co-creation of knowledge

*"A lot has been said this morning about how research and research partnerships engender new knowledge, and co-create knowledge"*

- Engendering hope

*"Findings that engender hope and maybe we need to start thinking about doing research which really encourages hope"*

*"We heard that as well when Person 6 spoke about David's story and how his narrative encouraged hope because it gave us positive images of teachers"*

#### Teacher Benefits

- Acknowledgement
- Generation of a positive image of teachers
- Teacher development – development of skills and competencies

*"The teachers benefitted because there was acknowledgement of teachers, we heard voices, the teachers' voices came across clearly, we saw a positive image of teachers, and much of the research I think lead to teacher development, whether it was development of skills, whether it was development of competencies, but there was teacher development"*

*"I think looking at the drawings that you made just in the session before this one, it also indicated I believe, how you have developed and how you have grown; professionally but also personally, because you cannot go away untouched when you are so close with so many people who are so precious. You cannot remain untouched or unchanged"*

### Whole School Communities

#### Learner Benefits

- Improved support by fellow students and teachers
- Enhanced awareness of how learners are impacted by certain issues such as HIV/AIDS
- Enhanced awareness of how learners can be enabled

*"There was a benefit to learners, that they were supported better either by the students or by the teachers who were more aware of how learners were impacted or more aware of what they could do to enable learners"*



## Student Benefits

- Integration of theory and practice

*"We heard about benefit for students, in place-based learning and the integration of theory and practice"*

## Researcher Benefits

- Development of researchers
  - Researcher identity and personal development
  - Scope of toolkit and methodology

*"If I just reflect on who I was as a researcher when Person 11 and I first started the partnership in 2003, and who I am as a researcher in 2009, it could not have had happened if it was not in partnership with teachers"*

*"It was a process of building relationships, not just in terms of the partnerships, but also in terms of relationships with the self, the researcher's relationship to herself in the research"*

*"So the development of my identity as researcher and also I think my scope of my tool kit, my methodology would not have happened if it hadn't been for the partnership in research"*

## Collaborative Partnerships entail many Challenges

### Gaining Access

*"A female researcher in a Black school context is not always easy. And so again, raise the notions of access and sustainability"*

*"She spoke about Place 1 having twelve partnership schools, and that it was quite difficult to access these schools and two community organisations that they work with"*

## It is not possible to collaborate until a relationship has been built

*"There were a number of challenges that we heard about there; that care is impossible without relationship building"*

## Human circumstances and affect which influence the collaborative process

*"Other challenges like working with research participants who are fatigued"*

*"A challenge of doing research is that many of our researchers become care worn"*

*"She mentioned how overwhelming it is for her as a researcher, to work with communities and with schools and teachers and learners who are impacted by the challenges of our contexts"*

*"We don't think enough about how it impacts on researchers"*

## Disregard for the rights and dignity of research participants which leads to suspicion and scepticism with regards to researchers and their agendas

*“There’ve been a number of people who have come into their schools and almost demanded information, and so when researchers come in there’s a sense of “What do you want from us, and are you going to treat us as badly as we’ve been treated in the past?”*

### **Process-related challenges**

*“Once you had gained access there were challenges of being patient, and challenges of understanding that this is a process, and that it takes time”*

### **Sustainability**

*“A big challenge is the implementation of our research and the sustainability of research. Then the researchers leave, what then?”*

### **What EP Researchers can Learn from Teachers and Share with Future Research Participants**

#### **Although classrooms are shaped by the educational landscape, best practice is a choice**

*“The educational landscape shapes classroom practice”*

*“The lessons that she learnt amongst others, were that commitment to excellence is a choice, and I thought that that could be a very encouraging finding for us to share with our communities”*

#### **Teachers need to be recognised and acknowledged for their contribution to the development of South African youth**

*“Teachers want and deserve recognition... it’s also about giving voice to our teachers and recognition to our teachers”*

Trend	Sub-Trend	Presentation 1 (Speaker 9)	Presentation 2 (Speaker 4 & 8)	Presentation 3 (Speaker 3)	Presentation 4 (Speaker 2 & 7)	Presentation 5 (Speaker 1)	Presentation 6 (Speaker 5)
Core Characteristics of Collaboration						*	
	Context		*		*	*	*
	Common Goals		*		*	*	*
	Emphasis on the Process		*		*	*	
	Relationship-Building & Trust		*		*	*	*
	Mutual & Reciprocal Nature		*	*	*	*	*
	Power Relations			*		*	*
	Commitment	*	*	*	*		*
	Money						*
	Reflection & Acknowledgement	*	*	*	*		*
	Assets as Resources	*			*		*
	Delivers a Sense of Purpose & a Sense of Importance to Roles Played	*		*	*		
	Teachers and researchers to find ways of sustaining projects/partnerships		*		*		
	Enablement	*	*	*	*		
	Reinforce Established Concepts		*				

