

**MUSIC BEHIND BARS: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF MUSIC AS A TOOL FOR
REHABILITATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF OFFENDERS AT MTHATHA
MEDIUM CORRECTIONAL CENTRE**

Zoliswa Twani

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand,
Johannesburg, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Music.**

SUPERVISOR: CHRISTINE ELIZABETH LUCIA

Johannesburg, 2011

ABSTRACT

My interest in conducting this empirical research exploring music as a tool for rehabilitation and empowerment of prison offenders was sparked by my observation in 2002 of the problematic use of music at Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre (MMCC). Music activities were simply a microcosm of music activities outside prison, and despite the existence of the National Offenders Choir Competitions (NOCC) since 1997, neither offenders nor Department of Correctional Services (DCS) Officials seemed to regard participation in such activities as music education, let alone rehabilitative or empowering. In 2007 I conducted a one-year Participatory Action Research project of four cycles or stages, in the prison, intended to work towards developing and improving musical, self-reflexive, and other life skills. I then used Michel Foucault's notion of 'panopticism' (1978) and Paulo Freire's theory of 'conscientização' (1970) to interpret the music styles, practices, and performances developed during the project and their impact on those involved.

Two central questions underpinning this study are, 'To what extent do music activities subvert the watchfulness of the prison system and environment?' and 'How does music encourage offenders to transcend their prisoner status and reinvent their lives as musicians 'behind bars', better able to reintegrate into society as rehabilitated citizens?' Through narrative enquiry and thematic content analysis I examine how the participants' critical consciousness about music and about themselves was raised and the way in which the praxis (reflection and action) method had changed their lives. In the light of the results from this approach and context, I devised a set of recommendations for a music education curriculum for implementation in South African prisons,

suggesting that it be implemented using a dialogical life long learning (DLLL) theoretical approach.

Keywords: prison, ‘panopticon’ or ‘panopticism’, conscientização, reintegration, rehabilitation, participatory action research, narrative enquiry, thematic content analysis, praxis, and dialogical life long learning theory.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Zoliswa Twani

(Name of Candidate)

15th day of August 2011.

DEDICATION

This research study is dedicated to many people. It is especially dedicated:

1. To the research actors that are the subjects of this study, especially the offenders: Mr Ngxishe, Mosa and Vuyo Sis Makholi, it was a delight to work with you. To all of you, it was through your cooperation and willingness to be part of this study that I was able to explore and understand the extent of music's contribution to the successes and failures in our lives.
2. To my husband Zandisile (Sbali) and daughters Mbasakazi and Khanyisa for their understanding and patience.
3. To my recently deceased mother (Pearl Liwile Fikelepi) who prayerfully and domestically supported this work.
4. To my three sisters and family: Ursula Nobulali, Tembeka and Noxolo as well as my four nieces: Babalwa, Bongiwe (Nototosi), Nosipho and Sihle.
5. To the special family friends and prayer partners in my life: Tinny, Nokwanda, Nyameka, Nontlaza and Nela.
6. To my recently deceased mother-in-law, Eunice Nombewu who emphatically supported the extension of my surname to include my maiden surname – Fikelepi.
7. Importantly, to God for Rhema Umtata Christian Church's Prison Ministry, through whom came the wisdom and the seed to embark on this PhD dissertation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the support and efforts of the following people and organisations without whom this research study would have been accomplished:

1. My promoter, supervisor and mentor, Professor Christine Lucia, for helping me from the initial (proposal development) stages of this research, and for her patience, encouragement, loving, caring and critical but underplayed reprimands and yet valued assistance throughout my entire study. I appreciate and value your professional judgement and wisdom in finding experts of international standing to examine my thesis. Thanks a million for this enhancing of the credibility value of my work.
2. My special former student, colleague and friend, Tembela Vokwana for a life changing advice to request the services of Prof. Christine Lucia to supervise my doctoral thesis.
3. A very special colleague, mentor and friend, Dr N.N. Mabovula for constant and untiring support throughout my journey, I will never forget November/ December 2009.
4. Financial support from: The National Research Foundation's (NRF) Prestige and Equity Scholarship; University of the Witwatersrand's SAMP/NRF Project; South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO); Unitra/Walter Sisulu University (WSU) Vice Chancellor's and research office under the directorship of Prof. E.A. Akrofi and his assistant, Mrs. Penny Dawson. Also, to my recent employer – Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Research Capacity Development office - for funding the final production of this thesis, and to the Eastern Cape Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture for funding certificates of participation and for support with providing research evaluators.
5. A special acknowledgement to the South African Department of Correctional Services (DCS) and Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre Management Area for permission, approval. and guidance for conducting this research study.
6. Priscilla Hall, thank you so much for editing my work and the useful and valuable comments you made. I am greatly indebted to you for the new knowledge gained.
7. Professor Jean Kidula of Georgia University. I appreciate every minute you spent on critiquing my work. May God bless you for the seeds you have planted. I love you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	
Abstract	ii
Declaration	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Chapter 1: Orientation and background	1
1.1 Introduction and background of the study	1
1.2 The South African prison system	4
1.3 Current rehabilitation initiatives	6
1.4 History of the NOCC	7
1.5 The arts and rehabilitation in South African prisons	9
1.6 South African choral music outside prisons	10
1.7 South African prisons and music	13
1.8 Prison programmes: An international perspective	15
1.9 Motivation for the research methodology	19
1.10 Theoretical framework	27
1.11 Concluding thoughts	35
Chapter 2: Introductory cycle and activating workshop	36
2.1 Introduction	36
2.2 Preparatory meetings	36
2.3 Cycle 1	43
2.3.1 Cycle 1: Activating workshop Part 1: Expectation	43
2.3.2 Cycle 1: Activating workshop Part 2: Explanation	50
2.3.3 Cycle 1: Activating workshop Part 3: Participation	54
2.4 During Cycle 1	58
2.5 Cycle-end meeting of Cycle 1	66

2.6 Concluding thoughts	72
-------------------------	----

Chapter 3: Second cycle: Research into topics and evaluation of oral and practical presentations by offenders **73**

3.1 Introduction	73
3.2 Cycle 2: Part 1: Activities of the 11 music circles	75
3.2.1 Learning basic music theory: <i>Masifunde Sonke</i> (Let Us Learn Together)	75
3.2.2 <i>Sifunda Ukusina uHubhe</i> (We are learning to perform) <i>uHubhe: Thuthukani Mampondo</i>	78
3.2.3 Learning to read tonic solfa notation: Double Quartet	83
3.2.4 <i>Sifundisana Ukusina</i> (We are teaching each other how to perform) <i>Indlame: Nyandeni Cultural Group</i>	86
3.2.5 Learning <i>Isicathamiya</i> Dance Steps: The Peacemakers	90
3.2.6 <i>Imfene Isinwa Njani?</i> (How is <i>Imfene</i> performed?): <i>Masibuyekeze</i> (Let us restore)	92
3.2.7 Learning to sing Gospel songs: The Juvenile Gospel Group	93
3.2.8 We are learning to play the recorder: The Recorder Group	96
3.2.9 Basic conducting and singing skills: Mthatha Choir	99
3.2.10 Learning to read and write staff notation: Music Literacy Group	100
3.2.11 Learning two Gospel songs and keyboard skills: <i>Masakhane</i> Gospel Group	103
3.3 Cycle 2: Part 2: cycle-end meeting	107
3.3.1 First day of cycle-end meeting of Cycle 2: 29 June 2007	108
3.3.2 Second day of cycle-end meeting	114
3.3.3 Evaluation of the music circles and comments by invited participants	117
3.4 Concluding thoughts	120

Chapter 4: Third cycle: Continuing with research topics and

impromptu cycle-end meeting	126
4.1 Introduction	126
4.2 Cycle 3: Part 1	127
4.2.1 Growth and development in Cycle 3	128
4.3 Activities of the music circles	130
4.3.1 <i>Thuthukani Mampondo – UHubhe</i> Music Circle	130
4.3.2 The Choir Music Circle	133
4.3.3 The Conquerors - Double Quartet Music Circle	136
4.3.4 The Peacemakers - <i>Isicathamiya</i> Music Circle	139
4.3.5 The Recorder Music Circle	141
4.3.6 The Juvenile Gospel and the Keyboard Music Circle	143
4.3.7 Nyandeni Cultural Group – <i>Indlame</i> Music Circle	146
4.3.8 Nyandeni <i>YakuMdepha</i> - <i>Indlame</i> Music Circle	146
4.3.9 The Hip-Hop Kwaito Music Circle	149
4.3.10 The Spiritual Dance Music Circle	152
4.3.11 The Visual Art Music Circle	154
4.4 Cycle 3: Part 2: The cycle-end meeting	156
4.4.1 Integration of music and other life skills in the <i>Isicathamiya</i> music circle: The Peacemakers	158
4.4.2 Acquisition of PAR-related skills and knowledge by the Hip-Hop Kwaito Music Circle	160
4.4.3 Leadership and management by <i>Indlame yase Nyandeni</i> – <i>Indlame</i> Music Circle	160
4.4.4 Teaching and learning strategies in the Spiritual Dance Music Circle	162
4.4.5 Practical presentations	162
4.5 Concluding thoughts	163
Chapter 5: Fourth cycle and end of MPAR project	165
5.1 Introduction	165
5.2 Cycle 4: Part 1	168

5.2.1 <i>Nyandeni yakuMdepha - Indlame</i> Music Circle	169
5.2.2 <i>Indlame yase Nyandeni – Indlame</i> Music Circle	175
5.2.3 The Recorder Music Circle	176
5.2.4 The Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard Music Circle	181
5.2.5 Hip-Hop <i>Kwaito</i> Music Circle	184
5.2.6 Spiritual Dance Music Circle	188
5.2.7 The Peacemakers – <i>Isicathamiya</i> Music Circle	191
5.3 Cycle 4 Part 2: Cycle-end meeting	193
5.4 Concluding thoughts: Overview of the evaluation process	199

Chapter 6: Implications from data presentation and data analysis **203**

6.1 Introduction: Identification of themes arising out of the project	203
6.2 Hopes and aspirations	205
6.3 Gaps in education	206
6.4 Prior knowledge brought in by participants	209
6.5 Grasp of the PAR method	212
6.6 Programme content	215
6.7 Ways of learning	217
6.8 Interaction and knowledge production	221
6.9 Learning context and production of knowledge	223
6.10 The prison conditions	225
6.11 Life skills and values acquired	229
6.12 Perceptions of rehabilitation	231
6.13 summary of findings: successes and failures	235
6.14 Concluding thoughts	242

Chapter 7: Dialogical life long learning model for rehabilitation and empowerment of offenders through music education **245**

7.1 Introduction	245
7.2 Music education	246

7.3 Life long learning	248
7.4 Dialogical learning: Its underpinnings and a description	251
7.5 A dialogical lifelong learning (DLLL) method	254
7.6 Recommendations for DCS	255
7.7 Concluding comments	257
References	259
Appendix 1	268
Appendix 2	269
Appendix 3	274
Appendix 4	275
Appendix 5	279

Acronyms and glossary of terms

Acronyms:

AR	Action Research
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
DoE	Department of Education
DSRAC	Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture
HOD	Head of Department
MMCC	Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre
MPAR	Music Participatory Action Research
NOCC	National Offenders Choral Competitions
PAR	Participatory Action Research

Glossary of terms:

Area Manager: the most senior manager of Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre employed by DCS in South Africa.

Evaluators: research actors of a special category who are invited participants or subjects involved in the research as evaluators of the learning or research attempts of the research actors. They were music experts and / or research experts and participated only at cycle-end meetings.

Facilitator: main researcher in charge of the whole research / study or research project and author of this thesis.

Heads of Prison: senior managers who head the various departments of Mthatha Medium Correctional Services and serve under the Area Manager.

Inside and outside groups: research actors / participants or subjects involved in the research located inside the prison or outside the prison.

Local coordinators: participants / subjects or research actors who coordinated the research activities inside the prison.

Meetings: the research meetings of research actors where all the discussions, debates, practices, rehearsals and learning occurred, weekly, fortnightly and at the end of each cycle.

Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre: Mthatha prison / the prison / the centre.

Music circle learners: research actors / subjects or participants in their capacity as members or learners in the various music circles or research **groups** with whom and upon which research was enacted.

Music circles: research groups / music groups / classrooms where learning, practices; rehearsals and research took place. The term is indebted to Paulo Freire's 1993(1970) term 'culture circles' in which illiterate communities held discussion meetings to teach one another reading and writing skills.

Offenders: inmates or prisoners.

Research activities: music activities, research process inside and outside prison.

Research actors: all core researchers / participants or subjects in their various capacities: research leaders, research coordinators, local coordinators, music circle learners, facilitator and research evaluators involved in the research. This term emanates from the juxtaposition of the various tasks performed by the research actors as leaders, managers, contributors to knowledge production as learners and researchers in training throughout the project.

Research cycles: the four phases or stages of AR or PAR taking place within one year. In the case of this research, each cycle was carried over a period of three months and concluded with a cycle-end meeting. Thus 'cycle' here means something different from the one-year 'cycle' as used by other PAR researchers.

Research coordinators: research actors / participants/ subjects who coordinated the research process inside and outside prison.

Research leaders: participants / subjects / research actors leading the music circles.

Study: this research / research project / MPAR.

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

My first introduction to Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre (MMCC) was in 1997,¹ when I was a voluntary counsellor of young offenders and women offenders working in the Rhema Umtata Christian Church's prison ministry.² As a result of my experiences there and my encounter with the prison choir competitions I wrote a Masters thesis (Twani 2002) on music activities at MMCC, which proved a valuable and enriching experience, motivating me to continue my work at doctoral level. MMCC is an all-male precinct with four sections: a Juvenile section for young offenders up to 25 years old, a Medium section for young offenders beyond 25 years who have short-term sentences for 'medium' crimes, a C section for adults who have committed 'medium-term' crimes, and a D section for adult offenders of 'serious' crimes.

In my Masters work I had an opportunity to enter the world of music and musicians behind bars and be close to them as a participant observer, an experience that in social and participatory action research is described as a "valid and authentic scientific investigation" within qualitative research (Babbie and Mouton 2006: 53; see also MacIntyre 2008: 16). Such entry into the world of the participants, Babbie and Mouton argue, "offers meaningful opportunities for obtaining data that could not be obtained otherwise" (Ibid: 57). I observed the musical life at the Centre, which had developed over time and was quite rich, taking the form of gospel and choral music for female, male, juvenile and mixed choirs, and traditional music such as *isicathamiya*,³ *imfene/uhubhe*,⁴ *intlombe*,⁵ and *indlame/u*.⁶

¹ The prison was formerly known as Umtata Prison and colloquially as Wellington Prison. I refer to it hereafter mostly as MMCC, the Prison, or the Centre.

² Since the publication of the Department of Correctional Services' *White Paper on Corrections in South Africa* (2005), prisoners are no longer referred to as 'inmates' but as 'offenders', although offenders still use the word 'inmates' among themselves.

³ *Isicathamiya* is a Zulu male *a capella* singing style. The word means 'on tip-toe' or 'in a stalking approach'. *Isicathamiya* (unlike its predecessor, *mbube*) focuses on achieving a harmonious blend between voices. The name also refers to the style's tightly choreographed dance moves that keep singers on their toes. *Isicathamiya*'s roots reach back to before the turn of the twentieth century, when men left their homelands in order to search for work in the cities. Today, *isicathamiya* competitions in Johannesburg and Durban take place on Saturday nights, with up to 30 choirs performing from 20h00 to 08h00 the following morning.

⁴ *Uhubhe/Imfene* is one of the South African dance styles that are widely practised and performed in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape. It is also known as *imfene* ('ape') because of the up and down movement of

Having seen the Mthatha Offenders' choirs in action before, during and after the biennial competitions that were started in 1997, I noticed how offenders appropriated and used music programmes for their own benefit and I began to appreciate the contribution of music in their lives. I showed in my Masters research that music in MMCC, and in particular the National Offenders' Choir Competition (NOCC), did a great deal to make life in prison bearable and to lighten offenders' sentences. It offered recreational opportunities and put them in the limelight as performers, one step up from being offenders 'serving time'. Tia DeNora refers to this idea of people using music in their daily lives as part of "a survival strategy" (2000: 53), which in this case allowed some offenders to find an element of psychological freedom as 'performing offenders', even though they were behind bars. It speaks, as DeNora points out, to Michel Foucault's notion of a "technological power" where "discipline" may be identified as a type of power, and therefore a modality for the exercise of power, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application and targets; it also embodies what DeNora calls "aesthetic agency" (Ibid). Later in this chapter I discuss Foucault's notion and its influence on my work.

The prison choir competitions are held under the auspices of the South African National Department of Correctional Services (hereafter DCS or Correctional Services). The MMCC choirs have emerged as sites where singing, conducting and tonic solfa notation are learnt, along with life skills and even leadership qualities that might enhance careers post-incarceration. The MMCC choirs were champions in the 2005 and 2006 competitions, and the reason for this posed a challenge for me as a researcher.

the dancers' waists. It is performed to the accompaniment of recorded *mbaqanga* and *maskhandi* (guitar) music. This dance style originated with mine workers who work in mines and go back to their homes in rural areas for holidays or after the term of contract has expired. It is characterised by a brightly coloured tattered type of skirts and 'tekkies' (running shoes) for all performers, both men and women. The most common colours are red and blue, mixed with white, green, and yellow.

⁵ *Intlombe* in some areas is called *emgcobeni*, *emtshotshweni*, or *esigcobeni*. There are three different types of *intlombe*: one for boys, one for boys and girls, and one for the traditional meeting of *amagqirha* (divine healers), which is the one used in MMCC. It features the spirited dances of the *amagqirha* to the accompaniment of songs for healing.

⁶ *Indlame* is a traditional Zulu male dance where the dancer lifts one foot over his head and brings it down hard, usually landing squarely on the music's down beat. Typically, two dancers in warrior's pelts perform *indlame* routines together, shadowing each other's moves. It is sometimes referred to as a Zulu war dance and is also known as *indlamu* or *indlam*. In this research I use the term *indlame*, which was used by the participants.

It was clear from the outset of my doctoral work, of which the present dissertation is one of the main outcomes,⁷ that this was going to be a complex investigation because of the accolades that the MMCC choir had achieved and the skills they had learnt (or not learnt) in the process. There was the problem of choristers learning songs with the music scores held upside down, for example (as I observed on more than one occasion), relying on the prowess of the conductor singing all the vocal parts, which they only had to imitate. They were still learning by rote after eight years' existence of the NOCC.

I discovered through a preliminary literature search and through talking to people in DCS that no one had yet done any extensive work on music in South African prisons. Information came to light after my master's research that, according to the DCS's 2003/2004 *Annual Report*, the prison population in South Africa in March 2004 was 189 748, of whom 63 percent were juveniles (DCS 2004: 3) - an alarmingly high proportion of youth in prisons, which alone provided the moral justification (to me) for further research.

My aim was to investigate, through an interventive participatory action research (PAR) programme with offenders, correctional officials and community musicians, the music styles, practices and performances taking place in MMCC, and to assess their impact on those involved. Following from this, I would explore ways in which music encourages offenders to transcend their 'prisoner' sense of self, to modify their behaviour and prepare themselves for reintegration into the society as rehabilitated citizens. A tentacle that extended from this dual aim was questioning the extent to which any skills could be developed and improved inside prison through the PAR model. A further aim, which developed as the PAR project got under way, was to see how I could show both successes and failures along the way as equally 'PAR for the course'. For within this model, according to Jean McNiff (pers. comm. 6 October 2008) and the work of Wilfred Carr and Stephen Kemmis (2005), both failure and success can be reasons for development and improvement (2005: 337). Failures and successes impacted on offenders and also on DCS officials, the more so since the DCS's *White Paper on Corrections in South Africa* (2005: 8) indicated that they were thinking of certificating and even accrediting offenders for participating in programmes in prison, and that parole boards were taking such

⁷ In a methodology such as action research, the university dissertation is not seen as the only outcome, since the methodology itself is geared towards outcomes for the participants involved.

participation into account. How was the measurement of ‘successes’ being imagined here? Or how was ‘failure’ counting against offenders?

The NOCC itself posed another kind of problem in that, just as communities outside prison do not see choral singing as a ‘music programme’ but as a competition, they did not see it this way in MMCC either, the prison music being a microcosm of music activities outside. Neither offenders nor DCS officials regarded participation in such activities as a potential space where music education might play a role, through offering a new knowledge base and an empowering set of skills transferable outside prison.⁸ Nor did they necessarily see that such activities might demonstrate, to offenders and to officials, rehabilitation in process. For all these reasons, I gravitated towards PAR as the best model to serve the purpose of this research. I speak more about this model later, but first I give some background on the prison system.

1. 2 The South African prison system

The history and nature of prisons worldwide is dealt with extensively in the literature, especially the literature in sociology, psychology, economics, law, and politics: see for example Michael Welch’s *Corrections* (1999), Hans Toch’s *Living in Prison* (1993), Stanley T. Williams’ *Life in Prison* (1999), Lori B. Girshick’s *No Safe Haven* (1999), Norval Morris and David J. Rothman’s *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society* (1995), Angela Davis’ *Rethinking Prison Justice* (2003) and *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (2003), Pieter Spierenburg’s *The Prison Experience* (2007), and Greg Wellman’s *History of Alcatraz Prison* (2008). It is however Foucault’s flagship work that has dominated contemporary thinking about the penal system, especially his *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prisons* (1995(1978)), which I draw on to construct my theoretical framework. There is also the literature on South African prisons and on musicology and music education to take into account, as well as personal accounts of South African prison life such as Nelson Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom* (1995), Hugh Lewin’s *Bandiet: Out of Jail* (2002), and Albie Sachs’s *The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs*

⁸ Given the legacy of very poor music education in most South African schools, even the little amount learnt during a short PAR project stood to equip participants with more music knowledge and skill than was possessed by almost anyone else in their community.

(1990). Drawing on selected aspects of this huge body of disparate literature, I begin with an outline of the South African prison system.

The *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (11th Edition 2008) defines prison as a building for the confinement of criminals or those awaiting trial. Brock Hornby (1974: 664) refers to it (somewhat ironically) as “an institution whereby all wrongdoers awaiting trial and those found guilty are kept and locked up against their will for a specific period from a month up to life imprisonment as determined by the court of law”. This common understanding of a prison - a place where individuals go to atone for their crimes against society in the hope that they come back in some way transformed (or don’t come back), and the notion of prison as a place of atonement, crime, and transformation - has, as Foucault and others have shown, changed over time. The reforms that swept through South Africa since 1994 have also had a profound effect on prisons and rehabilitation processes and how these are perceived and practices implemented.

There is little general historical work on the prison system of South Africa prior to Union (1910) but some that deals with the twentieth century, such as *Prison Institutions of South Africa* (1965). Some sources focus on skills development - for example, work on farm prisons such as Leeuwkop and Colesberg from the 1950s onwards (Ibid), which developed agricultural skills among offenders in preparation for their return to society as a useful work force in postwar South Africa. The national prison system was not co-ordinated effectively at this time: a properly organised administration emerged only around 1965 with the Republic of South Africa (*Prison Administration*, 1969). Different layers of scholarship in the apartheid and post-apartheid eras theorise different notions of the penal system, and focus particularly on the problem of overcrowded prisons. See for example Marc Mauer’s *A Comparison of International Rates of Incarceration* (1992), Sarah Oppler’s *Assessing the State of South African Prisons* (1998), and Jonny Steinberg’s ‘Prison Overcrowding and the Constitutional Right to Adequate Accommodation in South Africa’ (2005).

An extensive literature on the retributive justice of apartheid *vis-à-vis* restorative justice characterises the post-apartheid era, including Allison Morris and Gabrielle Maxwell’s *Restorative Justice for Juveniles: Conferencing, Mediation and Circles* (2001), Richard Wilson’s *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimising the Post-Apartheid State* (2001), and Lukas M. Muntingh’s *After Prison: The Case for Offender*

Reintegration (2001). On the one hand, several scholars address notions of human rights as enshrined in the Bill of Rights and the Constitution: see Amanda Dissel and Jody Kollapen, *Racism and Discrimination in the South African Penal System* (2003) and Lebogang R. Morodi, *The Constitutional Rights of Prisoners within the South African Criminal Justice System* (2001). On the other hand, Nicholas Haysom's *Towards an Understanding of Prison Gangs* (1981) and Steinberg's *The Number* (2004) explore security and the formation of gangs.

In the post-apartheid era governmental annual reports and policy documents, including keynote addresses by successive ministers of the DCS have shown some consistency in their attempt to create a humane environment in prisons, with more programmes for the development of offenders emerging after 1994 according to former DCS Minister Ben Skosana (2002),⁹ and the DCS's *Annual Report 2003/2004* (2004). Key points in this new direction are the notion of restorative justice and an approach to rehabilitation that involves the department, offender, victim, and community working together. My own personal attitude, and consequently my research project, adheres to a strong belief in this approach.

1. 3 Current rehabilitation initiatives

The DCS's ideals have been extended from 2005, the idea of incarceration as a developmental rather than punitive exercise, for example, giving assistance within specific programmes to offenders after release. Such initiatives are premised on basic human rights as enshrined in the South African Constitution, and 'needs-driven approaches' to rehabilitation and aftercare of offenders where the community plays a significant role are more to the fore in Government rhetoric (*White Paper on Corrections in South Africa* (2005)).¹⁰ Both former DCS Minister Ngconde Balfour and his deputy minister Cheryl Gillwald said that although the prime mandate within DCS remains

⁹www.polity.org.za/article/skosana-correctional-services-management-board-02122002-2002-12-02. Accessed 24/11/2002.

¹⁰www.info.gov.za/whitepapers/2005/dcs.pdf&w=white+paper+papers+corrections+correction+south+africa+2005&d. Accessed, 18/08/2006. Needs-based rehabilitation programmes and services are of two kinds. 'Offence-specific' programmes address needs related to offences: admission assessment and a correctional sentence plan to deal with offences committed, offences suffered, and harmful addictions in relation to violent offending, sexual offending, and drug and alcohol abuse. 'Offence-related' programmes cater for areas such as family support, damage from drug use, accommodation needs, development, care, education employment, sport, and recreation. See DCS *Strategic Plan for 2005/6-2009/10* (Policy Document 2005).

security and public safety (Ibid), the ‘needs-driven approach’ is addressed through initiatives such as the Centres of Excellence concept.¹¹

The removal of women offenders at Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre just as my PAR project was about to begin (with consequences for me: I had to rethink my goals) was an outcome of the Centres of Excellence idea. DCS authorities see it as a strategic way of setting a platform for needs-based corrections that can eventually be extended to all correctional centres, supposedly increasing the potential for successful rehabilitation countrywide. In his introduction to the *Strategic Plan for 2005/6-2009/10*, Ngconde Balfour declared:

We will not compromise on this. Driven by the challenge of ensuring that rehabilitation is central to all our activities, our programmes are aimed at maximising delivery on corrections, development, security, care, facilities and after-care to all offenders. It is only through the delivery of these key services, aimed at behavioural, attitudinal and social changes that we have a chance of succeeding in the rehabilitative processes of offenders (*DCS Policy Document* 2005: 1).

Subsequent DCS policies emphasise the management of correctional centres and their staff, in an attempt to make the strategic plan produce a corpus of well-trained, well-managed, vision-oriented officials. The DCS’s intention is to increase both the number of employees and their capacity for effective management of the new rehabilitation ideals. As I show in Chapter 7 there is however a lag between these ideals and their implementation, which my research has revealed: for example, the still-visible lack of self-empowerment and the old-fashioned, offhand way officials still sometimes behave towards offenders. This is part of what I interrogate in Chapter 6.

1.4 History of the NOCC

One of the reasons the DCS introduced the strategy of the NOCC in 1997 was because they saw it as “an important vehicle towards attaining the Departmental strategic objective of rehabilitation” (Policy Document, 2005: 2). A biennial event, the first choir

¹¹A Centre of Excellence is a Correctional Centre where all services, programmes, resources and human potential and capital are directed at providing a place of new beginnings for each and every offender, a place where every staff member is motivated, resourced, skilled, developed and supported to become a rehabilitator.

contest was held on 10 September 1998 in what the DCS called Randburg but was actually Parktown, Johannesburg (in the Linder Auditorium, now on the University of the Witwatersrand campus).¹² It set a model that continues to this day and is in turn modelled on the national Old Mutual adult choir competitions. It features two main sections, 'traditional' and 'choral'. In the traditional section (African) traditional music and dances are featured, with nothing prescribed. The choral music section, as in competitions outside prison, features vernacular and Western prescribed pieces,¹³ for female, male, youth, and mixed choirs. In the 2008 competitions the new feature of an operatic solo item - also creeping into national competitions - was added.

Giving the keynote address at the 2001 competitions, the then commissioner of Correctional Services, Linda Mti noted that choral singing in the DCS was

a very important tool in the hands of those responsible for the rehabilitation of the offenders since it opens doors and breaks down barriers. It gives the offenders a sense of self-worth and it enhances their self-respect. As an added bonus it also goes a long way towards combating the idleness that is naturally a side-effect of incarceration for 24 hours a day. It is in this vein that the Department supports this competition (www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm, accessed 31.10.2008).

Mti's views were later repeated by Ben Skosana (2003: 7). In part, the job of my research is to prove whether or not what they claim is true. I question, for example, the anomaly between combating 'idleness' and choristers taking as long as 18 months to learn competition songs. During the 10 years of its existence the NOCC has attracted hundreds of offenders as choristers (1000+ in 2003 and 903 in 2006).¹⁴ Not surprisingly, it has become a popular attraction in government circles, where the DCS can be seen as creating a platform for the participants to showcase their talents: and, naturally, "DCS is building on the success of the event".¹⁵

¹² www.info.gov.za/speeches/index.htm. Accessed 10 February 2004.

¹³ In the current schools and adult choir competitions administered by the South African Schools Choral Music Eisteddfod (SASCE), the Eastern Cape Choral Music Associations (ECCMA) and Old Mutual National Choir Festival (NCF), the term 'vernacular' has fallen into disuse in favour of 'African' songs. I retain it to distinguish the traditional music section from the choral music section lest they are construed as the same thing.

¹⁴ www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm. Accessed 31/10/2008.

¹⁵ Manelisi Wolela, www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm. Accessed 31/10/2008. Since November 2008 the DCS has held its first choral festival for choirs from various prisons in South Africa, which may be the development Wolela refers to.

The competitions are popular not only among prisoners and DCS officials but also with the community outside prisons, which includes friends and families of inmates who get to see their loved ones outside the usual visiting times, and local officials who get a chance to be seen. At the competition in the Good Hope Centre in Cape Town, which I attended in 2003, dignitaries included ministers from other government departments, premiers from several provinces, the mayor of Cape Town, members of parliament, a judge, researchers involved with DCS, and members of nongovernmental (NGO) and community-based organisations.

The involvement of the community relates to the restorative justice approach to rehabilitation and the integration of offenders, which emphasises the involvement of victim, offender and community in correcting the offending behaviour. Community members assist in preparing choirs for the competition and are allowed to be conductors. This results in some transfer of skills and the empowerment of both offenders and officials, a point noted by Skosana (2003: 7). Ministers and other keynote speakers at competitions never fail to acknowledge the role played by community members. As one of the adjudicators for DCS, I have observed conductors even being honoured with trophies, and a commissioner voicing his gratitude to “the many members of the community who are involved in the preparation of these choirs. It is a perfect example of how the community and the Department [can] share responsibility in delivering rehabilitative programmes to the offenders” (L. Mti, 16 February 2006). Again, I question how the transfer of skills is supposed to occur and which skills these are exactly, when (as mentioned earlier) choirs learn by rote.

1. 5 The arts and rehabilitation in South African prisons

The other arts in SA prisons, such as drama, creative writing, poetry and visual art, often include music in their presentations; and in my PAR project some groups began to incorporate other arts such as poetry and visual art in their ‘topics for research’ (I explain this term later). Because the DCS’s rehabilitation and reintegration policies emphasise the notion of healing, their view being that incarceration itself is enough punishment, the process of implementing this has brought into the prison system a whole gamut of people to assist through education and training. There are thus various programmes and interventions in prisons that affected my research at MMCC.

