

**A PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION APPROACH OF A RURAL CATTLE
PROJECT: A CASE STUDY OF NGUNI CATTLE PROJECT IN THE EASTERN
CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA**

BY

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

(COMMUNICATION)

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DECEMBER 2011

ABSTRACT

This study examined the participatory communication practices of a rural cattle project. It did this by reviewing relevant literature in development communication. The review done showed that literature is replete with arguments critical of the dominant paradigm due to its top-down nature of communication. Scholars critical of dominant paradigm argue that participatory communication should be given a prominent role to ensure that stakeholders work in concert to realise the stated objectives of their development project.

The study highlighted many contentious issues surrounding the nature and practices of participatory communication. It pointed out that the issues have played themselves out in literature in the form of different typologies of participatory practices, which were dealt with extensively in this study. The discussion of participatory communication in literature is also mindful of different models of communication and the space they occupy in participatory communication practices. In this study, there was a discussion of transactional communication models as depicted by Nair and White (1993:52) and Steinberg (1997:19). Both scholars emphasise that participatory communication will not achieve its stated purpose without mutual agreement of the parties in communication. They equally stress the recognition of the possible effects of some contextual factors which may have bearing on the prevailing nature of communication.

A review of different communication tools used by participatory development communicator was given in the study. These different communication tools were discussed in view of how these tools can be used to advance participatory practice in a development project, especially with reference to the project examined in this study.

Using qualitative research method, different and appropriate interview methods such as semi-structured, focus group and post-survey interviews were used to collect data from the respondents in this study. The analysis and discussion of the data revealed that different challenges on the ground could affect participatory communication practices in a development project. With regard to the project examined in this study, the analysis showed that there is a weak stakeholder relationship, especially stakeholders identified in this study as field officers. The study highlighted that stakeholders such as the agricultural extension officers and

animal health technicians are not very active in the implementation process of the project. Some of the reasons pointed out is the fact that the secondary stakeholder such as the Provincial Department of Agricultural (PDoA) to which these field officers belong is not playing active role in ensuring that they complement the efforts of other field officers such as the IDC representatives. The second reason is the fact that the participatory focus of the project was not properly communicated to the beneficiaries. This also transpired in their inability to reflect participatory practice in their relationship with the beneficiaries and other stakeholders of the project.

Other challenges, among others, as pointed out in the analysis showed that participatory communication practice requires expert personnel to be successful. In the case of the project examined, apart from the fact that there is shortage of manpower to handle the challenges mentioned in the study, there is no communication expert among the few active personnel in the field.

The findings of this study showed that there was no clear role and identification of responsibilities let alone coordination of all actors involved in the project. Through the selected case study, this study has not only provided avenue to explore both theoretically and practically participatory communication, but has added to participatory communication discourse that there is no easy answer to challenges field officers encounter in practice. This is the reason the different participatory practices characterising nature of the project this study has investigated was given.

KEY WORDS: Dominant paradigm, new paradigm, participatory, participatory communication, development project, one-way and dialogic communication.

DECLARATION

I, Sam Erevbenagie Usadolo, student number 200805772, hereby declare that “**A PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION APPROACH TO A RURAL CATTLE PROJECT: A CASE STUDY OF NGUNI CATTLE PROJECT IN THE EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA**” is my work and has never been submitted at any other university for a degree. Where I have made use of ideas or sentences of other people, I acknowledged them by means of referencing the sources in both in-text references and the end-text references of the research.

SIGNED:

DATE:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like stop short of characterising the journey taken thus far to this point in this study as tumultuous but it has not been an easy ride. Firstly, I would like to thank my God for giving me the willpower and determination to complete this study, especially for seeing me through on several occasions I nearly called it a quit.

Words are not enough for me to thank Dr Linje Manyozo of London School of Economics for helping to sow the seed for this study. The intellectual acumen he displayed for the short time he supervised the study remains etched in mind. The same goes to Prof Francois Lategan of Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Fort Hare, Alice Campus. He flung the door of rural development practice wide open for me through lectureship opportunity in rural innovation practices I got in his department.

Other academics equally gave their sterling contribution to this study. Notable among them is Prof Marc Caldwell. My deep gratitude to you, Prof Marc Caldwell, for breathing life into the study when it almost became rudderless after the exit of Prof Sibanda. My note of appreciation goes to Dr Fhulu Nekwevha for his effort in securing Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre's research bursary. Equally worthy of mention are academic staff in the Department of Communication – Mr Oluyinka Osunkunle, Prof Abiodun Salawu, and Ms Cathy O'Shea. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the camaraderie and warm relationship shown towards me by Prof Abiodun Salawu and Mr Oluyinka Osunkunle. Thank you for the 'space' you provided me to contribute to the development of the department. I owe so much to Prof M. Somniso, the Dean of Social Science and Humanities, for salvaging this study when it was struggling to reach the finishing line.

To all participants in this study – the beneficiaries, IDC representatives, agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians, Mr Moss, Mrs Faku and others not mentioned here – thank you. Your contributions made significant difference in this study. My very special appreciation goes to my wife, Mrs Q.E. Usadolo, whose love and degree of financial support in this study cannot be quantified. To my friends, Dr Peter Osifo, my brother in-law, Mr Osagie Omoruyi, and Mr and Mrs Iyekeoretin-Obasogie, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to you all.

Finally, many thanks to Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre of the University of Fort Hare for awarding me bursary to undertake this study.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the problems nations on the Asian and African continents had to contend with after they became independent following the end of the Second World War and in the 1960's was the question of development. They had to look to their colonisers, who responded in the form of aid, technical assistance, infrastructural development and several programmes to alleviate poverty and promote urban and rural development (Melkote & Steeves 2006:52-53).

For example, the United Nations (UN) was formed on 24 October 1945 and many of its agencies later formed were products of this thinking. Many of its agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organisation (UNESCO) and other related organisations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD, also known as World Bank), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) were founded to address, among other things, issues about development in Third World Countries (Melkote & Steeves 2006:48). Interestingly, Melkote and Steeves (2006:49) note that the zeal to commit to a development agenda in these newly independent countries led to the articulation of the concept of development support communication (DSC) in the UNDP by Erskine Childers. Citing Mayo and Servaes (1994), Melkote and Steeves further note that with DSC, communication functions

were not confined to information or broadcasting organisations or ministries, but extended to all sectors; and their success in influencing and sustaining development depended to a large extent on the adequacy of mechanisms for integrated and coordinated multi-sectoral project planning.

These development organisations, as noted by Ayee (1993:1), regarded mass media as powerful communication tools, especially radio. It was believed that radio would help to spread information from early adopters of innovations to the majority of the people in need of technological innovation and thus speed up development in the various communities (Ayee 1993:1). Mass media were seen as the most effective means of information dissemination in the history of development.

The use of mass media at that time reveals a weakness that is not only seen in “their one-way, top-down” method of message dissemination (Melkote & Steeves 2006:118) but also in the misconception that the development of any community or society in developing nations rests squarely on the availability of the media. Schramm supports this assumption and states that “the less-developed countries have less-developed mass communication systems also, and less development in the services that support the growth of mass communication” (Schramm 1964:112). Awa (1996:135) believes that this implies that the target audience for development is “ignorant and incompetent and must be kept in line for their own benefit”. This is regarded as communication efforts by Bessette (2004) aimed mainly in dissemination of technical packages or information to the target communities who are expected to use them. The consequences of this type of communication can be detected in the low impact on the overall development focus, and indeed, the lack of relevance as this type of information dissemination does not address the actual situation. A reason for this is that it is a communication model based on Western perspectives and applicable only in the developed nations (Ayee 1993:2).

Studies by different researchers (Rogers 1976:313, Melkote & Steeves 2006:243,338) have shown this media-based approach to be an outworn model of development paradigm where communication is top-down, which is not only antithetical to democratic principle at government level but in the relationships that exists between the development practitioner and the target community. Servaes (1996:17) argues that the local structures, power relations and the need to facilitate the community involvement at all levels of the project should be taken seriously.

Owing to the avalanche of criticisms against this model of development – a model “found rather seriously wanting” by Rogers (1996:222) – there were calls for alternative communication approaches to rural community development. Various alternative approaches were suggested and all the approaches were conceived in the realisation that the rural communities or the poor resource villagers should be centre of focus for these development programmes. Rogers (1996:222) notes that these alternative approaches moved away from the linear and top-down communication model or source-receiver model to one that is dialogic, two-way or face-to-face interaction. Servaes (1996:16) also recommends that the ideal

communication focus should be one that moves from “a *communicator* – to a more *receiver-centric* orientation, with the resultant emphasis on meaning sought and ascribed rather than information transmitted”. This is a communication practice which is inherent in participatory process and according to Awa (1996:137) it creates reciprocated supportive relationships among the development practitioners, the development beneficiary communities and other stakeholders such as rural development practitioners, community workers and funders of the development project.

According to Awa (1996:136), communication that is participatory should ensure that development practitioner responds to the needs of the people rather than dictating to the people their needs. This implies that participation in terms of development, is used in such a manner that the context on the ground takes pre-eminence over any other consideration the development practitioner may have no matter how good he/she thinks it is. It should include a high degree of public involvement starting from the production process to the management process of the communication systems used (Servaes 1996:18).

This, therefore, is regarded as a participatory communication approach which is the focus of this study and is explored in detail in Chapter Three. Based on this approach, an assessment will be conducted on a rural cattle project, known as the Nguni Cattle Project, in order to look at the nature and extent of participatory communication practice taking place in the project.

The need to prioritise the basic survival requirements of the rural communities calls for the appropriate use of communication to facilitate the community's co-participation in the dissemination of the necessary technical and research information required to boost food production (Melkote & Steeves 2001:35). Appropriate use of communication means that the required communication technologies or tools are used effectively to disseminate information from researchers to stakeholders in rural agriculture and the poor rural farming communities. The impact of this reflects positively on food production in rural areas.

Information disseminated may not achieve the desired objectives if the relevant communication, based on the needs on the ground, is not used. In other words,

communication has to reflect the “accumulated cultural and social knowledge and structured experiences” of the individuals in the community (Roberts, Davies & Jupp 1992:7). Apart from this, communication has to be used in a manner that makes the rural livestock farmers and rural agriculture stakeholders protagonists or co-participants in the farming issues the communication is meant to address.

As studies have indicated, appropriate use of communication in development programmes still seems to be a problem in developing nations (Mody 2005:25-26), and South Africa is not an exception. South Africa’s situation deserves a specific mention as it is a society that has recently emerged from apartheid, which was declared a crime against humanity by the United Nations. During this period the Black population was excluded from the political processes and basic social amenities that were enjoyed by Whites. This policy of exclusion, or separate development, resulted in inequalities and poverty that remain a legacy in many communities across the country.

It is the recognition of these conditions that motivated the democratic government to adopt a number of initiatives such as Section 152(1)(e) of the South African Constitution, which stipulates that the objective of local government, amongst others, is to ensure “the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local governance”. Section 73 of the Municipal Structures Act (No.117 of 1998) also requires that municipalities establish ward committees to enhance participatory democracy at the local level.

Apart from the government effort aimed at redressing the pass imbalances in the form of legislative framework, other private bodies have initiated development strategies by practically establishing their presence in rural communities. One of such initiatives is the Nguni Cattle Project, which was a brainchild of the University of Fort Hare, funded in its earliest stage by Norway. In the following section, the Nguni Cattle Project will be discussed but this will be preceded with a review of literature about Nguni cattle.

1.2 ORIGIN OF THE NGUNI CATTLE

There are various historical accounts about the origin of Nguni cattle, but a common thread is that cattle were brought down to Africa from the north. Bester, Matjuda, Rust and Fourie (2003) refer to Hannotte *et al.*’s (1998) article in which

DNA studies were used to confirm that the “Nguni of South Africa could be considered an African taurine with a slight Zebu admixture that probably originated from bulls imported from the Arabian Peninsula”.

Bester *et al.* (2001) claim in their study that there are records which show that Nguni cattle came from the Nile valley and due to environmental pressure, war and barter, there was migration southwards by the herdsmen and their cattle. The first dated account of the origin of Nguni cattle in Southern Africa is 300 BC, according to Plug (1980, in Bester *et al.* 2003). In Bester *et al.*’s (2000) words:

By 300 BC cattle were found in the Luangwa Valley in Zambia and by 300 AD settled communities with cattle were living in southern Africa, in areas of eastern Botswana, in Gauteng as far as the Hartebeespoort dam area, the eastern lowveldt and the coastal region of Natal.

History is silent about the Nguni cattle in South Africa until the sixteen and seventeenth centuries, when European settlers arrived in South Africa, bringing livestock with them. The European settlers’ cattle were said to be distinctive in terms of high productivity and uniform colour as opposed to Nguni cattle’s poor performance and varied colour pattern (Bester *et al.* 2003). Bester *et al.* (2003) believe that the Nguni people became convinced that their cattle were inferior to the European’s exotic breeds and, therefore many Nguni herdsmen abandoned their cattle in preference for the European exotic breeds. However, as noted by Musemwa, Mushunje, Chimonyo, Fraser, Mapiye, and Muchenje (2008:239) who cite the works of Collins-Luswet (2000) and Scholtz (1988), the exotic cattle breeds often did not survive the harsh environmental and socio-economic conditions endemic in rural areas, where Nguni cattle thrived.

In 1934, the perception of inferiority of the Nguni cattle resulted in the enactment of an Act in which the Nguni cattle type was described as “scrub” (nondescript), according to Bester *et al.* (2003). Bester *et al.* (2003) maintain that after the promulgation of this Act, animal inspectors were instructed to castrate Nguni bulls. This continued until 1985 when preliminary studies revealed some remarkable qualities of the Nguni cattle. This led to the appointment of a committee to investigate and report on the desirability of having an *in vitro* germplasm bank for indigenous livestock and on the control of imported semen from exotic breeds (Hofmeyr 1994).

After the 1985 findings on Nguni cattle, several studies reported about data that confirmed that the Nguni cattle can withstand inclement weather, diseases and poor rural cattle management practices far better than the exotic breeds can (Scholtz 1988). Thus, a decision was taken to recognise the Nguni cattle and this resulted in initiatives in 1995 leading to the development of Nguni cattle breeds by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Bester *et al.* 2003).

1.2.1 The Nguni cattle breed characteristics

Studies on Nguni cattle show that the cattle have a high fertility rate (IDC 2005). Bayer *et al.* (2004) also report that Nguni cows “have an amazing mothering ability and could be used as mothers for crossbred calves with larger beef breeds”. These cattle are also able to survive diseases that will decimate exotic cattle herds in short time.

Nguni Cattle is said to have excellent foraging ability according to by Mr Mzileni. He notes that the Nguni cattle have no problem grazing and browsing on slopes and in thick bush. Owing to the cattle’s ability to adapt to poor quality grazing and other climatic conditions such as heat and humidity, IDC (2005) reports that this “adaptability provides Nguni with the unique potential to produce high quality meat and hides under ecologically controlled free ranging condition without the use of chemicals”.

These distinctive characteristics ensured that the Nguni cattle breed gained the recognition that freed them from the ‘inferior’ label and led to this breed of cattle being selected by rural development projects as an optimum way to provide food security. One of these initiatives is the Nguni Cattle Project.

1.2.2 The Nguni Cattle Project

The Project was initiated by the University of Fort Hare (UFH) and financed in its earliest stage by Norway. It started formally in 1997 with the introduction of Nguni

herds into rural communities. As stated on the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) website: ¹

The project involves the establishment of nucleus of registered Nguni herds in communal villages over a period of five years. Each community receives pregnant Nguni heifers and Nguni bulls to make up a nucleus herds in each of the recipient communities. Initially, the Project was earmarked for Eastern Cape but was later extended to include the other five provinces due to its potential benefits.

Presently, the project is funded by the IDC and it is built around the “concept of *passing on the gift* where communities are required to return 10 heifers and 2 bulls from the offspring within 5 years. The communities get involved in all the different phases of the project planning through Participatory Rural Appraisal” (See IDC’s website stated above).

Those involved in the project include extension officers, tertiary institutions such as UFH, the animal scientist, the veterinary officers and the project funder, IDC, as well as the beneficiaries in the rural communities.

The Project is based on a model that requires the establishment of a trust. The trust is composed of eight trustees drawn from the project stakeholders and these are two members from each of the IDC, the tertiary institution, the Provincial Department of Agriculture and the beneficiary communities.

The trust is used as a vehicle through which the registered Nguni herds are distributed to the identified beneficiary communities. Other functions of the trust includes having a pact with community leaders to ensure that within the given time, the community does not renege in the agreement to return the required number of cattle to the trust, which will then be passed on to another community. The trust is also responsible for appointing the project manager who is responsible for managing the nucleus herd. The duties of the project manager, as stated by IDC (2007), are:

- assisting and advising communities in the management of Nguni;
- inspection and examination of the Nguni;
- assisting in maintenance of a stock book and register;

¹ <http://www.idc.co.za/nguni%20project.asp>.

- reports regularly to at trustees meetings; and
- exercise oversight over the marking and identification of the Nguni and their progeny (See IDC's website stated above).

As stated above, the trust assists in identifying beneficiary communities using certain selection criteria.

1.2.3 Criteria for selection of beneficiary communities

The selection of the beneficiary communities is done under strict criteria to ensure a greater chance of success for the participants in the project. The selection of the beneficiary communities starts with the applicants having to fill in an application form, which is then considered by a panel using a short listing process. This is followed by interviews with the short-listed candidates and upon satisfactory performance in the interview, the selection is taken further where an on-site visit will be conducted to verify the information provided by the applicants (See IDC's website stated above).

The project is solely for rural communities or simply "communities" that comprise of "black households, black individuals and/or newly established black farmers", according to IDC (2007). In order for beneficiaries in these communities to qualify for the project, the following criteria, according to IDC and Musemwa *et al.* (2008:240), must apply:

1. There must be sufficient land area in the community to accommodate livestock numbers at recommended stocking rates. This means that the project livestock should be managed away from cattle utilising collective rangeland. In order to do this, there must be a controlled environment or an area fenced for the animals to be kept. The nature of the land to be utilised for the project must be such that it can be divided into units to support livestock management and water (drinking trough) for the livestock.
2. Besides the land requirements, the beneficiary community must have a demonstrable proof of the envisaged management requirements for the project. This, according to IDC and Musemwa *et al.* (2008:240), entails proof that daily management of livestock will be ensured.

3. To prevent diseases from the existing livestock in the community, the participants' livestock must be certified free of diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) and venereal diseases before the delivery of the animals to them. In most cases, Musemwa *et al.* (2008:240) note that the project's coordinator "discourages use of nondescript cows and enforces the removal or castration of the existing exotic bulls in the communal areas and replaces them with pure registered Nguni bulls".

1.2.4 The management of the project

The management of the project is rooted in a participatory approach and this is to ensure the involvement of the communities in the different phases of the project (IDC 2007). Many expert services are required to run the project successfully and these include extension services, livestock managers and projects managers, among others. In the Eastern Cape where the project was started, the University of Fort Hare plays a cardinal role in this regard, as it is responsible for "planning, coordinating and training of livestock managers and extension officers" (Musemwa *et al.* 2008:240). This also applies in other provinces to which the project has been extended. Both the participating universities and the relevant provincial Departments of Agriculture are involved in the affairs of the project.

1.3 AIMS OF THE STUDY

From the foregoing, the following are the aims of the study. They will inform the path the study will follow and the questions that will be asked to realise them. This study aims to:

1. Assess how participatory communication approach is used in the project under investigation.
2. Establish factors that affect participatory communication approach in the project.
3. Determine the nature of stakeholders' relationship and their impact on the participatory objectives of the project.
4. Find out what the stakeholders and the beneficiaries understand about the participatory communication process.
5. Recommend solutions to address the challenges identified regarding the participatory communication focus of the project.

1.4 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The delimitation of a study helps the researcher to point to the areas that will be the focus of the study.

This study will be limited to 12 beneficiary communities of Nguni Cattle Project in Eastern Cape, South Africa. The beneficiary communities are Platform CPA, Kwezana, Lower Gqumashe, Upper Gqumashe, Ntselamanzi, Dikidikana, Ncera, Tyutuza, Jojozi, Dyam-Dyam, Ngqele, and Masele. All these communities are in Buffalo City and Nkonkobe Municipality, Eastern Cape. This does not indicate that other beneficiary communities in Eastern Cape are irrelevant to this study, but the research was confined to these communities because of financial limitations and to communities where there were participants who were willing to be participants in the study.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is theoretically and practically significant for academics, communication professionals and development practitioners. It is significant in terms of its contribution to literature that describes processes and procedures involved in stakeholder engagement and dialogue. It has highlighted a gap in existing literature by describing specific communication process required in facilitating competent stakeholders' management in a development project. In addition, the current study has highlighted the primacy of ensuring through communication a collective agreement on objectives and a plan of action on how to deal with the anticipated development project's challenges by the stakeholders.

The presentation of an in-depth analysis of participatory communication literature has extended the understanding of the strengths and pitfalls of participatory development project. In literature, facilitating the involvement of the beneficiaries and all other stakeholders in project development and implementation is the preferred option. As this study has shown it has not been entirely possible to achieve what Arnstein (1969:214) refers to as genuine participation that will leave beneficiaries empowered to be in full control of the project. Thus, from theoretical perspective, this study has succeeded in providing groundwork for understanding the relationship between the framework of participatory development and actually getting people involved in a development project.

Moreover, there is a gap in understanding the policy frameworks for promotion of participation and what really takes place in running a development project such as the Nguni Cattle Project that straddles across different rural communities. This needs to be understood in terms of how different socio-cultural factors may call for different approaches in each of the communities. This is discussed in the study. Equally emphasised in the study is how the dialectic between theory and practice in participatory development project is sometimes in conflict with each other. Thus, results emerging from this study are important for development practitioners, participatory communicator, governments at both local and national levels. The results will help them to recognise and understand constraints and problems of participatory communication and development and the need for consensus to make citizen participation more meaningful.

Furthermore, research results will also be central to any further research into the nature and running of local development projects such as the one this study has investigated. This study has provided in its analysis local contexts of theory and practice which can be used as comparison in other developing countries.

The study is significant because it has been able to demonstrate why effort should be concentrated on managing the stakeholders' partnership in terms using dialogue to get all and sundries relevant to the development project to agree on what needs to be done right from the onset and as the project progresses.

One of the major contributions of this study has been to consider participatory communication in terms of participatory framework designed to assess beneficiary's participation practices in a development project. It is hoped that this research will contribute to opening up a new line of thinking on the links between participatory communication practice and theory. This in turn will improve the development of a research framework, which can then be employed in similar development project.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study comprises eight chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and contains the aims, delimitation of the study and organisation of the study.

Chapter Two contains a brief discussion of development communication and theoretical issues in development communication such as the notion and

communication practice reflecting the dominant paradigm and the criticisms that resulted in the shift to new paradigm.

In Chapter Three, there is a brief review of literature about participatory communication and this includes how different scholars define participatory communication and the challenges encountered in participatory communication practices.

Chapter Four involves a discussion of how to plan participatory communication in a development and this will be followed by a discussion of participatory communication tools in Chapter Five.

In Chapter Six, the research design and methodology are discussed. The methods and procedures which were used in this study, the methodological approach, sampling techniques, and data collection and analysis methods that were used are explained.

The analysis and interpretation of findings are given in Chapter Seven. The focus of this chapter is to validate, through data collected, the extent of the participatory communication practices between the Nguni Cattle Project's beneficiaries and other stakeholders. Finally, in Chapter Eight, the conclusions reached through the study and recommendations emanating from it are given.

1.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the thesis was introduced together with a short review of an earlier conception of communication in development that emphasised the use of mass media in the dissemination of innovation ideas and technology to rural communities. This period as discussed also marked an emphasis on mass media where it was believed that the more people were exposed to message via the media, the better chance of them being persuaded about development messages.

However, this was rejected for its top-down approach nature and lack of involvement of development beneficiaries. This perceived failure of the top-down approach culminated in an alternative approach known as participatory communication. This, as discussed in this chapter, emphasises a two-way (dialogic) type of communication to disseminate message to the target audience.

The acknowledgement of the advantage of participation of citizens in government policies and programmes was discussed and it was shown that the South African government gives participation a prominent place in its Constitution.

The Nguni Cattle Project as a case study was briefly introduced and the aims, and delimitation of the study were given. Lastly, the organisation of this study was discussed.

In the next chapter, there is a detailed review of relevant literature about the history of development communication; theoretical approaches to the use of communication, such as early communication theories on development and other relevant theoretical approaches, modernisation and growth approach, new paradigm which includes participatory approaches and other relevant issues in community participation in development.

CHAPTER TWO: DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION, DOMINANT PARADIGM AND NEW PARADIGM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the 1950s, scholars and development practitioners affiliated to agencies of the United Nations (UN) and non-governmental organisations have written extensively about the approaches suitable to achieve the aims of development in the developing nations. Some of the discussions dwelt exhaustively on the use of communication in all the phases of development projects. An overview of the studies undertaken shows development communication practices and recommendations that are specific to different epochs in development discourse. Notable among these discussions are the questions and views expressed by different scholars to critique the general conception of development and the premises informing them.

Examples of the different views of development and the associated communication practices are found in the dominant paradigm, which will be discussed extensively in this chapter. This chapter provides a detailed discussion both of the proponents and critics of the paradigm of development as well as the responses to the criticisms, and the resultant suggested communication interventions in handling developmental issues in developing nations.

2.2 EARLY HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Diachronically, the emphasis on development communication dates back to World War II regarding the proper way to assist countries in Africa, Asia and Latin American to overcome their problems of illiteracy, poverty, poor health and lack of political and social infrastructures (Waisbord 2001:1 and Melkote and Steeves 2003:47-53).

During this period, the main concern of development communication sought to find out how best to facilitate transformation through dissemination of information via mass media to change the so-called *backwardness* of the traditional society in the developing world into the modern ways of the western world (Mowlana 1990, in Inagaki 2006:4). Commenting on this, Melkote and Steeves (2003:52) state:

“Clearly, therefore, alleviating Third World suffering consisted of inserting the Western cornucopia of advances in agriculture, commerce, industry and health”.

This thought of what role development communication should be addressing has also influenced the way it is defined by different scholars across different disciplines. Writing in reference to confusion among scholars regarding the definition of development communication, Manyozo (2006:80) declares that there is lack of agreement about the definition of development communication because scholars view it within “[W]estern development scholarship, post-war aid projects and the dominant paradigm”. Waisbord (2001:2) argues in similar fashion and he writes that different researchers define development communication based on their worldviews and the views of some organisations and foundations in the field of development. However, McPhail (2009:3) defines development communication as “the process of intervening in a systematic or strategic manner with either media (print, radio, television, video, and the internet), or education (training, literacy, schooling) for the purpose of positive social change”.

According to Ayaegbunam, Mefalopulos and Moetsabi (2004), development communication can be used in all development sectors that depend on people’s choices and actions to attain success. They also state that its use is not limited to supporting agriculture alone, but also to promote projects in areas such nutrition, health, gender, population and reproductive health, livestock, forestry, environment, literacy, income generation, and sustainable livelihoods. In other words, its use cuts across socio-economic sectors, especially in developing countries.

Many scholars have addressed how socio-economic progress and development can be addressed in the developing countries and this began in development history with what is commonly referred to as dominant paradigm or old paradigm of development or modernisation.

2.3 EARLY VIEWS OF DOMINANT PARADIGM

The basic premise of the dominant paradigm states that development problems are as a result of lack of knowledge and thus interventions in the form of provision of information to people are needed to change their behaviour (Waisbord 2011:2).

The early concern for development practitioners follows some historical epochs, which according to Rogers (1976:214) are the “Industrial Revolution in Europe and the United States, the colonial experience in Latin America, Africa and Asia, the quantitative empiricism of North America social science, and capitalistic economic/political philosophy”. Following these experiences, Rogers (1976:214) maintains that the primary criterion used in measuring development was the rate of economic growth, that is, the degree of national development based on per capita income. Among other views cited by Rogers (1976:214) that characterised the discussion of development communication are development through industrialisation, capital-intensive technology, economic growth and quantification. These and other perspectives in development communication by scholars are discussed below to explain the nature of dominant paradigm.

2.3.1 Development through industrialisation

In the synopsis provided by Rogers (1976:214), the pattern of development discussion in the 1950s and 1960s emphasises industrialisation as the antidote of underdevelopment in the developing world. Industrialisation was equated with development and development programmes such as hydroelectric projects, steel industries and a host of manufacturing industries were recommended for developing nations at the expense of investment in agricultural development.

2.3.2 Capital-intensive technology

Technology was considered one of the ways to develop emergent economies. The developing countries’ culture was considered antithetical to development and one of the ways out of it was to prioritise the modernisation of the traditional culture. The premise for this according to Rogers (1976:215) was the assumption that:

appropriate and social technology would appear to accompany the externally introduced material technology. When the needed social structures did not always materialize in less developed countries, the fault was accorded to ‘traditional’ ways of thinking, beliefs, and social values.

2.3.3 Quantification

The focus of development was in quantitative terms where the rate of development could be reduced or measured in quantifiable numbers. Anything short of this was not fit in the consideration of development. The quest for the quantification of

development took its root from the North American social science empiricism, which defined what development was or was not. In this regard, Rogers (1976:216-217) notes that “[m]aterial well-being could not be measured. Such values as dignity, justice, and freedom did not fit on a dollars-and-cents yardstick. And so the meaning of development began to have a somewhat dehumanized nature”.

2.3.4 Early theorists of dominant paradigm

One of the early theorists of development is the modernisation theorist, Daniel Lerner, whose study has had tremendous influence in the discussion of early notion of development. His publication, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1958), is a study of the modernisation process in developing countries, specifically the Middle Eastern societies. According to him, the following set of variables is imperative for modernisation: urbanisation, literacy, mass media use and democratic participation. One of the central ideas of his book is that in order for the governments of developing countries to develop or modernise their societies, they need to have a significant sense of empathy, which as highlighted in Lerner’s (1958:50) words means the “capacity to see oneself in other fellow’s situation”. Lerner considers this to be a vital skill and vehicle to move out of traditional society to modern society. Traditional society is treated with derision in Lerner’s book, as he believes traditional society is “nonparticipant [...] lacking bonds of interdependence, people’s horizons are limited by locale and their decision involve only other *known* people in *known* situations” (Lerner 1958:50). He states that modernisation is equal to westernisation and that the developing countries should emulate the development model of the Western world. His study emphasises the spread of literacy and mobile individuals with a psychological predisposition to changes. Lerner believes that communication is central to the quest for modernisation in the developing societies and he justifies his assertion by alluding to an Iranian who says “The movies are like a teacher to us who tell us what to do and what not” (Lerner 1958:54).

The construct of mobile individuals, according to Lerner, would be people who have a formal education, are able to read and write and express an opinion in matters having bearing on their personal lives. In sum, the mass media is

emphasised because through mass media people could be exposed to new cultures and places.

A study that concurred with Lerner's view is that of Rao (1963). Rao, a product of a developing country, posits in his doctoral thesis that through mass media people would be exposed to new ideas. His study was based on two villages in India. One village had a road that linked it to an urban area, and Rao credited the laying of the road as the genesis of development in the village. The road enabled the villagers to visit urban areas; people could visit the village and above all, mass media could find a base in the village. The consequence of this was a village that was transformed and willing to embrace changes and innovations.

On a comparative level, the other village studied was, according to Rao, immersed in traditional customs and beliefs and thus no development took place in it. Rao, like other scholars of 1950's and 1960's, believes that traditional customs and beliefs are antithetical to development, hence he concluded that the laying of the road and the mass media in the first village brought modern culture, which influenced the villagers to desire education.

Rao's study, like Lerner's, is premised on the view that sees Western values and their ideas of development as the panacea to the problems in developing countries. Rao and Lerner were not alone in this vanguard of the Western model for development in emerging nations. For example, the position taken by Rao that development in the Western sense of the concept would result in more jobs and efficiency was also shared by Schramm (1964:49) who declares that development would bring about more productivity and economic activities in the villages.

Schramm (1964), Lerner (1958) and Rao (1963) are modernisation theorists as they have similar arguments about development in developing nations. For example, Schramm argues that:

the task of the mass media of information and the 'new media' of education is to speed and ease the long, slow social transformation required for economic development, and, in particular, to speed and smooth the task of mobilizing human resources behind the national effort (Schramm 1964:27).

Schramm believes that there is a link between the mass media and development. He argues that the problem of the developing countries is not human resources *per se*, but how to ensure that modern ways of life in the context of Western societies

are embraced by the people in the developing countries, especially those championing developmental issues (Schramm 1964:41). His answer to this lies with mass media, which must be used to break individuals free of their tradition in order for them embrace modernisation. Schramm stresses that people need to change in order for development to take place, and this must include a reciprocal flow of information. Schramm (1964:26) writes that:

Information must flow, not only to them but also from them, so that their needs can be known and so that they may participate in the acts and decisions of nation building: and information must also flow vertically so that decisions may be made, work organised and skills learned at all levels of society.

Though Schramm's suggestion of the use mass media to bring information to the developing countries is dialogic and it fits into the modern view of communication, his disparaging view of traditional culture in the Third World places him firmly in the league of scholars who take a dim view of traditional culture in the development discourse. Generally, Schramm, like other development theorists, regards traditional culture in the Third World as a factor working against adoption of modern attitudes and behaviour. Schramm (1964:41-42) notes that Third World "villages are drowsing in their traditional patterns of life [...] the urge to develop economically and socially comes from seeing how well-developed countries or the more fortunate people live". To this, Melkote and Steeves (2003:118) remark that the development paradigm that follows sees mass media as the means to prepare individuals in the Third World for a quick socio-economic change. In their view, mass media, in the context of development, are believed to have an overarching influence on individuals in the Third World.

Lerner, Rao and Schramm's assumption about mass media rests on the belief that traditional culture hinders development. They believe that through the use of mass media, attitudes can be modified as the necessary information is made available for individuals to help them to embrace development.

Arguing against this, Mody (2005:23) remarks that Western-trained scholars have attitudes that suffer from a lack of understanding of the traditional structures where the culture of domination, caste and racial profiling still persist as subculture, thus resulting in general state of low motivation.

Development was also considered from the perspective of economic growth theory. Here scholars view the problems of development in emerging nations in

economic terms. As earlier stated, in this context, per capita income is used as an indicator of development. A notable scholar who discusses development in economic terms is Rostow (1960) in his book: *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non Communist Manifesto*. Rostow's work is a seminal text in the thinking that links economic growth, measured in the rate of growth output, as a standpoint to development. His economic growth theory was propounded through the following five phases: the traditional society, pre-conditions for take-off, take-off, the claim to maturity, and the age of high mass consumption.

Rostow's economic growth theory is based on the belief that all societies would pass through these phases (Melkote & Steeves 2006:85). The developing country was referred to as a traditional society, which according to Rostow (1960:18-9) is "a society predominantly agricultural – with in fact usually 75% or more of its working force in agriculture – must shift to a predominance for industry, communication, trade and services". Traditional societies are characterised by limited economic activities that are also confined to their societies, hence in Rostow's view, the only requisite for their economic to take-off is to be engaged in international economic activities. This, by further explanation suggests that the developing countries need help in order to find their place in the community of nations and the following captures Rostow's (1960:109) thinking in this regard:

Colonies were often established initially not to execute a major objective of national policy, nor even to exclude a rival economic power, but to fill a vacuum: that is to organise a traditional society incapable of self organisation (unwilling to organise itself) from modern export activity including production for export.

A perception reverberating in this quoted statement is that the development of traditional societies is the responsibility of the Western world. Ayee (1993:31) points out that Rostow, referring to the pre-conditions for take-off phase, believes that "people in the developing countries would respond rationally to economic incentives, and that profit motive would be instrumental in motivating widespread and large-scale behaviour necessary for development to occur". The take-off phase marks the transformation from traditional society to modern society or "the interval when the old blocks and resistances to steady growth are finally overcome" (Rostow 1960:7). The take-off phase is followed by a claim to maturity and this phase, according to Melkote and Steeves (2006:85), is characterised by stable pace of growth in the economy, improvement in technology and profitable

international business. The final phase, which is the age of high mass consumption, typified by several individuals in the economy whose daily struggle is no longer 'bread and butter' issues but comfortable life-style able to afford luxury goods and services (Melkote & Steeves 2006:85). Referring to research that questions the validity of growth theory, Mody (2005:18) comments that in cases where the gross national product has increased, it is the upper class groups who have something to show for it. This is because they are in privileged position to gain from the opportunities created by the ensuing economic development plans at the expense of majority of poor people whose conditions remain the same. Citing an instance to buttress her assertion, Mody states that in India the castes with economic power and other privileges, took advantage of the development in technology and physical infrastructures to consolidate their businesses as opposed to lower castes "with no purchasing power" (2005:19).

A study carried out by UNDP in 1990 and reported by Mody (2005:91) also discounts the economic growth theory. The study concludes that the relationship between economic growth and human development is not an immediate guarantee to automatic human advancement. The UNDP report instead states that the requisite for human development begins with a sustained environment of civil and political freedoms.

The view of the powerful influence of mass media resulted in the knowledge-transfer model, that had a pro-innovation and pro-persuasion focus for many years, hence it was regarded as the dominant paradigm (Waisbord 2001:5).

Two communication models are mentioned by Waisbord (2001:3) and Melkote and Steeves (2003:118) in effecting this knowledge-transfer approach. The first model, as explained by Waisbord, is Shannon-Weaver's Mathematical theory of communication, which focuses mainly on sender and receiver and is basically a linear, one-way model of message dissemination. The second model is called the bullet model and it holds that mass media have a bullet effects in changing attitude and behaviour. This begins a process of communication considered "one-way, top-down process of message transmission from source to receiver" according to Steyn and Nunes (2001:31) and Melkote and Steeves (2003:118). As Waisbord (2001:3) puts it, it is a communication process that is "linear, unidirectional process in which senders send information through media channel to receivers". To Steyn

and Nunes (2001:31), this is also known as modernisation paradigm. Ayee (1993:29) labels it as a paradigm dominated with the notion that communication can be used to persuade people to change their attitudes, values and beliefs because their traditional way of life impedes the conveyance of information suitable for modernisation.

From the foregoing, the emphasis on mass media meant that they would serve as agents of diffusion of modern culture or as Schramm (1973, in Dodd 1987:157) contends, would serve as multipliers of information and learning necessary to bring about rapid development benefits in Third World nations. This view sees the correlation between the number of mass media technologies (transistor radio and television) and modernisation. In other words, Rogers and Svenning (1969, in Dodd 1987:157) maintain that the availability of television and radio sets in a country would expose more people to media messages and consequentially be favourably disposed in attitudes and behaviour to modernisation.

Roger's (1962 and 1983) diffusion theory, backed by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) findings, supports the view that the development of mass media is synonymous with development. The view that mass media could be used to disseminate information about agriculture, health and education to developing nations gained momentum.

This diffusion theory became the rally point of development communication. Citing Rogers (1995), Lievrouw (2006:250) writes that the diffusion of innovation theory "describes how new ideas or practices are introduced and adopted in a social system, with special focus on the communication relations and information flows that promotes adoption".

Mody (2005:23) asserts that the diffusion scholars found the mass media a useful tool to quickly bring about "awareness and interest" in modern scientific knowledge in developing countries, but they did not take into consideration of the possible existence of internal power structures in traditional societies such as dominant structures and the need to focus on how to bring the have-nots on board.

2.3.5 Theories related to dominant paradigm

These theories are conceptualised in the tradition of dominant paradigm and its associated modernisation/diffusion of innovation theory approach. These theories

were a result of criticisms of dominant paradigm and scholars developed what they thought were appropriate approaches in the consideration of development communication (McPhail 2009:21). Some of the theories have been reviewed below.

2.3.5.1 Social marketing

Social marketing is one of the theories identified in the tradition of dominant paradigm because it follows the diffusion of innovation and behaviour change models (Waisbord 2001:4-5).

Rawjee (2002:20) describes social marketing as a generic concept of marketing which is applied to non-commercial transactions, such as development, social change and community campaign. As a commercial marketing strategy, it is used to address the inadequacies of the diffusion theory. According to Melkote and Steeves (2003:127), this is because the diffusion theory is laden with concepts that are vague and does not provide enough process for recipient feedback, and feedback is considered important in a successful communication campaign. In response to these inadequacies, message dissemination using commercial marketing approach became the favoured communication strategy both in the First World and Third World, leading to the application of a social marketing approach in development communication.

Social marketing is defined as “the design, implementation and control of program calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving consideration of product, planning, pricing, communication, distribution, and marketing research” (Kotler & Zaltman 1971, in Melkote and Steeves 2003:127). A definition given by Andreasen (1994) cited by Waisbord (2001:7) states that social marketing is “the adaptation of commercial marketing technologies to programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences to improve their personal welfare and that of the society of which they are a part”.

The development of social marketing as a communication technique emerged from the disciplines of advertising and marketing in the United States, that were used to address the political situations and social issues of the late 1960's (Waisbord 2001:7). Waisbord points out that the emergence of non-profit organisations that use a marketing approach in their programmes is another reason for the

widespread use of the social marketing technique. According to Rawjee (2002:20), social marketing is used where the objective of the campaign is to bring about social change within a community.

Waisbord states that the perceived importance of social marketing is based on the need to be *socially relevant* and *socially responsible* and more specifically for marketing as an industry and discipline to be responsive to social issues (2001:7).

Social marketing focuses on behavioural change and this is where its techniques have been judged to be similar to diffusion theory, according to Waisbord (2001:6-7). In a remark about its similarity to diffusion theory, Waisbord argues that social marketing is predisposed “to a sequential model of behaviour change in which individual cognitively moves from acquisition of knowledge to adjustment of attitudes toward behaviour change”.

Waisbord (2001:8) explains that the application of techniques such as market segmentation and formative research are used to increase the effectiveness of communication interventions in social marketing. He also notes that such communication interventions have been used in programmes promoting agricultural reforms, nutrition, immunisation and family planning.

According to Waisbord (2001:9), the strength of social marketing as a communication technique lies in its ability to position products and concepts in the traditional beliefs of the targeted community, using information derived from marketing research on audience segmentation. However, Waisbord (2001:9-10) points out that development communication practitioners favouring participatory communication approach, have criticised the social marketing approach because they view it as a non-participatory strategy that is only interested in people as consumers. Thus, it uses an approach that persuades them towards certain behaviours “that have been decided by agencies and planners”. Two limitations of social marketing cited by Windahl, Signitzer and Olson (1992, in Rawjee 2002:22) are that its approach unfolds in a linear manner and it usually does not identify the right public for its campaign because its approach fails to orient people to the objective of the campaign.

2.3.5.2 Health promotion

Health promotion, similar to social marketing, is an approach that has been used as a communication intervention in the Third World. Health promotion, according to Waisbord (2001:11), was originally developed in the United States and gained adoption in combating health problems in Third World countries. Its proponents believe that individuals' behaviours are largely attributable for the type of health problems they may have. Consequently, communication interventions must focus on changing their behaviours, hence it is referred to as the *behaviour change model*, according to Melkote and Steeves (2003:130). According to them, people have to pass through sequence of steps for an adoption of an idea or product to take place.

Critics of the approach note its individualistic focus at the expense of the socio-cultural conditions that may make individuals in the community vulnerable to unhealthy behaviours (Waisbord 2001:12).

2.3.5.3 Entertainment-education

The entertainment-education strategy is premised on behaviour change and communication interventions and is similar to the modernisation/diffusion theories. Entertainment-education is also known as enter-education or edutainment. Durden, Tomaselli and Dalrymple (2003) write that entertainment-education is a communication strategy used to disseminate information through the media and it is applied in development communication. The similarity to modernisation/diffusion theories lies in the reliance on media to disseminate information (Melkote & Steeves 2003:139, Waisbord 2001:12 and Inagaki 2007:17). Melkote and Steeves state that:

Entertainment-education is the process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience knowledge about an educational issue, create favourable attitudes, and change overt behaviour. This strategy uses universal appeal of entertainment to show individuals how they can live safer, healthier, and happier lives (2003:139-140).

In his explanation of the similarity between modernisation and diffusion theory, Waisbord (2001:13) notes that "The fact that its premises are derived from socio-psychology and human communication theories place entertainment-education in the modernization/diffusion theory trunk". Waisbord also notes that entertainment

education is not a theory but a strategy used to maximise the efficacy of health messages. Its origin is traced back to Mexico in 1970 and according to Durden, Tomaselli and Dalrymple (2003), McPhail (2009:35-36), and Singhal and Rogers (1999:47) it has been widely used in developing countries in literacy programmes and rural agriculture campaigns in Nigeria, Philippines, India, Turkey, Gambia, Pakistan.

The central tenet of entertainment-education is that people learn from role models in the community they can identify with, hence it is important to ensure that such role models fully support the core values considered important to the message that is being put forward (Melkote & Steeves 2003:141). The entertainment-education strategy described by Rogers (1988, in Melkote and Steeves 2003:141) uses entertainment genre such as soap operas in the television medium. An example of this is “Soul City” shown on the South African Broadcasting Corporation, Television Channel 1, which focuses on the promotion of knowledge and values to the viewers “so that individuals could better understand the reality of their social problems, and seek possible solutions” (Rogers 1988, in Melkote & Steeves 2003:141).

Despite its wide appeal as communication intervention strategy, in Melkote and Steeves’ (2003:143) view, the fact that entertainment-education takes place in a manner that it is subsumed under other communication campaign strategies means that it will be difficult to evaluate how it has had impact as communication intervention. They also note that its reliance on a communication technology, such as television, means that it cannot be used to reach a wide audience as the poorest of the poor may not own or have access to a television set.

2.3.6 Questioning the notions of dominant paradigm

These early notions of development have not escaped scathing criticism from scholars. Melkote and Steeves (2006:58) called Lerner’s 1966 *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*, a “premature pronouncement”. This is, indeed, a fair comment given several findings after his study, that emphasised the need to take into consideration the traditional beliefs and customs of the recipient community as a starting point for development.

Due to the way mass media were excessively emphasised as precursor of development in developing countries by early theorists of development, many developing countries invested massively in radio networks and television. As noted by Ayee (1993:37), there was a general belief that through mass media, the developing countries could, within decades, reach the same level of development that older economies took centuries to achieve. This was not to be the case, as the flow of information from government and development agencies simply resulted in development of a small section of the society (Ayee 1993:37-38).

Szirmani (n.d.:6) faults the notion of development based on economic growth. He argues that economic growth is not economic development. He cites Kuznets' (1996) definition of economic development, which refers to "growth accompanied by qualitative changes in the structure of production and employment, generally referred to as structural change". Based on Kuznets' (1996) definition of economic development, Szirmai notes that "economic growth could take place without any economic development" and this applies in some "oil-exporting countries, which experienced sharp increases in national income but saw hardly any changes in their economic structure".

For example, in the 1970's and 1980's, Nigeria, as an oil-exporting country, experienced a dramatic increase in its national income but this did not translate into the development of the country or in the material well-being of its citizenry (Imasuen 2009:3). Imasuen describes what happened in Nigeria as a "grandiose profligacy", an example of which occurred in 1976 when the Nigerian government gave all workers a salary bonus equal to their yearly income, despite the dire need to develop infrastructure. This is also true of the situation observed in Botswana, which has been experiencing economic growth with impressive foreign reserves, but with an unimpressive economic development as evidenced in the poor living conditions of the majority of Botswana (Imasuen 2009:4). Szirmai (n.d.:7) notes that economic growth does not always mean better social indicators, such as high life expectancy, high literacy, low infant mortality, availability of telephones, good health care services, etc.

Sen (1999) also disagrees with the notion of development propounded by Lerner and other classical scholars. Sen sees development as a substantive measure of freedom. In Sen's view, economic growth and technological advancement are

important only when they lead to the increase of human freedoms, especially freedom from hunger, freedom from poverty, freedom from premature mortality.

Similarly, Djité (2008:1) questions the understanding of development in terms of economic growth. He states that economic growth cannot be achieved without good governance that will guarantee basic human rights and a political vision to drive development. Development must bring about change in the individuals holistically and not just about 'economic possession', according to Djité (2008:2). Djité's argues, based on the sociolinguistic situation in Africa, that although Africa is rich and blessed in mineral resources, the continent is still plagued with poverty, war and disease to the extent that developmental efforts remain crippled. In his words:

The education systems, the health systems, governance and hence the economy are all crippled, in no small measure, because of lack of genuine communication. Those at the top are *talking at*, not *to*, the population, using European languages that bring them power and prestige. For those at the bottom though, day-to-day life is a struggle that is made even harder, as they must face the challenge of learning and seeking medical help in a foreign language (Djité 2008:2).

Rogers (1976:217) disagrees with the early conception of development on the grounds that it is intellectually ethnocentric. Rogers points out that most of the early theorists of development were Westerners who had no adequate data relevant to the reality on the ground to support their assertions about development in emerging nations. These early theorists postulated that the development of these countries must be a wholesale transition from their traditional ways to the modern ways of the western countries. One cannot disagree with Rogers as the worldview used to define development speaks to a westerner's view of what is appropriate and important. Also, the discussion of development by early theorists seems to uphold a one-size-fits-all approach without considering that different communities have their own peculiar socio-cultural milieus that may negate the approach entirely.

Thus, while the practice of modernisation theories still persists, critics have generally believed that the problems of development or underdevelopment in the Third World should be viewed using the prevailing social realities of the time. This view has been crystallised in a theory critiquing the dominant paradigm and its

associated communication intervention approaches. This theory is known as the *dependency theory*.

2.3.6.1 Critical views: Dependency theory

Dependency theory is one of the responses used to critique the modernisation theories. It was developed in Latin America and is informed by Marxist and critical theories. Its proponents, according to Waisbord (2001:16), claim that development problems in the Third World countries are as a result of the disproportionate distribution of resources aggravated by the growth of global Western capitalism. Citing Hornik's (1988) argument, Waisbord states that the problem of underdevelopment in the Third World is due to socio-political factors and the economic and political domination of the Third World countries by First World countries and not lack of information. As a dependency theorist, Frank (1969, in Melkote and Steeves 2003:171), argues that

underdevelopment is not due to the survival of archaic institutions and the existence of capital shortage in regions that have remained isolated from the stream of world history. On the contrary, underdevelopment was and still is generated by the very same historical process which also generated economic development: the development of capitalism itself.

Dependency theorists or *dependistas* (as they are called in Latin America) refute the notion that Third World nations are in a stage of development similar to an earlier stage of Western European nations. Instead, they emphasise that dominant paradigm touted as solution to the development of the Third World nations does not take into consideration the prevailing historical development within them. Indeed, Ayee (1993:44) insists that it is pointless to consider communication in a national setting without giving attention to the pertinent historical development of the target community for development and the manner in which global economic system influences development.

As postulated in the dependency theory, the role of mass media ownership and the consequent agenda-based control by modernisation theorists is neglected. Waisbord (2001:16) argues that "Urban powerful interests controlled the media that was supposed to promote development" and he goes further to state that "media were not interested in championing social goals or helping underprivileged population but in transmitting entertainment and trivial information".

The role of communication, according to dependency theory's proponents, is to have an educational programme that reveals the inhuman nature of the world economic system and its incapacitating characteristics (Ayee 1993:45). It is also stated by Dissanayake (1985, in Ayee 1993:45) that communication strategy should be used to mobilise support for a structural re-arrangement of society and, according to proponents of this theory, this can be realised through interpersonal channels, as recommended by proponents of participatory communication discussed in detail in the next chapter.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The new paradigm is a response to the failures and shortcomings of dominant paradigm, as it was unable to meet the development objectives in the developing nations. The new paradigm, as stated by Roger (1976:225), is an alternative that simply implies that the role of communication in development must also change. Different positions have been taken with regard to role played by development communication in the new paradigm. Primary among these is the participatory communication approach. This approach is the main focus of this study and it is discussed extensively in the next chapter.

In this chapter, the shifting focus of development communication scholars which transitioned from dominant paradigm to new paradigm was discussed. The particular focus of the dominant paradigm was development in the emerging nations and how the modernisation model of the Western, developed nations could be replicated. While this was the accepted view of development scholars and practitioners for a period of time, it was indicated in this chapter that different studies, with valid variables and facts which shifted the discourse of development and the associated communication to a new paradigm, emerged. The new paradigm, as explained in this chapter, emphasises a participatory communication approach that includes the basic rights of the community and communication that reflects the socio-cultural context of the beneficiary community.

In the next chapter, participatory communication will be discussed. This will highlight the challenges of participatory communication, as well some communication models to explain the nature of participatory communication.

CHAPTER THREE: PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two, the old paradigm or the dominant paradigm was discussed and several criticisms of the dominant paradigm were referred to. The general consensus among scholars is that the dominant paradigm approach has failed the purpose it was intended to address.

In criticising the old paradigm, scholars argue that communication is a process of social interaction and, indeed, a two-way process between the sender and receiver. This begins the focus of the new paradigm, which includes participatory communication.

The focus of this chapter is, therefore, on participatory communication. A definition of participatory communication will be given, and the many typologies in which the concept has been used by scholars will be presented. In addition, scholars' views of participatory approach in development will be discussed and this will include the limits and problems of participatory approach in development.

3.2 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION AND THE PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

There is no simple definition of participatory communication. A look at the relevant literature shows that there are different but related definitions informed by different perspectives or focuses. In what appears more like a description of a participatory communication than a definition, McPhail (2009:27), says that “[p]articipatory communication stresses the basic right of all people to be heard, to speak for themselves and not represented or reworded by another party”. Michener (1998:2105) states that participatory communication “is a powerful concept with a strong appeal but suffers from many ambiguities that, for most part, go unrecognized”. Similarly, Arnst (1996:110) states unequivocally that “[p]erhaps no term has been more distorted, more overused, than participation” and therefore suggests that the term can be best understood by considering first what it does not represent. According to Arnst:

Participation is not simply bodily presence at community meetings, nor can it be construed as a chance to tick a voting ballot every few years. Participation

is not simply access to mass media controlled by the urban elite and bureaucratic vested interests [...] participation is not a tidy variable to isolate, validate and systematically replicate. It is not an 'input' to be unilaterally diffused or applied by remote control from the 'centre' to the 'periphery', from 'sources' to 'receivers' or from 'experts' to, by implication, the 'ignorant'. Such 'participation' imparts only a façade of power and involvement – a very thin façade (Arnst 1996:110).

Participation is not any of these mentioned, but it “is an approach, indeed, an ideology which mandates equality, in act as well as in attitude” (Arnst 1996:111). For Ayee (1993:46), participatory communication informs the call for the recognition of the core value and belief system of the target communities and to equally assist them in being protagonists in their own development. Steyn and Nunes (2001:31) assert that participatory approach “inspires people to use their potential by offering them choices to fully develop their abilities”.

Arnst (1996), Ayee (1993), and Steyn and Nunes' (2001) views of participation clearly put the beneficiaries of development at the centre of, or as equal partners in, matters of development. This requires a communication approach which sustains mutual understanding for such a relationship. Thus, a participatory approach is a two-way communication model, which encapsulates bottom-up and horizontal direction of flow, is emphasised as opposed to the vertical transmission of message from experts to target communities. The use of a participatory communication approach means that there must be an established relationship based on trust between the development practitioner and the local stakeholders in order for a collaborative relationship to exist without problem (McPhail 2009:27).

McPhail's assertion bears a similarity to Freire's (1970) concept of communication. Freire emphasises participatory communication which consists of dialogue – a back and forth communication between those within development organisations and those they serve (McPhail 2009:29). Freire holds that dialogic praxis is central to a participatory communication approach (Freire 1970:72). Dialogic praxis should be based on a relationship that is characterised with “love, humility, and faith” in a situation where “dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence” (Freire 1970:72). The main emphasis in Freire's argument is dialogue as a pre-requisite for participatory communication. (Freire's *'Pedagogy of the Oppressed'* is relevant and is reviewed extensively in section 3.4.3.)

Nair and White's (1987 cited in White 1999:36) description of participatory development reflects Freire's concept of communication. According to them, participatory communication is "a two-way dynamic interaction, which through dialogue transforms grassroots' people and enables them to become fully engaged in the process of development and become self-reliant". This, according Nair and White, places emphasis on total liberation of the development beneficiaries (often the marginalised of any society) from conditions of inertia, enabling them to become active participants.

The participatory approach practice requires respecting citizens' culture as it applies to their values, beliefs and societal needs in the decision-making (Lent 1989:28). This, as observed by Lent, distinguishes participatory communication approach from the dominant/modernisation paradigm. It means that the indigenous knowledge and culture of the local communities must be recognised as a starting point from which they are to be dealt with. Thus, participation demands communication which allows all stakeholders an equal voice, hence the call for trust between those involved is emphasised. It is a practice which requires a fundamental change in the thinking of participatory communicators in order to make sure that local community's knowledge and that of the development planner are taken into consideration. This has been found lacking in many of the so-called participatory development projects. For example, often the initiative for a development project comes from outside the target community, exposing the 'outside' or foreign development planner's inadequate knowledge about the culture of the target community.

