

Learning to struggle in grassroots community
organizations:
The Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association

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Abstract

This study was motivated by my interest in what ordinary people, who have become involved in political, civic, environmental and other community organisations and taken up struggles in their communities, learn through this. I am specifically interested in how they learn through struggle in community-based grassroots organisations; and thus focused my study on Clairwood, where livelihood have been affected by the influx of trucks and environmental and industrial hazards, and people involved in the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents' Association (CRRA) who are struggling against this. I thus chose the critical paradigm as the most appropriate paradigm within which to locate my research, since I was interested in struggle and social change.

In keeping with a critical paradigm, my study is qualitative in nature and the main data collection method was in-depth interviews, as I thought that it would be the most effective method to enable me to gather rich, qualitative data from my participants.

The existing adult education literature on adult learning, especially in the social context, includes adult learning theory that looks at adults: who have significant experience of involvement in struggle: particularly of taking action; have experienced this collectively; and have presumably learned something from this experience. I chose experiential learning theory, and particularly the model of experiential learning theory as developed by Peter Jarvis, as the most useful in helping to understand the learning that takes place within the CRRA.

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I would like to thank my supervisor, Anne Harley, for her patience, constant guidance and motivation. I would also like to thank the residents of Clairwood for participating in my research study and for sharing their stories so passionately. I would also like to thank my husband, Anand, for his support, and my children, Kaelin and Kiara, for continuing to inspire me.

I dedicate this to my late mum, Pushpa Chetty, who was born and bred in Clairwood and spent the best days of her life in this vibrant community.

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Chapter 1: Focus and purpose

Introduction

For me the most interesting and significant learning occurs informally and incidentally, in people's everyday lives. And some of the most powerful learning occurs as people struggle against oppression, as they struggle to make sense of what is happening to them and to work out ways of doing something about it (Foley, 1999, pp. 1-2).

This study looks at how people learn through struggle, looking specifically at the case of the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA). This study arose out of:

- My concern for the people of Clairwood, whose livelihood has been affected by the influx of trucks and environmental and industrial hazards;
- My interest in how people learn through struggle in grassroots organisations, specifically those involved in the CRRA.

In introducing this study on how adults learn through struggle, I present in this first chapter the rationale for this study, focusing on a brief history of my activism and my interest in the struggles of the people of Clairwood, and the background and history of the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA) (formerly the Clairwood and District Residents and Ratepayers Association (CDRRA)).

My interest in the struggles of the residents of Clairwood stems from my childhood connections and my later experience as a student and community activist in neighbouring Merebank from the early 1980s. My grandparents lived in Clairwood and my mother grew up there. I recall spending holidays in my grandparents' home at 118 Archary Road: a spacious, Victorian house with wrap-around verandas, huge old trees on a substantial plot where my aunt used to grow vegetables and keep chickens. However, with increasing pressure to leave the area, my grandparents left in the early 1980s, moving to a tiny semi-detached house on a small plot in Phoenix - something which physically and mentally destroyed my grandmother as she lost all sense of belonging and community, and felt trapped in such a small space.

Despite the removals and the destruction of the physical and human fabric of the community through the industrialisation of the area, people in Clairwood continued to struggle to retain their community (and still do). I am very interested in how ordinary people, through their involvement in community organisations, are prompted into action and hence become campaigners for change, often taking on and challenging the might of the state with their limited resources. I am thus interested in exploring the power of social learning. At the time I began this study, I was involved in the Krish Rabilal Foundation (KRF) which was formed to fill the gap in active community work which was needed after the 1994 elections. Through the KRF, I was involved in organising youth in the Merebank area, whether in school, at university, or unemployed. Since Clairwood and Merebank are neighbouring suburbs and have historically faced similar struggles, the danger to the residents of Clairwood, their livelihood and their environment is of great concern to me. Hence this serves as my motivation to pursue this research study. I have opted to look at Clairwood because (1) Merebank itself as an area has been the focus of many research studies and as a result has been 'over-researched' and (2) the issues facing the residents of Clairwood are, in my opinion, far more serious.

I am especially interested in how adults learn through involvement in civic/community organisations and how that learning is translated into furthering the struggles of their organisations. Thus the main emphasis of my study is on how adults learn about how to struggle, and what they learn through struggle. How do they use their experiences of struggle in their struggles? And what are the dynamics of this learning in struggle?

Recently, there has been an increasing interest in learning in struggle, particularly in the so-called new social movements. Foley (1999) argues that while systematic education does occur in some community organisation sites and actions, learning in such situations is usually largely informal and often incidental - it is tacit, embedded in action, and often not recognised as learning. For this reason, he concludes, learning is often potential, or only half realised. He goes on to suggest that in order to more fully realise the value of such learning, we need to expose it.

Hall, Clover, Crowther and Scandrett (2011), in their editorial to a special edition of *Studies in the Education of Adults* devoted to learning in social movements, stress that it may seem obvious that movements move people, but point out that it is important that they do so in

concerted ways, and the knowledge they create and the learning that occurs is critical to the mobilisation. They alert us to the different types of learning that occur through involvement in movements, drawing a distinction between ‘learning in movements’ and ‘learning from movements’. They argue:

In a world which badly needs alternatives to the dominance of neoliberal values and the polarization of poverty and wealth, within and between societies, how people learn to create values-based and socially just economic structures is of critical importance (Hall et al, 2011, p.115).

Whilst many of these writers have focused on social movements, their arguments about the importance of looking more closely at learning in struggle are equally relevant to community organisations such as the CRRA.

In my study I hope to delve into the intricacies of the learning that takes place among residents of Clairwood and members of the CRRA in their struggle against the government, municipality, industry, and truck owners and drivers. How did they learn to become activists? What have they learned through this, and how? And to what extent is this learning translated into further action?

History of Clairwood

The history of Clairwood is important in understanding the community’s present struggles and, more importantly, understanding how members of the community learn to participate, support and lead these struggles.

Clairwood is a residential area situated in the South Durban Basin. It is flanked by the Jacobs industrial area; the Bluff residential area; Merebank and Wentworth, which are residential areas; and the industrial giants - Mondi Paper Mill, Sapref and Engen Oil Refineries.

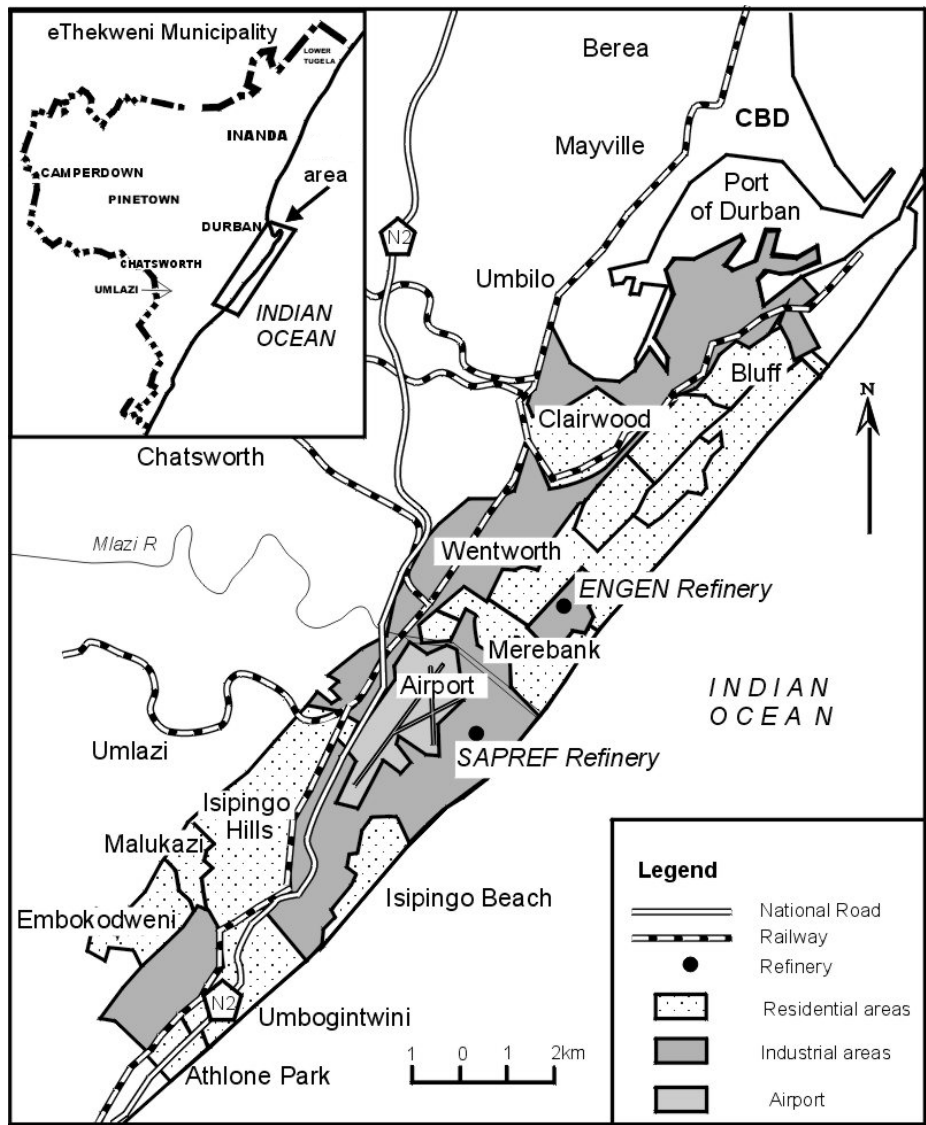


Figure 1: Map of the area

Clairwood was first settled in the 1880s, as indentured Indian settlers completed their contracts and moved to the area to start market gardens on the available land. The land was available because it was not ideal – it was swampy, prone to flooding, and infested by mosquitoes. They were granted legal tenure by the Durban Municipality after initially being illegal ‘squatters’, and were allowed to lease small plots of land. The market gardens of Clairwood provided fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers to Durban and Pietermaritzburg. As late as 1940, there were still 640 acres of market gardens in Clairwood (1860 Legacy Foundation Clairwood, 2010).

The failure of the Durban City Council to provide adequate housing for the Indian population in the city meant considerable influx into the area and the population grew rapidly. By the early 1960s, it was estimated that some 60 000 people were living in the area, many of them under the poverty line (1860 Legacy Foundation Clairwood, 2010). I remember from my childhood how families would often share homes, and there were increasing numbers of backyard shacks.

Despite these hardships, or perhaps because of them, a strong sense of community developed from early on. Scott (1994) states that:

Clairwood and District grew into a densely-populated informal living space with all facilities and institutions built by the community. Based on a cultural inheritance in the form of language, the extended family system and religious beliefs, the Indian settlers and their descendants developed an elaborate network of kinship and communal relationships which formed the moral and social framework for the process of communal space construction. (p.4)

Scott (1994) asserts that by the 1950s, Clairwood and District had become a vibrant Indian community which had invested its cultural and material resources and skills to provide a range of community facilities. She goes on to suggest that the outcome of this process was a culturally unique local landscape with a well-established 'sense of place', which was acutely felt by residents and acknowledged by all South African Indians.

Scott (1994) adds that, on entering the colony of Natal predominantly as indentured labour, the Indians were from the outset ostracised and subjugated by the white settlers and perceived as an alien temporary group. This identity was henceforth embodied in discriminatory legislation which marginalised the Indians in South Africa and resulted in their neglect and spatial containment.

The above description of the history of Clairwood paints a picture of a rich, thriving community, with a deep sense of culture and religion; a community formed and sustained in the face of oppression and discrimination. Scott (1994) describes Clairwood as a “self-built community” (p.290).

However, the community has faced a sustained attempt to erode it as a residential area, and hence as a community. Scott (1994) states that the struggle to industrialise Clairwood reveals a sustained and consistent attempt to eradicate the last pocket of Indian communal space in order to complete the formal industrialisation process of the southern corridor.

This is largely because of its geographical location – Clairwood is close to the Durban harbour, the city centre, the railway lines, and the former airport. From early on it was targeted for re-zoning for industrial development. In 1943 a special committee, set up to consider post-war development of the city of Durban, found that the area was well suited for industrial development (Gopal & Singh, 2010). In 1952 the Durban City Council applied to have Clairwood zoned for general business purposes and industrial use (South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR), 1984). They argued that Durban desperately needed more industrial land to provide work opportunities for the many thousands of unemployed people, and Clairwood was ideal industrial land because it was near the city centre, the harbour and road and rail transport. They further added that, because Clairwood was surrounded by an industrial area, it would be only natural and logical that it should be re-zoned for industrial use itself.

However, residents of the area did not want to move from Clairwood and the community responded by forming the Clairwood and District Residents and Ratepayers Association (CDRRA) in order to resist this.

In 1956 the Durban City Council applied to re-zone Clairwood for industrial development, and also resolved to propose that in terms of the Group Areas Act, which had been passed in 1950, this industrial area be zoned for whites only (Gopal & Singh, 2010; SAIRR, 1984). However, the Provincial Town and Regional Planning Commission rejected the Council's application and proposed that a large portion of Clairwood be retained for Indian residential purposes (SAIRR, 1984). In fact Clairwood remained a residential area unzoned in terms of the Group Areas Act, and thus racially mixed (Gopal & Singh, 2010). The Council then embarked on a process leading to the deliberate 'slumming' of the area (SAIRR, 1984):

The provision of civic amenities, the care of roads, drainage and electricity was to be neglected henceforth (p.2).

In addition, the Council imposed a building ban on the area (ibid.). As a result, large numbers of people left the area. Between 1952 and 1984, the population dwindled from 40,000 to only 6,000. People moved out largely because of uncertainty and insecurity, but also because of high rates that were based on an industrial rateable value (ibid.). Thus the industrial penetration of the Indian residential area of Clairwood had commenced by the late 1950s, resulting in a slow process of urban decay. By the 1960s the Council was undertaking a concerted effort to force people out of Clairwood (Scott, 1994).

The CDRRA, other organisations in the area and others acting in support (including Diakonia, the University of Natal, etc.) continued to resist the erosion of their community in the following decades (Gopal & Singh, 2010). Scott (1994) argues that this resistance had relatively little impact until the 1980s. Heated debate about the future of the area again rose in the early 1980s with further municipal proposals that the area be industrialised. By now a much wider case was being made for why the area should remain residential, for example, Dr Jeff McCarthy of the Department of Geography of the University of Natal argued that a 250 hectare site less than 5km from the Kwa-Mashu/Phoenix/Inanda area be considered instead of Clairwood, which was only 100 hectare in extent (SAIRR, 1984). A public meeting on 28th February 1982 resolved that Clairwood should remain a residential area (Gopal & Singh, 2010), and this was supported by many, including the liberal media, as this editorial from the *Daily News* dated 8th November 1983 shows:

THE DAILY NEWS

CLAIRWOOD

" Durban City Council does not come out of the Clairwood question with much credit. Whatever the demand for industrial land and whatever the cost of reversing a decision of the past, these have to be weighed against the human cost of uprooting (and therefore destroying) a community which has developed in the area over a century, is strongly attached to it and has no wish to leave.

It is true that the present council is a captive of previous bad decisions. But is that any reason not to attempt to put them right? It is true that Indian entrepreneurs who bought Clairwood land at industrial zone prices would suffer if the zoning were to be reversed. But would compensating them be so much more expensive than rehousing 10 000 people at a cost of R20 million, which would probably turn out closer to R40 million in the end ?

And there is a strong whiff of bureaucratic obstinacy in the assertion that half the Clairwood residents would have to be removed to provide "proper" residential amenities. Could Clairwood's cultural community not decide for itself what amenities it needs - subject to public health considerations?

It is inconceivable that any authority would uproot 10 000 enfranchised whites to make way for industry. The argument that whites are expropriated for such thing as road-widening schemes is the final sophistry in a sorry affair. "

Figure 2: *Daily News* editorial, 1983

Widespread public support for the Clairwood community resulted in a joint planning committee being set up with the Council and the CDRRA to plan the future of the area. In May 1986 the Council withdrew its application for industrial zoning (Oelofse, Scott, Martel & van Niekerk, 2008). Finally, at a meeting that I attended in February 1987, city officials agreed to draw up a Draft Structure Plan for the development of Clairwood. The plan was developed and finally approved, after public discussion, in 1991 (Gopal & Singh, 2010).

However, very little changed materially, even after the 1994 elections, and illegal businesses continued to expand into the area. In 2004, the now ANC-controlled Durban Municipality released the Clairwood Precinct Plan for discussion (Gopal & Singh, 2010). This plan, which allowed for the area to be upgraded as a residential area, was never passed probably because of the greater plan for South Durban then under consideration.

The port of Durban is the main point of entry for crude oil into South Africa (Hallowes & Butler, 2003). As a result, two of the country's largest refineries - Sapref, owned jointly by Shell and BP, and Engen, owned by Petronas – are based in the area, as well as a cluster of chemical industries and major petrochemical and chemical storage facilities. The proximity to the harbour and the airport means that some 600 industries are located in South Durban (Ibid.). In 2005 a link road, linking the port and the former airport, via the residential areas in South Durban (including Clairwood), was proposed. In the late 2000s, a back-of-port expansion proposal also threatened these communities. A senior CRRA official said "Clairwood has been targeted because the authorities are looking at ways to use our land for the port expansion and our area is closest to the port" (Naidoo, 2007). Whilst neither of these proposals has been implemented, the plan to expand Durban's trading facilities (port and airport) remains in its *2040 Vision*. Bond (2000) states that in most fully-fledged capitalist societies, current development policies are known to result in the growing displacement of the poor, homelessness, decaying inner-city areas and slums. This is a chillingly vivid description of Clairwood today.

The area has faced forced removals, relocations and increased industrialisation, in the form of the port expansion, under the apartheid government. These problems have escalated with the present government. Residents now find themselves living among ever-increasing industrialisation and an influx of trucks, which mainly transport containers to and from the port.

The Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association

As Scott (2003) has observed, the process of industrial expansion in South Durban has not been without resistance. One of the longest campaigns of resistance has been that of the Clairwood and District Residents and Ratepayers Association (CDRRA) (and subsequently Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA)), which has lasted for over six decades. This resistance has been uneven, and still unsuccessful, but continuing.

Scott (1994) states that the Association, although active for the two decades after the initial re-zoning application in 1956, had little effect on the Durban City Council's policy or actions with regard to the re-zoning of the area during this period. She sees the submission of only two objections to the re-zoning application as an indication of a low level of individual and

group resistance at this point, possibly because of a lack of experience and resources to access legal aid in order to penetrate the complexities of the planning procedures. Purcell (1974) cited in Scott (1994) points out that resistance strategies, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, were constrained by fear of reprisals from the national government via the Security Police. Sanctions against political challenges to national government and race-related legislation were severe. During this period, the strategy of the CDRRA was to 'object' to rezoning proposals through legal, institutionalised channels (Oelofse et al, 2008). It actively participated in the legal channels of public participation provided by the Town Planning Ordinance. Purcell (1974, cited in Scott, 1994) suggests that these more technical, politically-neutral strategies served to delay and modify the Council's policy with regard to Clairwood, and it was felt by Indian organisations that, at that stage, their opposition would at least enable displaced people to secure alternative accommodation. However, clearly some mass action was also involved, as this poster suggests:



Figure 3: Clairwood poster

In 1979, the CDRRA shifted to a strategy of full-scale protest (Oelofse et al, 2008) and mounted a concerted communal programme of resistance called 'Help save Clairwood'. Scott (1994) suggests that the growing public support of the Clairwood community and high levels of generalised political protest in South Africa in the late 1970s and early 1980s led to the Durban Council reconsidering the proposed accommodation of displaced residents. The Council considered the option of accommodating displaced residents in the southern Durban area as opposed to Phoenix, which was considered as being too far away.

Robinson (1984) states that by the early 1980s the heightened conflict over the future use of Clairwood had become a metropolitan issue, with wide support from bodies detached from, and in opposition to, the structures of authority in the wider social system. It was this technical assistance and moral support from these groups that helped to strengthen the position of the CDRRA, giving it greater confidence and "implicitly politicizing the conflict" (Robinson, 1984, p.64).