The South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) runs one such intervention. NICRO is a national nongovernmental organisation (NGO) which runs a 9-12 month intensive ‘tough enough’ programme. This requires offenders and ex-offenders to take up the challenge of living a constructive life. They enter the programme voluntarily but are required to commit to it for the duration: they have to stay in the programme for a year in order to take responsibility for their lives and create a better future for themselves and their families. Within this programme the NICRO Creative Arts Awards for Prison Art offers prisoners the opportunity to unleash their creativity and express themselves through visual art. This is supported by an annual competition (open to all prisoners in the categories of painting, fabric painting, matchstick construction, recycling, calligraphy, wood crafting, leatherwork, needlework, and poetry and prose) and an awards ceremony for best and improved visual artists. In this ceremony, choral singing is an important entertainment feature.

Other initiatives are located only within specific prisons: for example, the Arts in Prisons (AIP) programme launched in March 2005 in Kroonstad Prison and set to extend to other Correctional Services centres and include the Department of Social Development (DSD) and the South African Police Service (SAPS) as partners, with a focus on preventive as opposed to curative care.¹⁶ NICRO resonates with my project as it features competitions, offers training sessions, and provides study opportunities. Also, it is a national project, like the NOCC. Further, I see it as empowerment-triggered and developmental in approach in the same way that my research is.

¹⁶ Outside the DCS, since 2003, the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN) Centre for Creative Arts has co-ordinated some activities inside Westville Correctional Centre, Durban (KwaZulu-Natal), where performances and workshops by UKZN students and prisoners are held in conjunction with (for example) the Poetry Africa Festival, the Time of the Writer Festival, and the Awesome Africa Music Festival. For three years (2006-2008) Poetry Africa has brought festival poets to Westville, an exchange enhanced by poetry workshops where graduate students of the Creative Writing programme in UKZN English Department work with selected groups of (Westville) offenders, evaluating and reviewing their poetry. This culminated in the Prison Poetry Exchange (26-31 May 2008) featuring Dennis Brutus and Abdallah Zrika, poets who had themselves experienced prison life (www.nicro.org.za/about/about-history.asp and www.artsmart.co.za/festivals/archive/436.html. Accessed 20/10/2008).

1.6 South African choral music outside prisons

Part of the research problem I investigated relates to South African choral music outside prison, on which there is a fairly substantial literature, including three doctoral studies. The work of Caesar Ndlovu on the history and practice of *isicathamiya* gives a sense of why this genre is important in prisons (1996) because it thrived as a musical practice in the rural communities of KwaZulu-Natal province (KZN) and this helped popularise the genre in the mines and later on radio and recordings. The prison population at MMCC contains many people from rural areas who know this genre, and one of the main *isicathamiya* groups there, The Peacemakers, is (still) often invited to perform outside prison. Almost all offenders' choirs feature music from this genre in the NOCC in the 'traditional' section.¹⁷

Markus Detterbeck deals with the sociology of choral music particularly in KZN (2002); he also uses action research, although only partially, showing how choristers involved in his research worked at developing and improving music skills. There are differences between his work and mine, however, in that PAR is a small part of his work, and he dealt with choristers outside prison, who were more literate and more experienced. However, his intervention (two years of cycles as opposed to my one) and his findings (how the cyclic nature of action research fosters an inward and self-driven change in the gradual refining of understanding and skills of the participants involved), create useful synergies with my work at MMCC. (I explore the importance of the time frame for data generation in PAR, in Chapter 6.) These and other smaller or more narrowly focused studies of South African choral music - see for example Vokwana 2003, Nhlapo 1993 and Mngoma 1986 - give a good sense of the stylistic changes, performance practice, repertoire, organisation and sponsorship of competitions, trends which are mirrored 'behind bars', including the way competitions are structured.

The competitions outside usually start with opera extracts, in which male and female soloists compete (Nhlapo 1993: 5), followed by a section of small vocal ensembles such as duets and trios (Vokwana 2003: 23). In school competitions choirs compete in all

¹⁷ Perhaps offenders from KZN villages bordering the Eastern Cape who are imprisoned at MMCC are mainly responsible for popularising it. (The past two leaders of The Peacemakers were from this province and one of them, who has helped with my current research, is from UMzimkhulu, a rural village on the border of KZN and the Eastern Cape.)

levels, from junior to senior (Mngoma 1986: 4 and Nhlapo 1993: 5) while in adult choirs there are standard and large sections (Vokwana 2003: 23). Western songs are prescribed for female and male voices and mixed choirs at all levels. A similar pattern is used inside prison except that young choirs come with the nomenclature ‘juvenile’ instead of junior/intermediate/standard, and there are no mixed choirs. Another (significant) difference is that, in the Open Own Choice section outside prison, choirs decide what they will sing, and their choice is often relatively easy compared to the prescribed songs. In the prison system, ‘open own choice’ only occurs in the traditional music section.

External sponsorship by Old Mutual, the *Sowetan*, Metropolitan Life and Transnet (Vokwana Ibid: 25) nationally,¹⁸ or the Eastern Cape Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture (DSRAC), OR Tambo District Municipality (for the Eastern Cape Choral Music Association competitions), and provincial and national Departments of Education (for the South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod (SASCE)) does not feature in prison, as DCS foots the whole bill. The NOCC competition - as outside - proceeds from district to provincial and national levels, but there are no regional competitions, since there are fewer prison choirs.¹⁹ The Mthatha district competition includes choirs from Mthatha, Lusikisiki, Ngqeleni and Mqanduli. The Eastern Cape provincial competition includes the five districts Mthatha, East London, King Williams Town, Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth. The NOCC follows competitions outside in its manner of adjudication, and adjudicators are drawn from the music fraternity provincially and nationally.

Grant Olwage’s doctorate (2003) gives a historical perspective to all this. It provides a ground-breaking overview of the origins of choralism in the Eastern Cape and of its political meanings as the practice emerged. His work also served as useful radar for the way I could use Foucault in my own research, for he offers a critique of the discipline instilled through Victorian notions of “docility-utility” (2003: 26). Olwage posits that Victorian choralism used music to slot individuals into hierarchical social strata through graded choral music training for self-improvement, societal occupation and status. This, by implication, inspired individuals through a subtle and manipulative process of set standards and examinations to study choral music in order to be productive and move up

¹⁸ Until 2008 the national Old Mutual competition was co-sponsored by Telkom.

¹⁹ www.und.ac.za/und/carts. Accessed 20/10/2008.

the social ladder. He theorises this idea as “the work of the certificate for hierarchising” (Ibid: 28), rewarding the conformists and punishing the nonconformists. Such hierarchising was a political technology of the body, he argues, a subtle and manipulative method of making ‘docile bodies’ to perform and be productive.

This notion becomes all the more meaningful, of course, in the prison environment. Think of Skosana’s comment (above) about ‘keeping offenders busy’. From my observation, music activities, particularly choir practices, are used by officials at MMCC to make offenders docile while also showing ‘results’: their choirs have made the list of provincial champions on more than one occasion and they are the reigning national champions. To do this, however, they are subjected to long hours of practice with little or no consideration for meal times: arrangements are made on their behalf for them to have meals later. (In Chapter 6 I expand on some of the power issues involved here.)

1.7 South African prisons and music

Dick Jansen (cited in *Department of Correctional Services*: 2001) refers to the “political challenge” of rehabilitation, in which music is involved in the challenge because it is part of our biological inheritance, “hard-wired into our genes as a survival strategy” (2001: 5). Jansen’s reference to the individualistic functionality of music echoes DeNora’s principle of music as a strategy for survival. In my previous study (Twani 2002), I showed how offenders would rather be involved in music activities spending larger parts of their days of incarceration in the choir rehearsals and performances, than idling or sitting bored in the prison cells, or worse, getting involved in prison brawls that result in further extension of one’s sentence - using music activities as a survival strategy. In my present study I show how prisoners may have been able to be considered for parole by successfully ‘self-policing’ and managing conflicts and infighting through discipline acquired in music groups (see Chapters 2 to 5 of the thesis). MPAR participants spoke in my research about how the prison environment helped them develop creativity by designing attire using local resources such as plastic carrier bags, the Uhubhe music circle being a case in point. Also, on the role of music in prisons, the *Prison Administration in South Africa* (1969) traces the inspiration offenders got from music in South African prisons from the 1980s, “long after the abolition of hard labour” (Ibid: 4). Skosana highlights how, before this,

music provided inspiration and creative opportunities for offenders in their quest to deal with the hardships of imprisonment:

Singing has been the only form of music practised in the prisons by offenders. This can be traced back to the 1960s when Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Robert Sobukwe and many others were subjected to hard labour working in teams in the quarries. During those days, music, the lyrics of which were carefully and appropriately chosen [by the offenders], served as a source of strength and inspiration (Skosana 2003: 4).

Nelson Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom* (1995) and Hugh Lewin's *Bandiet: Out of Jail* (2002) are among a number of prison memoirs in which music plays a significant role. Writing about life in Robben Island and Pretoria Prison respectively, they reflect on how music helped them survive the dreary and harsh conditions. Lewin muses on the regulations where a concert was allowed as one of the possible diversions offered to prisoners: "but on Christmas Day things were different. We always meticulously prepared for this concert and looked forward to this day" (Lewin 2002: 169). He also remembers how they tried to keep up with the prevailing taste through records they were allowed to buy every month, and that Bram Fischer, the Chief Record Programmer, compiled a list of songs that would be played by the night staff disc-jockey "from 5 till 8" (Ibid: 171).

Mandela recalls music competitions between rival groups, specifically political prisoners and 'gang groups' (criminal offenders), instigated by prison warders acting as "agents provocateurs" (1995: 483) to provoke the political prisoners, harass them and inhibit political discussions. In the process of planning their songs, adding more, and changing lyrics, the men increased their skills in arranging music as well as their repertoire. Moreover, "[t]he singing made the work lighter. The gang members were no competition to us; they soon became quiet while we continued singing" (Ibid: 484). Like Lewin, Mandela remembered the Christmas Concert and Play, permitted as what seemed to be a gesture of goodwill: "The concert was a centrepiece. Our choirmaster was Selby Ngendane ... a natural entertainer with a lovely voice and a fine ear. Selby chose the songs, arranged harmonies, selected the soloists and conducted the performance" (Ibid: 539). Robben Island prisoner Grant Shezi, released along with Muntu Nxumalo and Theminkosi Sithole in 1994, told an audience in Chicago during a tour of the US with their CD of prison songs, "We would use songs to ease our hunger" (Ibid).²⁰

²⁰ www.robbenislandsingers.com. Accessed 09/04/2009.

In the scenarios described above, offenders seemed to have some opportunity to make decisions about music making. My observation at MMCC prior to my project was different. There, music functioned at a more communal level but officials seemed to have an upper hand in making practical decisions for offenders, including decisions about when offenders could practise and when they could eat.

Other literature relating to the effects and use of music and the other arts inside South African prisons is scarce, save for newspaper articles, reports on performances in prisons, and occasional television news flashes. The *Daily Dispatch* supplement *Indabazethu*, for example (30 March 2005) reports on a “juvenile band” from Fort Glamorgan Prison in East London using music and storytelling to warn the youth against crime. Seemingly, the juveniles acquired skills in playing electronic guitars, keyboard and bongo drums while in prison. The report is silent, however, on how the instruments were acquired and focuses on the trial and error of learning them and about playing compositions from pop to jazz and arrangements of *izitibili* (Xhosa folksongs). Overall, music in prisons is cursorily mentioned; more is written about the other arts.

1.8 Prison programmes: An international perspective

Moving the background information in another direction, in this section I look briefly at other countries with regard to music in prisons, choosing them on the basis of policies, principles and practices that are publicly debated and congruent with my research. Their programmes emphasise partnership between stakeholders (offenders, correctional officials, and the community) as an essential ingredient for diverting young people away from crime: ‘No More Prisons’ is a Malian “multiracial grassroots organization of youth activists” working and strategising to resist and fight incarceration and drug abuse through political education, community-based partnership, organisation of youth, and direct action;²¹ Intercultural Youth Exchange provides work opportunities outside the UK for 18-30-year-olds for six months to a year and countries on all five continents are involved, including Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana in Africa;²² and UNESCO has over five thousand clubs in 120 countries involving young people and adults in voluntary prison

²¹ www.nomoreprisons.org. Accessed on 08/04/2009.

²² www.icye.org.uk/. Accessed on 08/04/2009.

activities that include the study of human rights documents, the promotion of literacy, environmental conservation and preservation of cultural heritage.²³

In Ghana, The Hiplife Trio VIP and its producer, Isaac Abeidu-Aidoo, popularly known as Goodies, are “rais[ing] funds to support the prisons and go there with the boys to entertain them” (Mannak 2008: Preface). In Angola, offenders have worked in collaboration with “the great Robert Pete Williams of the Arhoolie label” (Ibid) and been recorded. Helen Coljin tells the compelling story of how the singer Margaret Dryburgh and the conductress Norah Chambers formed a 30-member “ragtag choir” (because they were dressed in tattered remnants of shirts and dresses) in an Indonesian prison camp (cited in Kalogerakis 1997), and on a makeshift “palm-thatched” pavilion they sang excerpts from Dvořák’s *New World Symphony*, to the delight of offenders and officials. (Some of the offenders in my research also created their own costumes, using whatever material was available.) In Brazil and the UK, the official programmes seem more advanced. Brazil’s Path to Freedom (Painting Freedom) programme was created in 1997, the year when the NOCC began in South Africa). It was initiated by Cultura Inglesa,²⁴ a language school already teaching language through the arts throughout Brazil. Their cultural events include the São Paulo three-week festival of arts, and their whole venture is much larger than South African initiatives such as the AIP programme, which have not yet spread countrywide. The Brazilian model should therefore provide inspiration for the DCS.

These initiatives are isolated, however, and as far as Africa is concerned, basic prison reform remains the main underlying problem. As Jeremy Sarkin notes in an interview with *ISP News*:

Over the past ten years, various positive prison reform initiatives have been undertaken across the continent. The Kampala Declaration on Prison Conditions in Africa has played a crucial role in this. This document was drawn up in 1996 following a three-day meeting of delegates from 47 countries, including Ministers of State, prison commissioners, judges and non-governmental organisations ... A number of African governments have altered their legislation as a result of the declaration,” Sarkin continues. “This has improved the situation in various prisons across the continent (<http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/>. Accessed 17/09/2008).

²³ www.unesco.org. Accessed on 08/04/2009.

²⁴ www.cultura.inglesa/homepage. Accessed 21/08/2008.

He warns, however, “Despite these positive signs, the situation in many African prisons remains unsatisfactory. Not many governments seem to be interested in investing in prisoners. This combined with shortage of staff [and] the fact that staff members are often poorly trained does not improve the situation” (Ibid). In terms of the NOCC, the South African government (via the DCS) is interested in investing in offenders, but is still busy turning interest into results, and it has been my observation that some officials are still insufficiently trained to maximise the possibilities and opportunities offered by the rehabilitation programmes. I engage with these problematics in Chapter 6.

In contextualising my research globally I am indebted to the ideas of people such as Grace Nicky (1993), whose research with the Geese Theatre Company in the UK draws attention to the financial value of art behind bars when it is sold to generate income for offenders; this fact can also justify its expense. Some of the offenders I worked with have similarly traded their wares with DSRAC and Walter Sisulu University. Nicky’s research, which (like mine) includes interviews with offenders, reveals a positive regard for the arts ‘inside’ even though most offenders have nothing to do with the arts ‘outside’, because of poor school arts education, for example. I also found, in my Masters research, that most offenders had no music background from school (Twani 2002: 3). Nicky highlights the struggles and innumerable daily problems (lack of resources, and so on), which I, too, found to be a feature (see Chapter 2 below). DeNora’s notion of music as an everyday, active ingredient in engineering and caring for the (social) self and enabling people to have control over their environment and to communicate (and, for me, even experience) emotions, also helped me analyse the use offenders make of music on a fairly low-key, daily basis. These views also border on the literature of music therapy, as we shall see in some of the ideas expressed by the MPAR participants in subsequent chapters.

John Fonti’s (2004) study of 33 youths in a young offenders programme in Parklea Correctional Centre (UK) and the teaching method he used with them is significant for my work in several areas - notably youth and music teaching - especially because he shows how a performance-based medium can successfully develop the life skills of communication, cooperation, leadership, and inter- and intra-personal skills, and how by emphasising the setting of objectives rather than the production of ‘professional musicians’ one can unleash more potential in each individual, build personal esteem, and cultivate a desire for new educational activities. Fonti contends that when this method is combined with a traditional approach to music education it has potential for enhancement,

assisting people to acquire professional status if they have the aptitude and required discipline for further studies in music. Fonti's study suggests ideas for choosing appropriate teaching approaches, with objectives that could lead to meaningful successes. His work also implies the notion of lifelong learning, such as could result from involvement in educational programmes in prison; this I suggest as a way forward for DCS, in Chapter 7.

The British penal system in general seems to demonstrate greater commitment to artistic empowerment, music included, through collaborations: between government departments and NGOs such as the National Training Consortium for Arts in Criminal Justice (NTCACJ),²⁵ the Koestler Award Trust,²⁶ which has a series of arts projects in prisons focusing on combining creativity with learning, and British Employment Agency and Training (BEAT), a charity set up to build bridges into self-employment for offenders and ex-offenders, launched in 2002. The commonality with my research here is the creation of a culture of entrepreneurship, encouraging people to set up their own businesses or to participate in social enterprise; I enlarge on this topic later in the thesis.

Finally, in the US: California spends \$44 000 per prison on arts programmes and started its Arts in Corrections programme 20 years ago; Pennsylvania has art programmes financed from money generated within prisons (in line with Grace Nicky's ideas on using the arts to generate income for offenders); some New York and California prisons have secluded music rooms for offenders to be free from constraints while practising (conditions better than in much of South African higher education); and San Quentin State Correctional Institution in Pittsburgh has a special auditorium-cum-art room for offenders. These issues of space were of great concern during my research and what I met compared very unfavourably with these examples, as I will show.

Spaces are not just physical, however. As Ray Pratt (in Dougan 1999: 13) suggests, music generates "enclaves of autonomy", spaces that create an alternative psychological reality, an imaginary 'new life' within the existing one. Music affords a temporary freedom and chance of stardom (Ibid). In the same vein Johan Hattingh points out that exposure to the

²⁵ www.apcentre.org.uk/node/162. Accessed 07/04/2009.

²⁶ www.koestlertrust.org.uk/. Accessed 17 March 2006

public in and out of prison gives offenders opportunities to become what he calls ‘dandies’ (1994: 4) - people who renew their life to assume a new identity. The development and encouragement provided to offenders in American penitentiaries is premised on the idea of rehabilitating offenders in such a way that their mind-set is changed: learning an art not only helps them ‘do time’ but can lead to a new way of seeing the world, and something instead of crime to turn to in their spare time.

This underlying theme of agency and value - music as a ‘technology of the self’ - comes through strongly in scholars such as Valerie Jones (in Nicky 2003), whose writing has helped shape my theoretical framework. The way people can become agents of their own personal change and therefore ultimately societal change (Ibid: 8) relates to Brazilian educator-activist Paulo Freire’s much broader and more activist notion of ‘praxis’ (1970), a concept I have found particularly useful in interpreting my findings and which comes from his observation of the ability of human beings to use available opportunities for their own self-actualisation. Before I go into more detail about my theoretical framework, however, I need to explain my methodology.

1.9 Motivation for the research methodology

Central to my ideas on action research (AR) and participatory action research (PAR) is the work of Stephen Kemmis and Robin McTaggart (1993); closer to home, my foremost model is Sallyann Goodall’s work among teachers in KwaZulu-Natal (Phase 1- 9 1997-2000), the only extended music PAR of its kind in South Africa. In a PAR methodology, theory and method are intimately related: the researcher and the researched are not so much separate entities as they can be in other kinds of research, thus power relations in PAR differ from those in other styles of inquiry. McTaggart locates PAR inter-disciplinarily as “a convergence and coalescence of theoretical and practical traditions in many fields: agriculture, social work, education, health, housing and community development” (1993: 67). It originated in all these fields as a dialectical response to the contemporary crisis (Babbie and Mouton 2006: 59), where the aspirations of some academics “did not inform social practice and the flight for social justice” (Fals-Borda 1988: 97). This led to an upsurge in liberationist research methodologies, which by definition had “explicit political goals and commitments to politically liberate and empower those who were being studied” (Ibid), and power relations became an

“important aspect [of] knowledge production” (Maguire 2004: 154). Or as Alice McIntyre puts it (2008: 56): “Understandably, the academic discourse that my analysis and interpretation was embedded in was difficult for the research subjects to comprehend”.

AR and PAR are basically the same: methodologies that focuses on the effects of the researchers’ direct actions of practice within a participatory community with the goal of improving the performance quality of the community or an area of concern, music education in prisons in the case of my research. Earlier proponents such as Kurt Lewin in his writings on group dynamics (1946) called it action research. When later twentieth-century proponents such as Paulo Freire, Antonio Gramsci, Jean McNiff, Jack Whitehead, Willliam Carr, Stephen Kemmis, and Orlando Fals-Borda began to theorise the dynamics of participation and collaboration it came to be known as participatory action research (PAR) with a variety of emphases such as living theory (Whitehead 1989 and Whitehead and McNiff 2006) or community action (Fals-Borda 2002). Both AR and PAR involve all relevant parties in actively examining together current process (which they experience as problematic) in order to change and improve it. They do this by critically reflecting on the historical, political, cultural, economic, geographic and other contexts which make sense of it. In this sense, it is action which is researched, changed and re-researched, within the research process by participants. It aims to be active co-research, by and for those to be helped. It cannot be used by one group of people to get another group of people to do what is thought best for them - whether that is to implement a central policy or an organisational or service change - but instead “tries to be a genuinely democratic or non-coercive process whereby those to be helped, determine the purposes and outcomes of their own inquiry” (Wadsworth 1998).²⁷

Both AR and PAR emphasise collaboration between the outsider and insider participants who bring about actions that seek to change and develop participants such that the changed situation is self-initiated in order to create new knowledge. Lewin believed that such change should emanate from the belief that knowledge creation should come from problem-solving in real life situations (see Herr and Anderson 2005). AR/PAR is carried out under diverse intellectual traditions and it comes with a variety of names such as

²⁷ <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/p-ywadsworth98.html>. Accessed on 14 April 2010.

action science. Its emphasis is on participants' self-initiated and needs-driven processes to solve situations.

In the 1970s critical theorists like Freire and Habermas added the political notions of liberation and communication, respectively, as central to the AR process, and (by implication) to PAR. Other emphases on collective and individual participation, including sharing processes and conceptualisation of research, brought about challenges to the ethics and power relations of research that were increasingly hard to ignore.

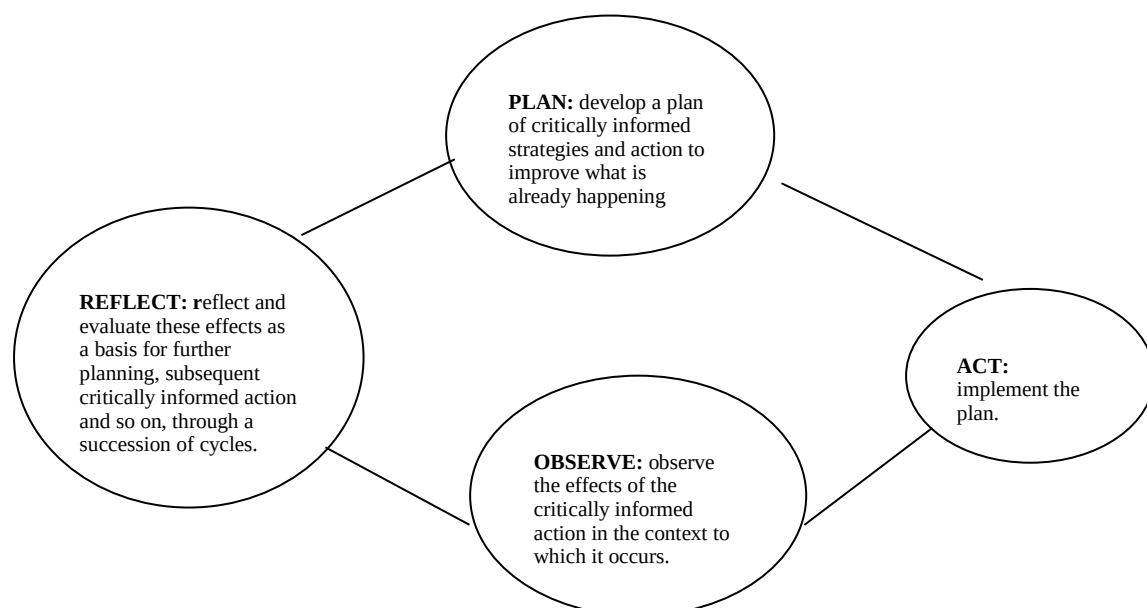
Consequently, both AR and PAR have a long and hotly debated history within the social sciences. Max Elden and Rupert Chisholm (1993) agree that in its simplest form AR is a way of generating research about a social system while simultaneously trying to change the system - seeking to both *understand* and *alter* the problems generated by social systems, because "it is important to understand the world if we are to change it" (Whyte 1991: 17). Alternatively, as Kurt Lewin said: "one of the best ways to understand the world is to try to change it" (in Argyris, Putnam and Smith 1985: 42). In addition to its interdisciplinary nature, AR is value-laden (Elden and Chisholm 1993) and thus "there is a deep problematising of values" (Jean McNiff, pers. comm. 6 October 2008) in it. In my research, who I am and what I stand for were constantly interrogated and negotiated, a point I return to in Chapter 6.

In PAR any member of the community (in my case offenders, officials, musicians and students) can generate valid knowledge about the social systems in which they participate. The PAR design emphasises the necessity to involve those persons who are the supposed beneficiaries of research in an analysis of their own reality, in the hope that they will see their lives in a different light with their consciousness heightened and awareness of their plight raised to a level where they can then take it upon themselves to use available opportunities and resources to their advantage, to change their lives. They are full partners in a systematic empirical enquiry based on their own categories and frameworks for understanding and explaining their world, and they themselves define, investigate and solve the problems produced by a particular social system (Elden and Chisholm 1993: 107).

For me, therefore, PAR brings together action (practical music making), research, and education, with the voice of the prison community. It involves a strategy of community development and change, which goes beyond learning (as in 'music education') and takes

learning into action. MacIntyre (2008: 2) highlights the combination of individualism and collegiality. For her, PAR is a “collective commitment to investigate, [a] desire to engage in ‘self- and collective’ reflection to gain clarity about the issue under investigation; a joint decision to [build] alliances between researchers and participants” (Ibid). In other words, the community is not simply the object of study or a passive recipient of expert-defined research programmes. The NOCC’s impact in Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre, with its well-intentioned but nevertheless top-down method of learning (which led to the problems I mentioned earlier), made me aware of the importance of a participatory research method and influenced my decision to find ways and strategies that would improve and develop the music skills of the choristers while at the same time empowering them. PAR is a fundamentally political methodology, making ongoing critical analysis of institutionally structured situations in which people work, and so has to be approached with great delicacy in the prison environment, especially in the new dispensation and bearing in mind the aspirations of DCS outlined above. The methodology is most successful when it is structured in ‘cycles’, as expounded by, for example, David Kolb (in Phil Riding 1995). Cycles are essentially learning cycles, where participants learn and create knowledge by critically reflecting upon their own actions and experiences, testing new changes in new situations. I planned for four cycles in MMCC, from January to December 2007,²⁸ basing my notion of a cycle on Kemmis and McTaggart’s four stages of PAR, plan-act-observe-reflect, stages integrated within each of the four cycles:

Fig. 1 Four stages of a cycle, adapted from Kemmis and McTaggart 1992: 8



²⁸ This went according to plan except that I had to return for a day in June 2008 to hand over certificates of participation.

The MPAR at MMCC differs from some other PAR models, such as those in Goodall's, Kemmis and McTaggart's, and Detterbeck's work, where a 'cycle' is a year and is repeated the following year making a project last two years (Detterbeck (2001-2002) or three (Goodall 1997- 2000)). The complexities of security in a medium correctional centre made this impossible, besides which, a number of offender participants had already applied for parole when the research commenced. I thus had to make sure that some ground was covered before they were released. As it happened, even before the first cycle started one offender who was part of the sample was released and another was released before the second cycle. After November 2007 when the four cycles ended, a sizeable number of research actors were released from prison. Furthermore, when certificates were handed out to the MPAR participants in June 2008, at least five research leaders made a special appearance as visitors and ex-offenders at the MMCC to receive their certificates of participation. All of this militated against a longer life span of the MPAR, although the impact of the project continued after the fact: I continue to interact with the MPAR members outside the prison to this day. I talk more about this later in the thesis.

As the PAR process evolves, research questions and other questions that emerge in the planning stage are reproblematised in the light of critical reflection and dialogue among participating actors (MacIntyre 2008: 52), thus developing participants, sharpening their skills and understanding. It is by such critical reflection that participants recognise they have a stake in the project. PAR is geared towards development work, as Jennifer Green points out (1988: 4), and usually focuses on two key issues: participation, where those taking part work towards the improvement of their own practices and also research themselves; and development, where participants (including the researcher) learn how to manage and change their environment and learn from the consequences. In my case, I was initially an outsider, someone not part of the prison system, who brought other outsiders - teacher, a guitarist, and some music students - and whose status was nevertheless gradually tempered through collaboration with insiders. I also had three different insider types: an HOD, two interns, and various kinds of offenders; and my research involved literate, illiterate, and semi-literate participants (I introduce the participants in more detail in Chapter 2). My project was therefore perhaps rather different from other PAR constructs.

Since PAR is context specific and involves a changing agenda which *inter alia* involves developing a spirit of actively belonging (through participation in discussions and meetings, for example), it was a strategic choice, allowing me to combine two enterprises: rendering service to members of a disenfranchised community (part of their expectation) and research (part of mine). The 153 participants (including myself) were all experimenting with the research agenda, all engaged in what Rob Lammerts calls “experimental try-outs” (1988: 88). I entered the site as a community builder, a volunteer Church worker in the prison ministry, and an academic who had worked in the prison environment since 1998. With this multiple identity I negotiated my entry into and continued my role in the MPAR project as an equal player with other participants, constantly engaging in reflexivity that helped me see how my own personal biography informed my ability to listen, question, synthesise, analyse and interpret knowledge, ever conscious of the educational attainment and literacy levels of the participants.

The team members entered the project differently and came with a range of experiences. One community music expert had been a volunteer conductor of the Mthatha choirs since 1997 and was a music graduate. Another (a plumber by profession) was a *maskhandi* guitarist and a band member at the Mthatha Arts Centre. Of the three (male) students, none of whom had ever been inside a prison, one was a postgraduate, one was a chairperson of Walter Sisulu University Music Society, and one had worked voluntarily with ‘twilight kids’ and was a youth leader in his Church. A fourth (undergraduate) music student who joined in cycle three was a female student with a Church background.

The insiders comprised three officials, one a permanent employee at DCS (head of the Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture (SRAC) section),²⁹ two of them DCS interns, a male and a female, with a degree in music and a diploma in sports management, respectively. Other participants invited during the process came from the Eastern Cape Province’s Department of Education (DoE) and Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture (DSRAC), Walter Sisulu University (WSU), and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). They added value to the MPAR as evaluators during the second and fourth cycle-

²⁹ The Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture (DSRAC) exists in the nine provinces of South Africa, however, within DCS, Sport Recreation Arts and Culture exist as a unit or section, similarly to DCS Education section, to distinguish these from the provincial departments, while at the same time creating symbiotic links, hence the names DCS (SRAC) and Education, respectively.

end meetings. Collectively, we created a symbiotic link between the academic community, the DCS community, and the wider community. We gave the students on-the-job experience of doing action research *with* people, not *on* people, as Jeff Ferrell says (1988: 5).