Initiatives planned outside the target community are commonly referred to as exogenous-based development initiatives. These characterise development projects in developing countries, especially in Africa. In many countries in Africa, international (Non-Governmental Organisations) NGOs are deeply involved in the rural hinterland, helping to alleviate miseries caused by disease, poverty and natural disasters. While the work of these NGOs is laudable, it should be pointed out that they often lack adequate knowledge defining the beneficiaries' culture and this causes barriers to the achievement of their projects' objectives. A remark put forward by Burkey (1993:45-46) in this instance states that it is impossible to understand how individuals or group of people will respond to externally-driven

projects without first understanding their social relationships and their cultural traditions.

Korten (1983, in White 1999:31-32) recommends that the participatory approach should enable the involvement of population at grassroots in a development project that is meant to address their needs. To Korten participatory approach should reflect what he has summed up below in the follow poem:

Go to the people
Live among the people
Learn from the people
Plan with the people
Work with the people
Start with what the people know
Build what the people have
Teach by showing; learn by doing
Not a showcase but a pattern
Not odds and ends but a system
Not piecemeal but integrated approach
Not to conform but to transform
Not relief but release.

Many development initiatives have floundered because the project leaders failed to recognise the benefit of working with their beneficiaries, as elucidated by Korten. For participatory communication to achieve its stated outcome, the relational pattern and value system in the community must be respected (Burkey 1993:46). In this light, Thomas (2001:250) states that “if participation is to lead to empowering discourses and lasting change, then communication strategies need to be built on the basis of conversations with the local value systems”.

One of the primary motivations for development projects is to empower the beneficiaries, enabling them to take control of their lives. How this should be done is open to debate, which may not end on a common dialectic ground due to the divergent views of the word *empowerment* in development. For example, Hughes (1987:397) asserts that an assumption that underpins empowerment strategy in a participatory-focused approach in development is that “people have valid and valuable knowledge of their needs, values, and goals that can be put into action”. This means that development planners should see themselves as collaborators who must harness their knowledge, as well as that of the community, in matters of development. Some of the questions raised by a development planner who sees himself/herself as a collaborator are: “What can we do together to address this

problem?” or “How can we help?” and in this manner, Hughes notes that the development planner establishes a mutual understanding of the problem as well as respect and opportunities for others to tap on their abilities (Hughes 1987:397).

Similarly, Eade (2000:51) states that development approach must “take into account the diversity of people’s experience” or “risk failing to build on their many varied capacities”. A similar view is held by Hughes (1987:397) who emphasises that empowerment strategy highlights diversity. Hughes, citing the work of Rappaport (1981), states that participatory development needs to mirror empowerment which is:

[...] based on divergent reasoning that encourages diversity through support of many different local groups rather than the large centralized social agencies and institutions which control resources, use convergent reasoning, an attempt to standardize the ways in which people live their lives (Hughes 1987:397).

Above all, Hughes (1987:400) recommends that a participatory development with an empowerment tinge should work with facilitators who must identify local competencies, invite ideas and jointly establish necessary plans for actions to effect the change required.

Diversity should also be viewed in the light of the difference that exists between the development benefactor and the beneficiaries. Indeed, these differences will be reflected in the way they perceive the development project. Foster’s (1973:130-31) work in the traditional societies in the early seventies supports this and he stresses that the problems arising from these differences, can be solved or mitigated through effective communication. He declares that communication in this instance should mean:

much more than mastering a language and presenting ideas in simple and clear speech; it means that new ideas and techniques must be presented verbally and visually and conceptually so that the recipient perceives the potential advantages in much the same way as does the technical agent.

Where these different perceptions are not well-managed through appropriate communication, the development project’s objective may not be realised as the participants in the project may have different and irreconcilable expectations about each other behaviour (Foster 1973:131).

The question of the perceived disempowerment of development specialists or planners, and the empowerment of the development targets discussed above, is

addressed by Servaes (1996:105). To Servaes, both the development specialists and the beneficiaries are important in a participatory approach, as the “viewpoint of the local groups of the public [must] be considered before the resources for the development projects are allocated and distributed, and the suggestion for changes in the policy be taken into consideration”. Though, Servaes’ statement reflects an exogenous-designed participatory approach, it stresses a communication model in which the views of and feedback from the beneficiaries are respected. Similarly, Ascroft (1987, in Jacobson and Kolluri 1999:268) says participatory communication is “knowledge sharing and creating beneficiary comprehension of benefactor’s intentionalities.”

Some scholars, such as Bessette (2004), view participatory communication in the same way as Servaes. Indeed, Bessette (2004) states:

Participatory development communication is a planned activity, based on the one hand on participatory processes, and on the other hand on media and interpersonal communication, which facilitates a dialogue among different stakeholders, around a common development problem or goal, with the objective of developing and implementing a set of activities to contribute to its solution, or its realization, and which supports and accompanies this initiative.

Bessette advocates a participatory communication approach in which there is a shift from persuading and giving information to change beneficiaries’ behaviour and attitudes, to one that focuses on facilitating exchanges between different stakeholders to address a common problem. Furthermore, he maintains that participation development should result in a partnership between the development practitioner and the beneficiaries in order to have a common development initiatives and solutions to problems of development.

Leeuwis’ (2006:249) idea of participatory practice bears close semblance to that of Bessette, except that he emphasises that there are “normative rules” which must be followed in a participatory practice. These normative rules, according to Leeuwis, are:

- all relevant stakeholders should be involved in the participatory process;
- participants must have equal opportunities to speak out;
- participants need to be able to speak freely;

- the multiple perspectives (including values, interests, local knowledge and 'needs') of stakeholders must be explored and taken into account;
- 'ownership' needs to rest with participants as much as possible;
- participation must lead to the 'empowerment' of the participants;
- power imbalances among stakeholders need to be rectified as far as possible
- it is illegitimate to intervene in a 'top-down' mode during participatory processes;
- the role of interventionist is mainly to facilitate critical learning and dialogue;
- participatory processes must be flexible and context specific; and
- participatory processes must proceed on the basis of joint agreement and mutual respect.

Given these normative rules and the reality embodied in participatory practice, Leeuwis (2006:250) asserts that there are extremely few participatory practices that match the normative definitions of participation. In Leeuwis' view, this is due to the inability to apply participatory principles and also errors "in the theoretical rhetoric [...] itself". Leeuwis (2006:250) refers to participatory process in which the decision-making authority and control are handed to stakeholders as *maximum participation* and this implies that there are other types or levels of participation.

3.2.1 Types and levels of participation

The widely used typologies of participation, according to Pretty (1994, in Leeuwis 2006:250), are based on three elements which are:

(a) information input and (b) decision-making authority between participants and interventionists in relation to (c) different key functions in development planning, such as situation analysis, problem identification, goal setting and implementation.

Using information input and decision-making authority, Leeuwis puts together a typology adapted from Pretty (1994) and Biggs (1989) as follows:

- (a) Receiving information: In participation that falls under this level of information receiving, participants are told of the benefits of a development after it has been designed and a decision about the project has been decided by others.

- (b) Passive information giving: At the level of information giving, participants only respond to questions and matters deemed appropriate to help development planners in making decisions about development projects.
- (c) Consultation: Participants' views and opinions are openly sought, but the development planners decide unilaterally about what to do with the views and opinions sought.
- (d) Collaboration: Participants are equal partners in development project and decisions are taken jointly with development planners.
- (e) Self-mobilisation: At this level, participants are the ones who initiate, work and make decision about projects independently and the development planners' role is restricted to supportive role.

For Michener (1998:2106), the definitions of the word 'participation', and by extension the term 'participatory communication', have multiple meanings and uses, hence there is a classification indicating types of participation. One of the types of participation commonly referred to, is Arnstein's (1969) "ladder of participation". Arnstein's ladder has been reproduced and referred to by many scholars in different forms and in the contexts of the participation study they have undertaken. For example, the classification system referred to by White (1996, in Michener 1998:2106) is based on four types of participation. This classification system is typically characterised by the various interests of the different stakeholders. In the classification, development planners' interests are described as top-down while that of beneficiaries are described as bottom-up interests and participation varies from nominal to transformative (Michener 1998:2106). This is indicated in the table below:

From	Top-Down	Bottom-Up	Function
Nominal	Legitimation	Inclusion Cost	Display Means
Instrumental	Efficiency	Leverage	Voice
Representative	Sustainability	Empowerment	Means/End
Transformative	Empowerment		

Table 3.1: White's classification of participation (White 1996, in Michener 1998:2107).

White's classification shows that the expectations of the development stakeholders are not the same as evidenced in the first three levels in the table. The table also shows that the development planners and beneficiaries have conflicting views about what participation in a development project actually signifies. At the last level (transformative level), the situation is different because the empowerment of beneficiaries is central to the interest of development stakeholders (Michener 1998:2107).

Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation is more comprehensive and it reflects most of the interpersonal encounters that are classified as participatory approach in development. It is, therefore, explained in detail below.

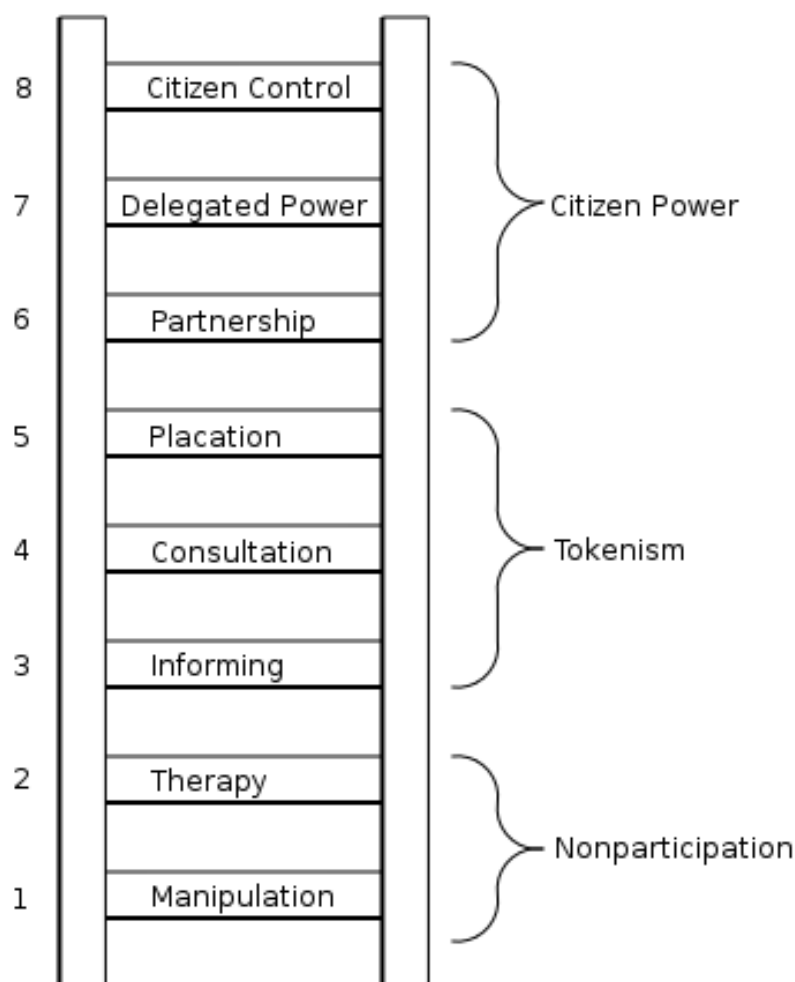


Fig 3.1: Arnstein's (1969) ladder of citizen participation.

Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation has eight levels, which are manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control. These levels have been grouped together as non-participation, tokenism and citizen power.

3.2.1.1 Non-participation

Non-participation is at the lowest rungs of the ladder and it comprises manipulation and therapy. At the non-participation level, Arnstein remarks that the primary aim of the development planner is "not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable power holders to educate or cure the participants" (1969:218). This means that participation is at the behest of development planners as the beneficiaries lack complete understanding of the issues involved in the project meant to alleviate their problems. Manipulation used at this level ensures that "the dominant elites try to conform the masses to their objectives" (Freire 1993:128).

True to its manipulation purposes, it has been found that private organisations use it as an opportunity to get involved in community affairs for their own ends, such as gaining self-serving publicity. To the community, they are thankful to development planners as they are told that the project is meant to free them from poverty and its associated ills. Development planners are seen as experts and are thus held in high esteem. The reality is that they do not understand the cultural beliefs and proper needs of the people, and so cannot properly participate in their practices. According to Freire (1993:129), they sustain whatever practices they do have with a "series of deceit and promises", which are the norms of manipulation.

The second level Arnstein refers to is therapy. This is also described as non-participatory in so far as development planners think their development projects are for the good of the community. They go to the community as experts who have answers to their problems. "What makes this form of 'participation' so unpleasant is that citizens are engaged in extensive activity, but the focus of it is on curing them of their 'pathology' rather than changing the racism and victimisation that create their 'pathologies'" (Arnstein 1969:210). This is a common practice in health communication where the people are prescriptively told about what to do to mitigate their health problems by other people they see as experts.

3.2.1.2 Tokenism

Tokenism is used to indicate that something is being done in line with what has been agreed to – as a form of symbolic gesture – but which is not the case. Falling under tokenism in the ladder are informing, consultation and placation. Informing is an element of tokenism that Arnstein suggests is aimed at passing information monologically to a participating beneficiary community. The hallmark of participatory communication is dialogue and this ensures a relationship where both the development planners engage in a meaningful interaction based on a shared understanding.

Thus informing, according to Arnstein, is contrary to the notion of participation and the Freirean understanding of dialogue² because it is linear and top-down. Informing is used to signify the development planner's decision-making approach which does not involve the beneficiaries. All that is done in this regard is to pass on the information or decision taken to the beneficiaries or community.

Following informing is consultation, at level four. This is another kind of tokenism in Arnstein's view. Although it is an important component of a participation process, Arnstein argues that its lack of dialogue in decision-making makes it tokenism. In this instance, it is tokenism because the community are seen to be consulted but their involvement is not evident in many aspects of the project.

At the fifth level is placation, and according to Arnstein this is the mere selection of individuals to get involved in decision-making processes. A group of individuals is selected to represent the community, but the decision-making stops with the development planner or agent.

The three levels representing tokenism are synonymous to communication used in modernisation paradigm in which planning about development is done outside the community. In this case, the modernisation scholars were interested in generating ideas outside the community but made every effort to promote the ideas within and around the community. This is not true participation because it is not based on mutual understanding or collective decision-making as it is evidenced in the next level.

² See discussion of Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in sub-section 3.4.3.

3.2.1.3 Citizen power

At this level – partnership, delegated power and citizen control – there is genuine participation. Beginning from the partnership level in the ladder, Arnstein remarks that there is shared commitment for different phases of the development project. Describing this level, Arnstein (1969:212) states that “power is in fact redistributed through negotiation between citizens and powerholders.” The nature of power in the management of the project is understood by all and jointly agreed on. In this case, it is easy to get the support of the community because they are seen as partners (Bassette 2004) in the management of the development project.

However, regarding the question of power, Arnstein notes that in local communities this may be a problem as the degree of selflessness required may be lacking. She states that “those who have power normally want to hang onto it; historically it has had to be wrested by the powerless rather than proffered by the powerful” (Arnstein 1969:213). This characterises the nature of power in many rural communities hence development planners may not succeed in their participatory approach no matter how good their intention is.

At the seventh level, the nature of participation at level six (partnership) already indicates that the question of delegated power is a given. When there is partnership and redistribution of power as indicated by Arnstein in level, the delegation of power is addressed.

The highest level which is level eighth in the ladder is the preferred type of participation. Although full control is not possible, according to Arnstein, the main priority at this level should be how “the citizens can govern a programme or an institution, be in full charge of policy and managerial aspects, and be able to negotiate the conditions under which ‘outsiders’ may change them” (Arnstein 1969:214).

At this level, the beneficiaries have power in the form being able to be their own change agents. Thus, as change agents they know the type of project that will address their needs appropriately and thus seek partnership to address the needs.

Another kind of participation level, according to Michener (1998:2106), is referred to as *planner-centred* and *people-centred* participation. Referring to the planner-centred perspective, Michener notes that there is a belief that popular participation

of the beneficiaries in development project planning and implementation will encourage the beneficiaries to become committed to the success of the development project. Michener (1998:2106) believes this to be a ruse to exploit the beneficiaries' indigenous knowledge, "labour, financial, and in-kind contributions," and to reduce the cost of implementing development projects. On the other hand, with regard to a people-centred perspective, "participation is both a means and an end in itself" because it serves as a means to address local needs and to "redistribute scarce resources." This, in other words, means that the people-centred perspective enables a process in which the poor are empowered by the improvement of their management capacity, increasing their confidence and collective consciousness.

In whatever way participation is characterised, it has become fashionable among development planners to label their development approach as participatory. For example, Leeuwis (2006:254) and White *et al.* (1994, in Michener 1998:2105) state that there is a participation "buzz-word" in almost every development project. In fact, White *et al.* (1994, in Michener 1998:2105) maintain that development project may not attract funding from development agency if provision is not made for the target community or people to participate in it. In addition, Leeuwis (2006:254) says there must be "participation speak" in order for one's project to be funded by large donors.

To Leeuwis, 'participation' is a favourable concept when used to describe the different stages of a development project and where the word 'participation' is not used, other similar concepts are employed in its stead. This may serve to explain the various terms and labels used in development literature. For example, Eade's (2000:23) book, written from the perspective of a non-governmental organisation (NGO), participation is seen as capacity-building. According to Eade (2000:23) capacity-building means "strengthening people's capacity to determine their own values and priorities and to organise themselves to action on these." Eade's explanation suggests that participation is a means to uncover the beneficiaries' intrinsic abilities to chart their course of development. Eade (2000:23) maintains that the beneficiaries' wider socio-economic and political environment impacts on capacity-building.

Successful capacity-building in a development programme intended to address issues at community level can only occur if the development planners start by addressing the root causes of the perceived problem. Considered from a participatory communication approach, it means a process that recognises the prevailing socio-cultural norms of the community should be used. Eade (2003:30) observes that “behind every apparent problem lies a deeper one. Taking a capacity-building approach may mean starting several steps behind the ‘obvious’ point of entry in order to avoid generating resistance”. For example, a development effort aimed at encouraging women to learn to read and write may fail if the developers do not understand why more women than men are illiterate. Eade suggests that if the men of the community do not support the literacy drive for their women, the effort may end in failure (2000:30).

A development project in Tanzania which was participatory in approach but failed to recognise the cultural dynamics of the community provides a good illustration. Eade (2000:27-28) relates the history of this development project intended to reduce poverty among women. The initial stage was successful, but the involvement of women in the project waned rapidly to the surprise of development planners. The project failed because the cultural dynamics of the community was not taken into consideration. For example, the patriarchal nature of rural communities in Tanzania was neglected, hence the men were left out in the execution of the project. It turned out that the men felt the matter should have been discussed with them for permission to allow their wives to participate in the project. In the absence of this consultation, their reaction was to prevent their wives from participating further in the project.

Thus, the need for mutual understanding between stakeholders in a development project cannot be over-emphasised. In the case of the failed project referred to above, the inclusion of latent stakeholders, such as the husbands referred to in the above example, is important. Central to overcoming such problems is the use of dialogic communication as culture-specific and context-specific variables, which often results in misunderstanding in top-down communication.

3.3 DIALOGUE AS THE DEFINING FEATURE OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

The dominant focus of participatory communication is the notion of dialogue in communication. Mody (2005:28) refers to this as the central thesis propounded by Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Dialogue as discussed by Paulo Freire is given in sub-section 3.4.3.

Dialogue is a requirement in consensus-building between individuals in communication. Consensus is also a requirement in the execution of a development project:

- within groups of people with homogenous needs,
- between groups of people with different needs, and
- between the public and planners (e.g., government agencies, private voluntary organizations) claiming to meet their needs (Mody 2005:28).

In other words, a dialogic relationship is important because communication flows in all directions – horizontally, bottom-up and top-down. Communication flows horizontally within and between groups, bottom-up from beneficiaries to development planners and top-down from development planners to people (Mody 2005:28-29). Mody (2005:29) describes dialogic communication in development as a three-way flow of communication “in a never-ending spiral [...], first horizontal and then up and then back down, continuously, and on a variety of issues”.

In participatory development discourse, dialogic communication is said to include multiple participants in communication. Steinberg (1997:13) refers to this as transactional perspective of communication. The essence of this perspective, according to Steinberg (1997:13), is that “people communicating are mutually responsible for the outcome of the communication encounter”. Nair and White (1993:50) argue that this represents a new thinking in development communication, which only “dialogic, transactional model or can embody” because it gives voice to the people at the grassroots level and it is an enabling tool for them to become self-reliant.

3.3.1 Transactional perspective as dialogue

The transactional perspective, according to Nair and White (1993:48), is one of the steps taken in the development discourse to move the conceptualisation of communication out of linear and positivistic thinking which characterises dominant paradigm. They define the transactional perspective as

The opening of dialogue, source and receiver interacting continuously, thinking constructively about the situation, identifying developmental needs and problems, deciding what is needed to improve the situation, and acting upon it (1993:51).

Steinberg (1997:13) defines the transactional perspective of communication as a “process of exchanging messages and negotiating meaning to establish and maintain relationship”. Referring to an earlier study undertaken jointly by them in 1987, Nair and White point out that the receivers are not just receivers of someone else's messages, but are protagonists in the development, elaboration and delivery of the messages. Steinberg (1997:13) refers to this relationship as one in which people in communication are “mutually responsible” for the transmission of information, creation of meaning, elicitation of feedback and the outcome of the communication. Steinberg adds that in a communication encounter, the emphasis should be “the quality of relationship”, which in the case of transactional perspective, takes the form of mutual agreement in order to have a satisfactory communication relationship.

This idea also informs the basis of Onabajo's (2005:123) view of the transactional perspective. In his explanation, he states that the transactional perspective is a communication model in which “a sender and receiver of message interact over a period of time to arrive at shared meanings.” The transactional perspective does not discount the communication model which is “from ‘top-down’ to ‘bottom-up’”, but rather integrate these two polar approaches, and unites them through transactional communication” (Nair and White 1993:51).

The transactional perspective is dialogic, dynamic and transformative because it is a process of dialogical communication in which development planners and their beneficiaries are mutually involved. Onabajo (2005:124) labels dialogue of this nature as both disempowering to “powerholders” and empowering to the “powerless”, thus implying that these two groups are active and equal partners in communication. Talking about empowerment and disempowerment in development

communication discourse, Shapiro (1988, cited by White 1999:20), argues that communication cast in terms of the transactional perspective is not about “improving conversations but constructing countering discourses, modes of writing which opposes the terms of power and authority circulated and recirculated in the prevailing modes of discourse.”

What is very clear in Shapiro’s argument is the need for ideological contestation and the sustenance of such ideologies between the development benefactors and beneficiaries. The argument rejects a discourse that projects the dominant role of development agent at the expense of a balanced discourse where the development agent and beneficiaries are joint protagonists. Nair and White’s (1993:51) suggest in this case that the normal communication process should be eschewed in favour of a process that focuses on reworking communication processes and methods to achieve a balance of power. This, as observed by White (1999:33), could result in empowering the poor people because it will give them voice to highlight their concerns. It also means a “communication process which takes into account indigenous knowledge and self-reliance gained through increased information and acquisition, facilitated by external scientists/experts” (Nair & White 1993:51).

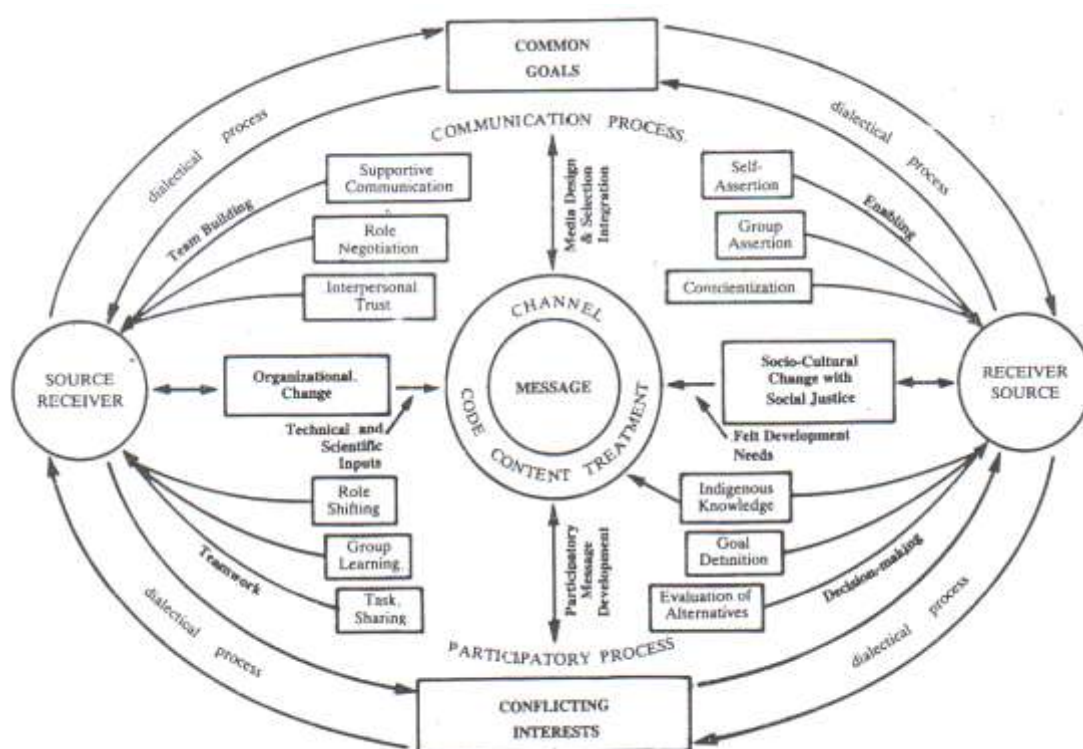


Figure 3.2: Source: Nair and White (1999:52) Transactional model for development communication.

In a nutshell, the transactional perspective is a mutually-negotiated communication process that takes into consideration the sender's and the receiver's values, which may affect the outcome of communication (Steinberg 1997:19). This view is encapsulated in Nair and White's (1993:52) transactional model for development communication above. Nair and White's transactional model indicates the fundamental components, which are the source, message, channel and receiver. These components are repeatedly influenced by the *communication process* and *participatory process* depicted in the model.

The key concepts of the model are *organisational change*, *socio-cultural change*, *common goals* and *conflicting interests* while the participatory process encapsulates the following concepts: *teamwork*, *teambuilding decision-making* and *enabling* (Nair & White 1999:53). As shown in the model, the nature of communication (transactions) between the source of communication and the receiver must "reflect the *felt needs* of the receiver". Added to this: "Messages are shaped, drawing from the appropriate *technical and scientific input* from the source interfaced within the indigenous knowledge" (Nair & White 1999:53).

The model shows a dynamic type of communication, as this occurrence between the source and receiver is on-going and ever-changing. Role shifting is shown in the model because at any given time the source is depicted as the receiver, and the receiver is depicted as the source, and the receiver is viewed as equally dominant in the communication. The receiver is able to take part in the communication event as a co-dominant partner, and is also able to shape his/her "responses consciously, rather than helplessly or in a dependency mode" (Nair & White 1995:53).

In a more explicit explanation of the model, Nair and White (1999:53) state that the model is a developmental process because the participants (the development planners and the beneficiaries) in the nature of transaction taking place "grow and change, each influenced by his or her own interpretations of the other's messages, changing feelings and belief as the dialogue progresses". Thus, in essence, the model recognises that people's involvement in communication is context-bound in the form of their feelings, beliefs and their general worldview, among others.

The model portrays a transactional perspective of communication as both participatory and dialectical in process and, therefore, there must be organisational and socio-cultural changes.

3.3.1.1 Components of the transaction communication model

In order to explain the components of the models, concepts such as the source, receiver and channel as depicted in the Nair and White transactional model of development communication above, will be discussed.

3.3.1.1 (a) The source

According to Nair and White (1999:58), two considerations are necessary in order to have a clear picture of what the source symbolises. These considerations are:

1. that of examining the forces which bring about teamwork through team-building; and
2. that of determining the operational infrastructures which can provide those forces and catalyse necessary organisational change.

Equally important in participatory approach is a team-building process which results in integration of the knowledge of all stakeholders. Thus, effective use of dialogic interaction between the source and the receiver is imperative.

Teamwork, as indicated in the model, is achieved “when a group of persons significantly relate to each other in order to accomplish common goals or objectives through either formal or informal team-building process” (Nair & White 1999:58). *Interpersonal trust*, which is typified mutual respect for one another as human beings, is imperative in this regard and it also reflects the view of Paulo Freire (see Freire 1970:72). Put differently, the communication relationship that exists between the source and the receiver should be based on an understanding where both the source and receiver acknowledge that there could be some elements that may affect communication outcome between them. These elements, according to Steinberg (1997:19), may affect “the meaning that is expressed and the meaning that is interpreted”. Nair and White (1999:58) refer to teamwork as “cooperative working patterns”, which come about, as indicated in the model, through *role negotiation and supportive communication* at the organisation level.

The nature of interaction at the source level takes a joint development of message through dialogue and, as can be seen in the model, this has to go through *role shifting, group learning and task sharing* on the part of the source. In addition, Nair and White (1999:56), and De Vito (1994:32) point out that as it is a participatory process, it takes a simultaneous involvement of both the source and the receiver to jointly construct message in the participatory communication process.

In a transactional perspective, the source takes on a new role in which he/she has to repeatedly adjust his/her message in response to the feedback from the receiver, highlighting their needs, sharing knowledge and integrating their indigenous knowledge (De Vito 1994:32 and Nair & White 1999:58). This means that:

Each person in a communication transaction acts and reacts on the basis of the present situation influenced in great part by his or her history, past experiences, attitudes, cultural beliefs, self-image, future expectations, and a host of related issues (DeVito 1994:32-33).

This, in essence means a two-way communication where through the process of feedback, both the source and receiver are able to continue communicating more clearly. The dialogical process mirror to them challenges that may prevent understanding and such challenges are mitigated or are addressed in the process of feedback.

Nair and White (1999:59) show that organisational change takes place at the source level in the model. Consequently, the channels of communication are modified, which in turn affects the construction of the message, its content and code so as to accommodate the receiver's participation. In this regard, the receiver is not only a receiver but equally a source of development and channelling of messages.

3.3.1.1(b) The receiver

In order to explain the concept of receiver based on the model, Nair and White (1999:59) point out two main considerations, which are:

1. that of examining the forces which lead to informed decision-making through an enabling process; and

2. the opportunity to express felt needs and utilise indigenous knowledge to shape socio-cultural change.

One of the roles of the receiver is to utilise the indigenous knowledge. This has to be based on an informed decision-making made possible by access to appropriate information. From a participatory communication perspective, the objective of development is to make it possible for the beneficiaries (the receiver as depicted in the model) to take charge of their lives by making appropriate data accessible to them. This is referred to as a process empowerment by Freire (in Nair & White 1999:60). They (Nair & White) refer to it as *enabling process or enablement*. It is called enabling process because it results in the attainment of skills or enabling “people to change themselves, their lifestyle, their environment, their perception about self, and their relationship to the socio-cultural, political context”, (Nair & White 1999:60).

This is also referred to as “liberative intent” of participatory communication because it is a process of conscientisation and awareness made possible by access to information (Nair & White 1999:60). They add that the liberative intent of communication can only take place if the beneficiaries are included in “defining their own goals and in development needs-based media which incorporate indigenous knowledge”.

3.3.1.1 (c) The channel

To explain channel as it applies to the transactional perspective, Nair and White (1999:61) use a sub-model which deals with the important elements regarding the flow of message through the channel. They term the sub-model a ‘message development model’ and use it to depict the relationship of the source and receiver as a *transaction* in which *dialogue* and *networking* are continuous activities.

The message development model shows different communication forms and the appropriate channels that are to be used to disseminate the messages contained in them. These communication forms and channels are influenced by socio-cultural context (Nair and White 1996:61). The availability of several communication forms and channels is advantageous to the transactional perspective because “When messages flow through several channels and as media forms are mixed, there is likely to be an increase in message clarity and reception” (Nair & White 1996:61).

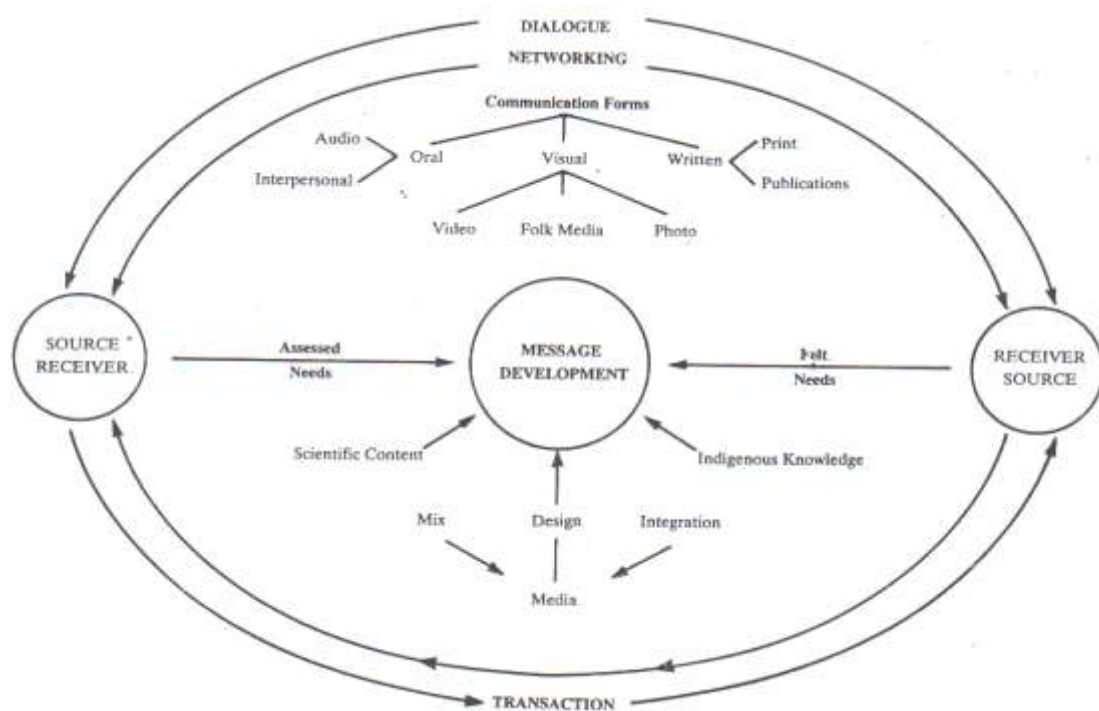


Figure 3.3: Nair and White's Message development model.

The message development model depicts *message development* and as can be seen in the diagram, this may be done by development planners in such a way that there is a balance between the *assessed needs* and *felt needs* of the development beneficiaries. As a participatory model, the determination of the needs (assessed needs and felt needs) takes place through dialogue. Below the circle indicating the message development in the diagram, there is an arrow indicating *scientific content* from the source and an arrow indicating *indigenous knowledge* from the receiver. This shows a joint supply and use of information by the source and the receiver in solving identified problems (Nair & White 1996:63).

The diagram shows a combination of communication forms which are *oral*, *visual* and *written* communication. The possibility of this type of combination, according to Nair and White (1996:63), "depends upon the delivery format, content to be delivered, user mode, and most importantly, on the context of delivery".

In a nutshell, the model characterises a communication transaction in which the source and receivers are both protagonists in the development and dissemination of message (Nair & White 1996:63).

A similar model, below in Figure 3.4, provides a more detailed explanation about the transactional perspective of communication. Although Steinberg (1997:19) uses the model to explain an ordinary communication process, the explanation provided accentuates the views embodied in Nair and White's (1996) transactional model.

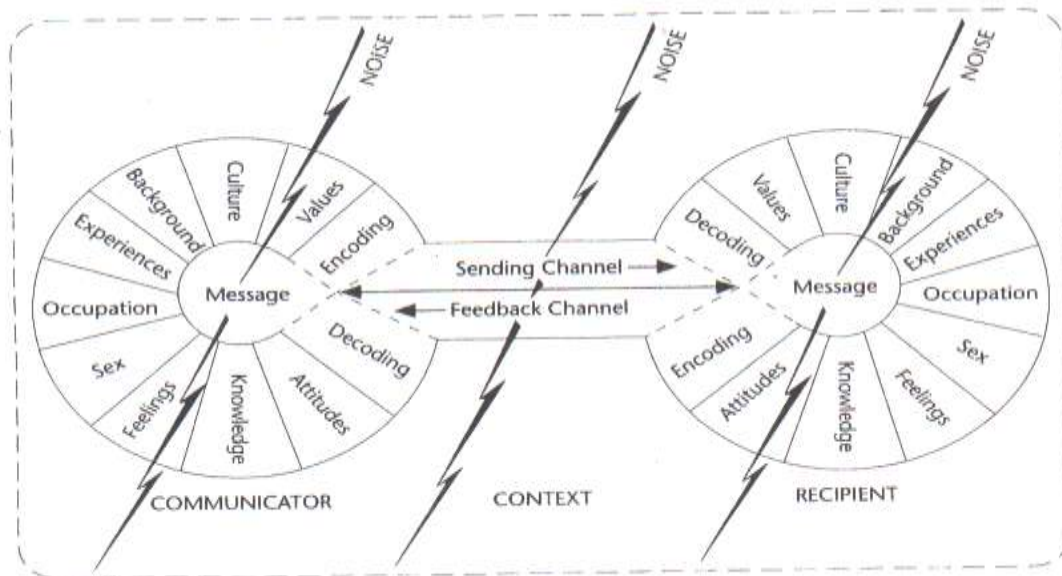


Figure 3.4: Transactional model of communication, Source: (Steinberg 1997:19).

In Figure 3.4, two opposite circles are used to represent source and receiver. In the centre of both circles is the message which comprises of the thought, idea, or feeling of the source and the receiver. Around the message in the circles are several blocks, used to indicate the source's and receiver's value, culture, background, occupation, gender, experience, feelings, knowledge and attitudes. According to Steinberg (1997:19), these are elements about the source and the receiver that could influence the "the meaning that is expressed and the meaning that is interpreted".

In the diagram, there is a bar between the circles and this represents the channel used in the dissemination of the message between the source and the receiver. The arrow pointing in both directions or to and from both circles shows, according Steinberg (1997:19), indicates that there is continuous flow of messages between the source and the receiver and both of them are, therefore, both source and receiver.

Around the communicators (source and receiver), there is an area which represents the context in which the process of communication is taking place. Contrary to Nair and White's (1996) model, Steinberg's diagram of transactional perspective shows that there are sources of noise at several places in the model. Noise, as stated by Steinberg (1997:19) can be external, internal and semantic, and all these types of noise can disrupt the meaning of communication intended. Though Steinberg's diagram is used to explain an ordinary communication process, the explanation and depiction of noise in the diagram is relevant to the consideration of communication in development communication process.

Noise, both semantic and internal, can affect development message because of the differences between the development planners and the beneficiaries. For example, being specialists in matters of rural development, development planners may use jargon and vocabularies beyond the comprehension of the beneficiaries. This is referred to as semantic noise because the meaning of the message may not be understood by the beneficiaries.

The same applies to the socio-cultural differences between the development planner and the beneficiaries, which may trigger internal indignation from either of the parties in communication and this can block attentive listening necessary in comprehension of message. Such internal indignation is called internal noise and it is represented in Steinberg's diagram indicating transactional perspective of communication. The diagram shows noise taking place at different stages of the communicative encounter.

Steinberg refers to this diagrammatic representation as a 'one-to-one model' that explains basic communication. He remarks that the view mirrored in the model can apply in a group situation. As shown in the diagram, the flow shows a two-way communication and it reflects an outcome of an encounter that is "determined by mutual involvement of the participants in negotiating the meaning of the message" (Steinberg 1997:19). Steinberg's diagrammatic representation of transactional communication shows a different perspective in which the notion of dialogue can be seen. In the next section, a perspective used by Paulo Freire to discuss the notion of dialogue and other views in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which are relevant to participatory communication is discussed.

3.4. PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED

The work of Paulo Freire (1993) has had an enormous influence in education and across the humanities and social sciences. Many participatory communication researchers – such as Mefalopulos (2003), Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009), Waisbord (2008) to name but a few – have relied on Freire to advance their works on participatory communication. Freire brings a fresh approach to understanding how participatory communication should be applied (Waisbord 2008:508), and how it can be used to achieve genuinely participatory approaches in development projects. The participatory approach is about giving voice to the voiceless, and this is what Freire has advocated in his seminal book *Pedagogy of Oppressed*.

His work was borne out of his concern for the underprivileged, especially those in developing countries. His work was not just a mere concern regarding the ontological issues of the oppressed, but goes deeper in seeking the best ways to make ‘humanisation’ a possibility for those who have been dehumanised. In his words, “And as an individual perceives the extent of dehumanisation, he or she may ask if humanisation is a viable possibility”. In sum, Freire (1993:35) describes the pedagogy of the oppressed as “the pedagogy of people engaged in the fight for their own liberation”. Thus, his desire is for ‘the oppressed’ everywhere, but more specifically in post-colonial societies is to liberate themselves from economic, socio-political domination.

His work is in summary the establishment of a dialogue between actors in a development project, (Gadotti 2001:viii). Cast in a pedagogical background, he asserts that both educators and learners can learn from each other and thus no one can arrogate an exclusive position to himself as the educator or the learner (Gaddotti 2001:viii). In a nutshell, the journey of learning is to be walked and explored together to find out “new dimension and possibilities about realities in life. Education becomes a shared and ongoing process of training” (Gadotti 2001:viii). Freire’s teaching is considered important in participatory communication practice because it sees the beneficiaries and the development practitioners as equal partners in the implementation of a development project.

Freire contends that oppression causes dehumanisation, which colonialism has left in its trail. Dehumanisation not only undermines the humanity of the oppressed but that of the oppressor. It takes somebody that is ‘fully human’ to recognise that his

act of oppression is bad and a further indulgent in such act is not only deemed an act of injustice onto another but an act in which he/she dehumanises him/herself (Freire 1993:26). Essentially, Freire's work calls for respect for the personhood of any human being (Servaes n.d.:78) because it is only when you respect the personhood of others that you will be able to engage in a dialogue in an empathetic manner with them.

For Freire, the colonial approach to education is simply a tool to perpetuate the oppressor/oppressed binary because evident in the colonial education is the race and gender hegemonies that characterised the colonial elite's mentality. The colonial education has succeeded in instilling in the oppressed an acceptance of the oppressive nature of the oppressed – even though it is repugnant to them. The oppressed certainly realise that it is only freedom that can make them exist as human beings. Freire explains:

The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting them; between human solidarity or alienation; between following prescriptions or having choices; between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors, between speaking out or being silent, castrated in their power to create and re-create, their power to transform the world. This is the tragic dilemma of the oppressed which their education must take into account (1993:30).

For Freire, education should be seen as a pedagogy that must be forged “*with*, not *for* the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity” (1993:30). Here Freire stresses education where teacher and student learn from each other but the teacher has to take step to ensure his involvement exposes his students to what they can do to help themselves. In other words, education should involve process or a praxis which triggers a “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (Freire 1970:33). Freire's work is enshrined in a participatory development practice that is pro-poor, especially given his advocacy for an educational approach in which the teacher and the students are constantly changing role in search for a common and shared goal.

Freire's work is a resonating participatory communication practice because it provides a framework where all actors can work together based on the prevailing contexts of the project. Both the weak and strong work together in identifying their challenges and solutions to them. This, according to Servaes (n.d.:80), is a

process where people gain “an understanding of their situation, confidence and an ability to change that situation”. Freire states that “[t]he oppressed can overcome the contradiction in which they are caught only when this perception enlists them in the struggle to free themselves” (1993:31). He also refers this as “critical awareness of oppression” (Freire 1993:33), or an awareness and acknowledgement of a problem and a willingness to confront it. Similarly, a study done by Xavier Institute in 1980 cited by Gadotti (2001:11) suggests that participatory development should be anchored on the belief that people are capable of knowing what is good for them and thus are able free themselves from their impediments if given opportunity. The study notes that this is only possible when a process is in place to help the development planner to identify the strength of the community and how to listen to those with whom he works in the community.

A central theme of his book is a dialogic approach which is problem-posing as opposed to the traditional or banking approach education (Freire 1993:52-67) that is lifeless and static. In the banking approach, Freire explains that the teacher treats the students as empty vessels into which he/she can deposit knowledge and the students are in most cases passive in the learning process. On the contrary, in the dialogic approach, the students discover reality through critical thinking and free communication, which enables the students and teacher to be active in the learning process.

Dialogic education is a means of attaining social cohesion in the community (Freire 1993:164). Some of the elements that characterise a cohesive community are cooperation and mutual decision-making and these are important for the realisation of the participatory focus of any community project such as the Nguni Cattle Project which is the subject of this study. It is also one of the reasons scholars such as Jan Servaes sees Freire’s work as having a principal influence on the practice of communication for development. Servaes remarks that “[t]hough Freire's theory of dialogical communication and action is based on group dialogue rather than the mass media, there is a sense in which this theory can apply to almost any aspect of human communication, in a truly participatory manner” (Servaes n.d :73).

There is no doubt that there is a huge gap in terms of social status, education and sometimes wealth between the development planners and members of the

community they work. Consequently, Freire states that for dialogue to take place between two disparate group, there must be humility, especially from one who seems to be more advantaged than others in the relationship. According to Freire, “dialogue cannot exist without humility ...Dialogue as the encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of them) lack humility” (Freire 1993:71). For dialogue to take place, the people with whom you interact must be treated with respect rather than with sympathy. This essentially means empathising – seeing things not only from your perspective but also from theirs. Dialogue also means admitting one’s shortcomings. In this regard, Freire notes: “How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own?” He goes further to say: “Men and women who lack humility (or have lost it) cannot come to the people, cannot be their partners *or jointly work with them in their community*” (Freire 1993:71, emphasis added).

Dialogue is about eliciting solutions to the problems community members have, and this is done by dialoguing with them about their views. This helps in knowing the beneficiaries’ worldview with respect to the situation they are in. Arguing in similar fashion, Freire (1993:77) states that an education approach that is not critically aware of the situation of those it is meant to serve is as good as a traditional or banking approach to education.

Dialogue, according to Freire, enables all stakeholders to engage in an exchange that is not coloured by their preconceptions, biases and assumptions. The stakeholders, in other words, recognise in dialogue the negative influence of their assumptions and preconceptions. Dialogic praxis is fundamental in the consideration of participatory approach as it is found “upon love, humility, and faith” hence “dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence” (1993:72).

Education results in the acquisition of knowledge following an understanding of the subject covered. In the context Freire discusses education in the colonised societies, education should be seen as an instrument of emancipation so that the oppressed are able to recognise and acknowledge their problems. Earlier in his book, Freire (1993:30) refers this as pedagogy that highlights “oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and from that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for liberation.” There is a lesson to be

learnt here in advancing the use of a development project as a catalyst among a rural population. Stating it in the manner Freire has it, it means the development planner should facilitate a process where poverty and its causes are identified and acknowledged with a willingness to overcome it.

As stated previously, in problem-posing education the teacher-student's relationship does not confer an absolute authority on the teacher because the students are able to participate actively and make suitable contributions in the process of learning. As such, the student's contribution is recognised in a sense of being treated as capable of contributing to solutions to problems besetting him as opposed to being fed with solutions to his problem. Teachers are able to do this in an approach that favours empathy instead of sympathy; an approach where there is love and patience.

From the foregoing, an educational approach which is monological and dictatorial will not include students in the process of critically engaging in the social and political reality that characterises their existence. This also speaks of a participatory development approach which is planner-centred and one-way, and certainly excludes the beneficiaries from critically reflecting on their prevailing social and political reality.

The banking concept of education as explained by Freire is an antithesis of what participatory communication stands for. The teacher is considered as an all-knowing solution giver and opposite of students who know nothing (Freire 1993:53). Education is supposed to be a process of inquiry but it is used to project ignorance onto others. Freire (1993:53) considers this to be "a characteristic of the ideology of oppression". This is still how many development planners see the communities benefiting from their development projects. Through their management of participatory development projects, many development planners patronise other stakeholders, especially the direct beneficiaries of their projects.

Development planners are supposed to facilitate the stakeholders' involvement in their projects by making sure their ingenuities are brought to the fore in the implementation of the project. For some development planners with banking concept frame of mind, their project beneficiaries are to be told what to do instead of helping them to develop the necessary critical consciousness to understand the

reality of their problems and bring about solution to them (Freire 1993:54). The banking concept of education is decried further by Freire because it serves as a means of making the student adaptable, manageable and passive, and they thus remain dominated (1993:54-55).

The opposite of banking education is problem-posing education and these two education practices are polar opposite of each other, according to Freire. Banking education is anti-dialogue, regards students as object of assistance, hinders creativity and denies “people their ontological and historical vocation of becoming fully human” (Freire 1993:64-65). Problem-posing education on the other hand, is dialogical, inspires true reflection and inquiry and affirms people as beings who are aware of the imperfection and how to deal with it.

Freire’s criticism of the banking concept of education and his preference for dialogue or problem-posing education does not discount the fact that the development planner has a role to play to advance the desired goals of his project. He argues that as leading person in the project, the development planner has a responsibility to coordinate and provides direction but not at the expense of denying the beneficiaries of the project “action and reflection (praxis) directed at the structures to be transformed” (1993:107).

Action and reflection or praxis, according to Freire must take place in a two-way direction between the development planner and the beneficiaries or other stakeholders of the project he leads. He argues that a development planner that is truly committed in bringing change to the community cannot see his action and reflection taking place without the action and reflection of others he works with (Freire 1993:107). Anything short of this will be ill-conceived action and reflection or one based on the worldview of the dominant elites.

Manipulation is one form of participation and it is a concept Freire deals with extensively in his work. He argues that manipulation is used to make the masses conform to their objectives and this becomes easy with a naïve population (Freire 1993:128). As stated earlier, the development planner in, all respects, is in a world of his own in that he is more knowledgeable, and in a better position socially than most of the beneficiaries of his project. This makes the people more pliable for him

to manipulate, if his participatory objective is to manipulate the people to look as if the participatory objectives of his development are being followed.

Manipulation is carried in the community in the form of pacts, which the masses are meant to sign in order to ensure conformity. Though the pacts may look like a dialogic instrument as it can be argued that it is a product of mutual agreement, Freire (1993:128) remarks that “In reality ... these pacts are not dialogue, because their true objectives are determined by the unequivocal interest of the dominant elites”. Manipulation is used to blur reality, to hoodwink and “to anaesthise” the people, so that reality does arouse thinking that will make them to go against the intention of their manipulator (Freire 1993:130).

Antithetical to dialogue is what Freire refers to as cultural invasion. By cultural invasion, Freire states that “the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group, in disrespect of the latter’s potentialities; they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression” (1993:133). Cultural invasion is an anti-dialogical way of preventing the invader from seeing or grasping reality. The invaders do these by imposing their reality or worldview upon those they have invaded so that “they begin to respond to the values, the standard, and goals of the invaders” (Freire 1993:134).

Everything about the invaded is looked down upon. They are primitive, they are their own problems and they need to catch up with reality – reality defined by the invader. All these are done in order to make the invaded feel and appear inferior so that they might recognise and respect the superiority of their invaders (Freire 1993:134). Emphasising what becomes of the invaded, Freire states that:

The values of the latter thereby become the pattern of the former. The more invasion is accentuated and those invaded are alienated from the spirit of their own culture and from themselves, the more the latter want to be like the invader: to walk like them, dress like them, talk like them (Freire 1993:134).

Contrary to cultural invasion is cultural synthesis, which is a “deliberate form of action which operates upon the social structure, either with the objective of preserving that structure or of transforming it” (Freire 1993:160). This, in other words, means the development planner does not go into a community and seek to replace its culture with his own, and does not see the people’s culture as antithetical to his objectives but as a base to work with the people. From a

participatory communication point of view, cultural synthesis means the development planner does not go to the community “to teach or to transmit or to give anything, but rather to learn, with the people, about the people’s world” (Freire 1993:161). What this indicates is that the development planner works with the people in an integrative manner as co-protagonists of the action needed to transform their world. As opposed to cultural invasion in which those invaded do not see beyond what their invaders want them see, in cultural synthesis, there are no imposed views but critical analysis of reality in conjunction with the people (Freire 1993:162).

The solution in working with rural people lies in cultural synthesis because it means acknowledging people’s views. According to Freire (1993:162), “Cultural synthesis does not deny the differences between the two views, indeed, it is based on these differences. It does not deny the invasion of one by the other, but affirms the undeniable support each gives to the other”.

Freire proposition of cooperation differs from cultural invasion. He remarks that cooperation is a feature of dialogue and leads people to focus on “reality which mediates and which – posed as a problem – challenges them” (Freire 1993:149). This is also contingent on trust in terms of an encounter in which the development planner and the beneficiaries have to work as co-subjects (Freire 1993:151). Cooperation of the beneficiaries must flow from their humility and shared effort, and this is linked to their ability to organise themselves as group to transform their situation. The extent to which communication processes are dialogical depends on the degrees of transparency, trust, and synergy present in the particular situation. (The consideration of transparency, trust and synergy is very important and it is discussed below.)

It is not uncommon in many participatory development projects to have high degree of cross-cultural differences in terms of differences in language, social status, belief and norms between the development planners and other stakeholders in the project. In some cases, the differences are also noticed among the stakeholders. These differences influence participation in the development projects. The type of communication used in managing cultural differences determines the success or failure of the relationship that will evolve. One-way, monological communication which emphasises cultural differences is common in a

development project where there are differences between the actors involved (Matson & Montagu 1967, in Hart 2003:iii-iv). On the other hand, dialogical communication is a feature of a relationship where the need to overcome cross-cultural obstacles is paramount (Matson & Montagu 1967, in Hart 2003:iv).

As argued by Hart (2003:iv), dialogue in terms of a development project must be built on trust among the participants, transparent communication and synergistic learning across cultures of the people involved. In other words, the degree to which these factors (trust, transparency and synergy) are used also determines whether communication can be classified as monological or dialogical. When these are used in high degree, it shows communication is dialogical but when they are in low degree, it shows communication is monological.

Transparency promotes dialogue when it is used in every aspect of a development project – from conceptualisation to implementation (Hart 2002:30-31). In the context of implementation of a development project, it means open communication and a willingness to divulge information to other parties in the project. It also means commitment to identify possible challenges among other stakeholders, and then to work to mitigate the challenges together or to identify the roles each and every stakeholder will play to mitigate the challenges. According to Hart (2003:31), the different actors involved in a development project need to comprehend the goals, ideas and strategies for the project and this makes communication dialogical because there is an open flow of communication regarding the project.

Trust is variously referred to as an element of dialogue by Freire (1993). For example, he states that to achieve reflection and action (praxis) “it is necessary to trust in the oppressed and in their ability to reason. Whoever lacks trust will fail to initiate (or will abandon) dialogue, reflection, and communication, and will fall into using slogans, communiqués, monologues and instructions” (Freire 1993:48). In addition, Freire also refers to trust in the following sense: “A real humanist can be identified more by his trust in the people, which engages him in their struggle, than by a thousand actions in their favor without that trust” (Freire 1993:42).

In most cases, the development planner and all other stakeholders in a development project come from diverse background. To sustain relationship in such a diverse background, mutual trust is required. This is not always easy as the

diverse background comes to the fore in the form of not being able to identify with one another (Hart 2003:31). Trust is an important element in participatory communication as the development planner may not be able to relate with the local community of his project if the members of the community do not trust him. The buy-in of the local population is thus important and this can only take place through dialogue.

Sometimes most development planners find out that there is a big chasm separating them from the local group(s) they are working with. In this case, communication that is possible will be monological in the form of instruction and often passed through a local person in the community in the form of interpreter. However, Basette (2004) and Hart (2003:31) argue that dialogical communication cannot be avoided because the development planner needs to know the local population and this takes place by committing extra effort to establishing relationships with them. In the process of establishing relationships, trust is required and it involves transparent communication. As stated by Freire (1993:148), cooperation is a fundamental characteristic of dialogical communication. He argues further that “trust is basic to dialogue” but results from an encounter in which people involved are in cooperation. This, in summary, means people can only be involved in cooperative action when there is trust. Cooperative actions are central to the success of a participatory project.

Following trust as an element of dialogical communication is synergy and this means, in the context of relationship in a development project, working together. Working together means cooperative efforts and this again speaks to the requirement of trust as discussed above. Synergy is important in a participatory development project as it is needed to build the strength of the diverse population in the form of a team (Hart 2003:32) to realise the objective of the project. The diversity of the stakeholders is in a way a blessing if it is managed synergistically so that the strengths of the different group are harnessed to solve the challenges of the project.

According to Adler (2002:116) synergy is an approach that acknowledges “both the similarities and differences among the cultures that compose a global organization and suggest that we neither ignore nor minimize cultural diversity, but rather view it as a resource in designing and developing organizational systems”.