Trend	Sub-Trend	Presentation 1 (Speaker 9)	Presentation 2 (Speaker 4 & 8)	Presentation 3 (Speaker 3)	Presentation 4 (Speaker 2 & 7)	Presentation 5 (Speaker 1)	Presentation 6 (Speaker 5)
Core Characteristics of Collaboration						*	
	Involves Gaining Access/Building networks		*	*	*		
	Different Frame of Reference		*				
	Care as All-Encompassing Concept		*		*		
	Involves Learning from Each Other/Partnership Knowledge Networks	*	*	*	*		
	Use of Metaphors		*				
	Requires a Belief in Partners		*	*	*		
	Gaining Access & Relationship-Building are Interdependent		*				
	Bridges Gap between Theory and Practice		*				
	Highlights Additional Issues for Research		*				
	More of a Social Intervention			*	*		
	Action			*			
	Emphasis on for whom is the Research			*			
	Insider Perspective				*		

Trend	Sub-Trend	Presentation 1 (Speaker 9)	Presentation 2 (Speaker 4 & 8)	Presentation 3 (Speaker 3)	Presentation 4 (Speaker 2 & 7)	Presentation 5 (Speaker 1)	Presentation 6 (Speaker 5)
Core Characteristics of Collaboration						*	
	Acknowledge and Identify Barriers as well				*		
	Sense of Agency				*		
Need for Platforms or Forums in CPs			*				*
	Awareness		*				*
	Theorize		*				*
	Acknowledgement		*				*
	Funders		*				*
	Affirmation		*				*
	Motivation etc		*				*
Various Ways of Collaborating						*	
	Service-Learning					*	
	Ethnographic, Narrative-Based Research		*			*	
	Visual Participatory Methodology			*		*	
	(VPM Uses & Intentions)						

Trend	Sub-Trend	Presentation 1 (Speaker 9)	Presentation 2 (Speaker 4 & 8)	Presentation 3 (Speaker 3)	Presentation 4 (Speaker 2 & 7)	Presentation 5 (Speaker 1)	Presentation 6 (Speaker 5)
Core Characteristics of Collaboration						*	
	Rich Descriptions of Perceptions			*			
	Explore and Generate Own Theories			*			
	Space to Discuss and Resolve NB Issues			*			
Benefits						*	
	General		*		*	*	*
	Teacher				*	*	
	Learner					*	
	Student					*	
	Researcher		*		*	*	
	Community				*		
Challenges						*	
	Gaining Access	*	*	*		*	
	Relationship-Building & Trust		*			*	
	Human Circumstance					*	
	Disregard to Rights and Dignity					*	
	Process-Related		*			*	

<b>Trend</b>	<b>Sub-Trend</b>	<b>Presentation 1 (Speaker 9)</b>	<b>Presentation 2 (Speaker 4 &amp; 8)</b>	<b>Presentation 3 (Speaker 3)</b>	<b>Presentation 4 (Speaker 2 &amp; 7)</b>	<b>Presentation 5 (Speaker 1)</b>	<b>Presentation 6 (Speaker 5)</b>
Core Characteristics of Collaboration						*	
	Sustainability		*	*		*	
	Uncontrollable External Influences		*				

## **Trend Analysis Report**

### **1. Core Characteristics of Collaborative Partnerships between Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers**

- 1.1. Collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers are characterised by common goals
- 1.2. Collaborative partnerships are forged within a context
- 1.3. There is an active emphasis on the process that is followed and which emerges and evolves with time
- 1.4. There is an exchange of knowledge and a subsequent development of knowledge networks
  - 1.4.1. There is an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice
- 1.5. The overarching philosophy “care” directs the way in which partnerships are forged. This involves:
  - 1.5.1. An emphasis on building trusting relationships  
(In order to gain access and develop networks)
  - 1.5.2. Delivering and fostering the enablement of all partners  
(This results in the development of a sense of purpose, pride and self-importance, and which implies a belief in and acknowledgement of the ability of partners)
  - 1.5.3. Commitment to all partners and the given collaborative partnership project
  - 1.5.4. Agreement that the nature of the collaborative partnership be mutual and reciprocal  
(This implies the negotiation of equal roles and power positions)

### **2. Methodologies in Collaborative Partnerships between Teachers and Educational Psychology Researchers**

- 2.1. Service learning exercises
- 2.2. Visual participatory methodology
- 2.3. Participatory reflection and action

### **3. Educational Psychology Researchers Focus their Studies on Various Educational Topics**

- 3.1. Issues and concerns which hamper teaching and the learning concept
- 3.2. Teacher experiences and how teachers make meaning of their teaching lives and the educational landscape
- 3.3. Teacher enablement and support
- 3.4. How research can support teaching capacity in terms of practice

#### **4. Collaborative Partnerships have Benefits**

##### **4.1. Teacher benefits**

- 4.1.1. Development of a positive self-image
- 4.1.2. Development of professional skills and competencies
- 4.1.3. Generation of a positive image of the work being done by teachers

##### **4.2. Researcher Benefits**

- 4.2.1. Expansion of scholarly skills and resources
- 4.2.2. Development of researcher identity
- 4.2.3. Personal development

#### **5. Collaborative Partnerships present Challenges**

- 5.1. Gaining access into communities
- 5.2. Sustainability of collaborative partnership work
- 5.3. Making provision for the influence of external influences

## First Draft of Data Analysis Results

### 1. Collaborative Partnerships between Teachers and Educational Psychology Researchers have certain Core Characteristics