My research relied heavily on the narrative style characteristic of PAR. It allowed me to reflect on the research process as well as on findings, which I later formulated as propositional knowledge. In some PARs, participants are involved from inception in report writing from the start right up to the presentation of the final report. My research differed somewhat because not all participants were literate and we had to work alongside security issues in the prison environment. The writing of the final report and the presentation was thus in my control; the participants' involvement in this was via the DCS.

As for writing up the project in a doctorate: whereas PAR is collaborative, the dissertation requires individual demonstration of academic competence and individual decisions about, for example, how to narrate the process as well as the findings. Approaches to data analysis may (here) not completely reflect "horizontal equality" (MacIntyre 2008: 57) between participants and researcher. Equalising power relations and eliminating power differences in PAR is anyway a continual challenge, and my position thus remains rather open. As Harding and Norberg put it, "there are better ways or worse ways" (in MacIntyre 2008: 57), and doctoral students like myself have to figure out how and which AR traditions mesh with our own academic imperatives. One of the main issues for me, as both a doctoral researcher and someone ethically responsible to my participants, is the validity of my findings.

In AR validity is constantly under scrutiny. Some people call this trustworthiness (see Herr and Anderson 2005), but neither term is quite adequate because neither quite acknowledges the way AR generates *outcomes* that go beyond the scope of the research itself, as well as a body of knowledge. I believe the four cycles of my research process and the multiplicity of data, as well as the commitment of everyone to the process, helps to validate the results. Throughout the year, none of the 11 music circles resigned their involvement and the number of research leaders remained constant, with some slowly progressing to local coordinator and research coordinator level. The use of a five-point evaluation scale (verbal and practical) and weekly, fortnightly and cycle-end meetings,

continually lent validity to the research. Continued contact between some of the research actors attests to matters of trust and to the interest of action researchers in going beyond knowledge generation. Although the MPAR cycle ended on 29 November 2007, I have kept going back to the participants to maintain contact and to motivate those who have been released.

Conducting research in a male-dominated prison was one of the many handicaps I encountered when conducting this study, as it provided me with a male-only perspective of how the MPAR functioned and was perceived. However, in my entire prison experience earlier that triggered my research endeavours at MMCC and my previous study (Twani 2002), I worked with female offenders. I therefore have a bird's eye view of how women have experienced music activities while in prison, although, needless to say, my doctoral work falls short of a perspective on women for this extended PAR research. Studies by such scholars as Lois Weis and Michelle Fine (2004), in their PAR work with female offenders in American precincts, throw light into this gap in the MPAR within South Africa. Investigations into music topics in the context of teaching and learning, where women usually feature in large numbers, comparatively speaking, were minimal in this research, according to the DCS intern, the initial research leader of the choir who was also a music teacher. But the female research coordinator of the spiritual dance circle contributed a wonderful insight, that even men have the ability to perform and achieve in such culturally unlikely fields! The experience was both humorous, informative and a huge learning curve for me on how correctional centres functioned as well as how the community is needed in there to assist fellow human beings.

One of the main ethical dilemmas in this research, for me, was that of ensuring that all participants could speak, perform, and write openly while under surveillance. This research carried the official ethical approval of the DCS and Wits, and participation by offenders was ethically sought and approved. (See Appendices 1 and 2.) I may be the sole writer of the thesis, but I am aware that I am not the only producer of the knowledge that was created within the prison space; indeed, the narrative reports of research actors form the backbone of this thesis. The 153 participants including the offenders, 15 research leaders, the DCS HOD, interns and the student population agreed with my using their true and correct names and surnames, while some of the 131 music circle learners (offenders) preferred me to use their clan names and nicknames.

This latter request caused a lot of debate among research leaders in one of the meetings. I recall one of them saying that in any case, “*asazelwe nto* [IsiXhosa = we are relegated into nonentities], so hiding our names is of no use”. Another participant indicated that they as offenders are always on TV for one reason or another especially when DCS demonstrates its achievements, “so what is the big deal now? This signing of forms is not necessary” (pers. comm., identity deliberately concealed: 16 January 2007). After much persuasions and explanations of the reasons on different occasions, the agreement form was signed by the 16 research actors to free us all from the commanding academic gaze by allowing for individual views, and for the research to be ethically compliant. (See Appendix 3. The signatures are not shown.)

1.10 Theoretical framework

Having dealt with the academic and ethical considerations, I here explain the panopticism and other theoretical concepts that frame this research. In this section I show how the ideas of Foucault and Freire apply in my work and how they relate to the methodology. Foucault’s use of the principle of panopticism (1978: 14) emerged out of Jeremy Bentham’s idea of the panopticon as a model prison which functioned as a round-the-clock surveillance machine designed to ensure that no offender could ever see the inspector, who conducted surveillance from a privileged central location. What Bentham invented was a formula of “power through transparency” and “subjection by illumination” (Foucault 1980: 8), a social system of surveillance and discipline to use human potential to its maximum in a highly organised and structured way: a theory of surveillance, and a technology of power. Just as for Foucault, power in the prison could be visible but unverifiable, so, I suggest, the prison officials in MCC used various tactics, including the NOCC, as a form of practical and aesthetic control over offenders. Offenders were aware that they were constantly under scrutiny as they rehearsed and performed, while officials made value judgements regarding change of status in their behaviour.

The panopticon is a two-edged sword. On the one hand DCS (and other) officials can use it to monitor behaviour; on the other, ‘performing’ offenders, despite the fact that they are conscious of being under surveillance, can use it as a way of enacting their own power. Both are manipulating strategies of power, both are exercising technologies of the self,

but they are doing it differently. Power within the prison system, as Foucault points out (1978: 26-27), is not a phenomenon *possessed* by those who dominate but a strategy *exercised*; not an attribute, but an ongoing exchange in which the dominated can even collude. “[T]his power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who ‘do not have it’; it invests them, is transmitted by them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them” (Ibid: 27). In this process, power and knowledge “directly imply one another” because, “there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (Ibid). Part of the reason why the new DCS initiatives are slow to be implemented, as I showed earlier, is that with the policy shift from atonement to rehabilitation, or from an ethos of punishment to one of development, has come a necessary shift to the perception of offenders as people with democratic rights, and with individual lives with their own capacity for acquiring knowledge and power, within the restorative justice system.

This speaks to a shift of power from officials to offenders, with which officials struggle more, I suggest, than offenders. Offenders for their part are beginning to use their knowledge as performing musicians to exercise a certain kind of power - acquisition of music skills, acquisition of life skills, self-confidence, organisational skills, problem-solving skills - even within their dominated position, which seems on the surface not to allow for this kind of personal growth. In this sense, my use of Foucault differs from that of Olwage (2005:17-18). Aside from the fact that Olwage applies Foucault mainly to the education system, not to the prison, the context in which he shows how choristers become ‘docile bodies’ and contribute to a model of ‘docility-utility’ is different from the context in which this happens to offender-musicians. The contemporary incarceration system is arguably more random than the mission schooling system, less universal in its control (ironically), largely because it is less dependent on the Victorian ideologies of power that held sway over mission schools and certification methods. It is, above all and because of changing policies and practices, in a state of flux. Music in MMCC, even the NOCC process, is not only about surviving the present, as music was for Mandela and other offenders under apartheid. It is also about building skills and a sense of self for the future. In this regard, I argue, my PAR methodology provided a strategy for shifting the balance of power, which the DCS itself aspires to but finds difficult to attain.

What role does the panopticon play in all this? Its major effect, Foucault notes, was “to induce in the inmate a sense of conscious and permanent visibility that assured the automatic functioning of power” (1978: 201). It is this consciousness of being visible, I suggest, that offenders have turned to their advantage when it comes to music behind bars. During the competitions and rehearsals, it is offenders who benefit the most; they are in the limelight, and everyone depends on them. They display responsibility, respect, determination, and willingness to learn, participate and win. Skosana noted in 2003 that no escaping of offenders was reported during these competitions since their inception in 1997, despite the fact that more than a thousand offenders a year were involved (Skosana 2003: 7). The officers show more concern for the offenders during this time, too, because they in turn receive recognition for their hard work.

One must ask if offenders’ consciousness of being in the limelight is a false consciousness which only reaffirms the “reified powers of domination” (Foucault 1978: 212) around them. Even within the prison environment, however, music’s potential as an “impulse of opposition” (Pratt, cited in Dougan 1999: 10) still holds. Through music people are able to articulate many kinds of expression, not necessarily all visible. Music also has a long history in South Africa and elsewhere of being used to voice protest against repressive systems, a history easily transferable to protest against the conventions of incarceration and socio-cultural restriction. Here, the relative autonomy of the music groups that developed in MMCC during my PAR project (some of which still continue) plays an important role. Although these groups arose within an environment that denies freedom and severs connections to social situations ‘outside’, and although the implications of panopticism are that it becomes a political technology of the body, where power relations “invest it, mark it, train it, and force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs” (Foucault Ibid: 25), offenders *use* these signs as a strategy of discovery about their *own* aesthetic practice, physical selves, and power.

Even before my project began, within the confines of the NOCC and pre-existing music groups in MMCC, issues of mutuality and reciprocity existed and were manipulated both covertly and overtly. Offenders adhered to training programmes, performance sessions, and other disciplinary processes and procedures to remain part of the competitions and continue to enjoy the benefits that result from participation. By the same token, criteria for involvement, and their attainment - when and where the competitions are going to be, what the repertoire is going to be, how the schedule of events will work - are not under

the control of offenders. These are initially known only to DCS officials or those organising the NOCC. The officials control the programme while the individual competitors seem to exercise some autonomy regarding their participation. The 2005 NOCC was postponed from July 2005 to 16 February 2006, and the offenders did not know the reasons for such postponement. Some even lost the opportunity to participate. However, there is a shared vision, almost an unspoken pact, between offenders as participant choristers, that the correctional authorities want them to win the competition. The delay is thus equally aggravating for both sides.

Foucault's point of departure for the analysis of power relations is the resistance to structures of domination, as noted above. Strategies of power, whose object or target is primarily the human body, are endowed with certain capacities or possibilities for action. Actions are intentional goal-oriented movements. Furthermore, Foucault is committed to the view that all social relations are inevitably and inescapably power relations. In his view, there is no possible social field outside or beyond power, and there is no possible form of interpersonal interaction that is not at the same time a power relation.

In this case, where actions of DCS officials have succeeded in modifying the actions of offenders through soliciting their involvement in the NOCC, we can say that officials have exercised power over offenders. In terms of the panopticon, it is another mechanism for controlling the conduct, movements and behaviour of others. *But*, I argue, the exercise of power over others in the MMCC environment does not always imply modification of their actions; even while colluding with power, offenders resist it, each bringing their own distinct capacities for action.

Offenders involved in music activities in prison, although they are not completely panoptic-free, are nevertheless panoptic-conscious, or what I call 'panoptic-wise'. They are free to participate in music activities and *perform* to the very people they are subjected to, subverting the authoritarian gaze into the gaze of an audience. They can take their performance outside prison ('beyond bars') and show themselves to officials, other offenders, and their social community, in ways that other offenders cannot. They enjoy certain psychological and physical freedoms, and can develop new perspectives and outlooks (on themselves and their time in incarceration) compared to those who are not participating. Still 'behind bars' and still performing offenders, they create a space of freedom even within inhabiting the space of restriction called the prison system.

This emancipation from the paradigm of power and surveillance, their panoptic-wiseness, enabled them to make use of the PAR programme to alter their current situation and their potential for rehabilitation and full reintegration into society. Some of the offenders at MMCC have gained considerable music experience - far more than many members of the community 'outside' have, especially in the Eastern Cape. The offenders' exercise of power has become a life-changing activity. Thus, a strategy (choralism) introduced by DCS as part of a programme of discipline and control has empowered offenders and contributed towards their rehabilitation.

The logic of self-emancipation here equates to Hattingh's paradigm of the 'dandy' or DeNora's technology of the self (see above), but resonates even more strongly with the work of Paulo Freire. In his seminal *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) Freire refers to breaking the "culture of silence" of the oppressed (Ibid: 14). To Freire, the broken silence denotes emancipation, showing that the oppressed, in Foucault's words, "can now take the power of knowledge into their hands and are no longer oppressed" (Foucault 1978: 25). Freire's notion of *conscientização* - critical consciousness, or conscientisation (Ibid: 9) extends the Foucaultian relationship between power and knowledge; and I have drawn on it here more directly for the educational terrain - or rather, for the realm of what Freire calls 'praxis', which for him is identified with self-knowledge or self-reflection (Ibid: 11). This strategy involves interest in the way one's own personal history and biography has expressed itself - and continues to express itself - in how one sees oneself, and in one's roles and social expectations.

For Freire (1970: 15) emancipation and empowerment are from institutional or environmental forces that limit our opinions and rational control over our lives, but are taken for granted and seem beyond our control. Therefore, insights gained through critical self-awareness are liberating, in the sense that at least one can recognise the reasons for one's problems. Following Freire, the assumption I made during the PAR project was that in discovering themselves as offenders - oppressed, disempowered, disenfranchised (by their crime and then by incarceration) - these offenders would become not only knowledgeable but aware of the sense of liberation that comes with new knowledge. This process occurred as they engaged with others in dialogue and discussion, when they tried to transform their oppressive situation in which they found themselves. I argue here that such transformation cannot just happen theoretically - in the head or by thinking - but has

to come through active participation. Thus PAR became the appropriate tool for conscientisation that challenged the musicians behind bars and that required responses; not just at the intellectual level, but also at the level of action.

While Foucault's theory of panopticism looks at how power structures operate, Freire's theory of *conscientização* through 'praxis' impacts more directly on my application of participatory action research as a method. If offenders have the capacity to change and control of their lives through music (both behind and beyond the bars), Freire's notion speaks to the need for critical action and reflection; a 'praxis' for them to develop new and improved skills for successful reintegration into the community. It is also about social transformation that comes from an individual's critical understanding of society and their ability to change it. For Freire (1970: 53) a 'dialogic' process is the essence of education for self- and social freedom. In my research, dialogue played a crucial role in facilitating the whole process initially, and in initiating collaboration between participants, at different levels of psycho-social dynamics.

Freire's ideas were nurtured in the 1960s era of critical theory and revolutionary politics. More recently, Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action (1996) has proposed that the act of coming together and agreeing can take the place of revolution as a mode of change. As he puts it: "A discourse-theoretic interpretation insists on the fact that democratic will-formation draws its legitimating force both from the communicative pre-suppositions that allow the better arguments to come into play in various forms of deliberations and from the procedures that secure fair bargaining processes" (Habermas 1996: 24). Communicative action is the type of action that Habermas says uses all better ways of thinking, plus language. This combination allowed participants in my research to understand and agree with one another and to make plans for common action. As Freire advocates:

We must never merely discourse on the present situation, must never provide the people with programs which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes, and fears. It is not our role to speak to the people about our own view of the world, or to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours (1970: 53).

In this sense, both communicative action and dialogue are a consequence of the action and reflection that may flow from discussions and debates, combining theory and practice from which knowledge is acquired. To both Freire and Habermas, discussion at this point

has to shift from the question of the prevalence of simple majority decision-making in deliberative processes to one which constitutes better and reasonable ways of arguing (Habermas 1996: 24). Habermas's theory and Freire's dialogue assume consensus. The contention is that teaching and learning occur as the dialoguers interact. Debate of this kind is thus a tentacle of praxis and an interaction of both praxis and consciousness-raising as advocated by Freire.

To this end, Habermas suggests that active communication is about deliberate and free participation and invariably where consensus is required. His consensual form of democratic participation through reasoning and persuasion could suggest how participation could best be achieved in the prison environment (1996: 299). Habermas argues that consensus ought to be subjected to debate or deliberation and reflection. Freire, however, promotes action and reflection, believing that consensus should not be a prerequisite for discussion but should rather reflect the democratic discourse of informed deliberation and reflection responsive to the demands of an active citizenry (Ibid). If there is an exchange of argument, according to Habermas, as with the MPAR project, it should be unconstrained, free from the panoptic gaze of the authorities in the sense of Foucault. Such ideas were of importance for the actions of the research participants involved and the research method I had chosen for my inquiry. The idea of dialogue as articulated by both Habermas and Freire features prominently in my closing chapter, where I talk about dialogic learning.

Freire's starting point is the organising of the curriculum that must be in the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people involved; thus a needs-driven approach to curriculum development. In this way, he demystifies the false consciousness of the oppressor as the one who is knowledgeable and emphasises the need to lead the oppressor to assist in designing curriculum according to the needs of the oppressed to support the transformation process, at the same time conscientising the oppressed of their role in it. If curriculum development is approached otherwise, both the oppressor and the oppressed are dehumanised - if the hopes, aspirations, opinions, feelings and views of the oppressed are not given full credit. This would happen if an elitist stance allows the oppressor to impose their views on the others by whatever manipulative and sadistic means, intentionally or otherwise. Freire's principal concern lies with the social transformation of the oppressed by educating both the oppressors and

the oppressed through critical self-reflection as they debate and discuss in a dialogical way.

Such “experimental try-outs” (Lammerts 1988: 88) were carried out in the MPAR’s 11 music circles and cycle-end meetings; the research experiments carried out by research actors were collaborative and included all participants at various levels. In this process the four stages of PAR explained in Fig.1 were integrated in each cycle of the research with the continuous gathering and feedback of information about the existing local practices and how these could be developed at MMCC. However, this to me is the first step towards a deeper understanding and implementation of a dialogical learning process to transform people. An education programme has yet to emerge from the “generative themes” (Freire 1970: 58) of the dialogue.

These generative ideas suggest the direction for change, translating a shared vision among participants into a comprehensive action plan which would require changing individual and organisational behaviours, impacting on old systems and structures that may have outlived their purposes, and getting beyond quick-fix solutions for true and real transformation to take place. For the above reasons a programme such as the MPAR had, for me, the methodological aim of arriving at solutions through reflection and action in order to generate an action plan by all the relevant actors together, and so assisting offenders to find their best place in society.

Finally, some aspects of critical theory inspired my methods of analysing data, since I had collected multiple levels of information. A variety of techniques for data analysis was the way to go. I was attracted to Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly’s narrative inquiry, particularly their assertion that stories that are told and lived become points of reference and are capable of educating the self and the other; and indeed, the journal entries and my field notes were informative. As Iris Young (2000: 47) puts it, narratives are useful in creating opportunities for the marginalised (musicians behind bars) to air their views about their oppression, constraints and difficulties: “they voic[e] their reflections on situated experiences and identities in relation to their social positions and their affinity to others” (Ibid).

In addition I found the thematic content analysis (TCA) approach advocated by Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) useful in analysing data collected in narrative form.

With TCA, the researcher notes the number of times a word, theme or issue emerges, after which meaning is applied and data analysed. Palmquist (1998) emphasises the value of this approach in analysing qualitative textual data emerging from a multiplicity of streams including written words, interviews and speeches as well as informal conversations. Such techniques enabled me to elicit evidence that would support or nullify my propositions that music could be used successfully to conscientise and liberate Hatting's 'dandy' (1994: 2). I further explore such techniques in Chapter 6.

1.11 Concluding thoughts

With PAR as the appropriate research design for my work, I theorise that the 'culture of silence' of research actors in my project, especially with the offenders, was broken. The offenders emerged as "speaking bodies" (Susan van Zyl pers. comm. 21 February 2006) because of their local knowledge and the contribution in knowledge construction that occurred within the project. The spread of information and power was distributed and located among the different research actors in the Music Participatory Action Research (MPAR) project as they interacted, reciprocated and influenced one another in acquiring new knowledge and skills. Here, the MPAR along with the NOCC became not only power and knowledge tools but also agents for change for the musicians behind bars. They were conscientised into activism through praxis, creating a space (which I have framed as a Foucauldian/Freirean nexus) where knowledge was created, and research actors were emancipated and empowered. My evidence for all this is tabled in Chapters 2 through 5 below.

CHAPTER 2: INTRODUCTORY CYCLE AND ACTIVATING WORKSHOP

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe the events and narrate the stories told by some of the research actors in the first of the four PAR cycles in MMCC, from late 2006 to March 2007. This chapter and Chapters 3 to 5 constitute the main empirical evidence of my research.³⁰ After three months of preparatory meetings, the cycles took three months each except for the last two-month one. Within each of the four cycles, the four stages - plan-act-observe-reflect (Kemmis and McTaggart 1992: 18) - were continuously interwoven. The whole research was therefore conducted over a period of 14 months.

Six preparatory meetings were held with the area commissioner, various heads of MMCC, a head of section and the research actors from 16 October 2006 to 09 January 2007, to introduce the MPAR and outline research processes and procedures. Prior to this I had requested and received permission from the National Department of Correctional Services in Pretoria to conduct the research. (See Appendix 1: Permission to Conduct Research Letter.) The first cycle started on 16 January 2007, and the last ended on 29 November 2007. Because of the cyclic nature of action research and the importance of describing phenomena from the participants' perspective, I present their narratives from reports and journal entries verbatim and unedited. They often spoke in their home language, IsiXhosa, and where this happens I give the English translation.

2.2 Preparatory meetings

Cycle 1 began on 16 January 2007 and ran to a cycle-end meeting on 27 January March 2007. This was a preparatory cycle where music topics were decided but no musical

³⁰The strategic process relayed in these chapters, of continuous gathering and feedback of information about the existing local practices, shows its aim in the call for and the opportunities for social participation of offenders and how these practices develop in all four cycles of the research. Reports and journal entries from those who were part of the MPAR project, some of whom have since been released, illustrate some of the successes gained with this research model.

activities happened yet. Before it began there were six preparatory meetings, structured as follows:

1. On 16 October 2006 there was a meeting between myself as research facilitator and Mr Luvuyo Gqili, the area commissioner, in his office at MMCC, to introduce myself and the research and to arrange further meetings with other authorities. The idea was also to solicit his support for the project. He was excited because “it was going to pave the way for music development of such talented offenders” (pers. comm. 16 October 2006). He added a regret:

You know, Mrs Twani, I am sorry that only Mthatha Maximum Correctional Centre has been made a Centre of Excellence by the Department and not both Maximum and Medium, because this is actually where a lot of activity is even in sport and music, as you know choirs from this prison are national champions when it comes to music. However, we are grateful that people like you have become involved to further develop our offenders. It is certainly a credit to this centre and me as the area commissioner. I truly welcome the research project and give you full support.

Mr Gqili suggested that when I met with him and the other authorities in the next meeting I should explain the difference between research and training, action research and other kinds of research, and why I had decided to do action research.

2. A second meeting was held at the same office at MMCC on 23 October 2006, attended by Mr Gqili, three heads of prison, and myself. I gave two PowerPoint presentations on the differences between research and training; and another one introducing the MPAR project and explaining the PAR model, its advantages and disadvantages, and how it differed from other research models. I gave two reasons why I preferred action research to ‘training’: first, the two are very different even if some of the outcomes appear similar, and the processes that govern them are different; second, teaching and learning music requires mastery of skills, techniques, and knowledge over a period of time, usually medium- to long-term, and my project would only be one year. A major consideration, I said, was the profile of the targeted participants for the project, who had little or no formal music background and some were semi-literate or totally illiterate, as I had seen during choir practices.

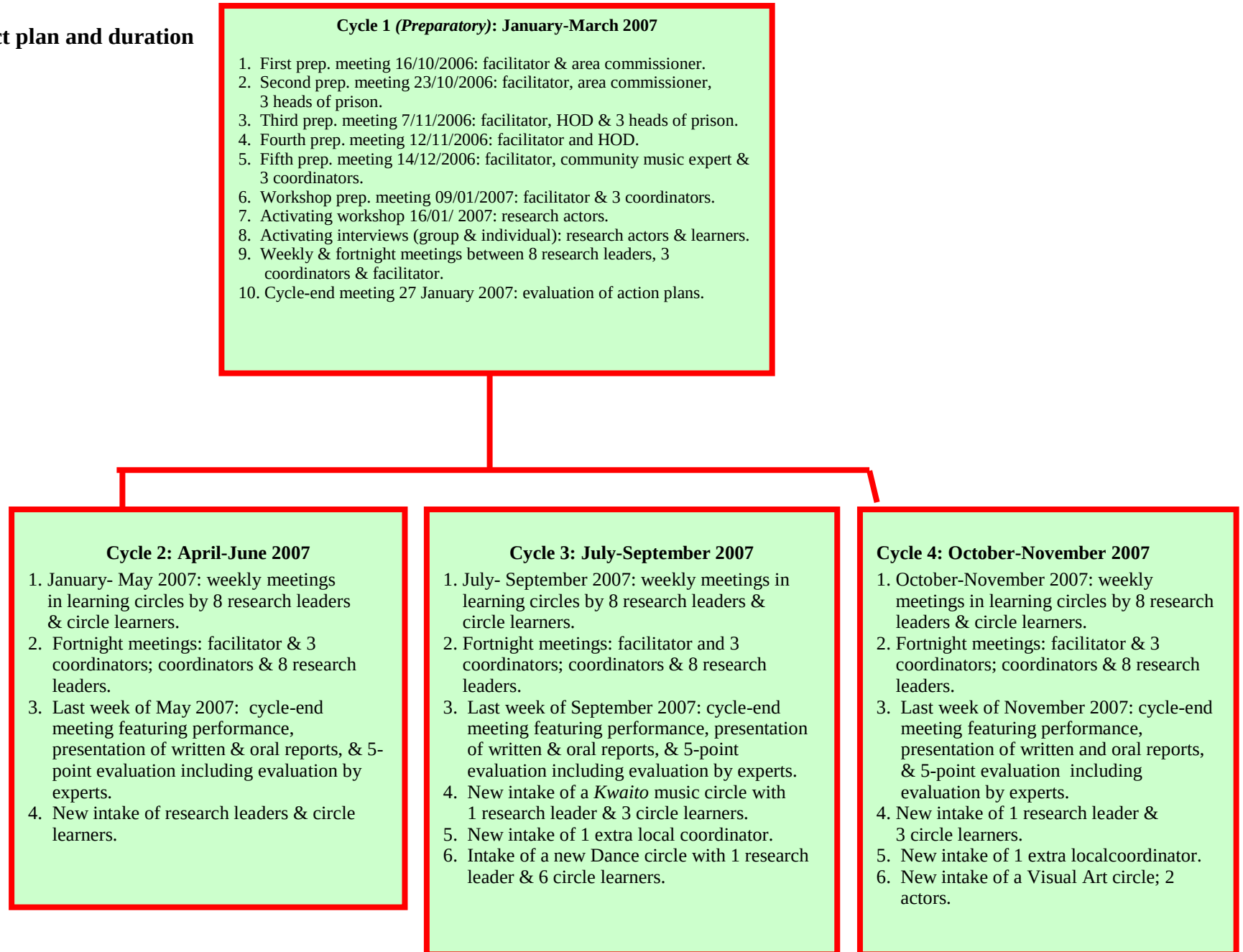
The aim of this meeting was to get the buy-in and support of the senior officials and to ensure that they were left in no doubt as to the significance of the processes involved. In

this meeting the head of the Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture unit, Mr Makroza Alfred Ngxisho, was identified as the right person for me to work through, since he was in charge of that unit and would be able to assist with the selection and recruitment of participants, taking into account prison requirements such as length of sentences and conduct of offenders. The three heads of prison pledged their support for the project.

3. A third meeting was held on 07 November 2006 between myself, Ngxisho and the three heads of prison. I outlined the strategy and duration of the MPAR project and the type of offenders who should be involved: those who were already involved in NOCC and those serving medium- to long-term sentences, to ensure that the project would be sustained at least to the end of 2007. Figure 2 demonstrates the structure, activities and time frames for the project.

Ngxisho was of further assistance in identifying MMCC officials for involvement in the MPAR project, such as the two interns who took part right to the end. They enthusiastically welcomed the project, seeing it as an intervention that would help music develop to greater heights in the prison and they also talked about its rehabilitating effects on offenders.

Fig. 2 MPAR project plan and duration

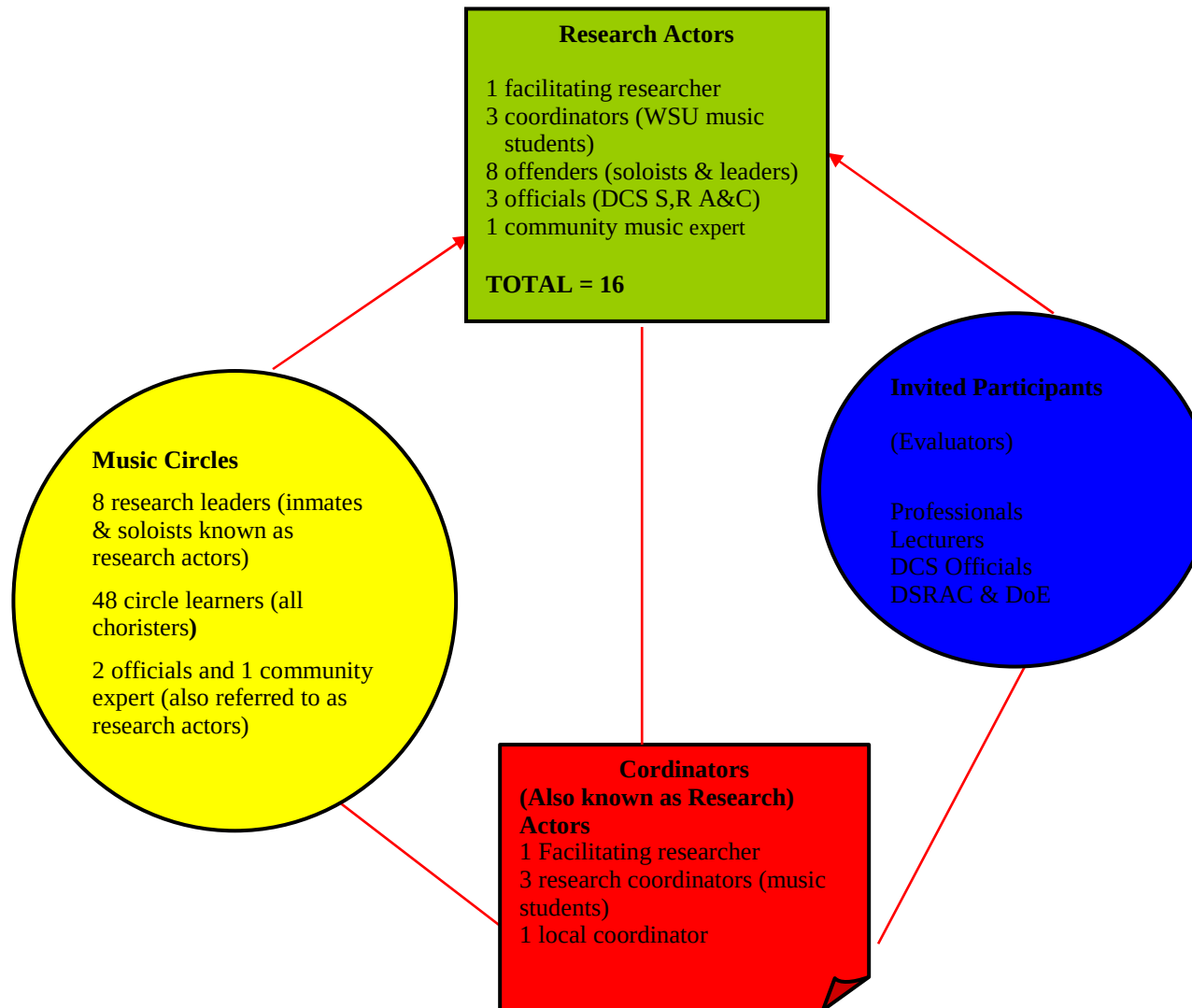


4. The fourth, very short meeting took place on 12 November 2006 between myself and Mr Ngxise to confirm participants and set a date for an initiating workshop in January 2007 that would introduce and outline procedures and processes for all participants. (How they were chosen is explained in Chapter 2.4 below.) It was agreed that the participants would be three officials (Mr Ngxise, Vuyo Mduduma, and Musa Mpopo), eight offenders: Cingile Qoboza, Andries Mathida, Mchayiswa Madikizela, Thembisile 'Papa' Msawu, Mluleki Gogobala, Ndoyisile Dubula, Vusumzi Majanti, and Sphathiso Mabho, three research coordinators who were (my) music students from Walter Sisulu University: Mkhanyiseli Gobingca, Lungamzi Ngoma (a postgraduate), and Sikhululekile Mafunda, and a community music expert, Mrs Kholisa Mlandu, who was a music teacher and had been involved with coaching the DCS choirs even before I started in 1999.