3.5 CRITICISMS, CHALLENGES AND SHORTCOMINGS OF PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

Although the participatory approach is a celebrated method in development projects, there are development scholars and practitioners who criticise it for some of its inherent weaknesses. These are considered in this section.

Rogers' (1996:230) extensive elucidation of the nature of participatory practices in development shows how the participatory approach leaves itself open to criticism. Rogers takes two development projects as examples, and argues that in both cases there is bound to be a change in the level of participation as the programme progresses.

In the first example, the development agents occupy the centre stage in terms of deciding the nature of the programme and they then afterward invite the beneficiaries to join in the programme. Rogers (1996:230) argues that in this scenario, the nature of participation progresses from a situation where the development agents act as leaders and the beneficiaries as followers, "through a stage where both partners will be more or less equal, to a final stage where the wishes and the decisions of the participants will take precedence". Here there is no equality in the participation of the development agents and beneficiaries in the development project given the prominent role played by the development agents in the initial stage of the development.

Alternatively, this scenario can take place in a reverse direction. Rogers (1996:230) points out that in this instance that initially, the development project is driven by the aspirations and desires of the beneficiaries. Although the beneficiaries' wishes and intentions led to the origin of the development project, the development agents continue to facilitate and actualise the project. In this example, the wishes and the intentions of the beneficiaries dominate at the initial stage of the development project, which then moves to a stage where the development agents and beneficiaries share control equally, through to the final stage where the envisaged goal of the development agents is realised.

Both scenarios described are characterised differently in the nature of participation by the development agents and beneficiaries. However, the development agents' role is equally prominent in each case, and they could be regarded as the catalysts

that get the development project going until the project reaches its desired goals. Both cases show that it is not easy to achieve the same level of participation by the parties involved in development projects.

White (1999) agrees with Rogers, citing the World Bank's style of development programme. According to White, such a 'community participation' begins with the reconnaissance stage where "outsiders gather information on the community, identification, where the beneficiaries needs are assessed; preparation, when the community is consulted on its role in the project; and the implementation of the project" (White 1999:34).

In this practice, typical of a dichotomous hierarchical and grassroots development project, decision-making power is never given to the beneficiaries "except to decide what their role might be in an already designed programme" (White 1999:34). This is also a reflection of an exogenous approach which does not seek the input of the beneficiaries in the design of the development project but they (the beneficiaries) are only recognised because their local power structure is required in the implementation stage (White 1999:33).

Rogers (1996:232) also tries to discover how it is possible for participatory practice to succeed in a development programme where there are participants who are non-participatory in nature. Rogers points out that participatory developmental success requires skills and attitudes such as "wide bases of perception [...], an ability to analyse, means to communicate" and a "high level of consciousness" (Rogers 1996:232-233). Beneficiaries who have these skills and attitudes are able to plan and execute development programmes on their own in a self-determining way. Thus, this then implies that they have no need for development agents (Rogers 1996:233).

Melkote and Steeves (2006:339) believe that participatory development practice is certainly a means to an end. They argue that in most participatory practices, people are persuaded to participate in development activities after the solutions to the envisaged problems are selected by development agents. They also describe the participation of the beneficiaries as directed participation, especially when the purpose is to obtain extensive cooperation in a project meant to boost food production. In sum, Melkote and Steeves (2006:339) state that people at

grassroots level are usually “co-opted in activities that, in the end, would make consumers of them for industrial goods and services”. Thus, participation is a means to an end –where people depend on a situation controlled by the elites.

Melkote and Steeves believe that the ideal purpose of a participatory development project should be a conscientisation of people about the unequal social, political and economic structures in their community. This will place them in a better position to perceive their needs, “identify constraints to addressing these needs, and plans to overcome problems” (Melkote & Steeves 2006:339).

Participatory development programmes usually involve two stages. In the first stage, similar to the description given by Melkote and Steeves (2006:339) above, the development agent is solely responsible for putting in place the steps to be followed in the implementation of a development project, before encouraging or inviting the beneficiaries to be a part of the project. The second stage is where the participants are already involved in the project and much of the control of the project is in their hands (Roger 1999:235). While Melkote and Steeves (2006:339) describe the first stage as an opportunity used by development agents as a means to end, Michener (1998:2106) believes it is open to abuse as this is the time when the beneficiaries are often used as cheap labour to do the tasks identified in the project. In addition, according to White (1999:36), the beneficiaries “are given little or no opportunity for input, neither in planning nor in implementation of a project”. In other words, the beneficiaries’ involvement in the project is simply to carry out the tasks given to them. Their input is not sought during the planning and implementation of the project, hence the developers may miss the opportunity to get the best from the beneficiaries by “limiting their function and by underrating their abilities and their commitment” (Rogers 1996:235).

On the other hand, poor results may very well occur where the development agent expects too much from the beneficiaries too early in the project. According to Rogers (1996:235), this happens when the development agent judges the performance of the beneficiaries very favourably or thinks that the beneficiaries can perform as well as he can. A high expectation of this nature by development agent is fundamentally flawed as it is based on poor assessment of the beneficiaries’ situation. However, Rogers asserts that most development agents have many years of exposure and “have built up bodies of experience, banks of concepts [...]

and jargons, understanding of relationships, groups of skills, sets of attitudes and values, all of which will be different from the knowledge, concepts, terminology, understanding, skills, attitudes and values of those we are working with” (Rogers 1996:235).

Confusion arises in a participatory development project because of problems that consist not only of what needs to be done, but the extent of the involvement of the beneficiaries in solving their problems. Thus, both parties (the development planner and the beneficiaries) may “slow [the] pace of coming to agreement” (Rogers 1996:235). Rogers believes it is important not to “expect too little of those we work with, but equally we must not expect too much” (1996:235).

A participant-requested development agenda is regarded as a more advanced type of participation as opposed to an agency-designed agenda (Rogers 1996:237). This type of development takes place when the beneficiaries set the agenda and goals and the development agent simply drives the process. This may work better for the beneficiary community because, as pointed out by Rogers (1996:237), the beneficiaries will be more interested in tackling problems they have identified than those identified by development agents. In addition, when the initiative is driven by the development agent and the beneficiaries have simply been asked to be part of the development, the process could be exposed to reluctant participants (Rogers 1996:146). The participant-requested development agenda “seems best pursued with groups which are already motivated and reasonably equipped in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding, in other words, with groups which no longer need development because they can manage to a large extent on their own” (Rogers 1996:237).

Groups meeting these criteria are difficult to find in rural communities or in poor urban areas that are the usual target of development project. As the data in Chapter Seven will show, most rural communities think of the development agents (the NGOs, agricultural extension officers, etc.) as bearers of the answers to their development problems. They know that their communities need development, but they are aware that they cannot chart the course of developing their communities. This is also attributable to the fact that many rural communities are usually illiterate and unskilled, and therefore unable to produce realisable goals and workable

agendas for their development. It should be noted that this description fits a significant percentage of the beneficiaries of the project this study has investigated.

The participant-requested or participant-led participatory development programme cannot really escape the control of the development agent as his/her active participation is needed to sustain the momentum required for the success of the programme. The beneficiaries' inability to meaningfully participate in development decision-making can be attributed to what Servaes and Jacobson (1999:119) refer to as "self-deprecation". The hierarchical structure in most developing nations, where rural people see themselves as occupying the bottom rung, lead them to expect solutions to their problems to come from above (Servaes & Jacobson 1999:119). Servaes and Jacobson point out that the rural communities fall into a state of self-deprecation because the social system in which they live causes them to believe that they are 'good for nothing' and incapable of learning. Self-deprecation by rural dwellers is described by Narula and Pearce (1986, cited in Servaes & Jacobson 1999:120) as *learned dependency* or what I would prefer to term a *dependency syndrome*.

The starting point of any development project is premised on the needs of the beneficiaries (see Figure 3.3 above), and these are both the assessed and felt needs. The term 'assessed needs' refers to the development agents assumptions of what problems the beneficiaries wish to have addressed by the development project. 'Felt needs' are the needs the beneficiaries actually want the development project to meet.

The manner in which the beneficiaries' needs are determined in a development project is criticised by Rogers (1996:148), who argues that the process cannot be objective regardless of who is in charge. Rogers (1996:148) states, somewhat philosophically, that:

A need can only be established by reference to an outside standard; it cannot be validated internally. There are some who argue that individuals can determine that they lack (and therefore need) something for themselves, but such a judgement can only be made by relating themselves to someone or to some earlier time. One cannot know one 'need' what one has never had or known about.

Fundamental to Rogers' argument is that needs, either assessed or felt, have an exogenous influence as indicated in the Nair and White (1996) transactional

perspective of development communication above. Assessed needs, in terms of the transactional perspective, are outsider-perceived and this has “a real danger of misjudgement and of imposing externally perceived needs on local community” (Rogers 1996:149). To mitigate the effect of this, Nair and White (1996:63) suggest that there should be congruence between the felt needs and assessed needs and communication in this regard must take place through dialogue.

Leeuwis (2006:254) argues that a participatory development project that is of exogenous origin, cannot guarantee the full participation of the beneficiaries. In real terms, development planners have to go through project proposal and even tendering procedures to get funding for their development project (Leeuwis 2006:254). This negates a participatory process, because even if the beneficiary community is informed of the intended project and their input is sought, it is difficult to quantify how full participation of the community will be possible during the proposal writing process and/or tendering process. Leeuwis concludes that at the “preparatory stage of the projects [...] usually happens largely behind the back of the prospective beneficiaries.”

Issues such as the goals of the project, budgets for the project, methodology for participation and the development process, time planning, evaluation criteria and procedures, etc., are addressed in the preliminary stage and often do not receive the active participation of the beneficiaries (Leeuwis 2006:254).

Another reason why full participation of the members of community may not be possible in a development project is the socio-cultural and educational differences among community's members. Castello and Braun (2006:41) highlight these differences as challenges to the understanding of participation and the concomitant modes of communication. In their view, the level of understanding of the participatory communication process will vary as a result of these differences among community members and the negative effect of this will have to be mitigated by adapting participatory tools to meet the identified differences among the community members. In order to do this, Castello and Braun (2006:41) suggest that:

Communication habits have to be carefully observed and the communication situation has to be arranged in a way that people can build trust and feel free enough to speak about their deepest concerns, especially in the case of vulnerable groups and people perceived to be of lower social status.

Castello and Braun (2006:41) believe that the socio-cultural and educational differences among the beneficiaries could be a problem to participatory development. However, Mody (2005:157) agrees with this assessment, and posits that the problem may lie in the difference in the level of education between the development planners and the beneficiaries. Mody asserts that successful communication occurs more readily between individuals who are alike or *homophilous*³, than between individuals who are *heterophilous*. Mody believes that it is doubtful that communication between individuals who have educational differences, will be successful. Indeed, Mody poses the following question:

What are chances of communication occurring when the sender is an educated upper middle class media producer who lives in the city and the receiver is an agricultural labourer in a village with a couple of years of primary schooling, strong religious beliefs, and no contact with the urban world?

Mody states that the chance for communication to occur is very slim. In her opinion, this has been a recurring problem, especially in the mass media production of messages which are sent out as if the receivers are homophilous (2005:157). In terms of development projects, the development planners are heterophilous because their backgrounds usually fit that of individuals who live in urban areas, have university degrees and are middle class citizens, whose worldviews are certainly going to be different from their project's beneficiaries. These differences have been cited as inhibitory process in development because the production of messages by the development planners may be "inconsistent with the receiver's language and existing beliefs that then go unheeded" in the production of the message (Mody 2005:157).

As stated by Mody (2005:28), media producers can mitigate the challenges posed by these differences, by studying the target audience and presenting a draft of the message to them to gauge whether or not the message reflects their needs and customs. This usually happens in the form of choosing a sample, representing the larger community or audience, to validate the message. It may, therefore, be concluded that the opportunity for maximum participation advocated by scholars, such as Leeuwis (2006:251), is limited in the production of the message.

³ Homophily is the degree to which interactive pairs, e.g. the sender-receiver pair, are similar in certain attributes, such as attitudes, knowledge, behaviours, etc (Mody 2005:157). Heterophily is the opposite of the homophily.

However, using representatives from the community to validate the message may counter the real intention of a participatory practice, especially if the representative is part of the power structure of the community. Mody (2006:28) points out one of the inherent dangers in such a case. This, as pointed out by Mody, simply means that “the power structure will instruct media producers to use this methodology to package their agenda in the terminology of the people”. This may work in advertising communication but it is not sufficient to lead to informed participation necessary for “self-sustaining national development” (Mody 2006:28).

Ramanamma (1993:160) reports that media professionals believe that as they are specialists, they have the know-how to be able to produce and disseminate messages to any community without dialogue with the people of the community. He calls this ‘professionalisation’ of media production, and he calls for a ‘deprofessionalisation’ to accommodate a participatory process. He states:

In order to achieve participation, consultation, cooperation and effective mobilization of people, the media system would need to assist in establishing a sense of community and would need a desire to resolve the issues concerning them (Ramanamma 1993:160).

To realise this, Ramanamma suggests that the media professionals should strive to make media more accessible to the beneficiaries, who in most cases are rural people, through the deprofessionalisation of the media production. This will remove the rigid structures in place, and allow the beneficiaries to participate in the production of messages concerning themselves.

Although the discussion here is about media production, a field that requires technical expertise, it is instructive to note that the issues raised apply to development planners as well. These planners are specialists in their field, and may assume that they also have the required expertise to design development messages for their beneficiaries without going through a consultation process. Some participatory development practices are similar to what Castello and Braun (2006:42) describe as participatory manipulation. They note that:

Communication among groups with different communication skills can lead to participatory manipulation where groups with better communication skills and of perceived higher social status can dominate weaker ones.

In a hierarchically structured society, the beneficiaries, who are usually at the lowest level, are vulnerable to manipulation, especially in the light of the

dependency syndrome explained earlier in this study. Participatory manipulation applies to hierarchical and centralised organisations, where highly placed individuals are not open to the use of the participatory approach, as they fear the loss of control and power (Castello & Braun 2006:42). This is the reason it is not unusual in centralised organisations for their management to use the top-down communication approach as it enables them to block views contrary to theirs.

Top-down communication approach cannot be completely rule out in participatory practices. The assessment of communication practices in most participatory development projects has been found to follow a top-down approach, despite the theoretical argument that suggests otherwise (Chambers 1999:8). One of the reason this has remained a feature of participatory approach, according to Chambers, has to do with “personal orientation” of the development agents, hence the actual process of participation goes through routine methods and engineered consensus (Chambers 1999:8). Although, Chambers does not provide an example to illustrate his assertion, his viewpoint is echoed by White (1999:15) in her work entitled *Participation: Walk the Talk!*

White (1999:16) declares that “Authentic participation of grassroots people may still be more of an ideal than reality”. She concludes that there is no doubt that participatory development practice has been widely acknowledged by development planner as the preferred option in handling decision-making and other activities, but this has remained an acknowledgement. Acknowledgement a need does not actually mean steps are being taken to implement a change, rather it means it is simply being talked about it. In the case of participatory practice or “to ‘walk the talk’, it requires “commitment to *make* it happen, and to possess the savvy and practice to see it happen is not easy” (White 1999:16).

Moreover, the ethos of development agencies has also been cited as a challenge to successful participatory practice. For example, White tells of an anthropologist who complained that it was not possible to carry out participatory practices with the beneficiaries of the project he was involved in because of the working methods of his sponsoring agency. According to the anthropologist, the institutional practices and the reality on the field are different, but any deviation from the institutional practices could imperil the project (White 1999:16-17). Given the field worker’s experience, White (1999:17) argues that the deep conviction about the catalysing

force of the participatory process is not enough. Rather, it requires both the involvement of the beneficiaries and a fundamental shift in attitude on the part of the sponsoring agencies. White (1999:17) goes on to describe the sponsoring agency's emphasis as antithetical to *walking the talk* of participatory practices, because its approach is "economic driven" rather than "human driven". Thus, White's examples highlight the fact that many sponsoring agencies see their involvement in development from an economic standpoint, governed by the need to make a profit.

White's narration also reveals that the various stakeholders in development have different perceptions regarding development approach and this plays out in the process of implementing activities aimed at realising the development goals. In this regard, Kiiti (1999), as cited by White (1999:17), observes that a development sponsoring agency pays lip service to "differences in values and philosophy between the funding agency, the implementing agency, and local people in participating communities" and does not take real cognisance of these differences.

Servaes and Jacobson (1999:114) provide another perspective why *walking the talk* may not be as easy as it sounds. They believe that participatory communication is a concept that is widely upheld theoretically but practically, "most scholars admit [...] that participation in communication hardly exists, except, in a very limited way, in a number of small localized experiments". They contend that the translation of academically-conceived participatory policies and strategies into real-world realities is problematic because there is a sharp contrast between what the academics theorise and the situation in the field.

Besides the challenge of translating theory into realities in the field, time is also a challenge in the execution of most development projects. Many development agencies want to see change or realise the objectives of their projects within a short period of time. Consequently, time frame for implementation of the project is often limited or short. This has been considered as an unfavourable practice as participatory development requires a longer time to plan and implement in order to bear fruit (McKee 1989:40).

This view is supported by Servaes and Jacobson (1999:114) who state that development organisations are usually in a rush to demonstrate positive results in

the community they are operating. This helps to explain why, in most cases, development planners are faced with policy guidelines that emphasise “quantitative target, [...] results over process, ends over means” and this affects participatory practice negatively (Servaes & Jacobson 1999:114). Commenting further on this, Servaes and Jacobson (1999:115) add that:

[...] even though when people authentically participate and are thus committed to an idea, they can often mobilize an astonishing variety of resources to realize it, it is certainly not the most expedient or easily assessable route from this ‘quick-and-visible-results’ perspective because it takes time, money, and effort to consult the people.

From the beneficiaries’ point of view, participatory practice is also regarded as an expensive undertaking (Leeuwis 2006:253). Leeuwis states that it is common to see beneficiaries complaining of time and energy, which they do not have to realise the objective of the project they are involved in. Participatory practice may suffer from lack of dedication because of time, especially in communities in which the beneficiaries are involved in different development projects or economic activities. In such communities, Leeuwis remarks that the beneficiaries may not be willing to invest the required time and effort without being rewarded for their efforts or time channelled away from other priorities (Leeuwis 2006:253).

Linked to time is the question of financial resource, which is required for training and buying of equipment in order to be able to use some participatory communication tools. This may constitute some challenges in terms of high initial investment, training and funds to implement participatory development project (Castello & Braun 2006:41). The issue of fund is also a concern as it may affect intellectual capital necessary for “the participatory process involving larger groups of players with different perceptions and interests” (2006:41).

In addition to this, the existence of different authorities in some traditional communities may work against participatory development practice. In many communities, there are different authorities, either because of the communities’ political structure or authority based on ethnic line. In some of these communities the question of authority is not easily delineated, as there may be more than two or three centres of authorities whose vested interest cannot be ignored by development agents. Foster (1973:121) poses the following questions, to which there are no simple answers:

In carrying out technical aid programs, how does the technician identify the leader with whom he must work? Where does he find the people who have the informal or informal power, the prestige and influence, who will be instrumental in deciding whether work is to go forward? Are the obvious political leaders the best bet? What is the role of the religious leaders? Are there informal leaders whose power can be known only after familiarity with the community? Is it best to work through established leaders, whatever their position, in spite of the fact that they are often conservative because of vested interest, or can new leaders be found or created?

While the questions asked by Foster (1973) may not be easily answered, they do point to the fact that in communities with these multiple authorities, the development agents will have a lot to contend with in terms power and authority. This may be a dire situation as the notion of unequal power or authority does not favour participatory development practice. In the observation of Servaes and Jacobson (1999:115) real participatory development focuses on equitable economic and political power. This may be a problem in some communities as those in authority may not yield their power base for inclusivity and equality required to implement a participatory development project. In other words, Servaes and Jacobson (1999:116) maintain that “it is not in the interest of dominant classes, both national and international levels, to implement policies and plans that would substantially improve the conditions of the lower classes”.

Servaes and Jacobson's (1999) argument can also be seen from the perspective of vested interest of few individuals in the community. These individuals according to Bordenave (1989 in Servaes and Jacobson 1999:116) own the means of production and wield both political and economic clout to be able stand in the way of any of development effort that will reduce their source of influence in the community. At community level, such vested interest may be in the form of moneylenders who may oppose programme such as low-interest government-managed credit programme, and merchants who may oppose any development programme which offers alternative cheap wares in the community (Foster 1973:117). Many rural communities have different factions and each of these factions has its vested interest to protect, which may be antithetical to the development interest of the community (Kennedy 1984, cited by Servaes & Jacobson 1999:119).

Politics often plays a role in factionalism, with the various sections of the rural communities belonging to different political parties. This type of situation can manifest in partisan opposition to a development project that has been approved

by the other faction. Commenting on factionalism in the rural communities, Foster (1973:116) notes that “if the members of one faction show interest in a new program, the members of another faction immediately declare against it, without attempting to weigh its true merit”. Factionalism runs deep in many rural communities and it is usually cast in terms of political divides or personalities, who mobilise resources to fuel schism, thus hindering participatory development process in the rural communities. A community that is inherently factional is not a good environment for participatory development practice, as it will be all but impossible to reach consensus from the community members and the development agents.

Referring to levels of participation (see section 3.2.3), Leeuwis (2006:251) concludes that the general view is that the beneficiaries should be involved in major decision-making or should jointly make decision with the development planners. While this seems to be an ideal premise that should inform participation in development, Leeuwis notes that this is usually not a workable premise. It diverts attention from other vital areas that should inform the consideration of participation in development. Moreover, it is a view that seems to suggest that “maximum participation” of the beneficiaries is possible despite all evidence to the contrary. Leeuwis (2006:251) remarks that while he is not sure whether it even makes sense to strive for maximum participation, he would advise development planners that this should not be their central focus.

Again, referring to Pretty’s typology, Leeuwis argues that there is an undue emphasis on decision-making, which conveys the idea that decision-making is “the central process in a participatory innovation trajectory” (Leeuwis 2006:251). He states that participation is judged based on the degree to which the beneficiaries are involved in the decision-making of development planning process. While it is important that the beneficiaries are central to the decision-making in development planning, Leeuwis argues that this must be done with caution. According to him, it is essential that all stakeholders in the development project are involved in the decision-making process but it must also be noted that decisions

[...] do not normally result from a rational decision-making process, but rather they ‘grow’ from a gradual learning process ... Also, ‘decisions’ in projects are shaped by variety of social process, including negotiation... Thus, one could argue that it

would make sense to measure the level of participation in terms of involvement in learning or negotiation, rather than in decision-making.

From the foregoing, Leeuwis (2006:251-252) concludes that instead of focusing on decision-making in the fashion it has been discussed, the effort should rather be on enhancing the decision-making ability of the beneficiaries. He believes that it is pointless for stakeholders to have a major influence in decision-making when they have not learnt anything or have not made any contribution in terms of elimination of anxieties or barriers to innovation.

3.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, participatory development practice was discussed extensively. The different views informing the way development scholars see participatory development practices were given. Some of the views discussed emphasise dialogic communication where both the source and receiver have to interact in a two-way process and where the messages are influenced by context factors specific to the individuals in communication.

The different levels and classifications of participatory development process, indicating the levels of involvement of the beneficiaries were given. Lastly, the challenges, criticisms and shortcomings of participatory development as posited by different scholars were reviewed.

In the next chapter, the planning of participatory communication or method of participatory communication will be discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: PLANNING OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION IN A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Three, the concept of participatory development was explored in detail. The discussion included the definition of participatory development and the views of scholars about participatory development practice. An extensive review of Nair and White's (1993:51-65) transactional perspective of communication was given. Lastly, some of the challenges facing participatory development practices were discussed. This chapter consists of mainly a review of the participatory communication plan as expounded by Bessette (2004) and Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009). In addition, Mody's (2005:53-60) participatory communication design will also be discussed, along with views of other scholars.

Participatory communication planning, as referred to in this chapter, is necessary because it provides pathways or steps to be followed to ensure that appropriate communication is used at all stages of a development project. In other words, it represents a blueprint of how the communication aspect of a project should be undertaken.

Different scholars refer to this stage in participatory communication using different terms. Some refer to it as methodology or approach and others call it planning or application of participatory communication. For the purpose of this study, I will use the term *planning*, because what is discussed here is similar to what other communication processes refer to as planning. Participatory communication planning is important because without it

Many needs for services will not be addressed, local knowledge, often gained over generations of observations and experience, will not be recognised or heard, new knowledge will not be accepted [...] and the sustainability of interventions will be short-lived (Castello & Braun 2006:39).

There is no cut-and-dried way to plan participatory communication. What is important in the preparation of participatory communication is to ensure that the plan works with the prevailing situations and the stated objectives of the project in the target community (Bessette 2004; Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:17).

4.2 PLANNING OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

The first step to undertake in planning of participatory communication is what Bassette (2004) refers to as the diagnostic phase. Some of the salient aspects of the phase will be discussed below and, where necessary, will be substantiated with the views of other scholars.

4.2.1 Establishing a relationship with a local community and understanding the local setting

In the diagnostic phase, the first step is to establish relations with the target community. This, according to Bessette (2004), involves collecting the necessary information about the community prior to entering it. Background information can usually be found at the statistics office of the area and other relevant secondary sources of information. Bessette adds that information obtained in this manner should be complemented by interviewing someone who is well-versed about issues of the community, including their prevailing socio-cultural problems.

Then, when the development planner enters the community, the collected data is expanded and adapted where necessary, using the input of the community members. At this diagnostic stage, the need for development project is either at the request of the target community or on the initiative of the development planner who is mandated by public or private organisation or government (Bessette 2004:38; Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:24).

Development projects carried out at the behest of authorities other than the target community usually follow carefully laid down criteria to ensure the target community qualifies for the project. For example, it was stated earlier that the beneficiaries of Nguni Cattle Project are selected using criteria by a Trust established to manage the project (see Chapter 1, subsections 1.2.2 and 1.2.3).

The primary criterion used by a development planner lies in the identification of a community with compelling needs requiring development intervention (Bessette 2004), which can be in the form of any development project.

In this regard, Yoon (1996) points out that many NGOs will choose a community they know, where they have worked before or are currently working. NGOs prefer familiar communities, as they can build on the existing working relationship and

using their existing knowledge of the community, it is easy for them to assess the needs and the corresponding development project to address such needs (Yoon 1996).

Bessette (2004) notes, however, that choosing a target community will come to nothing without the community's consent to the stated objective of the project. Usually typical of this early stage of a development project is the fact that

The authorities of a specific community will give their agreement without the community understanding the implications in terms of participation and involvement in a concrete development action. This often leads to artificial situation (Bessette 2004).

What is implied in Bessette's statement is that it is characteristic of the development planners to seek the permission of the local authority of the target community without consulting other members of the community. The development planner, in other words, may succeed to obtain an entry to the community but as this is not based on the expressed will and consent of the generality of the people he may suffer some setback later in his participatory efforts in the community.

This can be avoided in a participatory development project, by ensuring that the main stakeholders are identified and their "positions and perceptions about the proposed change" are known as soon as possible" (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:24). The need to get the community members ready with regard to the nature and scope of the project, as well as the degree of their involvement in the project, underlines the importance of early awareness of the views of the main stakeholders.

Regarding the need to understand the community members, Yoon (1996) cautions against a fleeting process of what he terms *getting-to-know-each-other*. Yoon, who looks at this from the perspective of NGOs' involvement in development projects, remarks that many NGOs require their field staff to live in the community for a reasonable period of time, usually for several months, in order to gain acceptance by the community and to have a good appreciation and knowledge of the community.

Similarly, Usadqlo (2008:2) – who believes that extension agents are change agents in the community – recommends that an 'embedded extension officer' in the target community should be used in order to avoid a situation where much of what

is supposed to be known about the community, is actually not known. An 'embedded extension officer' here refers to a person who is either from the target community or someone who is not from the community, but is alike or homophilic (in terms of beliefs, values and social status) and has worked in the community for a reasonable period of time.

Whether a person embedded in the community is used, or someone in the development project's team lives in the community, or information is sought about the community from secondary or primary sources, the ultimate aim of the development planner is to have the information necessary to assist him/her in entering the community. Having the necessary information about the target community as well as knowing about its positions and perceptions before the development planner enters the community is vital. This will give the development planner the knowledge to guide him/her in dealing with the community and give the development planner a sound base to introduce his/her development initiative to the target community.

The introduction of a development project to the community is an important stage in the initial communicative encounter between the development planner and the community. This is usually done, as stated earlier, through a preliminary meeting between the development planner and the community leaders. In this meeting, the development planner presents the development initiative to the community leaders and seeks their permission to discuss it with members of the community (Bessette 2004).

Rural communities, including the communities this study has investigated, are often answerable to different local authorities. These authorities have significant influence in the communities and any development planner who ignores them does so at the peril of his/her development project objectives. These authorities may be traditional, political or religious authorities, but all of them must be consulted prior to meeting the members of the community.

Bessette (2004) is aware of the impact of various authorities in rural communities, and advises that such authorities must be approached in order to inform them of the development initiative, seek their cooperation and use the opportunity to understand how they view the development initiative being introduced. For this

approach to be successful, Cohen (1996:234) states that a community situation analysis must first be done, making it possible to determine who the local powers structures (leaders) are, and how the community interacts with outside world.

Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:25) refer to this as the preliminary stage of *establishing a common space*. To them, it is an opportunity to ensure that there is interaction with key stakeholders in order to achieve an understanding towards seeking agreement about the needed priorities of the project. They believe that to establish this common space, “regular meetings in physical space open to everybody, more formal mechanisms where stakeholder representatives convene and engage in a dialogue facilitated by neutral source” (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:25) should be held. Meetings of this nature can serve as a platform to get the members of the community involved, raise awareness about issues as well as consensus about solutions to problem, declares Cohen (1996:241). To reflect the participatory objective or focus of the project, Cohen recommends that:

- Meetings should be open-ended and the project staff should see their role as facilitators;
- Meetings should be not be inclusive of all community members regardless of their status but rather segmented into smaller homogenous groups. This is important because communities’ members are homogenous, and their members do not have equal status and interests, especially with regard to power. For example, Cohen notes that it will be pointless combining landless women with male farmers because certainly the men are more at an advantage and they are more powerful to be able co-opt the project for their benefits and interest in terms of training, loans, etc.; and
- Meetings should be conducted in the language of the community members and at pace that is suitable to their lifestyles and educational levels.

Meeting offers an interpersonal platform for two-way communication. This will ensure participation of the community members and opportunity to spell out the specific mandate in order to avoid raising unrealistic expectations (Bessette 2004). The explanation of the mandate should involve stating the “possible negative and positive outcomes” of community members’ involvement in the proposed project, the impact of the project as well as the possible financial and material advantages for participating in the proposed project (Bessette 2004). Meeting is one of the

opportunities used by the development planner to collect information about the community through a process known as participatory rural appraisal. This is discussed in the next section.

4.2.2 Participatory Rural Appraisal

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is a technique used by development planners to collect basic information that will enable him/her to work without undue problems in the community for his/her proposed project. According to Bessette (2004), PRA is a participatory technique used to involve members of a community to gather the required information about issues that have bearing on the proposed development project. The collection of the required information by the development planner will enable him/her to establish the necessary relationship with the community of the proposed project.

PRA can be used as a collection technique for mapping the local area, for developing a time line, Venn diagrams, wealth ranking, and so on (Bessette 2004). PRA is a preferred method because it offers a speedy way to gather information with the involvement of the community members, and this information can be shared to the benefit of others participating in the project.

Tufte and Mefalopulos regard PRA as an old version of what they now call Participatory Communication Assessment (PCA). A look at their discussion of the PCA, shows that it is a re-worked version of PRA. Bessette regards PRA as an information collecting technique during early encounters between the development planner and the community, but Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:22) regard it as the first phase in the application of participatory communication. A brief discussion of the PCA follows in the section below and serves as a preliminary to the review of Tufte and Mefalopulos' ideas regarding participatory communication planning.

4.3 PHASE ONE: PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT (PCA)

PCA is an offshoot of Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA) developed in Southern Africa by the Food and Agriculture Organisations (FAO), United Nations (UN) and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:22).

Other related approaches or applications in participatory research methods are Participatory Rural Communication Appraisal (PRCA), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Participatory Action Research (PAR). These concepts are all similar and intended to address issues in communication for development. However, PCA, as stated by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:22), is meant to respond to broader issues not addressed by other concepts. For example, they point out that that it is possible through the use of PCA to

account for [...] wide range of applications reaching beyond the original rural focus and to indicate the more analytical nature of this approach from the initial concept of appraisal to a more in-depth assessment of the situation, which usually includes options to address change and to seek solutions.

Bessette (2004) regards PRA as an information gathering technique used during the first phase of participatory communication plan in the community. However, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:23) hold that PCA encapsulates all the steps in the diagnosis or first phase of participatory communication and is used to achieve the following objectives:

1. To understand the socio-cultural context while identifying and defining key issues (including the definition of key stakeholders);
2. To create a common/public space, establish dialogue, and build trust among key stakeholders;
3. To assess the needs, problems, risks, opportunities and solutions;
4. To prioritise key issues for change and reconcile different perception; and
5. To validate findings and define solutions or objectives.

The first phase consists of these steps, explained below to illustrate how PCA is carried out. The review on planning participatory communication, given below, is based on the work of Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009). However, other sources will be cited where appropriate.

4.3.1 Step one: Issue identification and definition

As indicated earlier, the need for a development project which will result in contact between the development planner and the community is identified either by the community or the development planner or other bodies such as private organisations or the government (Bessette 2004; Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:24). At

this stage, PCA should be used in an exploratory manner in order to cover relevant issues necessary for the successful implementation of the project. The use of PCA in an exploratory manner allows for the investigation of major issues, risks and perceptions and it also helps in isolating the key priorities and identification of applicable recommendations. The opposite of this is what Tufte and Mefalopulos call a *topical* PCA because it is limited to investigating issues or already defined objectives that, in most cases, are not participatory.

4.3.2 Step two: Establishing a common space

This is an important step, which, according to Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:25), is a step “where all stakeholders feel comfortable enough to express their views, share their concerns, and provide their inputs on the desired change” in order to achieve a sustainable development initiative.

In a participatory communication-based development initiative, the establishment of a common space requires an interactive atmosphere where all the stakeholders contribute equally to issues at hand. Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:25) believe this is necessary for mutual understanding and consensus-building, which can be established through formal regular meetings of representatives of all the stakeholders. In addition to meetings, they suggest that the use of interactive technologies, including the Internet, will enable some stakeholders to contribute and communicate easily with the others involved.

When meeting members of the target community, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:25) recommend a number of communication methods and techniques to build trust between all relevant parties. A method favoured by them is referred to as the *transect walk*. This is used in rural and peri-urban settings where a chosen member of the community “walks around the community illustrating the various social and productive areas to outsiders”. Another method recommended by them is called *trend lines*, and this is used “to identify if and when certain phenomena (such as AIDS, soil erosion, and so forth) have occurred, making it easier to identify key causes and possible solutions”. They also refer to a method known as the *seasonal/daily calendar* and this is a method “in which relevant groups describe key activities, according to the scope of the investigation”.

4.3.3 Step three: Assessing needs, problems, risks, opportunities and solutions

This step is principally about addressing identified areas on which to focus in the development initiative. The objective of participatory communication at this juncture is to assess relevant problems, risk, needs, opportunities and their applicable solutions.

In this step, there are a number of tools that can be used to assess pertinent communication issues and one of the tools recommended by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:26) is a *baseline study*. According to them, a baseline study is used principally for two functions which are:

1. To measure the situation at the beginning of a communication intervention in order to assess the complete effect in a reliable manner by comparing the findings with a second study carried out at the end of an initiative; and
2. To validate and quantify the extent of the initial findings defined through qualitative methods.

The second function, according to Tufte and Mefalopulos, is brought into use

[...] if a few ad-hoc interviews reveal that there are some reservations about the proposed change to give more political and financial power to local authorities, a baseline study can further probe the reason for these positions and quantify how widespread are these views among stakeholders (2009:26).

Another technique used at this level is what Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:26) refer to as *the problem tree*. In a study carried out by Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:3), they assert that the problem tree is used to determine the main causes and effects of a problem. The problem tree is depicted as a tree, where the trunk is the problem, the roots are the causes, and the branches are the consequences or effects of the problem (Bessette 2004). Through the use of a problem tree, Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:10) maintain that it is easy to ascertain the focal problem, which will then be subjected to a cause-effect examination to identify areas requiring communication intervention. The use of a problem tree involves a significant amount of negotiation and discussions regarding “what is a cause and what is a consequence” or effect, according to Bessette (2004).

Other commonly used techniques at this level are *one-to-one interviews* and *focus groups*. These methods are not entirely participatory in nature but they can be used as part of participatory process (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:25). The use of a focus group usually calls for a group of eight to ten people who are connected to the matter under discussion, while the one-to-one interview allows the development planner to meet with a person who is knowledgeable about the problem being investigated.

Another method, the *common resource mapping*, is similar to a function of PRA discussed above. Common resource mapping is a tool used to establish what the main source of income of rural communities is (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:26). Similar to this is the *livelihood mapping*, but here the focus is on the community members' occupations rather than on their source of income. There is also *social mapping*, which is used to understand the social composition of the target community.

The use of these mappings (common resource, livelihood and social mappings) answers the question posed by Bessette (2004): "Who are the different community groups and the other stakeholders concerned with selected problem and solution?" A derivative of the mappings will give the answer. Bessette believes that this answer will help to determine the groups in the community who are affected by the development problem, as well as the best means of establishing dialogue with each of these groups. This mapping will also identify those among the groups who might be capable of providing solutions to the development problem identified. Bessette adds that to understand the groups in the community, there is a need to

distinguish among these categories on the basis of factors: age, gender, language, ethnic or other specific social factors, livelihood or socio-professional categories [...] income, educational level, localisation, culture, values or religion, behaviour or common interests.

These elements reflect the essence of the different mappings discussed by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:26). Mappings can also be used to deal with communication-related issues. Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:26) refer to this as *communication resource mapping*. According to them, this type of mapping is used to indicate the "way the communities and stakeholders communicate among themselves and their preferred channels of information".

Communication resource mapping is akin to the process Seetharama (1993:135) describes as “identification of informational needs”. Seetharama states that this consists of identifying how the community generates and utilises information, and identifying the types of channels used by both in information seeking and in interactions within the community. Related to communication resource mapping are Venn diagrams used to evaluate the influence of the actors and organisations and the circulation of information among them. In addition to this, it is essential to carry out media environment audit, which is principally meant to evaluate the available media infrastructure and the prevailing media law.

When dealing with communication matters at this level, it is necessary to recognise both the formal and informal institutional channels, as they influence the way communication flows in the community (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:29; and Leeuwis 2006:133). For example, the role of Ministry of Agriculture in facilitating the adoption of innovations is undoubtedly very important. Successful farmers may also influence other members of the community to adopt innovation. Leeuwis (2006:137) describes these farmers as *progressive* and in his discussion of progressive farmers’ theory, he states that they are the early adopters of an innovation and are capable of influencing others farmers to follow suit.

4.3.4 Step four: Prioritise key issues for change and reconcile different perceptions

After step three that evaluates key issues, causes, risks and applicable options and opportunities, the next step is to “probe and triangulate the findings” (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:27). In their words, this step is used to determine whether

the issues are perceived and considered equally important by all key stakeholders. Even when there is consensus on a problem, there may be many different views on how to address it. As a result analysis of the cause of the problem is needed to prioritize the various reasons and their solutions.

Using deforestation as an example of a problem facing a community, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:27) remark that to design an effective communication strategy to address deforestation, it is not enough to know that the key problem is the destruction of the forest, or when the fire destroying the forest does start or the cause of the fire that destroys the forest. What is important is to devise a communication strategy that seeks to establish if the fire is intentional or due to

carelessness. In addition, the farmers' perceptions about the forest should be investigated to establish if they regard the forest as something that will benefit posterity or be a hindrance to the development of their fields.

As explained by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:26), once these are known, it will be easy to set priorities, define identified problems and then reconcile the various perceptions using the relevant tools. One of the tools that can be used is referred to as the *window of perceptions* (Tufte & Mefalopulos (2009:27). This tool uses diagrams to represent different key issues and how the different stakeholders feel about their causes and effects. Then the various diagrams are compared, and when marked differences are noticed, a two-way communication is used to reconcile these differences.

Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:27) add that in a situation where there is a need to make a direct comparison between different items, such as when there is a need to look into health risk as perceived by the target community, a *pair wise preference ranking* technique should be used. They state that the pair wise preference ranking is used to "probe stakeholders' views and rank a set of issues in any sector such as health, agriculture or infrastructure. Its goal is to allow stakeholders to express their opinions about which issues are more important".

4.3.5 Step five: Validate findings and define solutions/objectives

This final part of the PCA or first phase as described by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:27), requires cautious "synthetic and analytic skills" for the interpretation of the data collected in the previous steps. The findings obtained from the relevant stakeholders must be compared and contrasted in order to ascertain patterns leading to the change agreed to by the various stakeholders.

The concern of the participatory communicator at this level is to interpret the data collected. Often, some shrewd thinking is required on the part of the communicator to bring about a consensus that cuts across a significant percentage of the stakeholders and to be able identify the best solutions following the interpretation of the data.

The use of an effective PCA should result, at this level, in the “identification and definition of the objective(s) of the development project or program” based on participatory principles (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:28).

4.4 PHASE TWO: PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION STRATEGY DESIGN

This is the stage 2 of participatory communication plan. The review of this section will largely be based on the work of Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009), and other scholars' works corroborating views put across by them will be cited. The heading of this section is entitled 'Participatory communication strategy design' as opposed to the heading used by the main author being reviewed. Tufte and Mefalopulos' original heading for this section is entitled: “(Participatory) communication strategy design”. The difference in their heading and the one used in the study is due to the fact that their discussion does not entirely reflect participatory communication strategy as can be seen in reference to their discussion of monologic communication approach below. This informs why the word *participatory* is in parenthesis in the heading they have used for this section.

A successful participatory communication strategy is an indication of well-defined objectives (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:8). Fundamental to the development of objectives for participatory development project is the need – usually material and communication needs – which are identified by the community and must be taken into consideration (Bessette 2004).

Material needs in development context refer to material resources and the associated means of acquiring and managing the resources. In Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:14), these needs are referred to as the structural problems of the community. On the other hand, communication needs are complementary needs and include the need to share information, influence policies, raise awareness, facilitate learning, mediate conflict, etc., (Bassette 2004). The following is an illustrative account given by Bessette of how material needs and communication needs intersect in the context of a development project:

[...] in an initiative aiming to resolve water conflicts in a village, we will probably find a need for an improved access to water, and development initiatives are needed to address that need. At the same time however, we may find out that in order to find adequate solutions in the present context, we must first understand the reasons behind the conflicts, such as the time schedule for various categories of users or the conflicting needs of herders, women and

farmers. Or we may find that villagers do not know how to set up or manage effectively a water management committee. Or there may be a need for the village authorities to advocate for more water access, such as the drilling of another well, to the national water program.

As Bessette states, communication needs are complementary. This then suggests that the identified material needs related to the overall achievement of the communication objective must be supported by appropriate communication methods.

The communication needs may be with regard to raising awareness about the availability of farming tools needed by subsistence farmers to carry out their farming activities. Such awareness may focus on where they can get the tools cheaply in the market or perhaps, the tools may even be available free of charge from the government, without the members of the community being aware of this. In this case, the communication need has to be about giving information regarding the availability of the farming tools. Thus, based on the communication needs identified, the development planner will be able to isolate specific problems or activities to be carried out, that will inform the focus or objectives of the communication strategy design.

There are steps to be followed in participatory communication strategy design. However, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:28-29) declare that it is not important for the stakeholders to participate fully in all steps, as the activities involved may require a specialist knowledge who understands his/her audience's culture, perceptions and priorities.

Based on what the development planner understands about his/her audience's culture and the nature of his project, participatory communication strategy that is intended to be participatory may not be able to avoid some elements of a monologic or one-way communication approach (Tufte and Mefalopulos 2009:29). They justify their view by saying "participation does not always mean everybody is engaged in every step of the way", but point out that it can be used to facilitate the participation of the stakeholders in major aspects of decision-making. For example, in the design of participatory communication about awareness, knowledge, attitudes and practices, one-way communication approach can be used to promote public reform, a health campaign to emphasise desired behaviour or publicise innovation (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:29).

A monologic mode may prevail in the relationship between the development planner or communicator and the community at any stage of the project. This usually occurs when it is absolutely necessary for the planner and/or the community leaders to take a decision with which they expect the community members to comply (Cohen 1996:240). The dialogic aspect of the strategy is used when a change in the degree of “collaboration, mediation, conflict resolution, mobilisation, or partnership and coalition building” is required, according to Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:29).

4.4.1 Monologic mode in a communication strategy

In order to explain how the monologic mode is sometimes used in a communication strategy, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) cite an example of a rural development project meant to address climate change in Latin America. A number of issues were identified using PCA, one being soil degradation due to poor land use by farmers. This resulted in decreased land productivity, increased numbers of landslides during the rainy season and the ecological imbalance of the environment caused by continuous deforestation. The main priority of the development project was to raise the farmers’ awareness about the adverse consequences of soil degradation, while at the same time improving their knowledge and competence regarding use of land in a sustainable way (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:30). They state:

Even if the communication objectives (addressing change in the awareness and knowledge level) point to a strategy based on a one-way, monologic modality, the overall approach can still be considered within the participatory communication boundaries, although to a limited degree, since the strategy was derived through a participatory communication assessment and stakeholders inputs were taken into account throughout the process.

When the need for communication is to increase awareness, the preferred approach has always been one-way or monologic communication. For example, communication at the knowledge stage about an innovation usually follows a one-way or monological mode. As the main purpose is to increase an individual awareness of the innovation, mass media in the form of radio, television and newspaper are used. The emphasis here is to make sure many community members are aware of the innovation. However, this does not mean the design of the message follow participatory design of message. The

monological mode has also been used to communicate awareness of regulations that may affect the context the development project is operating (Leeuwis 2006:52).

4.4.2 Dialogic mode in a communication strategy

The above discussion of a monologic mode of communication strategy used a project in Latin America as an example. The following discussion of a dialogic mode of communication strategy is also based on a development programme. Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:32) use the example of a water sector reform in terms of the general framework of good governance to discuss an effective communication strategy in the dialogic mode. They maintain that the main objective of the water sector reform was to improve water services, which “were considered inefficient and with little or no accountability mechanisms to protect consumers’ inputs”.

Using PCA, the dialogic mode identifies the key priority of improving water services and ensure the establishment of measures that will guarantee the inclusion of the input and feedback given by the target community (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:32). One of the identified objectives, in this instance, was to establish a partnership of the principal actors in the development programme so as to guarantee both accountability and transparency in the system.

This also includes the identification of the main actors, their characteristics, the understanding of the functions of each group and establishment of a partnership to drive the project (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:32). Following this, there will be a selection of a communication approaches and activities to achieve the set objective.

In contrast to the monologic mode, partners and channels are defined in dialogical mode. The channels identified may be in the form of meetings, which the stakeholders may attend and convey any decisions made and action taken to the audiences they represent. Using the identified channels, the partners can interact, discuss, reach common understanding, seek solutions within the established framework and reconcile any differences.

Ultimately, in a dialogical mode the expected outcomes are considered. However, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:33) remark that it is not easy to state clearly whether

or not the expected outcomes are met, especially in the consideration of a genuine participatory process. The desired outcome, in this case, is to have a viable partnership among the three main players in place. The assessment here consists of looking at “how well the three parties are able to collaborate and what results are produced by such collaboration” (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:33).

4.5 PHASE THREE: IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

From the foregoing it is evident that once the communication strategy has been defined, the planner must put an action plan, consisting of all the activities pertinent to the envisaged communication strategy into operation. In this regard, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:34) state that:

Starting from objective, the plan includes people (audiences or stakeholders) who are engaged in the needed change, activities planned, resources needed (human and financial), party responsible for each activity, and timeframe. Finally a column about the indicators to assess outputs and outcomes can also be added to facilitate the monitoring of the activities.

The activities of a properly designed communication strategy will appear in the action plan in a logical and straightforward manner. The PCA done for the communication strategy will show the different contexts and the available resources that will inform or influence the way the action plan is organised. For example, in a community where the medium of radio is popular, it would be advisable to make local radio the major channel for the communication message. In other traditional communities, especially in Africa, it may be advantageous to use popular theatre as the major channel of communication.

Audience/ stakeholders	Activities	Resources	Party responsible	Time frame	Indicators
Who are the actors addressed by the initiative?	Which are the needed activities?	What are the financial, human resources needed?	Who is the party (person or institution) responsible?	What is the schedule for completion?	Which are the indicators to assess and evaluate their impact?
Local farmers	Production of radio programmes , posters and training workshops	Funding for design and production of radio programmes and posters, and training for courses	Extension unit in the Department of Agriculture	End 2009	Survey indicating level of awareness of farmers on the given topic

Table 4.1 Communication action plan. The objective of the action plan: To increase the awareness of the negative consequences of soil erosion to 80 percent of local farmers.

4.6 PHASE FOUR: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation strategy discussed by Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2009) is the principal source that will be used in this phase. According to Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:98) “it is necessary to evaluate the overall impact of the intervention in order to assess the degree of success or failure” or to find out if the stated objectives have been achieved (Bessette 2004), and where there are identified weaknesses, a means to address them will be sought (Cohen 1996:244).

Evaluation in the project cycle is very important; however Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:35) assert that in many development projects, evaluation is considered only at the conclusion of the project. Ideally, an evaluation should be started at the very beginning of the project, and continue throughout the project’s lifespan. Indeed, as long as there are activities being carried out in the preparation of the communication strategy, it is important that there is formative evaluation in order to carry out the required refinement and realignment of the communication according to the unfolding contexts. The unfolding context in this case may be in the form of resources (financial and human), or some unforeseen unique social settings.

Evaluation done why the project is in progress can be regarded as monitoring, although it is not explicitly referred to as such in the work of Tufte and Mefalopulos being reviewed. In a similar study carried out earlier by Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:93), monitoring is referred to as “the process of establishing checkpoints to make sure that you are on the right track”. They explain further that this has to involve the establishment of “a system for recording, on a regular basis, useful information for keeping track of the activities and progress being made towards the set objectives”.

The planning and monitoring of a development project should be based on the following steps:

- Establish the purpose of the monitoring;
- Establish what will be monitored;
- Establish how it will be monitored (indicators);
- Establish when monitoring will occur (checkpoints); and
- Establish who will be responsible for monitoring (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:94).

Monitoring is an important aspect of a development project as it helps to check some of the important activities as they are being done (e.g. training workshop), or some of the required inputs, such as the timely delivery of the required materials (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:98). In a participatory communication programme, monitoring should involve the community or the stakeholders, who identify and define what needs to be monitored, thus ensuring that the relevant issues are established collaboratively (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:98).

A development project that has been well-monitored will lead to a good evaluation process. Through monitoring, the development planner will gain a thorough understanding of the project in terms of its strengths and weaknesses, and this will assist when the focus moves onto the evaluation stage of the project. Thus, good monitoring leads to a good beginning in a project's evaluation.

Evaluation enables the project planner to see the practical effect the communication strategy is having in relation to the objective set and this is considered in terms of the project itself. Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:98),

aver that this has to be about “the impact caused by the project intervention in relation to the set objectives”.

As participatory communication strategy, it is important that all the stakeholders in the development project should be involved in the evaluation process. This must start as a joint agreement on what needs to be evaluated and how the evaluation should be carried out. Bessette (2004) notes that an evaluation process must be done together with all partners, including the community members and other stakeholders.

The nature of the evaluation can be either quantitative or qualitative, depending on the objective of the evaluation. Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:35) and Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:98) recommend that when the objective of evaluation is to measure the impact of an innovation, it is appropriate to use quantitative method. They state that this can be combined with a qualitative method when, in the same evaluation objective, there is a need to assess the degree to which the project has satisfied the local community stakeholders. Though Bessette (2004) does not specify which method (qualitative or quantitative) should be used, he states that in order to know what must be evaluated, there is a need to consider the three levels of evaluation:

- The process: everything that was done from the outset - planning and implementation of activities.
- The results of communication activities.
- The observable impact of activities on the problem or on the development initiative, that is, do the results contribute to resolving the problem that was posed at the outset, or to supporting the development initiative that was identified?

In addition, he states that for every level, the following should be done:

- Identify what is to be evaluated and formulate the questions that need to be answered.
- Identify the information needed to answer the questions formulated.
- Identify a procedure for collecting the information.

4.6.1 The use of quantitative evaluation: the baseline study

A baseline study is used by the development planner to measure the state of things at the beginning of the project and the state of things at the completion of the project. If the project is about increasing awareness, it then means that the baseline study should be used to establish the level of the awareness of the community at the beginning of the project and compare this to the level of awareness on completion. As stated by Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:99), the differences between the levels of awareness will show the amount of change that has taken place as a result of the communication activities in the project. Development projects are intended to bring about change in the chosen community and one of the ways to assess the change that has taken place is to “have a starting point against which to measure any eventual change” (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:99).

Thus, with a baseline study, it is possible to have verifiable data which will be used to indicate the quantitative extent of the problem to be solved and these data will be used as terms of reference in the future.

4.6.2 The use of qualitative evaluation: the Participatory Impact Assessment (PIA)

The use of qualitative evaluation is to assess the human factor, which may not be covered by quantitative evaluation (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:100). A qualitative evaluation is more appropriate when assessing the level of satisfaction of the community. When used in the form of PIA, Mefalopulos and Kamlongera point out that it is possible to measure what the community feels about the result of the communication intervention as well as the degree of the satisfaction of the community.

The PIA is carried out through a number of participatory techniques, for instance, a problem tree. Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:100) believe that this has to be done jointly with the community in order to identify the indicators for the problems that are to be solved. Using participatory techniques and tools, the development planner and the community are able to ensure that the following steps are adhered to:

- Agree on the purpose of the evaluation;
- Establish what will be evaluated, such as project objectives, people's satisfaction, etc;
- Establish how will it be evaluated;
- Establish by whom it will be evaluated (evaluation team);
- Establish when it will be evaluated; and
- Make final comments and recommendations (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:100).

These important steps are to ensure that the evaluation activities are properly carried out. Mefalopulos and Kamlongera add that the principal purpose of the "PIA is to make sure the evaluation is not a theoretical exercise for few experts but a comprehensive measurement that includes the community perceptions and concerns" (2004:100).

Finally, after the completion of the evaluation using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the results obtained should be combined in the form of a comprehensive study, where the change brought about by communication intervention is stated (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:100). Some of the changes reported may require strategies to rectify mistakes and to seek better procedures to deal with lapses uncovered in the evaluation.

At the completion of an evaluation, a report has to be written. The writing of the report can be done in a number of ways, but the most preferred method includes the following elements:

- Brief background of the project, which specifies the objectives;
- Preview of the results achieved by the project or by the communication intervention;
- Evaluation method used;
- Description of evaluation activities;
- Findings of the evaluation; and
- Comments and future recommendations (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:100-101).

This marks the end of a review of a planning for participatory communication based principally on the work of Bessette (2004) and that of Tufte and Mefalopulos

(2009). The section below is a review of a participatory communication plan based on the work of Mody (2005).

4.7 SYSTEMATIC STEPS IN AUDIENCE INVOLVEMENT FOR MESSAGE DESIGN

This section is based entirely on Mody's work entitled, *Designing Message for Development Communication*, published in 2005. Much of the review will be done by paraphrasing and comments based on my understanding of her writing.

Mody (2005:54-55) calls her message design "a community-centred approach" and "an acknowledgement of the equal partnership of the audience in achieving communication". This, in essence, is what a participatory communication design is all about, and it is the reason why this work forms the basis of the review here. Mody believes that the steps to be followed when designing community-centred approach message are as follows:

4.7.1 Step 1: Learn everything about the topic

The topic to be dealt with may be selected by the communicator himself or selected for him by the funding agency, community organisation, etc, but as a development communicator, it is important to be familiar with the topic to be communicated. There are many ways to learn about the topic and this, according to Mody (2005:55), may be from an expert on the topic, reading relevant literature on the topic or any other sources. This step is very important in order to have the necessary facts at hand and to make sure the audiences for the message are not misled or misinformed.

4.7.2 Step 2: Observe the lifestyles and values of different segments of the audience in order to decide how to communicate properly

Usually, the people reached by the medium selected for the message will be from different groups and this requires a creative strategy to ensure that what needs to be communicated reaches all of the people, no matter their background. In this regards, Mody (2005) remarks that the media one chooses,

the frequency with which you present programs on the topic, the words, gestures, characters, and settings you choose; and whether you treat topic in serious, comical, dramatic or farcical form will be determined by age, sex, race, occupation,

education, economic class, and religions of the audience with whom you aim to share your meaning (Mody 2005:55).