- *Collaborative partnerships have common goals*
- *There is some kind of power relationship that exists between researchers and practitioners*
- *Partnerships involve an exchange of knowledge*
- *Partnerships involve the development of partnership knowledge networks*
- *Partnerships between researchers and practitioners attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice*
- *Collaborative partnerships are mutual and reciprocal in nature*
- *Collaborative partnerships require a certain level of commitment from partners*
- *Partnerships emerge and are forged within a context*
  - *There is an active emphasis on the process that is follows and which emerges and evolves with time*
    - *This process involves setting priorities and implementing action plans*
  - *There is an active emphasis on the building of trusting relationships with partners*
  - *Those involved in collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers provide a space for reflection and the acknowledgement of different situations, roles played and challenges faced by teachers*
    - *Requires reflection and acknowledgement of oneself, other partners and institutions*
    - *There is an acknowledgement of what teachers are doing right and what makes them valuable*
  - *There is a trend toward focussing on the positive assets and resources which exist between partners with a view to mobilising assets to improve community issues/problems*
  - *Collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers delivers a sense of purpose, pride and self-importance to those involved*
    - *Partners regard themselves as tools that can be used to unlock the potential of the community*
    - *Partners regard themselves as nurturers and supporters who provide care and warmth to the community*
    - *Partners regard themselves as messengers of new information and knowledge which can be used to develop and support the community*
  - *Educational psychology researchers hope to deliver and foster the enablement of teachers through collaborative partnerships*

- *There is an active emphasis on gaining access and the development of networks which can be used to sustain projects*
  - *This necessitates the negotiation of roles*
  - *This necessitates a clear understanding and awareness of the context in which the partnership is to be forged*
- *There is a strong belief in partners involved in collaborative partnerships*
  - *Collaborative partners regard CARE as the most important concept in collaboration*
  - *Collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers place a greater emphasis on long-term social intervention than on solving once-off problems*
  - *Collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers provide a much richer “insider perspective” into issues and problems within communities*
  - *Collaborative partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers require partners to have a certain degree of self-agency in order to sustain projects*

**2. Collaborative Partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers require a form of platform or forum in order to:**

- 2.1. Raise awareness and encourage sensitivity towards community issues
- 2.2. Theorise about problems and how best to solve them
- 2.3. Attract funders
- 2.4. Provide partners with affirmation of the work being done
- 2.5. Share information and exchange knowledge on a broader level
- 2.6. Partners gain a sense of hope, encouragement and motivation from participating in such events

**3. Teachers and Educational Psychology Researchers have come up and continue to come up with a variety of ways of collaborating with each other:**

- 3.1. Service learning exercises
- 3.2. Ethnographic, narrative-based research
- 3.3. Visual participatory methodology
- 3.4. Participatory reflection and action

**4. Collaborative Partnerships provide various Benefits to those involved**

- 4.1. General benefits
  - *Engendering of new knowledge and the co-creation of knowledge*
  - *Engendering of hope*
  - *Provide a comfortable way of talking and learning about important issues*
    - *Partnerships normalise experiences and situations*

- *Partnerships provide a platform from which people are able to learn, have their questions answered and obtain and provide support to others*

4.2. Teacher benefits

- *Motivation*
- *Sense of purpose*
- *Reception of acknowledgement and recognition*
- *The generation of a positive image of teachers*
- *Teacher development*
  - *The development of skills and competencies*

4.3. Learner benefits

- *Improved support by fellow students and teachers*
- *Enhanced awareness of how learners are impacted by certain issues such as HIV/AIDS*

4.4. Researcher benefits

- *Expansion and broadening of professional and academic repertoire*
  - *Learning how to adapt and become flexible when working in contexts and cultures that are unfamiliar*
  - *Learning how to use existing resources and the people around them to learn*
  - *Being required to learn a great deal about oneself on a personal and professional level*
- *Development of researchers*
  - *The development of identity and personal development*
  - *Development of a toolkit and researcher methodology*

**5. Collaborative partnerships present with various challenges**

5.1. Gaining access

5.2. Building trusting relationships with partners

5.3. Process-related challenges

- *Setting of common priorities and the implementation of objectives*
- *The development and mutual agreement of common goals*

5.4. Sustainability

5.5. The effects of uncontrollable external influences

## **Final Draft of Data Analysis Results**

### **1. Core Characteristics of Collaborative Partnerships between Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers**

- 1.1. Common goals of educational psychology researchers and teachers
- 1.2. The contextual nature of collaborative partnerships
- 1.3. The process-oriented emphasis of collaborative partnerships
- 1.4. Knowledge and subsequent development of knowledge networks
- 1.5. Overarching philosophy of “care” in collaborative partnerships

### **2. Methodologies in Collaborative Partnerships between Teachers and Educational Psychology Researchers**

- 2.1. Service learning exercises
- 2.2. Visual participatory methodology
- 2.3. Participatory reflection and action

### **3. Focus of Educational Psychology Researchers Studies**

- 3.1. Issues and concerns which hamper teaching and the learning concept
- 3.2. Teacher experiences and how teachers make meaning of their teaching lives and the educational landscape
- 3.3. Teacher enablement and support
- 3.4. Support of teaching capacity by research

### **4. Benefits of Collaborative Partnerships**

- 4.1. Teacher benefits
- 4.2. Researcher Benefits

### **5. Challenges of Collaborative Partnerships**

- 5.1. Gaining access into communities
- 5.2. Sustainability of collaborative partnership work
- 5.3. Influence of external influences

## **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

### **1. Core Characteristics of Collaborative Partnerships between Teachers and Educational Psychology Researchers**

<b>INCLUSION</b>	Data pertaining to the nature of collaborative partnerships in various contexts and amongst a variety of different researchers and practitioners. For example, all major processes which emerge during collaboration, goals and aims of collaboration and focus of collaborative partnerships.
<b>EXCLUSION</b>	Data related to the needs, barriers, challenges or benefits identified by researchers and practitioners in collaborative partnerships.