5. The fifth preparatory meeting was with the three research coordinators and Mrs Mlandu, and took place at WSU on 14 December 2006. We clarified our roles: I was the research facilitator; Gobingca, Mafunda and Ngoma were the research coordinators and would coordinate work inside and outside prison; Mlandu was the community music expert; and the three DCS officials together with the eight offenders would all be research leaders. All the research actors except the three coordinators and myself would find at least six learners each with whom they would work, then decide on music 'study topics', venues, and times for their meetings. Figure 3 illustrates the structure of participation and role of the research actors. The year closed with a lot of enthusiasm and buzz about the project in the prison corridors and we were all set to start working in January 2007.

6. Finally, I held a final short preparatory meeting on 09 January with the research coordinators to ensure that all the resources for the activating workshop on 16 January (equipment, catering and transport) were organised.

Fig. 3 Structure of participation and role of the research actors



2.3 Cycle 1

The Main part of Cycle 1 went from 16 January 2006 to 27 March 2007, the day of the cycle-end meeting. It was more of a preparatory cycle in terms of ensuring that all research actors (all core participants – research leaders, community music expert and coordinators) were on board, and understood what they were involving themselves in, knew about the conditions of participating, understood their roles and commitment to the year-long project, and could plan their music topics and activities. A ‘preparatory activating’ workshop was essential for all of us, to map out the strategic purpose, processes, procedures, and logistics.³¹ From the end of January to the end of March the participants held meetings and discussed their aims, aspirations, and needs. At the end of the cycle we all came together to listen to presentations of work planned or in progress.

I begin with a three-part ‘thick description’ of the activating workshop, where many issues were revealed for the first time and where the research actors introduce themselves. I call the three parts ‘Expectation’, ‘Explanation’, and ‘Participation’, although elements of each come into all three parts.

2.3.1 Cycle 1: Activating workshop part 1: Expectation

On 16 January an activating workshop was held for the 16 research actors (research leaders, community music expert and coordinators), where research-related procedures and rehabilitation imperatives were explained. As Rob Lammerts notes (1988: 82), an activating workshop “is an instrument whose main goal and strategy is to gain more discursive knowledge and to break down obstructive routines of action”. I found that this instrument also helped sensitise participants and enabled me to do a baseline assessment of their knowledge about the DCS’s approach to rehabilitation their awareness of the impact and benefits of participating in rehabilitation programmes and the ways in which these added value or not to their lives in prison and beyond. I wanted to find out whether participants were able to make connections between their involvement in musical activities

³¹ It may seem as if there was an excessive amount of preparation, but at each of the preliminary meetings more people came on board and took ownership of the project. This was important to me as an action research facilitator, and for them as participants. This groundwork was not just ‘background’ but vital to the process; and process is vital to PAR.

and rehabilitation. In addition, it was important for me to learn what else motivated them to participate.

Fig. 4 shows most of the 16 research actors, who drove the research and were part of the activating workshop. With their varying educational and musical backgrounds, they provided useful insights that helped me to pitch the presentation of the research process at an appropriate level.

Fig. 4 Activating workshop attendees



Back row: Mkhanyiseli Gobingca, Siphathiso Mabho, Mluleki Gogobala, Vuyolwethu 'Vuyo' Mduduma, Mchayiswa Madikizela, Cingile Qoboza and Vusumzi Majanti.

Front row: Andries Mathida, Musa Mpopo, Kholisa Mlandu, Makroza Alfred Ngxishe, Zoliswa Twani, Thembisile 'Papa' Msawu

Not in the picture: Sikhululekile Mafunda (photographer), Ndoyisile Dubula and Lungamzi Ngoma

The research actors pictured above ranged from 19 years to 52 years of age, but their age did not deter the spirit of enthusiasm that permeated the workshop. The six-hour activating workshop was intended partly to find out the research actors' central understanding of terms such as music, research, participatory action research, rehabilitation, restoration, and

reintegration, and their relation to one another. Another intention was to come to a common understanding of how music through the AR model could contribute to preparing offenders for reintegration into society. Further, the idea was to generate an action plan to assist offenders in finding their place in the wider society. Above all, we wanted to outline ethical considerations and address the modalities of daily reality in a prison, especially those of a “psycho-dynamic nature” (Van Beinum 1988: 67). Receptivity towards the other is a methodological necessity in AR as Van Beinum notes, as well as an ethical one. It was imperative that emphasis was placed on the need to break down hierarchical barriers and assume a neutral stance, where all participants could see each other as partners and actors and the role of each could be seen as crucial in the success of a project where everyone has to collaborate in finding solutions.

The workshop followed a programme set by the outsider participants. In brief (followed by more detail below): opening prayer by Gobingca; welcome remarks by myself; an ice-breaker by the male intern Vuyolwethu ‘Vuyo’ Mduduma; workshop expectations and introduction of the MPAR project facilitated by myself; a discussion of the relevant terms and rehabilitation *vis-à-vis* the role of music, facilitated by Ngxisho; and the introduction of all circle learners (offenders) by eight individual research leaders (themselves offenders). Finally we had an impromptu performance by the offenders’ choir conducted by the acting conductor (who was an offender) and Mrs Mlandu. Some of the programme was recorded on film and in photographs.

In welcoming the participants, I thanked Mr Ngxisho profoundly for his part in enabling us to run the project. In a prison environment, I stressed, success depended on great patience and humility. I highlighted that the participants in the project were the lifeblood of the MPAR project, without which there could be no project. I further wished that the spirit of determination that was in me would flow into their inner beings as participants, for I knew that it was not always going to be easy, having worked in the prison environment before.

I presented the background to my doctorate and how the MPAR project linked to it. I ran through the meaning of MPAR and why I chose this model. (See DVD ch.1, which also

shows the atmosphere and physical environment.³²) In Mduduma's 10 minute ice-breaker everybody introduced themselves. For this activity, I asked the participants to sit in a semicircle for more effective discussion. We then came to the crucial discussion of what participants expected from the research project and here, one of my main concerns was that people should express their hopes and fears about being involved, seek clarification, and find common ground and a shared vision. It was one of the most energetic and participatory sessions. At this early stage, I noticed the tension between teaching and research emerging as the offenders kept referring to their expectation to be 'taught' certain things. Mchayiswa Madikizela asked, to the laughter of everyone in the room,

*Ke ngoku Mama, uzakusithengela iincwadi, ne uniform, kaloku kufuneka sicace ukuba siyafunda kule project. Mna ndiyavuya ngokuphinda ndibengumntwana wesikolo, futhi ndifunda into endiyithandayo, kaloku ndaphuma kusekwa ngoko esikolweni.*³³

[Mother, are you going to get us books and uniform? In reality, we need to be different from others [other offenders], and it must be clear to everyone that we are learners in this project. I am happy to be learning again since I left school quite early].³⁴

To defuse this tension, I immediately went to my explanation of Action and Participatory Research to show how research differs from teaching. Even though I made this presentation and later constantly reminded them to use terminology such as music circles and circle learners as opposed to music groups and group members, referring to themselves as researchers, the tension prevailed. My hope was that it would end by the time we finished the project and that it would not create any dependency either during the project or beyond.

I was surprised by their energy and enthusiasm to learn about research. Vusumzi Majanti, wanted to know:

³² Extracts from DVD footage are on the DVD that accompanies this thesis. It has 24 clips but some of them are grouped under one chapter, so the numbering goes from chs. 1 to 15, as follows: 1, 2, 3, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 5, 6, 7A, 7B, 7C, 8A, 8B, 9A, 9B, 10A, 10B, 11A, 11B, 12, 13, 14, 15.

³³ The records from the activating workshop in Cycle 1 are documented and preserved in DVD footage that can be made available with permission from DCS. Most of the discussion on this footage has been transcribed, and it is these transcriptions that I use here.

³⁴ All the translations are by Zoliswa Twani. To make the participants' comments and my translations visually clear, I have usually indented them in single spacing even where they are short, not following the standard formatting code that I do for quotes from literary sources (only quotes five lines or longer indented).

Mam'u Twani, yintoni i research, ngoba lento le ndidla ngokuva ithethwa ngabantu abafundileyo. Ingaba nathi singayazi?

[Mrs Twani, what is research? I often hear educated people talking about research. Will we also be able to learn about it?]

Without down-playing the enthusiasm, we needed to manage the activities and ensure that the playing field was levelled. I was alert to my role as a facilitator who needed to be cautious about power relations and how these were coming across and received by participants. As Herr and Anderson note, one of the challenges of PAR is gauging the positionality of the researcher, since the major difference between PAR and other qualitative research is that “research participants themselves are either in control of the research or are participants in the design and methodology of the research” (2005: 1). My response to Majanti was that they should first regard the research project as an opportunity to show off their skills and knowledge about music and see themselves as contributors to knowledge that we would all be amassing; second, that any learning that took place would be informal, that they would be operating outside normal school boundaries, so uniforms were not necessary and nobody was going to be teaching anybody in the traditional sense. Third, I urged everybody to talk about ‘attire’ for the various music genres as represented in the music circles rather than referring to ‘uniforms’.

The question of dress continued to be an important one. For example, Madikizela insisted on acquiring proper *uhubhe* attire for each member of his music circle for the final cycle-end meeting. The way people looked was an important part of how they felt about themselves. I return to this point in more detail later, where I also note the creativity of offenders in searching local resources to acquire ‘uniforms’.

Mluleki Gogobala, at 19 years the youngest of all the offenders in the project, asked about a different aspect:

Mna, ndifuna ukwazi ukuba ndizakuzuza ntoni ngokuba kule project? Ingaba sizakubhala iimviwo, zona iizatifiketi sizakuzifumana? Kudala simana singena kwizinto zomculo kodwa ufumane ukuba, into emnandi kukuphuma ngaphandle kwe jele, kanti ke kumele kubekho into ebonisayo ukuba umntu unezinto azifundileyo.

[I want to know what the benefits for joining this project are. Are we going to write examinations and get certificates for participating? Some of us have been involved in a lot of music activities in the prison and the only benefit is to get out of prison for a while and yet I think there should be evidence that one has actually learnt some things.]

It was clear from those who had some choral experience that their number one desire was to learn to read and write music. Cingile Qoboza commented with excitement:

*Eyi, mama intle lento uzenayo, uyabona mna nalamajita ndicula nawo, sihlala sithetha ngento yokucula itonic solfa. Kungakuhle gqitha ukuba singaphuma kule project sikwazi ukufunda nokubhala i-tonic sol-fa, namagqudu la, lento ye staff.*³⁵

[You know what you have brought us, mother, it's what the other choristers (*nalamajita* is colloquial for 'gentleman') and I talk about, namely, singing in tonic sol-fa. It would be quite nice if we could leave the project knowing how to read and write both tonic sol-fa and staff notation.]

Andries agreed with Cingile and he further mused:

IStaff mna ndisibona sibalulekile, ingakumbi nje ngokuba mna ndibawela ukucula lomculo we opera and kufuneka umntu awazi lamagqudu. Kakade, Mam' uTwani, ndingakwazi ukucula ngesi Jamani okanye isiTaliyane?

[I see staff notation as the most important thing to learn for me since I am interested in singing opera music and I need to learn staff notation. Mrs Twani, is it possible for me to learn to sing in German and / or Italian?].

Other concerns were regarding learning to play instruments and the availability of these. Madikizela asked:

Nje ngokuba lomculo ndiwuthandayo, uhubhe okanye imfene usebenza ngekitara namakhasethi ingaba sizakwazi ukuba nazo ezozinto? Ndiyafuna ukufunda ikitara ukuze sizenzele umculo wethu singathembeli kulamakhasethi qha.

[Since the music I enjoy is *uhubhe* or *imfene*, which uses a guitar and cassette tapes, is it possible that we acquire these? I want to learn to play the guitar so that we can make our own music rather than relying only on cassette tapes.]

Dubula then raised what I had anticipated would be a major challenge in the MPAR given the spread of educational backgrounds of participants, one that would involve some adaptation of the AR method (based so heavily on participants' writing). My immediate concern was, which areas of the research process do we share and at what stage do I take control and ownership of the data analysis needed for presenting the AR dissertation? His question was thus extremely pertinent:

Mna andikwazi kufunda andikwazi nokubhala, ngoku ke ndizakwenza kanjani xa kufuneka kubhaliwe? Lo nto ingathethi ukuba ndithi mandikhutshwe, hayi!

³⁵ There are no proper names for most of the music terms in IsiXhosa; however, some Xhosa words have been invented in the process of formally introducing music as a learning area within the education system. One of them is '*amagqudu*', to describe music notes written in staff notation because of their round shape and the stem that resembles a knobkerrie (round-headed stick).

Ndizakuhlala ngoba ndifuna ukubonisa olwam ulwazi ngomculo, ndifunde nezinto ezintsha.

[I cannot read or write, so how are you going to work with me when there are things to be written or read? By so saying I am not suggesting that you should take me out of the project, not so! Because I want to demonstrate some music knowledge I have and also learn new things.]

For me this was a bold display of courage, and intellectual maturity, because as he points out he did not know if illiteracy excluded him - which was certainly not the case, but it also involved thinking about adaptations of certain AR and PAR aspects that could ensue for the MPAR. One such adaptation was allowing a research actor and not Dubula the research leader to be the one responsible for recording events, thoughts, ideas and progress related reports - because of Dubula's inability to read and write. Since Dubula was a key person in his music circle it was still imperative to get his perspective, which is where DVD footage was useful. This situation also demonstrated the essential 'situatedness' (Weis and Fine 2004), flexibility of approach, and uniqueness that each PAR project has, where methodological aspects of PAR are adapted as necessary to achieve optimum results. As Elden and Chisholm put it (1993: 107), in a systematic empirical enquiry evidence is based on the participants' own categories and frameworks for understanding and explaining their world, and "they themselves define, investigate and solve the problems produced by a particular social system".

I had hoped that this mid-morning session would be short but to my surprise it became the longest; it took about 45 minutes. I allowed it to carry on simply because the offenders, in particular, were enjoying their probably rare opportunity to speak their minds and express their feelings and opinions freely, making 'communicative deliberation' or 'naming their world' as Habermas (1976) and Freire (1970) have put it. The problematic of research vs teaching and learning needing such a length of time was quite puzzling, and I wrote in my journal that I had expected them to problematise 'research', which they didn't. I resolved to emphasise the use of research terms continuously and to keep reminding them to think of themselves as co-researchers and co-leaders of the research process.

In sum, the workshop produced expectations about the research process, procedures, resources needed, and considerations for successful implementation. I gained a good idea of the participants' readiness for participation, but I realized that some matters would need clarification as we went along, such as notions of rehabilitation, research, the benefits of

participation, the nature of cycle-end meetings and their evaluation, and expectation about resources and ‘uniforms’. Above all, I had to think carefully about illiteracy in relation to my reporting the research, and about the relationship of the project to my PhD, and I talk about this later in the thesis.

2.3.2 Cycle 1: Activating workshop part 2: Explanation

Having dealt with some of the issues arising from the participants’ expectations, I returned to the idea of ‘research process’. I explained that the three coordinators and I would provide overall guidance and support while the other 12 research leaders would lead the music circles in planning their music activities. I dealt with the roles of the research actors and constitution of the music circles (as in Figure 3 above). I explained that the circles were dedicated to planning, acting, observing and reflecting on what they had done, throughout a particular cycle, and that the music circles (classes) would be visited regularly during the cycle. I explained the use of research journals and their purpose for recording participants’ plans, ideas, and reflections. To cater for illiteracy, we agreed that those research leaders who felt inadequate about their literacy levels would discuss with their music circle learners other ways of recording the necessary information. They could then report on this aspect to research coordinators during the music circle (class) visits.

I set the stage by requesting Mkhanyiseli Gobingca to distribute stationery, including the research journals, to all 15 research actors, for them to start keeping their records as expected in a research project of this nature. This ‘ownership’ of a journal and writing utensils was an enormously symbolic gesture, even for those who could not read or write, as I realised later. I explained the whole MPAR project by means of a PowerPoint presentation. (See DVD ch. 1). I immediately read curiosity and excitement in the eyes and faces of research actors, especially the offenders, some of whom asked: “Are we going to be on TV?” Such a question gave me an opportunity to speak more about documenting the research using DVD, photographs, and other means, and why all this had to be done. I said in a mixture of IsiXhosa and English:

Mandiyiphinde lento ndiyithethayo ngesiXhosa. Kwezi journals umntu uzakubhala yonke into afuna ukuyibhala ngohlobo lwakhe, ukuze nawe ukhumbule inzame zakho. [Let me repeat what I am saying in Xhosa. In these journals, we are all going to record whatever we feel is important in our own way, so that we can all at

a later stage reflect on our own efforts.] The equipment is for everyone involved in the project; feel free at any stage in your work with your circle learners to use some of it. This can be arranged through the research coordinators and the office of Mr Ngxishhe.

I explained that I was answerable to the DCS Research Directorate, wherein, for example, the spelling of Mthatha had to remain ‘Umtata’ as a DCS imperative, as well as the reporting of the progress and outcomes of the research. I explained the nature of action research as but one kind of research among many other kinds, where the two terms ‘action’ and ‘research’ highlight the essential feature - that of trying out things in practice as means of improvement and of increasing knowledge. With my voice warming up, I found myself exclaiming:

It is research done by individual participants themselves into their own practice in many different work situations, formally or informally and *even in prison*. *Ke, lento ithi, aninakuba nangxaki yinto yokuba nithi nikulendawo nikuyo nibenifunda nisenza iresearch. Yi -research eyenziwa ngabantu abadibeneyo befunda banzi ngomsebenzi abawenzayo nokuba basejele.* [This means that you should not have a problem that even in your situation and environment you are involved in learning to conduct and about research.]

I explained the terms used in the MPAR project (such as research actors, music circles, research leaders) in both English and IsiXhosa, making sure that even those who were illiterate or lacking in the understanding of English were fully involved and left in no doubt as to what the project was about. (See DVD ch. 2.) Also I needed to point out, albeit in a subtle way, the importance of English in music teaching and learning; there are no appropriate IsiXhosa words for most musical terms. I ended this session by showing them a set of four recorders, which could be used in one or more of the groups.

When Ngxishhe and Mlandu went on and off stage to help facilitate the next session, I was fascinated by the admiration that the offenders showed, by clapping and ululating. The purpose of the next part was to find out participants’ perceptions of rehabilitation, restoration and reintegration and for the DCS to explain their understanding. Mlandu first took a turn, and started apologising for her late coming due to her work commitments. Most of the offenders burst into bouts of laughter and shouts of joy because of her asides. Although she was not due to speak, she made a speech about me in which she indirectly told participants the sort of thing they would be learning in the project:

As you know xa sifunda amaculo pha ekwayarini, ndidla ngokuthi kuni kufuneka iculo eli ulazi ukuba lithetha ngantoni ukuze ukwazi ukulicula. Ndayifundiswa nguye ke le nto yokuthi analyse a song, nezizinto ndidla ngokuthetha ngazo ze-keys. Ndiyavuya Mrs Twani ngale project bazakutsho bayeke ukucula nge music scores eziqutyudiweyo.

[When we learn new songs with the choir, I usually say we should know what each song is about and how it should be sung to the meaning of the text and expressions for you to interpret it well. She taught me how to analyse music and theory of music. I am happy, Ms Twani, about your project, it is going to help them to be music-literate and stop singing with the music scores held upside down].

At this stage everyone was laughing, and she joked: “*Niyahleka, kumnandi. Zenifunde umculo lo niyeke ukundweba*” [You are laughing. Learn music and stop being inquisitive].

More laughter followed. What she said raised a number of significant points such as her cordial and sound relationship built over time with the offenders. This cordiality was to become a valuable feature within the project, essential for good partnership. Even in this first meeting, the carefree moment with Mlandu gave everyone an opportunity to loosen up and participate freely.

The same atmosphere continued as Ngxishe took his turn leading the question and answer session, where I and other research actors responded. Some of the illuminating moments included Dubula’s response:

Kum, Mhlekazi i rehabilitation yinto yokuba thina bonileyo siboniswe indlela, siyeke ukuba ngamasela, sizivelele sinezinto esizaziyo esinokuzisebenzisa kuze sibe lulutho kubahlali xa singaphandle, nokuba ke ababantu bebekumoshile wade wabe ulapha ejele bengazukukubonela ntweni.

[As I see it, Sir, rehabilitation is about redirecting our thinking and attitude about crime so that we can feel empowered with skills that we can use in our communities after incarceration, even if those people who contributed to our being convicted will not see any good in us.]

This view to me was the most mature, particularly the ‘knowingness’ and conciseness of it. This research leader (who was so vocal about being illiterate) demonstrated this grasp throughout the project, a fact that was illustrated by his music circle’s initial action plan to learn how to form and register a legal entity with a constitution and business plan. As it turned out, it became the most successful and celebrated group, even to this day.

Madikizela, in a humorous way, added about rehabilitation:

Yinto yokuba sihlale kakuhle nabantu apha ngaphakathi nangaphandle, nokuzithethelela kuba ke sonile, yilento sibanjiwe, xa ke sikwiprojects ezinje kutsho

ukuthi sidanile, ke masilisebenzise elithuba siqwebe izimilo ezitsha. Apha kuthi sonke akakho nomnye onokuthi akonanga, njengokuba abanye bedla ngokutsho xa beqhathana, ngowungabanjwanga xa ubugonanga.

[It is something to help us live peacefully inside and outside prison and to change our ways because we have erred on the wrong side of the law, hence incarceration, so when we are involved in projects like this one, that indicates we are sorry. It is for us to use this opportunity to change our behaviour and conduct. No one among us can say they have not committed crime, as some usually argue when deceiving each other, because you would not be in prison if you did not commit crime.]

This candour so early in the project was invaluable: only when people voiced such admissions about themselves could we really advance to considering positive changes in life style. ‘Papa’ Msawu chuckled in response and made the point that the project opened up the idea of lifelong learning:

It is a chance to learn other things ebendisoloko ndinomdla kuzo, qha ke ndingena ndlela yokuziqala pha ngaphandle ngenxa yobudala bam [that I have always been interested in, but could not do them outside because of my age]. Kaloko phaya emakhaya lento yokucula ikwayala idityaniswa nabantwana. Lithuba lokufunda izinto ezintsha. [People outside prison regard choral music and singing in the choir as something to be done by youngsters. This is a valuable opportunity for me to learn new things.]

Sphathiso Mabho interrupted and raised the idea of music helping with reintegration into society:

Umculo lo uzakusineda ngokuba sizakufika pha ngaphandle sikwazi ukungena kwii groups ezikhoyo okanye, ukuba sifundisiwe kule project njengokuba sithenjiswa, sitsho sikwazi ukuqala ezethu iigroups zomculo sitsho sifundise oogxa bethu okosikufunde ejele.

[Music is preparing us for the time after incarceration because we are going to be released with some music knowledge and skills which will enable us to join music groups outside prison if we are taught as promised in this project and even form our own music groups.]

To which Cingile Qoboza added, addressing Mlandu, that a positive activity like choir work would help people to leave a negative one:

Khumbula kaloku wena Mama, SisMakholi, udla ngokusixelela phofu usicebisa, noxa udla ngokuba usenyelisa phaya ekwayarini ukuba xa sifika pha ngaphandle sihambe siyokucula ezikwayarini zee - adults ngoba zininzi phaya ngaphandle, siyeke ubututu nobukrelemnqa obu, khe senze izinto ezibhadlileyo.

[Remember, Mother, “SisMakholi” [nickname], you usually advise us, although mockingly and jokingly, during the choir practices that when we are released we should join the many adult choirs that exist outside prison, for us to stop crime - thieving and brutality and participate in constructive activities.]

Such views strongly demonstrated the understanding and intellectual maturity of some research actors and their (already) raised consciousness and readiness to change their lives. They were future-oriented and seemed to have specific goals for reintegration and new life adventures.

We took a 10-minute break in which we enjoyed light snacks that the coordinators and I had brought. By this time we had gone through two hours of the workshop and I was happy about the progress. Almost all the research actors were speedily taking notes and actively participating; each had asked questions and contributed to the discussion. Even our camera operator, Sikhululekile ‘Skhulu’ Mafunda, took turns in the debate although he could not take notes, and was at times relieved as cameraman by the other research coordinator so that he could participate.³⁶ My only worry was time, as we were left with one major session to handle, on how the procedure and process of the MPAR project would work, under my facilitation. I was glad that we were all refreshed at this stage to carry on for another 90 minutes. I checked whether everyone was keen to continue or wanted to postpone, but all were in favour of continuing.

2.3.3 Cycle 1: Activating workshop part 3: Participation

I presented the diagram of the stages of action research as presented in Chapter 1 (Fig. 1) to show how a group of ‘research actors’ like ourselves would engage in the four stages of planning, action, observation and reflection (for further planning) and how this could be integrated into and seen as part of a cycle and then as a succession of cycles. I briefly informed the research actors of the two main goals of AR: to learn the method by doing it, a ‘hands-on’ approach, so that eventually people can work on their own (the action part), and to learn to write and talk about their work so that improvements can be shared and multiplied (the research and reflection stage), which meant delivering oral and written reports and performing in some cases, at cycle-end meetings. There is a greater possibility in an AR or PAR project to change plans while acting, for example, and it is possible to embark on almost all of the four stages within one cycle without necessarily waiting for the next cycle.

³⁶ It must be mentioned that the DVD footage was not taken by professional cameramen but by participants.

I explained that the research would be conducted over four cycles of three months each and that my plan was that in all four cycles the meetings of music circle learners would take place in the classrooms for at least two hours a week to discuss, debate, disagree and agree on how they would learn, what they would learn, and why they wanted to learn. They would also talk about the challenges, problems, suggestions and solutions involved. I told them there would be fortnightly meetings between research leaders and coordinators to sort out problems, monitor progress and, if need be, make classroom visits to the 12 groups to help the learning process, as required. This in turn would necessitate weekly meetings between the research coordinators, myself, and sometimes the community music expert, for documenting and effective planning. I informed them of the 3- or 4-hour cycle-end meetings for all research actors and invited guests and the five-point evaluation plan which would be used to assess oral and practical presentations by everyone, including myself.

Finally I explained the use of the research journal for reflection and reflexivity thus documenting events, challenges, problems, successes, failures, opinions, feelings and whatever reflective ideas the research actors wanted to record. These included reflecting on music needs; noting decisions and action plans to improve the situation of learning; recording new knowledge and skills gained in group debates and discussions; developing research topics; and growing skills in report writing and presentation with the guidance of the research leaders, the facilitator and research coordinators. The diagram in Fig. 2 above indicating the final design and plan for the four research cycles was also presented.

After my explanation I responded to questions of clarification on the process and procedures, and was also able to find out if people were still keen to participate or wanted to opt out. No one chose to opt out, which I was glad about, but one of the research leaders, Mchayiswa Madikizela raised a crucial point, that I had not anticipated:

Njengokuba ndibona kulento sele siyenzile mam'uTwani, ndiyabona ukuba lomsebenzi ufuna abantu abanesineke, abakhutheleyo nabanomdla abayithandayo nyhani lento yomculo. Imeko yalapha ejele yahlukile, thina sizizibotshwa sibanazo iingxaki zethu zokudelelana. Mhlazimbi, bazakubuza oogxa bethu ukuba uMadikezela lo ukhethwe njani? Isingathi kum utat'uNgxishe ngekhe abize enye imeeting yethu nababantu bethu abayi six sizakubakhetha, acacise kwakhona ngale research nokuba thina aba bazi leaders sikhethwe ngokuba kutheni.
[Now that we have gone this far in explaining about the project, I realise that it needs people who are patient, diligent, interested and who really like music. Prison

conditions are different and we as offenders have our own issues of undermining one another. Questions of how and why, for example, I was chosen may be raised by other offenders even those that will be part of the groups. I feel that Mr Ngxisha should call another meeting just for us leaders and our circle learners to explain about the project to us as a group and how we were chosen as leaders.]

These comments raised serious points about the politics of prison life and group dynamics. They showed how the bureaucratic tendencies in the whole system had been internalised by offenders, especially the hierarchising tendency - Madikizela's point that a person of authority should address the circle learners on matters of inclusion and exclusion. Coupled with this, Qoboza further suggested:

Utat'uNgxisha ngeke abe ngumntu olungiselela le project ngoba, wena mama awuzazi izinto zalapha ngenye imini kuzakungafunwa kwangamagosa la olawulo ukuba sikhutshwe eziseleni siyokudibana nezi groups zethu.

[Mr Ngxisha should rather be a coordinator. You may not be aware, Mrs Twani, about this environment. Some days we may encounter problems such as the officials themselves not letting us out of our cells to go and meet with even those circle learners we have chosen.]

Both views pointed to the nature of the prison environment and how power relations impacted on it. Here was another issue to monitor, as I noted in my journal.

With Ngxisha's approval, we agreed that he should be a local coordinator, contrary to my earlier idea of him being a research leader. Another idea was that the choir could become one of the music circles, a larger one with Mlandu targeting group learning of skills and other kinds of knowledge for about 48 choristers. We all hailed this as a brilliant suggestion because it would serve a greater number of participants in one go. We also saw it as a way of getting circle learners to commit themselves to the project.

We then took another 30 minutes for me to deal with some of the daily 'modalities' or realities of life in prison, especially those of a psychodynamic nature involving ethics, values, beliefs, fears, anxieties and so on. From my knowledge of the PAR literature and my observation in MMCC thus far, tensions in these areas would tend to disrupt relationships between research actors if they were not dealt with. I therefore talked at length about the importance of respecting each other's views, ending:³⁷

³⁷ I used two languages, so I translate the IsiXhosa as it appears.

Ladies and gentlemen we are all counterparts now ... *uDubula uthi ufuna ukufundisa indlam, mna andikwazi ukufundisa indlam kodwa ndinezidanga zomculo andikwazi kwenza nalondlam kodwa* [Dubula wants to teach *indlam*, I do not know how to teach it yet I have several music degrees and I cannot even perform it although] it's part of my heritage and culture. *Lento yalatha ukuba umculo ubanzi kwaye* [this indicates that music is a wide field and], you can never know enough and everything.

We took a further 10 minutes settling issues such as collaboration and finding solutions together. However, as much as I engineered some of the discussion points and emphases, such as rehabilitation, reintegration and the role that music can play in it, I was wonderfully surprised by the participants' - and particularly the offenders' - awareness about rehabilitation and reintegration and what it meant for them. I welcomed the strong sense of buy-in and acceptance of the project.

To try and help level the playing fields of literacy/illiteracy and to reinforce the relationship between research, teaching, and learning, I supplied each of the research actors with a template for their journal entries with suggested subheadings: date of lesson, topic, what to learn, how to learn (method), learners, tools, duration of lessons, problems, challenges (where we need help), solutions, questions raised, successes, failures, and suggestions to overcome problems. (See Appendix 4: Journal Entries Template.) I left them with the four-cycle flow diagram (see Fig. 3 above) and an assignment for the next two weeks: to hold discussions with their circle learners, decide on venues and what music topics to experiment with, select working days, craft their lesson plans and strategy for implementation, and gather learning materials. We agreed that all research leaders would hold 'activating interviews' with their circle learners to define the nature of each circle. It was agreed that research leaders would invite them to the cycle-end meeting on 27 March 2007 to formally introduce the people involved. In the meantime, the three coordinators and I agreed to devote the same two weeks to finalising our schedule of visits to the music circles and assisting them in shaping their topics and action plans.