4.7.3 Step 3: Dialogue with the audience on what each segment already knows, feels, and does on the topic

As opposed to technical knowledge of the subject specialists, the indigenous knowledge is unique to the community's culture and society, as it speaks of the way the community deals with local issues. It is important for the communication strategy planner to learn about the indigenous knowledge, as this will enable him/her to concentrate on what is required in the communication strategy. If this is not done, vocabulary, jargon and some foreign concepts could inadvertently be used in the design of the message and these may cloud the understanding of the message conveyed in the communication strategy.

Thus, it is necessary for the development communicator to have a dialogic relationship with the members of the community at the very start of his/her interaction with the target community, in order to know their beliefs, images, attitudes, behaviours, etc.

4.7.4 Step 4: Write down the objective – the audience impact to be used to measure whether communication has been achieved

When committing the objective to paper, it should be considered against the state of things in the community, the overall objective of the communication intervention is (see baseline study, section 4.3.3) and the realistic consideration of what the media message can achieve. Mody (2005:57) recommends that this consideration should be the objective through which effectiveness of communication intervention should be measured.

4.7.5 Step 5: Choose the channels and frequency of exposure required to reach the set objective

It is usually not ideal to use the same channels of communication for all communities. Different communities may be familiar with different media, and Mody (2005:57-58) remarks that "the selection of mixture of media must be based on information collected regarding the community group's communication habits and how the groups relates to the intended topic". The information collected in this

manner will assist in planning regarding the use of a combination of media in conveying the messages.

Schoen's (1996:262) observation regarding channels of communication used by the target audience is worth noting here. In his view, it is important to consider how the target audience usually gets information on similar issues. He also emphasises the need to know where and when the target audience meets. On this note, he states that women in local communities meet in markets, health education meetings, hospital waiting rooms, when collecting firewood and water from the stream; while men meet at work and community gatherings.

These interpersonal sources of information help when considering the appropriate channels to use in communicating with the target audience. Schoen (1996:262) adds that it is important to:

[...] catalogue how people use media. How many radios do we find in the area and how do people listen to them? How many (local) radio stations can we use? How many cinemas? Do people read newspapers and to what sections of the paper do they most attention?

4.7.6 Step 6: Design a creative-persuasive strategy to package the meanings intended to be shared

Most development communication strategy designs are technical in nature reflecting the source institution of the message. The message conveyed often does not take into consideration the need to *communicate* with the audience in such a manner that meanings are shared. Mody (2005:58) observes that the communicator often fails to use the appropriate format that will hold the attention of the audience and allow them to comprehend the message. She further notes that successful communication design is usually one that appeals to the community's emotion, and not one that is rational and only addresses the community's intellect. A message that appeals to the audience must, according to Schoen (1996:261), answer either of the following questions the audience will implicitly or explicitly ask themselves:

- What is in for me? or
- Why should I listen?

4.7.7 Step 7: Write specification for every message, describing its goals, content, and recommended format/treatment

Mody (2005:58) refers to this step as a memorandum of agreement on production content and form. In order to do this, she recommends the following:

- Take sheet of paper and state what the message will achieve;
- The type of content that will go into it; and
- State how the content will be put together to gain audience attention and comprehension.

Mody (2005:58) believes that this is necessary, because it is not possible to achieve development communication with a single programme. Hence, specifications must be established and recorded for use in the later programmes. However, prior to using these specifications, the strengths and weaknesses of the communication programme should be assessed. Where necessary, such specifications can be adapted to one that is more applicable to the set communication objective.

4.7.8 Step 8: Pre-test the creative-persuasive strategy on a sample of the audience to find out whether the chosen approach is working

In this step, the following among others should be pre-tested:

- Concept,
- Story line,
- Characters,
- Story boards,
- Paste-ups, etc.

Pre-testing is necessary in order to see how well the production will perform in terms of gaining the audience's attention, making them understand the message and the ease with which the strategy can be used, before a mass launch of the strategy. Sood (1993:192) recommends that message should be pretested on a sample of the target audience and any shortcoming noticed should be rectified. When this is not done and it is discovered later that the strategy has problem, it may be too late to rectify.

4.7.9 Step 9: Modify the message design according to the pre-test's findings and then proceed with final production

The pretesting of a message may reveal that the objective of the strategy is too ambitious, the format is not suitable and the content is too complicated. In addition, the pre-test may reveal that the community has failed to understand the most important elements in the script. In other words, the message is not appropriate for the target community. Consequently, the message has to be modified according to what the pre-test has revealed in order to have an effective communication strategy.

4.7.10 Step 10: Monitor physical exposure, attention, comprehension, and implementation levels after message distribution has begun

Monitoring of these elements must be done in a manner that engenders feedback from the community. This feedback will show whether the media content and form used, are effective in the real life situation. This will also show whether the technological channel is effective in conveying the message to the target audience. Mody (2005:60) states that "Unless messages are physically available in reception situations where they have a good chance of being read, heard, or observed as the case may be, no communication potential exists".

4.7.11 Step 11: Evaluate whether the message is achieving its knowledge, feeling, and behaviour goal

Communication is a means, and development is an end or result, in development communication. This implies that communication is a means which can be used to achieve an end, i.e. development. For example, participatory communication can be used as a means to increase the community's ability to harness its resources and become active in ways that will lift them out of poverty.

In any communication strategy, the result of the communication may not be realised even though it seems the community has understood the message. Therefore, every development project must undertake an evaluation process to see if the overall goal of the project is realised.

The evaluation used here is called summative evaluation and it enables the development planner to know whether or not the communication has facilitated the attainment of the development goal or whether the communication campaign could have been approached differently.

The steps enumerated above, (steps 1-11) are illustrated in the figure below.

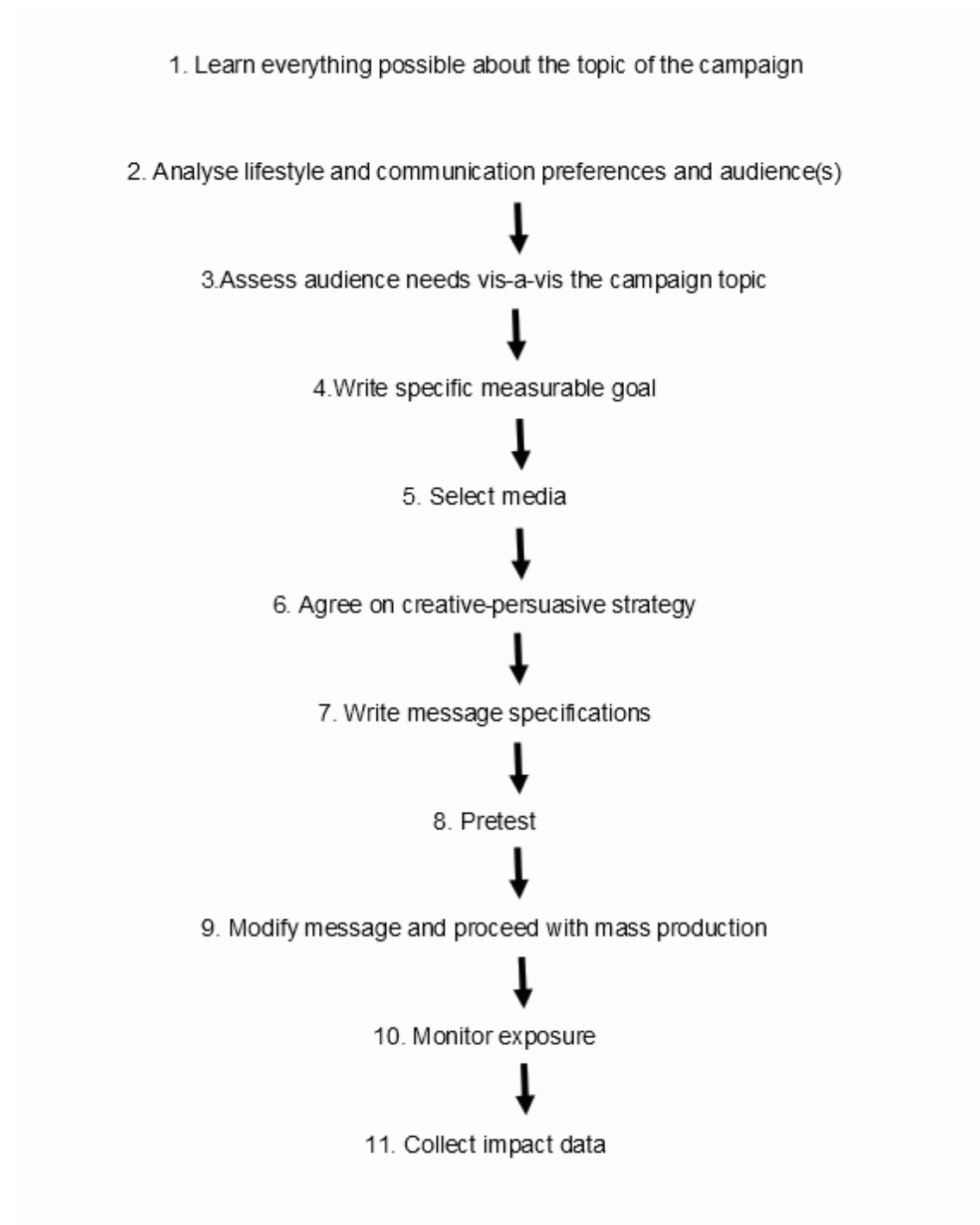


Figure 4.1: Steps in audience participation-based message design (Adapted from Mody 2005:56).

4.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the different phases of participatory communication as articulated in the works of Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009), Bessette (2004) and Mody (2005) were reviewed. It was pointed out that the overall objective of participatory communication would not be achieved if the target communities for the project are not included in the life cycle of the planning process. This, as stated in the review, can only be achieved through a dialogic or two-way communication approach. However, Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) expressly state that a monologic mode of communication cannot be avoided in some cases, owing to some aspects or the stated objective(s) of the development programme that may not allow an entirely dialogic mode of message design.

Other aspects of the review worth noting are the discussions of monitoring and evaluation. It was stated that monitoring, as a process of the participatory communication plan, allows the development planner to undertake formative or continuous assessment of the plan and, thus, know the strengths and weaknesses contained therein. It allows a good look at the participatory communication in the development project, and puts a suitable evaluation of the programme in place.

A participatory communication plan or method, as discussed in this chapter, has put into perspective what a communication design for a development project looks like. It shows the best way to communicate with the target community in a participatory manner. In order to realise this, the development planner has to carefully choose his/her communication tools that will help him/her to reach the participatory goal of his project.

In the next chapter, participatory communication tools will be discussed. This will include a look at how the tools used at any given time in the life cycle of the development project can facilitate mutual understanding and consensus-building, which are the central tenets of participatory projects.

CHAPTER FIVE: PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION TOOLS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four put forward the argument that the realisation of an overall goal of planning participatory communication had to include the appropriate use of communication tools. This affirms the need to take into consideration a host of factors that could influence communicative intervention in a participatory development project. One of the ways to do this is to use communication tools that match the prevailing socio-cultural situations in the target community.

This chapter focuses on a selection of tools used for participatory communication, and explains how these may be used at any given time in the life cycle of a development project can facilitate mutual understanding and consensus-building, which are the main principles of participatory projects. Tools selected for discussion in this chapter are those relevant to the communities selected as a case study. These fall into the categories of (a) interpersonal communication, (b) traditional media, (c) group media, and (d) community media.

5.2 INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Interpersonal communication is typically face-to-face interaction. Leeuwis (2006:196) refers to interpersonal communication as communication in which the parties who are in communication are interacting at the same time and place. He also calls this face-to-face and non-mediated communication.

The day-to-day activities of a development communicator are characterised by interpersonal encounters with stakeholders of his development project. This shows how pervasive and important interpersonal communication is in the development project life cycle.

Research confirms that interpersonal communication is a powerful means of changing opinions, sustaining harmony in a group and a means of generating the necessary commitment towards the stated or implied communication objective (Matin, Jandaghi, Karimi & Hamidizadeh 2010:387). As stated by Matin *et al.* (2010:388), interpersonal communication can be used to influence public opinion and reduce (if not eliminate) apathy because it provides a two-way process of

communication in which there is feedback between the people involved. Through feedback, an opportunity for clarification and negotiation in order to arrive at a shared meaning is created and sustained. According to Dodd (1987:159) although other forms of communication such as media are very influential in increasing awareness and dissemination of salient information, interpersonal sources play a vital role in the decision to use the information.

Interpersonal communication allows the development planner to handle issues on one-on-one or one-to-a small group basis. However, it also gives the opportunity to air personal feelings, grudges and other interpersonal issues within the target community. In participatory development projects, interpersonal communication in rural communities can take place through the use of group discussions or meetings.

5.2.1 Group communication

Group communication as discussed here encapsulates group discussion and meeting. In the previous chapter (4.2.1), it was stated that group meetings or discussions were an interpersonal communication tool used by the development planner especially during his introduction of his project to the community members.

Before calling a group meeting or discussion, it is important for the development planner to establish the most positive way to do so in the particular community. Schoen (1996:261) have suggested that because there are different groups in a community, there may be a need to segment the meetings, so that people are assigned to various groups, based on an identified similarity, such as gender, age group, social class, etc. This is important because, as reported in Bessette (2004), in some settings, young people or women will not speak in the presence of the older men in their community, as a mark of deference. In addition, different communities have their own cultures that may affect group formation or gathering of people together for discussion. (The analysis of the data in Chapter Seven shows that young beneficiaries were reported to be inactive participants in the Nguni Cattle Project for similar reasons.)

According to Inagaki (2007:17), “group communication is a form of interpersonal communication and takes place in settings where people engage in discussion on matters of collective or communal importance.” This is one of the reasons Fraser

and Restrepo-Estrada (1998:275) consider group communication as a fundamental process of communication intervention as localised information needs to be analysed and debated. It is an important means of grassroots communication as it provides means to connect with the community (Mezzana 1996:191).

Group discussion is acknowledged by communication scholars as a tool that can be used in combination with other participatory communication tools such as participatory video. As stated by Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada (1998:277), “people exposed to information material may understand its significance in different ways, but the analysis and discussion that follows will help to clarify the issues and lead towards a consensus view.”

Group discussion or communication has been blended in participatory communication in the form of community members viewing video after production and then make them to discuss and exchange of ideas about it (Lunch 2007:28). This, according to Wang and Burris (1994:172), creates a space that allows the community members to critically and collectively examine their reality providing them with practical knowledge.

In the Nguni Cattle Project, photographs are used especially in the teaching of different outward symptoms of diseases on the cattle. With group communication, it is easy for the group of beneficiaries to come together to discuss what they have seen in the photographs. Group discussion or communication can complement photographs because it “provide an opportunity to have group discussions around a visual prompt which makes it easier than trying to talk about something in the abstract” (Cook & Hess 2007:32).

On a general note, the use of a group communication features prominently in this study. It was pointed in Chapter Four that the development communicator or planner needs good interpersonal skills, such as effective communication skills, to get the community to understand the participatory focus of the project. Moreover, the development communicator or planner needs to draw on these interpersonal communication skills when dealing with the local authorities and, in particular, when in a one-on-one meeting with husbands, who will want to be sufficiently convinced before they allow their wives to participate as respondents in the study.

Although it has been said that the use of interpersonal meetings puts the development planner or researcher in an innocuous but dominant role in communication, it should be noted that such meetings play a vital role in allowing the development planner to deal with matters on a personal level with the community.

5.3 TRADITIONAL MEDIA

In this section, the discussion will centre on traditional communication system, which refers to communication system used in rural areas besides the mainstream communication systems such as mass media (television and radio, newspaper).

Chukwu (2006:107) defines the traditional communication system as a “way of relaying information in rural areas, with the town crier as the purveyor of news”. Although Chukwu adds that this may also include the use of graphic elements, such as signs, colour and symbols, her definition is limited in that there is a host of other means of traditional communication in rural areas.

Onah (1996, cited in Chukwu 2006:108) looks at the traditional communication system in a broader form as “a continuous and persistent process of information dissemination, entertainment and education used in societies which have not been seriously dislocated *or influenced* by western culture or any other external influence” [Italics, my emphasis]. Onah’s definition aptly describes traditional communication in rural communities, as it acknowledges the presence of parallel communication systems, including radio, television and newspapers within these societies. There are very few, if any, communities that have not been influenced by mass media.

As has been discussed in Chapter Two, the influence of mass media in the dominant or modernisation paradigm did not yield the expected outcome in the developing nations. One of the alternative approaches described by scholars in response to the shortcomings of dominant paradigm was a consideration of how traditional media could be used in development communication. The modernisation approach, which characterised colonialism resulted in the displacement of traditional agriculture and social practices (Awa 1996:130). According to Jayaweera (1988, cited by Ayee 1993:55), it promoted unnecessary reliance on

mass media resulting in “consumerism and new individualism which in turn stimulated demand to a degree beyond the capacity of the economy to absorb.”

In most African countries, the majority of the population live in rural areas where development projects are mostly needed. Development projects in these communities must reflect the aspirations of these communities and this requires the use of traditional communication media and other culturally designed communication approaches (Boafo 2006). Traditional communication media falls under the broader traditional communication system and this includes gongs, flutes, use of symbols and signals such as canon shots (Nwabueze 2006:121).

Ayee (1993:57) divides traditional communication media into two categories: folk media and traditional media. Folk media include the performing arts such as folk dramas, dance, storytelling, traditional festivals, religious activities (Mersham, Rensburg & Skinner 1995:176; and Ayee 1993:57). Traditional media include communication and information sharing at meeting places, religious centres, and other community gathering places (Wang & Dissanayake 1984, cited in Ayee 1993:57).

Folk media, also referred to as oramedia, are conventional with cultural features that make them appropriate for the maintenance of social relationships and worldview of the traditional societies (Mersham *et al.* 1995:175). Use of oramedia media are appropriate when wishing to “speak to the common people in their language and their idiom” and can have direct relevance to their situation (Mersham *et al.* 1995:175).

Traditional media provide an alternative platform for development agents or planners to “involve all the poorest groups and classes who are often left out of development activities because of illiteracy or lack of understanding of the English or French”, according to Oso (2003, cited Nwabueze 2006:121). Examples provided by Boafo (2006) of the use of traditional media to address development challenges are as follows:

- the Theatre for Community Action project in Zimbabwe, which uses theatre to support and involve rural community members in several districts in Matabeleland in the combat against HIV/AIDS;

- the use of theatre and folk musical groups to disseminate agricultural information to farmers in rural communities in Nigeria;
- the transmission of messages about reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention through traditional dance and music in rural communities in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, among others;
- the use of participatory drama and folk music to address issues of gender inequality and HIV/AIDS in Niger State, Nigeria; and
- the transmission of messages about natural resources management through dramatic performances in Uganda.

Although traditional communication media are important in the production of culturally appropriate forms of communication, Boafo (2006) sounds a caveat. According to him, traditional communication media, like other forms of communication, have their disadvantages as “they are particularly deficient in simultaneous dissemination of information about development issues across wide and geographically disperse populations”.

Some of these traditional communication media will be discussed in the next section, beginning with theatre or traditional drama performance. The review will be limited to a few traditional communication media that can be used in the context of participatory communication.

5.3.1 Community theatre

The discussion of community theatre here is inclusive of community drama. Community theatre can play an important role as a tool for communication in development programme if used appropriately. Through a well-produced community theatre, it is possible to enact issues happening in the community in the form of entertainment couched in a message designed to bring about a change in behaviour.

Some scholars refer to the use of community theatre or drama as genre of entertainment-education (see 2.3.4.3) in development communication discourse because it is an educational message conveyed through a form of entertainment (Leeuwis 2006:221). Community theatre should be produced in cooperation with the local community and the characters used must be from the community

(Bessette 2004). Apart from the fact that this will make it participatory in nature, it will promote audience identification with the characters. As observed by Leeuwis, “through audiences’ identification with characters [...] they can be aware of and interested in the problems that these fictitious characters [...] experience.” Bessette (2004) adds that the message being conveyed through drama is more persuasive when the actors are from the local community.

The content of community theatre will lack impact if it is not about issues in the community. Leeuwis (2006:221) states that the most challenging issues facing rural communities, are health issues, family planning, intercultural conflict, farm succession, struggle for resources, etc. To these can be added intra-community conflicts stemming from disparate vested interests and politically-inspired conflict.

Bessette (2004) believes that through theatre debate and theatre forum, the messages conveyed are strengthened. He explains that theatre debate allows for an interaction with the audience after the play, while theatre forum creates a situation where “some parts of the play are played again by audience members, usually to try to convince a character of the play to change her behaviour” (Bessette 2004).

Leeuwis notes that community theatre can be used to solve community problems that are not discussed openly. The enactment must be such that it will provoke debate and discussion after people have seen the theatrical performance. This means that though the issues are not commonly and openly discussed – perhaps because of their sensitive nature – exposure to the dramatised message should result in awareness and de-emphasis (and possibly elimination) of sanction with regard to how the nature of discourse of such issues are handled. Bessette (2004) sees community theatre as an opportunity to depict the problem situations of the community on stage, thereby consequentially making it possible for the community “to address sensitive issues and encourage people to express their reactions”.

This reminds me of a friend⁴ (a Zambian national) who said his family occupied an exalted and prominent position in his village, but things started taking negatives turn due to a HIV/AIDS-related death in his family. He related the efforts her

⁴ This story narrated here was not corroborated by the parents of my friend, as they could not be reached. However, some other Zambians agreed that they were aware of similar efforts made through community theatres in their country.

parents made to conceal the source of the death in his family, even when they knew it was HIV/AIDS. According to him, being wealthy and highly regarded members of the community, his parents were not comfortable disclosing the cause of his siblings' death, which they instead blamed on witchcraft.

He said they were a family of twelve, but by the time the fourth family member died his parents and the entire family were confused. In their quest for a solution, they were introduced to HIV/AIDS support groups in another community. Here they attended a theatre performance in which people relived their pain and sorrow, but at the same time showed the reality of HIV/AIDS accompanied by a message that the only way to prevent its spread is to facilitate open discussion about it.

My friend said his father became evangelical about the effect of HIV/AIDS in his village, using his money to invite experts to talk to the villagers about HIV/AIDS. However, his father did not take the further step to tell the members of the village that he had lost four children through HIV/AIDS until his fifth child developed symptoms and became ill with HIV/AIDS. With the permission of this infected child, the father took to the streets in the village to spread information about HIV/AIDS, using the example of his sick daughter and those who had died.

To drive home the message, a play about the family's response to the plague was enacted. Graphic pictures of his siblings showing their struggle against HIV/AIDS until they succumbed were shown during the enactment. In conclusion, my friend said that the spread of the disease was checked and his parents became heroes in the village.

My friend's story reveals how to use community theatre, in combination with other communication tools, successfully. As narrated, my friend's parents used drama to tell their story, and in order to drive home the message, they added pictures and video recordings of their children's struggle against the disease. The pictures and video recordings were shown on a screen that magnified the images. Bessette (2004) refers to the use of community theatre in combination with other communication tools as a "global strategy". The play and the tools must be complementary, allowing interactive activities with the intention to increase awareness on a given issue.

An advantage of community theatre as a development communication tool lies in its suitability for use in the absence of other communication tools, such as conventional mass media (radio, television and newspapers). Community theatre has been used successfully by international development organisations in rural areas in Nigeria, where the practice of using community radio for the rural population is still uncommon (Okunna 2005:622). The erratic Nigerian electric power system makes communication through television a problem even in urban areas, let alone the villages. This, according to Dagron (2001:19) in his report of a study sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, led to the popularity of local theatre in Nigeria. Dagron contends that even where there is access to radio and television, the impact is questionable given that the establishment of

small drama groups at the level of local governments greatly contributed to support health and education activities with innovative means of communication, using the most important local resources: people, culture, tradition and language (2001:19-20).

Dagron (2001:20) adds that the impact of theatre on the audience can be evaluated immediately because of its face-to-face format. Unfortunately, no further explanation was provided by Dagron about this as it is, to me, contentious regarding how it stands to reasoning about being able to evaluate impact of theatre on the audience immediately. I would want to add that the impact can be evaluated on a long term basis as the people demonstrate the behavioural changes that necessitated the production of the theatre.

Community theatre strengthens participation through establishing a live dialogue, the local relevance of the content, the preservation of traditional values and “communicating in the local language contributes to the process of community participation” (Dagron 2001:20). Community theatre as discussed is an important vehicle to get messages across to people. Unfortunately, throughout the period this study lasted, there was no instance of its use in the communities that partook in this study. In other words, it is not one of communication methods used in the Nguni Cattle Project.

5.3.2 Other traditional media

There are many communication media in rural communities, but here the review will focus on those media in the communities identified for this study. Chukwu

(2006:111) states that there are verbal and non-verbal systems of traditional communication, and these should be explored for their potential in contributing to the realisation of communication objectives in the community, by the development communication specialist. However, the emphasis of the review below will be on the verbal traditional systems of communication and structures in rural communities that facilitate communication.

5.3.2.1 Market square

The reference to a market square here does not in any sense imply that it is a communication tool, but rather that it is being considered as an access through which other communication tools can be used. In many rural communities, there are places set aside for the rural dwellers to sell their farm produce or anything else they have to offer, and to buy the products they need. This is usually referred to as the market square, where people converge to exchange goods, money and news. Chukwu (2006:111) stresses that this venue can be used to effectively disseminate information to all the stakeholders identified in a development project.

Market squares can serve as a good platform to communicate with the rural people. For example, some of the modes of group discussion discussed above (see 5.2.1) can take place at the market square. It can be used as a meeting place for a group discussion or a one-on-one meeting. The market square could be used for a venue for a community theatre production, as it inherently means that a significant number of people will be at a particular place at the same time, thus giving the development communicator an ideal opportunity to stage a play. Written notices for meetings and any other information about the development project can be put at strategic positions in the market place. Loud hailers can also be used to pass messages about the development project to the crowd at the market.

The essence of any group communication is to ensure that a significant number of people are reached by the medium of communication selected and this is why market square in the rural community is important. However, in the communities studied for this research, the concept of market square does not apply. In some smaller communities, there are no market squares or communal trading places. These communities usually rely on small shops where the day-to-day necessities

are sold. The members of the community often meet in these shops and discuss issues of note to their community.

5.3.2.2 Town crier

Generally speaking, the town crier's job is to convey information from the local traditional authority to the community members. Etukudo (1989, cited in Chukwu 2006:111) describes him as follows:

The town crier is a member of the town or village caucus with the responsibility to communicate the decision of the town's highest administering body to the rest of the people. He uses a wooden gong, and most times steel gong, he is seen as the purveyor of news, with impeccable character.

The concept of a town crier has different connotations in different communities, but the particular element that is common to all in Etukudo's description, is his reference to the crier as a member of the community and as the news purveyor. In the communities studied for this research, the town crier, referred to in isiXhosa as *abapapashi*, takes a more modern slant and drives a motor car around the area slowly and uses a loud hailer to pass information to the villagers.

The town crier can be a message purveyor for the development communicator or planner but this has to be done with permission of the local authorities, such as the chairperson or the chief of the community. In Chapter Four, it was emphasised that the development planner should make sure that the message to be communicated does not stop with the community chairperson or chief, but reaches a significant percentage of the community in order to avoid what Bessette refers to as an 'artificial situation' (see 4.2.1). In this regard, the town crier can be of immense use to take the message to the community and to ensure that there is as wide a coverage as possible.

5.3.2.3 The church

The church, like the market square, offers a good opportunity to reach many the community members at the same time. All Christian community members are likely to congregate for church services. In rural communities, the church is not only a place of worship, but is regarded as a vital outlet for information (Chukwu 2006:112). Indeed, development communication specialists can make use of church services to communicate messages about development projects.

Akpan (1977, reported in Chukwu 2006:112) believes the church is also an indirect means of communication, especially in reinforcing and changing attitudes or group norms. Akpan's assertion aptly captures how the church influences its members through its pastors and leaders. Many development projects find it difficult to convey the necessary information to the community members because they have been unable to overcome the prevalent age-old norms of the community. Pastors in the church can be useful in this regard, as the worshippers look up to them for spiritual guidance and any other socio-culturally related matters.

Thus, the church can serve as forum through which the development communicator or planner could seek to increase awareness about particular issues needed to get the development project going. Indeed, if the planner is able to win the cooperation of the church management or the pastor, he might even be given permission to address the church congregants.

In addition, the data in this study also points to the fact that pastors and ministers in rural areas wield enormous influence in their communities, especially among their own members. This makes the pastor of the church an important opinion leader. Thus, when considering how information is disseminated in rural communities, it may help to include the role of the church as epitomised by its pastors.

The church can also play a role in influencing the acceptance of the message disseminated, especially in creating a balance between the traditional culture and information that may undermine such cultural practices. In some of the rural communities studied in this research, there are no churches. The Christian respondents claimed they attend church services in other nearby rural communities or even in the closest town, thus exposing them to influences outside their village, and making them less insular.

5.3.2.4 Village square or community centre

The village square is very similar to the market square, except that it is a place in the village for gathering when meetings are held and for other gatherings of the villagers. This meeting place varies from community to community and, as noted by Chukwu, this can simply be a spot under an umbrella tree or a purposively-built community centre.

The village square should be used by the development communication specialist to ensure that significant members of the community are given information about the development project. This can be in any of the forms identified above in the discussion of the market square.

Five of the communities that took part in this study reported that they do hold their meetings in an open place they regard as their village square, especially during summer. In these communities, the focus group interview I did was in an open place, though in some of these communities there are community centres or halls.

5.4 GROUP MEDIA

The relevant group media discussed in this section are participatory video, participatory photographs and posters. These are widely used in some of the beneficiary communities in the Nguni Cattle Project.

5.4.1 Participatory video

Participatory video has been referred to with many names by scholars. Some call it alternative video, popular video, community video, or video of popular movement. Gray-Felder (in Dagon 2001:4) points out that unlike radio, “video gives us the ability to see and hear these voices, thereby allowing our emotions to be touched in ways never imagined before the advent of moving pictures”. Participatory video recording is an effective participatory communication tool because it allows people to be brought together to explore issues and concerns (Mwanundu & Fara 2010:23). Video recording enables the participatory development communicator to illustrate a problem and where there is solution, video recordings can also be used to demonstrate it (Bessette 2004:123; and Mwanundu & Fara 2010:23).

Based on my personal experience, video recordings as described by Bessette, are good for illustrating problems a society faces or is likely to face, while at the same time, giving an opportunity to show to the community members some footage of expected solutions. This applies when there is comparable situation in other community which is video-recorded and could be shown to other community in terms of the magnitude of the problem and how the problem has been dealt with. The community is most likely to accept the message in the video if the information indicates a similar or horizontal experience in other community.

A good use of video recording is to stimulate discussion. Bessette notes that it should be used to introduce a discussion or an issue which will be followed by a discussion among community members (Bessette 2004:124). Similarly, Dagron (2001:63) notes that “When organising in rural villages and urban slums, video productions can act as a magnet for people to meet and start discussions on the issues portrayed”.

Apart from the use of video recording to stimulate group discussions, it can also be used to complement other communication tools, such as community theatre, group communication or discussion and it is central to the production of many television programmes. For example, the Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA) in India have used videotaping to successfully increase awareness of women’s issues by recording a short programme that was broadcast by a television station for wider coverage.⁵

Bessette (2004:123) advises that when a decision is reached to use video as one of the communication tools in a participatory project, the process of planning and producing the video must include the community members. In addition, Lowen (2008:34) states that the video recordings should be made in the language used in the community, in order for the community members to be able to relate better to the story portrayed.

Participatory video is effective for training, especially where technical skills are to be imparted to the community. For example, it could be useful in training the Nguni Cattle Project’s farmers on how to distribute their herd over the grazing area and maintenance of farm equipment. In addition, many community project planners use participatory video to train selected trainee members of the community, who will then use the video to impart the knowledge gained to other members of the community.

Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:74) show that video has high appeal and credibility and is an effective medium to draw community’s attention to important issues. Although they state that a participatory video is an effective communication tool to use in a television campaign where the objective is to persuade people to agree to a certain change, they remark that such a campaign message, intended to

⁵ <http://c4c.org/about/participatorycommunication.html>

air through television, must be planned with caution because many community members do not have access to television in rural areas. They advise that

If you plan a mass campaign and you intend to use video, or television, you should first investigate the penetration levels, i.e. establish how many people have access to video or television. As a final recommendation, keep in mind the purpose of video you intend to produce, the people you intend to produce it with. When in doubt, ask for advice from experts (2004:74).

In order to ensure that the video has high appeal and credibility, it should be produced in the local language or dialect and in accordance to the ways of the community. When this is done, Lowen (2008:34) remarks that the video will have impact and “people can’t dismiss the stories as happening somewhere”. As stated earlier, video is a powerful medium to reflect horizontal experience. This means that a video portraying experience or issues of another rural community – especially a rural community known by the community being shown the video – will appeal to the members of the community and the story portrayed in it will sound credible to the community. This can be applied to the Nguni Cattle project, where the farmers involved spread across several provinces in South Africa. Where there is a positive story about aspects of Nguni Cattle practice, this story should be recorded on video and shown in other communities to motivate and reinforce the messages communicated by the development planners.

In the communities that this study investigated, video was used for training by the beneficiaries. Some of the communities said they used it to record group meetings in order to indicate to their sponsors of the project and other projects in the communities they are involved, the progress that is being made. They also claim that such videos enable them to demonstrate to their potential development agents that the strength of the communities in terms of decision-making and consensus-building required by many NGOs of a local communities.

5.4.2 Participatory photographs

Photographs, as a communication tool, can be used to complement other communication tools, such as group discussion. They are used as an illustration to aid the understanding of the topic under discussion (Bessette 2004). Participatory photographs give voice to the grassroots community. According to Clover (2006:276), “marginalized or disadvantaged people are provided cameras and the

opportunity to document, analyses, and make meaning of their own experiences and realities through images and symbols of their own choosing.”

Wang and Burris (1994:180, 184) describe participatory photographs as a dialogic tool because they “provide both evidence and validation of shared concerns”. Wang and Burris also analyse participatory photograph from a Freirian perspective of critical consciousness and state that “photographs serve as one kind of code that reflect the community back upon itself, mirroring the everyday social and political realities that influence people’s lives” (1994:172).

Photographs can be put to a lot of use in rural community. They may be used by development communicator to illustrate issues under discussion during group communication or meeting. I have been involved in an awareness raising exercise against malnutrition in rural communities, where photographs were used as illustration of children suffering from malnutrition. In this regard, Bassette (2004) states that photographs stimulate discussion and this could be about any matter affecting the community.

As an evidence of the type of problem the farmers are having, photographs may also be used. As noted by Bassette (2004), it is wise to give farmers cameras which they will use to take shot of the problem and then discussed it with agricultural extension officer or development planner who might not have opportunity to visit the site of the problem. Such photography would be an effective means of communication with the Nguni Cattle Project’s beneficiaries. By photographing their problems and sending these as illustrations in their communication with the agricultural extension representative or any other expert assigned to help them, they may be able to receive the necessary advice faster. The agricultural extension officer could collect and group photographs depicting a particular problem and conduct a discussion, either with other farmers or with specialists in the field, to find possible solutions. In the context of the project this study is based on, the beneficiaries keep photographs of their dead cattle as part of their record keeping. Some of the communities do records of the meeting with development agents in the form of group photographs taken with them.

5.5 COMMUNITY MEDIA

In this section, 'community mass media' refers to community radio, television and newspapers. Community media "encompasses a range of community-based activities intended to supplement, challenge, or change the operating principles, structures, financing, and cultural forms and practices associated with dominant media" (Howley 2010:2).

5.5.1 Community radio

The first recorded use of community radio, according to Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada (2002:70) dates back more than 50 years, when community radios in Bolivia were used to agitate for better working conditions for tin miners. Community radio is also referred to as rural or participatory radio (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:50-51) and it used to be a rarity in Africa. Following a conference called *Freedom for African Radios* held in Bamako in 1993, several countries recognised the importance and effectiveness of community radio. Consequently, community radio stations have increased in number exponentially and some African countries now have dozens of them (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada 2002:71). South Africa is a country where the culture of community radio has long been sustained. There is even a publicly funded institution, *The Media Diversity and Development Agency* (MDDA) that provides grants to community radio stations and other forms of community media.

Community radio is different from other types of mass media because it is run on a non-profit basis and it is owned and managed by the community it serves, in most cases through a trust or foundation (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada 2002:71). However, Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada note that many people are unaware of what the term 'community radio' actually means. They state that just because a radio is owned and managed by an NGO or religious organisation and that the radio station broadcasts issues about the local community, does not make it a community radio, unless it meets the definition given above.

In the wake of the rejection of the dominant paradigm, community radio has been recognised as an effective communication tool for community participation. Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada argue that community radio "can provide the platform for the public dialogue through which people can define who they are, what they want, and

how to get it, at the same time building long term capacity to solve problems in ways that lead to sustainable social change and development” (2002:70). Thus, the consideration of community radio here will focus on radio owned by the community for the purpose of broadcasting community-based issues.

As already noted, the participants in Nguni Cattle Projects are spread across several provinces in South Africa. Community radio would offer them a platform to discuss their experiences and challenges as Nguni cattle farmers. Using this relatively inexpensive communication tool (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada 2002:69), the community members will also be able to raise other mutual issues and through these efforts promote a sustainable, enabling environment for general farming practices. In this regard, the Centre for International Media Assistance ([CIMA] 2007:6) states that community radio plays an important function in “mobilizing groups to action by informing and empowering citizens, in giving voice to the marginalized groups of society, and in bringing community needs to the attention of local and even national governments”.

The essence of community radio is captured in its representation of the day-to-day activities of the community. It deals with the community in their language and culture and this allows people to relate to it and see it as part of tool that helps them to actualise their dreams and aspirations. It can also be a means of horizontal exchange of information between the communities where there are participating beneficiaries in the Nguni Cattle Project. Success stories recorded in one community can be shared with other communities to motivate them.

Community radio can be used to increase awareness of particular issues and to share information about innovations and advances (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada 2002:71). The participants of a project such as the Nguni Cattle Project would benefit from the use of community radios in their communities. A community radio that is sensitive to the development issues in its area of broadcast will transmit information that is useful to the community. With respect to Nguni Cattle Project, a community radio geared to their needs would ideally broadcast information about technologies that will help these farmers. Such broadcast should be in the language of the community and where there are technical terms, they should be adapted, using words that the community can understand and relate to.

Community radio can be put to many other uses. One of the complementary uses discussed by Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada (2002:72) is the UNESCO sponsored programme where community radio is used to link people with the Internet. They refer to a programme called 'Radio browsing the Internet' that allows the community radio broadcasters to discuss relevant information in different websites in the local language. The community members can then request information in areas of health, agriculture, poverty alleviation measures, etc., and the radio personnel will search for relevant websites. Once the information requested is available, it is broadcast. Thus, it is not only the person who has requested the information that will benefit, other members of the community will be benefit because the information is aired for the benefit of all listeners.

This appears to be a good platform to search the World Wide Web for information and technological advances that may be useful to the community. Unfortunately, this will still take years to introduce and implement in the communities being studied in this research, where at present there is no community radio and Internet access is only available to a very few of the Nguni Cattle Project's beneficiaries, who also hold white collar jobs.

Community radio can also be put to use through Radio Listening Club (RLC), described in Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:51). According to these scholars, the origin of Radio Listening Club is attributed to the Zimbabwe Chapter of the Federation of Africa Media Women. The RLC was started as a project to provide the rural population of Zimbabwe a platform to share ideas on varied issues through radio. In their description of how the programme works, Mefalopulos and Kamlongera state that "[a] co-ordinator services the RLC regularly. RCLs are formed entirely by members of the community, and the co-ordinator assists in the recording of the intended issues" (2004:51). After the issues have been recorded, the co-ordinator gets expert feedback from specialists, which is recorded. Then the co-ordinator matches the original community recording with the feedbacks provided by the experts and then transmits the programme.

The RLC is participatory and "People in the community have the opportunity to set the agenda and contribute to the programme expressing their needs, concerns and priority interests" (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:51). They also state that in the RLC, the flow of information can be horizontal, that is, from one community to

others; bottom up in the form information flow from the community to policy and decision-makers or local authorities; and top down in the responses. The programme has been lauded for its effectiveness. Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:51) cite the comments of the members of the RLC who agree

that listening to radio programmes on their personal receivers is not as effective as listening to the same programme on their RLC receiver. This is so because after listening to the programme on their RLC receiver they discuss and share their ideas.

The communities this study has investigated do not have community radio. The closest to what can be described as community radio to the communities is Radio Forte FM, based at University of Fort Hare (UFH), Alice. A monitoring of the programmes of this station has shown that it does not broadcast issues about Nguni Cattle Project, which is an UFH initiative, let alone other community issues. It is mainly concerned with student related issues. Other community radio stations in Eastern Cape, whose frequencies extend to the communities this study is based on, are Grahamstown Community Radio and Graaf-Reinet Community Radio. However, the respondents in this study indicated that they do not listen to these radio stations. The Umhlobo Wenene radio station, broadcasting in isiXhosa, has a significant number of listeners among the respondents of this study, but it is not a community radio as defined above. The discussion about community radio here was done, based on the assumption of the availability of community radio, where the use or functions would facilitate a participatory approach to a development programme such as Nguni Cattle Project.

5.5.2 Community television

In the 1980's and early to middle 1990's, television ownership was seen as a luxury for a selected few in rural South Africa. Nowadays, many rural dwellers own television sets, but most of the programmes transmitted do not bear relevance to their community's needs. Community television, like community radio, is owned by the community for the purpose of covering issues pertinent to it. In South Africa, the concept of community television has not gained momentum, although it is popular in other countries such as India, Brazil and Cuba. The discussion of television here will focus on how television can be used for communication for rural development.

In South Africa, mass media in the form of television is still controlled by the government through the public-owned broadcasting authority – South African Broadcasting Authority (SABC). In addition to this, there is a free-to-air private television station known as e-TV. There are other television stations besides the SABC stations (SABC 1, SABC 2, and SABC 3) and e-TV, but these are private stations that can only be accessed through paid subscription.

The importance of television in promoting rural development cannot be overemphasised. As noted by Yadava (1993:112) television provides an interface as well as interaction between mass media and other modes of communication and this gives it a significant leverage in reach and effect process. The transmission of scientific and technological innovations about agriculture, and cattle rearing practices in rural areas are better served by television as opposed to radio and newspaper. The transmission of the scientific and technological innovations through newspaper requires literacy, which is a rarity in the rural areas. In terms of community radio, scientific and technological innovations can be transmitted in the local language or dialect, but the fact that the information being transmitted cannot be complemented by visual images is a disadvantage, and therefore makes television an attractive medium.

Ezeokoli (1987, in Ajia n.d.:42) notes that television has the ability to convey several types of signals at the same time as well as other mutually reinforcing paralinguistic features such as gestures, words, postures and sounds. Critiquing radio as medium for effective message dissemination, Ramanamma (1993:153) argues that “people may hear a message just once and may not be able to recall the information” when there is need to use it. Ramanamma states that, as opposed to other mass media, television

provides words with pictures and sounds effects as movies do, it has a greater impact as large number of people simultaneously. As a communication form it is powerful because of its potential to integrate several communication forms using oral and visual media, increasing its impact (1993:154).

For example, television can be used to demonstrate the benefits of improved farming practices in order to persuade the rural farmers to adopt the ideas and technologies supporting these practices. Television is important at the knowledge stage of the innovation decision-making process where several communication

forms can be integrated into a television programme designed to inform or bring a particular innovation to the attention of the farmers.

The importance of opinion leaders and progressive farmers in innovation adoption has been reported widely by Rogers (1962:208), Dodd (1987:272) and Leeuwis (2006:132-133). Opinion leaders and progressive farmers are important in persuading other farmers to adopt a given innovation because they are respected, and are seen as sources of information and general advice about farming (Rogers 1962:218). These progressive farmers can appear on local television to promote new ideas, because “farmers respond readily to what is said especially when it comes from other farmers” like them (Ramanamma 1993:154).

Most of the respondents to this study regard their television as a means of entertainment, and do not expect to see programmes about farming or cattle rearing practices. This may explain why a relatively insignificant percentage of respondents who said they were aware of the of the SABC TV 2 programme, Agric TV on air everyday between 5.30am to 6am, but would not watch it even if contained relevant programmes on cattle, as they would rather watch an entertainment programme. Indeed, this is not unique to South Africa, as Yadava (1993:113) and Ramanamma (1993:154) report that farmers and rural communities in India switch on the television for entertainment purposes, as do their urban counterparts. An appropriate television programme response would be an edutainment type of programme that offers the twin purposes of entertainment and education to the rural community (see 2.3.4.3).

Bessette (2004) sees a great advantage of using television in participatory development projects in countries where the notion of community television is subscribed to. According to him, community television can be used to host and stimulate debates about issues relevant to the development of the community. As a mass medium in which a debate can be watched live, issues can be taken out of the television studio into a situation where they are further discussed and debated in several other platforms in community.

A way to add credibility to the matters discussed is to use role models and prominent members of the community in debates. Community members are more likely to give serious thought to these issues when they listen to people they

identify with and respect. This, as has been mentioned above, may encourage participation in a development programme as people first have to buy into the ideas informing the participatory project.

Another way television can be used in a participatory manner is to ensure that members of the community are involved in the design of the television programme (Ramanamma1993:158). It is my view that this follows the point, raised above, about television being a stimulator and host of debates about issues in the community. It is only when the objectives for a community project are well-debated and digested by the members of the community that they will want to be involved as protagonists in the production of a programme designed to address the challenges identified in their community.

As earlier asserted, rural communities are more likely to believe the contents of television programmes if they identify with the personalities in the programme. For this reason, Ramanamma (1993:159) suggests that “programmes should be made in such a way a rural person identifies the ‘actors’ as members of their village”, [sic]. Like all other communication tools in a participatory development project, the bottom-up approach should inform the collection of information and how the information will be broadcast. For example, Ramanamma (1993:159) suggests that the community members should be consulted about the topics or areas in which they require information. This is to ensure that the information being broadcast is what the community wants. It will also ensure that it is not done at the behest of the people at the top but drawn “from rural resources for its contents and presentation style” and this is best done using the interpersonal channels that already exist in the community (Ramanamma 1993:159; and Ajia n.d.:54)

5.5.3 Community newspapers

A community newspapers is a community medium that, according to Ajia (n.d.:41), complements centralised media because it affords “community-located inputs in programme production, management, ownership and control”. A community newspaper is also an identified community medium used by development communicators to ensure grassroots’ participation in development of their community (Nwodu 2006:196; and Kasoma 1991:58).

Unlike other community media such as radio and television, the use of a community newspaper has limitations in terms of reaching members of the community. This is because many rural dwellers are illiterate or not sufficiently educated to be able to read and understand the contents of the newspaper. Thus, newspaper is not a preferred medium of communication in the rural areas.

Users of this medium require a level of formal education to be able to read and understand the contents of a newspaper, be it published in their mother tongue or, as is usually the case in South Africa, the two *de facto* official languages – English and Afrikaans. This is corroborated by the data collected in this study, where an overwhelming majority of the respondents reported that they do not read newspapers because they are illiterate. The publishers of the local ‘community’ newspapers corroborated this data, agreeing that their newspapers have a low readership in some of the rural communities they serve, due to illiteracy.

In a community without the challenge of illiteracy, Bessette (2004) says that community newspaper is an effective medium in strengthening participatory development message, especially in informing the community and other stakeholders of the progress of the development project. Beside this, Bessette does not see any other way community newspaper can be used as a tool of communication in a participatory development project. However, he adds that it is advisable that the local journalists are informed at the inception of the project in order to develop a partnership that will ensure coverage of the project as it evolves.

As a community medium, Nwodu (2006:203) advises that the newspaper should cover issues in the community where it is located as well as nearby communities. Coverage of issues in nearby communities may provide horizontal information, such as a story about a successful project that the participatory development communicator may find useful to communicate to his/her project’s target community, especially when there is a need to persuade the community’s members. Importantly, Nwodu (2006:201) states that the newspaper must identify with the interest and values of the community in which it operates and it should at all times do research to ascertain the interest of the community.

In a personal communication, Mr Ssemanganda, editor of a community newspaper in Uganda, said that most of the contents of his newspaper are provided by the

community and his regular meetings with the community give him direction when deciding what will make it to print. Mr Ssemanganda's newspaper does not have a problem of readership, as it is a community newspaper for urban dwellers, and reports on about eighty percent of the community interests. Mr Ssemanganda remarks that his newspaper covers matters about development projects in the community by first explaining the stated objectives of the project in the community and then, on request from the development agent, his newspaper encourages the community members to participate in the process of implementation. This appropriately describes the extent to which a community newspaper can be used in a participatory development project. In the communities this study has investigated, the following local newspapers that describe themselves as community papers are:

- iDikelethu Newspaper
- Fort Beaufort Newspaper
- Ilitha Newspaper
- The Voice
- Izimvo
- Eastern Cape Today.

These newspapers are published in English and isiXhosa, but none of them has a foothold in the rural areas. Citing illiteracy, the editors of these newspapers said it does not make sense to concentrate on the rural communities. They also stated that they had no reason to cover news or matters about the Nguni Cattle Project.

Mass media, which includes community newspapers, according to Dodd (1987:159) are exceptionally influential in increasing awareness and bringing salient information about events, ideas and innovations. Although the impact of the lack of community newspapers may be negligible, due to the availability of other communication tools such Internet, cellular telephone-based news, interpersonal contacts, etc, the appropriate use of a community newspaper can play complementary function to the communication tools and channels of communication.

5.6 Information and communication technologies (ICTs)

There are several definitions of ICTs, and in this study the definitions given by Ngege (2003:1-2) and the European Commission (2001:3) will be given. Ngege defines ICTs as technologies that permit and facilitate the handling of different forms of communication between people and electronic systems. These technologies, according to him allow the users to capture, store, process, communicate and display information. A similar description by the European Commission (2001:3) states that ICTs are used by individual, communities, government services as enabling application technologies that use several types of equipment and software over telecommunication networks to improve their communication system.

Some relevant applications of ICTs in participatory development will be discussed in this section. The focus here is on the belief that access to information will place the target audience in a better position to participate in discussions regarding developments in their communities. Participatory development communicators will always find ICTs useful in almost every stage of their communicative relationship with the stakeholders. For example, software like PowerPoint is useful when there is a need to show a point-by-point analysis of the project he/she manages. Using this type of software, photographs and other illustrations necessary to substantiate certain issues being discussed can be stored in the computer (Bessette 2004).

There are numerous software packages and programmes that can facilitate the stakeholders' relationship with the development communicator, but unfortunately, these are still too expensive for the rural dwellers to afford. For instance, these days the development communicator does not need to be physically present in all meetings with the stakeholders because the use of Skype⁶ will allow him/her real-time visual and auditory interaction with the stakeholders of his/her project. Thus, the stakeholders and the development communicator can discuss important matters, as well as respond to each other's non-verbal cues and other paralinguistic elements.

In the context of the communities this study is based on, this is still a distant dream because apart from the fact that they do not own computers, they do not have the

⁶ Skype is a software application that allows users to make free calls over the Internet. It is possible to see the person on the other side through the use of an optic attachment.

level of computer literacy needed. Unfortunately, this applies to both the beneficiary members of the project and to some of the agricultural extension officers.

5.6.1 Cellular telephones

Many rural communities all over the world used to be excluded from easy access to communication and information but this has changed with the advent of cellular telephone. The use of these mobile devices in rural development is one area in ICTs that has received much attention across Africa, especially in Kenya, Ghana and South Africa.

Mobile applications or software can be downloaded by cellular telephone users, and as noted by Nyirenda-Jere (2010:3) these are effective in making necessary information available to rural communities. Cellular telephone is particularly suitable for this purpose because it is a technology people can easily access, it is lightweight and mobile, has a reasonable battery charge life and usable anywhere there is coverage from the networks, as opposed to other technologies, such as computers (Nyirenda-Jere 2010:3).

These applications can be used for mobile banking, weather details and agricultural market data (Nyirenda-Jere 2010:3) market prices, micro-insurance schemes and farmers are able to find prices about farm produces by send sending text message to other farmers or agricultural produce market (Ogunlesi 2012). All these will make the practice of rural agriculture easier, and may find greater acceptance from the farmers. Thus, the Nguni Cattle Project's participants can benefit from the use of cellular telephones and their applications.

One mobile application that the Nguni Cattle Project participants may find useful is called M-Farm. It is a mobile application that is recognised as the world first mobile phone for cow. According to Ogunlesi (2012), "it is an SMS or voice service that allows dairy farmers to track their cow's gestation, acting in effect as a veterinary midwife. Farmers are also given tips on breeding and nutrition".

Mobile applications are used in response to the shortcomings of the text messaging or short message system (SMS), according to Haynes (2010:4). Although, the use of SMS application is a way to disseminate information, the critique put forward by Haynes (2010:4) reveals that it is not an entirely reliable

means to elicit participatory communication. As argued by Haynes, one can only send a limited amount of information by SMS and it is not always possible to send visual information such as video or animation which can be used to buttress issues covered in message sent. Text messaging, especially in South Africa, is expensive in comparison to other applications, such as Mxit.

To mitigate some of the shortcomings of SMS, mobile applications that are cheaper and can be downloaded to low-cost cellular telephones have been developed, according to Haynes (2010:4). Based on Haynes' descriptions of available applications, for example, a livestock related application can provide information to rural livestock farmers through animation about the correct ways to milk cows or to mix medicine to treat cattle diseases according to the veterinary doctor's advice.

A web-based system called *JamiiX*, developed by a lecturer at the Cape Peninsular University of Technology (Parker 2010:8) is designed using 'wi-fi' so that cellular telephone users can access chat platforms such as Mxit. Parker explains that "JamiiX works with most chat or instant messaging system to which members send and receive messages back from their 'friends' who are also logged on at that moment".

JamiiX can be used by anyone with cellular telephone capable of connecting to the Internet, something that is now possible even for many low-end handsets (Parker 2010:9). JamiiX has been found particularly suitable for rural communities as study has shown that more than 25 millions are already using similar chat platform, according to Parker (2010:9). JamiiX is also inexpensive. Parker points out that to send an SMS in South Africa "costs, on average, about seven eurocents but subscribers can send up to 50,000 messages with JamiiX for the same price".

Regarding how JamiiX can be used by farmers, Parker points out that the platform can be used to deliver agricultural information or to send messages to a large number of people at low cost. He adds that farmers can use JamiiX to ask for specific advice from agricultural experts, such as agricultural extension officers, researchers or from their fellow local farmers who use the system.

Although the merits of JamiiX usage via cellular telephone, as expounded by Parker, show promise in the drive to make communication participatory, its reliance

on the Internet is an indication that this will take many years before it becomes available in rural communities in South Africa. Apart from the fact that data collected in this study show that almost all rural farmers who are participants in this study do not use the Internet, even if they wished to do so, the cost is prohibitive. For example, the price of a Vodacom data bundle that is used to access Internet for more than an hour is beyond the reach of many in rural communities. While it is not clear what type of low-end cellular telephones Parker refers to, most of the cheap cellular telephones owned by people in rural communities in South Africa are not capable of Internet connectivity.

5.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, several communication tools were discussed in terms of their suitability for participatory development projects. Attention was given to interpersonal communication tools such as group communication or meetings. Traditional media and traditional platforms that could be used to facilitate other types of communication tools in the rural areas were enumerated. Emphasis was placed on community theatre, the village and market squares. A discussion of group media, including participatory video recordings and photographs was given. It was pointed out that these media could complement other communication tools such as group discussion and television.

Mass media such as community radio, television, and newspapers were discussed. Of all the mass media discussed in this chapter, community radio was cited as being inexpensive and medium capable of giving voice to the voiceless as illustrated by Mefalopulos and Kamlongera's (2004:52) description of a radio listening club. It was shown that the importance of community television in rural development cannot be overemphasised because of its potential to integrate various other communication forms in the form of oral and visual media. Community newspapers can also facilitate grassroots' participation in development but the fact that it is not accessible to an illiterate target audience was cited as a decided drawback. Finally, ICTs were discussed, focussing mainly on different mobile applications which can be downloaded by cellular telephone users. It was indicated that through these applications, farmers can access the information they may need in their farming practices.

CHAPTER SIX: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, a discussion of communication tools in terms of their suitability for participatory development project was given. In this chapter, the methodology used for this study will be discussed, focusing on the research approach, the sampling methods, data collection methods and data analysis used. The reasons underlying the selected approach and methods will be given.

There are two commonly used research approaches, which are namely qualitative and quantitative approaches. In some research, the two approaches are combined, while in others, a single approach is preferred. In this study, the qualitative approach has been used, as the quantitative approach was considered unsuitable for the nature of study carried out.

6.2 QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

A quantitative approach is often used in studies rooted in objectivist and modernist epistemologies. It is premised on the belief that reality can be discovered through empirical and scientific methods expressed in numerical form or in quantitative terms (Babbie 2007:405). This is common in studies where the emphasis is on precise measurement and manipulation of variables through experimental design (Allen, Titsworth & Hunt 2009:7) in order to have findings that are generalisable and based on objective facts.