### **2. Methodologies in Collaborative Partnerships between Educational Psychology Researchers and Teachers**

<b>INCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes the variety of ways in which teachers and educational psychology researchers have discovered or recognised as successful or potentially successful ways of collaborating.
<b>EXCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes the benefits and challenges of the various ways of collaborating or which describes the process involved in each method.

### **3. Focus of Educational Psychology Researcher Studies**

<b>INCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes what essential knowledge educational psychology researchers set out to reveal or co-create in terms of the primary research question. Data which suggests or describes the research questions created by educational psychology researchers on the outset of the given studies.
<b>EXCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes any additional knowledge which educational psychology researchers set out to reveal or co-create which was not included in the primary research question of each study. Any research questions which may have been researched as a result of the initial research question of each study.

### **4. Benefits of Collaborative Partnerships**

<b>INCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes the benefits of participating in or being involved in a collaborative partnership, with regard to teachers and educational psychology researchers.
<b>EXCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes the benefits of any other practice which arises from participation in a collaborative partnership. For example the benefits of communicating via a platform.

### **5. Challenges of Collaborative Partnerships**

<b>INCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes the challenges one is confronted with when participating in or being involved in a collaborative partnership, with regard to teachers and educational psychology researchers.
<b>EXCLUSION</b>	Data which suggests or describes the challenges of any other practice which arises from participation in a collaborative partnership. For example the challenges arising from visual participatory methodology.

### **Data Collection Reflection One**

So here I am at the symposium where I am collecting data for my scripsi, and what a strange experience it has been so far. I felt rather apprehensive about the whole situation because I knew that I would mostly be around professors and doctoral students (who are also my lecturers), and I found that I was very worried about if I would fit in or whether they would treat me like a real junior!

I must say, I was pleasantly surprised, and by the end of tonight I felt much better about the whole situation.

From an academic perspective, I really did feel like a very little fish in a very big ocean. All these professionals and writers were talking about how they were in the process of having their work published, and I sat thinking to myself, "I don't even know how to write a proposal yet, never mind do actual research!" I did, however, meet a very interesting woman tonight, Beth, who is doing her PhD on a topic very similar to mine, so I really would like to try and have a chat with her tomorrow and hopefully stay in touch!

### **Data Collection Reflection Two**

Today was a bitter-sweet day for me... I will start with the bitter.

After thinking that I was so well-organised for this seminar with regard to the collection of my data, the sound equipment etc, everything seemed to go very differently than expected. I didn't realise what a massive job it actually was, and when I began to realise that it was going to be an up-hill battle all day, I felt downhearted, embarrassed and even a little dumb. I think the reason I felt this way was because I did actually put in a huge effort to organise the necessary equipment, but between Hermien, Tilda and myself, there was obviously both a miscommunication and a misunderstanding. For example, Hermien was under the impression that we had organised to use the department's equipment; I had no idea that we had such equipment, and Tilda thought that the last time her and Hermien had used the department's equipment; it had actually come from Lucas! What a mess!

I am trying to comfort myself with the fact that these things happen, and that since it was my first time doing this, I will be much more clued up next time. But still, the feeling has kind of stuck. And now I'm very worried that between all the different sound resources that we did manage to use, the quality won't be good enough to transcribe – how does one actually transcribe anyway?! Oh my gosh, all these frantic "toddler" thoughts are running riots in my head!

On the sweet side: This has been an exceptional experience. To meet all these scholars and to have the opportunity to hear them speak is truly amazing! I find that just from the few little things that were said on the side today, the one question that really stuck by me was when someone asked why all this research is only being done in the Black communities and in rural schools, and whether this problem (HIV/AIDS) is unique to their context. I think this is a damn good question – one I hadn't even considered.

I am really looking forward to the rest of the seminar and to discover what themes emerge in my data because I think that apart from answering my primary and secondary research questions, other critical questions are going to arise as well. That makes me think about Georgina's topic regarding sustainability. I think that it is quite possible that a lot of the ideas for sustainability may also arise from this seminar.

### **Data Collection Reflection Three**

Today went a lot better than yesterday. I really felt as though I knew what I was doing this time and everything went a lot more smoothly. I also felt a lot more confident today not only in terms of collecting my data, but as an individual. On Monday and especially on Sunday I felt very unsure of myself, so much so that I was even too shy to sit at the table and eat! I was very glad that today I was able to be myself and talk to the Profs that were there. One tends to think of them as if they are a cut above the rest of us, and while they are academically, I was pleasantly surprised to find that most of them are the most humble, modest people. I was also so touched by the fact that one of them was even glad to hear that I had enjoyed reading her book. I think this really proved to me that things like that are just as exciting and invigorating as the thought that one day we may get published is to us. It showed me that actually, we are all on very similar journeys – just on different levels.