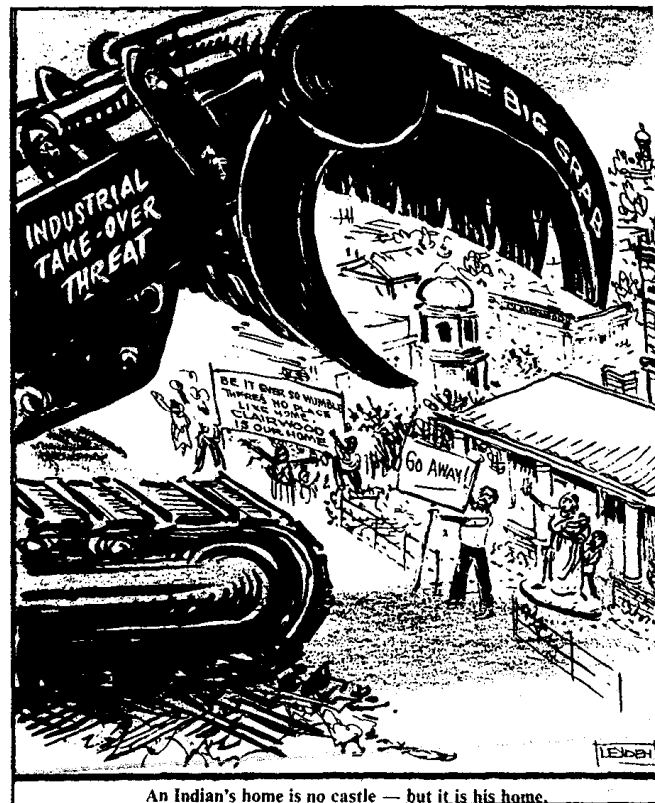


Figure 4: Leyden cartoon

In her 1994 thesis on the area, Scott reported that the continued resistance of the CDRRA in the 1980s, with the technical and political support from various organisations and academics, succeeded in reversing the long-standing goal of the Durban City Council to industrialise Clairwood. She emphasised that this should be seen as a victory as the dominant group had been directly thwarted in its goal, but she cautioned that this victory of the CDRRA must be weighed up against the losses sustained by the community over the 30 year struggle to that point. Losses included the forced and voluntary displacement of approximately 40 000 people; the subsequent disintegration of a viable, historically significant Indian community in South Africa; the physical deterioration of the communal living space into a slum; the consequent lowering of the quality of life of the remaining residents; the disbanding or physical relocation of numerous communal organisations and institutions; and the loss of Clairwood as a communally created 'place'.

However, nearly 20 years after Scott's writing, the 'victory' seems less certain, but resistance remains. Although Clairwood is still zoned as a residential area, the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA) continue to wage a very active and vociferous struggle against industrial expansion into the area. A groundWork (2003) report comments that the communities in the South Durban area, including Clairwood, have responded to industry in the area by monitoring incidents of excessive flares, fires, explosions and chemical leaks and by holding mass public meetings, marches and pickets to draw the government and municipality's attention to these recurring problems.

The people are frustrated over this matter, which has been at a discussion stage for a number of years, the zoning issue has been a problem for the past 50 years. Residents are now refusing to engage in any proposed port expansion discussions until we know where we stand and whether this area is a residential or industrial zone (Naidoo, 2007).

Newspaper articles over the last five years report both the ongoing problems related to creeping industrialisation, including the port expansion plan, and protest against these:

- “Anger after sugar refinery fire” (Naidu, 2008) reported that residents of Clairwood had been woken by a huge explosion at the Huletts Sugar Refinery, and were “fed up with fires of this nature”.
- “Residents take to the highway to protest increase in trucks” (Pillay, 2011) reported that Durban South residents had banded together to fight against the growing number of trucks in the area, and had launched the Kick Trucks Off Our Road Campaign.
- “Clairwood fights port expansion” (Pillay, 2012) reported that the community planned to submit comments on the proposed port expansion in response to the municipality’s call for comments from interested and affected parties. A public meeting had been held in the area the previous week. The Chair of the CRRA said that a memorandum against the expansion had been given to the municipality in 2011, but no reply had been received. Meanwhile, the Deputy Mayor, Nomvuza Shabalala, argued that although the areas affected by the proposal were zoned residential, they had not operated as such in recent years; but in any case, no residents would be moved.

Most recently, the CRRA, together with the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA), issued a press statement titled “Clairwood is not for sale: Community unites for mother of all battles” (SDCEA, 2012). The statement came out of a meeting held on 2nd August 2012 in Clairwood to discuss the municipality’s spatial development proposals, including the link road and port expansion, and reiterates once again the stand of the community:

Clairwood is a residential area and residents will not agree to further industrialisation of their area. This means saying no to more trucks, no to more pollution, no to more industries, no to rezoning, no to dugout port, no to link roads and no to back of port expansion.

This history of Clairwood places in context the CRRA as it existed in the past and how it exists presently. An exploration of the levels and depth of activism by the community of Clairwood and the members of the CRRA over the past decades; their struggle to retain Clairwood as a residential area; and their vociferous demands to resist the industrialisation of

the area, can help to explain how ordinary members of the community and members of the CRRA learn through their engagement in struggle.

What do people learn from the process of being active and involved in a social organisation like the CRRA? Where or whom do they learn from as they struggle together? Is this learning formal, non-formal or informal? Did all the participants in my research study learn from and through their experiences of being involved in the struggle in Clairwood? I hope that these questions will help me get closer to understanding how adults learn through struggle in grassroots organisations.

Key research questions

The key research questions of my study are:

1. Who/what do members of the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA) learn from?
2. Is this learning mainly formal/non-formal/informal?
3. What constitutes the content of their learning?
4. How do members of the CRRA relate their learning to the struggles of the organisation?

The way forward

In the following chapter, **Chapter Two**, I look at literature and other studies related to my study. **Chapter Three** outlines the theoretical framework on which this study will be based which is experiential learning theory. **Chapter Four** describes the research design and methodology of my study and provides justification for it. **Chapter Five** presents the interview data collected during this research. **Chapter Six** analyses this data in the light of Jarvis' model of experiential learning theory in an attempt to answer my research questions.

Chapter 2: Review of literature related to this study

Introduction

In this chapter I will consider what the relevant literature says about the main issues considered by this study:

1. The process of industrialisation in Clairwood, and how this is linked to broader national and global processes;
2. Resistance to this, particularly by grassroots organisations;
3. Learning through this resistance, particularly as part of such organisations.

The industrialisation of Clairwood within the broader context

The South African economy is not an island, cut off from the rest of the world. The linkages that exist are not only strictly 'economic' ones either. The evolution and exchange of ideas and ideologies, policies and interests that shape national industrial strategy have always articulated with, and been influenced by, global trends. The pattern of emulating global trends has seen problems like exploitation, abuse and discontentment amongst the majority of the population (Hallowes & Butler, 2003, p.34).

What has happened to Clairwood is not unique to either Clairwood or South Durban as a whole. Rather, the industrialisation Clairwood has experienced is part of broader processes in Durban, in South Africa and globally. Hallowes and Butler (2003), in a report on South African industrial strategy, stress the importance of a global understanding of industrialisation as a means of contextualising South Africa's industrial strategies. Hallowes and Butler view development as a consequence of the modern world, moulded by the principles of imperialism and industrialism. 'Development', therefore, was associated with economic growth which was driven by industrialisation, and development thinking was "about the best way for colonial, and then ex-colonial, states to accelerate national economic growth" (Leys, 1996, p.7, cited in Hallowes & Butler, 2003).

This notion of development as economic growth emerged after the Second World War as modernisation theory. In terms of this, it was thought that the state would be the main driver of development using the macro-economic policies at its disposal, which were broadly Keynesian – hence aiming at achieving maximum employment and hugely expanded markets (Hallowes & Butler, 2003; Youngman, 2000). The theory argues that national economic growth would benefit everyone via the ‘trickle-down effect’. Economic growth would result from increased industrialisation and trade between nations. This theory assumes that modern, capitalist, industrial North America was the aspiration for all societies, and that those countries that were far from this so-called ideal had to go through the various 'stages of development' to get there.

Modernisation theory emphasises the institutional dimensions of development - norms and values, and roles and relationships – but treated them as technical issues and ignored social relations of power, claiming for itself a 'scientific character' (Hallowes & Butler, 2003).

With the worldwide financial crisis of the 1970s, a shift from a government-led economic approach to an increasingly market-led approach took place. This resulted in what has come to be called neoliberalism (ILRIG, 1998; Mayo, 1997; Youngman, 2000). Neoliberalism argues for reduced government intervention in the economy, and an increase in free trade for economic growth. Exports are emphasised. This led to the rise of huge and powerful multinational corporations. Neoliberalism has come to dominate globally (Mayo, 1997; Youngman, 2000). Increasingly, the world has become integrated into a global trading system, which is both the result of, and a cause of, globalisation.

Marie (2004) states that a key feature of globalisation is that goods, services and information move across the globe at speeds and quantities never experienced before in our history. “Neoliberal globalisation has weakened national economies and made them subservient to TNCs [transnational corporations] and the market” (Ibid., p.42). The ability of the people and the government to take care of the needs of its people is sidelined by TNCs and global markets which ultimately set the trends and, in so doing, undermine the power of governments. Neoliberal globalisation ultimately undermines the quality of life the majority of people lead, and affects them economically, environmentally and socially (ILRIG, 1998; Marie, 2004).

Supporters of neoliberal globalisation see it as the solution to eradicating poverty and economic depression, and a means of increasing wealth and boosting the economy for all countries and their people (ILRIG, 1998). Critics, on the other hand, argue that neoliberal globalisation actually increases world poverty and lowers the living standard of workers, and increases the gap between rich and poor countries (ibid.).

These global and national economic and development policies, and their results, are clearly seen in the local experience of Clairwood. In Chapter One, I outlined the lengthy process of industrial expansion into Clairwood, and the several attempts to re-zone it from residential to industrial. I would argue that this process has its roots in the modernisation and neoliberal trends outlined above.

After the Second World War, South Africa embarked on an economic policy profoundly influenced by modernisation. Thus, for example, manufacturing output between 1945 and 1955 increased by 250%, and a further 181% between 1955 and 1970, whilst foreign trade also increased dramatically (Breitenbach, 1974).

Hallowes and Butler (2005) report that the Durban City Council began the process of industrial modernisation in South Durban in the mid-1930s as a result of pressure from the 'white' Chamber of Business, and rapidly expanded this after the Second World War. The Standard Vacuum Oil Refinery (now Engen Refinery) was started in 1954, whilst the Sapref Refinery was started in 1960. The two now process about 14, 5 million tonnes per annum (Danmarks Naturfredningsforening & South Durban Community Environmental Alliance, 2005).

Globalisation has meant that South Africa is even more integrally affected by what is happening on the global stage than ever, and thus by neoliberal policies. Nicholson (2001) argues that the South African economy has been strongly influenced by the neoliberal changes to the structure of the world economy. Patrick Bond's book *Elite Transition* (2000) argues that South Africa shifted from apartheid to neoliberalism. Bond (2000), in his introduction to the book, makes the following observation:

[W]hat is increasingly universal in the progressive literature on South Africa (not just books but the many discussion documents, academic papers and popular articles) is

concern about the new government's deviation from the liberation movement mandate. Sometimes this deviation is related directly to political and economic pressures, sometimes to the whims of individuals. Sometimes the implications for the oppressed have been asserted, often not. Sometimes, such as in the ANC's 1999 campaign literature, it is argued that the process has been slow, but that there is progress nevertheless – yet...the steps backward taken by neoliberalism in development policy and economic management throw this assertion into question (Bond, 2000, p.3).

Bond thus argues that the 'liberation' of South Africa is widely seen as having been shelved by the new ANC government as a result of global neoliberal economic pressures. This view is shared by, inter alia, Pithouse (2006), who argues that South Africa's transition from late apartheid to post-apartheid in the early 1990's came at the same time as the "collapse" of "Communism", the hegemony of global neoliberal economic policies of privatisation and the real logic of contemporary capitalism: what he argues is "accumulation by dispossession". He argues that poverty, landlessness and unemployment are products of the violence of neoliberal capitalist processes of accumulation which, he suggests, build upon, rather than wholly subvert, apartheid racial capitalism.

Within South Africa, it is commonly argued that the impact of globalisation is clearly seen in the replacement of the government's 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which was aimed at eradicating poverty, by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), which became a significant part of the government's macro-economic policy framework (Meer, 2001). After the 1994 elections, the new ANC-led government embarked on a process of policy revision. Whilst much of this was participatory, GEAR was presented as non-negotiable (Hallowes & Butler, 2005). Bond (2000) argues that GEAR cements neoliberal orthodoxy. Since GEAR was introduced in 1996, South Africa has implemented most of the elements of neoliberalism, including dropping tariffs, privatising previously state-owned enterprises, such as the electricity provider ESKOM, South African Airways, Portnet etc., and deregulating industry (Nicholson, 2001).

Instead of placing the urban and rural poor at the centre of our agenda and encouraging pro-people and pro-poor development, we drifted into the cruel logic of global power – downsize, casualise, subcontract and marginalize (Sitas, 1999, p.6, cited in Meer, 2001).

As a result, “the distance between rich and poor, already one of the most acute in the world, has worsened” (Hemson, 1992, p.2, cited in Meer, 2001).

Hallowes and Butler (2003) summarise that no matter what meanings are associated with the term ‘development’, it has become synonymous with industrialisation. As we have seen, approximately 600 industries are now based in the South Durban area, including Sapref and Engen, which are two of the country's largest refineries (groundwork, 2003). Whilst both modernisation and neoliberalism have tended to put profits before people, South Africa’s industrialisation has also been racially skewed because of apartheid policies, and this is the case in Durban as well:

The pattern of placing black communities downwind and downstream of polluting industries is evident in the location of the major petrochemical installations although there are exceptions (Butler & Hallowes, 2002, p.34).

Parallels can be drawn with the Clairwood situation where the influence of multinationals, local government plans, Portnet and other growing industries has resulted in the squeezing out of local residents and infringements on their livelihood. Residents are caught up in larger plans that do not include nor acknowledge their role or existence. In Clairwood the views and needs of the local residents are ignored in favour of big businesses and plans to forge ahead with ‘development’/industrialisation. Ballard et al (2006) state that: “The beneficiaries and victims of globalisation are present in both the industrialised and the developing world” (p.10) This feeds directly into my study where the effects of globalisation are evident in the case of Clairwood - this residential area has been overcome by a wave of industrialisation at the expense of the livelihoods of the residents of this area, whilst local politicians and business people benefit.

Clairwood resistance to industrialisation within the broader context

Resistance to the market-led economic policies of modernisation and neoliberalism, like the policies themselves, has been seen from global to local contexts. The critical response to modernisation theory emanated from dependency theory which challenged the “scientific” claims of modernisation theory, hence questioning the key assumptions of development.

Dependency theorists show that the development policies of the metropolitan (northern, 'developed', industrial, capitalist) powers served their own interests and were responsible for the insufficient development of 'peripheral' countries (i.e. those less developed) that were dependent on 'metropolises' (those that were more developed) (Hallowes & Butler, 2003). Dependency theory argues that so-called 'under-developed' countries had been exploited by the developed countries, and this exploitation had been a critical part of the development path of the 'developed' industrial nations. Thus the stages of economic development that modernisation theory suggested all countries needed to go through, was flawed. Industrial development of under-developed countries was, in fact, blocked by external factors relating to global power dynamics, rather than internal issues of lack of capital or skills (Youngman, 2000).

Dependency theory in practice had little effect on dominant development theory and, as argued above, modernisation theory continued to dominate until neoliberalism emerged. ILRIG (1998) argues that there have been three different responses to neoliberal globalisation:

1. The claim that 'There is no alternative' (TINA) which argues that a country like South Africa has no option but to move toward international competitiveness and the free market;
2. The call to 'engage with globalisation', which argues that the forces of globalisation cannot be stopped, but that their influence could and should be regulated;
3. The 'building alternatives to globalisation' approach.

The third approach has led, inter alia, to arguments for a more people-centred approach to development:

In contrast with market-led perspectives, approaches from the other end of the theoretical spectrum start from the view that market-led economic growth is not the be-all and end-all of development. On the contrary development should be measured, it is argued, in terms of society's success in meeting the basic needs of all its people, including their needs for education and for health, on the basis of environmentally sound, sustainable livelihoods (Mayo, 1997, p.21).

Pithouse (2006) states that, “the struggles of the Piqueteros in Argentina, the Landless People’s Movement in Brazil, the Sans Papiers in Paris, the Treatment Action Campaign in South Africa and many more insurgencies and defences have become part of the memory, language and mythology of a transnationally linked network of resistances to millennial capitalism”. Thus there has been resistance to neoliberal policies within this country. In the early part of the new century, Meer (2001) argued that to resist neoliberalism:

We need civil society organisations representing the interests of various groupings today, but we need to rethink the nature of such organisations. We need to struggle to understand our time, its constraints, challenges and opportunities, as we move into the next period of the “new” South Africa (Meer, 2001, p.14).

Much of the resistance to neoliberalism in South Africa has indeed been in the form of ‘new’ organisations - the so-called new social movements. Initially there seemed to be a lull in challenges to the neoliberal policies of the new democratic government, but the failure to respond to election promises led to a rise in resistance. Gibson (2006) talks about the period after the 1999 election when the ANC had increased the size of its parliamentary majority and seemed increasingly untouchable, disorienting and silencing oppositional voices. "Yet it was exactly at this moment that local, community-based movements organising around basic needs sprang up, giving voice to the human cost of the government's homegrown structural adjustments" (Gibson, 2006, p.4) . Gibson (2006) states that the period after the 1999 election was characterised by the rise of new social movements, like the Landless People's Movement (LPM), Mandela Park Anti-Eviction Campaign in the Western Cape and the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC), alongside other established movements like the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and the umbrella urban social forums. Desai (2002, in Ballard et al (2006)) argues that this resistance was primarily through the new social movements, in the gap left by the collapse of the older community organisations.

However, much of the resistance has been at local community level, through grassroots organisations – some of whom, like the CRRA, have existed for decades. Hallowes & Butler reported in 2003 that communities, trade unions and activists were very unhappy with a development model that was not working for the majority of the people. The report went on to add that people were mobilising around issues like access to affordable electricity, water, infrastructure, social welfare and services. It is true, however, that many of the older

community-based grassroots organisations – most notably the civics – have not necessarily been at the forefront of resistance to neoliberalism.

Ballard, Habib and Valodia's (2006) *Voices of protest: Social movements in post-apartheid South Africa* considers social actions in the Durban area and, more specifically, on the debates surrounding the role of civil society. They argue that for a while after 1994 the expectations of the new democratic government influenced much of civil society action and tended to stifle social struggles. Whilst there were a few social struggles that did occur, most of the relationships between the state and civil society were characterised by collaborative relations. Desai (2002) cited in Ballard et al (2006) explains that post-1994, the relations between the state and civil society changed from an opposition force that characterised the resistance to apartheid, to a more collaborative and development-focused relationship. The newly-elected ANC government, unlike the previous nationalist government which did not have international or domestic legitimacy, was now a democratically-elected government that was seen to be 'working on the problem' of relieving poverty and adding to social upliftment, rather than adding to the problem. The masses of poor and unemployed were patient and expectant and, although the social conditions did not change drastically for the poor, most of these communities were not keen to resist but were, at this stage, content to wait patiently for the newly-elected democratic government to assist them.

My own understanding of these collaborative relations is one whereby social struggles are somehow caught up in a love-hate relationship with the state whereby the people's loyalty goes back to the days of the apartheid struggle where they fought alongside each other. The hate and resentment would probably stem from the new government's failure to deliver on promises made to previously-disadvantaged people.

I think that, initially, there was an emotional bond between community organisations such as civics and the new government and people felt guilty about protesting and challenging a government that they had supported and fought hard to install, but eventually they gave in as their patience began to wear out. This dichotomy felt by these organisations is an important theme in understanding the form of resistance that emerged and the way it is perceived by the government and broader society. Many of the old community-based organisations were now either defunct or their members were working in government or working closely with government.

... key activists [took] key jobs in parliament and other government structures.

Generally, there was deep confusion in that the civics' mainly oppositional role to the state was now deemed inappropriate, as they were urged to move from 'resistance to reconstruction' (Loftus & Lumsden, 2003, p.19, cited in Ballard et al, 2006, p.16).

The increase in township conflict along with the collapse of many town councils during the 1984-1986 period saw an increase in civic activities - civic bodies actively negotiated with state institutions and business groups over rent boycotts and with local government restructuring. They played a role in the transitional and post-apartheid South Africa and, at grass roots level, they were instrumental in forming street committees (Seekings, 1992).

Civics were a major anti-apartheid force. In the period 1986-1989, civics were the main target of the state with many of their leaders imprisoned or banned along with their organisations. Stay aways, and rent boycotts characterised the action of civics. The period 1989-1991 saw the revival of some former civics and the formation of new bodies. The civic movement was dogged with clashes between former detainees and current leaders of the civics - finger-pointing and accusations characterised this period. The unbanning of the ANC and other organisations on 2 February 1990 led to confusion and sometimes even conflict between the civics and these parties. In some areas civics participated in local government negotiations and, in other areas, this role was performed by political parties who failed to gain the approval of the civics, often resulting in the collapse of many civics (Ibid.).