It seemed as if all research leaders had a clear understanding of the four stages of action in each of the four cycles: developing a plan of critically informed strategies, implementing the action plans, observing the effects of the action, and reflecting on and evaluating these effects as a basis for further planning. I felt that what I intended was to a large extent realised in these sessions. Above all, it had been important for everybody involved to meet each other to strengthen their relations, and especially to ensure acceptance of the music

circle learners as part of the MPAR project. (How they were chosen is explained in the next section.) Everyone had to feel that they were part of the whole project and not alienated in any way. All agreed that the activating workshop was a needed and “a highly successful exercise”, as Mlandu put it (pers. comm. 16 January 2007). The last hour was spent serving and eating late lunch, after which we all said our goodbyes amidst the hassle and jingle of prison keys and the rush towards lock-up time for offenders.

The diagram in Figure 3 details the participants as agreed in the workshop: one local coordinator (a DCS official), 11 research leaders, including the two DCS interns, each with ‘normal’ (six) circle learners, one ‘abnormal’ music circle with the whole choir to be led by Mlandu, three research coordinators and one facilitator, thus a total of 64 research actors, excluding the evaluators (invited participants).

As this session came to a close Ngxisha told the research actors that DCS had adopted a new policy of granting parole releases where participation of offenders in such activities as the NOCC or education programmes is considered. I half expected this, and I expected offenders to be thrilled. However, they were lukewarm, more so when he added what were meant to be encouraging words, which reminded us all that we were in a prison:

Uyabona, abantu abafana noo Mrs Twani aba, no mam'u Mlandu, niyamazi ke yena kwakudala, bamana besiza apha ejele, bengabanjwanaga, kwaye bengaqeshwanga apha, kuloko bazo kunceda nina aba. Ngenimbulela ke umama uTwani lo ngokuba akaceli nesenti apha ejele xa ezokusebenza, into kuyo uThixo umnike intliziyo ethambileyo apha ngakuni yiyo loo nto elapha. Ningakhe nidlale ngelithuba, kodwa ke ndiyanazi nonke, ndinikethe ngokunazi ukuba nizakuzimisela. Enkosi.

[You see, people like Mrs Twani and Mrs Mlandu, you know her from a long time, they often come to prison even though they are not prisoners or employees, but to help you. You should be grateful to her because she does not even ask for financial assistance to work here, but simply because God has given her a heart for you that is why she is here. Do not blow this chance, but I know all of you, I chose you because I know you are going to do us proud.]

I did not ask him why he said this, in the spirit of allowing people to express themselves freely, and no doubt his intention was that they went into the project with a sense of responsibility.³⁸

³⁸ The way he clarified the voluntary nature of the work and the belief system that stood behind it, the hint of threat at the end, and the way God and prison authority are conflated, may strike someone outside South Africa as ominous. Please bear in mind the lack of educational background of the offenders, the patriarchal

2.4 During Cycle 1

Between the ‘point of no return’, as Ngxishe described the activating workshop afterwards (pers. comm. 16 January 2007), and the cycle-end meeting at the end of March, came the recruitment of circle learners and then their choice of music topics. The circle learners were chosen through what Babbie and Mouton have called “purposeful sampling” (2006: 32) of participants: those who already knew each other in the cells or from the NOCC, those who had never participated in any music activities, those who had just been incarcerated, and volunteers. Each research leader gathered biographical data and information about educational and musical background during activating interviews, after which they chose their circle learners. Below are two typical transcripts from such interviews:

No. 1

His name is Thembisile Msawu but in prison, other inmates called him ‘PAPA’. He is from Queenstown, Lingelihle Township in the Eastern Cape. His highest standard qualification is Grade 10; he is 39 years of his age.

2. Cause of being in prison or cause of imprisonment?³⁹

3. Now that you are here, what is your involvement in the prison or activities you are involved in?

I am involved in the musical groups.

4. What type of music group are you involved in?

Choral music and Gospel group.

5. Why specifically these genres?

because I found myself in this situation of imprisonment, I prefer to be associated with positive and well behaviour.

6. What is this music doing in your life span in prison?

Changing my mind set and promoting human-kindness. The type of songs sung in

way that people often relate in South African society (never mind behind bars) and also the way the offenders themselves earlier chose Ngxishe as their intermediary.

³⁹ The answer is not shown because DCS gave permission for the questions to be asked provided individuals were protected from having their offences made publicly known. This question was not prevalent and I was grateful for that since the nature of the crime was not a qualifying criterion for participating.

our choir is songs that contribute to the creation and maintenance of proper social relations for instance, behavioural standards acceptable to society. Further, these songs we now them, constitute what can be termed, “African classical literature” and I believe that they work mental, social, emotional and physical development. When we practice Gospel songs and choral songs the atmosphere of respect and unity is created and order is established and emphasised. These songs change the lives of the people, pointing to unacceptable habits and indecent behaviour and consequent need for change.

7. After serving years in prison what can you do for your people?

organise musical project and groups for youth development in my place [i.e. where I live].

No. 2

Vuyo Mduduma: I grew up singing in church. I also participated in a primary school choir, In high school I was singing as a soloist .at U.P.E I gained a lot of information about western and S.A music history Hugh masekela, johnny Clegg, Miriam makeba etc also western classical music.

Groups Involved in and out of Prison

Before working for the department of correctional services I was helping a gospel group in my location that win lots of competition, they did 2 recordings and I also organize a concert in 2005 with veliswa skeyi in k.k. hoek [Kieskamahoek] which was very successful.

The following extract is by one of the music circle learners in the *Indlame* music circle who had no previous musical experience.

Ngexesha ebendingaphandle umxhentso ofana nalo ibingeyonto ebendiyenza koko nje bendinawo umnqweno wawo, koko ndingenalo ixesha lokuwufunda kuba ndiloko ndi busy sisikolo, kuthe ngelishwa ndakhathazwa yimpilo ndabe ndayeka esikolweni yaye ukhona wona umxhentso onje ekuhlaleni ndiloko ndiwubukela ngamaxesha onke xa ndinethuba. Kuthe xandiqala ukubangcono empilweni ndabanjwa. Ndifike apha zininzi iintlobo zemiculo nemixhentso kodwa kwathi kuba noko lo umxhentso ndingaqali ukuwubona nokuwubukela ndaqonda ukuba mandible ngumceli mngeni kweli iqela kulapho ndithe ndabe ndiyajoyina njengelungu. Ndafunda lukhulu ngalomxhentso ,kuloko ingase ndithi xandiphuma ibe iskhona leya ndandimke ikhona ekuhlaleni.

[At the time I was outside prison, I was not performing or even involved in dance groups of this nature although I had an interest, but I did not have time for it as I was busy with schooling. Unfortunately I took ill and became sickly until I had to leave school. In the community there were groups performing the dance and I would go and watch whenever I had the opportunity. As I was recovering from the illness, I got arrested. When I arrived in prison there were a variety of traditional dance and music groups but then, because I was familiar with this dance and I have also watched it a number of times, I took the challenge from the group and joined. I learnt a lot about this dance, that is why I wish that when I am released after my term I would find the traditional groups in my community still existing for me to be part of.]

Three snippets follow, illustrating how people of limited educational and musical experience initially expressed themselves. All three were members of the *Isicathamiya* music circle (they called themselves The Peacemakers). The research leader is ‘A’ and two circle members, are ‘B’ and ‘C’:

A.
I can sew using needles; my school is situated in Humana location. I was failed when I was about to start STD 6. I was in a school of local choir but I never study choral music. (Siphathiso Mabho)

B.
Studied at Mphangane, pass STD 3, I can play umrhube instrument. I can also sing. I did study music but I did not pass. I study music theory from STD 2. (Lindikhaya Higa)

C.
I was arrested when I was doing STD 7. I have one brother, 1 sister, I am a last-born. Both my parents passed away, first born works in Cape Town (1975), 2nd works in Hospital. I never study formal music but I was involved in a school choir. I was a gospel singer in my community. (Nkuthalo Nomesi)

Responses that qualified participants largely related to an understanding of rehabilitation and the role of music as well as to goal-orientedness about their involvement. All the comments revealed typical difficulties in offenders’ attempts in pursuing formal education, and how music experience came mostly from informal groups in the community, with people learning skills including the traditional *umrhube*, and music theory where they could get involved in school choirs. It also shows indirectly some of the difficulties of growing up in child-headed homes with deceased parents.

There was a strong emphasis on hopes and plans after incarceration. Below is an example from the Theory of Music group leader, Andries Mathida:

FUTURE PLANS.
When I come to maximum prison there were various groups e.g. juvenile section, they were practicing without an instrument and I organize one of them. There is also a group of 5 guys who sing kwaito. My future plans; if they can make a recording I will be very happy.

Some circles went further and generated constitutional guidelines and codes of conduct:

Imithetho ye Choir (Peacemaker Constitution)

1. *Siya practiza ukusuka ngo twelve ukuya ngo 1.* [Practices are scheduled from twelve to one o'clock.]
2. *Ilungu xa lifike emva kwexesha liyagwetywa.* [Latecomers will be punished.]
3. *Ilulungu xa ligula liyacela lihlale phantsi, alihlali endlini liyaya kwi practise,* [Those who are not feeling well are expected to come to the practices but will be allowed to take a break from participation and just watch.]
4. *lize libonelelwe yi choir* [The choir will decide on these issues.]
5. *Uma imember inenkinge ayihlali nje naleyonkinge imele ibike kwenye imember.* [If a member has a problem, they are advised to talk to one or more members for support and are discouraged from keeping the problems to themselves.]
6. *Xa sihambile sikwenye indawo asiloko sicela izinto ebantwini.* [If we are performing outside prison, we are not allowed to ask favours from other people, we must be self-sufficient.]
7. *Xa besiyocula kwenye indawo, asiculi ngakusa (xa siyo pefomer) kodwa uma kukho apho sileqa khona siyacula.* [If we are performing outside we are disciplined; even if we have to rush, we will sing.]
8. *Xa sicula asisoloko sizula-zula.* [When we sing we should not move about, we should be orderly.]
9. *Imember nganye inalo ilungelo kodwa kuyenzeka ingakwazi ukuba ilifezekise ngeemeko ezithile.* [Every member has a right but individual rights cannot always be entertained.]
10. *Xa ngaba imember ifuna ukuyeka emculweni kumele ibeke isizathu esivakalayo.* [If a member wants to terminate his membership from the music group, they have to give satisfactory reasons..]
11. *Imember xa ifuna ukuba izocula kwipeace makers ibe ngumntu owenza into esukela eminyakeni nangaphezulu kungabikho ngaphantsi.* [If a person wants to join the Peacemakers, they must be eighteen years and above and not below.]
12. *Kwakhona xa imemember ifika apha echoireni ithatha ithuba elingange 3 months kuphela kujongwe ukuba izimisele na okanye hayi.* [Again, a new member will not fully participate but will be under observation for three months to check their behaviour.]
13. *Apha sinentsuku zoku jima ezizezi Lwesithathu, Lwesine, Lwesihlanu.* [Here, we use three days, namely Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, for keeping fit.]
14. *Inombolo asiyisebenzisi totally.* [We totally do not accept nor do we encourage internal criminal behaviourlike gangsterism (those involved rate levels of gangsterism according to numbers: the 26s, 27s and 28s (Steinberg 2004: xi)..)]
15. *Iidrugs asiziphathi apha.* [We do not touch drugs at any point.]
16. *Xa siyocula sinxiba into efanayo sonke.* [We all dress the same for performances.]
17. *Asitshayi xa sinxib'iunirform.* [We do not smoke when we are in uniform.]
18. *Asifaki* [We do not wear] *rings or bangles and watches in the choir.* 19. *Imember ayiwatyi amawele ukutsho ukuthi sum more ekutyeni.* [A member does not go for a second helping during mealtimes.]
20. *Imember kufuneka isoloko iclean.* [A member must always be neat and tidy.]
21. *Umnqwazi awuthwalwa sesinxibe iunirform.* [You cannot wear a hat when in uniform.]

The clear message coming through this mixture of IsiXhosa, IsiZulu and English is that offenders were extremely committed and were determined to make a success of it, ensuring discipline among participants. Ill-discipline was perceived as an obstacle as a number of music circles factored disciplinary codes in their Cycle 1 plans. This could also

be a reflection of the regimented way prison functions, 'panopticising' the offenders. Whatever image was being portrayed, participants were determined to protect the dignity of the research groups and the work they were involved in. These disciplinary codes boded well for the future. They spoke to a sense of getting ready to be more disciplined when they left prison, which perhaps might not have emerged without the music circles.

The action plans were often detailed, with times of practice, times for free deliberation, how members could participate, and matters of confidentiality, all of which spoke to an immanent sense of professionalism. Below is an example from the Theory of Music group:

Expectations to the members

- attend the meeting and practice session.
- Discipline to all members.
- Early attendance to every one
- Report any absence during session
- Commitment and interest
- Debate participation is compulsory
- Freedom of expression
- Free complaints and request
- Confidentially, privacy and secrecy
- Rehearsal are compulsory to every one
- Absent without any reason is a serious offence.
- 5 absence disqualified without reason
- neatness to every member
- Free to learn any music tactics(tactics)
- Music exercise is compulsory to all
- Choral music is the main music to this project
- From 9h00 to 12h00 is the time for practice.
- This code of conduct apply to every and is approved by all the participants of this group on the 25th of March 2007

Some of the things I think about when I am alone.

Constructive -positive mind

Constructive -positive thinking

Constructive -positive timing

Double mind =is the person who have another alternative e.g. God, doctor and traditional healer. single mind is the person who trust one thing no matter what or god only.

Plan- develop strategies action to improve what is already happening.

commitment meeting for all of us

drafting of time table for rehearsals\practise

Informed Mr. ngxishe

base read of music notes
 vocalize tenderly voices thrice or tempo during the practice
 piano students to learn completely about piano
 time management since Monday to Saturday (daily rehearsals) in UNSTor juvenile for
 vacant space\room (enquiries by mr ngxishe)
 study kit (materiel)
 who is going to monitor us during the sessions for example musician, tutor, master .co-
 ordinator in charge for the whole species
 music procedure and agreement basically to the individuals in a group
 attendance register and the agreement from the individual because we are doing it
 voluntarily
 what we will benefit after all (is a course or a normal studies just to have a clue or
 guidance in music
 I would like to point out emphatically thast (that) the agreement expiry and conditions are
 held by this course are fundamentally and makeevale (make available) of sure information
 (what will happen here after there on)
 My strategy is be quiet and observe and let my action speak

MUSIC LITERACY
 How to read and write time signature and staff notation identify two notation, explain the
 difference between the two .how do we know it, identify those gaps

MUSIC SCALE
 Staff notation, music alphaberts -tonic solfa consist of alphaberts, staff notation.
 Notes names
 Cords notes which sung more than once. How do you do that u press 135 cords ACE
 intervals is the distance between two notes.

The action plan above was quite specific about acquiring music literacy skills and piano
 playing skills. Some comments intimated the necessity of validation of the efforts of
 offenders, as they speak to monitoring, tutoring and need for knowledgeable musicians to
 assist and assess their efforts. Such comments reflected the seriousness and perceptions of
 the offenders about the nature of teaching and learning and the importance of validation as
 a measurement of success. Also it spoke to their level of reflexivity and understanding of
 the nature of the research process where validity or evaluation was an important part of
 this construct

In selecting the transcripts from the journals for the thesis, I ensured that at least I had
 chosen something from each music circle that participated. I could not get anything from
 the larger music circle with the whole choir. Apparently some choristers did not
 understand that even the choir had to meet and come up with action plans and instead they
 just relied on those from the other music circles they are part of. This was exacerbated by
 the Centre's heavy schedule for choral activities provincially and nationally. At this stage I

was not expecting any submissions from the three research coordinators since from the organisational point of view we still had to finalise plans and visits to all music circles within the next two weeks prior to the cycle-end meeting.

I was amazed by the amount of detail that the various circles included in their transcripts. Another surprise for me was that all circles had written their reports and action plans often in English regardless of the level of expression. I associated this with the earlier observation of the tension between teaching and research. Here, English as a medium of instruction within formal education was being given priority and an important place in their plans as an indicator of their perceptions of the project as a schooling experience rather than as a research experience. Further, these transcripts demonstrate a tendency towards regulation of behaviour as suggested in the rules for participation, constitutions, agendas and code of conduct. I could already speculate and attribute this (as I recorded in my journal) to the regulatory nature of the prison environment. Masibuyekeze for example, added an agenda that included minutes of deliberations and decisions within it about the agenda and their meetings. Here is an excerpt:

19 March 2007: AGENDA.

Umluleki Gogobala uye wavela ebonisa idisipline ye group xa imile kistage, asigungqi. Simenyule uNobhala ngokusesikweni uMr. S. Somdaka. Samenyula uOrganiser uMfundo Maqegu. Kwisigaba sesibini siyaphathisana, xa ungaphathisani nathi siyaku suspend(a). Xa ungezanga epractice(ini) sikugweba i20c. Kwisigaba sesithathu; simfumene uNongxowa wethu uSimnikiwe Zibaya. Xa ukwiMasibuyekeze Group silandela igama lethu; sibuyekezana izimilo zethu noxa kukho abantu abasidobeleyo. Ithi ikukulungele ukuperfom (a) ngaphandle.

[Mluleki Gogobala stood to demonstrate the formation and positions of group members when on stage. We elected a secretary, Mr S. Somdaka, and an organiser, Mfundo Maqegu. Secondly, we work together, if you do not work well with everybody, you will be suspended. If you miss meetings and practice sessions, you will be charged 20c. Thirdly, we have a treasurer, Simnikiwe Zibaya. The name of the group (Masibuyekeze - Restoration) should be upheld at all times by group members, we are restoring our conduct and behaviour even though there are people who are discouraging us. We believe we are ready to perform outside prison.

This was a demonstration of determination and willingness to do the research and to perform and achieve goals against all odds even if others tried to discourage the group.

Detailed learning programmes including what to learn and a strategy for learning, along with a time plan for venues and schedule of meetings for the 11 music circles, emerged

once the circles were established. Participants reported (in their journals) on what learning resources would be needed. For example, the Masibuyekeze group had established the following needs by the end of the cycle:

Imasibuyekeze icela uku practice (a) nge HI-FI, icassettes ; inkunzi emdaka, ndizanomlilo, Shushu baby, uMkhonto kababa. Imeeting besiyingena ngo 12h30 sivale ngo 14h30, igroup ikhala nge uniform. Imasibuyekeze ithi iperffect for ukuya naphina ngendlela ezimisele ngayo.

[The Masibuyekeze group requests a HI-FI set with cassettes of the following artists: Inkunzi emdaka, Shushu baby, uMkhonto kababa. Our meetings would start at 12h30 and finish at 14h30. Group members express their desire for uniform. Masibuyekeze members maintain that they are so determined and 'perfect' to go beyond the limits.]

2.5 Cycle-end meeting of Cycle 1

The kind of extracts shown above formed the basis for Cycle 1 reports from the research leaders. There were no special guests invited to evaluate these; I was the sole evaluator as this was all preparatory work to get the project started and to ensure that we were all on an equal footing.

We met at the Hall *cum* Music Room at Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre on 27 March 2007. The event was three hours long, from 11h00 to 14h00, ending as usual with a light lunch and then bidding each other farewell (always quite a lengthy process). First on the agenda were oral presentations from the 16 research actors, derived from profiles they had written about themselves and their circle learners. These profiles, which took less than an hour, gave brief biographical information and experience inside and outside prison (as detailed above). The local coordinator, Mr Ngxishe presented himself thus:

As a person who like art and culture, I learn different kinds of music, traditional music when I was a young boy in the location. I am a leader of boys in traditional music, is where I am deeply involved in the occations.i also join the church where I join amadodana asewesile in my circuit at xhora.in the prison I am the person who started the office of sports recreation, arts and culture and I head the office there from 1994 up to 2007, I started many groups in the prison where mthatha medium won many competitions regional and national. it is that where I met mrs twani helping us in our choirs by the effort of mrs kolisa mlandu our conductor organising some few students at w.s.u. our centre that is mthatha medium which is on the top in development programme in correctional services in s.a.

The following comes from the leader of the *imfene* music circle, someone with very limited formal schooling but interesting musical experience from an early age:

Education

My first school was Luthulini J.S.S from STD or Sub A. And it also my last school where I ended at STD__ I was starting my music carrier at Bizana traditional group of 15 members I really like music and I want to learn more about music more especially traditional dance (IMfene) my self music mfene traditional

Artistic Experience

I'm only doing the Imfene traditional dance since I was young up to now, my group outside prison was thuthukani Mampondo traditional dance group inside prison is also thuthukani Mampondo traditional group.

From the cycle-end reports (and the journals) I got the impression that the research leaders were at high peak in terms of participation and determination. The use of the English language was impressive: although there were some structural problems with language everything made sense and their aspirations were clearly articulated. We then turned to the second main point on the agenda: research topics and the action plans for implementation in Cycle 2. Here is the report from the recorder music circle group led by Ms Musa Mpopo, the only female DCS intern in the MPAR project. It gives not only an action plan but achievements, failures, successes, and more. It is altogether very revealing about some of the processes and discussions that must have taken place during the circle meetings. It is presented here verbatim.

Cycle-end Report: the Recorder Group by M. Mpopo

20 March 2007

Research Actors - My Team:

Papa Msawu
Cingile Qoboza
Andries
Mluleki
Sphathiso
Vusumzi

Topic: How to Play the Recorder?

Types of recorder
How to use
Info about types of recorders

Figuring and Tonguing

Recorders Differs in size
They are made by woodwind family
-Decant_ Sopranos Notes

-Treble _ Alto
- Turner recorder
-Bass

Got 8 hole

Pentatonic scale 5 notes

All 3 & 8

11 & 8

Mazozo wont be available from 9th to 14th April.

We are struggling to meet as a group so we suggested that we going to join them (Mosa was suggesting that they were going to plan their times to coincide with those of the Theory of Music circle led by Vuyo Mduduma to adhere to prison regulations).

It is based on work done cycle 1

Group rules

Primary & Secondary activity

Progress

Failure as a leader

Recommendations

Achievements

Compile report

Present the report with headings:

Introduction

Action Plan

Time

Problems

Achievements

Challenges

Conclusion

Team leader: Mosasa

My team has the ff. members

Papa

Cingile

Andries

Mluleki

Sphatiso

Vusumzi

Topic: It's about recorders

Introduction

We would like to be introducing to the recorders, how to use it and the different types of recorders, fingering and tonguing. These are the things we would like to cover in the first cycle.

Action Plan

-Firstly we wanted to see, touch before we could even learn more about it and how does it differ. How is it going to be blown, the fingering and tonguing and also how to blow a

recorder. Lastly / the main goal was to learn on how to apply songs on/in it (singing songs through it)

Time

The practice / to meet

We schedule it for every Wednesday at the administration hall at 11h00 to 12h00. We also agreed on respect for each other despite gender that the leader is a lady.

Problems

We failed to meet at our first meeting because of the leader. The leader failed to initiate the meeting, was supposed to collect other members from the cells.

The main problem was with the leader I am a lady and working, as an intern is not entitled so I couldn't fetch the members from the cells because of the rules and regulations of this department and also for security reasons [According to prison regulations she was not supposed, as an intern, to be found alone in the presence of offenders.]

ARCHIVEMENTS

Through it all we managed to learn the following: 4 types of recorders alto, soprano, tenor, and bass and how they differ. They differ in colour; some are made of woodwind family and some in plastic. the recorder has 8 holes we have learned the fingering and how to play some songs like the national anthem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I for one would like to work with my team in mam twani's presence because of confidential reasons

PROGRESS

Because we could not meet without the monitor we decided to join vuyo's group when they meet we will also meet at the venue some time

CONCLUSION

We have worked very well we hope to excel in the next cycle. Greatly I thank mam twani for being patient with us even if things were not good but she pressed on until we actually rapped up the first cycle I also thank my teammates.

The idea of journaling was clearly grasped, and I appreciated their skill in using the report format. It was remarkable that the group pushed ahead in the way they did, despite being demoralised for lack of a monitor, their decision to join with another group being an example of resourcefulness. There are numerous other examples of ways in which music circles struggled but kept going. (Madikizela later suffered personal insults from the adult *imfene* music circle, for example, and despite being scorned by officers the *imfene* for Juveniles continued and ultimately joined hands with the adult *imfene* circle.) The quality and content of the reports indicated the offenders' understanding of the process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, and the potential the project held for their rehabilitation endeavours. Also, the range of capacity of the groups to work on their own

circles, evaluate their progress, make alternate suggestions, constructive actions and decisions towards achievement of goals were indicators of their ability to transform their lives through self-initiated ideas.

Mlandu, one research coordinator (a postgraduate student) and I then spent 20 minutes examining the journals. Everybody had brought them, as requested. Some had entries in IsiXhosa, English, and a mixture of both, plus a few IsiZulu words. All had indicated the dates on which they held meetings. Very few, though, had made comments on their feelings or given opinions. Dubula of course had to rely on the writing skills of one of the circle learners because he was illiterate.

I asked Mr Ngxishe to explain briefly what the cycle-end meeting was about, and report on the meeting he had held with all research leaders and circle learners as requested at the activating workshop. He then read a list of all the choristers and the music circles they belong to. In the meantime, two research assistants organised a venue to accommodate the choristers. The next item on the agenda was to introduce the circle learners and after the presentation of the list of circle learners, I asked the local coordinator, Ngxishe to help arrange the release of the choristers from their cells for their formal introduction into the MPAR project. As they are usually released for choir rehearsals that start at 12h00, this was a perfect time to have them join the research leaders and coordinators. We also used this time as a comfort break and for the research leaders to tie up some loose ends, if there were any, with their circle learners.

I discussed briefly with the local coordinator and the community music expert on how best to introduce the choristers. We agreed that it would be befitting for each research leader to introduce the choristers who were their circle learners and extract just two points from their profiles about their music experiences, rather than reading the whole profile for each individual member. There were a variety of non-musical experiences before imprisonment, as we heard, and a lot of musical experiences before and during incarceration. There were also a couple of those who were getting involved in music activities for the very first time in their lives. This took about 30 minutes, because there were at least 46 choristers at this stage. According to the profiles and journal entries, almost all music circle learners were already involved in music groups in prison, except for some learners in two traditional music circles, *indlame* and *imfene*; they had a mixture of

those already involved in music and first-time participants in any music activity in prison or outside.

At this juncture Mlandu took over and announced: “We cannot have a music cycle-end meeting without music. Seeing that the whole choir is here as part of the project and also to rehearse, I suggest they give us two or more items to round up the session”. (See Fig. 5.)

Fig. 5 Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre Choir under the baton of Cingile Qoboza, the assistant conductor, giving an impromptu performance at the cycle-end meeting of Cycle 1 with Mrs Mlandu in the centre.



Some of the choristers who had been in the choir for some time and knew the songs took the stage conducted by the assistant conductor, Cingile Qoboza, and later on by Mlandu, who conducted the last two songs. Lunch was served at 14h30 with the choir providing entertainment. This performance was very impromptu and informal but provided the atmosphere we wanted and brought a definite sense of closure to Cycle 1.

In a final announcement I reminded actors that their action plans would be implemented at the beginning of Cycle 2, which effectively started the same day as Cycle 1 ended, but formally on 01 April. The music circles they decided to form are summarised in the table below. I was impressed with how varied the topics were, although music reading comes up in various forms. It was also clear that the circles had grasped the preliminary, exploratory nature of what they were engaged in, for none of the topics is over-ambitious. The emphasis was on ‘siyafunda’ - we are learning.

Fig. 6 Research topics prepared by the end of Cycle 1, for Cycle 2

Topics	Name of Music Circle	Leader
1. Learning Basic Music Theory	Theory Group	Vuyo Mduduma
2. Learning to Read Tonic Sol-fa Notation	Double Quartet	Cingile Qoboza
3. <i>Sifunda Ukusina UHubhe</i>	<i>Thuthukani Mampondo</i>	Mchayiswa Madikizela
4. <i>Imfene Isinwa Njani?</i>	<i>Masibuyekeze</i>	Mluleki Gogobala
5. <i>Sifundisana Ukusina</i>	<i>Nyandeni Cultural Group</i>	Ndoyisile Dubula
6. Learning Two New Songs	The Peacemakers	Siphathiso Mabho
7. First Lesson in Theory of Music	The Gospel Group	Vusumzi Majanti
8. We Are Learning to Play the Recorder	The Recorder Group	Musa Mpopo
9. Basic Conducting and Singing Skills	Mthatha Choir	Kholisa Mlandu
10. Learning to Read and Write Staff Notation	Music Literacy Group	Andries Mathida
11. We Are Learning Keyboard Skills	Adult Male Group	Thembisile Msawu

2.6 Concluding thoughts

After the cycle-end meeting, I left MMCC feeling that the “experimental try-outs” (Lammerts 1988: 88) of the research and the initial plans that were laid down with such care and effort in Cycle 1 had probably already helped reduce a few specific social problems, and some of the bad psycho-dynamics that came with feeling disenfranchised by incarceration. I was convinced of the capabilities of the participants to carry through the research process and their resourcefulness in making alternative plans and decisions when necessary. Everybody had played their part, the profiles of participants and action plans had been produced, and enthusiasm had continued to grow. The groups had shown

their commitment in the face of problems, notably the recorder group who decided to join with another group for temporary support. Some negativity from officers and frustrations about the prison conditions and environment were also beginning to emerge. However, with the identification of circle learners and research topics the MPAR was well under way. It would be up to the research leaders and their circle learners to work through the success and achievement of their action plans in the next cycle, and see how to enrich their chances of rehabilitation.

CHAPTER 3: SECOND CYCLE: RESEARCH INTO TOPICS AND EVALUATION OF ORAL AND PRACTICAL PRESENTATIONS BY OFFENDERS

3. 1 Introduction

This chapter deals with Cycle 2, starting with the run-up to it after the cycle-end meeting in Cycle 1 and covering the period of Cycle 2 itself, from 01 April to 30 June 2007.⁴⁰ I first discuss the activities of the 11 music circles, and then the cycle-end meeting that took place over two days on 29 June and 03 July at Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre and Walter Sisulu University Auditorium.

In Cycle 2 the ‘action’ and ‘research’ of the 11 music circles in Fig. 6 above (Chapter 2), got under way, with the various music circles taking action, implementing their plans on the chosen music topics, replanning and making observations in weekly and fortnightly meetings. The research coordinators and I decided that each coordinator should evaluate at least three music circles during this cycle, applying a five-point evaluation plan, and that I would oversee all circles. In the first two levels of the five-point evaluation plan, research leaders would evaluate their own efforts, action and progress (self-evaluation), and their circle learners would evaluate them (peer evaluation). The third and fourth levels involved the evaluation, guidance and support provided by research coordinators and myself as facilitator. I, together with the invited participants (evaluators) would then make a final evaluation report at the cycle-end meeting.

The music circles implemented their action plans by experiment - trial and error. As happens in other PAR projects, observation and replanning occurred alongside the action agenda, the cycle-end meetings being the main reflection stage. Of course the process of reflection was there all along, but the cycle-end meeting is where groups had to present the reports they had compiled, and so this was the main point of delivery for their contemplation. The cyclic nature of PAR also featured during the circle visits, when we

⁴⁰ Unless otherwise indicated, all dates are in 2007.

monitored, supported and provided guidance and even solutions (to at least six groups). Within a month, we made sure that each group would be seen twice a month. I visited the music circles weekly except when I was out of town. The research coordinators religiously conducted weekly visits of all groups for five to six hours each; and there were at least three groups who met over weekends. In the final fortnight before each cycle-end meeting we increased the number of visiting days to suit the groups' needs.

We relied heavily on Makroza Ngxishe throughout Cycle 2. He ensured that groups were released from their cells, served as a link between us and the prison officers, and arranged transport for prison staff to attend the cycle-end meeting. Later, during Cycles 3 and 4 he was not available because of his fulltime employment commitments; yet some good came of this too, because it created an opportunity for Mosa Mpopo's development from research leader into a local coordinator from Cycle 3 onwards.