This makes me think about what one of the speakers said about the supervisor-supervisee relationship, and I mentioned this at lunch today. I don't think I've ever stopped to think about how much time, effort and emotional energy goes into being a supervisor – whether it be over interns, students of research or the like. I actually think it must be an exceptionally daunting task since supervisees tend to get the idea that one's supervisor is "all-knowing" and is therefore able to just give advice and suggestions on everything and anything related to a topic off the top of their heads. The truth, I have found, is that that is not what they are there for – they have just as much to learn from the supervisee and it is for this reason that the process of being supervisor or supervisee contributes to your growth.

Anyway, back to research data collection now. I now sit with about 10 hours of audio and video footage which needs to be downloaded and transcribed. I'm sure that's going to make for exceptionally interesting reflecting!

### **Transcriptions**

As I draw near to the end of my seemingly never-ending journey of trying to transcribe the audio data recorded as part of my data collection process for my scripsi, I am left with several thoughts...

Firstly, I would never have guessed how much hard work it was going to be! Originally I had assumed I would be able to get it professionally transcribed, not because I am too lazy to do it but simply in order to save time. However, this thought came to a halt very quickly when Prof. Liesel suggested that I do it myself. My first thoughts regarding this were that it was so much hard, unnecessary work for me when there are other people who would be able to do it faster and with much more ease. However, she insisted that it would be an experience that I would grow from significantly and that I should start as soon as possible. So, I started, and boy did it take FOREVER! I couldn't believe that it would take so long and had initially decided to give myself until the end of April to have them completed – that was a bit unrealistic!!!

Nevertheless, I kept at it, complaining every step of the way but I really must admit that it has been ONE HELL OF A LEARNING EXPERIENCE... Apart from all the skills which I have brushed up on in the process such as typing, listening, reflecting on and critically analysing what was said during each recording, I have found that this process has done wonders for my knowledge of the content of each presentation – something which I believe will undoubtedly be of great value when it comes to analysing the data. This process also encouraged me to attend various lectures around textual analysis and transcribing since I didn't really know how I should be going about doing the transcriptions until the very end when I eventually decided to do some research on it. Although I was pretty close to the mark, I now realise that had I done this before-hand, I would have saved myself a great deal of time in terms of formatting the texts as this was done several times over to each and every presentation before my research helped me decide on the most appropriate format to suit my "analytic needs".

One of the challenges which I experienced in a huge way during this process is that I have always thought that my auditory skills are not nearly as strong as my visual skills. However, I soon realised that this was not so; they may not be as strong as my visual skills but I reckon they are still strong! They would have to be in order to evaluate what was being said during each presentation in spite of the enormous amount of background noise during some of the presentations.

Another thing that I battled with a bit was the ethnic names of some of the schools. I am still not sure whether I should be including these in the text for ethical reasons, but seeing as the delegates felt so strongly that they be acknowledged and their efforts recognised, I have decided to leave them in for now. When I go and speak to Prof. Liesel about the writing of my proposal I will discuss this with her. From a practical point of view it might be a good idea to leave them out since the process of getting consent from all the relevant parties may be a complicated and timorous one; however I feel that it is more important to do what the participants expect or are hoping for, than to put a bit more effort into the process and get consent so that they receive the acknowledgement they long for.

Once I had finished the initial transcription process, it was then time for me to go back and reread and re-listen to all the presentations again in order to make sure that I have transcribed them as accurately as possible. This was a much easier and faster process and apart from a few areas and texts which needed to be altered, this wasn't too much trouble. I am certainly glad that I did it because I picked up on a lot more of what was being said (additional information) than during the initial phase of transcribing. I definitely found the presentations where there were more than one or two people presenting much more of a challenge. Prof. Liesel and Dr. Ronél's presentation was especially difficult and time-consuming and took me a few days just to revise!

Now that my transcriptions are done I can't wait to begin with the writing of proposal. I'm not too sure what Prof. Liesel is expecting of me because my scripsi forms part of her and Dr. Ronél's greater project so she might have specific things which she wants to add into the proposal so for now I think I will just carry on reading and meet with her ASAP. Our timing is actually good because we will be starting with NME 810 soon and I assume we will cover proposal writing in there...

### **Scripsi Meetings with Prof. Ebersöhn**

After having been pre-occupied with getting all my transcriptions done throughout this year, it was an invigorating experience for me to have my first official meeting Prof. Ebersöhn regarding the writing of my proposal. We started off the meeting just talking generally about what purpose the proposal actually serves and what needs to be included in it. This was not really anything new as I had done a very small research project and proposal in my honours year but obviously the scale of the research project for my scripsi is much larger!

I was really impressed at the way in which Prof. Ebersöhn provided guidance – I felt as though I had been provided with all the relevant information that was necessary to write the proposal which I might not otherwise have known, but still had the freedom to make the proposal 'mine' and to see it in a way that is meaningful for me.