The urge to move from 'resistance to reconstruction' included attempts to 'co-opt' existing and new organisations. Pithouse (2006) emphasises the role of global capitalism in social and civic movements, hinting at the subtle and sometimes not so subtle attempts to control these movements to suit the needs of capitalist investment. Much of what Pithouse says relates to the involvement of capitalist bodies in social and civic movement organisations and their desire to control and become involved in the struggles and campaigns of these organisations.

My understanding of the rationale behind this desire to control is a sense of fear of the might and strength of social movements and civic organisations who generally represent the marginalised groupings in society and, often by virtue of their numbers, could pose a threat to global capitalist forces; hence the attempts to control these movements and organisations.

Citing Narayan et al, Pithouse (2006, p.277) also makes reference to “the market penetration strategies of the private sector” to capture movements of the poor and create other opportunities for themselves under the guise of “strengthening civil society.” Gibson (2000) states that in contemporary South Africa the massive civil society projects of agencies like the World Bank and USAID exist alongside parallel civil society projects. Gibson suggests that these projects take on a variety of tasks, but generally function to suppress the expression of critical voices and inhibit the development of social antagonism by encouraging various forms of “partnerships” that produce anti-political, corporatist arrangements for managing conflict (e.g. lobbying, public participation, etc.).

So, if writers like Pithouse and Gibson say that there is evidence to suggest that social movements and civic organisations are constantly a threat to be controlled by capitalist structures, then it is therefore vital that these organisations remain firm and steadfast to their cause/s and principles so that they are able to withstand the pressure to succumb to these capitalistic overtures.

Gibson (2006) states that different struggles exist in different places characterised by unique histories and varying positions in the global economy and thus have their own unique aims and concerns. He suggests that since all struggles against capital - whilst having their unique aims – often share common concerns with others in similar positions. Hence, it would therefore be beneficial for there to be some collaboration between these oppressed groups.

This helps explain local struggles in South Durban, including Clairwood. Palan (2002) in his thesis titled *Social learning in environmental action* describes his thesis as a study of social action by a community in its struggle to obtain relief from the debilitating effects of environmental pollution and degradation. This study looks at the community of Merewent (another South Durban community) and describes its efforts to challenge industries and the government in the environmental struggle. This study is very intimately linked to my area of study and I can draw several parallels with it. The people of Merewent organised themselves against encroaching industrialisation through the creation of, inter alia, the Merewent Ratepayers Association and the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA). Through school campaigns, organised marches, press releases, placard demonstrations, lobbying of health practitioners, and networking locally and internationally,

they drew attention to particularly the health issues facing the community as a result of industrialisation in the area.

As we have seen, this kind of local struggle is evident in Clairwood. In the case of Clairwood, the existing 'civic' organisation continued to exist after 1994 and continued to struggle. There was a brief period when residents believed that the new local government would deliver on their demand to remain a residential area. Once it became clear that this was not going to materialise, their struggle intensified. At the local level the CRRA responds to issues of increased industrialisation; the threat of further port expansion; the dangers posed by the growing number of trucks that now occupy Clairwood and the effects of environmental pollution on the residents' lifestyle. This resistance has been in the form of meetings with the Ethekeeni Municipality; public mass meetings in Clairwood; marches to deliver memoranda to multinationals; and placard demonstrations to highlight the plight of the residents of Clairwood (Gopal & Singh, 2010; Naidoo, 2007; Naidu, 2008; Patu, 2011; Pillay 2011; Pillay, 2012).

Many activists were not happy with the slow pace of change post 1994 and with attempts by community organisations to negotiate patiently with government structures. This is evident even in the CRRA, where splits and the formation of splinter groups have occurred due to members' unhappiness with tactics and strategies adopted by the organisation. I specifically interviewed one person who had resigned from the organisation in protest.

Learning through resistance and struggle

The most powerful, visionary dreams of a new society don't come from little think tanks of smart people or out of atomized, individualistic world of consumer capitalism, where raging against the *status quo* is simply the hip thing to do. Revolutionary dreams erupt out of political engagement; collective social movements are incubators of new knowledge (Kelley, 2002, p.8, cited in Choudry, 2009, p.5).

Learning about how people resist/struggle, and what they learn from this, helps us to resist/struggle better. Whilst much writing has focused on social movements, much of what is argued is equally applicable to grassroots community organisations engaged in struggle.

Over the last two decades, there has been increasing interest in the role of social movements in resisting neoliberalism, and in the learning that feeds into this resistance, and the learning that occurs as a result of it (Choudry, 2009; Finger, 1989; Foley, 1999; Hall et al, 2011; Holford, 1994; Kilgore, 1999; Welton, 1993). So, whilst it is known that movements move people, it is important that they do so in concerted ways - and the knowledge and learning that emerges is critical to this mobilisation (Hall et al, 2011).

One of the key distinctions to be made within the field of learning through struggle is 'learning in movements' as opposed to 'learning from movements'. As Martin argues "...not only do people learn through their engagement with social movements but... these movements actually make and disseminate new knowledge and understanding through their activity. It is in this sense that they constitute 'epistemological communities'" (Martin, 1999, p.12, cited in Cooper, 2005, p.19). Hall et al (2011) argue that "the distinction between 'learning in movements' and 'learning from movements' draws attention to different types of learning, through participation in movement activity and to the wider public education that is often critical to achieving social movement goals" (Hall et al, 2011, p.114). My study focuses on 'learning in struggle', in order to learn from it.

Foley (1999, p.2) states that "the most powerful learning occurs as people struggle against oppression, as they struggle to make sense of what is happening to them and to work out ways of doing something about it" (p.2). Holst (2002, cited in Choudry, 2009) agrees with this, and uses the concept of "pedagogy of mobilization" to describe "the learning inherent in the building and maintaining of a social movement and its organization. Through participation in a social movement, people learn numerous skills and ways of thinking analytically and strategically as they struggle to understand their movement in motion" (Holst, 2002, pp.87-88, cited in Choudry, 2009, p.8).

However, as Foley (1999) argues, this kind of learning is often informal and incidental, rather than formal or non-formal. Formal learning generally refers to learning that is dictated by an established curriculum (Livingstone, 2001), often within institutions specifically set up for this purpose. Schugurensky (2006) describes formal learning as a "highly institutionalized system that goes from preschool to graduate studies" (p.164). Non-formal learning on the other hand is characterized by the learner's own will to learn voluntarily with the assistance of an educator as is seen in many adult education courses. Informal learning refers to

incidental and spontaneous learning that occurs in daily life (Schugurensky, 2006). It is this kind of learning that tends to happen as people struggle within a movement or organization. It is “tacit, embedded in action and is often not recognized as learning” (Foley, 1999, p.3). For example, the learning of a group of Australian activists involved in a campaign to save the rain forests was not articulated until he interviewed the activists about it many years after the campaign. Both Foley and Gouin (2009) thus argue that often the impact of a learning intervention is not immediately apparent, but has to be fully explored for its maximum potential to be realised.

Being part of a social movement (or grassroots community organisation, or indeed any group collectively geared towards action) means acknowledging the collective nature of learning within it. This often happens through discussions, debates and arguments on how to take an issue forward or on how to best resolve an issue. From my experience as an activist in civic organisations, this process involves the sharing of opinions and ideas and, of course, countless disagreements before agreement on a way forward can be reached and acted upon collectively, hence illustrating the collective nature of learning.

John Holst (2002 cited in Choudry, 2009), also emphasises the importance of the collective in learning. He sees this as less about creating shared meaning as about a deeper understanding of the interrelatedness of social reality: “as coalitions are formed people’s understanding of the interconnectedness of relations within a social totality become increasingly sophisticated” (Holst, 2002, p.87-88, cited in Choudry, 2009, p.8).

A number of writers have commented on the importance of relationships in learning in struggle - that learning is not simply an individual experience and endeavour. Both Foley (1999) and Langdon (2009) suggest that learning from each other is an important part of the process. Langdon (2009) in his discussion on learning to struggle in Ghanaian social movements states that: “It was clear that the current older generation feels a certain responsibility to pass on their knowledge and their experiences to the next group to carry the torch, even when these experiences are complex and contradictory” (p.99).

This idea is reiterated by D’Souza (2009) as cited by Choudry (2009). D’Souza draws on her work as a trade unionist, political activist and activist lawyer and, based on her ethnographic research in transnational networks of global justice activists around major mass

mobilisations, argues that “global justice activist networks generate dynamic settings for learning to negotiate differences in cultural backgrounds, historical experiences, social positions, and political visions” (D’Souza, 2009, as quoted by Choudry, 2009, p.8).

Another aspect of learning in social movements that has been emphasised by many writers is the complex social context within which such learning occurs. This is not surprising, given the fact that such organisations are geared towards acting to change something within their context. As Foley argues:

In order to understand informal and incidental learning in social action and sites we need to develop analyses which take account of specific social contexts, and which treat all aspects of adult learning as socially constructed and problematic. This requires both a broader notion of context and more detailed, specific analyses than are usually found in adult education theory. (Foley, 1999, pp.47-8, cited in Cooper, 2005, p.20)

Despite Foley’s assertion, Gouin (2009) argues that whilst she admires Foley’s work, she feels that his theoretical framework does not provide an analysis that takes note of the immense complexities of society and the social struggle. Gouin (2009) draws on a tradition of anti-racist, anti-capitalist, feminist theory existing within the Marxist tradition to show that this can serve to strengthen Foley’s framework. Langdon (2009) points not just to the broader context, but also to internal dynamics. He argues that power relations within organisations and continuous shifts in capital expose the complex and often contradictory process of learning. Foley describes a complex view of learning in social movements based on the characteristics of power and capital.

‘Learning in struggle’ organisations reflect the complex relationships within such organisations and between the organisation and the outside world - the context within which the organisation is struggling for change. It also often reflects the commitment and passion of those who join the organisation. Walter (2007), in reflecting on the environmental protests of Clayoquot Sound, argues that this is an affirmation of not only the transformative power of learning for individuals, but also for their concern, outrage and conviction in social change. Walter (2007) cites an interview with jailed environmental activists involved in the Clayoquot Sound protests:

Interviewer: Where is this all going to end? At some point you're not going to be able to get people out to those blockades if they're getting a six-month and year-long sentences, are you?

Sile Simpson (serving a six-month jail sentence): I don't believe that. I don't believe that. You just have to look at how slavery was abolished in the United States; you have to look at how the Vietnam War was stopped – I mean look at all the social movements. Social movements don't die out, they grow.

Learning in social organisations is therefore not a one-way process, but instead a very active two-way relationship whereby the adult learns from and through the organisation and the organisation is actively influenced and informed by the adult learner.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework#

Introduction

In my research study I look at how adults learn through their involvement in struggle as part of community organisations such as the CRRA. All of the participants in my research study were born in and lived in Clairwood and have refused to move to other residential areas as suggested by the Durban City Council. Among the participants there were full-time workers, a student, a pensioner, a housewife and a caregiver. All of these people lead very full, busy lives and are actively involved in several community activities. They are all adults who have witnessed the demise of Clairwood as a once-thriving residential area; they have endured the mass exodus of residents to outlying townships; and they have actively participated in the struggle to restore Clairwood to its former residential status. They have all been active members or have held leadership positions in political, civic, environmental, religious and/or youth community organisations in Clairwood. As members of these organisations, it was common for them to discuss and share their experiences with other members and the community at large; to participate in action-orientated forms of protest such as placard demonstrations, marches, sit-ins, public meetings, debates and forum discussions; to reflect on these experiences; and to analyse and plan a way forward.

Thus, this study looks at adults; who have significant experience of involvement in struggle; particularly of taking action; have experienced this collectively; and have presumably learned something from this. My research questions relate to this. Given this, I believe that experiential learning theory is useful in helping to understand the learning that takes place within the CRRA.

Trusting and Barton (2003) in their literature review on the models of adult education, describe adult learning as being characterised distinctly by experience and the reflection on this experience. Adults each have a unique set of experiences and contexts. Most adult education theories examine the importance of this experience for learning and, in particular, experiential learning theory does this.

In the discussion below, I consider experiential learning theory in detail. I make reference to the key theorists and attempt to clarify how the different theorists add to/develop the different aspects of the original theory.

Kolb's theory of experiential learning

One of the key theorists of experiential learning is David Kolb, who initially developed the theory. Kolb's *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (1984) is summarised as a 'systematic statement' of the theory of adult learning and its applications to education, work and adult development. Kolb states that the developmental focus of his theory is based on the thesis, first articulated by the esteemed Russian cognitive theorist L.S. Vygotsky, that learning from experience is the process whereby human development occurs. Making reference to the work of Lewin, Dewey and Piaget, and taking note of contributions by others in this field, Kolb proposed a model of the underlying structure of experiential learning as a continual process of experience of an adaptation to the world, rather than as a series of outcomes. Thus, he argued, experiential learning provides a different view of the learning process as compared to the behavioural theories of learning, and, hence, provides different suggestions for the conduct of education, the proper relationship among learning, work and other life activities, and the creation of knowledge itself.

Kolb closely considers the different models offered by Lewin (Model of action research and laboratory training), Dewey (Model of learning) and Piaget (Model of learning and cognitive development). Kolb found two aspects of Lewin's learning model interesting - firstly, one's immediate personal experience as the focal point for learning, and secondly, the role of reflection on the experience. The experience is used to verify and test abstract concepts and it also provides a concrete, publicly-shared reference point which can then be used to test the impact of the ideas created during the learning process. This means that when human beings share an experience, they can share it fully, concretely and abstractly. Inadequate feedback processes were cited by Kolb as being responsible for much organisational and individual ineffectiveness.

Kolb (1984) saw Dewey's model as being similar to Lewin's in that it emphasises learning as a "dialectical process integrating experience and concepts, observations and action" (p.22).

Dewey's model suggests that the impulse of an experience provides the energy for the idea to be acted upon, resulting in the impulse to action. He suggests that often it is important to delay the desire for immediate action as the need for observation and judgment, and eventually action is important to achieve one's purpose. Kolb (1984) adds that "it is through the integration of these opposing but symbiotically related processes that sophisticated, mature purpose develops from blind impulse" (p.22).

Kolb was also influenced by Piaget's assertion that the ability to reflect and act is the key process for the development of adult thought. For Piaget, the key to learning is in the interaction of processing the different concepts experienced and the understanding and assimilation of them into existing concepts.

Kolb called his theory "experiential learning" for two reasons. Firstly, he wanted to draw on the intellectual work of Dewey, Lewin and Piaget, all of whom were interested in experience, and secondly, he wanted to emphasise the importance of experience in the learning process. Kolb was cautious about suggesting that experiential learning is a third alternative to behavioural and cognitive theories, but rather argued that through experiential learning a holistic, integrated perspective on learning arises - one that combines experience, perception, cognition and behaviour.

In his theory of experiential learning, Kolb proposes a four-stage cycle, starting with concrete experience. In this, he draws on earlier work he did with Fry (1975). Kolb and Fry proposed a model of learning that consists of four separate elements: concrete evidence, observation and reflection, the formation of abstract concepts and testing in new situations. In explaining their learning cycle, Kolb and Fry (1975) stated that the learning cycle can begin at any one of the four points and stressed that it should be approached as a continuous spiral. The learning process often begins with a person carrying out a particular action and then seeing the effect of the action in that particular situation. The second step tries to understand the effects of the action, so that if the same action recurred in the same circumstances it would be possible to anticipate what would follow from the action. The third step looks at the broad principle under which this specific instance falls. The last step is its application through action in a new circumstance within the range of generalisation.

Kolb (1984) uses the same basic steps:

- Concrete experience – the cycle begins with the actual experience that the learner has.
- Observation and reflection – the experience and then reflection.
- Generalisation and abstract conceptualisation – the learner draws conclusions about their experiences and observations.
- Active experimentation – in this final step the learner experiments with different behaviours which will then lead to future actions.

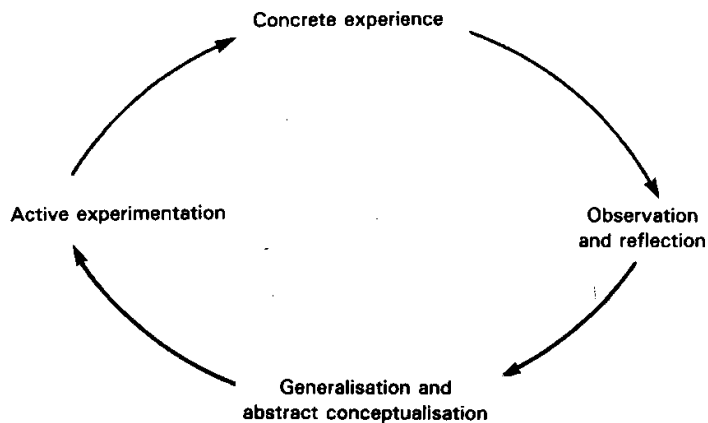


Figure 5: Kolb's model of experiential learning

Kolb (1984) argues that knowledge is gained through personal and environmental experiences, but it is not a given that this will happen. He states that for one to gain knowledge from an experience, certain abilities are required:

- The learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience.
- The learner must be able to reflect on the experience.
- The learner must be able to possess and use analytical skills to conceptualise the experience.
- The learner must possess decision-making and problem-solving skills in order to use the new ideas gained from the experience.

He observes that four different learning styles are related to the four different parts of the learning cycle. He suggests that the learner should ideally make use of all four learning styles in the learning cycle, but the uniqueness of each individual's experience often means that people rely to varying degrees on these four learning styles.

Kolb argues that people have different learning styles and this is influenced by a variety of different factors. People tend to choose a way of 'grasping the experience', which will then determine their response to that experience and how they decide to 'transform the experience' into a meaningful experience. This would ultimately determine their emotional response to the experience, thus inferring that one's learning style is a product of these two decisions.

Kolb clarifies that, although this model is sometimes depicted as a circular action, in reality if learning has occurred, the process could be seen as a spiral as the learning often takes place in a different set of circumstances and the learner is then able to predict the possible effects of the action.

Critiques of Kolb's model

Kolb's model has been critiqued for being inapplicable to all learning situations; for being too simplistic; and for not being substantiated by sufficient research. Thus Tennant (1997) argues that the experiential model is inadequate in that it cannot be applied to all learning situations and he suggests alternatives, such as information assimilation and memorisation which he says may be more appropriate to the variety of different learning situations. It has also been suggested that there has not been sufficient research to prove the theory because the initial research base was small, and very few studies have tested or explored it (Smith, 2001).

Kolb's model was also criticised for its tendency to oversimplify the learning process. Jarvis (2004) referred to it as an "over-simplification of the complexity of human learning...and we may probably never know sufficiently to embrace all the processes in a single model" (pp.105-106). Other critics of this model say that it is useful, but needs more work, particularly as it relates to the four steps in the learning cycle and their sequence.

Sequencing

Some critics have argued that the rigid sequencing of the steps in Kolb's model is unnatural as learning and reflecting on one's experiences generally does not occur in neat sequential steps as suggested by Kolb's model (Jarvis, 1987). As Smith (2001) points out, Dewey argues that many processes can occur at one stage in relation to reflection, and stages can be jumped; so Kolb's model is probably too neat and simplistic.

Step 1: Experience

Kolb has also been criticised for being biased towards a Western perspective which often ignores the fact that experiences may be socially constructed and culturally dependent, and so might our interpretation of these. Hence theorists like Anderson (1988) as cited in Tennant (1997), argue that Kolb and Fry's model does not consider the different cultural experiences/conditions, hence ignoring culturally-based differences in cognitive and communication styles amongst individuals. Trusting and Barton (2003) argue that through extensive experimental observations, Vygotsky concluded that the development of higher mental functioning in the individual, while dependent on and rooted in biophysical processes such as the maturation of the brain, is dependent mainly on social interaction and hence, without this social interaction, higher mental functioning would be affected.

Trusting and Barton (2003) summarise two contrasting models of learning within psychology - the earlier models, which included behaviourism, cognitivism and cognitive constructivism, focused primarily on learning as something that takes place for an individual. They add that, recently, an alternative paradigm has developed in fields such as sociocultural psychology, social constructivism, activity theory and situated cognition, where learning is seen as a socially-constructed phenomenon.

Jarvis (1987) argues that Kolb's view of experience is thus very limited, which limits the usefulness of his model:

Kolb appears to be concerned with a very specific form of experience in devising his model and therefore this model does not provide a perspective upon reality for that form of experience and also does not concern itself with other forms of experiences and knowledge. (p.18)

Step 2: Reflection

Some critics have questioned the necessity of the reflection process, suggesting that emotion might be as important as reflection. Boud et al (1985) argue that whilst Kolb's model has been helpful in that it has assisted us in planning learning activities and in assessing whether learners are effectively engaged, they feel that this model does not pay sufficient attention to the process of reflection. Dirkx (2001) also argues that Kolb ignores the affective domain and in so doing ignores the relevance of one's emotions in the process of learning. Kolb's model ignores the role of human emotion as an active ingredient in the learning process - emotion has been known to stimulate, thwart or fuel the learning process.