3.2 Cycle 2: Part 1: Activities of the 11 music circles

In this part of the chapter I present the work done in Cycle 2 and stories told by the research leaders in each music circle. I include comments and issues raised through meetings between the coordinators and learners as well as those between myself and the coordinators. In order for the data to make academic sense here, and given the setting for my research, I have been selective. Data presented here comes verbatim from journal entries, my own journal notes, DVD footage, photographs, and evaluation reports.

3.2.1 Learning Basic Music Theory: *Masifunde Sonke* (Let Us Learn Together)

This circle was led by a male intern, Vuyolwethu ('Vuyo') Mduduma, and comprised five learners: Nkuthalo Nomesi, Lindikhaya Higa, Sive Nqetho, Mbongeni Mzomba and Sipho Molo. The name *Masifunde Sonke*, Vuyo explained when I visited the circle on 8 April, "comes from our way of researching and learning, that we are all going to do something. If one knows something he is going to show others and I will give guidance [because] I have a degree in music" (pers. comm.). Vuyo drew up a plan through 'guiding others', which he

recorded in his journal on 3 April. It shows what they collectively knew already and what they were aspiring to, and how they understood this knowledge:

CIRCLE LESSON PLANS REPORT 03 April

1. WHICH CYCLE DID YOU START LEARNING

Lines and spaces

We write notes of music in lines and spaces each note has its place in a space or on the line .We have 5 lines and 4 spaces. lines are called stave like a ladder notes go down and up.

2. TREBLE AND BASS CLEF

We use letters of alphabets from bottom and go up. We use the first 7 letters of alphabets

3. ACCIDENTALS

There are two types of accidentals flats and sharps = a # sharp raise up by a semitone and flat decrease by a semitone.

4. TINIC SOLFA

Major and minor

Major scale-DRMFSLTD

Minor scale-LTDRMFSL

5. CHALLENGES AND ARCHIVEMENTS

Although they are still young their behavior is good except some other eggender also involve in other activities so we have to find a suitable time.

If someone has a problem we clarify everything to one who has a problem make sure he is clear and I have to give him exercise to make sure he understands.

6. FUTURE HOPES AND PLANS

I hope when they left the centre they will be able to make difference out there and educate those who are doing wrong things to our community.

Points 1 to 4 are musical and sometimes very specific (as in the sharp sign #), while the future hopes and plans are extremely broad: social rather than musical. Point 5 is pivotal, showing the group thinking ahead and anticipating problems. Mduduma made no further journal entries until the end of April, which unsettled me somewhat, but as Gobs explained at our research coordinators' meeting on 28 April: "even though they are not recording things down, their music manuscripts speak much of the progress of this group.

Ndizibonile iimanuscripts zabo [I have seen their music manuscript books], they are really on the right track". At the meeting I reiterated the importance of the journals, which should include feelings, thoughts and attitudes as well as activities, and made a note to address this matter in a bigger meeting and with the other music circles when I visited them later. Journals were crucial sites for developing powers of observation and reflection, which I did not want neglected.

I observed on a visit on 1 May that there was some kind of anxiety around the journals, understandable because we were dealing with people who might never have had to be self-reflexive or self-critical. I addressed the problem by providing the template (Appendix 4), suggesting subheadings as follows: ‘research action plan’, ‘goals’, ‘method of teaching and learning’, ‘challenges’, ‘problems and solutions’, ‘suggestions from members’, ‘achievements’ and ‘conclusion’. Everybody was relieved to have the template, excited even, and I found that people did use it, so the problem of getting going with the journals was clearly not related to literacy but to a new mode of self-recording.

Mduduma’s journal for 1 May notes a fascinating new issue of leadership : “After today’s lessons we set down as a group to appoint a leader who was going to be my assistant, and we decided to look at a fast learner and someone who can help the others to solve their problems in the cells. Since Nqetho have those qualities we chose him”. At a subsequent meeting a question arose from Mafunda (pers. comm. 04 May): “Is it correct that there should be assistant leaders?” to which I replied that as long as it worked for that music circle we should not be too prescriptive. By 15 May Masifunde Sonke had gone through about 70% of their action plan. They were left with researching how to learn the major and minor scale in tonic sol-fa and staff notation, but then gradually entangled themselves too early in the practice of transcribing tonic sol-fa notation into staff notation. Mduduma requested the use of the music series that he owned, called *A Fun Way to Learn Theory of Music: Grade One*, which was then reproduced for the learners. This resulted in the revision of their action plan to include transcribing major and minor scales from tonic sol-fa to staff notation, and “TRANSCRIPTION from Tonic to Staff. I am excited they are fast learners and the assistant is working hard. Last thing to do - Transcription: Tonic 2 Staff. To use Choir music” (Vuyo’s journal 27 May).

I liked Mduduma’s idea of using the choral repertoire to learn transcription, because familiar tunes and phrases might help their progress and show that their research could be related to the NOCC framework. The book added value regarding content, increased the pace of learning, and provided the basis for reliable and constructive assessment of their learning, allowing Mduduma to claim, “I can safely say they know theory and will be able to read music” (Ibid). Perhaps he was over-confident, because they spent more time than anticipated, on the scales. As Gobingca reported (pers. comm.16 June):

Hayi umhlaba uyenyuka kooVuyo abafundi bathi inzima itheory, kodwa! [The going is tough for Mduduma's group now, the learners attested to their difficulties, but!] they are continuing. I suggested to Vuyo that we take one of their gospel songs and write it in tonic solfa just two phrases, and then write it in staff. *Yho!* Ma'am, you should have seen them, they were so excited. *Yiyo ke lento uVuyo athe naxa esenza i* [that is why Vuyo decided that when they are ready with tackling] transcription, he will use the songs they know, he will move from what they know to what they do not know].

After this intervention things seemed to be fine, but there were no more entries from Mduduma's journal for Cycle 2, nor from the research coordinators. Mduduma's presentation at the cycle-end meeting (below) reveals what subsequently happened.

3.2.2 Sifunda Ukusina UHubhe [We are learning to perform UHubhe Dance]: *Thuthukani Mampondo*

The phrase *Thuthukani Mampondo*, the circle led by Mchayiswa 'Mirror' Madikizela, deserves special attention. There are a lot of reasons for a more bulky report on this music circle, all of which impacted on my research. First, the word *Thuthukani* is a Zulu one which has a variety of meanings such as develop, progress, grow, all of which relate to PAR. As used by this music circle, the word is an instructional verb of encouragement urging participants to go forward and develop. Second, *Mampondo* is plural for the clan name Mpondo. Third, as I discovered with Masifunde Sonke, there were modifications within the membership of the music circle and its plans, as they went along. Fourth, the leader, Madikizela, was passionate about promoting the traditional music and dance genre *uhubhe*, a genre whose name and meaning had historical significance for him. As he explained in a mixture of IsiZulu and IsiXhosa during a circle visit of 05 April:

Kaloku kuleliqembu ma kusina abantu abayi six asiyo mfene leyo. Futhi uma kusithiwa yimfene lomsino oko akutsho ukuthi ababantu zii-mfene, yilento ndithanda ukuthi umasisina lo msino siwubize ngela gama lithi uhubhe.
[The other issue is that the name *imfene*, an ape, does not mean these dancers are apes, that is why I like to use the word *uhubhe* for this dance (i.e. indicating his reasons for avoidance of the derogatory name of *imfene* where the dances could be dubbed as such).]

In view of this I enquired further as to the origin of the name *imfene*. An elderly man in this circle gave the explanation that it came from the movements that dancers make from

the waist down, especially the backside as it moves backwards and forwards to the rhythm of the music. Previously I had used the two terms *imfene* and *uhubhe* interchangeably.

Fifth, Madikizela's journal shows that he had no qualms about his musical intentions and his vision for accepting the role of leadership:

Nangoku andikayincami into endifuna ukuba yiyo, ndisazimisele ukuba ndizoba ngumaskhandi wase Mzantsi noba kunini uThixo ethanda. Iphupho lam kukufunda isiginkci, mna neqembu lam sizakuhlanganisa ingoma esizithandayo.

[I have not given up on my dream, to be the greatest *maskhandi* musician in South Africa, God willing. My vision is to learn to play the guitar, my group and I are going to compile songs that we like and dance to these.]

The group goals were "to develop my future; show other people what I have learnt; help my community because I know that the youth is in trouble of not knowing what to do with their lives." He added: "*Mna ne qembu lam sesithe sabanentlantla yokufumana elithuba, masingadlali ngalo silisebenzise.*" [We have been fortunate enough to get this opportunity, which we should not waste but use effectively.] Finally, his music circle brought in socio-cultural challenges within the MPAR project and dealing with these provided further insight to the method. The relationship between *uhubhe* and *maskhandi* music is a historic and interesting one that helped me in understanding Madikizela's compelling vision and desire to be a *maskhandi* musician and guitar player.⁴¹

The *uhubhe* music circle initially had seven learners: Ndooyisile Dubula, Mzukisi Mzomba, Simon, Mbolekwa, Mphumzi, Buzani and Sicelo. (Surnames are deliberately left out where some members did not feel comfortable with inclusion of them, but we agreed I

⁴¹ Due to the influence of *maskhandi* and *mbaqanga*, amaXhosa *imfene/uhubhe* dancers of the Eastern Cape working on the mines of the Witwatersrand incorporated their dance style and guitar accompaniment, which combines traditional and modern dance elements. *Maskhandi* and *mbaqanga* were the earliest form of popular music practised in the mines by migrant labourers who left their homestead in Pondoland (the eastern regions of the Eastern Cape). Their villages now form part of the O.R. Tambo District Municipality, very close to the borders of KwaZulu-Natal. An officer in the Department of Sports, Recreation, Arts and Culture (Manzandonga Vabaza. pers. comm. 05 July 2010) also explained that *maskhandi* and *mbaqanga* were probably the first types of music that had a major influence on the cultural life of amaMpondo because they live alongside amaZulu, an influence which may have further been strengthened in the mines. Thus *mbaqanga* and *maskhandi* played a major role in the transculturation that took place among migrant labourers and was then probably transmitted by migrant labourers returning to their homesteads for holidays or after their stint in the mines as a form of entertainment and courtship in dance parties, known as *ipotsoyi* in twentieth-century rural Pondoland. (See also <http://blogs.uct.ac.za/blog/embo-maxhosa2/2008/02/22/iinkokheli-zizo-ezibulala-iilwimi-zethu>). Accessed on 05 July 2010.)

could use their first names.) Their action plan of 12 April, which was a week late, highlighted challenging issues around people's lack of education and how this might limit what could be achieved. Lungamzi, the research coordinator serving this music circle, made a journal entry on 15 April reflecting on some of the discussions during circle visits, where lack of formal education was candidly acknowledged:

Kumnandi ukusebenza noMadikizela akazoyikiseli. Undigqibile ngentsini xa esithi i- action plan yabo ifike mva kuzo zonke ngoba bona abafundanga.

[I enjoy working with Madikizela, he has no inhibitions about his lack of education. He nearly killed me with laughter when he informed us that their action plan was late because they are not educated.] (All the members of this music circle left school at primary level with him leaving at grade 1 or Sub A.)

At a deeper level, because their plan attempted to involve guitar playing, special attention was given to their meeting times in a tight action plan for learning to play the guitar, with Madikizela as the first learner so he could teach others. The plan reflects on the treatment their group were receiving from officers: Madikizela referred to hindrances that seemed to implicate the behaviour and attitudes of officers in the way that Vuyo and other research leaders had earlier hinted. This needed further discussion with the local coordinator as it affected officers outside the project. I had no reason to worry about the legitimacy of the project as it was sanctioned by DCS nationally, but I needed to find out exactly what the problems were. Part of his report submitted at the cycle-end meeting of Cycle 1 already warns:

Ingathi sizohamba nzima kulejele. Lento siyenzayo apha ayinakwanga ngamaphoyisa. Kade sicela izinto zokusebenza asizitholi. Andazi umhlekazi uNgxishe kutheni esenza izithembiso angazigcini. Akakenzi nala meeting wayevumile ngayo kwi-workshop. Umam'u Twani uzakusokola apha.

[Seemingly the project we are busy with (referring to the MPAR) is being undermined by the officials. We have long been requesting resources and they are not forthcoming. I do not understand why Mr Ngxishe does not live up to his promises. Even the meeting he promised to hold after the workshop has not yet taken place. Mrs Twani is going to struggle in this centre.]

I found such challenges exciting, for they are the heart of PAR - the whole idea of problem solving to improve a situation. The key factor to me was ensuring group discussion and amicable resolutions. I show later how some of these problems were addressed.

Madikizela's journal entry of 19 April revealed how they learnt dance steps for two songs:

Inkunz'emdaka (A Dirty Cow) and *Ihashe Elimhlophe* (The White Horse).⁴² In the DVD clip one can see Mirror and other two learners demonstrating and directing learning of dance steps. (See DVD ch. 4 A, B and C.) They first listen to the song and each one of them has to create dance steps as the music plays. Once they like a particular sequence they all imitate it and refine it to their satisfaction from the beginning of the song to the end. Madikizela, as the most experienced dancer, plays a leading role in refining the choreography but the important thing is that they all engage by trial and error, and this stimulates their creativity. It also indicates the extent of time and energy needed by all involved. Despite all the repetitions, (The DVD ch. 4 shows a lesson in progress where Madikizela leads with individual participants coming forward to demonstrate a few steps each. It is interesting how he makes comments and advises on one particular circle learner (with the blue vest) who was struggling with rhythm and keeping in step with the rest of the group.

For two weeks Madikizela disappeared, then on 03 May Lungamzi, reported on the reason for this. Later, in his typical bold manner Madikizela informed us of how he was being undermined and taunted by the circle learners, who kept degradingly referring to him as a 'boy' simply because he was much younger than the people he was leading. He did not take kindly to this sort of treatment and we understood his anger and his need to safeguard himself against anger (what some of the offenders referred to as 'self-policing'). As he put it:

Uma unomsindo ejele ungagcina usenkathazweni ngoba it is very easy ukulwa lapha, abantu balapha bayadelela and ungabona sele usengxakini yokuba isigwebo sakho sande. So, ndibone kungcono khe ndiyophola
 [The people we live with are spiteful and can cause trouble for you, you might find yourself fighting with people as a consequence of their attitudes and behaviour to an extent that your sentence may be extended. So, I decided to take time off to cool down.]

Madikizela and I had an emotional but fruitful meeting where we resolved, at his instigation that he would embark on his personal goal and start learning the guitar. He was going to find Ngxishe, whose increasing unavailability was beginning to bring discomfort to me as well, and get his support and permission to research the teaching of *imfene* or

⁴² These are pseudonyms of the guitarists featured in *maskhandi* music.

*uhubhe*⁴³ with a group of juveniles who had approached him about learning the dance, rather than continuing working in a hostile environment. At his request and in order for him to implement his action plan, I had to find a *maskhandi* guitarist to teach Mirror (as he was fondly referred to sometimes) to play the guitar, since none of the research actors in the project were guitarists. Ngxishe would have to speed up the matter of Madikizela teaming up with the other juvenile *uhubhe* group. These were challenges for me but Lungamzi's comment when we met on 04 May outside prison - "I am glad I am part of this project, there is a lot to learn" - reassured me.

I found a *maskhandi* guitarist who began working with Madikizela in the week of 10 May, but soon we had to review the lessons because the guitar teacher said: "I am worried about this young man. Despite his limitations he is willing to learn and he does practice but everything is taking longer. It is a huge struggle and frustration on both of us because he cannot read properly. Is it possible for him to learn music theory concurrently with the guitar?" (pers. comm. 01 June). I discussed this with Madikizela during the following week's visit. "Do not worry, Ma'am, there will be a plan," he assured me; and indeed, in the week of 14 June he found an offender who was a *maskhandi* guitarist who agreed to teach him. He added, in his candid and optimistic way, "He is uneducated, he has never been to school, like me, so it should be easy for us to teach each other".

The photo in Fig. 7 below shows Madikizela demonstrating his guitar-playing skills during one of the circle visits, to the laughter of his audience because of the mistakes and asides he made as he was playing. The new lessons went on for about two weeks but then had to stop again, however, because of the behavioural problems of the offender he was teamed with, who was denied certain liberties by the authorities and could therefore not be part of the project.⁴⁴

At this stage I was not sure about whether Madikizela's large focus on himself and his goals was agreed to by all participants in his music circle, as his reporting seemed to indicate. However, their action plan submitted in Cycle 1 did make it clear that he would be the first to learn to play the guitar and then other members would follow. Whether the

⁴³My last use of this term *imfene* in this thesis was in the context of Madikizela explaining it as a derogatory term. However, as we progressed with the project, research actors continued to use both terms (*uhubhe* and *imfene*), and so I continue to use them.

⁴⁴ Apparently, he was caught beating up other offenders, and had insulted an officer.

group agreed or not to him reporting about the activities of the group in the way he did, with very little focus on the group I don't know; their journal entries were silent on this. He may not have fully grasped the PAR principle of consensus and agreement by all members at all times even with regard to reporting about the circle's activities, and this was something that called for attention on my part.

Fig. 7 Madikizela and the circle learners of *Thuthukani Mampondo*



3.2.3 Learning to Read Tonic Sol-fa Notation: Double Quartet

Cingile Qoboza was the research leader of this music circle and also the assistant conductor of the Mthatha Offenders' Choir. The Double Quartet members had vision. They wanted to develop music reading and writing skills in both tonic sol-fa and staff notation, starting with tonic sol-fa in Cycle 2 and continuing with staff notation in Cycle 3, knowing that "this would depend on whether we make progress in Cycle 2 or not" (Qoboza, pers. comm. 03 April). Their action plan (from Qoboza's journal) included these goals: to excel in tonic sol-fa reading; practise music reading in the choir; teach other choir members how to read music, and "write our" songs. Their rationale was quite bold: "We

are tired of imitating.” Much as the offenders liked to sing the song of being ‘uneducated’, I found that they were knowledgeable about certain things relevant to the project, and active contributors to that knowledge in ways not anticipated in our earlier discussions. This circle’s concern with thinking ahead to Cycles 3 and 4 denotes shifts of power relations as people gained knowledge that I comment further on in Chapter 6.

Gobingca, the research coordinator of this circle, confirmed this view in a conversation with the research leader recorded in his journal on 03 April:

Usisi Makholi [Sister (term of respect for an elderly lady) Kholisa] imitates and sings for all the parts. *Qha ke* [But then] some of us *bayabamba pha naphaya* [understand only here and there]. *Yiyo ke lento thina nabafethu sithe sifuna ukufunda ukubhala nokufunda umculo. Apho sijonge khona kukulamagqudu. Fanele ibeyinto yokuqala ngoku sisenomdla, ngoba izinto zalapha ejele anizazi nina* they can just stop *yonke lento le kusemnandi*. [That is why me and my fellow offenders decided in this circle to start with developing music reading skills, our target is learning staff notation. This should be the first thing to learn because you may never know enough about the prison environment, things may just change and this project can just be stopped while we are still enjoying learning from it.]

This relates back to my research problem: none of the offenders and officers had originally realised that the NOCC was a platform on which some form of music education could happen, a lack of realization that also happens with choirs outside prison. Qoboza’s remarks show that the offenders (at least) had now perceived how much quicker and easier their learning of songs would be if they were to read the music for themselves rather than relying on rote learning from the conductor. I was struck by their determination in seizing the now-or-never opportunities available to them.

Their main challenge apparently, was acquiring a venue and time for their meetings, which caused a two-weeks’ delay in their action plan being finalised, as recorded in Qoboza’s journal (24 April) where he registered his joy at finally managing to have the first meeting: “*Sincedile siyitshintshe nale plan yokudibana ngemigqibelo*” [It is a good thing that we changed our plans to meet on Saturdays]. Upon observation and reflection, replanning occurred immediately here, rather than waiting for the next cycle. Their method of learning the songs was that each person was made to bring a song that they knew, which was invariably a hymn. On 08 May an entry scanty in detail but rich in content, says, “Today was good. Other new word is strophic - same music to all the verses. That’s why the song is easy it repeats.” Through the research coordinator they requested learning material to

assist with understanding the meanings of signs and music terms (Qoboza pers. comm. 25 May), and five copies of the Maskew Miller Longman *Pathway to Tonic Solfa Sight Singing Series* (Vols. 1 and 2) were supplied, to be shared with all three music circles learning theory of music. The learning material must be viewed here as arising out of a need within, and not imposed like a 'curriculum' from somewhere outside.

Gobingca's next report of 09 June captures the feelings in this circle:

09 June: Everybody was overwhelmed today. I could not write down all the things they were saying but in Vuyo's group Tallman said - *imfundo ayikhulelwa namhlanje sifunda ngencwadi zase Yunivesithi* [you can never be too old to learn, today we are learning from University books]. Cingile said - "having these books is motivation enough for me to continue with my education." Jonas commented - "*Ezincwadi zezokufunda madoda, siyakhuthazwa kaloku*" [these books are for us to study, my friends, by the way we are being encouraged]. Andries just said - "I am learning great things."

Reading the comments above I wondered whether the MPAR would ever be acknowledged by the research actors as research not teaching. The books symbolised 'school', a site of formal education held in high regard. Seemingly I still had to make further inroads in dispelling the myth that we were learning as in a school and that books could only be associated with 'school'. It surprised me, because in my previous research (Twani, 2002) those who had been participating in the NOCC and other music activities were exposed to a variety of education and training programmes. The MPAR was not the first of such educational projects.

Qoboza noted the following week that the members were making good progress and were ready to learn another song. Of particular interest was his comment, "as we learn we discover new things". I wondered how they discovered and learnt those things but I was happy that they seemed to have grasped the plan-act-observe-reflect model, as they were even validating their discoveries by "checking with others". Also, their consistency in forward mapping was striking. Qoboza even announced on 16 June, "I am going to present in English at the cycle-end meeting (pers. comm.). This did not materialise, however, because three days later the group disagreed drastically on the issue of a test that Qoboza suggested, which badly backfired. As he explained at a meeting with Ngxishe and myself he then abandoned the group, not so much because of the disagreement but because of the insults they had hurled at him.

A further meeting on 19 June for all the research actors including the coordinator and facilitator was shrouded in innuendos to start with, but Qoboza simply made a public apology and everybody indicated their acceptance and wish to continue with the work, although the writing of the test (which was part of their initial plan that presumably agreed to by everyone and perhaps deliberately forgot) was abandoned.⁴⁵ One thing I concluded was that no matter how well documented everything was journal entries do not and indeed *cannot* reveal everything. The meeting seemed to have cleared the air, as the research actors left with regained vigour. One will never know whether this was due to the abandoned idea of a test or the apology from Qoboza.

3.2.4 *Sifundisana Ukusina Indlame* [We Are Teaching Each Other How to Perform Indlame Dance]: Nyandeni Cultural Group

The focus of the Nyandeni Cultural Group was on teaching and learning of *indlame*, a traditional dance of *Amampondo aseNyandeni* in the eastern region of the Eastern Cape Province. This music circle was led by Ndoyisile Dubula. It started with the required six circle learners excluding the leader: Bonga Makhalima, Sibulele Daki, Qondani Vabaza, Kholekile Mathole, Buzani Siqwala and Makwedini Mthini. Members were determined from the onset not only to learn *indlame* but also business skills such as forming a legal entity as a registered performing music group, with a formal business plan and a constitution. This tallied with my hopes to empower offenders with knowledge about government funding initiatives for artists financing their livelihood. South Africa's penal system hinges on rehabilitation and safe reintegration into society, too, encouraging offenders to participate in state and other community activities outside prison in the spirit of reconciliation. Thus I was motivated to help offenders tap into available funding initiatives.

In prisons elsewhere in the world, there are similar initiatives. In Brazil, for example, rehabilitation is supported by the Ministry of Sports' 'Path to Freedom (Painting

⁴⁵ At this stage I remind the reader of who the research actors are, namely all the participants involved in the research within their respective roles as indicated in Fig. 3, chapter 1: research leaders, research coordinators, local coordinator, community music expert and circle learners. All of these people were the core researchers who were recipients and contributors to knowledge production in the MPAR.

Freedom)' Program. Zoe Mullery, a creative writing instructor at San Quentin prison in California (cited by Tim Menees in *Post Gazette*, 30 September 2001 (<http://www.post-gazette.com/ps/060106>). Accessed 14/11/2006), commented that the attitude of prison authorities in prisons around California is that "[i]n prison all art can be therapy". The National Training Consortium for Arts in Criminal Justice (NTCACJ) in the UK runs a project called 'Creating a National Credit Framework for the Professional Development of Arts Practitioners Wishing to Work in the Criminal Justice Sector'.⁴⁶ Such initiatives offer important lessons for South Africa and fuelled my motivation to encourage the Nyandeni music circle.

I must add that the action plans of other circles showed that almost all groups had constitutions, and organisational aspects such as agendas, disciplinary codes, rules for members, were in abundance. The idea of prison groups accessing funding from outside prison and organising themselves as business entities was however mooted by only two of the 11 music circles in the MPAR's activating workshop of Cycle 1, the *indlame* and *isicathamiya* groups, significantly, the oldest groups in the prison (since 1997).

Soon after their second meeting on 11 April, the number of circle learners grew dramatically, to 32. Dubula's next entry registered a serious problem of personality clashes among the members:

14 April 2007: Research Problems

HOLOMISA SAY TWO TIME HE SAY TO DUBULA HE BRING LOOT OF TSOTSI BUT DUBULA THAT DID NOT HAPPY ABOUT THAT

15 April 2007

KHUSTA HE WANT TO HIT ANDILE KODWA UANDILE KHANGE A PHENDULE UVELE WAPHUMA [but Andile did not respond, he just left].

It was only at the end of Cycle 4 in January 2008, three months after Dubula's release from prison, that I was able to get hold of his journal; by this time he was out on parole. On submitting it, Dubula indicated that the two journal entries above were the reason for not submitting his journal: these clashes happened quite early in the project and he did not dare breathe a word about it until the matter was officially resolved by Ngxsishe. "It was

⁴⁶ (www.newaudiences.org.uk/static/. Accessed 04 May 2007; see also www.geovernmentfunding.org.uk for other opportunities for grants offered by the Department of Education and Skills, Department of Home Office and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister). A charity set up to build a bridge to self-employment for prisoners and ex-prisoners was launched in Holloway in 2002.

my top secret” (pers. comm. 15 January 2008). Unfortunately he was released before its resolution, but it was more serious than I thought:

Mama, la madoda ayendihlukumeza, kwaye ndahletyelwa ukuba anenjongo ezingekho ntle. Kwakunyanzelekile ndifumene indlela yokuphuma kwelaqela ngoba nam ndandizakudyobheka, kwaye ixesha lam lokuphuma ejele laliselisondele.
[Madam, those men were abusive and I was secretly advised of their evil intentions. I had to find a way of releasing myself from that group because I would have been at the centre of everything and I was due to be released on parole at the beginning of January 2008.]

In our meeting of 21 April with this group, Ndooyisile indicated the low levels of literacy. They would present verbal reports and rely on their lessons being captured on DVD. They also relied on the limited literacy skills of Andile, who had left school at Grade 7 when everybody else in the music circle had left school at Grade 1 and 2. I was not too bothered by this because the documenting of data was still possible, and progress in learning *indlame* dance steps was made. Dubula was somewhat disillusioned by the fact that there was little progress on the business plan and constitution, and I understood his anxiety in taking this 10-year-old group to another level, since in the genre itself they were already fairly advanced. The LH picture in Fig. 8 shows the *indlame* music circle dressed in full regalia.

Fig. 8 Some of the *Indlame* music circle members (left) and Dubula giving a presentation (right) at the cycle-end meeting in the WSU auditorium



Comparatively speaking they had no problems with performing. The DVD illustrates the progress and method that this group used to learn the dance steps. (See DVD ch. 5.) The MPAR was to them more a way of accessing a different kind of learning support. For Dubula, the business plan and constitution were key performance indicators for his life outside prison, and for the group's progress and development. Dubula and other research actors raised the problem of lack of education and its association with the intellectual demands of compiling a business plan and constitution a number of times, and I was of course aware that improving existing skills and knowledge is a key element in action research. Research actors had to continually moderate plans because of the discovery of inadequacies in their education and this was very much in line with the cyclic four stages of plan-act-observe-reflect. Msawu's and Mpopo's groups are cases in point, as well as Dubula's.

In another report of 28 April we learn some historical facts about *indlame* from the circle meeting of the 35-member *indlame* music circle in action (captured on DVD) under the leadership of Dubula and the guidance of the research coordinator Ngoma.⁴⁷ One of the oldest members of this group by age and experience as a dancer, Maduna (clan name) from Qawukeni, gave interesting background on the history and significance of the dance to the Amampondo of the East and South. Later on this day, Ndoyisile's methodology was another interesting point: he first called out the names of the older members and requested them to stand back as he "wanted to work with new members" on a song in call and response form. He sang the song through and then sang the first phrase (the call) and guided them to sing the response at the appropriate time. Given the 10 years of existence of this group they had reached their pinnacle of success inside prison and really needed some extrinsic motivation to move to another level. Even in the cycle-end meetings they were the darlings of the audience. (I discuss this further in the second part of the chapter.) There were no further entries in Dubula's journal on these events. However, all their meetings were documented in DVD footage for Cycle 2 as well as the cycle-end meeting.

In a brief meeting between the research leader, myself, and the research coordinator on 04 May we discussed the business aspects of the *indlame* music circle's action plan. We

⁴⁷ Regarding the size of the *indlame* music circle: it was agreed that music circles that focused on traditional genres such as *indlame*, choir, *isicathamiya* and so on, would be allowed to maintain the traditional setting of greater numbers, for effectiveness, rather than be restricted to 6 members.

decided to gradually help them work through their constitution and business plan. Because of their illiteracy challenges and my knowledge of small medium enterprise aspects of this business side of things I would provide guidance, using copies of constitutions and business plans from other organisations, as examples. However, this became a laborious exercise which Dubula himself felt would need to be implemented at a later stage since they were still in prison and environmental constraints might not work to their advantage. This idea was then shelved for future date. Indeed, when Dubula was released on parole he followed up on it with good results, which I report on in subsequent chapters.

3.2.5 Learning *Isicathamiya* dance steps: The Peacemakers

This was one of the slightly larger music circles, which oscillated between eight to 10 music circle learners due to people leaving and joining the group at different times. All its members were from the juvenile section of the prison. By the cycle-end meeting there were nine regular members. The leader of this group was Siphathiso Mabho. Other members were Mfundo Maqegu, Simnikiwe Zibaya, Sande Hagana, Nkuthalo Nomesi, Sive Nqetho, Mbongeni Mzomba and Lindikhaya Higa.

The *Isicathamiya* group had been in existence at MMCC for about nine years. Its membership had changed from time to time, with new intake as older members got released. The leader himself experienced a cardinal point in his life and the life of the group when after the Cycle 2 cycle-end meeting, he became an adult offender because of his age, and could no longer remain in the juvenile section. Historically, this group was one of the music anchors that had kept Mthatha Medium in the championship league of the NOCC for a number of years. To a certain extent, this change of leadership and other subsequent developments was set to affect this as well as interfere with the circle's plan for Cycle 2.

The Peacemakers' goals were in any case cautious in Cycle 2: to refine their songs and improve their overall performance after an intake of new members towards the end of 2006. It was one of the most diligent music circles when it came to music making, but as the reigning national champions since 2003 their approach to learning new skills and other music genres was muted. They were bent on performing *isicathamiya* and nothing else.

Their leader Mabho (pers. comm. 9 May) attributed this to lack of education and feelings of intimidation about standing in front of people and talking. Apparently for this group at this stage it was more important for them to do what they thought they were good at. Even their journals were nervously clean and sparse on entries.

Our second meeting of 17 May was interesting as it included the local coordinator, Ngxishe, who disagreed with what the music circle learners had said the previous week, indicating some elements of misinformation and untruthfulness on their part and that the juveniles were involved in malpractices in the prison which hindered their progress. For reasons of confidentiality I cannot tell the full story, but I later discovered the weight of such allegations, as they emerged also with the juvenile Gospel music circle, I still needed to exercise caution, put my trust in the research actors and try to acquire evidence to the contrary, so I gave them the benefit of the doubt. At the end of the meeting I asked Mabho to submit his journal at the next visit.