Neuman (2000:66) points out that as a research approach that can also be described as positivist, a quantitative study is mainly concerned with discovering and confirming a set of probabilistic causal laws necessary in the prediction of common pattern of human activity.

Not all scholars believe that the quantitative approach is a suitable research approach. For example, Denzin and Lincoln (1998:8) argue that it is overly reliant on measurement and analysis of causal relationship between variables at the expense of process and meaning. Moreover, this approach has been described as inappropriate when there is need to demonstrate the correspondence between what has been measured and “reality” and it provides insufficient “truth” necessary in context of practice (Krenz & Sax 1986, in Johnson 1990:11). When researching

issues that border on the question of meaning, socially-mediated realities and situational constraints, Carspecken (1996:3) argues that the quantitative approach cannot be used.

Similarly, scholars such as Allen *et al.* (2009:8) point out that the quantitative approach, considered from a postpositivist perspective, should make room for exceptions because there are unique circumstances that may cause unpredictability in some situations. Their assertion suggests that the findings of a quantitative approach cannot always be replicated, as particular human behaviours cannot be characterised without reference to the socio-cultural milieus that define these behaviours. Replication, in the sense it is used here, means “another researcher should be able to employ similar (if not identical) methods and observe similar (if not identical) results” (Allen *et al.* 2009:6). Logically, the replication of researched human behaviours, taking into account the social constraints faced by both the people being studied and the researcher, does not seem feasible, thus the quantitative approach is unsuitable in certain contexts.

The expression of quantitative approach findings in quantitative terms is usually considered as an advantage over qualitative approach. However, Babbie (2007:23) sees this as a disadvantage as it does not provide for “richness of meaning” common in the qualitative approach. Babbie bases his argument on the fact that the qualitative researcher is able to explain his findings beyond the mere surface meaning ascribed to situations when qualitative approach is used.

Given the criticisms of quantitative approach and its shortcomings, a different approach was, therefore, considered for this study. The qualitative approach was considered because it allows for human cognition and a more reflective interpretation of data collected, as is shown below.

6.3 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Many terms are used to describe the qualitative approach. For example, Borg and Gall (1989, cited in Savenye & Robinsnson n.d.:1046) describe it as naturalistic, ethnographic, subjective and postpositivistic approach.

Savenye and Robinson's (n.d.:1046) simply define the qualitative approach as a study dedicated to "developing an understanding of human systems, be they small, such as technology-using teacher and his or her students and classroom, or large, such as a cultural system". They state that the qualitative approach characteristically includes ethnographies, case studies and general descriptive studies.

Describing this approach solely as ethnographic will narrow its application, as according to Goetze and LeCompte (1984:2), ethnographies refer to "analytic descriptions or reconstructions of intact cultural scenes and groups". Nevertheless, it would appear that this borders on a terminological preference, because other researchers, such as Berg (2001:134), use the term ethnography to describe a research approach that places the researcher in the centre of what is being studied in order to be able to examine various phenomena as felt by the participants and then present these accordingly.

In this study, the position taken is that ethnography is a subsumed aspect of qualitative approach. However, its influence in this study is acknowledged because certain aspects of ethnography, such as the belief that culture influences communication both in spoken and written forms, played a role.

According to Johnstone (2000:80), ethnography is the study of culture, while discourse analysis focuses on the study of language usage. From a sociolinguistic point of view, which to a large extent also applies in communication, Johnstone argues that "speakers [...] bring previously formed expectations, beliefs, and norms to bear in interaction with others, so they necessarily embed analyses of aspects of culture".

According to Gray (2005:320), one of the cherished characteristics of the qualitative approach is that it is a powerful means of data analysis. Citing the argument used by Charmaz (1995), Gray remarks that qualitative approach is

highly contextual, being collected in a natural 'real life' setting, often over long periods of time. Hence, it goes beyond giving a mere snapshot of events and can show how and why things happen – also incorporating people's own motivation, emotions, prejudices and accidents of interpersonal cooperation and conflict (Charmaz 1995, cited by Gray 2005:320).

Gray's description of the qualitative approach encapsulates the reason for its use in this study. It supports Babbie's view that the qualitative approach provides

richness of meaning in analysis and it can show how and why things happen, something that is not possible in cases of statistical or quantitative representation in data analysis. Gray also alludes to the fact that the nature of the research is affected not only by those being studied, but also by the researcher. The qualitative approach involves a “description and analysis rather than, for example, the counting of features,” according to Wray, Trott, Bloomer, Reay and Butler (1998:95) and (Walliman 2006:55). The essence of the qualitative approach in a study such as this is mentioned by Rorty (1991:187), who remarks that

There are many possibilities for how any given experience may be interpreted, but no interpretation is ‘really’ true. The same ‘facts’ can be retold from different points of view and they can have very different meanings.

One of the issues emphasised in this study is how communication should be approached, especially in an environment where the objective is consensus in decision-making in transactional communication. This involves an emphasis on shared understanding or a mutually created basis for the nature of communication taking place. It was stated that both the sender and receiver bring to bear specific socio-cultural milieus that define the way they relate to the nature of communication taking place. This shows the importance of qualitative approach used in this study as such communication approach can only be analysed better by a researcher with interpretative frame of mind in order to reflect the point of view of those whose communicative encounters are being analysed. In a nutshell, qualitative researchers approach a phenomenon through a number of ways as they believe that truth is not absolute but as something that should be considered from multiple perspectives and interpretations.

Woods (2006) states that the main concern of the qualitative researcher is “to discover the meanings that participants attach to their behaviour, how they interpret situations, and what their perspectives are on particular issues.” In other words, the data collected and the way it is analysed must reflect what the respondents articulate of their socio-cultural milieus. Deakin (1998:45) emphasises that interpretative research must reflect “internal realities that people have constructed” and “an interest in meanings, perspectives and understandings” of the participants in the study (Woods 2006).

Citing Miles and Huberman (1994), Gray (2005:320) lists some of the characteristics of qualitative approach and sums up what has been stated above:

- The researcher is to gain 'holistic' or integrated overview of the study, including the perceptions of the participants.
- Themes that emerge from the data are often reviewed with informants for verifications.
- The main focus of research is to understand the ways in which people act and account for these actions.
- Qualitative data are open to multiple interpretations.

These characteristics, though not identical to those offered by other scholars, represent precise reasons why the qualitative approach is the preferred approach for this study. Indeed, the analysis done in this study represents the perception of the respondents, who were regularly consulted as evolving variables necessitated their further inputs. The post-survey interviews undertaken in this study were to seek clarification on matters that arose during the study and were not fully covered by the primary data collection method.

At the same time, however, some elements of a basic quantitative approach were also employed in this study. The quantitative approach, in the form of basic descriptive statistics, was used to complement the qualitative approach. Basic statistics are used to explain the fundamental characteristics of a collection of data, as this is considered very important in summing up variables (O'Leary 2005:238). In this study, basic statistics were applied to the analysis of data distribution in the form of a tabular representation of the percentages of respondents with regard to the issues covered. Thus, the data were analysed and stated to reflect the degree and actual rate of occurrence of particular variants, as suggested by Wimmer and Dominick (2000:234).

In research, the combined use of the qualitative and quantitative approaches often constitutes a manifestation of triangulation. Although, the quantitative approach used in this study is basic descriptive statistic, it helps to "provide clarity and coherence to the investigation and description of complex phenomena" (Hansen 2005).

An overriding reason for the selection of the qualitative approach here lies in the fact that this research is a case study. The relationship between the qualitative approach and case studies is dealt with below.

6.4 CASE STUDY

A case study, as noted by Wimmer and Dominick (2011:140), is a qualitative research technique that allows for a systematic study of individuals, groups or organisations. Yin (1994:13) defines a case study as an enquiry that allows the use of different sources of data to study a phenomenon in its real-life situation, “in which the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident.” The use of case study is important to this study because it is particularistic in nature.

As explained by Wimmer and Dominick (2000:124), its use allows researchers to focus “on a particular situation, event, program or phenomenon making it”. Thus, it is an ideal method to study the real situation on the ground. Babbie (2007:298) further notes this as the chief characteristic of a case study. A reason why a case study is preferred for this research, lies in the way it enables the researcher to focus on a particular situation or a common situation that defines the pattern of communication that can then be used to make an informed judgement about the subjects of the research.

Yin (2003:xi) posits that a case study can be used by both qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, his earlier discussion of a case study (Yin 1994:13) reveals why it is commonly used in qualitative approach when he states that it is used to “investigate phenomenon within its real-life context”.

Earlier in this chapter, this was given as a justification for the use of the qualitative approach. I believe that it further justifies the commonly observed relationship between a qualitative approach and a case study. Communication is context-bound, hence it is stressed that the best way to understand communication in any given situation is to look at the context mediating its occurrence.

The contextual nature of communication underlies the endemic view in literature that defines the conceptualisation of participatory communication. For example, in the transactional perspective of communication enunciated in Chapter Three, it was expressly stated that many contextual variables influence the nature of the

communication taking place between the communicator and his interlocutor. This view finds expression in Gray's (2004:124) description of a case study as a useful approach, readily taken by researchers who want to uncover the relationship between the phenomenon they are studying and the context in which it is occurring. It is not sufficient to build research using an experimental approach based on a causal associations as there might be various contexts that may influence the result of the findings (Gray 2004:124). A case study helps the researcher to "describe in sufficient descriptive narrative so that the reader could vicariously experience happenings and draw conclusion" (Stake 2000:439).

In the next section, the sampling and data collection methods used in this study will be discussed.

6.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

A "population" refers to the total group of people, objects, and events of interest that a researcher plans to study (O'Leary 2005:87). Walliman (2006:75-76) refers to population as "a collective term used to describe the total quantity of things (or cases) of the type which is the subject of your study". Thus, a population may include people, objects, events or things of interest, as stated by O'Leary (2005:58). All of these constitute what Walliman refers to as cases, while a complete list of all these cases is called "a sampling frame" (Walliman 2006:76).

The focus of this study is on Nguni Cattle Project's beneficiaries and all the immediate stakeholders to the project. This means that all the beneficiaries, the agricultural extension officers, the animal health technicians, the animal scientists, the veterinary officers, members of the project trust, and the IDC representatives – all form the participants in this study. Thus, it is important to collect data from every single member of the population but this is not practically possible for a number of reasons.

First, a research study is usually planned for a given period of time and under a given budget, hence every element in the population cannot be examined (Walliman 2006:75). Second, it is not possible to deal with the entire population, because the "[...] study will probably involve a population that you cannot reach in its entirety; it will either be too large, or it will have elements that you simply cannot access" (O'Leary 2005:87).

The answer to this problem lies in sampling, which means the study has to be based on certain selected elements of the population. Sampling is a “[...] process of selecting just a small group of people from a large group [...]” (Walliman 2006:75). This is done in the hope that the conclusion drawn from the responses elicited from these selected elements are generalisable to the entire population of the study. For the purpose of this study, the sample selected comprised of

- Nguni Cattle Project’s beneficiaries in Buffalo City and Nkonkobe Municipalities:
 - Platform CPA,
 - Kwezana,
 - Lower Gqumashe,
 - Upper Gqumashe,
 - Ntselamanzi,
 - Dikidikana,
 - Ncera,
 - Tyutuza,
 - Jojozi,
 - Dyam-Dyam,
 - Ngqele, and
 - Masele.
- Veterinary officers
- Animal scientists and health technicians

It must be noted that the IDC representatives, the trustees and the agricultural extension officers interviewed were not sampled. The trustees interviewed comprised of the UFH staff and the IDC representatives that also doubled as member of the trustees. There was no need to select representatives here as they were all interviewed. In the discussion of the sampling methods used below, the sampling methods used to select other respondents will be explained.

6.5.1 Sampling methods used

Different sampling methods such as purposive sampling and snowball sampling were used to select respondents from the different categories of respondents as listed above.

6.5.1.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling is used by researchers in qualitative studies to select subjects with particular attributes considered relevant to their studies (Aldridge & Levine 2001:80). This method was used to select the Nguni Cattle Project beneficiaries.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2000:84), by means of purposive sampling, it is possible to select subjects on the basis of specific qualities and characteristics. Some of the characteristics that informed the selection of the beneficiaries were their ages (not under 21 years), in order to comply with the Human Ethics rules and regulations (see Ethical consideration under Section below 6.9); and number of years as a beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project (not under two years). These characteristics were explained to the beneficiaries at the beginning of the interview process.

In the pilot stage of this study, the original plan was to use purposive sampling to sample at least twenty five beneficiaries from each of the communities listed above. This was not possible, as some of the farmers were not cooperative and made undue demands prior to the interview. In some communities, it was not possible to reach all the beneficiaries and in other communities, there were fewer than twenty five beneficiaries. As it was not possible to sample twenty five beneficiaries in some of the villages, the principle of 'sample to saturation' was used. This is a process where data are collected from samples with the specific characteristics until the point of data saturation has been reached.

6.5.1.2 Snowball sampling

Snowball sampling is the process of identifying subjects through referrals. According to O'Leary (2005:94), this means "Once an initial respondent is identified you ask him to identify others who meet the study criteria". This process of referral is repeated, with each respondent being asked for further referrals, "so that the

sample grows steadily in extent” (Aldridge & Levine 2001:80). Any, or some, of the following circumstances usually warrant the use of snowball sampling:

- no sampling frame exists;
- cases are rare and geographically widely distributed;
- cases are likely to know each other;
- individuals are willing to supply information about each other (Aldridge & Levine 2001:80).

Owing to the circumstances listed above, snowball sampling was used to select some of the respondents such as the animal scientists and veterinary officers. These respondents were not among the people initially identified for the research, but as the study progressed, I discovered they also have significant role to play in the Nguni Cattle Project. The only way I could meet them was through referral in the form of snowball sampling.

In some of the communities, it was noticed that there were some important personalities (opinion leaders) besides the community chairpersons. Some of these people were identified by the beneficiaries and agricultural extension officers during my interview sessions with them. Thus, snowball sampling was used here as well. These opinion leaders are people with influence or capable of influencing the state of thing in their communities, even though they are not officially in a position of authority. These people were interviewed to elicit information from them regarding how they had achieved this status.

Each community has a community chairperson whose main duty is to see to the general well-being of the community. These chairpersons were not sampled. Permission was sought from the chairperson of the different communities to meet other members their communities. In some communities, it was not necessary to meet their chairpersons, based on prior information collected about the communities.

6.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

There are many methods of data collection such as interviewing, observation, etc. The methods used in this study are discussed below.

6.6.1 Interviewing

The main method of data collection was through interviews, which took the form of semi-structured, focus group interview and post-survey interviews. In all the interview approaches used, prepared questions were used as an *aide-mémoire* or reminder of the main focus areas to probe in the interview (Gray 2005:213). Contrary to a questionnaire-based data collection, the interview allows the researcher and interviewee to seek clarification and expansion to responses (Babbie 2007:265).

The main reason a questionnaire-based data collection was not used is the level of literacy of the respondents. To respond confidently to a questionnaire – especially when the respondents are expected to do so on their own – requires a level of formal education. In the context of this study, most of the farmers do not have an adequate proficiency level in reading and writing, hence they were interviewed using a schedule of questions.

Another reason that interviews were used to collect data from the respondents in this case, lies in Gray's (2005:213) assertion that an "interview is a powerful tool for eliciting rich data on people's views, attitudes and the meanings that underpin their lives and behaviours". The following interview approaches were used:

6.6.1.1 Semi-structured interview

The semi-structure interview or partially structured interview is a common interview approach used in a qualitative study (Du Plooy 2006:177; and Gray 2005:215). It is an interview method where a list of issues and questions to be asked are prepared in advance. As the interview progresses the issues and questions may take different shapes, according to Gray (2005:215-216). Supporting this assertion, Du Plooy (2006:177) states that the interviewer may diverge from the prepared list of questions in order to "ask follow-up or probing questions based on the respondents' replies – if the replies are unclear or incomplete". Thus, the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to depart from the main focus of the interview to cover other issues that arise in the interview process and which are necessary for the understanding of the issues under review. As explained by Gray

(2005:217), this may be a response that is subjective in meaning or issues that are important to the stated objective of the study.

In the semi-structured interview, some open-ended questions are used. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2000:163), open-ended questions are used when the respondents are required to provide their own answers. They add that with open-ended questions, respondents are able to provide in-depth responses to the questions asked, and the researcher is able to ask further questions not covered in the questionnaire. In this study, open-ended questions were used in the interviews, allowing the respondents to comment freely on the issues raised and to invite other information and evaluations.

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews allow social interaction between the respondents and the researcher hence making it possible to provide additional explanations in cases where the respondents do not understand the question put to them (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell 2009:165). This proved to be an important consideration during the semi-structured interviews with some of the respondents. Frequently, I had to explain or re-word the question, either in a simplified form, or in a form more easily comprehensible to the respondents. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians, veterinary officers, animal scientists, IDC representatives and members of the board of trustees.

6.6.1.2 Focus group interview

The focus group method of data collection is a qualitative method of collecting data and it is used when there is need to interview respondents or participants numbering between six to fifteen (Babbie 2007:308; and Bertrand & Hughes 2005:81). A focus group is described as a “collectivist rather than individualistic research method that focuses on multivocality of participants’ attitudes, experiences and beliefs” (Madriz 2000:836). In other words, focus groups allow researchers to experience the participation of their participants collectively, with an interaction between the participants adding another dimension. In terms of method in which information can be elicited from the participants, Babbie (2007:308) maintains that structured, semi-structured or unstructured interviews can be used.

In this study, the semi-structured interview was used to collect data from the project's beneficiaries who were met as different focus groups in their communities.

The focus group method was particularly suited in dealing with the project's beneficiaries because they participate in the Nguni Cattle Project as a collective, hence it was important that they were treated as a group. However, some of them were interviewed separately during the post-survey phase and on some occasions where I specifically wanted a particular individual's view about the matters under investigation.

One of the advantages of a focus group method of data collection is that it is relatively economical and it allows the researcher to collect data from more participants more quickly (Bertrand & Hughes 2005:80). This is another reason that the beneficiaries were put into focus groups during the data collection phase of the study.

Apart from economic advantage, Gray (2005:230) stresses that the chance of non-response from the group being interviewed is almost zero. This was evident in the focus groups of this study as all the respondents in the groups contributed to the issues raised in the questions. The dialogic space between us was very friendly and this has been attributed to the fact that in a focus group where the participants know each other very well, it is easy for them to speak freely (Bertrand & Hughes 2005:81).

The responses to the questions posed were recorded using a digital voice recorder. As isiXhosa was used by most of the respondents, the recordings were translated into English. Notes were taken using the translated version, because some of the respondents' responses needed to be contextualised in the analysis.

6.6.1.3 *Post-survey interview*

Post-survey interviews were done for follow-up purposes, to clarify previous responses given and when issues that arose during analysis needed further required examination.

These post-survey interviews were done telephonically on a few occasions, but in most cases they were conducted face-to-face in a semi-structured format because I felt there was no need to limit the respondents who might wish to expand on the

issue under discussion. The post-survey interview was mainly used to collect data from the project beneficiaries and certain agricultural extension officers.

6.6.1.4 Observation of meetings of the Nguni Cattle Project's beneficiaries

Observation techniques for collecting data are also regarded as field work by scholars such as Wray *et al.* (1998:111). They assert that one of the advantages of observation techniques, whether participatory or non-participatory, is that the study takes place in the “natural setting of the activity being observed and thus can provide data rich in detail and subtlety”.

My observation of meetings of the project beneficiaries was to collect primary data regarding meeting procedures and decision-making. The focus of the observation was also to see how the beneficiaries interact, especially how the participation of women is affected in meetings where men are also present. This was done by observing proceedings, determining the roles of the participants in the groups and sub-groups. The observation was non-participatory, in that my role in the meetings was purely for the purpose of observation. I did not participate in any of the activities that took place in the meetings during the observation. I used a prepared checklist to structure my findings.

6.6.1.5 Secondary data

Throughout the research, literature was consulted as source of secondary data on an ongoing basis in order to remain abreast of established knowledge on each aspect of the analysis. Relevant articles, books and information on the Internet were consulted as sources of secondary data for the literature review and of any information pertinent to aspects covered by the research.

6.7 DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, data analysis was an ongoing process and involved constant revision of the preliminary deductions. This was deemed necessary, to enable me to identify important aspects that arose in the process of data collection in order not to lose them (Bogdan & Biklen 1992:157). The analysis involved reading the data repeatedly in order to identify salient patterns and connections between the

patterns identified as well as possible context mediating the nature of the pattern identified (Lincoln & Guba 1985, in Brice 2005:162).

Regarding data from interviews, Rubin and Rubin (1995:226-227), explain that data analysis starts even while the interviews are in progress. Thus, on completion of each interview conducted in this study, a conscious effort was made to start a detailed analysis of what the interviews had revealed.

It is important to note here that some of the questions in Appendix 1 were simply used as an *aide-memoire* in all the interviews for this study. Thus, the analysis does not directly reflect some of the questions in the appendix. As is often the case with semi-structured interviews, certain questions on the list may remain unused in order to deal with other matters pertinent to the study that may arise during the interview.

Through formal analysis, I discovered additional themes and concepts that shed more light on the data. These were noted and investigated in the post-survey interviews. Thus, before final data analysis is undertaken, it is essential to put together all the material gleaned from the interviews, as well as other data gathered through observation and secondary sources that are relevant to the subject matter.

The actual data analysis began by categorising the data and filing the information electronically. The system of categorisation entailed collecting and analysing all data in relation to the identified conceptual framework. Through this process, “[w]hat were initially vague ideas and hunches are refined, expanded, discarded, or fully developed during the stage” (Taylor & Bogdan 1984:136).

The data analysed in this study were from:

- Interviews;
- Observation of beneficiaries; and
- Information gleaned from the literature sources.

Once all the data had been categorised, different analytical tools considered appropriate for the particular data and research objectives were used, as discussed below.

A look at any research objective will point to the methodologies and techniques suitable for the study, as noted by Du Plooy (2006:48). In addition, the nature of the topic and the title used to indicate it in a study will also point to the direction regarding the techniques and the methodologies to be followed. This study seeks to explore the nature and extent of participatory communication practice in the Nguni Cattle Project. Thus, the realisation of this research objective will rely on presentation of data in exploratory, descriptive and explanatory forms.

6.7.1 Exploratory data analysis

Exploratory studies, according to Gray (2005:32) “seek to explore what is happening and to ask question about it”. This study is considered exploratory because it seeks to investigate participatory practices and how these correlate to existing theories on participatory communication, using a case study. The exploratory focus of this study indicates that the researcher sought to discover if the situation on the ground reflects the communication approach used.

Du Plooy (2006:48-49) notes that a study that has an exploratory objective is concerned about obtaining new insights and to validate *or refute* assumptions (*Italics my emphasis*). Babbie (2007:88) adds that an exploratory study is done to:

- To satisfy the researcher’s curiosity and desire for better understanding, and
- To test the feasibility of an undertaking in a more extensive study.

Thus, an exploratory study investigates whether or not established situations or assumptions in literature are valid in the field. Indeed, the data this study gathered and is analysed in the next chapter questions certain established assumptions in literature as it does not hold true in specific communicative practices.

An investigative study first has to scour related literature to establish what has been written about the topic and experts in the field must always be consulted (Gray 2005:32). In the analysis of the data gathered, the relevant literature is also used to corroborate or refute the findings and insights.

Methods common to exploratory studies are focus groups interviews and case studies (Babbie 2007:88; and Du Plooy 2006:49); and these were used in this study. In an exploratory study, research design is flexible because as the researcher tries to understand unknown issues (Du Plooy 2006:49), he/she may be

forced to adjust his approach to suit the unfolding development. This also occurred during this study. For instance, I had to change the sampling methods when it became apparent that the method I had planned did not meet the intended goal.

6.7.2 Descriptive data analysis

Hedrick, Brickman and Rog (1993, in Gray 2005:32) state that “the purpose of a descriptive study is to provide a picture of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs”. Thus, a descriptive study shows situations as they are or the ways in which they have occurred. The descriptive focus used in the analysis of the data presented in this study clarifies specific communication scenarios, especially how mutual decisions are made or not made by participants in communication.

A descriptive analysis of a study means that the researcher describes what he/she has observed (Babbie 2007:89). Du Plooy (2006:49) explains that a study with a descriptive focus asks questions starting “*What is [...]?*”. In the context of this study, the question that prevails is *What is the nature of participatory communication practice in the case selected for investigation?* The analysis reflects a descriptive answer to this question.

Du Plooy (2006:49-50) adds that a descriptive study also describes the ways in which two or more phenomena relate or disagree. The observation made is then described in a narrative form (such as describing the focus group interviews) or based on statistical analysis (possibly as frequency represented in tables).

6.7.3 Explanatory data analysis

Explanatory data analysis is seen as “the direction of a cause-and-effect relationship” between two independent variables (Du Plooy 2006:50). This, in the context of this study, means the determination of how the socio-economic and cultural imperatives as they apply to all the stakeholders identified in this study influence the nature of relationship between them.

The explanatory aspect of data analysis allows for the use other analytic tools, such as discourse analysis. Through the use of discourse analytic tool, it is possible to explain data that have bearing on communicative behaviours; the ways in which some mediated speech encounters are influenced by contextual factors,

such as the particular communicative activities taking place; and the socio-cultural factors determining the overall experience and worldview of the interlocutors.

Cognisance is taken of units of analysis, such as *situations*, *events* and *acts* (Hymes 1972, cited in Saville-Troike 2003:23) that are used to explain communicative behaviours. This facilitates the interpretation and explanation of a communication scenario in its “socio-historic context tied to power and knowledge” (O’Leary 2005:262), offering reasons why in some socio-historic context, the desired communication outcomes may not be realised.

6.7.4 Simple descriptive statistics

Simple descriptive statistical analysis is another analytic tool that was used in this study. Although, it was stated above that this features as a descriptive analytic tool in the form of rendering the data in tabular representation, it is necessary to point out that this features prominently in all other analytic approaches such as exploratory, descriptive and explanatory aspects of the analysis.

6.8 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

In any research undertaking, it is imperative that the matter of reliability and validity is addressed as it is measures that demonstrate the credibility of the findings presented in a study. Here the following steps were taken ensure the reliability and validity of the findings:

6.8.1 Reliability

The need for reliability in research is to ensure that when a particular research technique is repeatedly applied to the same object, it will result in the same findings.

One of the ways used to ensure reliability of this study was to record verbatim what the participants had said with the aid of digital voice recorder. Although I complemented this by jotting some information in the field note I carried along with me, this was primarily to record observations or aspects that needed to be explained based on contexts that might have influenced the nature of the information provided.

By recording the information provided verbatim, what Seale (1999, in Silverman 2005:221), refers to as “low-inference descriptors” were taken care of. Low-inference descriptors, according to them, involve “recording observations in terms that are as concrete as possible, including verbatim accounts of what people say ... rather than the researcher’s reconstructions of the general sense of what a person said”. Paralinguistic elements such as hedges, pauses and hesitations are some of the low-inference descriptors captured or recorded in this manner.

The data from the Nguni Cattle Project farmers were in IsiXhosa and as I am a non-IsiXhosa speaking, I had to rely on the service of interpreters who helped to interpret consecutively from English into IsiXhosa and vice versa. To ensure reliability, I made the interpreters to check on each other work and where there were problems, I called the team of the interpreters together to get suitable terms or words. I had three interpreters who were all isiXhosa speaking with bachelor degrees. One of them had a bachelor degree in IsiXhosa.

Reliability was also ensured during the oral interviews in the focus groups by repeating questions, using different words, to ensure that the respondents would provide same or similar answer to both questions. The prepared questions given in Appendix 1 were used as an *aide memoire* to ensure that questions covering the same issues and aspects were posed to all respondents.

6.8.2 Validity

Validity in research means the extent to which the instrument has measured what it has set to measure. In this study, the question of validity was addressed by following the actions:

- I undertook a research procedure that Weinberg (2001, in MacLiam 2006:140) refers to as member-checking. To do this, after interviewing the participants, I made sure that what they had said was read back to them and asked them to validate or confirm that their statements were correctly recorded. On occasion, some of the respondents would object to what I had written and I would then amend the statement to meet their approval.
- I used a post-survey interview to reconfirm some of the responses given by the participants. This was usually done when the response given was unclear. Where this involved IDC representatives and the agricultural

extension officers, I contacted them telephonically or sought one-on-one meetings. On two occasions, I had to go back to two of the communities to meet the village headmen, who were able to provide clarity to what had previously been said after consulting with other beneficiaries in their villages.

6.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS STUDY

The principle of ethical propriety based on fairness, honesty, openness, and respect for the integrity of the individual participants was strictly adhered to. Ethical issues in this study were accordingly addressed as follows:

- The participants were given clearly communicated information about the research. Information sheets were given to the participants, setting out the purpose of the research, the procedures, the benefits of the research to the researcher, to the participants and the field of communication in general and the minimum age for participants to participate in the study. This document emphasised that the participants could refuse to participate in the study, and ensured that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The participants were also encouraged to ask any questions that would shed more light on anything they did not understand fully. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed.
- The participants were given time to study the information sheets, and on some occasions, I had to explain in detail the information contained in the information sheets.
- All efforts were made to protect the information given to me by the participants in order to honour the promise of anonymity and confidentiality. This was done by ensuring that the information was safeguarded and only I had access to it, before, during and after analysis of the information.
- The interpreters were not allowed to go with any of the written information supplied by the respondents. Part of the agreement I had with them when they were hired was that they should keep all information about the study confidential.
- Only participants who are 21 years and above were allowed to take part in the study.

6.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the methodology used for this study was discussed. It was pointed out that because the nature of the study is interdisciplinary, combining qualitative approaches would be used. Some quantitative aspect of the method, however, was confined to a tabular representation of the processed numerical data.

The different methods of data collection involving interviews in the form of semi-structured, focus group and post-survey interviews were explained. In addition, other sources of information for the study were also provided.

The sampling methods used in this study were explained. These mainly included purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Certain participants, such as the Board of Trustees and the IDC representatives, were, however, not sampled. It was explained that these categories of respondents were very important stakeholders and are few hence there was no need to sample them.

The methods of data analysis used in the study were discussed, with a particular focus on analytic approaches such as exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and simple descriptive statistical analysis.

Lastly, the ethical considerations for the study were explained, focussing on how the question of ethics was handled in the study. In the next chapter, the data collected for this study will be analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the methodology used for this study was discussed. The discussion focused on qualitative approach and its associated methods of sampling, data collection and data analysis. In this chapter, the data collected will be presented and discussed.

The analysis and discussion are based principally on the responses provided by the beneficiaries and other stakeholders of the Nguni Cattle Project. The beneficiaries were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and post-survey interviews. The post-survey interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis with some selected respondents, who had previously taken part in the focus group interviews. This was to seek further clarification on issues that arose during the focus groups. The data collected from other stakeholders, such as the IDC representatives, the agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians, the animal scientists, veterinary officers, and some members of the board of trustees, are also analysed and discussed.

This chapter will begin with a discussion of the background information about the communities under investigation by this study. The demographic profile of the respondents and a brief discussion of the areas covered in the study will be provided. This will help in the understanding of the communication issues that are analysed and discussed in this chapter. What is analysed is a narration of the beneficiaries' responses to the questions asked. This is necessary in order to be able situate their responses to reflect the focus of this study.

7.2 AREAS COVERED IN THE STUDY

The communities in which the data were collected are in the area between Buffalo City and the Nkonkobe Municipalities, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. A total of twelve groups of beneficiary communities were visited, namely Platform CPA, Kwezana, Lower Gqumashe, Upper Gqumashe, Ntselamanzi, Dikidikana, Ncera, Tyutuza, Jojozi, Dyam-Dyam, Ngqele, and Masele.

Not all members of the communities are beneficiaries of the project. For example, in CPA Platform, only thirty-three people in the community are beneficiaries of the project and the number varies in other communities.

In total, two hundred and ten beneficiaries, twenty agricultural extensions officers, twenty animal health technicians, four animal scientists, four veterinary officers, two Industrial Development Corporation representatives, and one University of Fort Hare staff member were interviewed for this study. The following table provides information about the gender composition of the respondents:

Respondents	Number of respondents by gender	Percentage
Beneficiaries (Male)	160	76%
Beneficiaries (female)	50	24%
Agricultural extension officers (Male)	8	40%
Agricultural extension officers (Female)	12	60%
Animal health technicians (Male)	20	100%
Animal scientists (Male)	2	50%
Animal scientists (Female)	2	50%
Veterinary officers (Male)	2	50%
Veterinary officers (Female)	2	50%
IDC representatives (Male)	2	100%
UFH staff (Male)	1	100%

Table 7.1: Gender composition of the respondents

Most of the beneficiaries (97% N=204) are subsistence farmers, while some reported having other means of livelihood, including being teachers, owners of community spaza shops and taxi drivers. A few work in government departments, such as the Department of Education and Department of Roads and Public Works. All male respondents older than 65 years and all female respondents older than 60 years receive social grants from the government.

Reflecting the new democratic dispensation in South Africa, these communities are led by chairpersons who are elected by members of their communities. At the time

this study was being conducted, eleven of the twelve communities visited were chaired by men; however, they indicated that women could also aspire to be chairpersons. Some of the communities reported that women had held the position of chairpersons and deputy chairpersons in the past. Generally, in the meetings I had with the communities, men were in the dominant position, except in two communities, namely Dikidikana and Ngqele, where women dominated the meetings in terms of responses to the questions that were asked in the focus group interviews.

In terms of religion, some community members are Christians, while others observe the traditional rites. Christian churches are found in most of the communities and their influence is widespread across the area (see section 7.8 where pastors (*abefundisi*) were mentioned as opinion leaders). In four of the communities visited, opening and closing prayers were specifically requested by the respondents and these were done according to Christian observances.

The two main political parties in the region are the African National Congress (ANC) and the Congress of the People (COPE) – with the ANC commanding a comfortable majority. The respondents agreed that the emergence of COPE as an opposition party to ANC caused some friction in the communities as the principals in both parties at the national level are their political heroes. In one of the communities, they claimed that the emergence of COPE resulted in unnecessary political rivalry, which consequently had negatively affected the Nguni Cattle Project. For instance, they pointed out that some of the beneficiaries had ceased attending meetings, fearing attacks because they belonged to the minority party. However, these people were once again coming to the meetings, as most of the local COPE representatives had rejoined the ANC.

The dominant language spoken in these communities is isiXhosa, which is the first language of all the respondents. A few respondents speak English, and most of these respondents are employed in white collar jobs, as well as being involved in the Nguni Cattle Project.

7.3 THE FORMATION OF THE NGUNI CATTLE PROJECT

In a development project, the formative stage lays down how the nature, scope, goals and activities involved are decided upon. This needs to be discussed and agreed upon by those involved. Genuine participation requires that the beneficiaries and all other stakeholders should play active roles in all aspects of the project. A common understanding among all the stakeholders about the project objectives is absolutely vital.

As stated in Chapter One, section 1.2.2, the idea of the Nguni Cattle Project was first mooted at the University of Fort Hare, Alice. Having developed the idea regarding how the project could be used as a catalyst to fight poverty in the rural areas, other stakeholders, such as the funder (initially Norway but now the IDC) and the Department of Agriculture, were approached to join the project. The formation of a development project without the involvement of the target beneficiaries has been noted as a concern, hence Servaes advises that care must be taken to avoid development project being defined and implemented for the benefit of “economic and political elites”. He goes further to suggest that the formation of a development should involve gaining an understanding of the beneficiaries’ situation in order to know how to deal their problems (Servaes n.d.: 80). The formation of Nguni Cattle Project follows Servaes’ advice. Although, the past and present beneficiaries were not involved in the discussion that led to formation, the argument advanced by the IDC representatives in this respect sounds logical. They noted that everybody involved in the formation were products of the same communities the project was meant for hence it can be argued that they had thorough understanding of the target communities.

In addition, the project by its nature is not a one-off development project for a particular community. Ideologically, the project principles were developed and sold to the local communities. Communities who are interested in the project will then apply to be considered as beneficiary community. Consequently, many communities have applied and many are still applying to be considered to be target beneficiaries. For this reason, it can be excused that the beneficiaries were not involved as there was no target community in the mind of those who were instrumental to the formation of the project. Thus, preliminary discussions

regarding the nature of the project did not include the beneficiaries and other stakeholders, such as the Provincial Department of Agriculture (PDoA).

Often most rural projects' beneficiaries do not care about being involved in the formative stage of the projects in their communities (Timothy 1999, in Wisansing 2004:37). Winsang argues that this is the case because the beneficiaries lack the expertise to contribute at that early stage and on the part of the development planners, they lack the necessary skills to handle the participation of the beneficiaries (2004:37).

The respondents (the beneficiaries) in this study regard the project as an initiative of the government meant to alleviate poverty in their communities, and therefore the government decided the nature of the project. One of the beneficiaries said in a focus group interview that it was not necessary to involve them as they "understand that this project was started at the University of Fort Hare through research and that means we would not have been able to contribute because we are illiterate". This reflects Winsang's view about the beneficiaries' reluctance to participate at the formative stage because of lack of skills. Similarly, the technical nature involved in generating idea at the formative stage of any project was cited by the IDC representative as the reason the beneficiaries would have not been involved if the project was a one-off type. They claimed that most of the beneficiaries are illiterate and would not be able to contribute to the requirement of the discussion needed.

Commenting on this, one of the agricultural extension officers suggested that the government should see itself as a catalyst of change in the development of the rural areas. He added that communities in rural areas are not in a good position to help themselves and they barely know what needs to be done to help their communities, hence including them in the formation of any development project without assisting them regarding what is needed and how they will participate will be a fruitless effort. This view is clearly articulated by Mowforth and Munt (1998:257) in a similar study as follows:

[W]hile it is important that ideas for, and control of, tourism developments should come from within the community, it is also important that local community can make use of, and benefit from, the assistance of national government resources to help establish and co-ordinate their ideas and schemes. This is particularly

necessary where local communities may lack the base of resources, skills and finances required.

In the context of the project this study has investigated, it would have been impossible to involve the current beneficiary communities in the conception of the project, as the communities involved in this study are all second generation beneficiaries of the project in Eastern Cape. Three of these first generation⁷ beneficiaries in a community were interviewed for this purpose and they indicated that they were not involved in the formative stage of the project. According to them, it was then not necessary as they felt it was up to the government or any development agency to decide how to help their community.

While agreeing that the non-involvement of beneficiaries in the formative stage of the project is not unique to the beneficiary communities this study has investigated, it must be pointed out that for the purpose of effective communication, involvement of the beneficiaries would have given them a better understanding of the project objectives.

Regardless of the argument put forward above about the formation of the project, the fact that different communities have different needs – and this may also apply to different beliefs and norms – means it is important that development practitioners refrain from functionalist approach where data gathered are used to predict how the communities with different groups will behave (Robert White 1984:28). This underlines the practices of the IDC representatives and the agricultural extension officers who are directly involved in the Nguni Cattle Project. They would always argue when questioned about their one-size-fits-all approach that the communities are same or have the same socio-cultural characteristics. Often, this argument seemed not to hold as there were several cases of disagreements between the agricultural extension officers, IDC representatives and the beneficiaries due poor handling of social issues.

7.4 HOW THE BENEFICIARIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS LEARNT OF THE PROJECT

⁷ The first generation beneficiaries are those who became involved in the project when it was launched. They are no longer considered beneficiaries as they have passed all the phases of the project and are now on their own taking care of the cattle they received through the project.

In light of the exclusion of the beneficiaries from the preliminary stages, it is important to find out how they became aware of the Nguni Cattle Project. The data analysed in this section point to various sources of information about the project. I did not raise this question with the two IDC representatives based at the University of Fort Hare, as they were obviously informed of the project once their employer became involved. Instead, they were asked how they communicated the existence of the project to potential beneficiaries.

In their response, the IDC representatives said they relied on different means of communication to inform the potential beneficiaries about the project, including word-of-mouth at agricultural shows, workshops and agricultural auctions, interpersonal encounters and through communities who are already beneficiaries. In addition to interpersonal communication, the IDC representatives said that they used PDoA and local mass media, such as Radio Forte. It was pointed out by the IDC representatives that the essence of PDoA's involvement as a trustee member in the project is to be well acquainted about the progress of the project and this includes informing the communities, through its extension officers about the project – that it is a poverty alleviating project in their communities.

However, as indicated in the table below, it does not seem that the PDoA is very active in giving information about the project to the rural communities through its extension officers. The table below does not indicate that the PDoA was the primary source of information about the project. Rather it points to several other sources through which the agricultural extension officers first came to know of the project.

First source of information about the Nguni Cattle Project	Number of respondents (N=20)	Percentages
Through the PDoA	2	10%
From involvement in activities in the communities	15	75%
From IDC representatives	2	10%
From the media	0	0%
From other sources	1	5%

Table 7.2: Agricultural extension's sources of information about the Nguni Cattle Project.

Of the ten percent (N=2) whose first source of information about the Nguni Cattle Project was the PDoA, they all stated that it was not formal information from the PDoA but rather through word-of-mouth from their colleagues at work. They reported that they got information about the project during conversations about the activities in the communities in which they work. As can be seen from the table, 75 percent (N=15) of the respondents said they learnt of the Nguni Cattle Project through their involvement in their assigned communities. This, in other words, means that members of the communities told them of the project's existence.

In an interview with an animal scientist, who said she has been following the involvement of the PDoA in the project since its inception, further perspectives about how the agricultural extension, animal health technicians and others were informed about the project were provided. According to her, the Nguni Cattle was well-publicised through newsletters, internal memoranda, annual reports, etc, in the PDoA. Additionally, a concerted effort was made to publicise it among all the PDoA's employees working in rural areas with the beneficiaries, until it was presumed that all employees were aware of the project. She pointed out that when new extension officers or animal health technicians are employed, it is expected of their coordinators, controllers or immediate superiors to tell them about all the rural community projects in the wards they have been assigned. Moreover, she said the onus also rests on the former extension officer to make sure that there is proper communication regarding the projects in the ward he/she is handing over to the new extension officers. When told that most of the agricultural extension officers claimed ignorance of the project until they started working in the communities assigned to them, she said they have themselves to blame as the PDoA has an accessible electronic data base of all rural development projects in the Province of Eastern Cape.

It should be noted that 75 percent of the agricultural extension officers who responded that they learnt of the Nguni Cattle Project from the members of communities assigned to them, had only worked in the communities for just over three years. The same applies to 60 percent (N=12) of the animal health technicians. This may help to explain why their primary source of information was

not PDoA, as it would appear that the PDoA was no longer active in spreading information about the project few years after its inception in the rural communities.

An initial requirement for communities or groups within communities who want to be included in the Nguni Cattle Project, is that they apply through their local agricultural extension officers or animal health technicians. This may explain why some of these respondents learnt about the project from the members of the communities where they work. In other words, in aspirant communities the agricultural extension officers will be consulted about the application process. As the animal health technicians work closely with agricultural extension officers and the matter involving livestock, it is plausible to conclude that the technicians would be informed by the agricultural extension officers of such applications. To corroborate this view, 20 percent (N=4) of the animal health technicians also revealed that at the request of the agricultural extension officers in their wards, they had successfully facilitated the application process for some groups, who are currently beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project.

The beneficiaries' responses to the question about their initial source of information about the project, pointed to many sources as can be seen in the data represented in the table below. The data reflected here were collected from individual beneficiaries in the groups interviewed.

Initial sources of information about the Nguni Cattle Project	Number of respondents (N= 210)	Percentages
From fellow members of the community	105	50%
From IDC representatives	42	20%
From mass media	32	15%
From agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians	21	10%
From other sources	10	5%

Table 7.3: Beneficiaries' initial sources of information about Nguni Cattle Project.

The data stated in the Table 7.3 show that most of the beneficiaries (50 percent [N=105]) heard of the project from fellow members of their communities. This corroborates the information given by IDC representatives regarding how they

publicise the project in the local communities, as referred to above. Judging from the data collected about attendance of the agricultural shows and auctions, 65 percent (N=137) of individual beneficiaries responded that they do attend agricultural shows and auctions. Thus, it can be concluded that a possibility exists that some of the beneficiaries received information about the project at agricultural shows that they later passed on to other members of their communities.

In the communities surrounding the University of Fort Hare in Alice, such as Ntselamanzi, Kwezana, Lower Gqumashe, Upper Gqumashe and Ncera, a significant percentage (61% [N=36]) of the beneficiaries mentioned that Radio Forte was a favourite local radio station, along with Umhlobo Wenene. Twenty percent (N=12) of these beneficiaries said they had heard of the project mentioned on some of the programmes of the station. This shows that these respondents passed on information about the project to other community members, as indicated in Table 7.3.

A further instance corroborating this can be found in the responses from four of the communities where data were collected. In CPA Platform, Kwezana, Lower Gqumashe and Dyam-Dyam, some individuals were identified in the focus group interviews as the “principal drivers” of the project in the communities. These individuals had taken the initiative and persuaded their communities to become involved, and they were committed to the success of the project because they saw it as their contribution to poverty alleviation in their communities. Two of these individuals said they learnt of the project from other communities that were already involved, one said it was through his involvement with PDoA (he did not reveal the nature of his involvement with PDoA) and the other said from an agricultural show.

The second largest group here (20 percent [N=42]), reported that they had learnt of the project from IDC representatives. Some of these respondents said they were personally told by IDC representatives in one-on-one interpersonal encounters, and others said that they had made telephonic enquiries for confirmation and more information after hearing snippets about the project. As stated above, the IDC representatives mentioned that they used one-on-one means of communication to publicise the project. The other beneficiaries reported as follows: 15 percent (N=32) got their information from mass media, 10 percent (N=21) from agricultural extension officers and 5 percent (N=10) from other sources.

Those who reported that mass media were their source of information listed printed materials (bulletin) and the local radio station (Radio Forte) as their sources of information. The 10 percent who learnt of the project from the agricultural extension officers in their community stated that they were not sure what led to the communication in which they were informed. This data correlates with the data from the agricultural extension officers (10%) who said they learnt of the project from the PDoA (see table 7.2). The 5 percent of the beneficiaries who said they heard it from other sources were not explicit about these sources.

7.4.1 The nature of information given to the beneficiaries on learning about the project

The analysis in this section is premised on the perception that as the case study project is a participatory development project, the beneficiaries should be told about the nature of the project, especially about its participatory focus from the first time they are given information about the project. This can influence their decision whether or not they want to become beneficiaries of the project.

The 20 percent of the respondents (as indicated in Table 7.3) whose source of information was the IDC representatives, indicated that they were told about the objectives and the operating principles of the projects. They added that they had explained these to the other members of their communities who wanted to become involved. The rest (80 percent) of the respondents said they were not told about the objectives and the principles of the project. They reported that all they were told was that there was a project which would give their communities cattle for free, or, to use my interpreter's words, "for mahala". This is in stark contrast to the information provided by the IDC representatives who maintained that they would always discuss everything about the project with the beneficiaries beginning from the application process and during their meetings with them in their communities and that they had, indeed, done so.

From this data, it is apparent that although the percentage of respondents (10%) who got the information from the agricultural extension officers is statistically insignificant, it is worrying that the respondents said they were not given sufficient information about the project. This was not disputed by an agricultural extension

officer who, during the post-survey I conducted with her, agreed that she was the source of information for some of these beneficiaries. She said: "I mentioned about the project just in the passing in one of several interactions I had with the community and as it was not the main topic, there was no need to go into detail". She stated that the community applied to be a beneficiary of the project and was then given the necessary information about the project by the IDC representatives. This response corroborates the IDC representatives' assertion that they do give all the necessary information about the project to the communities beginning starting from the first time the communities would inquire about the project from them. What is, however, not clear is the nature of the IDC representatives' communication with the communities. Using Freire's lens to look at communication, it is not clear from the response given by the IDC representatives whether they were communicating "with" the beneficiaries or "for" the beneficiaries (Freire 1993:30). Communication at this early stage of the project should trigger critical awareness on the part of the beneficiaries to act on their situation and transform it (Freire 1993:33).

7.5 ENTERING THE COMMUNITY

The first encounter of a development practitioner with the target community has received great attention from development communication scholars. Their views, as reported in Chapter Four (see section 4.2.1), indicate that there are no hard-and-fast rules indicating how this is best accomplished. The data presented here do not show a marked difference from the discussion in Chapter Four, however some differences specific to the nature of the project, are evident.

Bessette (2004:36) posits that a development project in a community is undertaken at the initiative of the community, the government or a private institution. Even if it is the community who has identified the need for the development project, important information must be collected about the community by the development practitioner involved before entering it (Bessette 2004:36).

In this study, it became evident that the need for the project was identified by the members of the community themselves. As stated above (see section 7.5), an application by the community members through the local agricultural extension

officer or animal health technicians working in their community, has to be submitted.

According to the IDC representatives in charge of processing applications from potential beneficiaries, there are three main reasons why the potential beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project must apply through their local agricultural extension officers.

Firstly, the central role played by the agricultural extension officers in rural agriculture allows them to readily collect the necessary information about the community. The IDC representatives use this data obtained from the officers to ascertain, at preliminary level, the fitness of the community for the project; as well as to pave the way to their entrance into the community.

Secondly, the agricultural extension officers are considered important stakeholders in the Nguni Cattle Project. Their involvement in the application process is used to create a channel for the further communication necessary in for a robust partnership in a participatory development project. Thirdly, the IDC representatives emphasised that the agricultural extension officers' involvement in the application process exposes them to the nature of the project in terms of the principles underpinning the project.

The IDC representative's method of collecting information is similar to what is recommended by scholars such as Yoon (1994:44) and Usadqlo (2008:2). They believe that it is easier for a development planner to move into a community where the necessary information is already at hand or where there is someone, such as an agricultural extension officer, who is already embedded in the community (see also Chapter Four, subsection 4.2.1). Yoon (1996:45) suggests that it is necessary to deal with one who has been living in the community for a reasonable period of time and Usadqlo (2008:2) recommends the use of embedded agricultural extension officers.

Similarly, Servaes suggests that this should be in the form of "Collective definition and investigation of a problem by a group of people struggling to deal with it" (Servaes n.d.82). He goes on to say that the people primarily concerned or tasked with the affairs of the community should investigate and analyse the existing conditions with a view to knowing the social context informing such conditions. This

is similar to a group analysing their problems referred as conscientisation and critical awareness through problem-posing process so that they are able to offer solutions to their problems (Freire 1993).

In this case of this study, the collective definition and investigation of problem referred to takes place between the agricultural extension officers, the IDC representatives, and to some extent the beneficiaries. The IDC and agricultural extension officers are able to collectively discuss the target communities preliminarily based on the information collected from the target beneficiaries who takes step to apply having reached the conscientisation referred to by Freire. In other words, they took the initiative to apply for the project having realised they had problem and then identified the project as a means to free themselves from the problem.

According to the data discussed above in subsection 7.4.1, the IDC representative maintained they do discuss the project with the beneficiaries, especially with regard to the participatory focus of the project. One may argue that on the part of the beneficiaries that they have what Freire refers to reflection and action (praxis) to act on and transform their situations (Freire 1993:33) and this is evident in their identification of the project as a step to alleviate their poverty. Communication at this stage, according to Servaes (n.d.:80), is meant to enable the beneficiaries gain to “an understanding of their situation, confidence and an ability to change that situation”. This is the argument used by the IDC representatives to explain the nature of their communication with potential beneficiaries and they justified this by pointing to the fact the beneficiaries took step on their own to apply to be beneficiaries of the project having realised the situation they are in.

The data obtained from the agricultural extension officers complemented that of the IDC representatives in this regard. Ninety-five percent (N=38) of the agricultural extension officers and the animal health technicians who reported assisting the beneficiaries, pointed out that in the process of submitting the application forms, the IDC representatives used the opportunity to question them about the communities and discuss about poverty generally in the rural communities. Others said that a relationship was established with the IDC officials, and that they were contacted telephonically for further information about the communities. The IDC representatives involved in this project are isiXhosa-speaking and come from

communities with similar socio-cultural and development needs as those being used in this study. Thus, as development planners, they use their personal history to underpin their understanding of the community. This is their driving force as can be seen in the way they deal with the question of poverty and making it as object of reflection by the beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries.

At the development planner's first appearance in the community, it is advisable that he/she first approaches the chairperson⁸ of the local authority to explain the purpose of his/her presence in the community. The data collected in this regard from the IDC representatives were supported by the data collected from the members of the communities.

Firstly, the IDC representatives said through the information collected from and discussion with agricultural extension officers in the communities they intend to deal with, they are aware of what is required to enter the community successfully. They said in most cases this would involve a call to the chairpersons of the communities to inform them of their impending visit. On meeting the chairpersons of the communities, they would explain the objectives of their visit and then request a meeting with the community members who have applied to be beneficiaries of the project. They pointed out that in some communities, this may not be necessary given the fact that some of the chairpersons are part of the groups applying to be beneficiaries of the project.

Secondly, they reported that based on the advice of the local agricultural extension officers or the potential beneficiaries, they sometimes enter some communities without going through the chairperson. They added that this is done on the understanding that the chairpersons were already aware of the application and had been kept informed by the relevant community members. As the community members were the ones who have applied to be beneficiaries, the IDC noted that it is easy to deal with them.

From the data collected through focus group interviews, seven of the communities said the IDC representatives first met with their chairpersons, as opposed to five communities that said the IDC representative came directly to them. The seven communities whose chairpersons were the initial point of contact, said it was a

⁸ The word 'chairperson' is used to describe the leader of the local authorities in the communities this study has investigated.

standard procedure in their communities for the chairpersons to be consulted before anything is undertaken in their communities.

The other five communities offered various reasons why the IDC representatives did not first meet with their chairpersons:

- a general meeting that included the chairperson, was held, as the chairperson was one of the beneficiaries of the project;
- in a matter such as this, the villagers rely on what my interpreter referred to as the “principal drivers” of the communities’ affairs. Thus, the chairperson can be bypassed, as long as their principal drivers are involved, or if “the strangers come through them”; and
- the chairpersons are not active and in most cases they do not even know what is happening in their communities.

While collecting data for this study, in some of the communities it was mandatory that I had to seek permission from the chairperson prior to meeting the beneficiaries. I visited a particular community three times, and with each visit, I had to seek permission from the chairperson.

In other larger communities, it was not necessary to meet the chairpersons. In some communities, I relied on the ‘point man’ or principal drivers of the communities or the association in which the beneficiaries are members. I held one-on-one interviews with four chairpersons who were not beneficiaries of the project and who I did not meet before I entered their communities. Three of them claimed ignorance of the existence of the project in their communities. The fourth chairperson said he had heard about the project, but was not sure of the difference between it and any another cattle project in the community, yet the Nguni Cattle Project was the only cattle project being run in the community. Some chairpersons are detached from what is happening in their communities or villages as evident in these communities mentioned.

In rural communities and in fact in any other types of communities, it is important that the community leaders are met to seek permission and to gain their understanding of what is to happen and happening in their communities. It is more important in a participatory communication so that the project is not seen as an imposition on the community members by their leader. Communication is not

mainly concerned about conveying information but also concerned about conveying information without hindrance and possibly recognising other complementary channels through which information can be conveyed. In the case of the communities this study has investigated, this informed why the chairpersons in the community were considered important as they could be used as a horizontal process of exchanging and interacting with their communities' members. In the context of rural development and participation, they can work collaboratively with the development planner to lead their people "as agents rather than objects in the analysing their own situations and designing their own solutions" (Cornwall and Jewkes 1995: 1670).

7.5.1 The nature of the meeting held with the communities the first time

The main purpose of the first visit, which is referred to as "establishing a common space" by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:25), is to interact with the potential stakeholders about the development project in their community.

In the case of the Nguni Cattle Project, the development planners (IDC representatives) stated that they would visit the potential beneficiaries' village or communities after their applications had been provisionally approved by the board of trustees that makes the final decision on the project's affairs. According to them, they use this first visit to discuss the project in detail, stressing its objectives and its operating principles with the potential beneficiaries. At the same time, the community members' needs and strengths are assessed. A transect walk is done in company of some selected members of the community to assess the preparedness in the community for the project and to establish if community members have the potential to successfully participate in the project. The transect walk focuses on certain physical structures, such as existing grazing fields and dam, whether the topographical nature of the village will allow establishment of a grazing fields or if a new dam can be constructed, and random confirmation from other community members about some pertinent socio-cultural issues in the community. As a participatory project, it is further an opportunity to explore how to work with community members based on the needs identified and thus see how the project (Nguni Cattle Project) can be used to address them so that it will not be seen as imposition from above (Morris n.d.:5).

The IDC representatives reported that after assessing the first meeting with the community, they may decide to have a follow-up meeting to clarify certain relevant issues or make conclusion, which may be positive or negative regarding the application made potential beneficiaries. Indeed, the IDC representatives said that in the past the use of the transect walk in certain communities had enabled them to uncover conflict that would have negatively influenced the outcome of the project. They consequently had to immediately end their involvement in such communities as participatory approach can only function well in organised and cohesive communities.