Steps 3 and 4: Learning and knowledge

Critics of Kolb's model have also commented on the fact there that there is an insufficient link between knowledge and learning processes. Jarvis (1987) points out that, although Kolb shows that learning and knowledge are intimately related, Kolb does not actually look at the nature of knowledge in any depth. For Kolb, learning processes occur in the person's mind, so learning is therefore not seen as situated. Kolb's theory about learning styles has also been critiqued. Tennant (1997), for example, argues that the fact that the four different learning styles align nicely with the different aspects of the experiential learning model does not necessarily validate them.

Despite these problems, many writers have emphasised the usefulness of Kolb's theory. Tennant (1997, p.2) for example, asserts that although there are problems with it, "the model provides an excellent framework for planning teaching and learning activities and it can be usefully employed as a guide for understanding learning difficulties, vocational counselling, academic advising and so on". Likewise, Jarvis (1987) argues that Kolb has made a very important contribution to learning theory and has attempted to produce a very clear model of learning, and highlighted a number of very important aspects within it.

Kolb (1984) himself accepted there were problems with his model. He acknowledges that, although it has been widely used and accepted, experiential learning has its sceptics who see it as being more concerned with technique and process rather than content and substance. It is also viewed as being too pragmatic and anti-intellectual to the academic mind. Kolb attempted to address the concerns of critics and sceptics as he did not want experiential learning to become just another 'educational fad'. Kolb concludes that experiential learning

provides the foundation for education and learning as a lifelong process that is based in the intellectual traditions of social psychology, philosophy and cognitive psychology.

Building on Kolb's theory

By the late 1980s, experiential learning theory had gained momentum, and was being widely used. In 1989, Weil and McGill argued that people tended to use the term 'experiential learning' as if it contained no difference - rather, they said, it could be categorised into four 'villages', each with different practices, assumptions, challenges and influences. Village One is concerned with assessing and accrediting learning from one's life and work experience; Village Two focuses on the way experiential learning is used as a basis for bringing change in the structures of post-school education; Village Three emphasises experiential learning as a basis for group consciousness-raising, community action and social change; and Village Four looks at personal growth and self-awareness. Clearly Village Three is the most pertinent to my study. In their discussion of Village Three, Weil and McGill describe groups of people who validate their own understandings through their experiences and learning. These include community action groups, who are concerned about taking control of their own learning. They are often people who share a common background or characteristic, such as race, gender, disability or socio-economic class, and whose access to opportunities and power is unequal as compared to other groups in that society. They have also observed that dialogue and participation are critical characteristics of this village. "In this village, therefore, a particular concern is how internalised dominant assumptions or ideologies in the wider society are recognised. Reflection on prior learning in this village is seen as a means towards personal and collective empowerment" (Weil & McGill, 1989, p.12).

As a result of the critiques above, Kolb's experiential learning model has been further developed in a number of respects, most notably by Boud, Jarvis and Le Cornu, many of them relating to Weil and McGill's Village Three. In my discussion below I thus focus on developments particularly regarding Village Three.

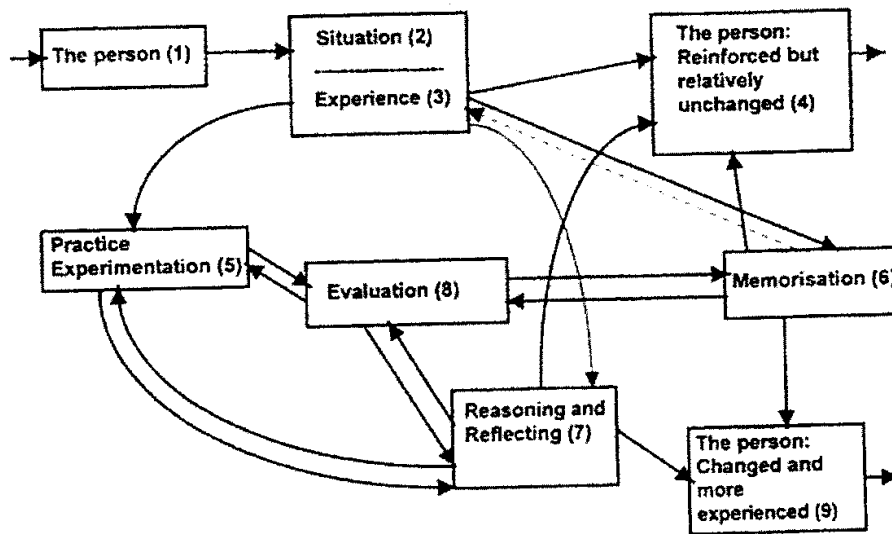
In building on Kolb's experiential learning model, Boud (1989) attempted to gain an in-depth understanding of experiential learning across the four villages. He especially reflects on the different assumptions associated with the notions of 'adult learning' which he describes as freedom from distraction; freedom as learners; freedom to learn; and freedom through

learning. He describes 'autonomy of learning' as a goal for personal development and for becoming effective in a knowledge or skill area.

Boud (1989) argues that some of one's learning, if one is critically reflective, can be for social change, whereas Kolb was more concerned with how learners learn as a means of becoming more effective in a knowledge and skills area. Boud discusses the four traditions of adult learning that have influence across all four villages of experiential learning - freedom from distraction; freedom as learners; freedom to learn and freedom through learning. This fourth tradition - freedom through learning - can be paralleled with the emphasis of Village Three. Boud suggests that, within the critical and social action tradition, facilitators need to understand the context-specific nature of knowledge and the values which impinge on learners, and assist them to appreciate their position in society and how this constrains the goals and the ways in which they learn. Boud makes reference to Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) who argues that it is vital that facilitators of learning enter into dialogue with learners and encourage learners to facilitate dialogue among themselves, allowing one's views to be criticised and being prepared to alter one's views.

As discussed above, Peter Jarvis has acknowledged the important contribution made by Kolb, whilst critiquing some elements of his model. Jarvis (1987) tested Kolb's learning cycle with many different groups of adult learners, demonstrating that it was an extremely simplistic description of the learning process.

Jarvis collected his research over a period of fifteen months, asking participants to write down a learning incident in their lives, and then state what started the incident, how it progressed and, finally, when and why they realised that it was completed. They were then placed in groups of three initially, and then groups of four, where they had to discuss the similarities and differences in their experiences. They were then asked to draw a simple model of their joint learning experiences. The result was that some of them constructed quite sophisticated models of learning. Thus this gave rise to Jarvis's model which illustrates the complexity of the learning process. Jarvis' model suggests that some people learn from a learning intervention, others do not; some reflect on their experiences whilst others do not; and some people learn through methods such as memorisation; whilst many people do not even think about their learning experience due to their busy lifestyles.



reproduced from Jarvis 1994

Figure 6: Jarvis' model of experiential learning

Jarvis (1987) suggests that all learning begins with experience. However, he argues that most of the literature on experiential learning “is actually about learning from primary experience, that is learning through sense experiences”, and “unfortunately it has tended to exclude the idea of secondary experience entirely” (Jarvis, 1987, p.75). Jarvis emphasises that one of the outcomes of learning is a more experienced person, who might have new knowledge, a new skill, a different attitude, a changed self-concept, or any combination of these, thus illustrating the complexity of human learning.

Jarvis' model thus highlights the variety of learning routes that might be followed, and identifies three categories - non-learning, non-reflective learning and reflective learning. In the non-learning category, Jarvis states that it is evident that people do not always learn from their experiences and therefore the first group of responses are non-learning ones: presumption, non-consideration and rejection. Preconscious, skill learning and memorisation have been associated with non-reflective learning. Reflective learning, on the other hand, involves the process of reflection. Jarvis's learning model thus highlights the complexity of human learning, taking into account several factors that might impact on one's learning experience, rather than the straightforward process suggested by Kolb's learning cycle.

Jarvis continually built on Kolb's model, and further revised his model. His 2001 model included below, suggests that the experience a person has is unique to that particular person,

taking into consideration his or her individual biography and experiences. This experience, whether in a social setting or a once off experience, could have an impact on the person or it could render him or her unchanged by the experience. Thus Jarvis still maintains that every experience does not necessarily have to be a learning experience or something that will have an impact on a person's life. Jarvis (2001) goes on to explain that only by engaging with and applying practically what one has experienced through reflection and evaluation of one's experience, will a person develop through the initial intervention; i.e. learn.

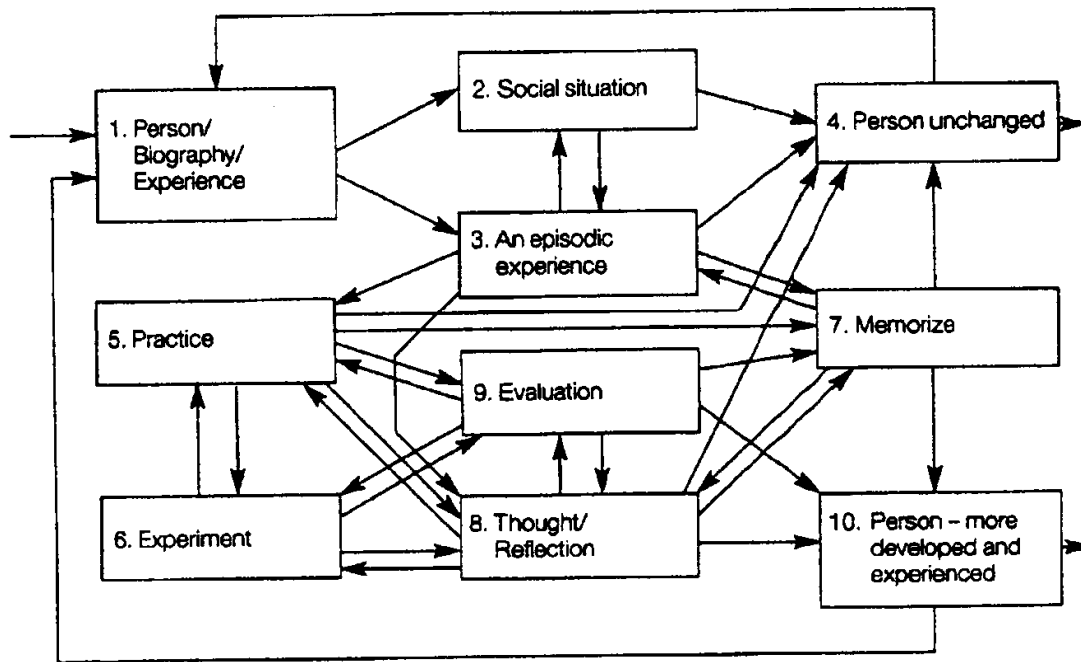


Figure 7: Jarvis' revised model of experiential learning

In her article *Building on Jarvis: Towards a Holistic Model of the Processes of Experiential Learning*, Le Cornu (2005) suggests a number of modifications to Kolb's original model, as well as to Jarvis' later versions, whilst acknowledging the work started by Jarvis. Her modifications include a change from a horizontal to a vertical disposition, a closer look at the relevance of human consciousness, reflection and the locating of the entire model within an existential growth matrix. Le Cornu admits that, whilst this does not succeed in portraying the intricacies of human learning, it does provide a structure to enable scholarly understanding of the processes.

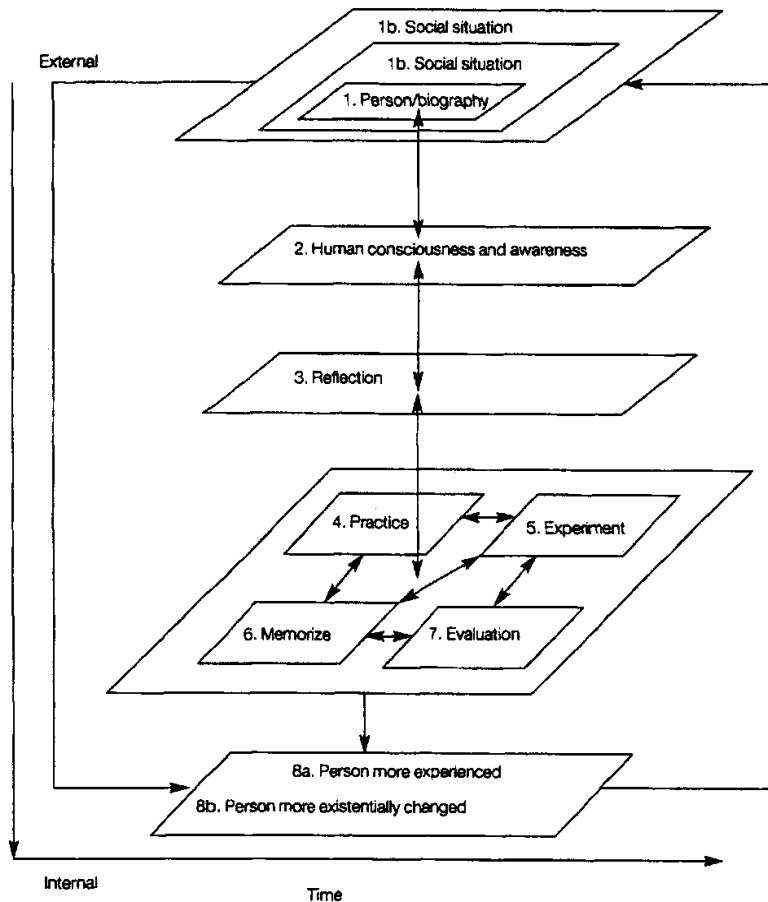


Figure 8: Le Cornu's model of experiential learning

Le Cornu revised Jarvis's model by representing it as a vertical model, rather than Jarvis's horizontal representation. She has included the elements of human consciousness and awareness which she believed to be integral to the learning experience. Her model suggests a continuous to and fro between the elements as the learner engages with what he or she has learned. The penultimate stage of her model is represented flatly with the learner practising, experimenting, memorising and evaluating his or her experience. Once again this is not a one-way experience - there is constant going back and forth. Le Cornu (2005) also observes that reflection, in particular critical reflection, seems to be a common theme throughout all experiential learning theories. It is clear that experience alone does not ensure that learning has taken place, but rather the reflection upon that experience and, finally, the transformation of the experiences into different learning outcomes. Finally in her model, Le Cornu offers two endings to this learning process - one in which the individual is more experienced and the other where the individual is more existentially changed.

Relevance of experiential learning theory to my study

Experiential learning theory acknowledges the importance of adults' experiences in the learning process, and focuses on how the individual makes meaning of his or her experiences. It is, therefore, well suited to my research study where I look at how ordinary residents learn through their experiences as activists within the CRRA and other community organisations, and as they struggle with the City Council to put an end to industrialisation and to restore Clairwood to its former residential status. As we have seen, Foley (1999) and others have argued that much learning in struggle is informal rather than formal. Experiential learning is helpful in exploring this kind of learning. Experiential learning is also concerned with action, particularly action taken as a result of learning from experience. If the learning that occurs in experiential learning is action-orientated, one then learns from being actively involved in an experience. In my study, all participants were directly involved in the struggle to stop further industrialisation of Clairwood and to restore Clairwood to a viable residential area. They had all participated in community campaigns to raise awareness or to highlight concerns of the residents living in Clairwood. They were all organisers of community meetings, marches or placard demonstrations. They had all participated in CRRA-Council meetings where they were often involved in strategic discussions around negotiations with the City Council or on outlining the way forward for the residents of Clairwood. Thus my study focuses on activists, whom, I believe, may have learned from the experience of struggle to advance their action.

Clearly, the category Village Three of experiential learning is the most pertinent to my study. As stated earlier, Weil and McGill (1989) suggest that Village Three emphasises experiential learning as the basis for group consciousness-raising, community action and social change. Hence Village Three suggests that adults often do not learn in isolation - they discuss and share their experiences with other people and, as Jarvis (1987) argued, people can learn from secondary experience. This is illustrated by Merriam et al (2006) who state that people make sense of their experience through collaboration with others. My argument is then that experience is of vital importance and can therefore not be ignored; reflection on this experience and transforming it into a relevant learning experience is pivotal to this process of learning; and finally acknowledging the role of others in our learning is vital because as adults we do not learn in isolation.

Although a number of experiential learning theorists have attempted to build in the situatedness of experience, and the importance of collectiveness, I still feel these may be the weak points in the theory. Trusting and Barton (2003), in their review of models of adult education, differentiate between two distinct paradigms of learning in psychology: one focuses on the processes going on within an individual, and the other views learning as a socially situated experience. Kolb's original theory clearly emphasised the individual far too much, while Jarvis and Le Cornu (2005) tried to shift towards situatedness. Kilgore (1999), in looking at social movement learning, argues for a theory of collective learning, emphasising that understanding learning in social movements requires one to understand the concept of the group as a learner and constructor of knowledge and an understanding of the group's vision of social justice that drives it to act - mostly in conflict with other groups - in the larger social, economic, and political field of meaning making. In the absence of this within experiential learning, my own feeling is that Jarvis' work bears most relevance to my study.

Chapter 4: Research design and methodology

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss how I undertook my study, and why. I discuss the research paradigm I chose, and the research methods, data collection and analysis techniques, as well as the limitations of these. Issues of trustworthiness, validity and reliability are looked at. I also consider the ethical issues related to my study, and how I dealt with these.

Research paradigm

In this dissertation, I look at resistance to neoliberal industrialisation and development, and what people have learned from this. I have thus identified the critical paradigm as the most appropriate paradigm within which to locate my research. Foley (2004) states that the critical paradigm emphasises the social aspect of education and its strength lies in the ability to recognise the connections between theory, ideology and power relations. The critical paradigm is not just about 'interpreting' the world, but is about critiquing it in order to try and change it.

It is clear that the critical paradigm fits my study for four key reasons. Firstly, Foley (2004) talks about power ideology whereby the ideology reflects, constructs and reproduces the power and interests of the dominant groups in society. Harvey (1990) states that critical social research is underpinned by a critical-dialectical perspective which attempts to dig beneath the surface of historically-specific, oppressive, social structures. Neoliberalism is just such a power ideology, and as such relates directly to my study, which considers members of the CRRA engaged in a battle with the Ethekwini Municipality, who have, as part of their neoliberal development policies, aggressively industrialised Clairwood. I believe that the critical paradigm will allow me to explore the covert, and often overt, oppression of the remaining residents of Clairwood by the ANC-led City Council, many of whose members were once sympathetic and very supportive of the plight of the residents of Clairwood as they challenged and petitioned the previous Nationalist Government. The residents of Clairwood had very actively supported the ANC in its struggle to overthrow the apartheid government and had hoped for a speedy resolution to their problems when the ANC was sworn into

government, but in 2012, the plight of the residents of Clairwood as they battle mounting industrialisation, influx of trucks, an increase in crime, drugs and prostitution, continues. Their situation remains unchanged and their hopes in the present government have been dashed by the many broken promises of the City Council. So whilst the ruling group has changed and power has shifted, the community's problems remain because, as discussed in Chapter Two, it is the same neoliberal agenda.

A second reason why the critical paradigm is appropriate to my study is because my study is trying to understand how adults learn in social organisations struggling for change – how they learn from struggle, and how they learn to struggle. As mentioned above, Foley (2004) states that the critical paradigm emphasises the social aspect of education. Freire (1996) argues that education is not a neutral process: it is either designed to facilitate freedom or to lead to domestication. Once adults have become conscientised, they become active participants in the wider world. My study focuses on how those involved in the CRAA learn to and from struggle within that organisation. Thus in my study I look at the processes that took place when residents went from being ordinary residents to activists, and how and why they became involved and aware of becoming critical of their existence in Clairwood and began questioning their circumstances.

Thirdly, I have chosen the critical paradigm because of what many writers have emphasised - the political nature of critical research; the intention to change the world, and not merely understand it. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) state that “the purpose of critical educational research is intensely practical, to bring about a more just, egalitarian society in which individual and collective freedoms are practiced, and to eradicate the exercise and effects of illegitimate power” (p.26). Morrison (1995) cited in Cohen et al (2007), argues that critical theory is overtly prescriptive, often prescribing what kinds of behaviour should exist in a social democracy. They emphasise that the aim is not just to give an account of society and behaviour, but to actually realise a society that is characterised by equality and democracy for all its' people. It does not merely want to understand situations and phenomena, but to change them - to empower the disadvantaged, to redress inequality and to promote individual freedoms within a democratic society.