At this meeting, on 24 May, Mabho did not show up. In my subsequent meeting with the circle on 08 June he appeared, and explained his absence to the group. They already knew that he had been transferred and could no longer be classified as a juvenile. Now he explained that his participation had to be renegotiated with officials in the new cell he was located in, which affected his schedule with the group. As far as he was concerned, the remaining time had to be used fruitfully to ensure that a report was ready for the cycle-end meeting and that the members were ready. However, the DVD recordings indicate that they were: despite Mabho's absence, the circle members continued to refine their song repertoire, and choreography, polishing their dance steps in preparation for the cycle-end meeting, although no new songs were researched. I admired the politeness and integrity of the leader, and decided that I would not do or say anything that would jeopardise the trust between me and the research actors at this stage.

Later on when I saw Siphathiso's journal, it demonstrated very little grasp of the research issues. He later admitted to having harboured a secret about his lack of education; he had left school in Sub A (Grade R) and was too intimidated to share this fact with anybody in or outside prison. All this time he had relied on one of the circle learners who became his scribe, Lindikhaya Higa. I liked the fact that, even though there was little attempt at

venturing into new areas, at least the circle members in the absence of their leader were improving other life skills, as Lindikhaya's journal entry of 01 June reveals:

I do not know about Siphathiso. *Kungcono namhlanje isincedile lento yokukhuthazana. Abafethu bebesele betyhafile. Sicinga ukuba i cycle-end yona izakusibeka endaweni. Noko asizokuhleleleka ngoba ke amaculo sinawo, sakulungisa nje iindawo ezithile. Uthethe kakuhle uNkuthalo xa ethi masingatyhafi nabani na apha kuthi angasuke akhokele. We need ukuba u moral abe phezulu. Icebo lizakuzakha and Mrs Twani and the gents bakhona for ukusinceda. Wonke umntu uready for the end. Kuzakufuneka sicinge ngenkokheli entsha.* [It is much better today, encouraging one another had a good effect. The members were discouraged. At least we will be ready for the cycle-end meeting and it is going to take us a step further. We will not be worse off because we have a rich repertoire, we shall just polish up certain areas. Nkuthalo's speech was very encouraging and gave us new hope that anyone of us can take up the leadership position. We have to keep the morale high. A plan will come up and Mrs Twani and the gentlemen (i.e. the research coordinators) will help us. Everybody is looking forward to the cycle-end meeting. We have to think about a new leader for the group.]

This reminded me of what action research is about. It is not only focused on the learning of new skills and acquiring knowledge but reflecting on what already exists. This is a very thoughtful entry. I was encouraged by what it showed of the acquiring of life skills along with music skills, and was satisfied that their refining and improving of music and dance skills as well as singing, had been captured on DVD.

3.2.6 *Imfene Isinwa Njani?* (How Is *Imfene* Performed?): Masibuyekeze (Let Us Restore)

This was another music circle with a passion for traditional music and dance - in this case *imfene*. It was made up of juveniles, under the leadership of Mluleki Gogobala, who was the youngest research actor in the project. I was pleased at the sign of positive thinking and determination to change one's mindset, in such a young person. From their action plan of 02 April however it was obvious that they had not grasped what the plan was about, although they did have meeting times. What were pertinent to them at this stage were tools (cassettes, uniforms and a hi-fi set) for carrying out their action plan. I liked their confident statement of preparedness even though they seemed to think MPAR was just about performance, and I attributed their urgency about equipment to a sense of yearning

for freedom from confinement of being ‘normal’ musicians with the necessary regalia and tools that typify performing artists.

Their action plan included an ‘agenda’, comprising organisational matters such as election of organisers and secretary, code of conduct, regulations for the members, and a demonstration of stage manners. This to me was indicative of how the regulatory and disciplinarian nature of prison had filtered down to offenders. Particularly interesting was the advocacy in their agenda of ‘good’ behaviour, to an extent that fines would be imposed on non-compliant members.

Key amongst other ideas that emerged from their action plan was the association of the MPAR project with rehabilitation, implied already in the name of the group, *Masibuyekeze* (Let us restore). They also talked of *ibuyambo* [finding their roots] as somehow having to do with making one a better person. Subsequent visits to this group were not possible for two weeks for a number of reasons including gruesome ones which resulted in them being grounded from participation for two weeks. I was happy that the reasons were not directed at the project itself but arose out of internal prison issues, although I was worried that they were going to miss a golden opportunity. The situation resolved itself because Mirror met with prison officers about his own struggles and the possibility of merging some of his group members with the juveniles came up. The first meeting of the merged group occurred on 07 June, according to Gogobala (pers. comm.), and thereafter the cultural and psycho-social side of the music research progressed well with greater focus on attitudes and the construction of relationships. We were all looking forward to the forthcoming cycle-end meeting to showcase the research actors and evaluate the cultural work of the dance itself. I had told all the research leaders to start drafting their presentations, for I was eager to find out what the reports would be like in the light of the changes that had been experienced.

3.2.7 Learning to Sing Gospel Songs: The Juvenile Gospel Group

This was a juvenile Gospel music circle which had the intention to learn Gospel songs with a view to changing their lifestyles and behaviour, as per their action plan. All the songs they decided to sing were composed by other people, but what attracted them to the

songs, according to their leader Vusumzi Majanti, were the lyrics, which they were hoping to internalise and live by. Members of the music circle were all classified as juveniles because they were under 26, and were Siphathiso Mabho, Nkuthalo Nomesi, Sive Nqetho, Mbongeni Mzomba and Lindikhaya Higa. Nomesi, out of determination, dedication and diligence acquired keyboard skills through his own private arrangements with the only keyboard player available in that environment, Sbu. Since he was a juvenile and Sbu an adult, he also got permission through the local coordinator to spend time with Sbu learning keyboard after their meetings, and went to the meetings of the Adult Male Group music circle so as to be there after their meetings. He became the keyboard player for The Juvenile Gospel Group in the final cycle.

This group had a hard time holding meetings and the journal was not forthcoming from the research leader, Majanti. They made a lot of excuses ranging from unhonoured meetings with the keyboard player (who tended to be 'hoarded' by the Adult Male Group music circle) to problems with matters related to prison work. On the other hand Mpopo had also complained about the unexplained absence of two juveniles in her recorder music circle, namely Majanti and Gogobala. While they continued to participate in the other music circles they were involved in, their meetings as the juvenile Gospel music circle did not take place for about six weeks of the second cycle (April and the first two weeks of May). The research coordinators also reported on the unavailability and excuses from this circle.

I was reminded of Majanti's first cycle-end report of 27 March that reflected a series of behavioural problems and challenges which resulted in infighting and punishment by the authorities for breaching prison regulations (punishment being non-participation in activities). Majanti's oral reports do not reveal much concerning these problems, as if he was sworn to secrecy. At this point I felt a slight sense of discouragement as to the potential level of development of life skills in this group, especially since they were all very young, but I thought they were skilful in concealing the negative effects of inaction as a circle because the coordinators and I did not pick anything up until quite late in the cycle, when we had to prepare for the cycle-end meeting.

One advantage this group had, which assured their continuous involvement in the MPAR, was that they were also circle learners in other music circles such as *imfene*, the recorder

music circle and *isicathamiya*, so their lack of musical progress in the gospel circle was offset. I learnt to be alert at all times and ensure that all music circles were functioning. It became apparent that other circle learners belonged to more than one music circle because of their involvement in music activities in prison prior to the MPAR. We therefore continued in that vein since this practice had no negative effect, but rather, a positive one. It offered people opportunity to learn as much as they wanted to while in prison.

In fact, the way these youths were constantly within eye- and ear-shot of the facilitator and research coordinators as members of other music circles meant that we were better able to monitor their progress or lack thereof, as was the case with Majanti's on and off behavioural moments. Had it not been for this, the challenges Majanti was faced with could not have been picked up and worked through with Gobingca, who later on counselled him. After Ngxishe made an intervention around May that included informing us about the disciplinary problems and regulatory processes levelled by prison officials on the juvenile offenders, including those involved in the MPAR, there was more visibility and activity among the juvenile music circle.

When they eventually got going, a purposeful approach to choosing their songs was adopted; they chose songs that they knew and for which recordings were available so that learning was faster, which I thought was a clever way of regaining lost ground. The songs were *Bawo Ndixolele* (Lord, Forgive Me), *Ndibek' ithemba lam kuwe Somandla* (I Put My Trust on You, Mighty God), *It Is the Power, It's Victory over Sin*, *Siphakamis' uDumo kuwe, Amen* (We Lift Your Name, Amen), and *'Umnt' Omtsha Uphila Ngeliizwi'* (Young People Live by the Word). At the end of May or beginning of June, Gobingca had a private talk with Vusumzi as research leader, who apparently was the major cause of the breakdown of activities in this music circle, and the research endeavours did bear fruit regardless of the fact that participation was not maximised in that one of the members, Nomesi, in the meantime attached himself to Sbu (the keyboard player for the Adult Male Group) and as such acquired keyboard skills.

My biggest disappointment with Majanti and this group was at two levels: first, there was no written report presented for this music circle; secondly, their musical rendition of the five gospel songs was all *a cappella* with songs that were supposed to be accompanied, and even these, though they were learnt by rote, were underprepared. It was obvious that

there were some disagreements among the circle learners caused by the disruptive behaviour of the leader and other members even though they were not reporting on these. Some members of the group felt embarrassed and requested that Nomesi should present his own report of what he had learnt. We then agreed on the right time and opportunity for Nomesi. All was not lost because their availability for the cycle-end meeting was for me a strong statement of their intentions to continue with the project and they promised to work harder for the next cycle.

3.2.8 We Are Learning to Play the Recorder: The Recorder Group

This music circle was unique in that it involved one of the only three females in the MPAR project, Mosa Mpopo, fondly nicknamed ‘Mosasa’, who moreover occupied a leadership position for the circle and was also the only female intern at MMCC. Other members included people who were already research leaders, namely Thembisile ‘Papa’ Msawu, Cingile Qoboza, Andries Mathida, Mluleki Ggobala, Siphathiso Mabho and Vusumzi Majanti. These were their goals:

Firstly we wanted to see, touch before we could even learn more about it and how does it differ. How is it going to be blown, the fingering and tonguing and also how to blow a recorder. Lastly the main goal was to learn on how to apply songs on/in it [i.e. ‘singing songs’ through it].

Throughout the first cycle this group continuously had a problem of nomenclature regarding music making through recorder playing. Despite the number of times I corrected them, each time they referred to recorder playing they talked about ‘singing’ songs on the recorder. This stems from the Xhosa tradition of largely vocally oriented music; and in IsiXhosa vocabulary there is no word for instrument playing and instrumental pieces. The very first action plan of this group brought in a dimension we initially downplayed: values and attitudes, especially around gender. They realised immediately after inception the importance of gender sensitivity, yet they were the group whose progress would be hindered by gender insensitivity. Mpopo’s report and journal entries alluded to this later on in the cycle.

This music circle was under the supervision and guidance of one of the three research coordinators in the MPAR project, Mkhanyiseli Gobingca (Gobs), a recorder student at

Walter Sisulu University. Mosa demonstrated good understanding of the technical demands of recorder playing, namely, tonguing, articulation and fingering, as she recorded in her journal: “I am so excited that finally I can make the right sound from this instrument and I can hear the difference, it sounds so nice. Thanks Gobs”. Through my research funding I was able to purchase two each of descant, alto and tenor recorders and one bass recorder, helping the circle’s dreams of ‘touching’ the instrument become quickly realised.

In her journal of 18 May Mosa recorded their happiness at the initial ‘lessons’ that they got from Gobingca even though this was not what the MPAR was about, and the circle members were encouraged to *research* how they would learn or improve things by experimentation. I had to allow the research coordinator to give the first lesson to set the stage for correct terminology and practice. Since most of her circle learners were research leaders in the project and lead singers in the NOCC choirs, they were well versed in tonic sol-fa notation. My concern was that they might start using it for instrument playing, since they had mentioned this idea in one of our meetings, but bringing in Gobingca for the first lesson was a strategic move because he read staff notation easily (he had a Grade 6 ABRSM certificate in treble recorder).

Examining the lesson plan (see below) I was fascinated by the various orders of knowledge that came through and which were also implied in the action plan:

18 May 2007

Today is one of our highlights everyone in the circle has a recorder from which we are all going to learn to play. Today’s meeting was also made interesting by the lecture we got from Gobingca about the types of recorders and how they differ. This is what we now know - Topic: How to Play the Recorder?

Types of recorder

How to use

Info. about types of recorders

Fingering and Tonguing

Recorders Differ in size

They are made by woodwind family

-Decant_ Sopranos Notes

-Treble _ Alto

- Turner recorder

-Bass

Got 8 hole

Pentatonic scale 5 notes

All 3 & 11 & 8

Here we have different types of recorders and sizes, technical requirements for good recorder playing (tonguing, articulation and fingering), the mechanism of the recorder, categorising of the recorders and relationship of recorders to choral arrangement of the different voice types. It was amazing that in this very first lesson Gobs and the circle learners were able to work on all these aspects.

Gobingca was in high spirits when he got back from working with the group, as he reported in our fortnightly meeting on 20 May: “Oh! I had such fun with the recorder group. If they work hard at it they are going to be one of the highlights of the project. Everyone including the officers was excited about the ‘new’ instruments that they had never seen before; the challenge is going to be making music out of them”. It was obvious from Gobingca’s notes that all the participants and spectators who witnessed the meeting, discussions, and the lesson, felt that learning to play the recorder was some kind of tangible knowledge - the instrument and the knowledge it represented could literally be ‘touched’ and there was evidence of knowledge having been transmitted. For the whole month of April, the recorder music circle learners worked independently, for different reasons. But then Mpopo’s journal entry of 24 May had a tinge of anxiety in it: “I am a lady and working as a intern so I couldn’t fetch the members from the cells because of the rules and regulations of this department and also for security reasons”. This issue had come up in her cycle-end report of 24 March and now even in May she was still alluding to security problems and her failure to initiate meetings.

For ethical reasons I will not elaborate on why intervention from myself were needed to sort out interpersonal relations. Mpopo experienced a threatening incident in the learning process, and this contributed to the failure of the group to meet. I admired her sense of responsibility and maturity in making attempts to address the matter by making alternative arrangements for the group meetings and getting the matter handled at the highest leadership level of the project. I attended two of the circle’s meetings after this incident, together with Gobingca as the research coordinator, to ensure continuity in the implementation of their action plan. Two DVD clips show footage of two visits, which cannot be publicised at this stage, a meeting on 30 May shows a recorder lesson under my leadership (learning to play the national anthem); and one on 13 June, showing Gobingca

(identifiable by voice) teaching Qoboza to play the first phrase of the anthem. Since Qoboza had already taught them fingering and the note names, we started by calling out the note names and playing them. Then we sang the first phrase of the anthem and played it by ear with Gobingca and myself providing guidance on fingering. Reading the notation was to be the next leg of learning once everybody could play the anthem, when they would start visualising and locating the notes on the stave.

In the meanwhile and because of prison regulations, Mosa had arranged with the other intern, Vuyo Mduduma, for their circles to work at the same time, so that whenever she met with her group Vuyo would be meeting his. This worked for two meetings, until Mduduma became a permanent staff member in Mthatha Maximum, on the other side of the prison complex, in June.

3.2.9 Basic Conducting and Singing Skills: Mthatha Choir

This was one of the largest music circles with about 35 members, some of whom were already members of the various National Offenders Choirs at the prison. For the first seven weeks of Cycle 2 the conductor, Kholisa Mlandu, was not available due to ill health, so Sikhululekile 'Skhulu' Mafunda, the research coordinator in charge of this music circle, held the fort.

The research actors seldom held discussion meetings during Mlandu's absence. Constructive work done with circle members largely took place in May and was in the form of practice sessions as the choir was preparing for a national festival which was to be held in Cape Town at a date that was to be made known later. (An interesting aside: even the head of prison never knew until at the last minute the dates for prison activities that would affect the MPAR. I am still not sure why. Sometimes I attribute it to the confidentiality around which prison authorities work, perhaps for security reasons, But it inconvenienced the operations of the project on a number of occasions.)

The choir rehearsals were almost a daily occurrence to cater for any sudden change of plan. The DVD footage taken on 24 May shows Mafunda demonstrating conducting and vocal technique. (See DVD ch. 6A and B) The rehearsal on 31 May illustrates the participatory

nature of the rehearsals, where inmates were offered opportunities to lead sessions. In the next shot Vuyolwethu Maqungo, a research actor in this music circle, works on technical aspects, such as tone placement and accuracy of notes from one voice part to another. The rehearsal of 07 June features Msawu directing relaxation and vocal exercises, Mafunda doing a vocal exercise in tonic sol-fa and demonstrating the physical support of the voice for focused and forward-directed placement and sound, using different songs to demonstrate different conducting patterns. There were no further inputs from the choir music circle until the cycle-end meeting, by which time Mlandu had recovered well enough to attend.

3.2.10 Learning to Read and Write Staff Notation: Music Literacy Group

This is the last group of the three developing their skills in music literacy, learning to read and write staff notation. The circle operated under the leadership of Andries Mathida, who could only complete this cycle of the MPAR project before he was released from prison on parole. However, by then he had made a meaningful contribution, even though he could not participate in the cycle-end meeting. Because of what I can only say is lack of transparency with regard to prison regulations (regarding parole), Mathida only learnt on the day of his release that he was leaving, and therefore could not even find a substitute. Bakhokhele Jonas, Zolani Nkotana, Unathi Gqoza, Vuyolwethu Maqungo, Kefuwe Malapana and Bulelani Yawa were the other circle learners.

Andries's journal entries start on the day of the workshop on 16 January, with the objectives and a summary of expectations and the meaning of research, with a list of those involved and their roles. This indicated a clear understanding of his role as leader, including the ability to note salient points for reporting to his circle later, about the expectations of participants, what they were supposed to do as groups, how he would report to the group members. For me it also demonstrated greater clarity of thought about what PAR is than other journals. His entry of 06 April highlights the challenges he had already noted in his cycle-end report of Cycle 1. I found this repetition quite thoughtful, and wondered why other research leaders' journals were not as clear. He had a sense of realism, not trying to pretend that problems were sorted out when they were not. Here is part of his presentation:

06 April 2007

-These are the people I'm working with. Some of the members I had to this group they were not involved/ not members of choir which is already taking place. -As we all know that it is always a challenge to work with people. -There's a point where I told myself that it's going to work at all, because we were straggling and we did not have a place to work -One time I encounter a problem where I was struggling to find one of my members to another section. They told me that I have to come with official member policeman if I need them.

Fortunately I pass the test. -We were also struggling in terms of accommodation but I decided to consult our local coordinator to help us to this problem. Luckily he managed to help us.

Andries used the journal as a self-reflexive tool: note how he is determined to succeed at all costs to 'convince' those who were not in the choir to join his music circle, and the sense of why he wanted them there, his sense of taking time to assert himself even to prison authorities, and his thoughts on double-mindedness and constructive thinking.

Examining my journal entry of 13 April, I thought this music circle had rather high aims but they were a sound group when it came to organising themselves. Like Vuyo Mdunduma's group, they had modified the MPAR project plans to ensure maximum participation from all members, and delegated some roles and duties to members other than the research leader, as the following entry shows:

(Duties and responsibilities

-Organization: to organize the project meetings and process.

1. Commitment meeting for all of us.

-Main objective of this project is to learn the music basic i.e to write and read notes. And it is to learn new things and improve the knowledge that we have.

2. Expectations to this project/ the things we would like to learn

-Introduction to choral music

-Principles of choral music

-Creative writing song for choral music.

-Basic learning program in music

-Ability to play piano and being able to give right key to the song

-Tempo indicator

-Ways of controlling voices

code of conduct

This sense of shared responsibility and delegation in the prison environment was welcomed by participants. Being in charge and responsible for something was a high honour, which came out quite strongly in the early months, for example, when Mirror

requested Ngxisha to call a meeting in which he would explain why the research leaders had been chosen. I thought the choir had high hopes and wondered about follow through. I was not sure whether consensus was attained on all of the goals despite a code of conduct and disciplinary codes being in place, and thought some of these might be in conflict with the action plan of the group: for example, ‘choral music as the main music’ yet this was a staff notation group and choral music uses sol-fa. As with other music circles, ‘conduct’ was integral to the learning process. I thought maybe they knew things I did not know as an outsider, and assumed I would deal with the unknown as it emerged.

In the facilitator and coordinators’ meeting of 21 April we discussed helping this circle streamline its topics and confine them to one area of research per cycle, but I had to leave them to discover on their own what was achievable, to form their own opinion about their learning. Self-driven and self-directed learning are two of important elements of PAR and participants have to debate their shortfalls and discover what works, in order to learn. As it happened, Mathida’s journal entry of 27 April reflected the following revised action plan for Cycle 2:

MUSIC LITERACY

How to read and write time signature and staff notation identify two notation, explain the difference between the two .how do we know it, identify those gaps

MUSIC SCALES

Staff notation, music alphabets -tonic solfa consist of alphabets, staff notation

Notes names

Cords notes which sung more than once

How do you do that u press 135 cords ACE intervals is the distance between two notes.

This indicates what was to be learnt, what was covered on a particular day, and also what was known. As they talked about chords (‘cords’), I got the sense that they had learnt about the structure of a chord, for example, the reference to “pressing 135 and ACE”, presumably intervals and distance in sound between the notes 1,3 and 5, or ACE.

Another journal entry of Mathida’s is laden with meaning.

Constructive -positive mind
Constructive -positive thinking

Constructive -positive timing
 Double mind =is the person who have another alternative e.g. God, doctor and traditional healer inle mind is the person who trust one thing no matter what or god only
 Plan- develop strategies action to improve what is already happening.

Unfortunately I never got the opportunity to talk to him about what he meant, because of his sudden release on parole.

The vacuum in leadership of the Music Literacy Group created a deafening silence and seemingly none of the remaining circle learners were ready to step into Andries' shoes. The coordinator, Bakhokele Jonas, reported an agreement that they had reached as a group in a meeting of 18 May, that all the remaining research actors be distributed to other music circles for the cycle-end meeting, and for the rest of Cycle 2 they preferred to remain as members of the choir music circle under the leadership of Mlandu. It was obvious from discussion with some of the members that they did not agree on who was to lead the circle after Andries. Some of them were not ready to take on leadership since they were not sure how the research leaders were chosen. Also, they felt inadequate in terms of their knowledge, which I thought was a courageous admission. And so it was that some of them were found participating in Cingile Qoboza, Thembisile Msawu and Vuyo Mduduma's music circles.

3.2.11 Learning Two Gospel Songs and Keyboard Skills: *Masakhane* Gospel Group

The last story is that of the Masakhane Gospel Group (and second Gospel music circle), whose goal was learning two Gospel songs and learning keyboard skills. The research leader was Thembisile Msawu, who enjoyed being called 'Papa' and had indicated so from the days of the activating workshop in Cycle 1. Papa explained that the whole group including himself were also choristers in the Mthatha choir and they all enjoyed singing choral and Gospel music. He had six circle learners including a keyboard player: Sikholiwe 'Fish' Mavuka, Bonile 'Nobetha' Sirhulu, Siyanda 'Siya' Maqungu, Sibusiso 'Sbu' Somtsewu (keyboard player) and Siyanda 'Stix' Rhanda. This music circle was

“unique by their liking for using nicknames to relate to one another” (Ngoma, pers. comm. 03 April).⁴⁸

I noted in my journal the light-hearted way in which Papa imparted discipline and values to the group members. As he was introducing them during our visit to their cycle meeting of 03 March, he asked each person to stand up as he recited their names, clan names and nicknames. He asked the third person as he was introducing him, “*Kha ume kakuhle u-Mama akubone, uyabona nawe Mama ngu Outie lo*” [Can you stand up straight so that *Mama* can see you? You can see, *Mama*, that Stix is a cool guy], a comment that made everybody laugh because of its colloquial style and the *tsotsi taal* he was using in words like ‘outie’ for ‘cool guy’. I enjoyed the free deliberation and dialogue that ensued at such moments, an example of “communicative action” (Habermas 1996: 24).

Msawu explained their ambitious dual plan of learning two Gospel songs while he would also learn the keyboard, a skill he would pass on to the rest of the circle. But at the very next meeting, 08 March, Msawu announced that he had abandoned the idea of playing the keyboard and they would concentrate on singing two songs:

Hayi, ndibone ukuba khe ndithi xha ngalento yokufunda ikeyboard. Ezizinto wena Mam, akukholula ukuzifunda umdala, ndibonile ukuba iyandisokolisa and sizakulibaziseka.

[I realised that learning to play the keyboard is taking me too long and is a huge struggle. You see Madam, learning of these things at an old age is not easy, and if I continue with it, it will delay the progress of the group].

He advanced a number of reasons: it was going to take a long time for him to learn and by the time the cycle-end meeting came he would not be ready; he found it difficult to learn to play the keyboard when he did not have enough theory of music background; he had already embarked on learning another instrument, the recorder, with Mpopo’s music circle, so he found the attempt to learn a second one premature; passing on the skill of playing the keyboard might also not work out because his fellow researchers had no music theory background either and would inevitably have similar problems. Planning, implementation, and reflection had all happened within five days. I appreciated his desire

⁴⁸ Lungamzi Ngoma is the only postgraduate student who joined the MPAR as a research coordinator together with Sikhululekile Mafunda and Mkhanyiseli Gobingca. He left the project at the end of Cycle 2 to take up a permanent teaching position in one of the schools in Mthatha. He was replaced by the only female research coordinator Andiswa Mdokwe, from Cycle 3 to the end of the project.

to venture into instrument playing, especially as this music circle had vast experience as choristers in the Offenders' Choirs. The music circle met again on the Sunday of the same week, and produced a revised action plan:

08 April 2007

Introduction

The leader is Papa Msawu, the learners are Sbu, Stix, Siya, Fish, and Nobetha. I am putting the keyboard lessons aside and we are first going to learn the two songs. The first song is Rejoice in the Lord by Papa Msawu.

Material - Keyboard, one page of the music.

The song is a short song with two verses that are repeated, in fact it is one verse with a chorus. Only the one verse is original, the chorus is known, a gospel chorus sung *kwezicawa zosindiso* [at charismatic churches].

Method -

1. Sbu is going to play the keyboard
2. The two Siyandas sing tenor and Fish and Nobetha sing bass
3. Papa to be lead singer
4. Papa owns the song, so he first sing tenor part two times, for verse one only
5. Tenors sing verse one with Papa
6. Papa sing line two and tenors sing with him after
7. All three sing tenor part verse one two times
8. Papa sing 2 lines for bass 2 times and basses sing with him same line
9. All sing to lines of verse one
10. Whole choir sings verse one 2, 3 to five times
11. Then we do the same for chorus we sing only three times, everybody knows this one better.
12. We use one copy and asked Vuyo, the officer, to make more copies for next day.

Rejoice in the Lord: Verse 1

He rejoice in the Lord your God

He is our strength x 2

Chorus: Verse 2

Holy spirit move me bow

And make my life whole again x 2.

The same day (08 April) as Sbu was about to start their song, I asked him how he determined the key for each song. They all exclaimed, "The key?" *Yintoni i key, Mam'u Twani?* [What is a key, Mrs Twani?]. It transpired that they had no knowledge of major and minor tonality and the system of keys, but Sbu listened to a song and then improvised and fitted in his accompaniment by ear. He could not read or write music. Msawu later explained (pers.comm. 08 April):

Sikhawuleze salazi eliculo wonke umntu ebelazi xa sisohlukana. Kufuneka ngoku sililungise sinayo indawo yokuyiloza. Ndicinga ukuba noSbu kufuneka aqhele i notes zakhe ze keyboard ukuze yonke into ibe ready for next time.

[We were quick to learn the song and when we departed, everybody knew the song. We have to work at our pitch stability because we tended to be off pitch. I think Sbu also has to polish up his part for us to be completely ready for the next meeting.]

Their method involved the leader who sang the leading melody and the rest of the members fitted in the supporting harmonies, which were refined by Msawu and anybody else who was capable. He made a comment in his journal the same day that he composed the song before going to bed after the cycle-end meeting of Cycle 1. The following week (10 April) Msawu came to witness our meeting with the Tuesday groups and manipulated us into including his music circle in our visits for that day, to which we agreed. He was quite skilfull in convincing me:

Ma'Twani kaloku thina sidibana ngecawa and wena uwubikho ngecawa ngoku ndiyaqonda ukuba uyakusibona kudala ngoku ungayiva igroup. Kaloku yi-research lena nathi siyafuna ukuqiniseka ukuba senza izinto kakuhle.

[Mrs Twani, is it possible for you to listen to our group? Since we meet on Sundays it might be a long time before you could get an idea of what we are doing as a group since we meet on Sundays and you do not usually come on Sundays. We want to ensure that we are doing research the correct way.]

Whenever I visited the music circles I would give regular general commentary on progress made, randomly on the whole: one session with this group, and the recorder, and juvenile gospel circles, according to what needed attention. Most of the time the research coordinators were capable of intervening with required skills. Thus I was able to support the attempts of this Gospel music circle with practical demonstration of breathing exercises, diction and articulation of words, intonation and accuracy of notes. There was a hilarious moment when I again asked them the key of *Rejoice in the Lord*. Nobody knew, but they knew the first note by the numbering of the keys on the keyboard, so in this case the key was 'number five'. Taking a closer look at the the keybord they were using, I discovered that the white notes were numbered in relation to what I worked out to be the scale of C major, so the figure five as I discovered was inserted on the note G, the fifth white note above C, as were the other numbers for the respective white notes. I then explained to them about the major and minor key system and made a note for Lungamzi to take this further in their next meeting.

Having listened to the song from Papa's music circle, we had a good session with them reviewing what they had done and what more needed to be done. I liked Msawu's attempt at 'composition', which was in fact an arrangement of a stanza from *Rejoice in the Lord* juxtaposed with the second stanza from *Holy Spirit, move me now*. They were fascinated by the fact that I was hands-on in assisting them with their research endeavours. In learning the song, I noted that Papa first sang the song to Sbu for him to fit in the accompaniment, which he did quickly and without difficulty. The second step was for the singers to join in as he led the song and harmonised their parts. It was clear that they had yet to master the text and make copies available for everybody involved.

I made further contributions and then we parted on a happy note with a *proviso* for the circle members to continue working but at the same time thinking about another day in the event that Sundays might not work well for Ngoma. The next entry in Papa's journal according to Lungamzi (pers. comm. 17 April) was about learning a second song, *If you think God is there*, along the same lines as the first. Lungamzi also noted that they should be ready for the cycle-end meeting. This was the last journal entry about the Masakhane group for this cycle, and I now discuss all the circles' involvement in the cycle-end meeting.

3.3 Cycle 2: Part 2: Cycle-end meeting

The cycle-end meeting of Cycle 2 took two forms: oral presentation of reports by the research leaders followed by practical demonstrations according to a planned programme. The cycle-end meeting was a key reflection stage of the research, where invited research actors who all had expertise in one area or another also evaluated the reports and performances (the fifth tier of the five-point evaluation process mentioned earlier). These people were music educators and research experts from outside the Prison, who evaluated along with the MMCC's Parole Directorate.

An unusual feature of this cycle-end meeting was its spread over two days, 29 June and 03 July, and two different venues, MMCC and WSU. This was an impromptu decision made for logistical reasons associated with the prison environment: because the Parole Directorate was going to be involved, part of the meeting had to be held inside the prison

in order to protect the Parole members.⁴⁹ This came about because area manager, Luvuyo Gqili suggested it could be a good idea for them to witness (rather than all the time rely on reports) the musical involvement of offenders in a ‘first ever’ structured music programme, the MPAR project, and see the level of performance reached. Ngxisho liked the idea, as it would generate rich evidence on offenders involved in the NOCC in addition to what he regarded as ‘problematic’ cases (Ngxisho, pers. comm. 22 June) - dubbed as such “because of the limitations of the DCS designed template” (Ibid). Plans to have the cycle-end meeting outside prison were already advanced when the issue of security of the Parole Board members came up, so, Ngxisho and I decided to split the meeting to accomodate them. This meeting differed from Cycle 1’s cycle-end meeting on another obvious count: the research leaders and music circles were now ready to showcase their practical skills and research progress.