I was also very excited when Prof. Ebersöhn mentioned PhD studies as that is definitely something that I can see myself doing some day, and was more than flattered when she told me that she can see the joy that research brings me, I didn't think it was that obvious...

Right now I feel extremely overwhelmed by the immense amount of work that writing this proposal is going to be, and I remember thinking during our meeting, "When on earth am I going to find time to get all this done, it's so much work!" I think what is worrying me the most at this stage is the fact that I write my board exam two days after I hand in my proposal. I guess the

lesson I can already take away from this is that the sooner I start working on it, the sooner I will find time to do other work as well.

With regards to how I am going to approach this mass of work, I believe that it is essential that I have a good, solid plan to get me through everything timorously. I think I am going to approach one section at a time and read, research and write about just that section until it is complete and then only start on the next section. I take this advice from Prof. Max Bergman during one of his lectures in the July research support sessions. He said research is like building houses and hoping you won't run out of resources, and that there are two ways of building these houses. The one way is to start 20 houses all at the same time and take the risk that if you do run out of resources (a metaphor for time), it is possible that when this happens, you will have 20 half-finished houses but not a single one that people can live in. The other way is to just build one house at a time until you reach your final goal of 20 houses. While this process may be fairly time-consuming and tedious, at least when push comes to shove and your resources have been depleted, you can rest-assured that you although you do not have 20 completed houses, you at least have 10 or 15 that can be lived n as opposed to 20 that can't be lived in.

I really think this is an excellent piece of advice. Although he was referring to the whole process of writing up a PhD or Masters scripsi, I do believe that it can be generalised to the research proposal as well, since this is an extremely important exercise and has the potential to make the entire process a lot less painful and can save a great deal of time if done correctly the first time round.

### **Data Analysis Reflection One**

Today I started my preliminary data analysis and I must say I do not particularly feel very competent to be doing this. I have read various texts on how to analyse qualitative data and have decided that the best type of analysis for my study apart from it being a content analysis, is to conduct a trend analysis. This is different to a thematic analysis in that I essentially I would be looking for specific trends which emerge when EP researchers and teachers collaborate as opposed to broad themes regarding the collaboration process.

What I have started doing, is to study each of the ten texts individually in order to get a broad idea of certain trends which emerge by colour coding all the pieces of text which refer to that particular trend. Thereafter, I am copy-pasting all the same coloured text onto a new word document and sorting that information into possible sub-themes or trends. I have also created a table where I can record and plot all the different rends which I identify during my preliminary analysis of the data in order to determine which trends are in fact prevalent and which are not. I am basing this judgement on how many of the texts each trend emerges. For example, if one particular trend occurs three or more times across the different texts, I will regard it as a prevalent trend. However, if it does not, I will re-examine where I identified that trend and then re-evaluate whether it can be regarded as prevalent or not. Once I have done this with all ten texts, I intend to go through all ten texts again, in an effort to try and identify some of the trends which were identified in other texts. It is quite possible that I will find additional trends when I have an idea of what I am looking for. This second stage of analysis would therefore be more deductive.

Right now, I am not so sure whether this is going to work or not and I find I am having difficulty distinguishing themes from trends. I am hoping that I as a go along this will become clearer but for now I have decided to start with two particular texts which served as summarising presentations at the symposium. I have chosen to start with these two because specific trends and themes were especially highlighted in these presentations in order to consolidate what was said on each day. In doing this though, I need to be mindful of the fact that these are themes and trends which have been identified by other researchers and I may therefore not necessarily regard them in the same way.

## Data Analysis Reflection Two

So far, my data analysis method seems to be working, but I am still having a great deal of difficulty distinguishing between themes and trends. I almost feel as though the texts which were presented at the symposium do not hold a great deal of the information or data which I was hoping to collect and analyse. I find that the majority of the presentations which I have analysed so far, reflect more on what exactly is going on in particular a school etc and not on the collaboration process – clearly I was hoping that the collaboration process would be the focus of each presentation but at present I am not sure it is. I suppose that I just need to read through and study each text more thoroughly but so far I am a bit disappointed in the information I am identifying which relates specifically to my research question. I am also finding that I need to pay more attention to identifying and analysing only that information which is relevant to my research questions. These texts are so full of wonderful information, but not entirely relevant to what it is that I am studying. I cannot yet put my finger on exactly what the best use for these texts but there is no doubt they are abundant with information regarding the various collaborative partnerships which have been established between EP researcher and teachers in South Africa. It is also interesting to read about how exactly each CP was established and their unique challenges etc, but I am trying not to focus on this too much.

Given my research question:

### **Research question:**

How might insight into collaborative partnership trends between teachers and educational psychology researchers inform participatory methodology?

### **Subquestions:**

- Which collaborative partnership trends emerge when educational psychology researchers and teachers talk about their participatory studies?
- How might such new knowledge inform participatory practices in future participatory methodology research studies?

I need to try and focus my analysis on only that data which refers to the specific trends which emerge when EP researchers and teachers collaborate, and in doing so, how is this information helpful for future collaborative partnerships and the participatory methodology in general.