Fay's (1987) views on critical social science, cited in Babbie and Mouton (2007), provides the final reason for choosing this paradigm. According to Fay:

a critical social science is one that recognizes that a great many of the actions people perform are caused by social conditions over which they have no control and that a great deal of what people do to one another is not the result of conscious knowledge and choice. In other words, a critical social science is one which seeks to uncover those systems of social relationships which determine the actions of individuals and the unanticipated, though not accidental, consequences of these actions. (Fay, 1975, p.94, quoted in Babbie & Mouton, 2007)

In my study I attempt to understand what it is that ordinary residents, who take on the might of the City Council, major industries and truck owners in their fight to free Clairwood from forced removals, further industrialisation and environmental pollution, learn from this process of struggle, and how they feed this back into their struggle (i.e. learn to struggle better). I try to understand how they learn from each other through this process of finding solutions to their civic, political, environmental and social problems. Fay's comments link to my argument about Clairwood, where the situation that people find themselves in is caused by social conditions which are often beyond their control. Their response to these conditions often arises from the frustration of having little or no control of the forces that govern, such as the City Council, who have through the decades continued with their plans to industrialise Clairwood, often oblivious to the needs of the residents.

Research method

In keeping with a critical paradigm, my study is qualitative in nature. Henning, van Rensburg & Smit's (2004) definition of a qualitative study will help to justify my choice of approach. They state that "in qualitative research we want to find out not only *what* happens but also how it happens and, importantly, *why* it happens the way it does" (p.3). Thus the qualitative approach fits well into a critical framework which, as discussed above, is concerned with why things happen and hence provides a critical account of what happens and acknowledges the social changes that takes place.

Many writers have emphasised the usefulness of qualitative research in exploring the meaning attached to things. Guba and Lincoln (1981) argue that human behaviour, unlike that of physical objects, cannot be understood without reference to the meanings and purposes

attached by human beings to their activities. They assert that qualitative data has the potential to provide a very deep insight into human behaviour. Maree (2007) argues that in qualitative research we look at human events in a more holistic way that attempts to locate individual actions in their cultural contexts. Qualitative research can help develop an understanding of the meaning(s) imparted by the respondents – i.e. “seeing through the eyes of the participants” - so that the phenomena can be described in terms of the meaning that they have for the actors or participants. His analysis of qualitative research aptly summarises what I have attempted to do in my research study: firstly, researching the existing conditions in Clairwood by reading relevant newspaper articles and documents describing and analysing the struggles in Clairwood, and then gathering my data by asking in-depth, open-ended questions to enable me to understand the meaning that this situation has for the participants, i.e. through their eyes.

“Qualitative research also acknowledges an interactive relationship between the researcher and participants as well as between the participants and their own experiences and how they have constructed reality based on those experiences” (Maree, 2007, p.55). It thus has the potential to unearth very rich data. Myers & Avison (2002) argue that qualitative research gives rise to rich and deep explorations and descriptions. Maree (2007) argues that personal experiences, beliefs and value-laden narratives are biased and subjective, but qualitative research accepts them as true for those who have lived through the experiences. He says that the stories, experiences and voices of the respondents are the media through which we explore and understand reality.

This relates directly to my research, where with the use of in-depth interviews, I was able to explore the stories, experiences, feelings and emotions of the residents of Clairwood, many of whom have spent most of their adult lives fighting for a just solution to the problems experienced by the residents of Clairwood, and hence I was able to get a better grasp of their actions and behaviour and what they learned from this. A qualitative approach allows me the freedom to explore at length the views and feelings of the participants in my study, and the independence to capture and report my findings as creatively as possible to convey the essence of my findings.

In my study I ask probing questions in my in-depth interviews to understand residents’ views on the prevailing situation in Clairwood and to ultimately understand how they have learned

to address these issues in their community, and what they have learned from doing this. I also focus on how ordinary individuals view their world and how they gain meaning from their experiences.

Data collection

Myers & Avison (2002) describe three main data collection methods that could be used in qualitative research: interactive interviewing, written descriptions by participants and observation. A number of writers have commented on the power of interviews in qualitative research. Kvale (1996) observes that the use of the interview in research moves away from just seeing human subjects as manipulable and data as external to individuals, to seeing knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversations.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) emphasise:

The interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, spoken and heard. The order of the interview may be controlled while still giving space for spontaneity, and the interviewer can press not only for complete answers but also for responses about complex and deep issues. In short, the interview is a powerful implement for researchers. (p. 349)

Cohen et al state that interviews allow people to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express their viewpoints, whilst Maree (2007) describes qualitative interviews as an opportunity to see the world through the eyes of the participant, and as a very important source of information, if used correctly. Interviews attempt to gain a better understanding of people's perspectives and are very commonly used in our society to help us understand a phenomenon better. Maree (2007) sees an interview as a two-way conversation whereby the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and, in so doing, learns about the ideas, beliefs, views and opinions of the participant.

My main data collection method was thus in-depth interviews. I chose this method as I thought that it would be the most effective method to enable me to gather rich, qualitative data from my participants. I chose to use semi-structured interviews as opposed to structured interviews since the former allows more flexibility, as Maree (2007) argues - semi-structured

interviews allow for probing and clarification of answers. Thus using semi-structured interviews as my data gathering method enabled me to gain a deep understanding of how adults learn within social organisations, in this case, the CRRA.

Obviously, a critical factor in the usefulness of in-depth interviews is the question of who is interviewed. I used purposive sampling in my research study. I chose six people who are/were involved in the work of the CRRA and the current struggles of the Clairwood area as my data source for this method. The people I interviewed are in the leadership of the CRRA and ordinary members of the community, both males and females, of varying ages. They include people from the older generation who have lived in Clairwood for almost all of their lives to younger people who were born into the industrialisation of the area.

McHugh (1994), cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), stresses the need for the interview questions to be thoroughly planned and prepared with careful framing of questions. I followed Cohen et al's guidelines, ensuring that I very carefully planned and prepared my questions in my interview schedule. My introductory questions began by asking respondents about their history and relationship with Clairwood, the CRRA and other community organisations. I observed that these questions assisted in making respondents feel at ease with what could possibly have been a stressful 'interview experience'. Questions on their feelings about the demise of Clairwood as a residential area and around their experiences working in community organisations, and questions on how and from whom they learned, made up the bulk of the interview schedule.

In preparing for my interviews, I reflected on my knowledge of the participants and their experiences and on my experiences working in a similar community as a community activist. I then predicted the following potential problems with the interview method:

- availability of participants;
- time constraints;
- privacy;
- unnatural setting;
- anxiety about the interview process; and

- fear of victimisation whereby participants are afraid to participate in the research study because it may affect their job or social grant, as they may believe that by participating in the study and expressing their views, they may be criticising the municipality.

I was also guided by McHugh's (1994, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007) suggestion that during the interview it is important for the interviewer to not only be as flexible as possible, and to follow the train of thought of the respondent, but also to be persistent if the interviewee does not address the issue. He does warn, however, that "an interview is not a courtroom" (p. 62), and thus suggests that tact, diplomacy and empathy are essential. I was very mindful of these suggestions during the interviews, and I was very patient and flexible throughout my interviews and allowed participants to speak as much as they wanted to in response to my questions. Often I found that I would have to draw the person back to the question at hand, and I was persistent when participants were brief in their response or when they brushed off the question. I found this was especially the case with questions that related to their learning within the organisation. It was clear that most participants had not thought about this aspect of their lives and struggle and often had to think hard about their learning, which suggests that they had taken it for granted.

I worked hard to gain the trust of the participants as I realised that this would be very important for the success of my study and that it could have a very serious limitation on my research study if not done properly. I was able to do this through my links with the Clairwood area through my previous and current involvement in community work as an activist working in neighbouring Merebank. This history helped me to gain the trust of the people and their confidence. I was also conscious of availability and time constraints of participants. I addressed this concern by working around their schedule. I considered Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2007) caution that interviews are expensive in time; open to interviewer bias; may be inconvenient for participants; interviewee fatigue may affect the interview; and anonymity may not always be possible.

I interviewed three people from the same family - the father, mother and daughter - all of whom were actively involved with the CRRA and several other community-based organisations in the Clairwood area and very actively involved in the struggle against the City Council to stop further industrialisation of Clairwood and to restore Clairwood to its original

residential status. All of them fitted perfectly with the range of categories that I wanted to interview - male, female and youth categories. I then realised that the fact that they all belonged to one family unit could affect my results. I decided to overcome this possible bias by conducting more interviews than I originally planned, as a means of ensuring that I did not compromise the reliability of the data collected.

Data analysis

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data – in other words, making sense of the data in terms of the participant’s definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities. A number of writers have discussed the difficulties attached to this task, although Marshall (2002) argues that textbooks often make coding seem very straightforward. Marshall cites Rice and Ezzy (1999) who state that “coding often involves reading through a manuscript for ‘first impressions’. In subsequent readings the qualitative researcher attempts to develop concepts and codes on a higher level of abstraction” (p.199). Marshall suggests that the process of coding is not such a straightforward process at all; rather, it is full of muddle and confusion. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) argue that there is no one single or correct way to analyse and present qualitative data. He suggests that one abides by the “fitness for purpose” rule, which alludes to the importance of taking note of each individual situation when deciding on ways of analysing and collecting one’s data. He also adds that qualitative data analysis is often heavy on interpretation and that there are often multiple interpretations to be made of qualitative data which he describes as “their glory and their headache” (p. 461).

I opted to make use of the thematic coding method to analyse my data. Maree (2007) describes thematic coding as the process of reading carefully through one’s transcribed data and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. Once the data has been coded, you move on to the next phase of the data analysis where you organise or combine related codes into themes or categories.

A number of writers have made practical suggestions regarding the coding process, and I found these very helpful when undertaking the coding of my data. Marshall (2002) in her “housekeeping” suggestion, emphasises good record-keeping and an orderly approach to the

coding process. Her suggestions were to break up coding; to have mechanising routines for coding; and to limit time spent in coding sessions. In her section on “Tips for young coders”, Marshall (2002) advises that you should expect that your emotions will be involved and that some emotions will be unpleasant. You therefore need to give yourself time to be reflexive, allow yourself time to step back and view your methods, and then be able to ask yourself how you will know when it is time to stop coding.

Maree (2007) emphasises that good analysis often depends on your understanding of the data, which simply means that you must read and re-read the text. The possible problem here is simply the quantity of data that there might be – Myers & Avison (2002) state that people who are not familiar with the qualitative methodology may be shocked by the vast amount of data and the detailed analysis that is necessary, even when the research study is confined to a small number of participants. Nevertheless, I read through my interview transcripts a number of times. I referred to Miles and Huberman's (1994), as cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2007), twelve tactics for generating meaning from transcribed interview data. In doing this, I found that I made greatest use of the following tactics when analysing my data from my research study: counting frequencies of ideas; noting patterns which stem from repeated themes; building a logical chain of events; and moving from metaphors to constructs to theories to explain phenomena.

I coded my data according to the following major recurring themes that emerged from my first read-through of my participant interviews: empowerment; resistance; camaraderie; industrialisation; fear; safety; sadness; insecurity; despair; hopelessness; broken promises; anger and frustration. I also coded according to my research questions. I then created a table for each research question, noting down the participant's name and what they had said related to that question. This allowed me to see where there were similarities and differences.

Trustworthiness, reliability and validity

A number of writers have considered the possible problems inherent in qualitative research and suggested methods to overcome, or at least limit, these. Cronbach (1980) cited in Lather (1986), argues that “the job of validation is not to support an interpretation, but to find out what might be wrong with it. A proposition deserves some degree of trust only when it has

survived serious attempts to falsify it” (p.67). Guba and Lincoln (1981) mention three things a qualitative researcher should do to make sure his or her research is trustworthy:

- triangulation, which refers to using two or more methods of data collection in the study;
- face validity or ‘member checks’, which refers to ensuring that the data collected is accurate by asking participants to check it; and
- reflexivity, which involves the researcher thinking hard about his or her research and involvement in it and questioning his or her assumptions and the theories that he or she is using overall.

Lather (1986), who considers in particular research within a critical paradigm – what she calls “openly ideological research” – suggests that in our efforts to create a self-reflexive human science, we need to protect our research and theory construction from our enthusiasms. Thus the development of data credibility checks is essential. She also makes three suggestions in this regard, some of them the same as, and some different from, those proposed by Guba and Lincoln:

- triangulation (using multiple data sources, methods and theoretical schemes to ensure that data collected and analysed is credible);
- construct validity and face validity/’member checks’ (making it possible for respondents to check and read through the data and to ratify it);
- catalytic validity. According to Reason & Rowan (1981) and Brown & Tandom (1978) both cited in Lather (1986), this refers to the degree to which the research process re-orientes, focuses, and energises participants in what Freire (1973) terms “conscientisation” - knowing reality in order to transform it.

In my study, I tried to use all of these techniques. I used triangulation by conducting in-depth interviews and analysing documents and newspaper articles linked to and relevant to my research study. This allowed me to check things being said in the interviews. On the issue of data collection, Lather (1986) stresses the importance of researchers being systematic about establishing the trustworthiness of data. Silverman (1993) describes audio-recordings as an important part of qualitative research and the transcripts of these recordings as extremely valuable for the data collection process. Silverman states that compared to field notes and observational data, recordings and transcripts can be referred to as they develop new

hypotheses. My interviews were recorded using a tape recorder and I took copious notes throughout the interview and thereafter transcribed the interview, taking note of notes made during the interview, and referring to the tape recordings of the interview to verify data collected. As stated above, I also gave the transcripts back to the participants to check (face validity/member checks).

In terms of reflexivity, Kamarovsky (1981) cited in Lather (1986), argues that if researchers want trustworthy data, they must formulate self-corrective techniques that will verify the credibility of the data and minimise personal bias based upon the logic of evidence.

Obviously, my long history of activism, including in an area undergoing very similar processes to that of Clairwood, means that I have particular biases. Lather (1986) suggests that this does not make it impossible for one to undertake trustworthy research – indeed, she argues that all research is ideological, and the point is to make that clear. I have done so in this thesis. However, this simply makes the importance of self-reflexivity that much greater. As discussed above, this involves the researcher thinking hard about his or her research and involvement in it and questioning his or her assumptions and the theories that he or she is using overall. During the data collection process, I thus constantly asked myself whether what I thought someone was saying was indeed so, and checked this with the participants (face validity also helped here). During the data analysis process I asked myself whether my interpretation was likely, and tried to guard against trying to ‘fit’ something into theory.

In terms of catalytic validity (the degree to which the research process re-orient, focuses, and energises participants), Merriam (1998) suggests that most people who agree to be interviewed enjoy sharing their knowledge, opinions or experiences. She adds that some respondents may gain valuable self-knowledge whilst others may find the interview process therapeutic, and here she brings up the issue of the researcher’s stance. She cites Paton (1990) who points out that the interviewer’s task “is first and foremost to gather data, not change people” (p. 345). Paton states that the interviewer is neither a judge nor a therapist nor “a cold slab of granite - unresponsive to the human issues, including great suffering and pain, that may unfold during an interview” (p.354, quoted in Merriam, 1998). Thus whilst the interview process can be intimidating to some, others may actually enjoy sharing their views, knowledge and experience and some may even hope that, by sharing, they could make a change or draw attention to a particular cause. In my research I was very sympathetic to the plight of the residents as I was very aware of the situation in Clairwood and had followed the

demise of this once vibrant residential area. In the process of my interviews I got the distinct impression that the participants in my study were hopeful that through sharing their stories with me, I would create an awareness of their plight, although I was careful not to lead them to believe that I would do this.

Five of the six residents of Clairwood I interviewed really enjoyed sharing their feelings, frustrations and anxieties with me. This sixth respondent was a really busy individual who was serving as the chairperson of the CRRA and running his own business, so whilst he was keen to talk to me, it was very difficult to set up an interview with him. I thus had to wait a few months to eventually schedule an interview with him. Although he seemed annoyed and evasive as I attempted to schedule an interview with him, and he had cancelled our appointment on several occasions, when we did eventually meet for our interview he was very co-operative and seemed to enjoy sharing his vast experiences as head of the CRRA and as someone who was born and lived in Clairwood.

White (1973), cited in Lather (1986), asserts that, in trying to reduce the ambiguity of what one does, one should not ignore the intimacy of human experience: “the irreducible disparity between the being of the world and the knowledge we might have of it”. Silverman (1993) states that ‘authenticity’ rather than reliability is often the issue in qualitative research. The aim is usually to gather an ‘authentic’ understanding of people’s experiences and it is believed that ‘open-ended’ questions are the most effective way to do this. My use of open-ended questions to gather my data illustrates Silverman’s view on the importance of research attempting to gain an ‘authentic’ understanding of people’s experiences. My desire to ensure that my research was as authentic and real as possible was further achieved through interviewing all the participants in their ‘natural environment’. All were interviewed in Clairwood, most of them in their homes, one in his office in an industrial part of Clairwood.

Ethical issues

All data collection methods present the researcher and the participants with certain ethical considerations. This is highlighted by Merriam (1998) who observes that data collection techniques of interviewing and of observation in qualitative research have their own ethical concerns. Merriam (1998) cites Stake’s (1994) observations that qualitative researchers can be described as guests in the private spaces of the world and, therefore, should display good

manners and a strict code of ethics. Merriam (1998) adds that interviewing, no matter what form it takes, carries with it risks and benefits to the informants, as participants may be concerned about their right to privacy, some questions may embarrass them and they may regret saying some things that they did. As discussed above, face validity or member checks can also help overcome this problem, but it is also very important to reassure the participants, at the outset of the interview, that the researcher will abide by the confidentiality clause. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) state that:

The principle of informed consent arises from the subject's right to freedom and self-determination. Being free is a condition of living in a democracy, and when restrictions and limitations are placed on that freedom they must be justified and consented to, as in research. Consent thus protects and respects the right of self-determination and places some of the responsibility on the participant should anything go wrong with the research. As part of the right to self-determination, the subject has the right to refuse to take part, or to withdraw once the research has begun. (p.52)

Cohen et al further suggest that it is important that the conduct of the interview be explained (what happens, and how, and the structure and organisation of the interview), and how responses may be recorded (and to seek permission if this is to happen), and that these procedures should be observed throughout the research process.

I observed these factors by providing participants with a detailed description and understanding of the study and the research process. I clearly outlined the process and expectations of the interview, negotiated a suitable time and venue, and tried to allay any fears that the participants might have. I also explained and asked participants to sign a letter of consent which included the title of the study; aim of the study; my details as researcher; details of my university supervisor; assurance that they have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time if they so wish and; finally; that they have a right to have access to the analysed data and to verify the findings of the data. I specifically drew the participants' attention to the confidentiality clause and, as required by the University of KwaZulu-Natal, they signed a letter informing them that I would abide by the confidentiality clause and hence protect them. I also verbally outlined who would have access to the transcripts of the interview, informed them of their right to stop the interview if they felt uncomfortable and/or if the question/s were deemed too sensitive.

Chapter 5: Interview data

Introduction

I chose six people who are/were involved in the work of the CRRA and the current struggles of the Clairwood area as my data source for this purposive sampling method. The people chosen are in the leadership of the CRRA and ordinary members of the community, both males and females and of varying ages. They include people from the older generation who have lived in Clairwood for almost all of their lives to younger people who were born into the industrialisation of the area. All of the participants were actively involved in the CRRA and other community organisations at some time during their lives. All the interviews were conducted according to my interview schedule. In order to protect the identity of the participants and the people mentioned in their narratives, I have used pseudonyms.

Interview 1: Navin Singh

I was born and bred in Clairwood and have lived all my life in Sirdar Road. My grandfather was one of the forefathers of Clairwood, which has a rich history. I remember being told as a child that Clairwood was once a swamp area and through persistent hard work by its residents, it was converted to a beautiful residential area. I also recall how Clairwood was once home to Indian, African and Coloured people who lived side by side harmoniously. There are many temples and places of worship that were built by residents and these served as meeting places for cultural, civic, social and political meetings. I would not contemplate living anywhere else but Clairwood.

Involvement in community organisations and the CRRA

I used to be a council member and executive member of the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association for many years, but due to personal issues and my frustrations with the way some of the issues were being handled, I decided to resign from the CRRA. This was very difficult for me since many of my colleagues within the CRRA had become my personal friends. I am now an active member of the Clairwood Social Forum which focuses on issues closer to the hearts of the people - we help people to apply for social grants, etc. We try to address the social needs of the residents in Clairwood. For example, we have identified the people in our area that are living below the breadline and we have developed a plan to assist

them. At the moment the residents of Clairwood are predominantly Indian and African. We give grocery hampers to people who are very poor and this is done through the generosity of businesses and community organisations in Clairwood. These people are very committed to the upliftment of the Clairwood community.

I'm also very active with the Community Policing Forum. We have a good working relationship with the Metro Police, who have a satellite station in Clairwood. The residents of Clairwood feel comfortable to work with us and approach us for help as we are known to them and most of them seem to be comfortable with this relationship.

I think it is safe to describe the members of the organisations that I am involved in as social activists. They are all involved in some form of social or community activity with the aim of uplifting the community. Clairwood is a small community and most of the members have been born and bred here. They are very committed to the upliftment of Clairwood. They have a personal interest in the community and are deeply committed to the cause. They are passionate about the struggles in Clairwood and remember that all the work that they do is voluntary.