The meeting with the community at this stage is in most cases monological. Though the community members are involved in transect walk with the IDC representatives, the decision taken after the transect work does not involve the community members. According to the IDC representatives, they use this opportunity to emphasise the objectives and the operating principles of the project and to find out if they are willing to abide by the principles spelled to them. In their words,

At this type of meeting, the question of dialogue does not exist because we are telling them once more what they have heard about the project and we just want them to hear it again before they commit themselves in the form signing some documents indicating their membership of the project.

Participatory communication cannot completely avoid one-way or monological communication. When there is need to inform people about government's regulation or to raise awareness, it is pointless using dialogue, according to Leeuwis (2006:52) and Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:30). Similarly, the IDC representatives chose not to use dialogue in the meeting referred to here because they claimed the meeting was meant to instruct, pass information about what could not be negotiated about the project.

When the outcome of their meeting with any community is positive, the IDC representatives said they then inform the communities about further criteria to meet in order for them to be accepted finally as beneficiaries of the project. They also mentioned that these criteria are non-negotiable, hence the question of dialogue does not exist at this stage. For instance, the communities need to:

- have at least three camps with loading zones;

- have a dam;
- have grazing field(s); and
- form a cooperative or association with a constitution, a bank account and a leader.

Regarding the need for the beneficiaries to organise themselves as cooperative or association, the IDC representatives noted that it is more convenient to deal them as association through their leaders, and not as individuals. These leaders are reportedly chosen by democratic means, hence they consider that dealing with the leaders implies a process of consensual decision making, required in the management of a participatory development project. This does not seem to hold true for all the associations of the beneficiaries in this study. In all twelve communities studied, only four reported that they have associations with leaders. Three of the communities could not even point out who the beneficiaries of the project are, as they believed the project was for all members of the community. Five communities do not have a clearly defined association of beneficiaries. This disparity is acknowledged by the IDC representatives who, at present, insist that such communities must organise themselves into an association.

After discussing the criteria with the applicants, the IDC representatives said they inform these potential beneficiaries in detail in a meeting where everybody is allowed to air his/her view about the nature and extent of the IDC's involvement, especially as it relates to the implementation stage of the project.

This stage is referred to as 'specific mandate development' by Bessette (2004:43), who emphasises that the "scope and limitations of your mandate must be explained and discussed with the community members" to avoid raising undue expectations. Bessette states that this must be done through a dialogic communication approach to ensure that there is no misunderstanding and above all to ensure the participation of the community members. This will allow the development planner to receive the necessary feedback to guide him in providing more detail where necessary.

The first meeting with the community members usually takes place in town halls or similar venues, according to the IDC representatives. They said the meeting usually comprises 20 to 35 people where interpersonal communication is the ideal

mode. They added that in these meetings, the communication process is partly dialogic and monologic depending on the issues on the table. However, they remarked that most of the meetings with the community members are dialogic as they are encouraged to participate in the discussion both through feedback and through relevant issues raised by them.

When the beneficiaries were asked to confirm or refute what the IDC representatives said about the nature of the first meeting they had with them, they confirmed that this was a true description of what had occurred. However, they disagreed with the IDC's version of the specific mandate development phase. Table 7.4 below shows the collective responses of the communities.

Types of responses	Number of communities (N=12)
Were told of the nature of IDC representatives' involvement in the implementation process of the project	3
Were not told of the nature of IDC representatives' involvement in the project	5
Were told of the nature of IDC representatives' involvement but not sufficiently explained	3
Were told of the nature of IDC representative involvement but did not understand at the time it was mentioned	1

Table 7.4: Information about the nature of IDC representatives' involvement in the implementation process

As shown in Table 7.4, only three communities agreed that the IDC representatives told them of the extent they would be involved in the implementation process of the project and they added that, unfortunately, the IDC representatives have not fulfilled their promises in this regard. They listed many problems that have arisen in the implementation process of the project that the IDC representatives have not addressed. These issues were acknowledged by the IDC representatives.

Table 7.4 also shows that five communities claimed that they were not told about the extent to which the IDC representatives would be involved in the implementation process of the project. For clarification purposes, a post-survey interview was undertaken with individual members of these communities. In the

post-survey interview, it was found that most of the beneficiary members of these communities did not know the type of assistance they could request from the IDC representatives and other stakeholders, such as the agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians, animal scientists, who are also involved in the implementation process of the project. These stakeholders had all held meetings with the communities, some of which were mentioned in the post-survey interview as what they had assumed I was referring to.

To sum up, members of the communities could tell me how long they had been involved in the project, the criteria they were asked to meet but were unsure of the matters discussed and did not know to whom they could address their request for assistance. In this instance, Bessette's (2004) suggestion of an ongoing dialogue between the stakeholders and the beneficiaries will address the beneficiaries' challenge in terms of information deficit and regarding who to address their request for assistance to. A situation such as this occurs where there is no clear delineation of the role boundaries between the various stakeholders. It is therefore apparent that these stakeholders' roles were not properly communicated to the beneficiaries.

In three of the communities, respondents claimed they were told but the information was insufficiently explained and one community (see Table 7.4) said they were told but did not understand.

It is illustrative to point out that the issues raised by the beneficiaries should have alerted the IDC representatives to the beneficiaries' lack of understanding of the information about the extent of the IDC's involvement in the project. For example, the beneficiaries reported requesting that their old bulls be replaced and wanted their cattle to be sold to raise cash. These undue demands are not covered in terms of agreement of their involvement as beneficiaries in the project, and this can be ascribed to the lack of information about the nature and terms of the project.

The beneficiaries complained that requests for assistance from the IDC representatives had been ignored. These included requesting advice regarding the management of diseases and the castration of bulls. However, this shows the lack of understanding of the partnership involved in the project. Where the IDC representatives are not available or unable to do as requested, the other partners involved in the management of livestock in the rural areas can be called upon. As

the data shows here, there is general ignorance about this and it points to a failure between the IDC and the beneficiaries to communicate properly.

Moreover, this suggests that the IDC representatives had not stressed in their first meeting with the beneficiaries what Bessette (2004:43) refers to as the “possible negative and positive outcomes” of involvement of the development partners in a project. If properly conveyed, these outcomes would have clearly spelt out to each and everyone the nature and extent of every stakeholder’s involvement, including an explanation about the short-term and long-term benefits of the project to the community. Regarding this, the IDC representatives maintained that these were explained in sufficient detail to the community members. What seems to be lacking is an ongoing communication between the stakeholders and the beneficiaries, as indicated earlier in this analysis.

Other related evidence of information deficit can be noted in the statement made by three communities that agreed that they had received sufficient information about the extent of their involvement and the long-term and short-term benefits of the project. These communities remarked that the IDC representatives are not ‘sticking to their words’ because they did not understand why the IDC representatives had not fetched their cattle after the five year period, so that they could start enjoying the long-term benefit of the project. The IDC representatives acknowledged that they had not fetched the cattle after the five year period from many of the beneficiary communities involved in the project. They felt that there are still many issues to be dealt with before the passing of the gift phase can be implemented, but this has not been communicated to the beneficiaries.

Although the explanation given in this regards by IDC representative seems plausible, the fact that the beneficiaries were not involved in the decision taken meant the IDC representatives did not follow the participatory focus of the Nguni Cattle Project. The consequence of this resulted in an information deficit on the part of the beneficiaries. The notion of participatory project is to ensure that the grassroots (the beneficiaries) are involved in the decision-making of the project. One of the reasons this is necessary is to keep them abreast of major decision about what is happening in the project.

The essence of communication in a participatory development project such as the Nguni Cattle Project is to make sure that all the stakeholders are aware of the current situation of the project. This involves communicating sufficiently and effectively to all stakeholders to avoid misunderstandings. However, this is not the happening at present with the Nguni Cattle Project where many of the beneficiaries are confused and accuse the IDC representatives of not honouring their commitments.

7.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE NGUNI CATTLE PROJECT

The primary objective of the Nguni Cattle Project is to alleviate poverty in the beneficiaries' communities. This objective is understood by all the beneficiaries in this study, as they themselves took the initiative and applied to be beneficiaries of the project. The IDC in this regard state that it will be easy for the beneficiaries to be committed to the participatory focus of the project if they willingly take the initiative to apply to be beneficiaries. However, two of the communities interviewed said the IDC representatives came to them and said "We have cattle for you from IDC and University of Fort Hare". This was perhaps the way in which the IDC representatives informed the communities of the existence of the project that they could approach for assistance. The same communities reported that they eagerly applied to be beneficiaries of the project, an indication that they acted on the information they had received from the IDC representative about the project.

The data also showed that all the beneficiaries understood that by joining the project, they would be helped in order that they could then help other communities. The process is as follows: the project 'gives' two bulls and ten heifers to the communities for five years, in the expectation that this nucleus herd will increase in size so that at the end of the period, the beneficiary community is able give two bulls and ten heifers back to the project. These animals are then given to a new beneficiary community. This objective is viewed as noble by all communities involved in the project, and in the words of one of the chairpersons interviewed:

We can see that the project will help us to raise money for our community and through it we have now realised we can do a lot as group to help ourselves. Our neighbouring communities who are not beneficiaries laud the project and envy us as beneficiaries. It is our hope that we will be allowed to recommend them as the communities to benefit from the gift we will be passing on. This will please us to see that we are able to help them in this manner because as

neighbour we should be able to help one other. Our worry, though, is that the IDC people are dragging their feet in this aspect – we have reached the end, it is five years but they are not coming to collect their cattle!

This chairperson's statement struck a chord and I explored the issue further in the other communities I studied. I asked the other beneficiary communities: *If you are given opportunity to recommend the community to pass your gift of 10 heifers and 2 bulls to, which community will you recommend?* The immediate answer was "Our neighbour". When they were asked: *Why will you choose your neighbouring community and not another community you may know?*, the responses showed that they viewed it their duty to help their neighbours. The subtext of these responses has to do with the value of *ubuntu* in rural areas. Ubuntu is an enduring value of the rural people and means caring for each other, crediting the efforts of others in one's progress. The communities see themselves as supporters of each other's advancement. The Nguni Cattle Project's principle of passing on the gift from one community to community also allows it to pass on horizontally a success story of a community that has partaken in the project.

Thus, ubuntu is at the heart of a participatory development like the Nguni Cattle Project, animated through communication among the beneficiaries and other participants. It motivates participation among the beneficiaries, knowing that their efforts will not only benefit them but their neighbouring communities. This also highlights the need to ensure that the objectives of a development project complement the values of the target or beneficiary community.

The discussion of development project objectives cannot be divorced from the needs of the intended beneficiaries of the project. In fact, when the objectives of a project do not address the needs of the intended beneficiaries, the project may turn out negative to the intended purposes. Evidence abound in literature that a development project that responds appropriately to people's need has a positive and sustainable impact on the situation of the people (Chambers 1997, in Chitnis 2005:233). This considered from the implementation perspective, a project's objectives that are in consonant with the needs of its beneficiaries has high degree of beneficiaries' participation in implementation of the project. In a participatory development project, this can be addressed in a number of ways. As stated in section 7.3, the formative stage of the Nguni Cattle Project was done without the

involvement of the beneficiaries, nor were they involved when the objectives of the project were identified.

The objectives of the project are meant to address the basic needs of the communities. As stated by Maslow, the lower order needs are physiological while the highest order needs are self-actualisation in the hierarchy or ladder of needs (Nel, van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono, & Werner 2005:311-12). Maslow argues that as each of the lower need is met, then the urge to satisfy the next higher needs arises. The lower order needs that the Nguni Cattle Project objectives are meant to satisfy are the need for food, drink, shelter and ability to meet basic health needs.

Some of the beneficiaries in the communities this study has investigated rely on government grants that are paid to the elderly (men over 65 years and women over 60) to eke out the subsistence farming practices they undertake.

Thus, it is obvious why the project's objectives are designed to respond to basic needs, the "bread and butter" issues of rural communities across Africa. This may also explain why the beneficiaries were not contacted when determining the needs the project is meant to address.

Countering the argument that the objectives of the project were supposed to have been drawn up with the participation of the target communities in order to ensure mutual determination of needs, the IDC representatives said that this was not possible because at the inception because there was no single community targeted when the project was initiated. They added that

poverty was visible in all rural communities in South Africa, and it is worse in rural areas in the Eastern Cape. Thus, coming up with a project that would address such an apparent scourge – especially when it is meant as a quick response, which leaves no one involved with sufficient time – the question of beneficiaries' participation in determination of needs pales into insignificance.

This applies to the issue of communication as well. It will take great efforts to persuade rural communities to attend meetings to discuss determination of needs for a project such as the Nguni Cattle Project, because the concept under which it is to operate may not be understood by them, said the IDC representatives. The IDC representative forgot here the importance of communication in facilitating participation and demystifying technical knowledge, according Chitnis (2005:226). Chitnis adds that the use of appropriate communication in the determination of the

project's objective will not only make the process comprehensive but it will show that knowledge is not sole prerogative of the IDC representative. One of the IDC representatives added that he came from a similar community, as did several of the other people involved in the conceptualisation of the project hence, to use his words, "we can say what the needs of these communities are".

The essence of a participatory development project, according to IDC representatives, is to make sure that the beneficiaries are helped based on mutually agreed terms between the development planners and the beneficiaries, and by extension all other stakeholders involved in the project. They added that as the communities took the initiative to apply to be beneficiaries of the project because they (beneficiaries) believe the objectives of the project will address their needs. The IDC representatives also stressed that stakeholders' participation is encouraged, as can be seen from the involvement of the local extension officers in their communities in the application process. In addition, they noted that:

Our project is unique in terms of its participatory goal and in terms of ensuring that the objectives of the project are understood, we do our home work to publicise the project through available media outfits and on the basis of what they understand of the project, the beneficiaries would apply for a beneficiary status of the project. As we speak, we are overwhelmed with applications from rural communities we are yet to process.

The semi-structured interviews with the agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians, and veterinary officers also showed that there is information deficit regarding the operational principles and the objectives of the Nguni Cattle Project in terms of passing on the gift, as mentioned earlier. These respondents (50% [N=22]) claimed that they did not know anything about its operating principles and the philosophy behind the passing on the gift of the project until after several months of communicative encounters with the beneficiaries.

They were asked about the moment when they first learnt of these operating principles and the passing on the gift. Some of the respondents, (35 percent [N=15]) said they learnt about it when they were asked to intervene on the community's behalf and to formally request that the IDC representatives fetch the cattle to be passed on to other beneficiaries. They then questioned the beneficiaries about the passing on of the gift and were told about the exact nature of the principle underlying the project. The veterinary officer, agricultural extension

officers and health technicians reported too that operating principles, such as the need to make sure the project is a participatory approach project was not explained to them.

In the analysis of the data above (section 7.5), it was stated that the agricultural extension officers and, to some extent, the animal health technicians are involved in the application process for the communities to become beneficiaries of the project. It was stated that the IDC representatives use the occasion of the application to explain the nature of the project to the agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians. Thus, if they (in this case the agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians among 35% above) are claiming that they only became aware of the operating principles of the project from beneficiaries, it means there is a contradiction to the IDC's claim in section 7.5. However, when I probed this issue further with these agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians, it turned out that they are newcomers to the communities, and were not involved in the application process. Thus the IDC's statement in section 7.5 does not apply to them.

No data showing that the veterinary officers were involved in the community's application process was found. However, it is important to point out that their response shows that there is a decided lack of information about the project. This puts significant numbers of important stakeholders in a position where they do not know the expected outcomes or objectives and may consequently affect the participatory focus of the project.

7.7 STAKEHOLDERS' PARTNERSHIP IN THE PROJECT

In this section, stakeholders' partnership is discussed. In a participatory development project, it is important that all the stakeholders who are directly involved are identified and brought into project. Managing a participatory development project calls for a strong partnership with all stakeholders. It will not only ensure a collective agreement on objectives and plan of action to encourage commitment to the project, it will provide an opportunity "to explore more widely the *anticipated* development challenge as perceived by different stakeholders" (Hawkins n.d.:5, emphasis mine). As noted by Freeman, Wicks and Parman (2004:364), the formation of a partnership drives the development practitioners "to

articulate how they want to do business – specifically, what kinds of relationships they want and need to create with their stakeholders to deliver on their purpose”. Stakeholders are “group or individual that can affect or be affected by the realisation of a company objective (Freeman 1984:25).

The identification of the stakeholders should be done early in a project. As indicated in Chapter Four (see section 4.2.1), the key stakeholders’ “positions and perceptions about the proposed change” should be known as early as possible in the project cycle (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:24). The involvement of all the relevant stakeholders in the project allows for space to seek views regarding the identified challenges and to identify how individual stakeholders can contribute in meeting the identified challenges. It is also another opportunity to establish a common space “where all stakeholders feel comfortable enough to express their views, share their concerns, and provide their inputs on the desired change”, according to Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:25).

One of the interpersonal communication tools the stakeholders of the Nguni Cattle Project use in facilitating communication among themselves is the group meeting or discussion. Group meeting or group discussion is an appropriate forum for dialogue to take place as reaction to issues communicated can be perceived and necessary response given. Mody notes that the group meeting or discussion offers a never-ending two-way interpersonal communication process where the sender and the receiver can communicate until the intended meaning is clearly understood (1996:42). This is depicted as follows:

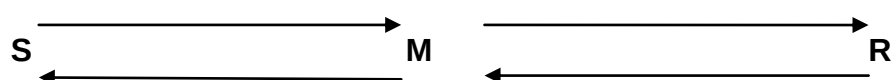


Figure 7.1: Never-ending two-way communication process (Mody:2005:42).

S in Figure 7.1 represents the sender, **M** for message and **R** for receiver, (Mody 2005:42). The arrows pointing to both directions show that both the sender and receiver can adjust their messages until the intended meaning is achieved.

This can be applied to the situation in the Nguni Cattle Project in terms of the varying degrees of differences between the stakeholders’ expertise, status and the differences in willingness to commit fully to the implementation of the project. In

establishing a partnership for the purpose of achieving the desired participation to implement a project, there is a need to have an understanding of the mutually agreed development challenges that will guide the kind of plan of actions that will be developed. This is because partnership formation allows for a constellation of the views of all the stakeholders around identified challenges. This will be in the form of analysis at different levels of the identified challenges of the project. If these are done together, it will be easy to have a concerted plan towards doing what needs to be done, especially in a participatory development project. What is important here is the type of interaction or communication that is needed to illuminate the development challenges, and the camaraderie needed in the partnership of the stakeholders. According to Hawkins (n.d.:3) “The difficulties of working in teams should not be underestimated. Most professionals are educated as individuals; few have formal training in teamwork. Facilitating effective teamwork is usually the most difficult aspect of the process”.

The stakeholders, identified in the context of the Nguni Cattle Project, and relevant from both management and operational perspectives are:

7.7.1 Primary stakeholders

The primary stakeholders are stakeholders who are directly involved in the day-to-day affairs of the project. According to Damak-Ayadi and Pesqueux (2005:7), they have direct relationship with the project. They are referred to as primary stakeholders in this study in the context of their direct operational involvement in the project. They are as follows:

1. The IDC representatives (animal health technicians and project manager),
2. Agricultural extension officers,
3. Animal health technicians,
4. Animal scientists,
5. Veterinary officers, and
6. The beneficiaries.

7.7.2 Secondary stakeholders

These are stakeholders who do not have direct involvement in the day-to-day operation of the project. They are impacted by what happens in the project but do

not have direct relationship with the project or in the context of this study, with many of the primary stakeholders. The secondary stakeholders in the Nguni Cattle Project are involved in terms of funding, employment of primary stakeholders and research. They are considered here from management perspective. They are as follows:

1. The project Board of Trustees,
2. The provincial Department of Agriculture, and
3. University of Fort Hare.
4. Beneficiaries' representative

These stakeholders (both the primary and secondary stakeholders), in the context of their relationship to the project, are usually supposed to:

- Come together as individuals to identify a common development challenges and focus that will benefit or lead to the realisation of mutually-agreed objectives;
- Achieve a common understanding of the development challenge;
- Integrate the views of the different stakeholders;
- Understand the broader context of the challenge;
- State the desired changes that needs to be seen; and
- Assess the different options that would help in carrying out the desired changes (Hawkins n.d.:2).

While the stakeholders of the Nguni Cattle Project are known, the stakeholders' relationship in the form of partnership as discussed above does not exist.

The IDC representatives referred to the Board of Trustees as exemplifying a stakeholders' relationship within the Nguni Cattle Project. According to the IDC representatives, the Board of Trustees is comprised of the representatives of the Provincial Department of Agriculture, the IDC, the University of Fort Hare and beneficiary representatives. One of the functions of the members of the Board of Trustees is to ensure the participation of their constituencies in the project. For example, the PDoA has to make sure that their agricultural extension officers, the animal health technicians, the veterinary officers and animal scientists are involved in the implementation of the project.

The IDC representatives believe this is all that is necessary for a successful stakeholders' relationship in a participatory development project, however the reality proves otherwise. Ideally, a good stakeholders' relationship cascades downwards to involve all the people in the project.

The nature of the stakeholders' relationship, referred to by the IDC, can be characterised as one at an institutional-based stakeholders as it comprises institutional representatives from the different institutions involved. Important primary stakeholders such as agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians were not mentioned. It is vital that these stakeholders are actively engaged by their various institutions because they are directly involved in the field.

The interaction at institutional level (secondary stakeholder) should extend to what can be referred to as inter-institutional interaction where stakeholders in one institution liaise with their peers in another to identify personnel who will be directly involved in the field to implement the project. These identified field personnel (primary stakeholders) should be given the required institutional support to form a partnership at field operation level. This is necessary because it will allow the desired network of relationship to drive the projects based on their integrated perspectives. This is not happening in the partnership identified in the Nguni Cattle Project.

The IDC personnel simply blamed the agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians, who they feel are not showing sufficient commitment to the project in their wards. They added that this was an institutional problem, typical of government departments where monitoring and effective communication are absent.

The data collected from the agricultural extension officers, the animal health technicians, veterinary officers and the animal scientists in this regard are indicated in Table 7.5. The question asked was: *Were you told by your institution about other field officers or personnel in other institutions that you would liaise with to explore the challenges facing the project?*

Types of responses	Number of responses (N=48)	Percentages
Yes, I was told	5	10%
No, I was not told	43	90%

Table 7.5 Whether agricultural extension officers and others were informed about other field officers in other institutions

The data in Table 7.5 reveals that the institutional partnership of the stakeholders in the form of Board of Trustees is not addressing the partnership that needs to be formed among stakeholders who are directly involved in the project in the field. The 10 percent (N=5) of the officers who said they were informed about other stakeholders in other institutions were mainly animal scientists, and according to the data elicited from them, they were involved in the project from its inception. As one of them explained, it was a project “that was highly acclaimed in the department and it was thus publicised in the department but as time went by, the impetus waned and this may be because of changes of officers who were directly involved in the beginning”.

This statement is supported by the fact that 80 percent (N=32) of the animal health technicians and agricultural extension officers reported that they had been assigned to their present communities after the project was already underway.

Most of these officers (75% [N=30]) have been working for the PDoA for under four years. This may explain why they did not benefit from the “impetus” referred to by the animal scientist above. In addition, this animal scientist reported that at the time of the inception of the project, those involved were told about other stakeholders in other institutions but this did not result in a significant stakeholders’ relationship. Supporting her claim, all the respondents who answered affirmatively in Table 7.5 (10%) said they had never met other stakeholders to identify common challenges and action plans to deal with such challenges.

The Board of Trustees is comprised of beneficiaries or their representatives, suggesting that the board members and the beneficiaries share the same perspectives in decisions made about the project. This, however, is questionable, given the data collected from the beneficiaries in this regard. In the focus interviews with the beneficiary communities participating in this study, all twelve reported that they did not have representatives from their communities on the Board of Trustees. They stated that they did not know the appointed beneficiaries’ representatives on the Board.

According to the former IDC representative, Mr Mzileni and the present representatives, the beneficiaries are represented in the Board of Trustees. Efforts made to meet the beneficiaries' representative were unsuccessful. This person is also a beneficiary of the project, but resides in another community distant from those taking part in the study. His unavailability to the other beneficiaries was confirmed by the IDC representatives, who said that it was logistically and financially impossible for him to keep contact with them.

The unavailability of the beneficiaries' representative to his constituents reflects a clear case of tokenism. He was selected to be on the Board of Trustees simply to fulfil the requirement of a beneficiaries' representative, but he is not fulfilling his mandate. No effort has been made to establish a line of communication between him and other beneficiaries, hence the majority of beneficiaries did not know they had representation on the board, let alone knowing the person supposedly representing their interests.

Ideally, a participatory development project requires a representative from each of the beneficiaries' communities because of the variety of challenges faced by the different community. The representatives from different communities will be able to articulate their communities' challenges in the Board of Trustees. This view is shared by Hawkins (n.d.:5), who states that beneficiaries in rural areas are not the same because "they have different interests, different resources, and have different ways of making a living. In other words, they have different 'livelihood strategies'". It is incumbent on the stakeholder management to ensure that these differences are managed and emphasised with regard to how the different communities will be affected with the action plans that will be used to address the identified development challenges (Hawkins n.d.:5).

It is instructive knowing here that there is no operational document detailing what is expected from the primary stakeholders of the Nguni Cattle Project. There is also no data in this study pointing to the fact that the primary stakeholders, such as agricultural extension officers, were verbally informed of such responsibilities. It is clear then why most of the beneficiaries said they did not know who to approach when problems arose during the implementation stage of the project. This is reflected in Table 7.6 below.

The beneficiaries were asked the following questions: *Were you told about the stakeholders to seek help from when you have problem at inception of the project in your community?*

Types of responses	Numbers of responses (N=210)	Percentages
Yes, I was told from the beginning	80	38%
Yes, I was told but after I complained of a problem	63	30%
No, I was not told but sought help myself from stakeholders coming to our community	67	32%

Table 7.6 Responses indicating the level of awareness of the beneficiaries regarding where to seek solutions to their problems.

Sixty-two percent (N=130) of the respondents reported either that they were told who they could approach only after they complained or were not told and then sought help from stakeholders who came to their community in the course of their other duties. In other words, almost two-thirds of the beneficiaries began the project with no information or without being told about other stakeholders who could offer assistance. A description that can be ascribed to this is a development project with poor stakeholders' management – a situation occurring at the expense of the participatory focus and smooth running of the project.

Only 38 percent (N=80) respondents reported being aware of whom they could approach. They stated they had been aware of the development of the Nguni Cattle Project even before their communities became beneficiaries. They, therefore, knew that apart from the IDC representatives, there were other stakeholders such as the agricultural extension officers, the animal health technicians, and the animal scientists who could assist them should they experience problems. One of the respondents said that “because I was already aware of the involvement of these stakeholders, I was able to ask the IDC representatives right from the beginning information in terms of how to reach and to what extent do I expect assistance from them”.

This respondent and several others in this group are more highly educated than the other beneficiaries. Their level of education may suggest why they were able –

and saw the need – to ask the right questions in their meetings with the IDC representatives. Thus, it is not surprising that they reported that they were well informed about other stakeholders involved in the Nguni Cattle Project right from the outset.

All the stakeholders such as agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians, reported that they had informed the beneficiaries of the other stakeholders, such as the IDC representatives and local councillors, who could be approached to intervene on their behalf. They added that they had given this information, but had been unable to supply contact details, such as telephone numbers.

This information received from the agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians shows that there is no formal relationship among the stakeholders, especially the primary stakeholders at field level. However, 65 percent (N=26) of the agricultural extension and animal health technicians responding, said they had given the beneficiaries their own contact numbers and told them how to go about contacting them personally; the physical addresses of their offices and who to contact when they have problem about agricultural issues in their communities. One of the agricultural extension officers referred to this process of giving contact detail as *contact information learning session* and another called it *information day*. They reiterated that they give out their contact details during their visiting and training (V&T) sessions in the communities. This corroborates the information given by 32 percent respondents in Table 7.6, who said they had not been informed of other stakeholders, but they had to seek help from the stakeholders coming to their communities. It implies that these respondents are now aware how to go about seeking help.

Whichever way the data above is considered, it is apparent that there was insufficient engagement of the stakeholders of the project. A good engagement of the stakeholders would result in an interactive process where both the institutional stakeholders (the secondary stakeholders in the context of how they are categorised) and those (primary stakeholders) directly involved in the field operation work in a coordinated environment to achieve the goals of the project. Such an interactive process, as can be seen in Figure 7.2 below, is both vertical

and horizontal in direction to allow the necessary information to go through a dialogic process.

Within the PDoA stakeholder's system, there is active linkage between the agricultural extension officers, the animal health technicians, the veterinary officers and the animal scientists. However, there is little linkage between the PDoA, the IDC and the UFH. The IDC representatives are the primary drivers of the project on the ground but they are not active in linking with the other stakeholders such as the agricultural extension and animal health technicians within the PDoA system. Consequently, the problems the beneficiaries reported to some of the stakeholders are not dealt with, as the person they have reported it to may not be able to solve their problems, neither is this problem reported to the other bodies, which might be able to provide assistance.

For example, four communities this study has investigated said that they had not received any assistance from the relevant stakeholders regarding a particular recurring disease among their cattle. Participatory project is not about one stakeholders depending on the other but it is about the stakeholders working together to deal with the challenges facing them. It is also about the beneficiaries being led to a state of critical awareness with dialogue in order that they are able to be major participants in the quest to transform their world (Freire 1993:108). In a stakeholder system where there is active engagement and coordination, whatever problem arises will be communicated in such a manner that the person responsible for dealing with the problem will be able to respond as swiftly as possible, and not simply left unattended. The four communities whose problem was left unattended are obviously faced with what Freire calls 'limit-situations ... which create a climate of hopelessness' (Freire 1993:80). In as much as there is a burning desire on the part of the beneficiaries to help themselves, the fact that they have not been capacitated to help themselves in absence of other stakeholders implies an attempt to still retain control over them. This is anti-participatory practices and it stems partly from lack of belief in people's ability to help themselves. As indicated in Figure 7.2 below, a stakeholder relationship in a participatory development project must be in the form of an interactive process.

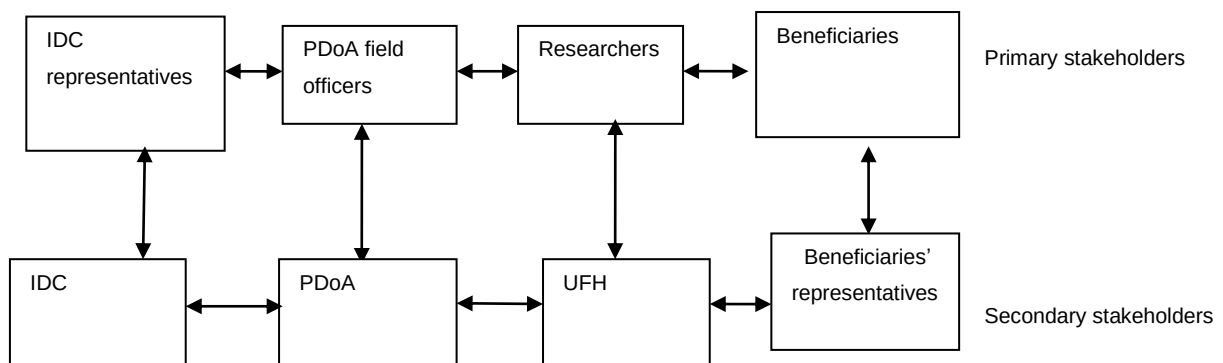


Figure 7.2: An ideal process of stakeholders' relationship in the Nguni Cattle Project

Figure 7.2 indicates the interactive process of a stakeholders' relationship in a participatory development project. The two-way arrow indicates an on-going communication between the stakeholders at both the primary and secondary stakeholders' levels.

At the secondary stakeholder's level, the stakeholder partnership formed is very important because the representatives from the various institutions make the decisions about the project in their institutions. Indeed, the stakeholders at this level are considered to operate from a management perspective. The decisions made at this level are relevant to the overall coordination of activities because these stakeholders are responsible for managing the primary stakeholders involved. Communication at this level requires a back and forth process as depicted in Figure 7.2, where ideas and views are discussed, refined and agreed upon in the form of an action plan or pathway to address the mutually-identified development challenges.

Communication at the institutional or secondary stakeholders' level should also include the identification of the stakeholders (at the field level) by their various institutions. These field officers (primary stakeholders) should be informed by their institutions of the identified development challenges and the action plan agreed upon. As the two-way arrows have shown, the communication at the institutional level in this regard should be such that all the institutional stakeholders liaise and inform each other of the identified field officers selected in their institutions for the implementation of the project.

These field officers are very important in the implementation of the project and they should have an organised, continual communication approach to enable them to have mutual understanding on how the project will be implemented and how identified challenges will be addressed. In Figure 7.2, this unbroken interaction process at the primary stakeholders' level, is also represented with a two-way arrow.

The primary stakeholders are mandated to perform the functions identified by the secondary stakeholders. They have to report to the institutional stakeholders and, as the vertical two-way arrows have shown, this means that there must be unbroken communication between the primary stakeholders and the institutional stakeholders. The unbroken vertical communication shows the need for both parties to engage in matters of the project and it also shows that through such communication, the institutional stakeholders will be able to exert control in the form of monitoring and evaluation of the project.

At both institutional and primary stakeholders' level, interactive communication is required in the stakeholder partnership's formation process, where leadership of the partnership will be decided, as well as the development challenges the partnership will address.

Thus, leadership is required at the institutional level (secondary stakeholders) and at the primary stakeholders' level (field workers). Both levels of leadership have to address the identified development challenges by identifying possible problems and deciding the best manner to overcome these problems and succeed in the ultimate purpose of the project.

In the identification of leadership at both levels, communication has to take place interactively allowing for maximum participation of the people involved in the identification a good leader. The leaders are responsible for addressing the identified development challenges, and one of the key tools they need to succeed is communication, hence communication occupies the central point in Figure 7.3 below.

The vital elements to the formation of a participatory project's stakeholder relationship (leadership, development challenges and communication) are represented in the figure below. Primary and secondary leaders must be identified

and their roles must be clearly spelt out. The development challenges that will be considered are the determination of the actual problems and the plans to overcome these problems.

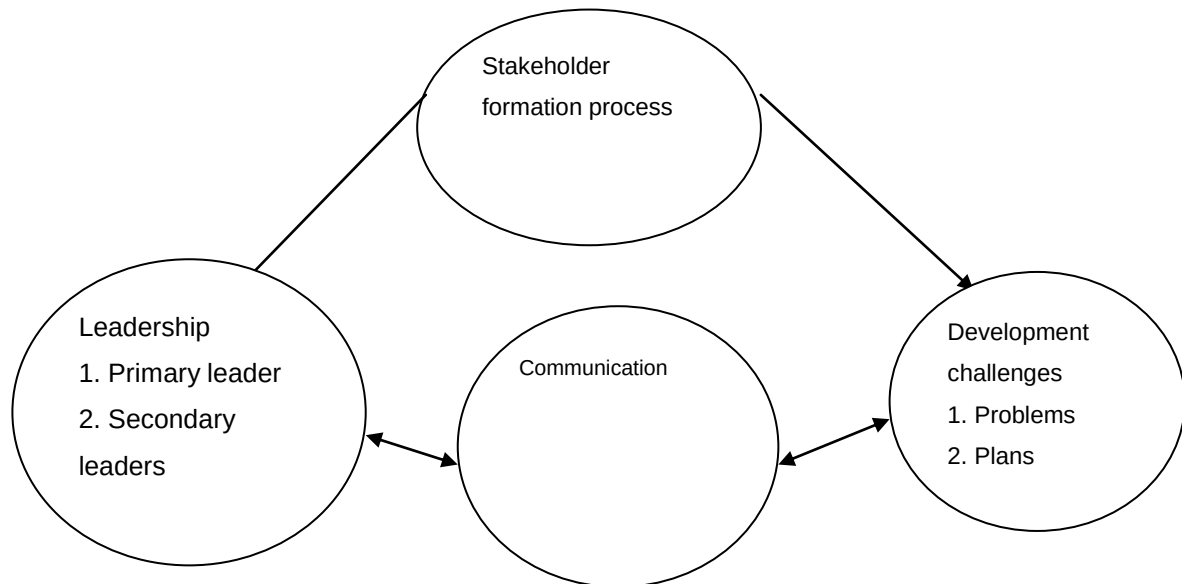


Figure 7.3: Stakeholder formation process

In subsequent sections in this chapter, the nature of communication in the communities studied for this project is discussed. The discussion points largely to interpersonal communication such as group meetings or discussions, as a mode of communication.

7.8 OPINION LEADERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE COMMUNITIES

The consideration of opinion leaders in this study is necessitated by the central role they play in information dissemination in their communities. Opinion leaders are described as people who wield enormous influence in their communities (Dodd 1982:272). They are the individuals “from whom others seek advice and information”, hence they are capable of influencing the opinions of others in their community (Rogers 1962:208; and Dodd 1987:272).

A key focus of any participatory development project is to ensure that the beneficiaries participate in every aspect of the project. However, without the required information they will not know what is required of them and will therefore be unable to participate fully, if at all.

Thus, as people of influence, the opinion leaders are important members of their communities to ensure the flow information, as well as being able to influence the outcome of such information. Opinion leaders are interpersonal channels of information in their communities and according to Inagaki (2007:6), they are more effective than mass media channels in “forming and changing attitudes towards a new idea, and thus influencing the decision to adopt or reject a new idea”. As members of the community who wield enormous influence, the potential role of opinion leaders in the dissemination of information regarding participation and implementation of development project cannot be ignored.

Opinion leaders, according Dodd (1987:272) play a significant role in influencing the nature of interpersonal communication no matter the type of society. In communities such as the ones covered in this study, the modes of communication used between the stakeholders and the beneficiaries are largely interpersonal communication modes, believed to influence individuals more than mass media does (Dodd 1987:273). In other words, interpersonal communication modes are good conduits through which information can be spread linearly at first, to enable the desired dialogic outcome such as a meeting for further communication. Opinion leaders are deferred to by their community as they wield influence over their community members to ensure that the people participate in community meetings, etc., where communication can be dialogic.

The data collected in this study shows that a popular mode of communication used by the beneficiaries and the field stakeholders (primary stakeholders) is the holding of a meeting. A meeting, as a form of interpersonal communication, is a good platform through which opinion leaders can help in the drive to change opinions and sustain harmony in a group or community.

In this study, the question regarding opinion leaders or progressive beneficiaries revealed interesting data. In all twelve communities, every participant in this study responded “Yes” to the following question: *Do you think there is someone in this community who know more than you do about livestock and other general issues?* The community members were then asked if they do go to that person for advice and information, to which they gave varied responses.

As can be seen regarding the wording of the question above, I did not specifically seek to refer to opinion leaders in matters about agriculture but in the responses provided, the respondents categorised the opinion leaders based on the issues that would prompt them to seek advice and information from them. That is, for various issues, they would approach different people, who have the expertise or knowledge required to deal with their issues. Dodd (1987:277) refers to opinion leaders selected on this basis of their specialised knowledge as *monomorphic* opinion leaders. A significant percentage (64% N=134) of the respondents who were interviewed individually in the focus groups listed community nurses, agricultural extension officers, *abefundisi* (or pastors) and teachers as people they go to for specific advice and information relating to their expertise.

In three of the communities, members who were also beneficiaries of the project were pointed out as the people they would ask for advice and information. Rogers (1962:218) opines that opinion leaders are described as people who exert personal influence on other people in certain situations. In the context of the data elicited in this study, the opinion leaders were described as people who are actively involved in the community affairs. The community members regard them as a source of information because they are known about many issues. As one of the communities said, “even if they don’t have the information, they will help us to get it. Usually they do have it because they go to offices”. The criterion used by these communities is largely based on the perceived active involvement of these people in the community affairs.

This was confirmed by the agricultural extension and IDC representatives who said that they pass information through these people to other community members, because they knew that the information would be disseminated and that any questions asked by the communities would be answered satisfactorily. However, the individuals identified as opinion leaders do not consider themselves as such, in fact, they pointed to the agricultural extension officers and other government officers working in their community as being the leaders.

In one of the communities, the chairperson was a young person and he was named as an opinion leader. I asked community members why they had chosen a young person rather than older members of the community given that experience comes with age. They all responded that he was voted in democratically and stated

that even before he became the chairperson, he was very involved in the decision-making in the community. One of the respondents described him as being “our eyes in this community, whether he is the chairperson or not”. Further probing about this chairperson revealed that he was an educated person with a degree, who had relocated to his village in order to farm. As is the case with the other three opinion leaders referred to above, this community recognised this young man’s active involvement in the community affairs, and he was elected their chairperson. The villagers further stressed that he is their “memory” about what needs to be done to uplift the community. Although education was not referred to as a criterion for becoming chairperson, it stands to reason that this person is able to achieve much of what he is undertaking because of his educational advantages.

In four of the communities, their chairpersons or deputy chairpersons were pointed out as people to whom they would turn for advice and information. When the community members were asked whether other people in the community go to these leaders for advice, there was a resounding “yes”, and they pointed out that apart from the fact that they were chairpersons in their respective communities, they were educated and close to government. My interview with these chairpersons confirmed this. They are well-educated, three hold diplomas and one holds a degree; and they have once worked in government departments, indeed, one is still working as Head of a government department.

As seen from the data discussed above, the role of interpersonal source in dissemination of information cannot be discounted. It was stated that 50 percent of the beneficiaries got information about Nguni Cattle Project from other beneficiaries or members of the community. While their sources may not have been the opinion leaders in their respective communities, in the context of the data being discussed in this section, the opinion leaders are vital interpersonal sources of information for the community.

As already confirmed in research, there is no clear distinction of who the opinion leaders are (see Rogers 1962:214) and this manifests in this study as many respondents referred to different people as their opinion leaders. Some referred to their children, who are university students, as their opinion leaders and others referred to the community leaders or chairpersons as their opinion leaders. Some women referred to their husbands being their opinion leaders.

Respondents, who claimed that their children or husbands are their opinion leaders, revealed that they confirm or discuss information they have been given with their family members before applying this information. This manner of confirmation of information given to them is referred to as multi-step flow (Rogers 1962:213; and Dodd 1987:275) or the passing of information through many interpersonal sources.

Opinion leaders are open to ideas and they are exposed to or use other sources of information such as mass media (Dodd 1987:275) more than the majority of the community members. Rogers adds that opinion leaders are open to innovative ideas, participate more in social issues and have more contacts with development agents than others in their communities. The data collected in this study acknowledge these attributes of opinion leaders and some of these were cited as the reasons why the community members would chose them as the persons to whom they would go for advice and information. For example, as stated above, the community members revealed that they go to some members of the community because of their commitment and high level of participation in community matters.

Information trickling down to the lower levels of the community takes time, especially in the context of multi-level flow of communication. In this type of communication flow, information goes through different stages of confirmation before it is finally used. As stated above, beneficiaries revealed that they take advice from different sources before they actually take action. The role of interpersonal influence in such community cannot be discounted because as will be shown later in this analysis, the commonest mode of communication besides telephonic calls made to instigate a communicative encounter, is direct face-to-face communication between the interlocutors. The interpersonal influence commanded by opinion leaders in their communities can result in change of behaviour or attitudes positively or negatively towards the intended purpose of the communication (Rogers 1962:218).

In communities where direct face-to-face is the norm of communication, interpersonal influence plays a large role. Attention should be paid to this influence, and a longer timeline must be allowed.

For instance, a training organised for the Nguni Cattle beneficiaries and other stakeholders on 10 August 2011 at Cape College, Fort Beaufort, was not well

attended. A post-survey undertaken with the communities that participated in this study revealed that the beneficiaries were aware of the training offer, but they did not see need for them to be trained. When many of the opinion leaders were questioned, they responded that they understood what the training was meant for and believed it would have been good for the beneficiaries. They stated that they wished that they could have attended the training session, but the information was received too late for them to make the necessary arrangements to attend.

In one of the communities, I was told that they usually sent a particular person, sometimes accompanied by a few others, to attend such training on their behalf. The person referred to by this community was one of their opinion leaders and he told me “I did not go because there was no time to mobilise my people”.

Thus, time is needed for the opinion leaders to use their interpersonal influence in their communities. The training was poorly attended by the beneficiaries because of the short notice given for the training session. Most of the opinion leaders who would have encouraged participation were not able to attend the training themselves, and did not have time to persuade others in their communities to do so.

7.9 MODES OF COMMUNICATION IN THE COMMUNITIES AND AMONG THE STAKEHOLDERS

The analysis of the data collected in this section will focus on the modes of communication between the stakeholders and between the stakeholders and the beneficiaries.

The most common modes of communication in the communities studied are the community meeting, the use of a loud hailer (*abapapashi*), *umququzeli*⁹ and the cellular telephone. The last three mentioned, are modes of communication used to facilitate community meetings that usually take place in the community halls or at another location, such as the village square or in a community member's house. They are also used to pass information to the communities in situations where no meeting is required.

⁹ Umququzeli is an isiXhosa term used to describe a person selected to be the community's messenger.

A community or group meeting is an interpersonal form of communication used by the development communicator, especially when entering the community. Scholars such as Schoen (1996:261) recommend that the development communicator should first establish the preferred discussion mode or meeting procedures in the community he/she intends to enter. Schoen emphasises that there might be a need to do segmentation where people, based either on their age, social class or gender, will be met separately. This was not an issue in this study. As it was established earlier in the research, all the stakeholders – especially the primary stakeholders who are active with the beneficiaries in the field – have the same cultural background as the beneficiaries. Thus, it was correctly assumed that they knew the meeting procedures of the communities, as I noted in the meetings I attended as a non-participatory observer.

A group meeting is the preferred mode used by the agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians and the IDC representatives during their interpersonal encounters with the beneficiaries. The IDC representatives, agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians all complained that it was very difficult to get the community together for meetings. This implies that there was poor participation by the beneficiaries in such meetings. These stakeholders stated that they encountered a general apathy from certain community members, who would only attend if ‘freebies’ were being given out. They also blamed poor attendance on laziness and the fact that some community members are involved in other economic activities.

The IDC representatives reported that in order to ensure that their meetings are attended by more beneficiaries, these meetings are scheduled to coincide with community meetings. For instance, the members of the Ncera community meet every week on Wednesday. The IDC representatives now schedule their meetings on Wednesdays to ensure maximum attendance.

The nature of the answer to the question asked with regard to participation in meetings depends on who is replying. The beneficiaries cite a plethora of reasons to justify the low attendance at meetings with the IDC representatives, including meetings being called on very short notice, no agenda made available prior to the meeting, frustration because there is no resolution to problems raised at earlier meetings and being busy with other economic activities.

The IDC representatives responded to these, stating that their mandate includes paying visits to the communities to monitor the progress of the project and such visits were always done with the knowledge of the communities. They also added that their visits to the communities were always prompted by the communities' call for help when there were instances of calving, castration, diseases control, dipping, branding, etc. The community members countered by stating that the IDC representatives did not often respond to their calls for help in time and when they eventually arrived, they were unable to link their visit to the call for help they made several weeks (and in some cases months) ago.

Freire use of metaphor "object of assistance" (1993:64) to describe the oppressed and poor people in his book depicts how the beneficiaries are seen by the IDC representative as evidenced in the data above. Freire's argument about problem-posing education has a bearing in this case because in a participatory development project, both the beneficiaries and the IDC must be jointly responsible and in a relationship where no one teaches another but "people teach each other, mediated by their world ..." (Freire 1993:61). This, thus, leaves the beneficiaries in a situation where they are not dependent or overly dependent on the IDC representatives and other primary stakeholders to survive in the project.

As discussed above about opinion leaders, some beneficiaries commit extra role or efforts to the implementation of the project. These people were cited as monomorphic opinion leaders in their communities and it was also pointed out by these communities they would most cases prefer or send them to represent them in meetings called by IDC people or any other such meetings in their communities. They said after all it was easy to understand what was discussed in meetings as the people would come to narrate what had transpired in the meetings as opposed to attending meetings to listen to the IDC representatives.

The third issue cited by these communities is the perception that the meetings did not address their problems. One of the community members who spoke English fluently, called this a "talk shop" where the same things were always discussed and "some of us will not have time for this".

The last reason cited by the communities to justify their poor attendance was that some of them were involved in other economic activities, such as vegetable and

poultry projects. Women beneficiaries were identified as those who were least likely to attend these meetings, because they felt that the discussion of cattle is more of 'men's talk' than women's.

One of the challenges pointed out in Chapter Three, section 3.2.5 was the question of time management, especially as the beneficiaries are involved in other economic activities. Leeuwis points out that some participants in a development project may be reluctant to invest the required time and effort if there is no immediate reward for the time and other priorities they have missed (Leeuwis 2006:253).

There is no socio-cultural barrier in these communities that prevent men and women from attending the same meeting. It was observed, however, that on some occasions women chose to exclude themselves from meeting, based on the agenda under discussion, notably if cattle were concerned. On the part of the women, they responded that generally the discussion of cattle is more of 'men's talk' than women's hence they would rather be absent to concentrate in other economic activities in their communities.

During the process of my post-survey interviews in the communities to explore the issues of poor attendance at meetings further with the participants, some of the beneficiaries were pointed out as habitual non-participants in meetings. These beneficiaries were elderly and they confirmed their non-attendance to me, but said that they no longer considered themselves beneficiaries, as they had passed their membership onto their sons. This was confirmed by numerous other beneficiaries, however they reported that the sons are young and who, out of deference to the older beneficiaries, would not attend meetings. In other words, these young beneficiaries did not attend meetings because they consider themselves too junior to be present and possibly be involved in a discussion in which they might differ with the older men.

This may be a reason for the IDC representatives to segment the meetings they have with the beneficiaries (Schoen 1996:261) as it is important for these young beneficiaries to fully participate in the project. Due to ethical concerns, I did not approach these young beneficiaries because those pointed out to me were under 21 years of age. As stated earlier, people under 21 years of age did not qualify as participants for this study.

Returning to the IDC representative's description of how they ensure that their approach to the implementation of the Nguni Cattle Project is participatory, I quote him verbatim: "We (the IDC people) always like to work with consensus and we also make sure that meetings that are held to discuss matters about the project are based on mutual agreement by ways of seeking the beneficiaries' views and we will also put our views forward".

Working by consensus demands that everybody's voice is heard and taken into consideration. This is only possible when there is maximum participation in meetings and everyone has the opportunity to speak. Meetings are appropriate fora for both the sender and receiver of information to have shared meaning or to "hold meaning in common or when the meaning the sender wanted to share is identical (isomorphic) to the meaning the audience receives", according to Mody (2005:41-42).

As it is obvious in the data being analysed, the boys who are beneficiaries in the project do not attend meetings for the reasons cited above and to ensure their participation, there should be segmentation of the meeting process where the old beneficiaries and the young ones are met separately. Although, there may be temptation to view this as anti-participatory practice, the over-arching interest in this case should be to ensure that people participate in meetings where issues about the project are discussed. In other words, getting out message to those that need it is central to other needs because once the message is received and understood through a dialogical process, challenge about beneficiaries' involvement in the project will be reduced. Moemeka's explanation of the core objective of communication for development is important in this regard. He states that communication in this case is an

[...] attempts to create a conducive atmosphere for genuine dialogue that would ensure that the members of the benefiting social system understand the rationale for the development programs, accept the need for change and fully participate in the planning and execution of the development programs" (2000:14).

Apart from the participatory nature which characterised the group meeting that took place between the IDC and the beneficiaries, another mode of group meetings is the lecturing mode that was used in the workshops and training sessions given to the beneficiaries.

From the inception of the project, the beneficiaries have attended several training sessions organised by Bayers and Bayers, Umthiza, and University of Fort Hare. The nature of communication that took place in these trainings was via a lecturing mode in which the trainers were dominant and the beneficiaries were passive. The lecture mode was a technologically-mediated one in the form of a power point presentation and printed matters. In the preparation of the message disseminated through lecture, the audience is usually invisible until the development communicator is with the target audience in the field. This characterises what happened in the lecture mode used in the case of the training referred to in this study. The information to be given to the beneficiaries was prepared by organisations that do not know who the beneficiaries are, but because of the benefits contained therein, the development communicator disseminated the information to the beneficiaries.

This is similar to what Mody (2005:43) has described as information transmission process with a sender, a message and a channel but an invisible receiver. In this case, the sender prepares a message which he/she will transmit through a known channel to receivers not yet known. Mody represents this as follows:



Figure 7.4: Technologically-mediated information transmission process

In this type of situation, Mody notes that the opportunity to personally interact with the target audience during the message preparation and thus make the message suitable to them in order to have meaning is limited (2005:43).

I attended a training session at the Cape College, Fort Beaufort, held for the beneficiaries, the agricultural extension officers and animal scientists who work directly with the beneficiaries. Leeuwis (2006:198) points out that lecturing mode of communication is not participatory as it is the development planners who are dominant in such communicative encounter while the beneficiaries are passive listeners. This was an accurate description of the training conducted at the Cape College. The presenters tried to be as facilitative as possible in order to ensure there was participation from beneficiaries, but were unsuccessful in this regard.

Although, lecturing mode is not participatory, Bessette (2004) remarks that its similarity with visioning process normally used to discuss aspects of the project (see subsection 5.2.1.1), makes it a good interpersonal communication tool. He notes that visioning sessions are used to talk about a project and then the beneficiaries are given the chance to discuss the project based on what they have been told in the visioning sessions. It is also used to raise awareness over some issues about the project. The training given at Cape College, Fort Beaufort can be characterised as such because the training was used to raise awareness about record keeping and breeding control – two cattle rearing practices the beneficiaries who participated in this study have largely ignored. In a participatory development project, it is not easy to avoid one-way communication such as lecturing mode, especially when there is need to raise awareness as stated by Bessette. This has also been noted by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) as earlier stated in Chapter Four, subsection 4.4.1.

Bessette recommends that the people lectured should be given the chance to discuss the issues raised in the lecture. Thus, the lecturing mode or visioning process can be viewed as a type of participatory process when the beneficiaries are given an opportunity to consider the subject presented. When such a meeting or training session breaks into smaller group sessions, participation and consensus from the beneficiaries can be achieved.

A post-survey interview I did with four beneficiaries, who were selected to participate in the training on behalf of their communities, revealed that three of them had not discussed the training with other beneficiaries in their communities. The one who had reported back about the training, an educated opinion leader, stated that he had tried to carry out the training in the manner demonstrated, but he was hamstrung by lack of training materials and insufficient training manuals.

Two of the agricultural extension officers who attended the training session, also passed on the training to the beneficiaries in the wards assigned to them. One of these agricultural extension officers referred to the training as an “information day”. The post-survey undertaken in this regard showed that eighteen agricultural extension officers did not pass this information to the communities in their wards. It is a good participatory practice for a group to be represented by an individual or some individuals. According to Alimchandani (2003:23), dialogue which

characterises participatory practice cannot be solely stated as a process in which everybody contributes equally to the decision-making. She states that this “could mean that certain individuals speak for others in a meeting, representing the position of a larger group”. Unfortunately, this cannot be said of most of the beneficiaries who represented their communities in the training at the Cape College as the data revealed that they did not pass the information obtained to their communities. The same can also be said of the agricultural extension officers who tacitly can be said to be representatives of the beneficiaries as their work involve dealing and giving information and training to them. Significant percentage (N=18) of the extension officers did not pass information relating the training to the communities.

The importance of a training session, as has been discussed, is that a lecture mode of interpersonal communication cannot be seen entirely as non-participatory if it is used to raise awareness and if the beneficiaries are given time to digest the issues discussed in order to have a well-considered responses from them. This, to me, is a form of consensus building which is necessary in participatory development project.

7.9.1 Cellular telephones as a mode of communication between the stakeholders

Traditional media has largely given way to modern communication media such as cellular telephones in the communities this study investigated. Cellular phones have been described as catalyst in the fight against poverty because of their suitability where other media cannot be used (see Time magazine, October 2012). Cellular telephones are used by many stakeholders in the Nguni Cattle Project. It ranks as the second commonest mode of communication after meetings. The majority of the beneficiaries and all the other stakeholders such as agricultural extension, IDC representatives, animal health technicians and animal scientist own cellular telephones. The data in the table below indicate level of ownership of cellular telephones among the beneficiaries.

Ownership of cellular telephones	Number of respondents (N=210)	Percentages
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Male beneficiaries	105	50 %
Female beneficiaries	32	15 %
Male beneficiaries without cellular telephones	55	26%
Female beneficiaries without cellular telephones	18	9%

Table 7.7: Ownership of cellular telephone handset in the communities studied.

The data in Table 7.7 indicate the dominance of the cellular telephone as a means of communication and information dissemination over other ICTs. It is this accessibility that has been cited by Nyirenda-Jere (2010:3) as a reason why cellular telephones should be the focus in terms of technology for dissemination of information in rural areas.

Cellular telephones, according to the IDC representatives, help them to communicate with the beneficiaries, especially when issues that need to be communicated are not technical in nature and require visits to the communities for meetings. They also added that usually after meetings have been held with the beneficiaries in their communities, this mobile communicative device has helped them to follow-up on what needs to be done or for clarification to the beneficiaries. The IDC representatives noted that the beneficiaries would usually send text messages or a 'Please call me' message to indicate that they wished to be contacted. Cellular phones in this case have helped to reinforce feedback, which is very necessary in a participatory development. Through opportunity for clarifications and responses, the relationships that exist between actors in a development project are further defined and contextualised to get the needed specifics going. Cellular phones as explained are appropriate tools to facilitate role negotiation and supportive communication Nair and White (1999:58) speak of in their explanation of transactional model of communication.