I think I am doing OK in terms of the trends emerging but I have not yet really figured out how these trends can inform the participatory methodology. At this stage I think what I need to do is just carry on systematically identifying my trends and worry about how these are useful later. By just focussing on identifying a good deal of trends, and sorting them into their appropriate sub-trends etc, I will then be able to take each trend individually and look at it critically in order to evaluate its usefulness and application to the participatory methodology. Right now, I have analysed about five of the ten texts so I still have a long way to go and hopefully in the meantime the path will become a bit clearer.

## Data Analysis Reflection Three

Thus far, it appears that I am having a bit more success in terms of identifying trends and themes in the data. It really is true what they say about having to pour yourself into the work you are analysing. I have been doing hours and hours of data analysis and only now do I feel as though I am starting to get some clear ideas in terms of the trends I am identifying and the method that I

want to follow in order to complete the procedure. What I do find however, is that I am battling to think up appropriate words for the trends which I identify. This has always been a challenge for me and I am not sure how to deal with it as yet. I am hoping that as I go along that too will become a bit easier, but if not I guess a lot of reading and discussing will be a good option. This is after all only the preliminary phase of the analysis.

With regards to the identification of trends, I find that I am not necessarily producing a lot of new information – or maybe it just feels that way because I have been through the text so many times that it feels as though everything I am identifying is years old already! One thing that I have noticed – I will call it a theme – is that there tends to be very different goals and principles of collaboration and collaborative partnerships within the field of education and educational psychology as compared to other partnerships which are described by the literature. For example, Collaboration Theory places no emphasis on the emotions involved in collaborating or of the difficulties that ed psych researchers appear to experience. Similarly, the sole purpose of collaborations seems to be to solve a given problem and then terminate the partnership. In education, I find we are just as interested in long-term social change or intervention as we are to solving a given problem. Furthermore, we do not necessarily view the difficulties that communities are experiencing as problems. Rather, we regard them as areas in which growth is needed and where there is a call for the enablement of communities so that they can sustain the initial ‘improvements’ brought along, by these collaborative partnerships. This is definitely an important point to have noted and will most probably form the centre of my argument.

#### **Data Analysis Reflection Four**

I am now busy with my last presentation that I need to preliminarily analyse and I feel as though I am reading data for a study that somebody else should be writing. Perhaps I feel this way because this is by far the longest of the presentations. Furthermore, this specific presentation mostly just reflects the findings of a Doctoral study and as such I really find that I am having to seed through the information with a fine-tooth comb to try and identify new trends. It is also possible that since this is the last of the presentations I have probably identified the majority of the trends which are likely to emerge already and as a result, feel as though I am just reading through old knowledge and information. I am also finding it a bit difficult to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information based on my research question and sub-questions. Once again, I am sitting with such beautiful, rich information which I’m not exactly sure relates to my research questions specifically.

I suppose I also feel this way because I am excited to get moving with the next phase of my data analysis but that will not be possible until I have finished the preliminary research phase. At least I can say that I am staying focussed (even if it is against my will). I think that quite often researchers get side-tracked with additional information or data and lose sight of what it is they are supposed to be doing. What I have done so far to try and prevent this from happening is to keep a copy of my working assumptions and my research questions next to me at all times so that when I come across interesting or intriguing data, I can glance through my notes to decide whether or not I need to be spending time analysing and coding that specific piece of information.

One way which I think will work quite well to try and get as much as possible from the data in the presentations is to go through all of them again once I have finished my preliminary analysis and see if I am able to identify any overarching trends into which the trends I have already identified may fit. This implies that I would try to use the remainder of the information in the presentations which hasn’t directly contributed to my data analysis process in an attempt to discover whether those processes, concepts or ideas indirectly suggest certain other trends which are of importance to the study. I am not even sure whether this is permissible or not but it is worth a try.

Another thing that I have noticed the majority of the presentations deal with, are the actual research processes that were employed in their collaborative partnerships. Perhaps I could also use this data to report on what exactly has been done in the past and what seems to have worked/not worked in the various methods. I do feel that indirectly this is a valid contribution in terms of my research questions since this information could serve as a guide for other researchers wanting to conduct similar studies or studies involving the same methodologies. I will make a note of this for after I have gone through all the presentations again.

### **Data Analysis Reflection Five**

Having finally finished my “preliminary” data analysis, or should I say the very first stage of analysis, it is quite refreshing to start on something which moves along at a faster pace. The second phase, which I have just completed, was mostly a process of going back to each and every presentation again and doing another thorough read through in order to try and identify any potential trends which were identified in other presentations and which on closer investigation, may appear in other presentations too.

At first it was really difficult and I felt as though perhaps I was just seeing new trends because I wanted them to be there, but once I got down to it, I realised that they really were there, and that my skills of analysis have improved immensely since the first day that I sat behind my computer puzzled by how difficult I was finding this process. If I think back on what has changed since then, I think it is possibly the fact that back then I was not really “reading between the lines”, but looking for important words which other people had said which would give me ideas. Now, however, it has been more a process of examining the processes administered and the actions taken and explained in each presentation and sitting down and thinking, “But what is actually going on here, what is it that the researcher/teacher is actually trying to tell me”. I must say, it has been a very enlightening and enabling experience!