Key current issues

Currently the trucking problem has become a major issue in Clairwood. Many trucks and trucking companies have moved into Clairwood and made it their home. The truck owners have bought properties in Clairwood and have changed the landscape of Clairwood from a residential area into an industrial area. They are wreaking havoc. Thirteen lives have been lost through truck-related accidents in the Clairwood area compared to one life lost in the Bluff.

A drive-by shooting occurred a few months ago which killed Mr Osman, a prominent activist from the Clairwood area who was especially vociferous about the influx of trucks in the area. It is obvious that it was a planned killing as a form of intimidation to others in the area who are opposed to the trucks moving into Clairwood. As a result of the trucks moving into Clairwood and making it their base and home, many residents have begun to lose hope of restoring Clairwood to its former glory and have begun to panic and sell their homes, often at a loss, to truck owners.

The trucking problem has given rise to many other related problems: the area is filthy and often unkempt, there has been an increase in road accidents, and a significant increase in pedestrians being knocked down by trucks. There has also been an increase in prostitutes soliciting their services in the area.

CRRA mobilisation around these issues

The CRRA uses flyers, handbills, community mass meetings and marches to mobilise the community around these issues.

Learning

My learning stems from the Hindu philosophy and teachings which emphasise the importance of “serving mankind”. I have also learned from prominent people in the community who encouraged me to become involved in community work. I think ‘learning’ could refer to formal learning, for example at schools and university, but you also learn from your mistakes as you get older. I view learning as a continuous process - you learn something new or something different every day.

I do think that you learn differently when you are younger and in school, as opposed to when you are an adult. Your experiences as an adult influence what you learn and the way that you learn. As an adult you learn from your mistakes and your life experiences.

Much of one's learning is ‘informal learning’, like through interacting with people around community issues, reading the newspaper, watching television, etc. You also learn through chatting to people about ordinary, everyday issues like current news events, etc. I learned about many things from attending community meetings and the discussions that took place. Here I learned about ethical issues, but I was also educated about meeting procedures - how meetings should be conducted and how to draw up documents, like memorandums, etc.

As a member of the Community Policing Forum (CPF) I have had to address issues like that of people being run down by trucks and other truck-related deaths like ‘hit and runs’ that have become a common occurrence in Clairwood. I have also learned about these issues through happenings in the area. I have also learned a lot about process and procedures in my many queries and questioning of city council procedures. I have also learned how to research certain topics which would help me develop my arguments when I am or was forced to

challenge the city council on issues that affected the Clairwood community. A great deal of my learning was a result of reading the local and regional newspapers which focused on similar struggles, for example the Cato Manor forced removals and their struggles with the city council and their resistance to the city council's plans. But local newspapers have been very selective and biased in their reporting. They are reluctant to carry stories of the struggles of local people and tend to focus on sensational stories, like the crimes that take place in the Clairwood area.

I also learned from another very important source - from the elders in the community, the senior citizens who were born and bred in Clairwood. Most of them have between 50 to 60 years of community work experience. They have witnessed the many-changing faces of Clairwood. They have led and been part of the resistance, of the struggle, of the people of Clairwood to forced removals, industrialisation, pollution and more recently the invasion of trucks in the Clairwood area. So, by listening to them at meetings and by being involved with them in discussions on issues facing the community, I have been able to learn from their wealth of knowledge and experience.

I think that this learning has had a positive impact on my life. I feel that I have been educated and become wise especially when dealing with the city council. They do not practise democracy and do not practise telling the truth. I have found that they have not been honest with the residents of Clairwood. The city council has not been transparent enough with the residents of Clairwood and, finally, I have learned to think very critically and not to accept what people say at face value as there are always underlying meanings or intentions that lurk behind the surface.

I think that I have learned sufficiently about new developments in Clairwood, and about what the city council is doing. They have forged ahead with their developmental plans but have failed to restore Clairwood to its former glory. The Deputy Mayor, Mr Logie Naidoo, did intervene and promised to take up the plight of the residents of Clairwood, but there has not been much progress on his promise. There is very little cleaning up of the area - instead only the prosecution of the trucks which increases the coffers of the Metro Police.

I have found that the Planning Section of the city council has not been very helpful in disclosing their plans. For example, in the Expansion of Port Proposal, the council opted to be very dubious and chose instead not to disclose these plans to the communities in the South

Durban Basin. Instead they dragged their feet, kept their plans to themselves and the communities in the dark. I wish that they would be more transparent and not resort to having hidden agendas. The other problem is that there seems to be the lack of continuity when dealing with staff from the council and the tendency to shift blame when communicating with staff from council.

Interview 2: Krish Nair

I have lived in Clairwood my entire life. My granny came to South Africa as an indentured labourer and she bought land in Houghton Road (formerly Syringa Road), Clairwood. My family settled in Clairwood and up until the early 1970s all of my family lived in Clairwood. I recall that people lived as a family unit and that they were mostly Indian market gardeners.

I become very nostalgic when I recall the memories of the past - in fact these memories still linger on within me. The early residents of Clairwood were a very industrious lot - they built their own schools in Clairwood and assisted in building schools in neighbouring areas such as in Wentworth and in Mobeni Heights. In Clairwood people built the famous Clairwood Girls' School. They also built their own cemeteries and they built their own sports fields. I remember that soccer was a very popular sport in the early days in Clairwood. We also built our own tennis courts. The community of Clairwood was a self-supporting community who helped to develop themselves and the area without the assistance of the government.

Even in the early days the government wanted to take Clairwood from the community and give it to the industries. There was always resistance to the city council's plans from organisations like the CRRA and later SDCEA [the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance]. I am sad about living in Clairwood at the moment because of the Back of Port plan to industrialise the entire Southern Durban. There is no improvement in the area, there is a lack of proper service delivery, and very few or no proper facilities and amenities.

Involvement in community organisations and the CRRA

I have been the president of the Patinda Andhra Sabha, a religious and cultural organisation in the Clairwood area. I have also been the vice-president of the CRRA, and the vice-president and the president of Clairwood Tamil Institution. I am presently the vice-president

of the Clairwood Senior Citizens Association, and I am also an active member of the Community Policing Forum, which is very active in Clairwood.

I have been an extremely active member of the CRRA for approximately 60 years. I was a member of the first branch of the NIC (Natal Indian Congress) in Clairwood. I was the branch secretary under the leadership of Mr Sam Pillay during the 1950s when we were actively waging struggles against the apartheid government and its municipalities. The Clairwood Senior Citizens Association is responsible for organising social get-togethers for the senior citizens of Clairwood. The Andhra Sabha Organisation looks at the needs of specifically the Telegu Community and addresses its religious needs. The Police Forum, on the other hand, takes care of the policing needs of the community and recently has been very helpful in curbing the illegal activities of the truckers in Clairwood, as opposed to the negative views that we have received from people like Mike Sutcliffe and Logie Nair.

I would call the members of the organisations that I am active in social activists, in the sense that we are fighting for freedom to live peacefully in our community. Many members of my organisation have played leading roles in political and civic organisations which were instrumental in fighting against the apartheid government. The irony is that we are now fighting the ANC government for our homes, our land and our dignity, the right to lead peaceful lives in a community that we were born and bred in. We are social activists because we are fighting for our rights and for what is due to us - we are fighting for our land. The municipality, on the other hand, are playing a dual role. They listen to us and our concerns and then they favour the truckers and allow them free access into Clairwood.

Key current issues

There are presently 7 000 residents living in Clairwood in contrast to the 45 000 people that previously lived harmoniously side by side with each other. There were many industries present in Clairwood then - there was a blanket factory and some shoe factories and most of the workers were residents of Clairwood. We were able to exist peacefully with these industries who respected the residents of Clairwood, unlike the existing industries who resort to using hardline tactics to intimidate the residents. These hardline tactics are also used by the municipalities to bully the residents of Clairwood into accepting their development proposals. I was part of the delegation to the High Court where we appealed for the special Residential Zoning of Clairwood. The CRRA is the official watchdog of the community. Almost every

organisation in Clairwood is affiliated to the CRRA, which is a strong muscle of the community. We have always fought against the municipal authorities. They have allowed the area to deteriorate to the state that it is in today and have not done anything to make the area credible.

The Clairwood Structure Plan was passed by the municipality, but was blocked and not sent to the Province for clearance. Mike Sutcliffe and Logie Naidoo are not honest - they have made many empty promises. Logie Naidoo came to our community meetings and promised that he would “bring Clairwood back to its former glory”. But truckers and illegal businesses continue to wreak havoc in Clairwood - they are a law unto themselves. The police reservists in the area have no power to prosecute the illegal businesses and only try to appease the community by listening to our complaints and problems, but nothing is actually done about it. I feel strongly that the area should be restored to a core residential area and that the truckers and illegal businesses should be moved to areas zoned as industrial in Clairwood or elsewhere in Durban. The trucks have caused immense damage to the roads, traffic lights, pavements and manholes. This situation is unbearable and some people have moved out of Clairwood because they have become frustrated with the deplorable state that Clairwood is in. But, there are those of us who will not move and give up the fight to restore Clairwood to its former glory.

The truckers and the influx of illegal businesses that have infiltrated the area are the biggest problem at the moment. They are depressing the area and are making the area look rundown. The city council’s regulation SR400 (zoning Clairwood as Special Residential) stipulates that Clairwood is a residential area and these truckers and illegal businesses have violated these regulations.

I find it very difficult to believe that although residents have inhabited Clairwood for 135 years, there is still no proper structural plan in place.

These issues are the most important ones that are affecting the community of Clairwood. Presently, people are feeling helpless as the municipal authorities have ignored their complaints and feel vulnerable as their livelihood is constantly being threatened, and they are insecure about their future in Clairwood.

My ideal solution would be for Clairwood to revert back to its residential core where its people would be accommodated as residents. The council should spend money on renovating and developing Clairwood to its former glory by building a municipal complex, a senior citizens' complex, a police station, a post office and other social and recreational amenities. I pray that this will happen in my lifetime, but in the meantime I will continue fighting for the dignity of Clairwood.

CRRA mobilisation around these issues

In the past, mass meetings were held in the community by the vibrant Clairwood branch of the Natal Indian Congress, which rallied around restoring Clairwood as a residential core and fought hard and long for the preservation of Clairwood as a core residential area instead of a commercial hub, and for illegal businesses to be moved to demarcated industrial parks.

The CRRA held many report back meetings to inform the community of the developments in the negotiations with the municipalities. The CRRA also held several marches and placard demonstrations to highlight the various campaigns and struggles that it was waging on behalf of the residents of Clairwood. I recall that these events were always well attended and successful, and residents were keen to use these platforms to air their views and give vent to their frustrations on the continued industrial development of Clairwood and the daily deterioration of Clairwood as a residential area.

Learning

My understanding of the term 'learning' refers to the ability to gain knowledge. I feel that knowledge has got to be improved continuously. I find that what one has learned today often changes the next day, so therefore it's very important to keep updating one's knowledge. I have also learned from my experiences and have used these experiences to motivate myself to fight against the institutions of apartheid. This learning has also assisted me to educate the community on their basic rights and of the importance of getting involved in the struggle to make Clairwood a better place for them to live in, so that they could eventually lead a better life.

On the question of whether I learn differently now in comparison to when I was younger, I think that this question is debatable. Yes, I think that I have learned differently as an adult in comparison to when I was a kid. I think that you learn better, as you are wiser because of

your age. The things that you ignored as a scholar, I find that you take more seriously as an adult due to your age and your responsibilities. As the eldest son, I had huge responsibilities as I was growing up, and even now as the elder in the family I have certain responsibilities that I need to fulfil, as I am beholden to my family and I am often called upon for advice on various issues. I have the responsibility to control my huge family and I have learned a lot through the process of looking after them and giving advice and nurturing them. I think that my experiences have been a guiding light to my family and that they have learned a lot from me. They have learned about the history of our forefathers, the history of Clairwood, and they have also learned from my knowledge of community issues. So I believe that I have definitely learned differently as an adult in comparison to the way in which I learned as a child. At school we were taught in the culture of merely listening to your teachers, but as adults one learns from interactions with others and from one's experiences and this learning is far more meaningful. I also became very critical as an adult and questioned lots of happenings which didn't seem right to me.

My learning as a member of community organisations has taught me that things are not always handed down to you on a silver platter, but instead you have to fight for your rights. This fighting and resistance continues to be an uphill battle. As a member of the CRRA, I always ensure that we conscientize the younger members of our organisation and community by imparting our knowledge of community work. The CRRA is a family organisation where different community organisations are represented and they make up the core workforce of the organisation. As a member of the CRRA I have learned negotiation skills, public speaking skills, letter writing skills (I have written hundreds of letters to the press and to the municipalities on issues affecting Clairwood), and I have learned to be critical and patient when dealing with government institutions.

When I completed my primary school education there was no place for me at the local high school, so as the eldest son in the family, I was forced to work as a porter at one of Durban's beachfront hotels. This experience changed the way I saw the world, and prompted me to become involved in the struggle for equality in South Africa. I later completed my high school education at Clairwood Boys' High School, which was a hub of learning as Indian pupils from all over Durban attended this very popular school.

I learned about SR400 (Special Residential zoning) from reading the city council's documents and from some newspaper articles, but you can't really trust the newspapers as they are very biased in their reporting. The local newspapers focus on crime and murders, but they do not give much coverage to our local struggles. Radio Lotus has given us much publicity and so has *The Post* newspaper which is aimed at the South African Indian community. *The Rising Sun* and *The Southlands Sun* have also focused on problems of local residents which are often brought to the attention of the CRRA and then taken up by the organisation. So, much of my learning has been from listening to local people discuss the problems that they are confronted with in Clairwood.

This learning has enriched me in the sense that I know that I am not alone in fighting the cause of the people of Clairwood and South Africa as a whole. As 'Clairwoodites' we are all faced with the same issues and common purpose. This common purpose has strengthened our morale as an organisation. As an organisation we became more aware of the issues and problems that plagued the community and this strengthened our resolve.

I think that I have learned sufficiently about the new developments in Clairwood. The industrial development has been by far the biggest issue. The city council's plan was to move the port to Clairwood, hence trucking companies were allowed to make Clairwood their base. This plan will soon affect all the other coastal areas. Most of my learning about these new developments has been through hearsay or newspaper articles, as the council has had a habit of withholding information on their proposed plans or revealing a part of the plan and not the entire plan. So this modus operandi of getting information on a need-to-know basis has placed a lot of strain on our relationship with the council and has contributed to our distrust of their intentions.

Interview 3: Adele Naidoo

I am a fourth year medical student. I was born and raised in Clairwood. My parents have always been involved with community work and in taking up environmental issues. I enjoy living in Clairwood despite everything that is going on presently. I have developed firm friendships in my community. I enjoy the vast space of land that our houses are on. Clairwood is ideally positioned - it is close to all the amenities and to my university.

If the trucks were not invading Clairwood, this would be such a peaceful place to live in. The municipality's perception is that Clairwood should be designated an industrial area. This annoys me. The municipality does not care about what happens to Clairwood and its residents - there seems to be a silent battle between the Clairwood community and the Durban municipality. The media ignores our plight - they seem to be scared of the municipality.

Involvement in community organisations and the CRRA

I am a member of SDCEA (the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance) and we mainly focus on environmental awareness and challenging the government's violation of our environmental rights.

I am also presently the secretary of the Community Policing Forum which serves as a partnership between the police and our community. This organisation has helped the community. We have many issues that have existed from as long as 1993, whilst some issues have changed. I find that the police forum now has the manpower to address these issues more effectively. In the past there was a lack of police presence. You had to wait for a long time until the police appeared to assist you, but the structures have changed and we have a satellite police station in Clairwood which makes the police more accessible to the Clairwood community.

I would describe the members of my organisation as social activists to a certain extent as they are fighting for a valid cause. They are fighting against the government and the local municipalities. I do, however, feel that they should change the ways in which they wage their fight. They need to explore new and more innovative strategies to fight this battle.

Key current issues

The influx of trucks in the area is a big problem. The trucks have caused many deaths on our roads. The trucks have also added to pollution and the increase in dust pollution in Clairwood. Crime is another pressing problem in Clairwood. There has been an increase in cases of housebreakings recently. This affects residents who are always on high alert. The municipality is exploiting the residents by ignoring their demands to avoid further industrialisation of Clairwood. Clairwood is so rich in its heritage and this heritage is slowly being eroded.

CRRA mobilisation around these issues

The CRRA has mass meetings to mobilise the community. The CRRA have also blocked off roads in Clairwood. The CRRA was part of a group of several social movement organisations who participated in a march down West Street in Durban to highlight the problems that these communities were experiencing, such as industrialisation, pollution, forced removals, the plight of the fishermen, service delivery and the trucking problem in Clairwood. My problem with the CRRA is that they are not open to new options and they refuse to change their minds about how they go about doing things and mobilising people. This is frustrating to me. I do, however, think that it is very difficult to change the way the municipality operates.

Learning

I understand the term 'learning' as gaining new knowledge and experiences and opening your mind to new experiences, and in the process widening your thinking. When you're open-minded you are able to entertain new ideas. It takes a wise person to entertain new ideas.

When I was younger I think that lots of my learning was through fear, as teachers were authority figures. At school I also learned a lot from reading. As an adult my learning is through listening to people talk about their experiences. I enjoy listening to old people talk about our history and their experiences. There is a lack of young people involved in community organisations, and they do not show any interest in issues affecting the community. This indicates the lack of education on broader issues that affect the community and society at large.

I have learned about issues that affect the community such as crime, drugs and alcohol through living in the area. You have to live in the community to understand these issues. I have also learned about community issues by attending workshops where we looked at issues, like the development of the evacuation plan for Clairwood. It is very frightening when one thinks about the extent of disaster management necessary should there be a crisis situation in Clairwood, considering that we are surrounded by huge industries and oil refineries.

Due to my involvement with the Police Forum I am aware of the crime statistics that affects Clairwood.

The CRRA are not open-minded - they will not move forward because they are not open to new ideas. They do not do things differently - as a result they do not attract new or younger members.

I have learned about the specific issues facing us from my parents who used to speak about issues affecting their lives. I did not learn about these issues from radio or newspaper reports, as I found that the media are too scared to address these issues. I have also learned about community issues from flyers from community organisations inviting the community to meetings or marches.

My learning tends to make me even angrier. The thought that you could one day be locked out of your house infuriates me and spurs me on to take up these issues. Anger makes you fight – the feeling within yourself to fight and to never give up.

I have learned sufficiently about new developments in Clairwood. These plans are an attempt to completely industrialise Clairwood and are part of a bigger plan linked to the harbour development plan. It is sad that they build a community and then so callously tear it down to make way for further industrialisation.

Interview 4: Shahnaaz Essop

I was born in Clairwood and I attended school in Clairwood. I cannot imagine living anywhere else. I lived here as a young child, as a teenager, and finally as an adult. I am presently a home executive. Clairwood has always been a very close-knit community. I grew up with people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. This upbringing has taught me to be tolerant of other people.

Even though Clairwood is in such a mess at the moment, you have to look beyond this mess. I still have a dream that Clairwood will go back to the way it was in the good old days and we will be rid of Clairwood being designated as an industrial zone. I love this area.

I believe that as a resident you have to take the initiative to raise issues. I find that many people are reluctant to take it up themselves.

Involvement in community organisations and the CRRA

I belong to a Muslim religious organisation and we run feeding schemes for indigent people in the community and outside the community. The Islamic feeding scheme feeds the poor and provides support to poor people who cannot afford to pay their electricity and water bills.

I am a council member of the CRRA. I am responsible for raising funds for the organisation. We hosted a dinner with Deputy Mayor Logie as the guest speaker to raise funds. I also work at the CRRA office where we address the concerns of the community and lobby support for our campaigns. We also use the office to communicate with the municipality to challenge them on their proposals, etc. The municipality is stringing the community along - they are often dishonest and vague in response to our queries. We are presently waiting for the municipality to unveil their new plans for Clairwood. The municipality takes too long to respond to the community's queries.

There is no help from The Metro satellite office which is positioned in Clairwood. They are present but they have no power to arrest the illegal truckers and panel beaters who disregard the regulations in Clairwood.

The CRRA is focusing on getting a plan for the future of Clairwood. We plan to have the truckers and the illegal businesses removed from the area. People like Mr Len George from the city council give us the run-around when we are trying to negotiate and communicate with the council.

Key current issues

The main issue is that of the trucks who have made Clairwood their home and 90% of their employees are foreigners. There is also the problem that the municipality keeps changing their staff. We find that we were dealing with a person who was in charge of a department, but he or she has now moved to another position or department and we are then forced to start all over again and develop a rapport with the new person. These new people don't understand the problems that we are experiencing and they are often unfamiliar with the area. This is very frustrating!