Stressing how cellular telephone usage is being used to maximise the participation of the beneficiaries in meetings or other matters about the project, the IDC representatives said they sent text messages to the beneficiaries as a group to keep the beneficiaries informed of current developments within the project, dates and times of meetings, and various other issues. How this has impacted remains to be seen, given the discussion of non-attendance of meetings above. Other

stakeholders, such as the members of the Board of Trustees, also make great use of cellular telephones, as well as e-mail.

A lot has been reported about how cellular telephones can be used to pass information to the beneficiaries in the rural areas, using mobile applications (see Chapter Five subsection 5.6.1) which give access to a myriad of subjects such as weather forecasts, agricultural produce prices, etc. This requires cellular telephones with the capacity to download information from the internet.

However, the data collected showed that the use of cellular telephones by the beneficiaries and other stakeholders is limited to making voice calls and using the short message system. The cellular telephones owned by most of the beneficiaries do not support mobile applications, nor is it possible for them to use web-based systems such as Mxit and JamiiX.

7.9.2 Other means of dissemination of information

Besides community meetings and cellular telephones, the other means of dissemination of information used in this project, according to the data collected, are e-mail, newspapers, words of mouth, radio, and interpersonal contact through agricultural shows.

The e-mail is used for communication between the IDC representatives, members of the Board of Trustees, and a few other stakeholders, including the agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians. The use of e-mail to communicate with agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians, happens rarely and none of the beneficiaries report having been contacted in this manner.

In the data analysed above, (see section 7.9.2) the IDC representatives mentioned newspapers as one of the mass media they use to publicise information about Nguni Cattle Project, albeit no data obtained from other stakeholders supports this. None of the beneficiaries, agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians said that they have read about the Nguni Cattle Project in newspapers. Throughout the time of the study, no articles about the Nguni Cattle Project appeared in any of the newspapers in the Eastern Cape.

The importance of community newspapers in participatory development project cannot be over-emphasised. It has been noted that this medium can be used to ensure a grassroots participation in community project (Nwodu 2006:196). Unfortunately, in the communities investigated for this study, there is no community paper. Some of the newspapers available in the communities are the Daily Dispatch, iDikelethu Eastern Cape Today, the Voice, Izimvo, Fort Beaufort Newspaper and Ilitha Newspapers. None of these papers are community newspapers as defined by scholars.

The use of word-of-mouth and agricultural shows were cited as media used to disseminate information about the project by the IDC representatives. This was supported by the data collected from other stakeholders who reported that their first information about the project came about through conversations with other people and when they attended agricultural shows.

The method of communication between beneficiaries in a particular community stood out. The beneficiaries reported that they communicate through the teachers at their community's school. The teachers tell the school pupils to inform their parents of any impending meeting. This, they say, ensures maximum attendance of the beneficiaries at the meeting. They added, that because there are funerals held almost every weekend and these are followed by a wake or other social get-together, they often request the master of ceremonies to announce important news such as notices of meetings of impending visits of important political and other personalities to their community. These modes of communication were unique to this community, according to the data collected in this study but it further reinforces that communication needs and means in one community may not be the same in other community. Hawkins (n.d.:5) refers this as different livelihood strategies in different communities.

7.10 THE STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS ABOUT PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

Participatory communication involves raising awareness and changing people's consciousness in order to make them realise what is possible or not possible (Freire 1993). Transparent communication is necessary in this context to highlight issues involved in all phases of the project. Through transparent communication,

the stakeholders will understand each other's needs, goal and what is required of them to be involved in the project. It will influence their views about the project which in turn influence their commitment to the project's objective. Thus, in this section, the data analysed focuses on what the stakeholders understand about participatory communication or the participatory focus of the project.

Before the data were collected from the various respondents, I had to preface the discussion by giving my views on participatory communication, balanced with statements about participatory communication and participatory development projects in general, made by notable scholars such as Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009). After this, I invited responses from the respondents. This was done to establish the extent to which the stakeholders understand the concept of participation, because people do not subscribe to an unknown or misunderstood practice or concept.

The beneficiaries' responses were troublesome in many regards. One of the beneficiaries said:

We acknowledge that we cannot help ourselves out of the poverty affecting our communities and this means that we must embrace any other assistance that comes to us to supplement the effort we are making to help ourselves. With Nguni Cattle Project, as you have explained, we cannot participate because there is nobody to participate with.

This drew laughter from other beneficiaries in the group and when I asked whether they agreed with the statement, they responded in the affirmative. However, another beneficiary pointed out that "There is no clear instruction about what we must do to get involved in the project other than knowing that when we have problem, we must call on this same people who brought the project to us".

Both of these respondents' responses corroborate the data analysed previously in section 7.7 about stakeholders' partnership in participatory communication. It also revealed a fault line in the communication process in the relationship between the major stakeholders (the IDC representatives) and the beneficiaries. As shown by the data analysed thus far, the beneficiaries were unsure about other stakeholders' involvement in the project, hence they did not know to whom they had to address their complaints and queries. The nature of the project was not clearly communicated to the beneficiaries as demonstrated in the second response above that revealed a lack of communication regarding the nature of their involvement in

the project. Bessette (2004:43) affirms that from the very outset of a project, unrealistic expectations must not be raised and that the roles of each and every stakeholder must be clearly communicated to all involved in the project, to prevent problems arising.

Any and all agreements reached with the beneficiaries or other stakeholders must be adhered to and this seems not to be the case in this project. Indeed, one of the beneficiaries said:

They must keep their promise, if they want us to participate. If they want us to participate and wait around for meetings, they must keep their promise. As the chairman of this community, I have many things that I do, but when they seem unserious, we can't wait for them, [sic].

The question of broken promises by the IDC representatives and the agricultural extension officers recurred in many statements by the beneficiaries regarding their understanding of participatory communication. In fact, this was a problem cited by 66 percent (N=139) of the individual responses from the group interviewed. However, the IDC representatives also reported that beneficiaries reneged on their promises.

One of the challenges of participatory development project identified by scholars such as Leeuwis (2006:253) is both the time needed for the project's activities and the willingness of the beneficiaries to sacrifice such time at the expense of other economic activities they are undertaking. This resonates in the response by the chairman cited above. His understanding of participation is that there is need to stick to appointed time and to keep promises. When this is not case, there is a problem, especially when it affects his involvement in other economic activities.

The chairman's statement reflects a lack of the selflessness needed in a participatory development project. This is also shown in the responses that I have characterised as a *dependency syndrome* that manifests in the beneficiaries. Exemplified in the following response is: "If we have to participate as you have suggested, how are we being helped as people with the level of poverty you are experiencing?"

All responses put together reveal one glaring fact apart from the dependency syndrome mentioned. It points to what Freire (1993:45) aptly describes as self-deprecation as a characteristics of the poor people, which arises from the

internalisation of the view the few dominant sector of their society hold of them. They are constantly told they are “good for nothing, know nothing and incapable of learning ... sick and lazy ... and in the end they become convinced of their unfitness” (Freire 1993:45). They see themselves as “object of assistance” hence the respondent quoted above states that “We acknowledge that we cannot help ourselves out of the poverty affecting our communities and this means that we must embrace any other assistance that comes to us”. Overcoming this state of mind requires a praxis in the form of community engagement in a participatory process so that the beneficiaries can realistically and consciously identify their development challenges and overcome them. Reflecting a Freirean’s (1993) view in this context, the development planner should facilitate a process where poverty becomes object of reflection by the rural poor in order to free themselves from it.

Following this type of response, I explained in detail what I meant by participation, saying expressly that it means that they have to participate in the decision-making process of the project and that things that need to be done must be based on mutual agreement by all parties involved in the project. My explanation met with a response pointing to different technical aspects of the project and a demand to know what I thought about their participation in these technical aspects. I pointed out that it is an acknowledged fact that there are technical aspects of development projects the beneficiaries cannot take part in due to the lack of the requisite expertise, but it does not negate the fact that these aspects have to be done with their expressed agreement or knowledge. To this, they responded that they did not care as long as whatever is being done is to help them.

A beneficiary who responded on behalf of his co-beneficiaries characterised the nature of participation taking place relative to his community as follows:

When you talk about participation, we – the beneficiaries – are fully involved because everything we do and decide must go through meeting and then mutual agreement. So, there is participation among us in the community. If joint-decision is part of participation, I would say this does not take place in our relationship between the agricultural extension officers, the IDC representatives and others such as animal health technicians. They take decision and come to tell us what to do. We do not question these decisions because they represent constituted authorities such as PDoA and IDC sent to help us.

One beneficiary looked at participation in terms of his involvement in the implementation of the project and concluded that “participation in this project means that there is nothing for *mahala* because we are expected to contribute our labour, material resources to get help we cannot give ourselves”.

It can be stated that participation in the Nguni Cattle Project is taking place at the beneficiary level. The beneficiaries in the various communities organised themselves into an association or society and they meet to discuss issues about the project. Decisions taken in these meetings are usually based on mutual agreement. As shown in the discussion of stakeholders’ partnership, there is a weak link between them and the other stakeholders. Though other stakeholders argue that they do meet with the beneficiaries, this is mostly in the form of directing or giving instructions to the beneficiaries about what to do. The beneficiaries’ responses also show some element of undue subservience to the agricultural extension officers, the animal health technicians and the IDC representatives. According to the beneficiaries, the fact that they are from PDoA and IDC means that they have to be respected and obeyed, again illustrating the beneficiaries’ belief that they are simply object of assistance, according to Freire (1993:64).

The nature of the beneficiaries’ responses is generally self-deprecatory. Many beneficiaries believe that there is nothing they can do to better themselves and lift their communities out of poverty. They, therefore, treat anyone who offers assistance with reverence. As a representative of a constituted authority, they believe it pointless to question decisions taken about the project he is managing. They willingly accept they are ignorant and are willing to listen to the constituted authorities who know what to do to help them. They believe in the superiority of the IDC and other stakeholders. Freire (1993:46) in this regard states that “As long as the oppressed remain unaware of the causes of their condition ... they are apt to react in a passive and alienated manner when confronted with the necessity to struggle for their freedom and self affirmation”. This self-deprecatory attitude has been cited by Servaes and Jacobson (1991:119) as one of the challenges facing the implementation of participatory development project.

The extent to which technical knowledge can be deconstructed to a level where beneficiaries, especially those who are illiterate (the majority of the beneficiaries in this study) can participate dominates the response given by one of the animal

scientists in a bid to explain her understanding of stakeholders' participation in a project. She said:

My concern is to make sure I do my job and that involves seeing to the general welfare of the animals. I will be prosecuted if this is not done. I do not see myself having to seek permission about what I need to do or to start teaching the beneficiaries what I want to do. We are in a different world and that means that what I took more than five years learning at the universities cannot be reduced to two or three day meetings with the beneficiaries. Participation is a fine concept but in this case, I will be very unequivocal in saying it will not work.

Participation can be used in deciding how to help the beneficiaries out of their poverty. With this I mean meeting with them to consider what development project will be good for them. It can also be used when there is a communal conflict besetting the project. In this case, there is need to have a two-way communication with all interested parties and stakeholders to the conflict to get either a win-win solution or a solution that will wrest the community from its restive situation. This I have always done. I have also tried to be participatory by making sure that the communities are well-informed of my impending visit and what I am coming to do in their communities. This is to ensure maximum participation. As a woman I insist on women's participation in my meetings with the beneficiaries.

Demonstrably evident in this response is lack of humility and empathy, which as stated by Freire (1993) are vital ingredients of dialogue. Freire notes that for dialogue to take place between two disparate groups, there must be humility, especially from one who seems to be more advantaged than others in the relationship. "Dialogue as the encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of them) lack humility" (Freire 1993:71). Freire also stresses empathy as a requirement of dialogue and it is lacking in the agricultural scientist's response above. For dialogue to take place, the people with whom you interact must be treated with respect and instead of sympathy. This essentially means empathising – see things not only from your perspectives but also others. Dialogue also means admission of one's shortcomings. In this regards, Freire notes: "How can I dialogue if I always project ignorance onto others and never perceive my own?" This clearly sums up how to look at the response of the agricultural scientist. To her, participatory communication will not work because she is not ready to climb down from the lofty height she is to a level where she can work as equal partners with the beneficiaries.

The animal scientist's response clearly articulates a position similar to the response given by a beneficiary, who stated that the beneficiaries do not have the requisite expertise to participate meaningfully with regard to technical matters.

The scientist's response also reinforces the view shared by some of the beneficiaries, that a development project should be seen first and foremost as a means to help the beneficiaries. Thus, the issue of participation ranks lowest in the minds of the protagonists driving the project in the communities. Three other animal scientists responded tersely that participation, as explained by me, is not practicable in the context of this project. However, one of them suggested that participation could result in an awareness of what must be done in order for the stakeholders to know how to participate and commit their efforts in the implementation of the project.

Only a few agricultural extension officers shared their views regarding participatory development projects. Others gave answers that were defensive about their non-active involvement in the project. Many said they were not well informed about the specifics of the project and they treat it just like any other community projects under their jurisdiction. Addressing the question of participation, 55 percent (N=11) of the agricultural extension officers stated that the beneficiaries are very difficult to work with as they do not always attend meetings. They believe that the beneficiaries are used to free handouts and when meetings called do not promise these, there is less interest shown.

The responses from all the respondents showed a lack of understanding of the concept of participation in a development project. In the context of the project that is the focus of this study, there are many stakeholders whose involvement impacts on the success of the project. It was expected that these stakeholders would be mentioned in the responses, but this was not the case. An explanation for this may lie in the perceived weakness of the link between the stakeholders, especially the institutional or secondary stakeholders. This shows the respondents' narrow view of what participation in a development project is.

Of all the respondents, only the IDC representatives gave an incisive view of what participation in a development project should be like. According to them, participation in development project such as the Nguni Cattle Project means

[...] there must be full commitment from all actors directly connected to the project and this must be accompanied with clear communication about the project. It is very important that the target community must be involved from the beginning to the last phase of the project so that they are able to help themselves during after other development actors have left the scene.

This view sums up the textbook definition of the preferred approach that should underscore a participatory development project. It essentially mirrors the need to have mutual identification of problem, solutions and joint decision-making but these respondents expressed doubt about the possibility of this happening given the many dynamics or reality on the ground that may influence the ways things turn out.

7.11 COMMUNITY NEEDS AND PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

The question of needs influenced the beneficiaries' responses about their understanding of participatory communication. While the identification of needs should be mutually determined in order for the process to be termed participatory, the responses from individual respondents (70 percent, N=147) of the communities show that they have divergent views about what the communities actually need.

For example, in response to the question "*What do you think are the needs of this community that should be addressed by a development project?*", up to 70 percent of the respondents mentioned different things. Thus, in an environment where there are divergent views about needs in a community, a joint determination of the needs to be addressed by the development planner and the beneficiaries may be problematic. When the development planner's (the IDC) representatives were asked about how they address such divergent views of needs, they said they work by consensus and in most cases tell the communities to reach an agreement amongst themselves whether or not they want the project, before taking the project any further.

In some communities, the question of needs that were not addressed by consensus, led to the withdrawal of women from the project. Most of these women stated that the project only caters for the interests of men. One woman said the project's success feeds into the ego of men, because as the implementation and contribution to the project are being relived or discussed, only the roles played by

the men were given attention. Most of the women also stated that they preferred poultry and vegetable projects because of quick return on investment.

The question of felt needs that should be mutually determined is one of the elements of genuine participation, according to Michener (1998:211) but she takes the argument further by saying that most of the needs identified by the community could never be sufficiently addressed. This is supported by the data elicited in this study, as most of the needs listed by the community members were needs that reflect their view of the definition of a participatory development project. Realising that they will have to contribute materially and physically to the project, most of the needs mentioned fall within the scope of their financial limits and labour contribution. When some of the beneficiaries were asked to compare the needs they identified to what they think the Nguni Cattle Project would offer, they admitted that they would not have mentioned the project given the scale of its operation and then concluded that “this is the reason sometimes we tell people who come to us to tell us how they can help us first before we contribute”.

The felt needs of the communities and how these needs actually address their greater problem is a continuous debate among development scholars such as Michener (1998:211) who reports that “the line between felt needs and needs identified by outsiders is an issue which challenges the participation rhetoric”. These challenges can be overcome with the use of an appropriate communication strategy.

The communities should be made aware of the issues that would address the development in their communities and they should also be given the freedom to identify needs without limiting these in light of their current financial position. This seems not to be the case when dealing with rural communities about their needs hence Mamphela Ramphele in Sunday Times, 9 September 2010 suggests that “Leadership in complex environments such as ours needs to embrace the involvement of citizens in the planning and implementation of programme for their own development”.

7.12 PERCEPTIONS OF THE BENEFICIARIES ABOUT THE NGUNI CATTLE PROJECT

This section is similar to the data analysed regarding the views of the stakeholders about participatory communication. It is important to know what the beneficiaries think about the project as a whole, before discussing specific participatory issues. All the communities studied here have been participants in the project for five or more years. Thus, the responses analysed are premised on the fact that the responses were based on their long experience.

The fact that the beneficiaries themselves were the ones who took the initiative to apply to be assisted through the project shows that they believed the project would alleviate poverty in their communities. Put differently, this means the community members became beneficiaries believing that the project would help to mitigate some of the poverty-related challenges they face. This belief is best reflected in a statement made by one of the beneficiaries in Dyam-Dyam and he said: “Nguni Cattle Project is good. We were happy to be beneficiaries because everything we were told about is enough to change our situation”. He added:

[...] but we are getting tired and disillusioned because the IDC is not sticking to all the promises. For example, we were told that after five years we will have to pass on the gift of 10 heifers and 2 bulls to IDC which they will use to help another community [...] here we are after five years they haven't come to collect the cattle so that we can know what is ours. How long are we going to continue to be at this level of uncertainty?

This beneficiary's response shows feelings that may affect participation in the project, especially in the implementation stage which all the communities represented in this study had reached. The beneficiary's use of the words 'disillusioned' and 'uncertainty' shows that they are concerned about the expected outcomes of the project. This resonates across all other communities as the common complaint about the project. They (the beneficiaries) have reached maturity or the full cycle of the project but they have not been informed about the implementation of the 'passing on of the gift'.

The IDC representatives acknowledged that there was a problem in ensuring that the beneficiaries exit the project as discussed with them at the inception, stating that certain problems had made this impossible. Some of the problems mentioned were calving problems, interbreeding resulting in most communities not having pure Nguni cattle stock and widespread cattle disease. Reportedly, these problems

have resulted in a situation where most of the communities' herds consist of more bulls than heifers, and in some they do not have enough of the right combination of cattle to be able to pass them on as a gift to other communities.

Four of the communities were worried about the composition of their herds as a problem when they were asked about what they felt about the project. They wanted to know what would happen because they do not have sufficient heifers to pass on as gift to another community. This clearly shows the failure of the communication process. The IDC representatives are aware of this matter, and therefore, the onus rests on them to inform the beneficiaries of possible solutions to the problem. As stated by the beneficiary in Dyam-Dyam, in the face of lack of a clearly communicated position of the IDC about the problems, the likelihood of 'disillusionment' and 'uncertainty' is inevitable, and this may jeopardise their continuous participation in the implementation in the project. The failure of the communication process here can be attributed to lack of transparent communication. Transparency in communication refers to the clarity and openness of a communication process and willingness to share knowledge (Alimchandani 2003:29). The beneficiaries' use of the terms 'disillusionment' and 'uncertainty' arise from the lack of transparent communication. Transparent communication in this case is required for the passage of information about the passing on of the gift and why the phase has not been implemented even though they have all reached the phase.

Owing to lack of transparent communication, some of the beneficiaries have started withdrawing from the project. For example, it was reported that many women had withdrawn from the project because they did not see its relevance to meeting their poverty alleviation needs. This is also the case with some men who reportedly withdrew. The data collected about beneficiaries who have withdrawn out show that eleven communities have experienced membership deregistration or a continuous lack of interest in the project. Chief among the reasons cited for this diminishment of members was their reluctance to wait for a long time before the project yielded the intended outcomes, indicating that they preferred projects with a shorter lifespan, such as vegetable and poultry projects. This was corroborated by the four of the beneficiaries I spoke to.

The lack of timely response or feedback to problems reported to IDC representatives, agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians is also manifestation of lack of transparent communication. Next to this and which featured prominently in their responses about the Nguni Cattle Project lack of respect of the beneficiaries. This perception is common to all the communities surveyed in the study. Indeed, it is crystallised by one of the beneficiaries in the Kwezana, who said “these people look down on us and do not take us serious”. This perception will work against participatory focus of any project, because when the beneficiaries believe that other stakeholders are not working to advance a mutually agreed upon interest, they are likely to withhold their contribution. This has been acknowledged in participatory development research by Becu, Neef, Schreinemachers, and Sangkapitux (2008, in Neef & Neubert 2011:188), who say that local stakeholders will cooperate with the other stakeholders only if they believe that the problem they want to deal can be solved by them and they have solutions that can be relied on to deal with their challenges.

The perception the beneficiaries in any development project have about other stakeholders affect the interaction they will have with them. According to Neef and Neubert (2011:188) who look at the question of participation between researchers and local stakeholders, they conclude that when the local stakeholders “perceive the researchers as ignorant outsiders, as teachers who want to instruct them, experts providing support, or as facilitators of a continuous and mutual learning process”, their interaction or communication will also reflect their perception.

This is shown in this study as demonstrated by the statement above, in which the belief that the other stakeholders treat the beneficiaries as inferiors. In this case, not only is misunderstanding and lack of mutual trust clearly exemplified, but it points to the need to consider the quality of participation that would emanate from such relationships. Trust is required in a communicative relationship between development planners and beneficiaries, otherwise they will resort to monological and top-down communication (Alimchandani 2003:31). Dialogue will certainly not happen in absence of trust because it is required in “a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence” (Freire 1993:72). This is a common situation in the relationships between participatory

development project planners and the target beneficiaries. As noted by Neef and Neubert (2011:186), project planners

[...] attitudes towards local stakeholders can depend on a variety of factors, such as educational and cultural background, or prejudices against certain ethnic groups. Researchers may not be interested in local stakeholders' perspectives and even treat them as backward and inferior.

As stated earlier in section 7.9, it is not only the beneficiaries who are critical of the other stakeholders; the agricultural extension officers, the IDC representatives and the animal health technicians categorise the beneficiaries as lazy individuals who want handouts more than they want to better themselves through their own efforts. In this climate of lack of trust about each other's capabilities and commitment, achieving the participatory goal of any project will be an elusive outcome.

7.13 IMPLEMENTATION

Beneficiaries tend to be more active in the implementation activities of development projects than in decision-making, problem and goal assessment (Holland & Blackburn 1998, in Waisbord 2008:509). In the case of the Nguni Cattle Project, apart from those who left the project and certain inactive beneficiaries, there was full participation in the implementation stage of the project by the beneficiaries. However, this was not complemented by similar levels of participation from other the stakeholders, such as the agricultural extension officers and the animal health technicians.

This is supported by individual responses collected from the beneficiaries in this regards. Sixty-three percent (N=137) reported that they were not helped with some of the problematic issues that arose, such as castration, stock theft, dipping, disease control, etc. The IDC representatives acknowledged this as shortage of personnel they were currently having. They also stressed that problem such as castration and dipping were not considered problem to the beneficiaries as they had been done several times with them.

Several of the beneficiaries stated that they had reported their problems to the agricultural extension officers, trusting that they would pass the information to the IDC representatives, but this did not happen. Some of the agricultural extension officers claimed they had never met the IDC representatives nor did they know how

to contact them. This is a problem that can be traced to weak partnership formation, as earlier pointed out in section 7.7.

It also shows that the flaws in the line of communication between the beneficiaries and other stakeholders such as the animal scientists, the agricultural extension officers and the IDC representatives resulting in the beneficiaries being left without the required assistance. The beneficiaries initiated the communication about issues arising, but did not get feedback or where feedbacks were received, it did not result in action taken to help the beneficiaries.

Given the data examined thus far, it seems there is also a problem regarding what the beneficiaries understand about the implementation stage of the project. They are not aware of the exact extent of involvement of the IDC and other stakeholders. They were told that the project would continue for five years, at which time they would be expected to pass the gift to another community. They would then be left to continue raising the cattle on their own with little or no involvement from the IDC representatives. The IDC representatives added that it was expected that the beneficiaries would, in these five years, have gained the knowledge and mastered the skills necessary to raise cattle, as well as the need to ensure that decision-making is by consensus. Michener refers to this as an example of “gradualist participation” (1998:2111).

The data collected in this study showed that this has not been without problems for any of the stakeholders. Firstly, the beneficiaries complained that the IDC and the agricultural extension officers were not on hand to help them when they had problems. The IDC believe that given the beneficiaries’ years of involvement in the project, they were supposed to deal with most of the challenges on their own. They further stated there was little they could do because they were short of manpower to handle the myriad requests for help coming from the beneficiaries. In addition, they said most of the problems remain unsolved because the beneficiaries are “lazy” and want to “be spoon fed all the time”. The same feeling reverberated in the responses given by animal scientists and veterinary officers, one of whom said “the beneficiaries have inordinate expectation”. Based on experience following the meeting I held with the beneficiaries on a number of occasions, the IDC representatives and animal scientists’ views are the defining nature of the beneficiaries. However, it calls to question the extent the IDC explained their

specific mandate to the beneficiaries, as suggested by Bessette (2004). In addition, as stated earlier, most of the beneficiary communities have reached the five year time to pass on the gift to other communities. They are expected to have been empowered enough to be able to manage their livestock without the involvement of the IDC representatives. The beneficiaries' responses in this section shows this is still a distant dream.

While the beneficiaries may have unrealistic expectations of the other stakeholders, this does not mitigate the fact that there is a communication gap between the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. The gap originates from the weak use of communication to inform the beneficiaries of the exact responsibilities and involvement of all the stakeholders. When issues of importance are not communicated or inadequately communicated, participation in the project suffers because those involved do not know what their roles are.

7.14 GENDER COMPOSITION AND PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

In this section data regarding the participation of women as beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project will be presented. According to the IDC representatives, gender equity is one of the criteria used when considering applications from potential beneficiary groups. This is to ensure that the project is not used to sustain discrimination against women, something that is endemic in rural communities. As a participatory development project, the participatory communication focus should be such that it facilitates exchanges among the beneficiaries so that individual perspectives or views about the project are articulated (Stuart & Bery 1996:199).

In rural areas, women are central to local development especially in farming. Women are said to produce 80 percent of the food required by their families (Melkote & Steeves 2006:189-189). Many studies have pointed to the fact that women are deliberately excluded or not well represented in the development issues targeting their interest (Commonwealth Secretariat 2001). This is especially true in livestock production where men dominate and control decision-making, according to study done by Mupawaenda, Chawatama, Muvavarirwa (2009:1017) and responses given by women participants in this study. As women are the active local producers of subsistence crops, it is important to involve them in any development targeting their communities. In order to do this, the development

communicator must ensure that women voices are heard at the various stages of the project. In a participatory development project such as the Nguni Cattle Project, it is important that the decision-making and ownership reflect the expressed will of all, especially at the local stakeholders' level where women form the majority of the constituency.

This view informs the selection and acceptance of application from potential beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project. Women have an equal chance of being beneficiaries of the project and this is evident in all the communities studied for this research. In the Masele community, the current chairperson of the village is a woman. The Nguni Cattle Project is premised on collaborative relationships in which people in a particular communities are expected to come together as a group in order to qualify as beneficiaries of the project. As women are members of the group, communication should enable a relationship in the group so that they are able to tackle issues important to the project (Stuart & Bery 1996:199).

In Table 1, the data about gender composition of the beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project revealed that 76 percent (N=160) of the beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project in the communities surveyed for this study were men while 24 percent (N=50) were women. Data showed that at the inception of the project in these communities, men were in command. There are many reasons to take into account here. First, most women whose husbands are beneficiaries, do not see the need to become beneficiaries themselves, as they believe that they are already represented in the project in this way. This was the response given by five of the communities. In the other communities, it was not possible to probe this issue in depth, and they simply stated that fewer women were beneficiaries. The second reason given by the women, who said they knew of the existence of the project in their communities but had decided not join as beneficiaries, because they preferred projects such as the vegetable and poultry projects they are involved in.

There were fewer female than male beneficiaries at the start of the project, and the data collected showed that the number of women involved is actually decreasing. The responses collected showed that many women left the project stating that they could not wait for five years to become the actual owners of the cattle. They said they preferred projects that take less time for them to start reaping the dividends that they could use to take care of their families.

Many rural women believe that cattle rearing is a 'man thing', according to a woman respondent, and this is supported by responses given by 65 percent (N=104) men respondents when they were asked the following question: *Are women in the group involved in the project like the men?* The men said that the women are not involved, even though they are members of the groups, because cattle rearing is a man's job and they added that they did not really bother to involve the women beneficiaries. A woman in one of the communities, who is still a member but not actively involved in the project in her community, said she has resisted being pushed despite being made to feel unwelcome. She stated: "You can see that there is still that old feeling or macho feeling that questions or says what has a woman got to do with 'cattle talk' and I guess that was why some women left". In light of this information, I approached other women who had been members of the project to find out if they left the project because of the male dominance or 'machismo'. I spoke to 15 women who withdrew their membership or who had not been active in the affairs of the project. The women were asked the following question: *Was there anything in your opinion that suggested that men who are beneficiaries of the project in your community were deliberately excluding you from the activity of the project because you are a woman?* Responses to this question varied, but a summary of the responses showed that:

- Of the 15 women, ten implied that they left the project or play a less active role in it because they could not abide with the men's attitude.
- The other five women revealed that they had resigned membership because they wanted to concentrate on something more lucrative, such as a vegetable project, or something "womanish", to use the word of one of the respondents.

The IDC representatives are aware of this, and confirmed that in some communities, women have been bullied out of the project or are generally not considered in meetings held in the communities to discuss the affairs of the project.

In many African countries, cattle ownership is culturally attributed to the man, as the head of family. It is a measure of wealth and thus a determinant of social status in rural communities. As women do not have much economic status in rural communities, it is not surprising that cattle, which have been from time immemorial a symbol of wealth and pride of rural communities, are still regarded as the

exclusive preserve of men. Thus, as the data has shown, women are ignored in anything to do with cattle. It is possible that women were only included in the initial groups to meet the gender requirement during the application stage.

Perhaps this belief that cattle issues are a “man thing” or not “womanish” account for the nature of participation in the focus group interviews I had with communities involved in this study. Only in two villages, Dikididana and Ngqele, did women play commanding role in terms of meetings and show that they are abreast of what is happening in the project. Four communities do not have any female representatives in the project. I was told that the women who were part of the group of beneficiaries at the inception of the project had resigned their membership. The other six communities have women who are beneficiaries, but they were not very active in the meetings and the focus group interviews I had with them. Even when prodded to answer questions, they said very little and their responses showed that they have very little knowledge of the development of the project. In the meeting I held with these six communities with inactive women participants, the women always deferred to what the men had said. In some cases, they deferred to such an extent that they were willing to negate their previous responses to questions asked. Rural women are noted for this type of behaviour when they are with men, as described in the study carried out by Mulvaney (2004:221). According to her, women normally play a non-aggressive and subordinate role in the way they use language when with men.

Although the IDC representatives acknowledged that there is much to do to level the playing field in terms of gender equity, their dealings with the communities does not show that they really consider this inequity to be a problem. These representatives are the major decision-makers in the project right up board level, hence they are able to use their influence to promote gender equity. However, this is not the case. For example, women who are still active participants reported that men were always selected to be given training on behalf the communities.

One of the commonest modes to share information regarding the Nguni Cattle Project, is through interpersonal communication in the form of meetings. It should be clear to anyone involved in such meetings that the number of women participating is diminishing. However, according to the five communities who agreed to discuss women’s participation, this issue has not been raised by the IDC

representatives. It is common practice among project developers not to interfere with the prevailing traditions in communities for successful participatory communication. Nevertheless, where issues surrounding gender equity and ethnicity become problematic, the project developer must initiate communication. Open discussion about the principles of equality, etc., will hopefully lead to mutually agreed changes that will be communicated to all involved and applied as far as possible. According to Thomas (1996:219) this is “initiated on the basis of a dialogue of world views. And it would be necessary that in the event of such a dialogue, privilege be given to terms of change initiated from within the moral economy of a given community”. Thomas (1996:220) states that this can only happen if sustained long-term suitable communication efforts aimed addressing the issues are used.

Unfortunately, even though the question of lack of gender representation or equity is acknowledged as part of issues that need to be dealt with, nothing is being done by the major stakeholders of the Nguni Project.

In Chapter Three it was mentioned that the idea behind the approach used is supposed to ensure that it is participatory in nature. It is difficult to see how this is possible when, given the data analysed about gender issues, it is apparent that the issues surrounding decision-making and ownership leave much to be desired. The question of gender equity is central to the philosophy underpinning this participatory development project. This is obviously important to the Board of Trustees from the prerequisite of having women in potential beneficiary groups. Unfortunately, once the application is approved, this required female participation is ignored by both the beneficiary groups and the IDC representatives. Women often resign their membership because of the attitude of their male co-members and this is not addressed by the project developer’s representatives.

The problems surrounding the participation of women in the project can be reduced by creating awareness of issues and finding consensus regarding solutions (Cohen 1996:241). These endemic socio-cultural factors in rural communities should be well-known to other stakeholders, including the development planners, who are directly involved with the beneficiaries. The previous data analysed showed there is little communication both among the stakeholders and between them and the beneficiaries. It is, therefore, not surprising that the problematic question of gender

representation has not been addressed. This may be partially attributed to a lack of human resources in the IDC.

It is clear that, whatever reason is offered, the focus of participatory development which is to extend “coverage of services to all community members, including those who are traditionally excluded: women, and the rural and urban poor” (Cohen 1996:231) is not being met.

7.15 SHORTAGE OF PERSONNEL

In the data presented so far, several challenges such as the ability to respond to requests for help quickly, are hindering the implementation of the project, and may even affect its sustainability. Most of the problems identified are linked to a lack of personnel, as in many instances, no one was there to react in time to issues identified by the beneficiaries.

The IDC representatives who are active field workers with the beneficiaries, report being overworked and understaffed. Until approximately two years prior to this study, four staff members were assigned to the project to do both the administrative and the field work required. However, two staff members have left and have not been replaced. This means that the in whole of the Eastern Cape with over 70 projects, there are only two field workers to deal with the myriad of problems emanating from the project.

Participatory development projects require close monitoring to ensure that the participatory roadmap is implemented for the success of the project. This has not happened in the Nguni Cattle Project, as many issues and challenges faced by beneficiaries have largely been neglected, partly because remaining two active field workers are simply unable to attend to everything that is required of them.

Waisbord (2008:511) notes that participatory development is time-consuming to implement and it requires extensive use of personnel. When too few staff members are available, cracks in the participatory project develop and the possibility of a successful accomplishment of the project is diminished. In the case of the Nguni Cattle Project, the lack of IDC field workers is contributing to the possibility of failure.

When considering the stakeholders identified for this project in section 7.7, the question of human resources should not be a problem. Most of the challenges faced by the beneficiaries could be handled by the agricultural extension officers or the animal health technicians. Unfortunately this does not happen. Neither the agricultural extension officers nor the animal health technicians are very active in the field, and, according to the information supplied by the beneficiaries and the IDC representatives, they do not respond to the challenges faced by the beneficiaries.

As part of the Board of Trustees, the PDoA representative's role is to ensure that the efforts of the IDC representatives in the field are complemented by the agricultural extension officers, animal technicians and animal scientists, and veterinary officers. This function of the PDoA's representative is notable in its absence, possibly due to the weak link between the stakeholders and a lack of accountability.

At its inception, the details of the project, such as the responsibilities and accountability of each stakeholder, were not publicised and communicated to all concerned. This failure to communicate has led to multiple problems arising, for which no-one is prepared to take responsibility.

As the data have shown, the usual ways that the various stakeholders communicate are by means of cellular telephones and face-to-face meetings. Cellular telephones are used to initiate contact while face-to-face interpersonal communication is used during meetings. The two IDC representatives said it has been a challenge for them to find the time to have regular and timely meetings with the all beneficiaries throughout the Eastern Cape, despite the urgent nature of the issues arising, as it is physically impossible to be everywhere they are needed.

7.16 TIME FOR MATURITY OF THE PROJECT

Although, most of the issues that will be dealt with in this section have been mentioned in some of the sections above, this analysis will help to illuminate the perspectives surrounding most of the issues. The implementation of the Nguni Cattle Project is entirely done by the beneficiaries with the assistance of the other stakeholders.

This is the nature of most participatory development projects where the beneficiaries are expected to contribute their labour in the implementation of the project. This contribution of labour and time has been noted as a problem in participatory development projects because development agents underestimate the beneficiaries' "opportunity cost of time" (Cornwall & Jewkes 1995, cited in Neubert & Neubert 2011:188). The matter of the "opportunity cost of time" has been mentioned earlier, especially under the discussion of the resignation of female beneficiaries.

When the beneficiaries were asked "*What challenge or problem are you having as beneficiaries of the project in this community?*", 80 percent (N=168) mentioned that they were concerned about when the cattle would be fetched by the IDC representatives. They had reached the end of the project's cycle, but the IDC representatives had not informed them when they were expected to 'pass the gift'.

According to the beneficiaries, they had simply been told to continue what they had been doing, and that these cattle would not be passed on to another community yet. This is acknowledged by the IDC representatives who said that it was not possible to implement this final stage of the project because of the following problems:

- In some communities, they do not have enough cattle to pass to other communities.
- In some communities, most of the cattle are bulls and this means they do not have enough heifers to pass on as a gift to another community.
- A significant percentage of the animals are too old to reproduce and it will be unfair to take the few young ones that can be passed on to another community and leave the current beneficiaries with old ones.
- Most of the beneficiary groups are not organised enough to continue on their own without help, even after five years' experience in the project.
- In some communities, the original beneficiaries who started the project have splintered into groups and it is difficult to determine who they should deal with in this respect, without causing further problems within the communities.

In the light of these problems, corroborated by the data collected, it has not been possible to for the IDC to implement the last cycle of the project. All the stakeholders, especially the field officers and the beneficiaries, acknowledge this as an accurate description of the current state of affairs. However, it would appear that no solution is forthcoming and the sustainability of the project itself is becoming tenuous. In the table below, the reasons given by the beneficiaries cited above are indicated.

Reasons for being worried	Number of respondents (N=168)	Percentages
Not meeting the expected basic needs in time	84	50%
Do not have sufficient time for continuous involvement	42	25%
Would want to get involved in other economic activities	42	25%

Table 7.8: Reasons some of the beneficiaries are worried about the project

The communities surveyed for this study are poor communities and, according to Neef and Neubert (2011:188), poor people will do anything that promises to meet their basic needs within a short space of time. This helps to explain why 42 percent of these beneficiaries said they were worried about the endlessness of the final cycle of the project. All the responses given indicate that they are concerned about the time taken by this cattle project.

Although none of these respondents said they would leave the project, many women beneficiaries have already resigned from the project for similar reasons. This is a cause of concern with regard to the sustainability of participation from the beneficiaries.

The reasons given by the IDC representatives for not implementing the last cycle of the project are quite plausible and this can occur in any participatory development project. As a participatory development project, all decisions taken or information about the current state of the project must be adequately communicated to and understood by all the stakeholders, so that they are fully aware of the matters at hand. This is the essence of dialogue in a participatory development project and what is of concern here is that this is not happening.

When the communities were asked whether they had been told of the reasons why the passing on the gift has not been done, six communities said 'yes' but they questioned the rationale as they said the reasons given did not apply to them. The data collected in these communities through a one-on-one interview with some beneficiaries showed differently, however, as validated the IDC's response. The other six communities said they were totally unaware of the reasons, but the data collected confirmed that at least some of these communities had been told why the passing on the gift could not take place.

Apparent in the nature of responses given by the beneficiaries in this regard, is that information was not clearly communicated and, therefore, conflicting views are held.

7.17 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation are done to ensure that everything about the project goes according to the stated work plan. Monitoring, as stated in Chapter Four, is a system of checking whether activities that are designed to implement the project are being followed and if these activities are heading towards the set objectives of the project. Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:93) sum this up as "a system for recording, on a regular basis, useful information for keeping track of the activities and progress being made towards the set objectives".

At the inception of a project, monitoring should be emphasised to all the stakeholders and this should involve the determination of what needs to be monitored in a collaborative manner by all the stakeholders (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:98). This should include monitoring whether the identified community NOPS, which the project is meant to address, are being met and monitor the feasibility and the relevance of the activities being carried during the implementation (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:94).

In the Nguni Cattle Project, this informs the approach to monitoring, hence it is stressed that the beneficiaries must keep records of all the activities that take place in the implementation of the project. This includes record keeping about meetings held by the beneficiaries, calving, cattle deaths, stock theft, diseases encountered, etc. This, as stressed by the IDC representatives will give them an overview of what the beneficiaries have done or what has happened between their various

visits to the communities. For example, the records of meetings, as stated by the IDC representatives are used as indicator of the participation of the beneficiaries in meetings held about project activities.

Out of the twelve communities this study surveyed, only six had an up-to-date record about the project. Three of the communities have kept records but these are not up-to-date and not easily accessible as they were kept in different documents that took effort to produce when I requested their records. The other three communities appeared not to have any record of their activities, although they stated that they do keep a record of their activities in the project. During the post-survey visits I made to these communities, they could not produce these supposed records.

This state of record keeping by the beneficiaries was acknowledged by the IDC representatives. They said that they always demanded to see the record books every time they visited the communities and where these were not produced, they instructed the beneficiaries to start keeping record of their activities, etc. They added that their concern about the lack of record keeping, led to a workshop held at the Cape College on 10 August 2011 where the beneficiaries, agricultural extension officers and others were taught the proper record keeping methods.

The records kept by the beneficiaries are used as an indicator by the IDC representatives to plan the interventions the communities require. The IDC representatives said they tried to confirm whether the records are the expressed views of all involved, especially in the minutes of meetings.

Other monitoring by the IDC representatives is done in collaboration with the beneficiaries. This, according to the IDC representatives involves inspecting the cattle in their grazing areas together with the beneficiaries. They also monitor the state of the grazing fields, camps and dips and, when necessary, make recommendations that the cattle should be moved or that the dips should be replaced. The IDC representatives emphasised that the monitoring process also affords them an opportunity to know the areas that need to be highlighted in the form of supportive communication or communication to reflect the situation on the ground, as suggested by Nair and White (1999:53).

Some of the communities concurred with the account the IDC representatives gave about monitoring, but they differed on the degree of frequency this is being done. When they were asked the numbers of times this is done in a year, eight communities stated that this monitoring occurs twice a year and the two communities said once a year or once every two years. Two communities stated that monitoring has never taken place in their communities.

These latter communities were amongst those that could not provide record keeping about the implementation of the project. It is difficult to credit their account as they said the IDC representatives had been to their communities at least once during 2011 and they reported at least one visit in every year since they had been part of the project. If the IDC representatives had visited their communities, one wonders how such visits could be characterised, if not to check the progress of the cattle. However, one of the communities reported that the last time the IDC representatives had visited their community, they had come to discuss a problem regarding fencing and calving. The beneficiaries are concerned about the lack of sufficient monitoring by the IDC representatives. Indeed, the complaints from the beneficiaries that recurred most often in the data were about the absence of the stakeholders when help was needed.

In a participatory development project, it is important to have a well-established and sustained monitoring system. Monitoring reveals omissions and problem areas in the work plan but also indicates what the development communicator needs to focus on when communicating with the various stakeholders. Where monitoring shows that the agreed work or action plan is not proceeding as desired, the development planner should evaluate the communication approaches being used in the project. Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:98) suggest that it may help for the development communicator to measure:

- the validity of the communication and if it appropriately reflects what it is meant to address;
- the degree of comprehension of the message or finding out if the message is easily understood by the beneficiaries community; and
- the degree of coverage or whether significant numbers of the beneficiaries received the message.

In addition to Mefalopulos and Kamlongera's suggestions, the development communicator should also consider the degree of feedback received in the communication approach used. Was it a message that was mutually shared and understood? Where this is not the case, the occasion of the monitoring should provide him/her an opportunity to reconfigure the communication approach so that anything that prevents clear communication can be eliminated in order to get the project on the work plan agreed upon by the stakeholders and to reflect the reality on the ground.

The account given above regarding the lack of monitoring of the project and the fact that records are not kept by certain groups of beneficiaries, reveal a problem with regard to the communication approach being used in this participatory development project.

While admitting that no effort has been made to respond to a number of issues identified as challenges to the project, the IDC representatives point out that participatory development project requires significant amount of their time and that of other the professional personnel involved to implement. As pointed out above, there is a dearth of personnel in the field. Indeed, qualified personnel to handle specific issues, such as communication, have not been appointed in the Eastern Cape. Issues about communication could be handled by agricultural extension officers, especially as it relates to the participatory focus of the project. However, this is not the case, because the project does not fall under their primary assignment. As an agricultural extension officer described it: "It is just an NGO project that happens to fall under the wards we oversee".

Monitoring is closely related to evaluation in that both measure the progress of the project in line with its stated objectives. In any development where there has been established pattern of monitoring, it is easy for the development communicator to gain understanding of the strengths and weaknesses that will emerge in the evaluation process.

A common practice among development project funders is a propensity to outsource the design and implementation of a project to external expert evaluators. In the view of Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:35) this cannot be considered a proper participatory process of evaluation. They assert that "If participation means that

stakeholders are partners in the decision-making process, it follows logically that they must also be partners in the process of evaluating the impact of that change". The evaluation of a participatory development project often focuses on outputs, such as finding out the extent proposed behaviours have been achieved or particular innovations have been adopted (Tufté & Mefalopulos 2009:35). Tufté and Mefalopulos believe that evaluation must be based on the feedback of all the stakeholders about the proposed change, including the ultimate users or beneficiaries if it is to be regarded as a participatory communication approach. This is the approach that will be taken in the discussion of the evaluation of the Nguni Cattle Project in this section.

The evaluation of the Nguni Cattle Project was outsourced to an external evaluator in 2009. In its tender notice, the IDC said the evaluation was meant to achieve the following objectives: "To assess whether the Project is meeting its objectives and recommend strategies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the Project in order to be sustainable". The external evaluator was asked to focus on certain critical areas and these include:

1. A detailed analysis of the project. This should include the status of the project, any successes and failures;
2. Identify barriers to meeting objectives; and
3. Interviews with the following:
 - IDC employees involved in the project – project champion, legal advisor, and IDC employees who are Trustees in various provinces;
 - Project partners – representatives of provincial departments of agriculture, participating universities and farmer representatives where appropriate; and
 - Selected beneficiaries in all provinces. The sample should be representative of gender and age.

It was also emphasised that the evaluation should look at the impact of the project on the following:

- Poverty alleviation,
- Rural development; and
- Livestock improvement.

- Viable initiatives for commercialization;
- Strategy for sustainability; and
- Exit strategy by the IDC.

Given the need to make Nguni Cattle Project participatory in focus, the critical areas spelt out for the external evaluator to focus on, as evidenced above, would hardly guarantee beneficiaries' participation in the evaluation process. According to the IDC document, the evaluation should focus on "farmer's representatives where appropriate" and "selected beneficiaries from all provinces".

However, in the various participating communities there are different socio-cultural variables that may affect the way beneficiaries participate in the project (This is one of the emphasis of the discussion of transactional perspective of communication in section 3.4.2). A true reflection of all important aspects of the project would be almost impossible in the light of the mandate given to the evaluator. According to the IDC document, the evaluation should focus on "farmer's representatives where appropriate" and "selected beneficiaries from all provinces". How this is possible to reflect the correct situations on the ground about the problem beats one imagination because in different communities there are different socio-cultural variables that may affect the way beneficiaries participate in the project. This needs to be taken into account in any assessment; otherwise it will not reflect the true state of things about the project. For example, out of the 12 communities studied in this project, one community stood out regarding the way the beneficiaries communicate among themselves. They said they communicate through the teachers teaching in the schools in their community so that the teachers will tell the school pupils to inform their parents of any impending meeting. This, according to them, is to ensure maximum participation of the beneficiaries in the meeting. In addition, they also said that nowadays, there is hardly any weekend where there is no funeral ceremony or other social get-together taking place in their community. In such social functions, they would tell the master of ceremony (M.C.) to announce important news such as notice of meeting and notice of impending visit of important political and other personalities to their community. These modes of communication were specific to this community, according to the data collected in this study.

Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:35) also stress that evaluation should not only focus on measuring the output of a project, usually done through a quantitative approach, but it should also include the qualitative approach allowing dialogue to assess the beneficiaries' satisfaction and feelings about the project.

The IDC tender document for the external evaluator described above seems to focus on output with nothing to indicate whether the beneficiaries' views about the project would be sought. For instance, the external evaluator was specifically asked to find out the impact of the project on poverty alleviation, rural development and livestock development. Most researchers do this using quantitative approach at the expense of qualitative approach which provides richness in meaning and context in which issues have been dealt with. Poverty cannot be easily characterised as it is different from one household and community to another. The use of qualitative approach will enable the evaluator to see how poverty is seen by different beneficiaries as opposed to quantitative approach in which the beneficiaries may be limited in the way they respond to the evaluation instruments.

This might have been what the external evaluator did in this regard because none of the beneficiaries in the twelve communities studied here reported being interviewed or spoken to by the evaluator. The deadline for the final report of the evaluation was September 2009. The IDC representatives said they were aware of the external evaluation process but had also not been interviewed by the evaluator. Unfortunately, all efforts made to find or obtain a copy of this report from the IDC on the evaluation done for it about Nguni Cattle Project in 2009 were without success.

Most evaluations that are undertaken, especially commissioned ones, take the form of a written report. The only written reports that the IDC representatives submit, can be characterised as formative evaluations that they table at each Board of Trustee meeting. They cited their report that led to the decision to delay the collection of the cattle to be passed to other communities and beneficiaries.

Generally speaking, the project is still in the implementation phase. At the time data for this study were collected and to time of writing, there is no instance of the

cattle being collected from a participant community¹⁰. Only when a community has reached this phase, can there be said that they have come to the end of the project and this is when summative evaluation (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:98) can be done to assess the success and failure of the impact of the intervention.

7.18 CONCLUSION

In this study, the data collected from different respondents such as the beneficiaries, IDC representatives, the agricultural extension, animal health technicians, animal scientists and some trustee board members of have been presented and analysed – or narrated.

It was stated in the analysis that the beneficiaries were not involved in the formation of the project and that many of the beneficiaries' first source of information about the project was from other members of their community. Regarding the agricultural extension officer, it was stated that the majority of them first learnt of the project through their involvement in the various communities assigned to them.

In the Nguni Cattle Project, like any other development project, the development planners entered the community after having informed the local authority. This also applies with respect to entering the communities for this study. However, this was deemed unnecessary in some of the communities.

Stakeholder partnership received attention in this chapter. It was noted that there is a weak communication link between the primary stakeholders, hence several problems reported by the beneficiaries were not attended to in time. The nature of stakeholder partnership was characterised from two perspectives: the management perspective and operational perspective, both of which are important for the successful management of the project.

Opinion leaders are vital elements in information dissemination and community affairs. This was noted and discussed accordingly with regard to data collected. Following this, several modes of communication used by the beneficiaries and other stakeholders were discussed.

¹⁰ As the data analysed in this study were being completed, I was informed by the IDC representatives that there would be a *passing on the gift* by some communities in the near future – precisely in few weeks time. This could not be reflected in this study as the data have been analysed.

The various views of the stakeholders and the beneficiaries regarding their understanding of what participatory communication were reflected upon in this chapter. Notably, the analysis showed that the beneficiaries did not quite understand what participatory communication actually is and this was attributed to the inadequate use of communication by the main stakeholders, such as the IDC representatives. Stakeholders, such as animal scientists and the IDC representatives, acknowledged the importance of participation in a development project and they cited specific contexts why they thought it would not be practicable.

The data analysed and discussed in this chapter showed that the many of beneficiaries are disillusioned with the project. They felt betrayed because they had reached the end of the five year period, and expected that they would now be the legal owners of the herd, except for the cattle to be passed on, but this has not happened.

With regard to gender, there is no balance in the gender composition of beneficiaries in the project. Far more men than women are beneficiaries, despite the fact that more women are active in rural agriculture than men. This is a challenge that deserves attention.

Another problem is the lack personnel referred to in the chapter. It was noted that due to insufficient manpower, most of the challenges mentioned in the analysis were not receiving the necessary attention.

The essence of monitoring and evaluation of a project was discussed and it was emphasised that the nature of monitoring and evaluation undertaken in the project was not participatory,

In the next chapter, the conclusion and summary of the study will be given. In addition, recommendations that might mitigate and address some of the problems or challenges identified in the study will be given. Lastly, a suggestion for further research to put certain identified challenges into better perspectives will be made.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION, SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the data collected were analysed and discussed. This chapter provides the conclusion, summary of the findings, problems and limitations of the study, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

As stated in Chapters One and Two, the notion of development communication falls into two diametrical opposed viewpoints. The first sees development communication based on the Western nations' view, which measures development solely by economic indicators. The second notion championed by scholars with a Latin America background and which can be traced back to 1960s, critiqued the first notion and then argued for a development that supports grassroots participation in which culture, gender and all other socio-cultural aspects of the target community are given prominence. In other words, the first which was a top-down approach was replaced by a bottom-up approach after much criticism (McPhail 2009:xi).

The bottom-up approach is an element of participatory communication which is the focus of this research. This study has conducted an in-depth look at the nature of participatory communication in a development project in terms of its theoretical and practical considerations as exemplified by the analysis and discussion of the data which took a blow-by-blow account.

The discussion of participatory communication and the data analysed in this study have shown that many factors affect the nature of communicative encounters between the beneficiaries and the stakeholders that it is not possible to reduce the nature of communication to one typology of participation. Likewise, no scholar or practitioner has been able to reduce the theoretical concept of participatory communication or the participatory development approach to one definite field practice even though there seems to be a converged view about what participatory communication means. Not being able to determine a single, definite way to practice participatory communication has led scholars to divergent interpretations

of what it means in a development project. It is, therefore, described in different terms.

The debatable nature of participatory development practices has led Rocheleau (2003:169) to assert that “researchers are not asking if participatory methods should be used, but rather when and how, and which type of method, in combination with which traditional research tools”. Rocheleau’s view typifies the nature of participation of the stakeholders – or their views of what participation means – in the project used as a case in this study.

Thus in the context of the data analysed in this study, how can the nature of the participatory practice in the Nguni Cattle Project be characterised under either of the two diametrically opposed approaches – the top-down (non participatory) bottom-up (participatory)? An attempt has been made to answer this question later on in this chapter but here a summary of the study and a brief discussion on the nature of participation used in the project under investigation, may be of assistance.

Lastly, the problems and limitations of the study, recommendations and suggestion for further studies will be provided.

8.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study analysed the nature of communication used in a development project in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, as its main research focus. To gain a better insight of the focus of the study, the premises for the study were discussed in Chapter One. It was stated that the need for development in countries on the African continent and in Asia increased after the end of the Second World War and in the 1960’s. The United Nations, through its development agencies, played a principal role in these efforts.

As pointed out, the emphasis of communication in these early development agencies was to get as much information as possible to people through mass media such as radio, television, newspapers, etc. Melkote and Steeves (2006:118) assert that the form of communication used was top-down because the beneficiaries were considered ignorant and had to be educated by specialists.

This mode of communication was criticised by many, including Rogers (1996:22) who refers to it as being “found seriously wanting” and an alternative approach was sought. One of the approaches, as mentioned in Chapter One was one that is dialogic or receiver-centric, according to Servaes (1996:16). This is participatory approach where the needs of the beneficiaries’ and their involvement in the activities of the project take pre-eminent position.

It was stated in Chapter One that participation can be seen as a feature of democratic process, hence, for example, in South African’ constitution, section 152(1) states that the main objectives of local government is to ensure community involvement in matters of local governance. In South Africa, participation is seen as a way of addressing the imbalances of the past that were aggravated by apartheid.

The Nguni Cattle Project was discussed as one of the initiatives to address the imbalance in the rural communities. The origin of the Nguni cattle and early recorded history of the breed was provided. The legislative attempts made in the 1930’s to prevent these cattle from breeding was noted, and an account of the studies in the 1980’s that revealed their ability to withstand the extremes of climate prevalent in southern Africa and diseases were cited.

The Nguni Cattle Project was then discussed, briefly touching on the origins at the University of Fort Hare and the formal introduction of Nguni cattle herds into rural communities in 1997. The involvement of IDC as the financier of the project was noted and its operational principle in of terms of the concept of passing on the gift was explained. The management of the project was discussed as well as the criteria for the selection of the beneficiary communities. The aims, the delimitations, the theoretical and practical significances of the study were given.