Once I was a bit more comfortable with this process, it was amazing how new ideas just flew into my head. Now, suddenly, all those presentations that I found slightly more challenging were actually very interesting and I found myself engrossed in my reading once more. I finally understand what Prof Ebersöhn meant when she said that 300 pages is actually very little to conduct a data analysis with; I am still glad that even though it is not much, I wasn’t confronted with double that. Perhaps then it would have taken me twice as long to learn this important lesson!

### **Data Analysis Reflection Six**

Today I went to see Prof Ebersöhn about my data analysis and I think the meeting went quite well. We chatted a little bit about how I went about my analysis and she commented that I need to make sure that I write down everything I did – the process that I followed. I was proud to be able to say that I have been documenting the entire process from start to finish and that this documentation is up to date and looking quite good.

Once I had explained what I have been up to for the last three months, she had a brief look over the work that I have done and we talked about the fact that I feel as though the findings are not really as good as what I was hoping for. Perhaps I just feel that way because I have been looking at this work non-stop for so long that nothing seems exciting or new anymore. I am almost sure that this is the problem because she actually found some of the findings which I experience as less convincing, really important. This really gave me hope.

We addressed the issue of having such a large trend (category) called core concepts and I showed her how I had decided to split this section into trends which correspond with Gray's theory and those that appear to be unique to partnerships between teachers and educational psychology researchers. However, she suggested that I make it one big category again because I had jumped the gun a bit and moved onto a brief interpretation instead of just stating the findings of the study – this makes perfect sense. We also discussed how I would go about reducing all these little so-called trends and I feel very comfortable with how I need to go about doing that.

When I did eventually sit down and try to reduce my trends, I was surprised that I hadn't noticed how obvious the ACTUAL trends really were – it was as if they were staring straight at me. Almost at once it became clear that instead of 20 odd trends, all of these were actually referring to only a few essentials of collaborative partnerships: resources, knowledge exchange, care, goals and the process of collaborating. What I did find slightly more difficult, was determining whether any of these now sub-trends could be synthesised and merged into one or just a few. With some it was really easy but others were slightly more challenging. When I started with this process it became evident why one would have to state inclusion and exclusion criteria – some of the sub-trends could easily have fit into several categories, yet I had to decide where to put them and why they would be best there. I think I am finally getting my head around these criteria.

I was surprised at how lengthy this process was, and in retrospect, I understand why it is so. It is so important to look very carefully at what exactly it is that I am trying to "say" through each trend and as such, words become so important. Suddenly, one little word in the wrong place changes the whole meaning assigned to that trend.

I think I have done pretty well so far and I am looking forward to my and Prof's next meeting so I can show her what I have done. In the meantime, I want to go back to the text and search for one last trend – I want to know what the aim or purpose of each research project was so as to get an idea of what educational psychology researchers regard as pressing issues which initiate research projects or collaborative partnerships. I also want to get to work with my inclusion and exclusion criteria – I am certain I am going to have a lot to write about there as well!

### **Data Analysis Reflection Seven**

Today I decided it would be a good idea to tackle the inclusion and exclusion criteria for my data analysis. I understand why it is so important now that I have been through the process. It also helped me clarify for myself what exactly it was that made me include and exclude certain data under different categories. I found the process relatively simple since I was dealing with quite diverse trends but there were one or two that I had to sit with for a while. I am not entirely sure that I have done these criteria right but I am confident that if I take them to Prof Ebersöhn for review I will be able to move forward productively from there.

She will be away next week so I think I would like to start my chapter one this coming week so that I can get a move on the writing while I wait for her to get back and arrange another meeting.



**Subject:** Fwd: consent  
**From:** "Liesel Ebersohn" <Liesel.Ebersohn@up.ac.za>  
**Date:** Fri, February 20, 2009 11:58  
**Priority:** Normal  
**Allow Sender:** [Allow Sender](#) | [Allow Domain](#) | [Block Sender](#) | [Block Domain](#)  
**Options:** [View Full Header](#) | [View Printable Version](#) | [Download this as a file](#) | [Add to Address Book](#) | [View as plain text](#)

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn  
Unit for Education Research in AIDS &  
Department of Educational Psychology  
Faculty of Education  
University of Pretoria  
Pretoria  
0002  
[liesel.ebersohn@up.ac.za](mailto:liesel.ebersohn@up.ac.za)  
+27 12 4202337

>>> Liesel Ebersohn 2009/02/20 11:53 AM >>>

Dear delegates

One of our MEd(Educational psychology) students (Janna Beukes) wishes to focus her 'skripsie' research on the seminar (**Partners in education research and practice: collaboration between teachers and education researchers**) content.

Her qualitative content analysis will focus on exploring and describing current HEI trends in studies where teachers and education researchers collaborate, in order to inform future educational psychology knowledge creation.

To this purpose she will audiotape the procedures, and thematically analyse the transcripts. She will also be documenting her observations in a researcher journal as well as visually (photographs).

We wish to obtain your informed consent for these processes.

Please indicate (via email) if she may utilise your presentation to this purpose.

regards  
Liesel

Prof Liesel Ebersöhn  
Unit for Education Research in AIDS &  
Department of Educational Psychology  
Faculty of Education  
University of Pretoria  
Pretoria  
0002  
[liesel.ebersohn@up.ac.za](mailto:liesel.ebersohn@up.ac.za)  
+27 12 4202337