CRRA mobilisation around these issues

We hold mass meetings, conduct door to door visits, use loudhailers and distribute pamphlets to inform the community of meetings and happenings in the area. We try to use local newspapers, but find that with the diminishing of Clairwood as a residential area, many community newspapers like *The Southlands Sun* do not distribute their newspaper widely in Clairwood.

Learning

I understand the term 'learning' to refer to one's everyday life experiences. To me education is not a degree but is rather your experiences as a human being. I think that learning takes place when you listen to your elders and their experiences in life. Learning is common sense and wisdom.

I think that I learn differently as an adult compared to as a child. I recall that I loved going to school. I was a very social person and enjoyed having lots of fun. School does not however prepare you for the day-to-day living as an adult. I think that you are more aware of your learning as an adult. You learn more from people and their experiences as an adult. I have also as an adult travelled a lot and have learned a lot about the world and increased my knowledge through all my travel experiences. I enjoy interacting with people and have learned from these interactions and from the experiences of others. You are more critical as an adult learner as you learn to sift through what you learn and hence become more critical.

I found that as I grew older I learned to be more patient and tolerant with people. I also learned that it is important to work hard and to co-operate with others when working in an organisation. I would like to commend the executive and senior members of the CRRA for their hard work and dedication. Through my interaction with members of community organisations and specifically the CRRA, I have learned never to give up no matter how difficult the road becomes - you should instead push ahead and make the effort. By being involved with the CRRA I have also learned how to interact with the city departments especially the Town Planning Department. I have also learned through my involvement with community organisations to be more giving to the community and this is evident in my involvement with the Food Hamper Drive.

I have learned about the specific issues facing us through living in the community all my life. I have also learned about the issues troubling the community through my involvement with the CRRA. I have also learned a lot about these issues from my conversations with my neighbour who is very active in doing volunteer work in the community. I have many common interests with her. She is also a member of the CRRA and we chat and discuss these issues often. She is the perfect example of someone who has the interests of her community at heart. She is a very strong person who has a good knowledge about community issues and the skill to deal with these issues. Through learning about these issues I have realised that it is easier to work within an organisation than on your own to resolve these issues.

Due to the fact that I am at home, I am often called upon by the CRRA, its executive and community members to respond to issues and crisis situations. I have a list of important contact phone numbers to assist me. Through doing this type of work I have also learned how to deal with people. I have learned how to negotiate and communicate with people from the municipality.

My learning has impacted on me by allowing me to develop into a better person. I am more understanding of other people. I have also learned how to stand up and voice my opinion and I feel better when I've done that. This learning has also helped me see a lot of things differently. I admire the people in the community who do so much to help the community and who make time in their lives to take up community issues. I have also learned that the residents of Clairwood are very strong and patient in their efforts to fight for Clairwood to be restored as a residential area. They face many challenges - the banks don't grant them loans to renovate their homes, the municipality does not pass their building plans - but they persevere. The municipality enforces the laws that make it difficult for them to move forward and they get no help from the local councillor, but they never give up their fight.

The CRRA keeps us updated on the latest developments and about community issues as they arise. They communicate this to us via telephonic contact or via SMS. The CRRA also distributes flyers or information booklets on important issues to the community. SDCEA is also another organisation that works closely with community organisations in Clairwood and they always keep us informed and up-to-date about developments that affect us in Clairwood. The SDCEA leader is a dynamic leader who is passionate about our struggles in Clairwood. I am still positive about the future of Clairwood and I am sure that Clairwood will survive.

Interview 5: Ramola Singh

I have lived in Clairwood since I married my husband, who was born in Clairwood. I have lived in Clairwood for 21 years and at my present residence for 16 years. Initially I was not very happy to live in Clairwood, but I have changed the way I feel about living in Clairwood. It is a very convenient area to live in, as it is close to all the amenities. It is quick and accessible to all the facilities. It is ideally situated as you have a number of shopping centres to choose from.

Involvement in community organisations and the CRRA

I have been involved in the Community Policing Forum at a very low-key level. My role has been to offer support to residents who experience problems, provide information to the public and offer advice to residents.

I am also presently an active member of the Clairwood Social Forum. We donate hampers to needy families in the area, and we collect and distribute stationery to poor students. We also offer bursaries to needy students. We have a community garden project whereby we allocate pieces of land to unemployed people, teach them how to grow vegetables and to look after the vegetable patches. This project is an opportunity for them to earn a living. We also have a soup kitchen providing a meal to needy hungry people in the community.

I am no longer an active member of the CRRA.

I would describe the members of the organisations I am involved in as social activists as they try their best to save and fight for Clairwood. They want Clairwood to be a safe area. The members in my organisation stand united to save the community of Clairwood from the state it is in.

Key current issues

The city council and the ANC, whilst involved with the Batho Pele Campaign, do not see to the needs of the people. In Clairwood we are faced with the challenge of having to cope with the problems associated with the trucks. The fumes given off by the trucks make it impossible to leave your doors or windows open as the dust settles in your home. I find that I have to be constantly cleaning the house and this stresses me and, as a result, I become demotivated as I

find that I cannot take pride in my home. I think that the city council is not being entirely honest with us and that they have a hidden agenda about the future of Clairwood.

Clairwood is a residential area and it should therefore be restored to its former glory. The municipality should move the industries away from Clairwood and leave Clairwood alone. We are a very close-knit community and the residents of Clairwood are getting sick of the uncertainty which hovers around Clairwood presently. I wish that the city council would stop messing around and stop dragging their feet on this issue.

Learning

I have learned about the specific issues facing us from my personal experiences, through reading pamphlets that are distributed by community organisations, by attending mass meetings where these issues are raised and discussed, and through my conversations with friends and neighbours in the community who have similar experiences. I feel that the situation is getting worse and that there is no change, although we have been fighting for the council to address our issues here in Clairwood. Nothing is being done about these problems.

My learning has made me despondent as I can see no visible changes in the situation in Clairwood, although there has been so much negotiation.

I don't think that I have learned sufficiently about the new developments in Clairwood. The information that I learned was from attending community meetings, but beyond these meetings, not much happens. The media is biased and often people talk about these newspaper articles and they question the information they read. The mainstream media is very biased and it is clear that they favour the government. We contacted 3rd Degree and they never responded. I find that the press are very reluctant to come to Clairwood. To me personally, Clairwood is worth saving - it is so valuable.

Interview 6: Max Moodley

I was born and brought up in Clairwood and I am immensely proud to be a child of Clairwood. Clairwood was one of the first racially and culturally mixed areas. It was characterised by a diverse culture, and people lived here in harmony. It was one of the first 'grey' areas in the days of apartheid. Clairwood was a thriving area. Initially it was a garden

area and a very popular area for people to settle in. Clairwood was named after a farmer called Benoni Wood - it is believed that he gave a portion of his farm to the people of Clairwood. In the early days, in 1911, there was only one combined co-ed school in Clairwood and students who wished to continue to high school had to go to Sastri College which was based in the city centre. Clairwood High School was opened in 1956.

Involvement in community organisations and the CRRA

I have been involved with the CRRA since 1977. I have dedicated lots of my time to the organisation, and via the organisation I was actively involved in the struggle against apartheid. The CRRA was formed in 1946 by good visionaries to take up the plight of the residents of Clairwood. We have been fighting from the days of apartheid and the colonial era. We thought that things would change in 1994, but there wasn't much change and we continue to negotiate the future of Clairwood. We sit once every two months with the local government to discuss the status of Clairwood as we really would like some closure on the future of Clairwood. Presently we are fortunate to have the assistance of a lawyer who, in his personal capacity and pro bono, provides us with legal advice and guidance. He understands the plight of the people of Clairwood as he comes from Cato Manor which underwent a similar process as Clairwood, and he describes the victories in Cato Manor as a "hollow victory". He is therefore keen to assist us as he does not want what happened to Cato Manor to happen to Clairwood.

Key current issues

There was an immense vibrancy in Clairwood and this has disappeared with the municipality's attempts to eradicate the area with forced removals. Many people moved to Phoenix and Chatsworth. Many people have fled the area and have rented out their homes and, as a result, many parts of Clairwood resemble slums - the houses are unkempt and derelict. Many people have also failed to pay their rates.

The main issues that are affecting the Clairwood area at the moment are the SR400 (Special Residence status) and the Clairwood Draft Structure Plan. Clairwood is located 7km from central town and is therefore ideally located for the Back of Port Expansion. At a public meeting, Transnet, however, promised that the expansion project would not affect Clairwood.

We find that the city council is very crafty as they do not prosecute people who use residential areas for their trucking businesses. The city council's response was that they admitted that they did not take forward The 2040 Vision. City Manager Mike Sutcliffe admitted to us that they messed up Clairwood. We always knew that they were negotiating with us but they had a hidden agenda, as the city council have historically dragged their feet on the Clairwood issue. The council cannot guarantee providing a clean and safe environment. The council has a hidden agenda - we were asked to comment on The 2040 Vision in October 2010, and on the Back of Port Expansion and the Dig Out Port plans, but thus far we have received no feedback on our comments or on what is currently happening with this process.

Clairwood has to be protected. It should be declared a heritage site. Our biggest challenge is that once an area starts to degrade, drugs, crime and prostitution creep in. It is a given that when areas become slums throughout the world, these issues are rife. My solution is that we start cleaning up Clairwood with the assistance of the city council. Due to the uncertainty of the area, everyone is taking advantage of the uncertain situation - illegal businesses and drug trafficking is rife. The CRRA wants some clarity on the future of Clairwood by the end of the year. The last local government elections saw a new local council being sworn in and we have changed wards - Clairwood used to be Ward 66, but we are now Ward 32. We still don't understand what this means for us and how it will affect us. These are the concerns that add to the uncertainty felt by the residents of Clairwood presently.

CRRA mobilisation around these issues

We mobilise people by hosting CRRA council meetings which take place on the first Monday of every month, and every quarter we host a public meeting and discuss relevant issues that are affecting the community. We have had public meetings to discuss the 400/500 Resolution and the 2040 Vision. Pamphlets, phone calls, SMS's and e-mails are used to inform the public about these meetings.

Learning

I understand the term 'learning' to refer to discovering something new and different. Although I was born in Clairwood, I have learned a lot about the history of Clairwood from the custodians of the CRRA who have lived in Clairwood their entire lives. They are the old guards who taught us about the struggle. They were active members of the NIC (Natal Indian

Congress) and most of them came from the Clairwood area. These 'old guards' taught us about the struggle. Clairwood has produced some very influential people in this country, Sam Pillay was at the historic Congress of the People; Minister of Telecommunications, Roy Padayachee was also born and bred in Clairwood; so too were the eminent Prof Poobalan Reddy and South Africa's first female black judge, Ms Navenetham Pillay, who was the first head girl of Clairwood High School

I definitely learn differently as an adult than I did at school. At school my learning was confined by the syllabus. In the CRRA we have old people with no or very little formal education who write minutes for our meetings. They have learned to capture the essence of the struggle with no formal education - just through their personal experiences - and I think that one's personal experience is the greatest educational tool. I also learned through my involvement with football clubs and other sports bodies that I have been involved in. Through my involvement in sporting bodies, I learned about the importance of endurance and perseverance. I also asked a lot of questions about why and how the senior members of our area and organisation were motivated to take up the cudgels to save Clairwood. I have tried to understand what motivated people like Mr Roy Bhagwan Singh to revive the Congress movement in Clairwood and to become actively involved in politics. Through questioning the elders of the community, I discovered that one of the main reasons that Clairwood was targeted by the colonial city council was because of its close proximity to the city centre - Clairwood was ideally situated.

Chapter 6: Findings and Analysis

Introduction

As discussed above, I used the thematic coding method to analyse my data. Maree (2007) describes thematic coding as the process of reading carefully through one's transcribed data and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. Once I had coded all data, I then moved on to the next phase of the data analysis process whereby I combined the related codes into themes or categories. I had to read through my interview transcripts a number of times. I then coded my data according to the following major recurring themes that emerged from my first read-through of the participant interviews: empowerment; resistance; camaraderie; industrialisation; fear; safety; sadness; insecurity; despair; hopelessness; broken promises; anger and frustration. I also coded according to my research questions. I then created a table for each research question, noting down the participant's name and what he or she had said related to that question. This allowed me to see where there were similarities and differences. This chapter will use the key research questions that I used in this study as the organising principle:

1. Who/what do members of the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA) learn from?
2. Is this learning mainly formal/non-formal/informal?
3. What constitutes the content of their learning?
4. How do members of the CRRA relate their learning to the struggles of the organisation?

Who/what do members of the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association (CRRA) learn from?

Most of the research participants stated that they learned from their own personal experiences, from the experiences of others, from prominent people in the community, and especially from elders within community organisations. They stated that they learned through attending meetings, planning campaigns, attending CRRA council meetings and meetings of other community organisations in which they were active. Many of the participants also

stated that they learned from attending city council meetings where they had to negotiate with city council officials on behalf of their community. People had learned from newspaper articles, pamphlets, watching television, researching topics of interests, etc.

Elders from the Clairwood community, who were active members of community organisations, were cited as a popular learning resource by all of the participants due to their rich history with the community and their long track record of activism in the Clairwood community. Both young and old participants saw these elders as an invaluable learning resource. Max Moodley offered that he learned a lot from questioning elders from the community to better understand the rich and long history of Clairwood which, often, was not recorded and, if recorded, was not always accessible to residents. Hence it was therefore necessary to rely on oral history from elders. The deep respect for the elders of the community was very evident from discussions with all participants. Many elders have been involved in community work and especially with the CRRA for many decades and some are still very actively involved, like participant Krish Nair. Krish is a feisty 77 year old who is still very active in the activities of the CRRA, the Clairwood senior citizens group and the Clairwood Community Police Forum. Many of the participants describe Krish as the doyenne of the Clairwood struggle and rely on him heavily for advice and guidance on community issues. Max Moodley, who is presently the chairperson of the CRRA, waxes lyrical about the role played by the elders of the Clairwood community. He praises their resolve to take on the city council and their perseverance in championing the Clairwood struggle. In conclusion, the elders from the community, as stated earlier, were described by many participants as the 'glue' that kept the community together and all participants cited them as a vital learning resource.

The relationships between most members in my research study spans many decades. Most participants have known each other their entire lives and hence their families have become close through civic, political, social, environmental and/or cultural activities within the Clairwood community. These unique relationships have definitely impacted on their learning relationships, as participants indicated that they were comfortable to learn from each other as they had known each other very well as residents of Clairwood and as activists working alongside each other on community projects.

These solid relationships definitely benefitted the Clairwood struggle since people were familiar with each other through their shared history and experiences and their combined passion to resolve the many civic, political, social and environmental issues that plagued their community. However, I observed that when relationships within community organisations were strained, this also affected people's personal lives. For example, Navin Singh, who for many decades was an active member of the CRRA, had a fallout due to differing opinions on the direction the organisation was moving with their negotiations with the city council. He resigned as an executive member of the CRRA and joined other community organisations. His resignation from the CRRA also impacted on his personal relationship with other members of the organisation, some of whom isolated him and criticised his decision to resign from the CRRA and to become more involved in the Clairwood Community Policing Forum and the newly-formed Clairwood Social Forum. These strained relationships were the cause of much bitterness and unhappiness for Navin and his family. He said that there were times when he felt ostracised from his comrades in the CRRA. It is, therefore, evident that in many cases, one's community work and life as an activist are often an extension of one's personal life.

Newspaper articles, pamphlets on issues affecting the community, attending meetings and being involved in discussions during and after these meetings, were also identified as important learning resources. All participants vented their frustration with the mainstream media who did not give enough coverage to issues affecting Clairwood in comparison to the coverage they gave to the neighbouring Bluff area. All participants stated that they learned from pamphlets produced by community organisations which gave them sufficient information about issues affecting the community and, often, updated reports on negotiations with relevant parties like the city council.

Some participants stated that, through attending meetings of the various community organisations that they belonged to and by attending public mass meetings on relevant issues, they gained valuable writing and public speaking skills, which increased their confidence and improved their participation within these organisations. Krish Nair reflected that he learned from council documents in his numerous meetings with the Ethekewini City Council. He thus became familiar with the laws, principles and policies of the city council and hence became very confident to negotiate with government and city council officials. In my interview with

Mr Nair it was very evident that he clearly understood the laws and policies of the city council and could recall names and dates of relevant council policies and laws. He also hinted that city council officials were often surprised and intimidated by the fact that residents of Clairwood who were negotiating with them had such an in-depth understanding of these laws and policies.

Some participants, especially the older participants, said that they learned a lot from watching television, especially the news and current affairs programmes. Watching the evening news was a routine that they all followed. This increased their awareness of current affairs matters within the country and often helped to contextualise the Clairwood struggle within the government's broader industrialisation strategy. On the other hand, the only young participant stated that she learned from social media and other forms of technology about the news and happenings in the country and world.

Many of the participants were actively involved with other religious and cultural organisations within Clairwood, but only two participants referred to learning from these. Navin Singh stated that his Hindu philosophy was the basis of most of his learning experiences. He attributed this to his parents and the Hindu home in which he was raised. He went on to state that he still used this philosophy to raise his children and as the ethos of his home and life. The other participant was Shahnaaz, who was brought up in an Islamic home in which caring and giving to the community is a key philosophy. She cited this as a basis for her community involvement and pointed out that her upbringing and her vast travel experiences were significant learning resources in her life. Her travel experiences made her more aware of the inequalities within South Africa and, more especially, of the disadvantaged communities like Clairwood. She was also involved in feeding schemes for the poor in the Clairwood community.

Adele Naidoo said that she learned from her teachers and parents. As the youngest participant, she emphasised that she was very influenced by both her parents, who were active community activists. She learned from listening to her parents talk about issues affecting the community and, as she got older, through many conversations with them on the many issues affecting the community.

Some differences in learning sources are apparent across gender and age lines. Both Ramola and Shahnaaz, both females and housewives in their forties, mentioned that they learned a lot from conversations with friends and neighbours, and acknowledged that this medium was an integral part of their learning process. They stressed that they enjoy 'chatting' to their friends and neighbours about issues affecting the community or what someone had heard on radio, watched on television or read in a newspaper or magazine. These discussions usually involved real stories and lots of emotion which they enjoyed and identified with. Thus this feeds into the generalisation that women like to talk about issues affecting them and often feel better once they have shared what is bothering them and, hence, seek the comfort of talking to and listening to others. These women stated that they were also concerned about issues that were not necessarily overtly addressed by community organisations.

Ramola was concerned about the safety of her children and the fact that she could not keep her house as clean as she would like to because of the constant dust caused by industries and the trucks in the area. She complained that her washing was often soiled by dust, and that if she kept her windows and doors open, the interior of her house was covered with a film of dust. She found this annoying and as a proud housewife she found this situation very challenging. Shahnaaz had to look after an ailing parent and the bleak situation that Clairwood had catapulted into was very alarming to her. She said that as a single female it was no longer safe to walk or drive by herself as the area had attracted many unsavoury characters who hang out in the area. She also stated that, in the past few years, car hijacking incidents were on the increase in the Clairwood area.

Local football clubs and sporting bodies were an important source of learning for Max Moodley, who whilst being a senior leader of the CRRA, was a keen sportsman and an active member of these sporting bodies. He said that he learned a lot about local issues from playing soccer with the local football clubs. This gave him an opportunity to speak to local residents and to hear what was bothering them and how they felt about the work done by organisations like the CRRA. Members of the football clubs were residents from Clairwood and many neighbouring suburbs and came from all race groups. These soccer players got to know and trust Navin and he stated that they felt at ease to complain to him about issues that affected them, and often would expect him to take up these issues.

Only Adele, the youngest participant, cited her teachers as an important learning source. This could be due to her very recent schooling experience. She also made reference to an environmental workshop that she attended as a source of learning. She is a fourth year medical student at the Nelson Mandela Medical School in Durban and reads broadly. Her reading is not restricted to newspapers and pamphlets like the rest of the participants. This could be attributed to her university experience and studies.

In conclusion I will explore the similarities and differences that emerged across the participants' responses and attempt to comment on why they are similar or different. Firstly, we see that there are obvious differences between the young and old participants and between the male and female participants; between the more religious participants and those that are not so religious; and between participants from the different organisations in the Clairwood area. The older participants, whilst clearly upset about the slow pace of the progress of the Clairwood struggle, were far more patient and still believed in negotiating with the city council, even though the council had made countless promises which they historically did not keep. The younger participant was very impatient with the slow progress of negotiations and blamed the older community members who were negotiating with the city council. She was agitated and annoyed at the slow rate of progress in finding a solution to Clairwood's problems and suggested that other more radical options need to be explored to find a speedy and final solution to the Clairwood problem.