In Chapter Two, the history of development was discussed, showing how it relates to dominant paradigm and new paradigm. The different views of development and the associated communication practices were given in this chapter. This involved a diachronic review of development communication dating back to the Second World War as well as the criticisms levelled at it that culminated in different communication approaches, such as participatory communication.

In Chapter Two, the divergent views among development scholars about the exact role development communication should be playing and how these views have

influenced the way it is defined, were pointed out. It was stated that many scholars took issue with the interventionist approach of the definition of development communication. This led to the top-down approach used in a notion of development that judges its success based on socio-economic progress. Development seen in this way was referred to as dominant paradigm or old paradigm. The dominant paradigm reflects a modernisation principle where industrialisation was considered to be the solution to problem of underdevelopment in emerging nations (Rogers 1976:214).

Notable modernisation theorists cited in the chapter were Lerner (1958), Rao (1963) and Schramm (1964). They believed that modernisation was equal to Westernisation and the traditions of the developing countries were antithetical to their development. They thought that the use of mass media would offer a solution and would encourage people to modernise their way of life.

Other related theories conceptualised in the tradition of dominant paradigm were referred to in Chapter Two. These included social marketing, health promotion and entertainment-education. The main interest of these theories is to change behaviour and they take the modernisation/diffusion route, hence they are within dominant paradigm.

Scholars' criticisms of dominant paradigm were mentioned in Chapter Two. For example, the notion of development seen in terms of economic growth was faulted by Szirmai (n.d.:6). Szirmai argues in this regard that "economic growth could take place without any economic development". Rogers (1976:216) disagrees with the notion of development as espoused in dominant paradigm. He refers to the arguments put forward as intellectually ethnocentric because most of theorists were Westerners with no information about the situation in the developing countries.

One of the theories that sprang up in a bid to expose the inadequacy of the dominant paradigm was dependency theory. The literature covered in this regard in Chapter Two pointed out that dependency theory was developed in Latin America. Citing Hornik's (1988) findings, Waisbord argues that the problem of underdevelopment in the Third World is due to socio-political factors and the domination of the Third World countries by First World countries economically and

politically and not lack of information. Given the inadequacies of the dominant paradigm, a communication strategy that is grassroots-based with appropriate interpersonal channels was recommended and this gave rise to new paradigm.

In Chapter Three, an extensive review of literature about participatory communication was given. This involved the discussion of the definitions and the way scholars view participatory communication. This review stressed that participatory communication is about basic rights and respect for people's interests. It follows the Freirean principle of communication that emphasises five main notions, namely, dialogue, conscientisation, praxis, transformation and critical consciousness. Participatory communication considered in the Freirean view encapsulates a framework where the development practitioners and the beneficiaries are involved in a reciprocal relationship based on an understanding of the contexts shaping the participation of the parties in communication.

Also considered in the review of literature about participatory communication in Chapter Three are the various views regarding different participatory development approaches. In a nutshell, the discussion focused on what needs to be considered vis-a-vis all other fundamentals such as socio-cultural (relational pattern and value system) and economic situations relative to all the stakeholders of the development project.

Different levels of participation were also reviewed in Chapter Three. As it is generally agreed in literature, there is no such thing as maximum participation. Thus, the different types of participation were discussed. Commonly cited types of participation in literature are passive, consultative, collaborative, self-mobilisation, empowerment and manipulative types of participation.

Although there are different types of participation, the dominant view is that participatory communication is dialogic in nature. This view is articulated in Chapter Three using the transactional model of development communication by Nair and White (1993:52) and the transactional communication model of Verderber, as adapted by Steinberg (1997:19). Both transactional models show that people's involvement in communication is context-bound in the form of their feelings, beliefs and their general worldview.

Also discussed were the challenges and criticisms of the participatory approach in a development project. Prominent among the challenges and criticisms pointed out in the review are practices which take an exogenous approach because they do not seek the input of the beneficiaries in the design of development project.

One of the challenges pointed out in Chapter Three was what is termed self-deprecation. In this regard, Servaes and Jacobson (1999:119) point out that the rural communities easily fall into a state of self-deprecation because the social system in which they are raised, cause them to believe that they are good for nothing and incapable of learning.

Another challenge referred to in Chapter Three is the impossibility of full participation of the members of a community in a development project. This is shown to be a result of the socio-cultural and educational differences among community's members. Castello and Braun (2006:41) believe that the level of understanding of the participatory communication process will vary as a result of these differences among community members and to counter the negative effect of this, participatory tools must be adapted to meet the identified differences.

White (1999:16) declares that "Authentic participation of grassroots people may still be more of an ideal than reality" based on the narrated experience by anthropologist used by White to corroborate her claims. According to the anthropologist, institutional practices and the apparent reality on the field are different and any deviation from the institutional practices may imperil the project (White 1999:16-17).

Important among other criticisms and challenges mentioned in Chapter Three is the fact that participatory process takes a long time come to fruition (see Mckee 1989:40). This particular fact may inhibit beneficiaries from full participation in the development process as some may have other priorities that require their time and energy.

Participatory communication planning was discussed in Chapter Four. It was remarked that that there is no definite method of planning participatory communication except that whatever method used must be in line with the prevailing situations or contextual requirement of the project and the stakeholders (Bessette 2004; and Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009:17).

Works by Bessette (2004), Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) and Mody (2005) were the commonly cited sources regarding participatory communication plan presented in this chapter. The first stage in the planning of participatory communication is to establish relation with the target community. This, according to Bessette (2004), involves collecting the necessary information about the target community before entering it. The community that is chosen will be one with compelling needs that require development intervention. Added to this, it was stated that at the beginning of his/her meeting with the community, the development planner should inform the community about his/her mandate in the community so that the community members will know the intended scope of his/her involvement in the community politically and on socio-economic issues.

The primary target in establishing a relationship with the target community is to gather the necessary information about the community. This is done through a participatory rural appraisal (PRA). PRA is a collection technique used, for example, to map the local area, to develop a time line, Venn diagrams, wealth ranking, etc, (Bessette 2004). In addition, PRA is preferred is because it can be used to quickly gather information with the involvement of the community members and the information will be shared for the benefit of others participating in the project. A version of PRA, also discussed in this chapter, is what Tufte and Mefalopulos refer to Participatory Communication Assessment (PCA). Other related terms similar or closely related in application in participatory research methods are PRCA, and Participatory Action Research (PAR). These concepts (PRCA, PRA and PAR) are all similar concepts meant to address issues in communication for development but PCA, as stated by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:22), is meant to respond to broader issues not covered by other concepts. The steps to follow in order to carry out PCA were stated.

Phase two of the participatory communication plan was discussed. This stage is referred to as participatory communication strategy and the discussion done here was based on the work of Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009). For participatory communication strategy to succeed, it must have well-defined objective(s) because they are the basis upon which the strategy should be built (Mefalopulos & Kamlongera 2004:8).

The steps stated in designing participatory communication in this chapter are both monologic and dialogic modes. Although, the communication strategy is intended to be participatory in approach, Tufte and Mefalopulos say it is permissible to use monologic mode as a part of the strategy as it not possible to avoid some monologic elements completely.

Following the design of the participatory communication strategy, the next phase, implementation of communication activities, was discussed. This involves a communication action plan to be put in place in order to realise the set objectives by working with identified stakeholders, going through agreed activities, resources under a given time frame and indicators that will help in the assessment of what has been done.

The stage where monitoring and evaluation is done in the participatory communication plan, was then reviewed. It was pointed out that monitoring and evaluation are important in a participatory communication plan in order to be able to find out if the stated objectives have been met. Monitoring, as explained in this chapter, is done as a formative assessment or as the implementation of the project progresses.

According to Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:98), evaluation is used to look at the “the overall impact of the intervention in order to assess the degree of success or failure” and this, as explained by Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009:35) is done or considered at the end of the project.

Mody’s (2005) message design for participatory development project was discussed. The decision was taken to include this, as well as Tufte and Mefalopulos’ version, because it shows another perspective through which participatory communication design can be done.

Chapter Five provided an overview of participatory communication tools, starting with interpersonal communication tools. It was emphasised that the day-to-day activities of a development communicator is characterised by interpersonal encounters with the project’s beneficiaries; hence interpersonal communication is very important. A common way for interpersonal communication to take place is through group meetings or discussions. It was pointed out that group discussion can be in combination with other participatory tools such as participatory video.

Another participatory communication tool discussed in Chapter Five was traditional media. Traditional media refers to communication systems used in rural areas as a “way of relaying information in rural areas, with town crier as the purveyor of news” (Chukwu 2006:107).

Various categories of traditional communication media and systems were discussed, including folk media, indigenous methods of communication, and community theatre, amongst others. The group media, such as participatory video recording, photographs and posters, were discussed. Participatory video recording is believed to be an effective participatory communication tool because it allows people to be brought together to explore issues and concerns (Mwanundu & Fara 2010:23).

The discussion of photographs included drawings on posters. It was stated that the use of photographs as a communication tool can complement other communication tools such as group discussion. This is done in the form of illustrations to aid the understanding of the topic under discussion (Bessette 2004:12).

Chapter Five also contained a review of community media. The discussion focused on community radio, television and newspapers. Community radio is important because of its representation of the day-to-day activities of the community. It was noted that use of community radio broadcasts allows the development communicator to address the community in their language.

As shown in the review, there is no community radio serving the communities this study has investigated. However, it was pointed out that there are some community radio stations in Eastern Cape whose frequencies extend to some of the case study communities.

Community television was discussed in Chapter Five. Mention was made of the fact that the concept of community television in South Africa has not received the same priority as in other countries, such as India, Brazil and Cuba. The television stations accessible to the participants of the Nguni Cattle Project are the government-controlled public broadcasting authority and the private free-to-air television station. Others are only available through monthly paid subscriptions and need satellite dishes and decoders, the price of which put them quite out of reach to these communities.

One of the advantages of television in promoting rural development stated in the review, was that it provides an interface as well as interaction between mass media and other modes of communication and this gives it a significant leverage in reach and effect process (Yadava 1993:112).

Community newspapers, as discussed in Chapter Five, were described as a medium that affords “community-located inputs in programme production, management, ownership and control” and this makes it a preferred medium for grassroots participation (Nwodu 2006:196; and Kasoma 1991:58). Unlike other community media such as radio and television, newspapers are not accessible to the many members of rural communities who are illiterate. The data collected in this study show that overwhelming percentage of the beneficiaries are illiterate and they cannot even read their mother tongue.

A review of ICTs was given. The definition of ICTs given by Ngege (2003:1-2) and the European Commission were used to show that through ICTs, in the form of social media available on the Internet, it may not be necessary for a development communicator to be physically present in all meetings with the stakeholders of the project.

Cellular telephone usage was discussed as an ICT and it was lauded as an innovation that has made it easy for rural communities to have access to information. It was noted that the use of cellular telephones in rural development has received much attention across Africa, especially in Kenya, Ghana and South Africa.

One mobile application referred to was the web-based system called *JamiiX*. This, as explained in the chapter and citing Parker (2010:8), is designed to use chat platforms such as Mxit to make contact and ask for advice from counsellors.

Use of the Internet as a means of communication was discussed and citing Dagron (2001:21) and Morales-Gómez and Melesse (1998:4), it was noted that the typical Internet users worldwide are high-income earners, urban-based and educated. This is not in stark contrast to the communities investigated in this study. The majority of these communities cannot use Internet or its associated social media such as Facebook, Mxit and Twitter.

In Chapter Six, the methodology used for this study was discussed. It was stated that the method used followed a qualitative approach, because it allows the data to be analysed from multiple perspectives. Added to this, some aspects of basic descriptive statistics use in the study in the form of percentages and the tabular representation of the data were discussed.

The population and sampling methods used in this study were explained. The sample selected comprised of Nguni Cattle Project's beneficiaries in twelve communities, the IDC representatives, agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians, veterinary officers, animal scientists – all based and working in the Buffalo and Nkonkobe Municipalities, Eastern Cape, South Africa. The sampling methods used in the study were purposive sampling, snowball sampling.

The data was collected through interviews that incorporated a questionnaire as an aide-memoire. The interview types were semi-structured interviews, post-survey interviews and focus group interviews. Another source of data collection reported in this study was literature review. The data analysis was an ongoing process as the study progressed. The formal analysis was based on the categories or the subject matters the data covered. Chapter Six ended with a discussion of the ethical considerations for the study.

8.2.1 Summary of the findings

A summary of the research findings analysed in Chapter Seven will be given in this section. The data analysis began with trying to find out about the formation of the Nguni Cattle Project. The analysis showed that the beneficiaries and other stakeholders, such as the agricultural extension officers and the animal health technicians were not involved in the formative stage of the project. The project was started by University of Fort Hare and only once they had conceptualised the project's goals and objectives, and determined how it would operate, were other stakeholders invited to join the project.

One of the reasons cited for non-involvement of beneficiaries at the formative stage of the project was the feeling that they did not have the know-how to contribute to the requirements of that stage. Following the data presented about the formative stage of the project, data reflecting how the beneficiaries and other stakeholders came to know about the project were given. Chief among these were

various forms of interpersonal communication. The analysis showed that stakeholders, such as the PDoA, do not undertake information drives about the project to its important constituencies such as agricultural extension and animal health technicians. Fifty percent of the beneficiaries reported learning of the project from other members of their communities. Twenty percent said they learnt of the project from the IDC representatives but they had not been fully informed of all aspects of the project.

The data analysed about the development planners (the IDC representatives) regarding their first entering into the community, revealed that the groundwork that would permit easy entering of the community is laid through liaison with the agricultural extension officer in the community. On this note, it was pointed out that the IDC representatives' method is similar to what Yoon (1996:46) recommended, that is through being introduced by someone who lives in the community.

To enter most rural communities, the authorities in those communities must first be approached to seek permission to enter their communities. Based on the data collected and analysed in this study, this was not the case across all the communities. In some, it was said that it is not necessary to seek permission from the community authorities as they do not really wield any influence over their community members. Another factor that made this permission seeking unnecessary was that some of the chairpersons in the communities are also beneficiaries of the project and they were aware of the impending visit.

While visiting the communities for the first time, the IDC representatives do a transect walk to establish the community readiness for the project. The IDC representatives also use the occasion of their first meeting with the potential beneficiaries to inform them of the nature and extent of the requirements, commitments and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved in the project. It was noted in the analysis that Bessette (2004:43) refers to this stage as specific mandate development where the scope and limitations of the mandate of the development planner must be explained and discussed dialogically with the community members in order to avoid raising expectations.

However, the beneficiaries disagreed with the IDC representatives. For example, five of the twelve communities said the IDC representatives did not tell them about

their nature of involvement in the project, and three communities agreed they were told but not sufficiently explained. A post-survey interview that followed this showed that the beneficiaries were not sure if they were referring to the IDC representatives or the agricultural extension officers regarding their complaint about not being told of their nature and extent of involvement in the project. Consequently, it was pointed out that this can only happen when there is no clear delineation of role boundary of the stakeholders in the project.

With regard to the data analysed about the objectives of the project, it was stated that the project primary objective is to alleviate poverty in rural communities. To achieve this goal, the concept of passing on the gift which will enable group of beneficiaries to help other communities was also considered as an objective. This, according to the data discussed, was well understood by the beneficiaries.

It was apparent in the data analysed that the need to eradicate poverty was uppermost in the mind of those who were involved in the formation of the project and this was the reason that the communities were not involved in the formulation of the objectives. In other words, the project was seen from the beginning as a response to the scourge of poverty in rural communities, which can barely help themselves hence the need for their involvement was not considered important.

Data collected in this study showed that there is a weak stakeholders' partnership in the project. Stakeholders in the project were identified from management and operational perspectives. The institutional stakeholders control the stakeholders involved with the beneficiaries in the field. It was stated that the various institutional stakeholders have to liaise with each other regarding the primary stakeholders under their control to ensure that the identified challenges are addressed.

The importance of interactive process in a participatory stakeholders' relationship was discussed. As an illustration of this, I represented what I considered the ideal communicative relationship between the stakeholders with a diagram depicting an on-going interactive process between the institutional stakeholders and the primary stakeholders.

The influence of opinion leaders in rural communities was discussed and the data showed that opinion leaders play a huge role in the communities this study has investigated. Most of the opinion leaders referred to by the beneficiaries were

identified as such on the basis of their specialised knowledge and can be referred to as monomorphic opinion leaders. Apart from these monomorphic opinion leaders, other opinion leaders were those who are active in community affairs. Based on the data gathered about opinion leaders, it was suggested that they cannot be ignored as they wield enormous interpersonal influence in their communities. The means of communication used by the various stakeholders amongst themselves were also presented. Stakeholders such as agricultural extension officers, animal health technicians and IDC representatives said they usually communicate with the beneficiaries by calling meetings, but they complained of poor attendance by the beneficiaries.

Generally, the study revealed that cellular telephones are used by all the stakeholders in the Nguni Cattle Project and this ranks as the second most common mode of communication. The IDC representatives said they use cellular telephones to communicate non-technical issues and to follow-up on issues that were previously discussed. The beneficiaries reported that they usually communicate with other stakeholders by text messaging, which in most cases are in the form of 'Please call me'. Other stakeholders also mentioned it as a common means of communication with the beneficiaries.

As pointed out in the literature review, with mobile applications it is possible to deliver information relating to price, weather, etc, to farmers. The data collected in this regard showed use of cell phone was not used in this regard. E-mail, as shown in the analysis, is used between the IDC representatives and members of the Board of Trustees, and a few other stakeholders such as the agricultural extension and animal health technicians.

Another means of communication mentioned was the community newspaper. This was described as a participatory communication tool but unfortunately, in the communities investigated for this study, there is no community paper as defined in the literature. As previously noted, this method of communication would not be of use in these Nguni Cattle Project communities, as the vast majority of the beneficiaries are illiterate both in their language and the *de facto* official language - English.

An analysis of the stakeholders view about participation in a project bothered me on many issues. The intention here was to find what the beneficiaries and the stakeholders understand about participation in a development project. Based on my explanation of what I believe participation means, one of the responses was that it was not possible for the beneficiaries to participate because it was not clear as to how they would participate in some aspects of the project. Others said participation was not possible when the IDC representatives do not keep their promises to meet them. The beneficiaries also mentioned that some technical aspects of the project hampered their participation. A response that bordered on self-deprecation on the part of the beneficiaries said the farmer would not question whatever decision was taken, as they believe it was taken by the constituted authority to help them.

An animal scientist said the technical knowledge involved in the project cannot be deconstructed to a level where the beneficiaries can participate in the project. She emphasised the fact that it would be impossible for the beneficiaries to participate in the project in the same way that she does, as she believed the level of difference between them and herself will not permit it. Of all the respondents, the analysis showed that the only IDC representatives understand what participation in a development project means. It was clear from the data analysed that the respondents hold divergent views about how needs can influence participation in a development project. Literature recommends that there should be co-determination of needs, especially by the development planner and the beneficiaries. To IDC representatives, this means working by consensus with the communities by making sure they agree that they want the project.

The data analysed showed that the question of consensus regarding the community needs was not well addressed or communicated. This was noted in the response provided by female beneficiaries who said the project feeds into the egos of the men. They also said they also preferred vegetable and poultry projects. However, most of the beneficiaries admitted that had they been consulted about their perceived needs, they would not have agreed that a cattle project would benefit them, but given what they have seen about the project, they believe that the project was worth it in terms of meeting their needs.

Related to the question of needs analysis was the data gathered to establish the beneficiaries' views of the Nguni Cattle Project. While the beneficiaries generally perceived the project to be one of the answers to the alleviation of poverty in their communities, they were concerned that the IDC had not fulfilled their side of the agreement regarding the passing on of the gift after five years. This was also what the analysis uncovered regarding the data about the maturity of and implementation of the project.

Besides this, there was a perception across all the communities that the IDC representatives do not take them (the beneficiaries) seriously, as there were many occasions where meetings were cancelled and requests for help received no response. It was pointed out that a perception such as this could work against the participatory focus of any project because when the beneficiaries believe that other stakeholders are not working to advance a mutually agreed upon interest or lack of trust, they are likely to also withhold their contributions.

It was shown in the analysis that other stakeholders such as the agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians were not active in the implementation stage of the project. For example, 63 percent of the beneficiaries said they did not receive help to solve some of the problems they had encountered. One of the reasons cited for lack of help by the IDC representatives was shortage of personnel. Certain agricultural extension officers admitted that they were aware of the problems reported by the beneficiaries but claimed they did not tell the IDC representatives, who were unknown to them. This, as pointed out in the analysis, further confirmed the weak relationship between the stakeholders, as discussed in section 7.7.

The question of gender representation in the project was examined in the analysis. This was considered important as rural women are the pillars of rural development, especially in farming, according to Melkote and Steeves (2006:189-189). It was pointed out in the analysis that only 24 percent of the beneficiaries were women. One of the reasons cited for low female representation in the project was that women, whose husbands were in the project did not see the need to become members themselves. Some women who had been in the project left because it was taking too long for them to realise its benefits. The most common reason

given, however, was that the project is a 'man thing', as discussed in the data analysis.

Lastly, data collected about monitoring and evaluation were analysed. Based on the definition of monitoring given Mefalopulos and Kamlongera (2004:93), the approach used to monitor the progress of the project was described as record keeping of all the activities that take place in the implementation of the project. Through this, the IDC representatives are able to stay informed of the progress of the project. However, the data analysed showed that not all the communities had an up-to-date record about their activities and other issues about the project.

Other monitoring done, as reported by the IDC representatives, is in the form of collaboration with the beneficiaries to see the conditions of things such as the grazing field, the dip, and so on.

Mention was made of the evaluation of the Nguni Cattle Project across the Eastern Cape Province by an external evaluator. It was pointed out that a summative evaluation could not take place in the communities that were investigated for this study as the project was still in the implementation stage.

8.2.2 Nature of participation in the Nguni Cattle Project

The principal aim of this study was to look at the beneficiaries and stakeholders' communicative relationship in the Nguni Cattle Project. The emphasis was to see if the nature of communication among them (the beneficiaries and the stakeholders) was participatory and how the development planners ensure the participatory involvement of the beneficiaries.

The nature of participation in the study will be characterised here. To do this, the aims of the study will be restated, as follows:

- Assess how participatory communication approach is used in the project under investigation.
- Establish factors that affect participatory communication approach in the project.
- Determine the nature of stakeholders' relationship and their impact on the participatory objectives of the project.

- Find out what the stakeholders and the beneficiaries understand about the participatory communication process.
- Recommend solutions to address the challenges identified regarding the participatory communication focus of the project.

Given the aims of this study, how can this study be characterised in terms of its participatory focus? As the analysis of the data has shown in the previous chapter, the stakeholders in the Nguni Cattle Project are from varying backgrounds and this is one of the reasons why participatory communication is differently understood by them. What the data have shown is that it is not possible to have maximum participation of the stakeholders and the beneficiaries due to the several factors mentioned in Chapter Seven.

However, given the data analysed, the following types of participation characterise different aspects of the project:

- **Passive participation:** This is when the beneficiaries of a project are simply informed by development planner or other authorities in the project of what is to happen or what has already happenedz (Tufte & Mefalopulos 2009 and Arnstein 1969). This is also called non-participation. This type of participation, according to the data analysed, occurred at the formative stage in the project investigated in this research as the beneficiaries were not involved in the planning process. They were told about the project and what have been decided about the nature of the project.
- **Consultative participation:** Participants' views are openly sought, but the development planners decide unilaterally about what to incorporate and what to ignore, as they are under no obligation to use the information collected from the participants (Pretty 1994; and Biggs 1989, in Leeuwis 2006). This characterises the nature of the relationship of the IDC representatives and the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries accuse the IDC representatives of not taking them seriously and the meetings were described as 'talk shop'. Arnstein (1969) describes this as tokenism. It can also be used to describe the meeting that took place when the IDC representative entered the community the first. The beneficiaries were told about the project, did transect walk round the communities and but the

decision about the way forward rested with the Board of Trustees based on the report of the IDC representatives.

- **Participation for incentives:** This is common in many participatory development projects. According to Hawkins (n.d.), participation for incentives is when the beneficiaries provide labour in exchange for something, such as money or something else of value. In the context of the project this study has investigated, the beneficiaries participated in the implementation by taking care of the cattle for five years so that they will own the offspring of the cattle, after the passing on the gift has been done.
- **Functional participation:** There is an element of what Hawkins (n.d.:2) refers to as functional participation in the Nguni Cattle Project. The beneficiaries were told to form a group or association in order to meet some of the objectives of the project. In this case, the group was formed, not because they will be involved in decision-making, but to simply to ease the implementation of the project.

8.3 PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While discussing the problems and limitations of this study, it is important to state that the strength of this study lies in the rigorous analysis of the communicative encounters among the main stakeholders and the beneficiaries. This enabled the study to be considered in terms of how such encounters have advanced the participatory focus of the project.

In literature, there is no single prescribed model that can be used to deal with all circumstances in a participatory development project. However, in the context of the project this study has investigated and any other similar projects, it is important to note that the starting point towards achieving the participatory focus of a project is to put an established framework for stakeholders' relationship in place. This is a challenge in the Nguni Cattle Project and one of the strengths of this study is its thorough discussion of stakeholders' relationship. Following this, what is thought to be the ideal stakeholders' relationship to manage a project successfully in order to realise its participatory focus was proffered. The discussion provided in this regard emphasised a dialogic type of relationship where communication takes both vertical and horizontal directions. This was illustrated diagrammatically. The same

applies to the discussion of partnership formation and identification of development challenges which require communication if the identified action plan to deal with the challenge is to be met. This is one of the qualities of the study.

In the course of this study, it became clear that a number of issues may affect the quality of the work intended. Firstly, it is important to point out that some of the data collected in this study were collected through consecutive interpreter because I, the researcher, do not speak or understand the language of the beneficiaries. This means the interpreters assisted me by rendering the source language (SL), isiXhosa, into the target language (TL), English. The potential problem of misinterpretation was addressed by peer review by the interpreters of each other's work. However, rendering of linguistic elements (syntax, morphology, etc) suitably from isiXhosa into English may be a problem in this study. This same feeling applies in terms of the interpreter being able to reflect the dynamic relationship between the SL and TL. This applies to the structural difference between the two languages in the form of word order, cohesive devices, cultural elements which may not be interpreted suitably given the sociolinguistic backgrounds of the two languages. Any anomaly that occurs due to this will impact on the strength of the data collected in the study.

There are 72 beneficiary communities of Nguni Cattle Project across Eastern Cape. Owing to a number of constraints such as a limited budget, this study only investigated 12 beneficiary communities. Thus, broad generalisations cannot be made based on the case study of this research. Although, this study has provided an in-depth analysis based on the case study used, it does not in any way mean that the findings can be used to generalise participatory communication situations in Nguni Cattle Project in other communities in either Eastern Cape in particular or in other provinces. Obviously, the possibility exists that there might be specific issues in other beneficiary communities which this study has not covered hence caution should be taken in generalising the findings of this research.

The study was designed to collect information from the population as explained in the sampling method used for the study. Unfortunately, it was not possible to speak to some members of the Board of Trustees, hence I agree that some relevant

issues specific to the study were not adequately covered and this may affect the quality of the study.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The main purpose of this study was to analyse the participatory communication focus in a development project in rural communities in Eastern Cape, South Africa. While doing the analysis, many shortcomings were noticed and these shortcomings informed the recommendations that will be discussed below.

8.4.1 Excessive influence of the IDC representatives

According to some of the data analysed, the beneficiaries complained that most of their problems were left unattended to by the IDC representatives. As noted in the study, the IDC representatives were unable to respond to the beneficiaries problems in time due to shortage of personnel. However, it is my belief that it is not possible to hold them responsible for their actions or inaction, because the IDC representatives wield enormous power among the stakeholders and the beneficiaries do not have credible representative(s) to raise their concerns with the Board of Trustees.

The IDC representatives are important and powerful stakeholders in the project because they are the 'eyes' and 'ears' of the funding organisation (IDC), and they are the ones principally involved in the implementation of the project. As the data from this study have shown, the trustees depend on the information provided by the IDC representatives to make decisions. Thus, they wield enormous power in the relationship and they are able to influence the flow of information to their advantage.

Many of the beneficiaries complained that their requests for help go unheeded and in most cases they did not receive any response whatsoever to their enquiries. There is no opportunity for the trustees to be informed of this, because they depend solely on the IDC representatives for information about the project. It must be noted that the beneficiary communities this study has investigated are not represented on the Board, as the sole beneficiary representative is someone who is unknown to them and with whom they have no contact at all.

The only way to reduce the enormous influence or power of the IDC representatives is to have checks and balances in the form of making sure the beneficiary communities are represented on the Board so that their grievances can be heard by the highest authority (the trustees) if necessary and that the other stakeholders can be held accountable.

8.4.2 The essence of communication

Communication is the lifeblood of any relationship and this applies to the partnership needed to drive a development project in order for it to be successful. In many organisations, this is addressed by employing a communication expert to manage their communication needs and objectives.

Things that are required to be done must be communicated to all stakeholders involved to gain their cooperation and understanding for successful implementation. The data analysed in this study revealed several instances of problems which the IDC representatives and others tried to mitigate, but were found wanting in communication. Unfortunately, the main actors involved in the implementation of the project such as the IDC representatives and the agricultural extension officers have no experience of the discipline of communication. Although, as exemplified in the analysis, the IDC representatives were able to reflect the essence of participatory communication in their response to questions posed, some of their encounters with the beneficiaries showed that they are not conscious of the important role of communication in a relationship.

Based on this, it is recommended that in order to mitigate the problem of misunderstandings, a communication specialist should be employed as a driver of the project. This will help in terms of the need to sensitise all stakeholders to the importance of communication, especially in making sure the appropriate participatory communication approach is used or reflect the prevailing situations in which the implementation and other issues about the project have to take place.

8.4.3 Sustainability of the project

The manner in which the project operates demands that after five years, the community will pass on the gift to another community. This effectively terminates

the relationship between the main drivers (the IDC representatives) of the project and the community.

This calls into question the sustainability of the project after the IDC representatives have withdrawn involvement in the project. Will the poverty alleviating focus of the project be realised, given the lackadaisical attitude of the extension officers who will then be expected to help the beneficiaries to manage the herd? The extent to which the management of the project has taken a participatory route thus far, can be credited to the IDC representatives. Thus, what will happen after they have left the scene and will the agricultural extension officers and animal health technicians be able to advance the participatory focus of the project thereafter? In other words, when there is nobody to monitor the project after the passing on of the gift, will the beneficiaries continue to build on what they have learnt in the five years they have been in the project and be able to help themselves? There is no easy answer to this, and it is a concern that should be addressed.

One of the ways this could be addressed is to strengthen communication in the stakeholder partnership in the project. This will ensure that as the IDC representatives withdraw from the project, the project is handed to the agricultural extensions who are informed of the focus of the project. To do this will involve bringing the PDoA into the picture to ensure that the agricultural extension and other officers, such as the livestock coordinators, animal health technicians, are committed to the participatory focus of the project to realise the needs of the communities they operate. In other words, it is recommended that the agricultural extension officers and other PDoA employees directly involved in livestock farming and management should be made more active than they presently are in the running of the project in terms of its objectives in the communities.

The data indicated that most of the agricultural extension officers reported being unaware of the project until they became involved in the beneficiaries' communities. This means they were not told about the project or its goals. Thus, to ensure the sustainability of the project, I will suggest that as way of ensuring that the agricultural extension officers are effective in the implementation of the project, all agricultural extension officers must be briefed about projects that currently operate in their area.

8.4.4 Community media

The Nguni Cattle Project is active in many rural communities in South Africa. In Eastern Cape, 72 rural communities are involved in the project. From the data analysed in this study, it is so clear that most of the beneficiaries are not well informed about the project. They also do not have opportunity to air their concerns and grievances with the appropriate authority to ensure that these issues are addressed.

Thus, it is my belief that a community media in the form of a local newspaper with relevant content or newsletter should be launched by the trustees responsible for the project. This newspaper will be devoted to Nguni Cattle Project issues and other issues in rural communities that will empower them to be good farmers. Such newspaper will give voice to the beneficiaries in a manner that their complaints will not go unheard as they will have opportunity to communicate through the newspaper.

The newspaper will also provide opportunity for horizontal knowledge and information as it will be possible for the beneficiaries to read of the progress being made in other beneficiary communities about the practices that are relevant to Nguni Cattle.

8.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The following have been identified as issues in the study that call for further research:

8.5.1 Cellular telephone and its use to disseminate information in rural communities

The data analysed showed that cell phone holds positive promise in revolutionising the availability of information for the beneficiaries in the Nguni Cattle Project. In other African countries such as Kenya, Ghana, cell phone is now commanding a leading role in information dissemination to rural areas. Considering the data analysed in this regard, this seems a distant dream for the beneficiaries of Nguni Cattle Project in South Africa.

As stated in the analysis, cell phone is used for simple communication function such as receiving call in the form of serving notice for an impending meeting and passing information and for SMS. A study should be conducted to establish the cheapest and sustainable way cell phone can be used to pass information by way of mobile apps where information about weather, common cattle diseases control methods and animal breeding are available to cattle farmers through their cell phone. A study of this nature should involve cell phone service providers such as Vodacom, Cell C and MTN to roll out cheap cell phone handsets that support the applicable mobile apps through which the download can be made cheaply. For instance, the cell phone service providers can be convinced to consider it as a part of their corporate social responsibility to rural communities to ensure that cell phone handsets are made available cheaply.

This will help the participatory focus of the project as it will free the stakeholders of time to concentrate on other issues beneficial to the project.

8.5.2 Increasing beneficiaries' participation in the project

The data analysed showed that women's participation in the project was declining. Although it was stated that most women left the project for other projects that give a faster turnover and because of the dominance of the men involved, I believe a further study is needed to look at the issue of women's participation.

It is my belief that there are issues specific to the rural communities that may help to understand and address the question of women's participation in this and similar projects. For example, although some women blamed the male beneficiaries as domineering, it was also noted in the study that the regulations regarding the management of local communities are not biased against women. Nowadays, women have equal opportunity to become chairperson of their communities, and indeed, some of the communities in this study have been led by women. Thus, a study to find the root causes of their lack of participation in projects like the Nguni Cattle Project could be very fruitful in the future.

8.6 CONCLUSION

The main thrust of this study has been to analyse a development project used as a case study with the intention to examine the nature of participation that takes place

in the project. Consequently, an in-depth review of the theoretical perspectives of participatory communication was done to foreground some aspects in which the analysis is based.

The analysis showed that, given some contexts specific to the project and the stakeholders, maximum participation was not possible. Instances of different participation typologies such as passive participation, consultative participation, participation for incentive and functional participation were identified. The nature of participation of the project took these forms largely based on the extent to which the actors or stakeholders understood the concept of participation in a development project. In some aspects, participation was not applied, because of the perceived urgency to implement the project in the fight to alleviate poverty.

While the beneficiaries claimed that they did not understand the operational principles or that these were not sufficiently explained to them, the data showed that this would not have made any difference in terms of what their response would have been. All they cared about was that it is a project that promises to alleviate poverty. Most of the problems identified showed that the IDC representatives were hamstrung by a shortage of personnel and could not respond in time to help the beneficiaries.

Certain recommendations were made to mitigate some of the problems identified in the study. I hope that what has been presented in this study will help to advance the understanding of participatory communication in the context it was investigated.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONS AND INTERVIEW GUIDES
SECTION FOR NGUNI CATTLE BENEFICIARIES
QUESTIONNAIRE: MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY
BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

2. GENDER

MALE	FEMALE
------	--------

3. MARITAL STATUS

SINGLE	MARRIED	DIVORCED	WIDOWED
--------	---------	----------	---------

4. HIGHEST QUALIFICATION

None	Matric	Diploma	Degree	Post graduate
------	--------	---------	--------	---------------

5. STATUS IN THE COMMUNITY

Teacher	NGO worker	Religious leader	Councillor	Other (Specify)
---------	------------	------------------	------------	-----------------

ETHNIC GROUP

Xhosa	English	Sotho	Zulu	Tswana	Afrikaans	Other (specify)
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Questions

1. How did you learn about the Nguni Cattle Project?

2. Describe your first meeting with any of the representatives of the Nguni Cattle Project?

.....

3. What message did they bring during their first visit?

.....

4. How was the message communicated to the members of the community?

.....

9. Do you know if the chairperson of the village was met first before other members of the community were met? Yes/No

10. Was any other person in the village met besides the chaiperson before other villagers were met? Yes/No

11. If yes, why do you think this person was met first?

.....

12. Was there anybody in the community in the company of the Nguni Cattle Project's representative when they spoke to you and other villagers? Yes/No

13. Has there been anything new different from what you know about Nguni Cattle Project? Yes/No

13.1 If yes, how did you know first?

.....

13.2 Did you seek more information about it after you became aware of it the first time? Yes/No

13.3 If yes, from whom (extension officer, friends, internet, others)?

.....

14. Do you communicate with the representative(s) of the Nguni Cattle Project? Yes/No

14.1 If yes, which representative(s) do you normally communicate with?

IDC Representative(s)	UFH Representative	Agric extension officers	Other (Specify)
--------------------------	--------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------

14.2 Can you specify any issues that you normally discuss with them?

.....

16. Have you ever initiated communication with any of the Nguni Cattle Project's representative?
Yes/ No

17. Are you given opportunity to respond to whatever you are told about the Nguni Cattle Project?
Yes/No

18. Would you say the current communication between the community and the representatives of the Nguni Cattle Project or agricultural extension officer is effective? Yes/No

18.1 If yes, why?

.....

18.2 If no, why?

.....

19. Do you think the information you are getting about the Nguni Cattle Project is enough? Yes/No

19. Can you make suggestion with regards to the improvement of the current process of community participation in the Nguni Cattle Project?

20. Do you have any suggestion to improve information between stakeholders involved in the Nguni Cattle Project? State the suggestion below:

21. What do you know about cattle farming that is different from what the Nguni Cattle Project representatives are telling you? Please explain briefly below:

.....

22. Is there any sense in the new thing they are telling you? Compared to what you know, which is better? Is it yours or theirs? Please explain your answer briefly below:

.....

23. Is there any problem you are having as beneficiaries of the project? Yes/No

24. If yes, have you raised this problem with the Nguni Cattle Project representatives? Yes/No

If yes, how was it solved?

25. Are other beneficiaries having similar problems? Yes/No

26. Do you know whether they have raised it with the extension officers?

27. Is there anything you think about the Nguni Cattle Project that is wrong? Yes /No

28. Have you raised this with the coordinator of the Nguni Cattle Project?

.....

31. What do you like about the project?

.....

32. What do you think is bad about the project?

.....

33. Do you think the project will improve your socio-economic situation? Yes/No

If yes, explain briefly below:

.....

34. How do you think you will benefit from the project?

.....

35. What were the criteria given to you in order to be beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project?

.....

36. Was it easy to meet any of these criteria or some of them? Yes/No

.....

36a. If yes, why?

.....

If no, why?

.....

39. What objectives do you think the Nguni Cattle Project is seeking to achieve in your community?

.....

40. Were the objectives of the Nguni Cattle Project explained to you? Yes/No

41. What do you think of the Nguni Cattle Project?

.....

OPINION LEADERS

1. Do you think, there is someone in this community who know more than you do?

2. If yes, who is this person or what is position in this community?

.....

3. Besides being a farmer, what other things does the person do?

4. Do you think there is someone in this community who has general information about almost everything such as politics (information about government), education, health problems etc?
Yes/No

5. If yes, who is the person?

.....

6. Why do you think this person has general information more than you?

7. Do you always or sometimes go to this person for information or to seek any help? Yes/No. If yes, why?

.....

8. Do you know whether other people also go to this person for information as well? Yes/No

9. When any new government officer comes to this community to meet the community people, who does he/she speak to first?

.....
10. Do you think it is right that this person is spoken to first before others? Yes/No. If yes, why?

.....
11. When you have any problem, to whom do you go for advice?

.....
12. When you need information about anything, to whom do you go for the information?

.....
13. How does this person communicate with the community? Is it in English or Xhosa?

.....
14. If it is English, is there an interpreter to interpret for community members who do not understand English? Yes/No

.....
3. In this village, who decides what should be done for the general good of the people?

.....
4. Who makes the final decision about any issue in your community? State the answer below:

.....
5. If you attend meeting in your village, do you discuss the decision reached with other person in the village? Yes/No. If yes, why?

.....
6. If the villagers are told to do anything, do you as an individual go to discuss with anybody before deciding to do what you have been told to do? Yes/No

.....
7. If yes, who do you normally discuss with and why? Wife? Husband? Son? Daughter? Or Friend or other (Specify)

.....
8. Are women allowed to participate equally with men in meetings in this village? Yes/No

.....
9. As a woman, if you disagree with on an issue raised by a man will you do it publicly in the meeting?

.....
10. How many women do you know that are beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project?

.....
11. Are there houses in this village headed by women? Yes/No

If yes, why are women leading heading these houses?

.....

12. As a man, will you feel offended if a woman objects to, or disagrees on an issue raised by you?
Yes/No. If yes, Why? And If no, why?

.....

13. When the village meets, is everyone allowed to freely express his/her opinions on issues being discussed? Yes/No

15. Are there meetings for men only in the village? Yes/No

If yes, kindly tell me why?

16. Are meeting only in the village?

17. If yes, please kindly tell me why.

18. When there is going to be a meeting in the village, how is the information passed around or how are people called to the meeting?

.....

19. Apart from Nguni Cattle Project, what are other income generating projects in this village?

.....

20. Do you have regular meeting in this village about development issues? Yes/No

OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Are you involved in any form of religious activities in this community? Yes/No

2. If yes, which activities are you involved in your religion?

.....

3. Are there political group formations or parties in this community? Yes/No

4. If yes, do you belong to any of the groups? Yes/No

If you don't mind please state below the name of the group?

.....

5. Do you occupy any position in any of these groups or parties? Yes/No. If yes, state the position below:

.....

MASS MEDIA AND OTHER MEANS OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

1. Is there any association or group which helps in circulating information in the community? Yes/No

2. How do you know of government activities such as grant, health services and other activities in this community? Please state your answer briefly below:

.....

3. What is your favourite radio station?

.....

4. For what purpose do you tune to this station? (Reason: Is it for news, current affairs, sport, music, agric broadcast)

.....

5. Do you tune in to this radio to seek information for agriculture?

.....

6. Besides the Nguni Cattle Project representatives, do you have other source of information about cattle farming and agriculture in general? Yes/No. If yes, is it any or a combination of the following source of information?

TV	
Radio	
From members of the community	
Newspaper	
Signboard/billboard	
Internet	
Others (Please state)	

7. Tell me about the newspapers common in this community?

.....

8. Which language is the newspaper written?

.....

9. Do you read any of the newspapers? Yes/No. If yes, does it carry news about your community? Yes/No

.....

10. Does the newspaper carry news about agriculture news in your community? Yes/No

11. Do you own a TV set? Yes/No

12. If you do, for what reasons do you always watch TV?

.....

13. Do you owe a cell phone? Yes/No

14. Do you use cell phone to communicate with the Nguni Cattle Project coordinators? Yes/No

15. Do you use cell phone to communication about the Nguni Cattle Project with other farmers?
Yes/No

16. Do they (the representatives of Nguni Cattle Project) use cell phone to communicate with you?
Yes/No

17. Do they communicate with cell phone through other person in the community to you? Yes/No. If
yes, why is the person chosen as an intermediary to reach you?

.....

18. Through which aspect of cell phone-enabled communication is the communication done?
(Reason: SMS, Direct call, MMS, E-mail, Twitter, Mxit etc)

.....

19. Besides the Project's representatives, do you have access to other stakeholders or other people
involved in the Nguni Cattle Project?. If yes, how did you know of these people?

.....

20. Have these people or any of these people come to meet you individually or in group? Yes/No. If
yes, what did they discuss with you?

.....

21. Through which language did they discuss with you?

.....

22. If not in local language, was there an interpreter to interpret from the language used into your
language?

.....

23. Is there any written document such as agreement of union or written information about Nguni
Cattle Project? Yes/No

24. Is this written in local language or English? Yes/No

25. If it is in English, was it translated into local language or did somebody read it in English and
interpret it into local language for you? Yes/No

26. Has there been any new ideas about cattle farming you were told of by the coordinators or the
extension agents? Yes/No

27. If yes is your answer, how was it communicated you?

.....

28. What was the idea?

.....

29. How did you receive the idea or did you start working with the idea immediately? Yes/No. If no, for how long did it take you to adopt the idea or you still haven't believed the idea is good?

VIEWS OF THE BENEFICIARIES ABOUT THE NGUNI CATTLE PROJECT

1. Do you think the Project is a solution to alleviating or mitigating poverty in your community?

Yes/No

2. Have benefited anything from the Project? Yes/No. If 'no' is your answer, do you think you would benefit anything from the Project in future? Yes/No

3. If 'yes' is your answer to question, what do you think you will benefit from the project in the future? Please explain briefly

4. Do you believe the project will benefit the community? Yes/No. If 'yes' is your answer, please indicate briefly below what you think the benefit is

5. Do you know of a place to go if you need solution to any problem you are having about project?

Yes/No

6. If yes, which place and is it here in the community?

7. Is there frequent supervision of the project from stakeholder of the project? Yes/No. If yes, who is the person who usually carries out the supervision?

8. What factors do you think will hinder people from being participating in the project?

.....

9. Do you have any suggestion how this hindrance can be removed?

.....

TRAINING

1. Have you ever received any training as a beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project? Yes/No. If yes, from whom?

2. Were you involved in the identifying the training needs? Yes/No

3. If you were not involved, were the training needs explained to you before it started? Yes/No

4. If you have been trained, who was your trainer?

5. In which language was the training conducted?

Xhosa	English	Other (Specify)
-------	---------	-----------------

6. If you did not understand the language used in the training, was there interpreter?

7. Were there training materials such as training guides, manuals or written instructions? Yes/No. If yes, were the material in the language you understand? No/Yes

8. If no, were they translated into your language? Yes/No

9. Why were you given the training?

.....

10. Did you learn something new in the training? Yes/NO

COMMUNITY'S CHAIRPERSON

1. Tell me briefly about Nguni Cattle Project in your community.

2. Did the development worker(s) overseeing the project meet seek your permission before entering this community?

3. Tell me briefly, what he/she or they discuss with you.

4. As the chairperson of this village, how do you passage message around to other members of the villages?

5. Do you think the means you are using to pass message around is effective?

6. Is there any other means you would have preferred that you cannot access?

7. Were the objectives of the Nguni Cattle Project explained to you?

8. Are you one of the beneficiaries of the Nguni Cattle Project?

SECTION FOR IDC REPRESENTATIVES

Questions

1. Were the farmers involved, could you give me any documents regarding the founding objectives of the NCP

1. Do you involve the beneficiary communities in the Nguni Cattle Project processes? Yes/ No. If Yes, how?

Through meetings	Liaison with the beneficiaries representatives	Or other (please specify)
------------------	--	---------------------------

2. How often do you interact with communities regarding NCP?

Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Other (Please specify)
--------	-------------	---------	------------------------

3. Have you ever given the Nguni Cattle Project beneficiaries any training? Yes/No

3.1 If yes, describe briefly the training?

4. In what language was the training conducted?

Xhosa	English	Other (Specify)
-------	---------	-----------------

4.1 Were there any of the beneficiaries who did not understand the language used in the training?
Yes/No

4.2 If yes, was there interpreter? Yes/No

4.3 Were there training materials, such as training guides, manuals or written instructions? Yes/No

4.4. If yes, were the material in the language the trainees understood? No/Yes

4.5 If no, were they translated into the language they understood? Yes/No

5. Who developed the training materials?

5.1 Were the beneficiaries' inputs sought before the training materials were developed? Yes/No

6. How did you determine the beneficiaries who were trained or all the farmers must undergo the training?

6. Did you think the beneficiaries learn something new in the training? Yes/No

7. If yes, explain briefly below:

.....

8. Is there any other type of training you give to the beneficiaries?

9. What is the proportion of women's involvement in the project?

10. What is the proportion of men's involvement in the project?

11. Is there any problem specific to any gender group among the beneficiaries?

12. In the communities or the villages, what is the common main occupation of the men?

13. In the communities, what is the common main occupation of the women?

14. Do you encounter any challenge(s) in having meeting with the beneficiaries?

15. Do you have problem with the beneficiaries or any authority in the communities?

No

16. Could please describe briefly of an instance below?

17. Have you encountered any problem from individuals or the village unwilling to accept the Project?

18. Please tell me of some specific NCP-related problems the communities do have.

SECTION FOR AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION OFFICERS, ANIMAL HEALTH TECHNICIANS

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. GENDER

MALE	FEMALE
------	--------

4. HIGHEST QUALIFICATION

NONE	MATRIC	DIPLOMA	DEGREE	POST GRADUATE	OTHER
------	--------	---------	--------	---------------	-------

L GROUP

XHOSA	ENGLISH	SOTHO	ZULU	TSWANA	AFRIKAANS	OTHER (SPECIFY)
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Questions

1. Tell me how the Nguni Cattle Project started.
- 2.. Were the communities involved at the starting stage of the Project? Yes/ No. If Yes, how?

3. How often do you interact with communities regarding Nguni Cattle Project?

Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Other (Please specify)
--------	-------------	---------	------------------------

4. Would you say that communities really participate in the Nguni Cattle Project processes? Yes/ No

4. Do you regard the current status quo of community participation in the Nguni Cattle Project to be adequate? Yes/ No. If Yes, why? And If no, why?

4. Can you suggest any improvement to the current status quo of the community in the Nguni Cattle Project? If you can, please state your answer below

TRAINING

1. Have you ever given the Nguni Cattle Project beneficiaries any training? Yes/No

- 1.1 If yes, describe briefly the type of training.

2. In what language was the training conducted?

Xhosa	English	Other (Specify)
-------	---------	-----------------

- 2.1 Were there any of the beneficiaries who did not understand the language used in the training? Yes/No

- 2.2 If yes, was there interpreter? Yes/No

- 2.3 Were there training materials, such as training guides, manuals or written instructions? Yes/No

- 2.4 If yes, were the material in the language the trainees understood? No/Yes

2.5 If no, were they translated into the language they understood? Yes/No

3. Who developed the training materials?

.....

3.1 Were the beneficiaries inputs sought before the training materials were developed? Yes/No

4. How did you determine the beneficiaries who were trained or all the beneficiaries must undergo the training?

.....

5. Did you think the beneficiaries learn something new in the training? Yes/NO

6. If yes, explain briefly below:

.....

7. Is there any other type of training you give to the farmers?

GENDERS ISSUES

1. What is the proportion of women's involvement in the Project?

2. What is the proportion of men's involvement in the Project?

3. Is there any problem specific to any gender group among the beneficiaries?

GENERAL CHALLENGES

1. Do you have problem with the beneficiaries or any authority in the communities?

2. Could please describe briefly of an instance below?

3. Have you encountered any problem from individuals or the communities unwilling to accept the Project?

4. What is your way of communicating with the Project farmers?

5. Given the participatory approach underpinning Nguni Cattle Project, how do you ensure your dealing with the beneficiaries and other stakeholders is participatory?

6. Can you describe briefly what you understand by participatory development project?

6. Please tell me of some specific Nguni Cattle Project-related problems the communities do have.

7. Is this problem a recurring problem in a year-in-year-out pattern?

8. How do you handle problem?

9. Do you know of particular social problems in the communities that may affect the Nguni Cattle Project?

9. Are there specific guidelines to follow to ensure the farmers' participation in the Project?

10. Is the farmers' participation in the Project being encouraged?

7. Does your employer have any communication strategies or guidelines regarding your company's relationship with the communities?

8. What were the existing channels of communication in the communities?

9. Is any of these channels being used in your dealing with the communities?

10. Do you use any mediated communication, such as TV, radio, newspapers, films, etc to support your communication with the communities?

OPINION LEADERS

1. What do you think is the socio-economic/cultural profile of the Nguni Cattle Project communities?
2. Do the communities have particular group of people or individual who wield(s) influence over them?
3. In your opinion, do you think these people or individual really have the influence over them?
4. Do you try to identify opinion leaders in the communities?
5. If yes, how do you identify them?

COMMUNICATION

1. What are the main socio-economic activities of the communities?
2. Who are other stakeholders in the Nguni Cattle Project?
3. Who do you report to or who is your immediate superior?
3. What is/are the means of communication between you and your superiors?
5. What are the means of communication between you and the communities?
6. What is your way of communicating with the Project farmers?
7. Given the participatory approach underpinning Nguni Cattle Project, how do you ensure your dealing with the beneficiaries and other stakeholders is participatory?
8. What in your opinion do you think the Project faces in an attempt to promote participation of the beneficiaries?
9. Is there any other development project in the communities besides Nguni Cattle Project?
10. If yes is your answer, please name the development projects.
11. Do you know of any traditional cattle rearing practices that are different from what you tell them?
12. Do you give reports of your work in the communities? If you do, how often?
13. Do you have any communication problem with any of the stakeholders?
14. If yes, what is the communication problem and do you overcome it if it is overcome?
15. Does your contact with the communities involve a two-way communication process?
- 15a. If yes, what communication approach do you use to make this an interactive relationship?
16. If yes, please indicate the one or a combination of the media you regularly use and why?
17. What kind of training do you give your field officers who deal with Nguni Cattle Project farmers?
18. How do you communicate with other stakeholders of the Nguni Cattle Project?
19. How do you ensure feedback from the communities in any of your interactions with them?

ENTERING THE COMMUNITY

1. How do you get involved in the Nguni Cattle Project?
2. In your involvement in the Project, do you have contact with the Nguni Cattle Project beneficiaries in their communities?
- 2a. How did you make your first contact with the communities?
3. If you have contact with the Nguni Cattle Project beneficiaries, in your initial contact with them through which medium did you send messages to them of the impending meeting?
4. Why did you use this medium?

5. In meeting with the Nguni Cattle Project beneficiaries, through which medium or media did you communicate with them?
6. Why did you use this/these medium or media?
8. In dealing with the communities, have you noticed any social-economic/cultural variable that does not apply across the communities?. If 'yes' is your answer above, what is the variable?
9. Do you try to find out about what the communities already know about community development?
10. Do you try to find out what the communities already know about cattle farming practice in relation to the farming practice they are being introduced to?
11. What is your level of involvement in the project?
12. Given your level of involvement, who are other stakeholders you regularly deal with it?
13. How often do you deal or meet with these stakeholders?
14. What strategies do you put in place to ensure that your objective of your involvement in the project is realised?
15. Do you have problem working in the communities? What of kind of problem is it and how do you solve the problem?
16. What other development agencies work in the communities?
17. What specific development initiative are they involved with?
18. Do you consider their communication relevant to your approach that you can use?
19. Do you have any form of relationship with these agencies, be it formal or informal?
26. How do you monitor the progress of the project?
27. In your opinion, are there mechanisms in place to control the activities of the Project coordinators or extension officers?
28. Do you know of any prior knowledge and experience of the beneficiaries as regards Cattle farming? Yes/No
29. Do you consider this prior knowledge and experience in dealing with the farmers? Yes/No
30. If yes, please explain some of the farmers' prior experience and knowledge you know and how these have had a bearing in dealing with the beneficiaries.

APPENDIX 2: LETTERS OF REQUEST



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Department of Communication
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
University of Fort Hare
Private Bag X1314
Alice 5700.

23 May 2011.

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

I am currently doing a research in the field of participatory communication at the University of Fort Hare, Alice. The research is regarded as being of critical importance for the practice of development communication – firstly as it relates to the theoretical conception of participatory communication and how it applies practically in development projects. In other words, in view of the fact that there is a lack of consistent or operationalisation of the term ‘participation’ in theory and practice, many development projects are labelled participatory development projects when in reality there is a limited or partial involvement of the beneficiaries. This research, therefore, seeks to find out the nature and extent of participatory practice in Nguni Cattle Project – a project described as participatory in approach.

My research is entitled: *A participatory communication approach to a rural cattle project: A case study of Nguni Cattle Project in Eastern Cape, South Africa.*

In order to obtain reliable information about this topic, your input as one with intimate acquaintance of this field or (one who is involved in the Nguni project) is regarded as most important. I would therefore greatly appreciate it if you would agree to participate as a

respondent by agreeing to be interviewed at a time convenient for you and if need be by answering the questions attached to this letter.

Since your participation is completely voluntary, you are protected by safeguards with regard to your privacy and involvement in this project so as to ensure that the study is conducted in an ethical manner. Any queries emanating from this study and relating to your rights as a participant may be addressed telephonically to Prof B. Sibanda, Research supervisor and research coordinator in department of communication at (040) 504 406022353, or in writing to Prof B. Sibanda Private Bag X1314, Alice 5700, e-mail bsibanda@ufh.ac.za.

If you have any questions about the questions attached, please do not hesitate to contact me on 082 4292647 or via e-mail at usadolo1@yahoo.com or susadolo@ufh.ac.za. On finishing in responding to the questions, you may contact me in the same way, and I will personally collect your responses from you.

Sincerely yours



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S.E Usadolo