There were also obvious differences between the concerns of the male and female participants. The male participants were concerned about issues like the state of council negotiations, council proposals, present and future campaigns to raise awareness of the plight of Clairwood, etc., whilst the two participants who are housewives were concerned with issues of safety, hygiene and cleanliness of the suburb, the increase in crime and prostitution, and the ongoing environmental pollution of the area.

Those participants that were more religiously inclined than other participants seemed to be far more concerned with helping residents to solve their immediate problems like enrolment of children at school, distribution of stationery to disadvantaged school pupils, caring for the aged and with the feeding schemes to distribute food to the needy and indigent residents of the community. Navin and Shahnaaz, both very religious and guided by their religious

teachings, were similar in their common concerns for the needy residents and were both actively involved in the Clairwood Social Forum and in the feeding schemes that were run by the mosque in the Clairwood area.

There were also notable differences between the organisations to which the participants belonged. Participants that belonged to the CRRA were generally concerned with long-term solutions, whilst participants that were active in the Clairwood Social Forum were short-term orientated, with a very hands-on approach, and were far more available and visible to the community. Navin Singh, who resigned from the CRRA after being a senior member for many decades, cited his frustration at the slow rate of progress made by the CRRA and this impatience drove him to put his energy into the Clairwood Social Forum and the Clairwood Community Policing Forum, which he describes as far more active organisations in the Clairwood area.

There are many similarities between the participants' responses and these centred around their shared experiences of having lived in the same area; from going to the same schools; as members of the same organisations; and from sharing the same experiences of the impact of increasing industrialisation of Clairwood and forced relocations of most of the former residents. The result was loss of friends and neighbours, severed relationships between those residents who relocated to newly-formed residential areas and those who decided to stay and continue the fight with the city council. All participants were similar in their responses to how they felt about finding a solution to the Clairwood problems and in their resolve to never give up the fight.

Is this learning mainly formal/non-formal/informal?

As discussed above, formal learning tends to refer to learning that is dictated by an established curriculum, within an institutionalized setting (Livingstone, 2001; Schugurensky, 2006), whilst non-formal learning is characterized by the learner's own will to learn voluntarily with the assistance of an educator. Informal learning refers to incidental and spontaneous learning that occurs in daily life (Schugurensky, 2006).

All participants, when asked whether their learning was mainly formal/non-formal/informal, stated that they thought it was informal. Formal learning referred mainly to learning at school for most of the participants, except for Navin and Adele, who referred to their university experience. The former went to university in the 1970s and the latter is currently a fourth year university student at the Nelson Mandela Medical School at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. All participants understood formal learning to be structured learning that occurred in a school or at university, they all associated formal learning with a structured curriculum, examinations and tests, and conducted by teachers or lecturers.

All participants alluded to the fact that most of their learning was through interacting with others at community organisation meetings like those of the CRRA and the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA), public mass meetings and sub-committee meetings. They said that this often took the form of either listening to speakers informing them of issues affecting the community of Clairwood, report back on progress of campaigns addressing these issues, or on the state of negotiations with the city council or the government to resolve these issues. They also stated that they also learned from the discussions that took place during and after the meetings. These discussions seemed to be a notable form of the informal learning that participants cited.

Almost all participants stated that they learned informally from talking to other people, listening to their views on relevant issues, especially issues affecting the Clairwood community and current affairs topics. Through this listening and sharing of views and opinions, a vast amount of informal learning occurred. Integrated with this kind of learning were the life experiences of the participants and the people with whom they associated. Thus one can say that life experiences formed a vital source of informal learning.

Learning informally through community work (i.e. through taking action) was cited by all participants as a major form of learning, through their involvement in campaigns, community projects, education drives, placard demonstrations, picketing, pamphlet distributions, distribution of grocery hampers, school enrolments, etc. Through their involvement in these community activities, participants learned more about key community challenges, the related history and background to these issues and, of course, they learned about each other and through their own personal experiences. Thus all participants said that they learned informally from interacting with others.

Newspaper articles were cited by all participants as an important informal source of learning. Whilst being critical of the newspapers due to their bias in allocating adequate coverage to Clairwood issues, all participants still read the newspapers to be better informed of current affairs within South Africa, Durban and Clairwood. They commented that the local newspapers like the *Rising Sun* gave more coverage to issues affecting Clairwood than the mainstream newspapers.

Shahnaaz and Ramola, both stay-at-home women, stated that they learned informally from regular conversations that they had with friends and neighbours on a wide range of topics, ranging from current affairs to pollution to the education crisis and to their concerns about the rapidly declining state of Clairwood from a bustling residential suburb to its present derelict state.

Adele stated that she learned informally through conversations and discussions with her parents who are active community workers in the Clairwood area - she learned a lot about the history of the area and about past struggles from her dad who served at executive level on many of the major community organisations. These learnings were often around the dinner table or whilst driving to school. Hence she came to better understand the struggle waged by the community through listening to her parents and through asking numerous questions. It is clear from my interview with her that she greatly values the lessons learned informally through these interactions. Adele presents as far more mature for her age than other 22 year olds - I am suggesting that this is due to her experiences living in Clairwood and as an active member of several community organisations and, of course, the vast influence of her parents as she was growing up.

The elders in the community who were actively involved in the struggle in Clairwood were cited as an extremely valuable informal learning resource. Through conversations about many issues affecting Clairwood, participants learned about issues like the history of Clairwood and South Africa, the role of Indian people in the broader South African struggle for liberation, their personal experience from negotiating with the city council and other government structures. Max, who is a senior leader in the CRRA, was especially appreciative of this informal learning resource as he attributes much of his knowledge and experience from his interaction with these stalwarts of the Clairwood community.

Adele was the only participant who acknowledged that she had experienced non-formal learning, through attending an environmental workshop conducted by SDCEA where she was involved in amending and developing a viable evacuation plan for the Clairwood area. This was done through listening to presentations, plenary and group discussions and through feedback and reporting sessions. I think that many of the other participants had also experienced this form of learning but did not recognise it as non-formal learning as they were probably only familiar with the terms formal or informal learning.

What constitutes the content of their learning?

I have grouped their learning into the following broad categories viz. skills, knowledge and attitudes.

Skills

Most participants acknowledged that, through their involvement with community organisations, they had learned about meeting procedures whereby they have become confident to conduct meetings. Navin recalled that he learned the technical skills required to draft official documents through his involvement with community organisations and through his experience of representing the community at meetings with the city council. Through his involvement in community organisations, Navin also learned effective research skills whilst co-ordinating several political, social and environmental campaigns. Krish and Max, who are very actively involved with the CRRA at senior leadership level, made reference to the negotiation skills that they acquired informally through attending meetings with the city council. As stated earlier, these negotiation skills that they acquired, gave these participants the confidence they needed to negotiate with the city council.

Participants also learned to improve on their letter writing skills through their involvement in community organisations. They were often called upon to write letters to the press, the city council, other local organisations, the police, etc. Most participants stated that they learned about proposed new developments in the South Durban area and, in particular, in Clairwood through attending community meetings and through the newspapers. Participants also learned about current issues challenging the community, such as the 'The Back of Port Expansion'

which is the council's industrial strategy for The Durban South area including Clairwood. They also learned from attending CRRA meetings, public report back meetings, newspapers, pamphlets or by word of mouth.

Knowledge

Most participants learned about the history of South Africa, Clairwood and the Indian community from the elders in the community who were involved in the Clairwood struggle. This information helped them to contextualise the present struggles and campaigns and to better understand issues affecting the community. Krish was adamant about the wealth of this type of knowledge and the importance for elders to share and for younger people to listen, so that they could become more aware. Adele, the youngest participant, concurred with Krish's view of the importance of understanding history - she felt that most people her age do not really care about these things and this concerned her.

Participants also acknowledged that, whilst doing community work, they learned about other people and their experiences through conversations. Participants learned about the news and current happenings from reading newspapers and watching television. Adele learned about the development of an evacuation plan for Clairwood by attending a SDCEA workshop. She also learned about issues affecting the community like crime, drugs and alcohol through her involvement in the Community Policing Forum where she was able to access crime statistics for the Clairwood area. Most participants said that they continually learned about organisations like the CRRA and community activities from community newspapers, posters and word of mouth.

Attitudes

Many participants stated that they learned to think critically, to question the existing status quo and to look for alternative answers if they were not happy with the answers that they got - they look beyond the surface and no longer take things at face value. Krish stated that he learned the importance of encouraging people to get involved in community work and to fight for their basic human rights. Max shared similar learnings to Krish in that he stated that he learned a great deal about the history of the broader struggle in South Africa and the parallels to the Clairwood situation. Max also stated that he learned the importance of endurance and perseverance and also learned to understand what motivated people. Through her experience

with community organisations, especially the CRRA and through the many campaigns that she has been involved in, Shahnaaz acknowledged that she had learned to be more tolerant of others, to be more patient and the importance of working hard and co-operating with others in an organisation. Navin mentioned that he learned about ethics via his involvement in community organisations and the struggle in South Africa. Changes in behaviour and critical thinking characterised much of what participants learned.

How do members of the CRRA relate their learning to the struggles of the organization?

As is clear, all the participants have been very active members of the CRRA and other community organisations. They have spent time attending council and community meetings, negotiating with the city council, and in activities like door-to-door visits to inform, or to rally the support of, the residents of Clairwood for the many campaigns that the CRRA and other organisations waged in their struggle. Their learnings were translated into their ability to develop and implement strategies to further the struggle in Clairwood; to recruit and sustain activists who were committed to the struggle in Clairwood; and to sustain their resilient spirit to continue to wage a struggle in Clairwood which has been inundated with untold obstacles.

Some of these learnings have been from outside of the organisation and outside of the struggle, but have nevertheless proved useful to the struggle. Many participants, through their work experiences or through involvement in trade unions, organisations like the Natal Indian Congress and sports bodies, were equipped with leadership, organisational, administrative and negotiating skills, all of which were vital in sustaining the CRRA in its struggle. Navin is a very creative writer, and he has used this skill to develop and design the CRRA posters and pamphlets which were key in mobilising the community on important campaigns. More recently, Adele, the youngest participant, has used social media to raise awareness of the plight of Clairwood and its ongoing struggle with the municipality. Max, who has been very involved in many of the sporting bodies in and out of the area, has used this network as a means to mobilise activists for the CRRA, especially in mass campaigns. Max was also a businessman in the area and has a reputation for tough negotiating skills - this was often displayed in his negotiations with the municipality as part of the CRRA delegation. As

discussed above, some of the participants stated that the basis of their involvement in the struggle was their religious teachings. All of the participants said that they felt it was their moral obligation to be actively involved in the struggle in Clairwood and in the broader South Africa.

However, most of what the participants have learned is clearly from the struggle itself. Some of the key things they have learned is to persevere; to communicate more effectively; and to be patient and understanding. However, many of them have learned how to become excellent negotiators; how to conduct meetings and how to write minutes of meetings. They also learned how to write letters to the city council and the press, and some participants learned how to design pamphlets and posters and, by doing this, learned how to operate the printing press and silkscreens used for this purpose. Krish, Max and Navin, all in leadership positions in the CRRRA, learned how to address public meetings, give interviews and to consult with lawyers whenever necessary. They all learned the importance of ensuring that they had the support of the community and the importance of reporting back to the community after negotiations with the city council. So participants have learned a range of useful skills, knowledge and attitudes from the struggle, and also for the struggle.

So much of what the participants reported they had learned relates directly to the struggle. However, they were not always consciously aware of this. Foley (1999), whilst making reference to a group of Australian activists involved in a campaign to save the rain forests, said the learning they had experienced in this struggle was not articulated until he interviewed the activists about it many years after the campaign. Foley (1999) thus argues that the most interesting and significant learning often occurs informally and incidentally in people's everyday lives: "the most powerful learning occurs as people struggle against oppression, as they struggle to make sense of what is happening to them and to work out ways of doing something about it" (p.2). But this learning is "tacit, embedded in action and is often not recognized as learning" (p.3).

What is clear from my study is that most of the learning my research participants reported was indeed informal and incidental, as Foley (1999) suggested, and much of it occurred whilst people tried to work out what has happened in Clairwood and why. It was also very evident in my interviews with the participants that, like the Australian activists Foley discussed, they were not always conscious of what they had learned. When questioned about

the learning that occurred through their involvement in the struggle in Clairwood, all participants were taken aback - they often had to take time to process this question. Many responded that they had not actually thought about it. But on reflecting further, they recounted many examples of the actual learning that had occurred and which they had taken for granted. As has been seen above, participants have, in fact, learned a great deal from their experiences in the Clairwood struggle. This finding – that participants were not always aware of their learning – calls into question the extent to which they had actually reflected on their experiences.

Thus in this next section I will attempt to show how my study relates to the theory underpinning this dissertation, i.e. experiential learning theory. I will use Jarvis' model of experiential learning to consider how the data collected during my interviews relates to the theory, and vice versa. Jarvis' model suggests that some people learn from a learning intervention, others do not; some reflect on their experiences whilst others don't; and some people learn through methods such as memorisation, whilst many people do not even think about their learning experience due to their busy lifestyles. Jarvis argues that an experience, whether in a social setting or once-off, could have an impact on the person or could render him or her unchanged by the experience. Thus, whilst all learning is derived from experience, not all experience leads to learning.

I will thus consider the participants, the 'situatedness' of their experience of struggle, and how they responded to their experience - i.e. whether or not they reflected on it and, if so, how. Finally, I will consider whether this process left them changed or unchanged, in Jarvis' thinking.

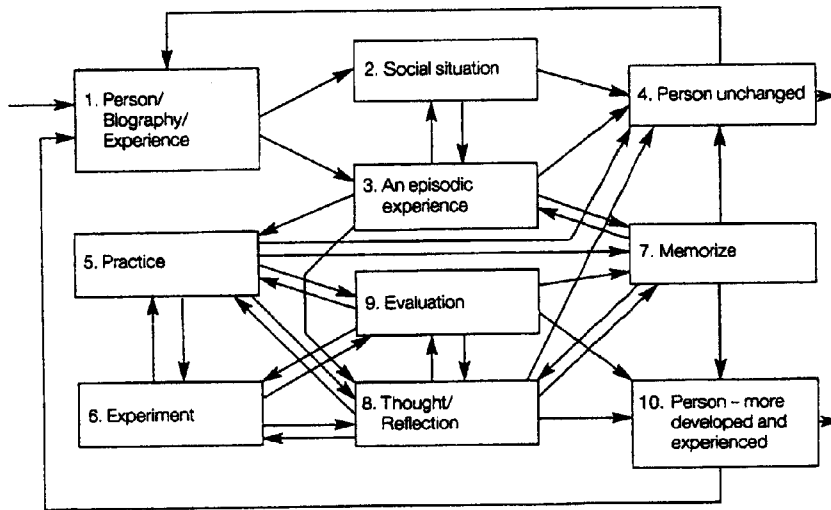


Figure 9: Jarvis' revised model of experiential learning

In terms of who the 'person' is (Jarvis' box no.1), as already discussed, there were six participants in my study, all of them are presently living in Clairwood. Three of them are male, and three female, and they are of varying ages and employment. Three of the participants have a tertiary qualification, and all of them, except Krish, completed matric. Thus the participants vary quite widely. However, there are obviously also significant similarities. Five of them were born in Clairwood and hence have lived all their life in Clairwood, whilst the sixth, Ramola, married a person from Clairwood. All of them live in their own homes in Clairwood, and all of them are active members of community organisations. All of them, except the student Adele, stated they also belonged to a religious organisation in the Clairwood area.

What is thus similar about the individuals is the situation within which they find themselves (Jarvis' box no.2). As discussed in Chapter Three, Jarvis and Boud both argue that all experience is situated; so where and how a situation happens, matters. As explored in Chapters One and Two, Clairwood was a thriving residential area characterised by a multi-racial community. However, the area has undergone a dramatic industrialisation process, worsened in the recent past by the city council's 'Back of Port Expansion' strategy. The community has resisted this process over a number of decades.

What is thus also fairly clearly a similarity is their experience of this struggle (Jarvis' box no.3). All the participants have a shared experience of living in the same community and belonging to many of the same organisations, and all of them have been determined not to leave Clairwood to move to another area. They have witnessed many of their friends and family leave for areas like Phoenix and Chatsworth, but they have remained steadfast and refused to move. They were all united in their common determination to restore Clairwood to its original residential status, to thwart the council's industrialisation plans and to decrease the environmental pollution that affects the community.

How has this experience affected them? I do not think that any of the participants were 'unchanged' (Jarvis' box no.4). Rather, I think that all of the participants in my study were radically changed by their experiences as activists in the struggle in Clairwood (and obviously learned a lot). This was evident from the responses to the questions in my interviews with them where they expressed their commitment to the struggle in Clairwood and all indicated a very strong resolve to keep fighting for the dignity of Clairwood.

I think there is some evidence that all of the participants practiced and experiment (Jarvis' boxes no.5 & 6), in that they applied what they had learned from various sources to the struggle in Clairwood, as considered above, and used them actively in their struggle.

In contrast, there is little evidence of memorisation (Jarvis' box no.7), although Krish was able to quote verbatim most of the bylaws and regulations that impacted on Clairwood.

All of the participants displayed the ability to show thought and reflection (Jarvis' box no.8), and I believe had reflected on their experience of struggle (although not necessarily on their learning from this). I observed this in the manner in which they expressed themselves in the interviews, and when they outlined the problems that they experienced as residents of Clairwood. Their ability to logically explain the problem and outline the deductions that they made from their reflection was clear.

I also believe that there was an evaluative component to their reflection in some cases (Jarvis' box no.9). For example, the male participants seemed to be impatient with the city council and the growing industrialisation of the area, but two of them were hopeful that their negotiations with the city council would still be successful. The other, Navin, was not as

confident about this, and as a result he was disillusioned with the tactics employed by the CRRA and subsequently resigned from the CRRA. The youngest participant was scathing in her criticism of the manner in which the older members of the CRRA were pursuing negotiations with the city council. She felt that they were too patient and that they were letting the community down. She had thus begun exploring other options and avenues of furthering the Clairwood struggle. These examples suggest that at least some of the participants have undergone a process of evaluation of the struggle.

I would thus argue that all of the participants are changed – developed and more experienced (Jarvis' box no.10) - as a result of the struggle, although this is not necessarily to the same degree. Jarvis (2001) argues that only by engaging with and applying practically what one has experienced through reflection and evaluation of one's experience, will a person learn. I would argue that my research suggests this to be true in this case – the practical, ongoing experience of struggle has required people not simply to acquire a range of skills, knowledge and attitudes, but to apply these. Boud's (1989) argument that some of one's learning, if one is critically reflective, can be for social change, is also clearly borne out by the evidence. Thus experiential learning theory appears to be a useful and valid theory for exploring learning through struggle.

Appendix 1: Interview schedule

Thank you for agreeing to my request to interview you, as stated at our earlier meeting, I am a student from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and I am presently studying towards a Masters in Adult Education. As part of my studies, I have to complete a mini dissertation. I have chosen to focus on how adults learn in community organisation in particular the Clairwood Ratepayers and Residents Association. My interest in the struggles of the residents of Clairwood stems from my experience as a student and community activist in neighbouring Merebank from the early 1980s. On a more personal level, my mum lived in Clairwood all her life, and I have very fond memories of holidays at my grandmother's house in Clairwood. I recall Clairwood as a bustling residential area. I have come to wonder how we learn through the process of being members of a community organisation, in particular the CRRA. I am interested in how ordinary people through their involvement in such organisations are prompted into action and hence become campaigners of change, often taking on and challenging the might of the state with their limited resources. I would be very grateful if you would participate in my study, as your experiences are invaluable and apart from helping with this research you can contribute to recording this piece of rich history for our children and future generations.

I want to assure you at the outset that I would like you to be as comfortable as you can and not to be intimidated by me or the interview, and if at any time during the course of the interview, you need clarification or you are unsure or uncomfortable with the question/s asked, please stop me and let me know. I would like you to please read and sign the informed consent form that I have designed specifically for my study.

1. Tell me a bit about yourself - How long have you lived in Clairwood?
 - If not born here, why did you move here?
 - How do you feel about living in Clairwood?
2. Have you been involved in any other organizations? Which ones and why?
 - Could you please describe the background to your organization and explain how it has developed.
 - Describe some of the main issues that your organization is involved in or tackles.

3. How did / does the CRRA mobilize the community around these issues?
4. I am interested in discovering how members of the CRRA learn within the organization.
 - What do you understand by the term "learning"?
 - Do you learn differently now than from when you were younger or when you were at school? Explain.
 - As a member of the CRRA have you or any other members learned anything in the organization and if yes, how did you learn?
5. What issues do you think have been most important or pressing recently in the community?
6. How did you learn about these issues? (probe further about when/ how and whom did you learn from)
7. To what extent do you think that this learning has impacted on yourself and your organization?
8. Do you think that you have learned sufficient about new developments in Clairwood?
9. Would you describe the members in your organization as social activists?
10. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me?

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