3.3.1 First day of cycle-end meeting of Cycle 2: 29 June 2007

This was not open to the public or even the general prison community but only to DCS officers, MPAR participants, and Parole Board members. One of the three heads of prison was present, the (female) director of the DCS Parole Directorate, and four Parole Board members, (the names of whom were not known even to myself, for security reasons). They all acted as evaluators. The format was the same as the first cycle-end meeting with five oral reports from the leaders of various music circles and three performances, by the *isicathamiya*, *imfene* and choir music circles (others were planned for the second meeting at the WSU auditorium). It took place on 29 June at MMCC Hall.

I told Luvuyo Gqili, who had suggested we invite them, that it was a good idea to invite them because it was an opportunity for offenders to demonstrate to prison authorities the lessons learnt from their endeavours (and because it validated the MPAR). The programme was directed by Mlungisi Ntlekeni .

The first report was presented by Vuyolwethu Mduduma of the *Masifunde Sonke* music circle, who explained their achievements and challenges and he gave his own impression of

⁴⁹ Part of the DCS security system policy is that although the Parole Board members include some members from the community, they are not disclosed publicly and can only perform their duties inside prison.

their progress. They had gone even further than what he reported in his journal entry: they had learnt about the construction of some major scales and about simple time signatures as well as transcribing the learnt tonic sol-fa notes into staff notation. He explained how prison chores such as working in the laundry, in the grounds and in the offices, interfered with their meetings but that circle learners were quick to find a solution to this problem by adjusting their meeting times to start at 10 rather than nine. He also reflected on his personal gains in finding an opportunity to make use of his music degree: “I am glad I joined this project because now I can put to practice the things I learnt at ’varsity and my degree is useful, I had forgotten some of the things but now, it is all coming back”. Finally he indicated their plan to continue with experimenting with music literacy in the third cycle.

The second presentation was that of the *Masakhane* Adult Male Group and its leader Msawu, which was a combination of verbal presentation and performance of the two Gospel songs he had composed. His group now involved new members from Mathida’s disbanded group, so they were 10 in total including himself. He dwelt on the significance of names by revealing his second name as Samuel (which to him signified an annointed Biblical leader) and by referring to the circle learners by their favourite clan names and nicknames. For example:

Ngu Stix lo, uJwarha apha ecaleni ucula i-tenor. Ibe ngu Nobetha apha ecaleni kwakhe, igama lakhe ngu Bonile Sikhulu.

[This is *Stix* or *Jwarha* (a clan name), on the side, he sings tenor. Next to him is *Nobetha*, another clan name, whose name is *Bonile Sikhulu*].

As he introduced each member they each came up to the stage to get ready for their performance. He explained their next action plan for Cycle 3 as continuing with learning more Gospel songs, especially encouraging group members to compose more. Their intial action plan was somewhat modiflicated because the idea of Msawu learning to play the keyboard first and ‘cascading learning’ (see two pages below) to other group members was abandoned, as indicated above. However, his explanation of their action plan for Cycle 3 was an important reflection regarding progress and further planning process based on what was achieved. It demonstrated expansion of essential knowledge to incorporate and acquire in their next action plan for further growth and development in the the same topic and genre, an important aspect of the PAR method of action and reflection.

Msawu explained their challenges including their meeting day, Sunday, which was a day of Church services from various Church-based organisations:

Eyona ngxaki sinayo lixesha lokudibana, phakathi evekini kunzima ngenxa yalomsebenzi wam wasezi ofisini nokujonga lamabanjwa afikayo, kodwa ke siyalifumana ithuba. Eyona mini yethu yiCawa, kodwa ke nina zi- researchers zangaphandle anikho, nale cawa iphazanyiswa yinkonzo.

[Our main problem is time for our meetings, because my responsibilities and work arrangements during the week take up most of our time but we do meet occasionally. Our chosen day according to the MPAR schedule is Sunday, but then the outside researchers do not come to the prison on Sundays and also the church services interfere with our meetings].

Also, because his job at DCS involved dispensing uniforms for newly arrived offenders, he would sometimes have to leave his music circle and do this. Another problem shared (as noted above) was his unreadiness to play the keyboard and his decision to put this on hold. He reported on the plight of offenders trying to be musicians in an environment where things would just be changed without notification, disrupting their plans. He mentioned incidents of offenders being called back to their cells after they had been allowed to go out, with no explanation. One of their achievements he mentioned was their successful negotiation for meetings to continue in the dining hall near their cells for better time management. He concluded excitedly:

Mawethu zininzi izinto esizifundayo kule project, ezinye ziyazenzekela singakha nge siziplane, nditsho ukuthetha ngendlela eyiyo, ukusebenzisana, ukunyamezelana, nokucengana xa silungisana, kanti nokumamelana.

[People, there are a lot of things that we have learnt in this project even though some of these had not been part of our plans, they just automatically occur, such as communication and interpersonal skills; respect for each other's views and tolerance of each other's mistakes; accommodating each other's likes and dislikes.]

At the point of their performance I noted that they still had to master the art of stage management, especially that as a lead singer he tended to sing with his back to the audience and this had a negative effect on the projection of sound.

The third presentation came from Siphathiso Mabho, the leader of The Peacemakers' *isicathamiya* music circle. He attributed the success of the group to their strictly maintained discipline through adherence to the code of conduct and constitution they had drawn up. They had agreed to have their research meetings on Wednesdays but continued to meet every day of the week from Monday to Friday to practise their songs and steps, he

said. He admitted to some of the failures of the group even though he did not quite articulate it as such:

Sinayo ingxaki, ngoba nangoku besifanele ukutsho kule report ukuba sizakwenza ntoni sileliqembu kulomjikelo ulandelayo, kodwa ke asikwazi ngoba asinanto etafileni, sizakudlana indlebe nee-coordinators zethu zisicebise, siphelelwe ngamacebo.

[We have a problem of not knowing how to proceed into the next cycle as we are supposed to indicate in this report what are our next plan of action is, we cannot because we do not know what to do, we need to consult with the coordinators to help us in this regard. We have run out of ideas.]

He attributed some of their success, on the other hand, to their recruitment strategy of ensuring replacement of old members with new ones, based on their potential and interest, so that they always had a pool of performers (as people are released at different times). In learning their songs they used a ‘cascading’ method, he said, where only three members would first learn the songs and steps and then each teach two or three other members. They felt this method was effective for increasing their repertoire. Mabho also attributed what he saw as their ‘huge’ repertoire to longer years of existence, service and experience in the NOCC for at least 10 years.

In light of the problems of this circle it was a defining moment for me: his ability to produce and present a report, even with the help of one of the research coordinators. He explained later that he had to make an effort because “*bendingafuni ukukuphoxa, mama*” [I did not want to disappoint you, Mrs Twani] (pers. comm. 29 June). The circle then performed two of their new songs to showcase them to us. The fourth report (verbal only, without performances) was presented by Gobingca, who explained the research coordinators’ role in assisting research leaders as that of checking whether the groups were functioning, ensuring that the circle learners were allowed opportunity to discover things for themselves, and assisting with practical demonstration on how, for example, to play a particular note on the recorder. Like the other two reports his report centred on the practical challenges they had encountered, such as gaining access to the prison, where they had to deal with different responses (and feelings) from the officers:

Amanye amapolisa usuke uxakwe ukuba wona atheni lento engafani nooNgxishe kodwa bonke bathetha ngokutshintsha izimilo zamabanjwa, usuke ubone nje ukuba bayanihlukumeza.

[Sometimes I just wonder why the other officers are not like Ngxishe and others, yet they are supposed to work towards the rehabilitation of offenders. Their

behaviour, instead of making you want to change to be a better person, makes you more rebellious because you feel abused.]

Such challenges helped him acquire patience, tolerance, communication, time management and interpersonal skills, learn to work with people of different age groups, show respect, open-mindedness, and humility. The other great opportunity he explained was acquisition of assessment skills and dealing with emotional imbalances among offenders. Finally, but he said this outside the meeting, the best moment for him was this realisation:

These are human beings who needed help. The whole experience of working with offenders and the prison has taught me a lot and has inspired me to see gaps in my knowledge and the skills that I would like to harness more for my future career. I would like to do a postgraduate degree in order to learn more on research skills as my own personal action plan and vision (pers, comm. 29 June).

A final mixed presentation was delivered by Cingile Qoboza of the Conquerors Double Quartet music circle. (See Fig 9.) In his verbal presentation, he started by drawing our attention to the meaning of the revised name ‘Conquerors’:

Igama leqembu lethu lichaza ukuba singabanqobi kwaye libonakalisa mhlophe ukuba sineenjongo ngokuba lapha, siziva soyisile. Soyisile ngoba ngoku sizakuba ngabantu abangcono abanolwazi kwezomculo, sifumene ithuba lokongeza kulomnconwana besinawo.

[The name of the group was purposely and appropriately chosen to indicate that we are conquerors. It clearly indicates our reasons for being part of this project; we feel we have conquered. We are winners because we are going to be better off than before as we have an opportunity to improve and add more to the little knowledge we had about music.]

Fig. 9 Conquerors' leader Qoboza presents his report, while the group waits to perform their songs, music scores ready in their hands



In the same way that Papa introduced his group, Qoboza called each member on stage for the music presentation. He then explained that they met three times a week (although only one day had originally been suggested) with a view to excelling in what they were doing. Their focus was on learning to sing tonic sol-fa, which he felt they had achieved with two hymns and later on with the music from the choir. (Their performance started with the singing of the two songs first in tonic sol-fa and then with text, to demonstrate that they had actually achieved singing from tonic sol-fa scores.) Their challenges, he said, were time and venue for their meetings, particularly as they resided in different sections of the prison. Besides the music achievements, they also acquired such life skills as accepting one another as brothers, respect and love for one another.

Other groups presented their reports on the second day of the cycle-end meeting where the 'Conquerors' performed for the second time. I was grateful and excited that all the offenders attended the cycle-end meeting and some of them 'owned up' to some of their failures. For me this was a great sign of empowerment and development, albeit not of music development as such. There was very little progress musically but there was growth in other life skills and qualities. They learnt how to deal with conflict, make decisions, accept punishment and admit to failure, face adversity with a positive attitude, and maintain a good self-esteem.

The day was closed with a vote of thanks from the Director of DCS Parole Directorate, who expressed delight in the Board having been invited as it made a lot of difference in providing visual and artistic insight of the magnitude of involvement of offenders in such music activities. This comment, to me, gave a thumbs up to the MPAR project for documenting such an important portfolio of evidence - the first proof of my hypothesis that the project could help with rehabilitation. We adjourned on this note for further preparations for the second cycle-end meeting.

3.3.2 Second day of cycle-end meeting

This part of the cycle-end meeting was a concert that took place on 03 July at Walter Sisulu University. The programme featured performances with a few oral presentations from those who did not present in the previous session. There were also guest performers from James Kobi Junior Secondary School. The concert commenced with Thuthukani Mampondo, led by Mirror Madikizela. In his report he first commented on his guitar-playing stint, to the laughter of everyone in the hall, where he indicated his resolution to focus on the newly formed youth group which he still called Thuthukani Mampondo:

Ngoku isiginkci nidsasibeke ecaleni, ndizobuya ngaso. Kufuneke ndijonge ababafana kodwa beze kakuhle andinaxhala. Oko ikhona into esinokuyibonisa ngalomhla we cycle-end, sobe sikhona phaya eUnivesithi jengoko ebesitsho uLungamzi.

[I have now laid guitar playing aside, I will definitely come back to it. Now I have to focus my attention on the juvenile group I have started. But! I have no fears, they are doing well. There is definitely something that we will be able to demonstrate at the cycle-end meeting and we look forward to performing at the University as Lungamzi has already indicated.]

In his jocular manner Madikizela continued by introducing his circle learners and told how they learnt the songs and the dance steps. He informed the university community (the underlined word was his emphasis):

Nokuba nise yunivesithi, nithi nifundile, ndizakunibonisa ke ukuba ndifunde ngaphezu kwenu, ndizakunibonisa, qxebe ndizakunifundisa imfene.

[Even though you are educated people in a university, I am more educated than you are because, you cannot do what I have come here to do and I am going to show you, in fact teach you how to perform *imfene*.]

In a spirited presentation he told of his experiences and thoughts and a brief background to his musical interests. His report included examples of the attitude problems he experienced with adult learners in the first music circle he tried to set up:

Ababantu badala bayahlupha balibele kukundibiza amagama futhi leyonto ayindenzi lutho, ndifuna ikufunda mna qha.

[These adult people are troublesome, they call me names and that does not bother me, all I want is to learn, that is all.]

This resulted in his current music circle, a group of juveniles. He explained what they particularly enjoyed as a group: the freedom to express themselves and learn in the manner that was satisfactory to them. He further explained his joy at the opportunity of learning to play the guitar and owning one. As he put it, “*ubukho buka mama uTwani was like oxygen kum*” [the presence of Mrs Twani was like oxygen to me]. Enthusiastically and confidently they also performed two songs, like people who truly knew the genre. All the other music circles that had already performed in the previous cycle-end meeting (29 June) showcased their music again. One research coordinator, Sikhululekile Mafunda, reported on how the project had created opportunities for him to learn photographic and DVD-recording skills. In the process, as he explained, he also acquired elementary DVD and DVD-production skills. The performance by The Peacemakers was loved by the audience. For me, there was nothing new in their performance, but the text of their songs moved the audience in a special way, judging by the vocables and ululations that emerged.

The occasion was graced by a special performance by Women in Jazz from Walter Sisulu University, after which came the music circle of Inyandeni Cultural Group led by Ndoyisile Dubula, who took the stage running and ululating. His presentation highlighted the competitions and number of places they had performed at, of what he called “*lomxhentso ujongelwe phantsi ngabantu bakuthi*” [this dance that our people look down upon]. His final point was “*ndifuna ukunibonisa ke into endidume ngayo*” [I want to show you what I am famous for]. The penultimate presentation was that of the Conquerors, shown in Fig. 10. The way they are pictured singing from music scores pleases me, because members of this is the group are some of those choristers I first met in 1998 singing with scores held upside down. Within a period of five months from February to June, they had made these remarkable achievements.

Fig. 10 The Conquerors singing from tonic sol-fa and staff notation scores



The final presentation was that of the choral music circle. The leader explained that some 8 members were on punishment and could not be part of the concert. Kholisa Mlandu, the research leader, reported on the historical background of the choir first and continued by explaining the conducting skills that the choristers had learnt (while Mlandu had been ill for six weeks). Vumile Tshayimpi asked the choir to demonstrate what they had learnt and started with himself conducting the first song, followed by Qoboza conducting and lastly Msawu, who was dubbed by the evaluators the ‘conductor of the day’. Their folk songs attracted ululations and joyful noises from the audience largely made up of university students. The final item of a hymn composed and conducted by Kholisa Mlandu brought the concert to a calm and dignified close, with a final vote of thanks from my colleague, Leeto Ramothea.

Reflecting on the work that was covered in this cycle, I realised at this point the intensity of carrying out a participatory action research project both theoretically and practically in a prison environment. The data collection process, in particular was the most challenging as there was a lot happening at different venues, and I was glad I had decided to use DVD footage as well as fieldnotes and journal entries. Furthermore, the cycle-end meetings reminded me that a great number of people (about 70) were now involved, all of whom were at different levels in terms of skills, knowledge, and workplace experience, reflecting

a multiplicity of modalities of daily reality. Operating in such a situation was both rewarding and discouraging at times, but nonetheless, results were emerging. In the next section I attempt to sketch the successes and the failures of the project so far, starting with remarks from the evaluators.

3.3.3 Evaluation of the music circles and comments by invited participants

The evaluation of progress from both verbal presentations and performances was done by seven people: a Music Subject Advisor for DE, the HOD of Music at WSU and a lecturer in Theory of Music, a District Manager from DSRAC, academics in Educational Management and Educational Psychology, and the Professor and Dean of Research at WSU. The complexity of the evaluation process emanated from the different levels at which the participants were assessed on their grasp and implementation of the PAR method, and from the nature of the environment and the participants. The latter was an important consideration in terms of the “context specificity of PAR” (Macguire 1987: 34) and the kind of knowledge creation happening. Addressing notions of researchers avoiding bias in PAR, Herr and Anderson (2005: 60) talk about approaching validity through ‘critical subjectivity’, which I find useful. Objectivity is almost impossible: one is heavily involved; but one is also a facilitator in a process aimed to make people critically aware of themselves. In this sense all participants including the research facilitator who produces a doctoral thesis (Ibid), are constantly evaluated on/evaluating their implementation and grasp of the PAR method at each phase or cycle. My approach to evaluation was informed by the five-point model used by Goodall (1997-2000) and Kemmis and McTaggart (1992).

Evaluation is already part of the PAR process, so I need to distinguish here between evaluation within the process and evaluation of the process. Within the cyclic pattern of PAR (planning, implementation, observation and reflection, replanning) there are five levels of evaluation: self-evaluation where research actors engage themselves in their music circles; peer evaluation where a group or members from other groups give feedback to another group; evaluation by an immediate supervisor, in this case the research

coordinators, of the research leaders and circle learners and of other aspects of the project such as administrative and organisational; evaluation by the facilitator (myself) of the meetings, journal entries, reports in preparatory meetings with coordinators for the cycle-end meetings. The fifth and final level in my case brought in people who were research and music experts to evaluate the progress of participants. It was only in the last cycle-end meeting that my own role was remarked upon by evaluators, apart from verbal asides about the importance of the work.

The evaluations were written, and naturally formed part of the reflection stage of the PAR method. I designed an evaluation grid (see Appendix 5) of which the subheadings I had provided for the journal template formed the basis. The 11 groups were evaluated in five areas: stage presence; costume; presentation skills (mainly looking at verbal presentations); artistic impression; and overall impact. The focus of evaluators was more on the performances with little comment on verbal presentations, which was satisfying to me. The evaluation grid allowed for little comments on verbal presentations since my intention was to draw on the research journals for data analysis and interpretation as well as their mastering of reporting skills in the use of journals.

The evaluations helped the research actors to focus their attention on making progress and strengthening their music and research skills. They helped the individual music circles have an idea of how other people viewed their work, and helped me interpret data and map a way forward for creating new knowledge about music in South African prisons. The comments can be summarised as follows:⁵⁰

1. The Peacemakers were unanimously rated as excellent in all areas. They were called a lively, energetic or ‘very good’ group that was fully prepared for performance with excellent skills in teamwork as evidenced by the display of rapport with the lead singer. “They displayed 100% stage readiness and knowledge of the genre, particularly the leader who also demonstrated passion and enthusiasm” (Professor of Music). The emphasis here was on performance, which recalls Nicky’s (2004) observation of how a performance-

⁵⁰ The comments do not necessarily follow the grid in detail but rather give an overall picture of how each group was seen.

based medium can successfully develop a variety of life skills and how within this method emphasis on the setting of objectives rather than the production of 'professional musicians' can unleash more potential in each individual, build personal esteem, and cultivate a desire for new educational activities.

2. Thuthukani Mampondo received a variety of ratings from 'needing attention and improvement' in their artistic impact to their emotional connection with the songs and the uniformity of movement to the song. On stage presence, they were seen as being full of confidence and passion for what they were doing with excellent stage projection, and therefore readiness for the performance. They were commended on their good technique, creativity in attire, appropriateness of movements and choice of songs and ability "to bring out the mood and paint the necessary atmosphere for this genre" (Nolwazi Ndamase, Lecturer in Theory of Music). In the same sense that the "ragtag choir" (Kalegorakis 1997) of Dryburgh in the Indonesian prison camp was appreciated for its creativity - called as such because they were dressed in tattered remnants of shirts and dresses - so also, in this research, the tattered skirts made by circle learners from this music circle were woven from plastic carriers bags and they received particular accolades: "the attire was phenomenal, just appropriate with a sense of creativity" (Myameka Macingwane, DE Senior Education Specialist in Music). They displayed an excellent sense of enjoyment in what they were doing coupled with a good team spirit. The leader was singled out as an "excellent entertainer" (Research expert 1). Here, research actors emerged as "dandies" (Hattingh 1994), free thinkers with a new identity as conscientised knowledge producers, with ideas on attire designed from locally available materials.

3. Nyandeni Cultural Group were the darlings of the evaluators and the audience, especially the leader, Ndoyisile Dubula, who was tagged by Research Expert 2 "*iqhaji*" (one who is fearless, bold, spontaneous, energetic). They were referred to in words such as excellent, dynamic, exciting, entertaining and vibrant with a lot of vigour: "they are ready for international performance" (Research Expert 1). Later, after the MPAR, the research leader Ndoyisile indeed became an international performer as he travelled to perform in Kenya, Zambia and recently, China. Artistically they were commended for their stage readiness and love for the genre, and there were some good comments on drumming and clapping "It was a fantastic performance of a high level" (DE Senior Education Specialist

in Music). “I enjoyed the performance, the dancers did too” (Professor and Dean of Research).

4. The Conquerors’s leader Cingile Qoboza was referred to as a good and consciencious leader. Again, the evaluators were unanimously impressed by the manner in which the group held the music scores they were reading from, particularly that they first sang in tonic sol-fa notation and continued with singing the text. This was hailed as the highest display and achievement of knowledge gained in this cycle by the circle learners, especially that they sang correct pitches, evidence of technical mastery of musical nuances. They were advised to improve on stage presence and manners, and “undo the unnatural vibrato in your singing” (Theory of Music Lecturer).

5. The Juvenile Gospel Choir led by Vusumzi Majanti was the only one that received negative comments, which was a reflection on their state of unreadiness. The leader was advised to speak louder, face the audience and also attend to his costume, which was seen as clumsy. Their stage presence was faulty as they often gave their backs to the audience with the leader facing sideways (with resultant loss of sound). They were seen to need improvement on clarity of diction and their choreography was not too well coordinated, although they understood the genre and chose songs that (cleverly) signalled a ‘state of repentance’. This in a way may have been the one important clue to their existence in the project: selecting songs that indicated an attempt at showing elements of rehabilitated criminals remorseful for the crimes committed.

6. The Adult Male Group conducted by Papa Msawu, one of the assistant conductors of the choir music circle, became the show-stopper with its repertoire of composed pieces and *izitibili* (action songs), which were immaculately choreographed. Papa was commended for his conducting skills and management of the choir, whose standard was seen to be representative of provincial and national champions in this genre, from the previous NOCC since 1998. This signalled one of the ways in which music directly produces other non musical achievements. The audience was also raised to their feet with much ululation, praise and a standing ovation. “That Mrs Mlandu [the research leader] produced three conductors was a statement on its own of the good work that has been done” (Research Expert 1). The process and (dialogical) learning method allowed for a

multiplier effect through the production of shared leadership and other life skills that were fast paced and escalated from one to three leaders.

3. 4 Concluding thoughts

This conclusion is a summary of emerging themes combined with my own observations about the participants' involvement in the research. The evaluators' comments discussed above are perhaps overly positive - in a spirit of encouragement - but they reveal the way participants were using the MPAR, conscious of their imprisonment and the crimes they committed and therefore, using the project to project themselves differently. In my view the acquisition of musical or life skills, as far as the participants were concerned, was secondary to the need to be seen as being rehabilitated and thus eligible for early release.

In generating themes that I conclude this section with, I draw ideas from Saldaña (2009) on coding of data in order to generate the themes summarily discussed below, which I further discuss in Chapter 6. Saldaña emphasises the application of coding to qualitative data from a multiplicity of textual sources such as books, essays, interviews, photos, speeches, and informal conversation. I then used an approach in which I adapted thematic content analysis (TCA), in order to deal with the amount of words generated by participants.

As I reviewed my data so far - evaluation comments, DVD footage, my own notes on every meeting, the journals of research leaders and coordinators - I noted what words, patterns, trends and issues came up most often. My processing of the data commenced with manual coding using highlighters and pen on hard copies of data entered and formatted with basic word - processing software, which I then transferred onto an electronic file. To manage the data I had to conscientiously do this with small amounts of data at a time at the end of each fortnight. The process became more subtle and tacit including translation and selection of participants' journal entries, highlighting with different colours each time certain words and synonyms appeared, how often phrases or words associated with another word, were repeated. This yielded the themes below.

What came up most often were phrases such as “change of plans”, “we can do it”, “learn”, “how we do it as a group”, “our decision”, “agreed”, “how the prison operates” and “things are not easy in prison”. I refined this list as I went along and gradually a few key themes emerged, whose significance I drew from the number of times they emerged, occasionally revisiting the literature. I have condensed the emergent themes into the following nine broad categories, which I revisit in Chapter 6: ways of learning; use of journals; modification of action plans; musical progress; gaps in education; behaviour and discipline; the nature of prisons; life skills; and prior knowledge. Conclusions drawn from these themes are largely presented as my analytic reflection of data, thus:

1. Ways of learning: Whatever method of learning was used, cascading, learning through role play and demonstrations, imitation or rote learning, mostly it was offenders teaching each other, and although learning took place on an individual basis what was learnt was expressed in groups. Sometimes people learnt through the ‘cascading’ method, sometimes from me or other research leaders, sometimes from material supplied on a needs basis. In the choir, imitating the conductor was no longer the norm: higher cognitive and literacy skills began to be practised and new techniques such as conducting developed. It was significantly self-directed and learner-centred with groups requiring material resources to match the developing needs and support and complement their learning endeavours.

2. Use of journals: The use of journals by offender participants was problematic from the onset. The lack of a sense of realism among the participants about what was to be recorded and the importance of reflexivity in the journals were of the main until I developed the template (Appendix 4). This avoidance of realism posed a threat to the use of the journals for self-reflexivity on a variety of levels and areas, but with more practice and encouragement, they became more confident and there were improvements. Offenders said things like “I cannot write well in English”, some commented “my writing is not so good”, others came with lame excuses of “I have not been allowed to use my book by the officer, they say we use the books for smoking” and so on. These were some of the main issues with them, clearly giving lame excuses to avoid submission of the journals for review, because with further probing they failed to provide evidence of their claims.

3. *Changes in plans of action:* The resetting of goals became a general practice and was typically one of the essentials and expectations in PAR - reflection and re-planning. Reasons varied from, “we want to try something else” “we cannot continue until everybody knows it”, some commented; “learning an instrument is too difficult, so we changed the plan”; others noted, “the officers ridicule us”. Some mentioned difficulties in meeting as a group and so continued with previous work. Another theme expressed was “we lack resources to go on, we need uniform”. Initially the action plans were hardly recognisable as most circles misconstrued this initial and important research step as referring to behavioural and disciplinary issues thus including things like “our vision”, “the constitution of ... is ...” and at times, “our agenda” and “code of conduct”.

4. *Musical progress:* It depended on the topics, which ranged from bold and ambitious to cautious. For some, improvement of existing skills was seen as a priority, because four of the 11 music circles included members already involved in music activities. They began to provide solutions for themselves in a focused and systematic manner which they were not attuned to in the past. The Gospel groups needed elementary composition and literary skills and developed them. The *Isicathamiya* group decided to continue with the same songs but improvise new dance steps and sequences, as well as ensuring that other members tried their hand at improvising new steps. The Adult Gospel group decided to embark on elementary composition of their own songs which, given the amount of musical knowledge and their understanding of composition was successful.

5. *Gaps in education:* Overarching problems around language and grammar in verbatim reports and journal entries abound as evidenced by selected journal entries here. For some reason all were bent on expressing themselves in English, despite the flaws and consensus on the use of any of the official languages. This brought about a constant tension in the project, of associating all learning with formal schooling, albeit in prison, for example, their requests for uniform, books, and questions around examinations. With the majority of participants having left school at primary level, illiteracy was a major contributor in stifling attempts, as indicated in the action plans and questions and revelations during the activating workshop in Cycle 1. The age factor was also a point to consider in the learning of music instruments as in the case of Msawu and Madikizela, who were adult learners compared to the younger Nomesi, whose term to learn the keyboard skills was much

shorter. Further, such gaps resulted in constant referrals, articulation and reinforcing of the research strategy as a means to recovery from years of lost schooling. Consequently, the association of the research process to schooling and learning and regarding the whole research project as taking them through lost years of schooling, was a constant reiteration. Also, the understanding of learning or education as a phenomenon that could only take place in school continued to prevail. I further discuss these nuances in Chapter 6.

6. *Prior knowledge*: This is knowledge acquired prior to incarceration and the MPAR in respect to some choir members and traditional music genres, and relates to for instance Mthida's desire to learn opera, the choir members' indication to learn staff and tonic solfa notation, and the desire to sing in Italian and German to enhance their operatic and singing skills. Some of the successes gained by such music circles were partly a result of the leaders who were involved in such genres before prison and thus knew about the historical background and cultural significance of these, which was perhaps self-motivating. Prior learning coupled with lifelong learning were interesting and important aspects in the PAR model which I come back to later on in the thesis as they impact on how power and knowledge relations contribute to knowledge creation in this kind of research model.

7. *Behaviour and discipline*: These were trouble spots in the project that hindered musical progress and attempts at rehabilitation in a serious way as the events in the music circles unfolded. A number of juvenile participants, especially, were constantly punished and were at times barred from participation and we had to experiment with solutions which I discuss further in the sixth chapter.

8. *The nature of prisons*: Problems emanating from the prison environment were strong in all the cycles, especially the bureaucratic and territorial attitude of officers. Even research leaders who were employees commented on the nature of the environment, the officers' attitudes and their impact on the treatment of offenders, while the latter were trying to change their lives. There were constant comments on the "instability of prison regulations" which challenged them to "self-police than deal with unknown consequences". Others lamented, "*UMama akazazi izinto zasejele*" [Mother, referring to me, does not know how things operate in prison]. With the organising of the music circles, a lot of emphasis was

on regulatory processes for running the music circles, such as disciplinary codes and punishment of non-conformists and these strongly articulated their being accustomed to the prison system.

9. *Life skills*: Positive results yielded through the MPAR project in this regard were adjunct and did not occur overnight. Progress in life skills, cultural aspects and human relations was quite rapid with research leaders having shown maturity regarding leadership, accepting their mistakes and failures and owning up to these. This was a first step to a rehabilitated and free thinking citizen who is responsible and conscious of meaningful contribution to society. Their consciences were raised to levels of not only participating in the project but also finding ways to further improve on the skills acquired even outside prison.

Suffice it to say that the impact of the MPAR project was felt inside and even outside prison, and it managed to raise the consciousness of all involved, including bystanders. Its successes and failures gave life to the MPAR process, as I show in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4: THIRD CYCLE: CONTINUING WITH RESEARCH TOPICS AND IMPROMPTU CYCLE-END MEETING

4. 1. Introduction

As soon as the cycle-end meeting of Cycle 2 finished on 03 July 2007, Cycle 3 started, creating an overlap. Goodall (Phase 2 1997: 14) explains that this overlap between cycles is caused by the fact that the cycle-end meeting, being the fifth level in the 5-point evaluation plan, is where invited participants through their comments collaborate with the researcher to either confirm the progression of research groups (music circles in the case of my research) into new research topics or continuation with the previous ones for improvements through their comments. This was the intention even with the MPAR and makes the cycle-end meetings vital. The largely positive remarks from the invited participants at the end of Cycle 2 did not, however, holistically evaluate the work of the MPAR, including my presented reports. (To this day I have only received verbal comments with regard to the ‘good work’ that the project was doing.) Each music circle did not have much feedback to take forward into Cycle 3, other than their own sense of progress and the continued guidance and support of both the research coordinators and the facilitator (myself).

Throughout Cycles 1 and 2 the other four points of the evaluation plan (self-evaluation by the group, peer evaluation - other groups evaluating one another, research coordinator evaluation, and facilitator evaluation) were enmeshed in the regular activities and circle visits by the research coordinators and leaders. One of the disadvantages of working in the prison environment was its extremely time-consuming challenges on the ground - dealing with illiterate and semi-literate research participants for example, or being caught between various panoptic prison operations, sudden changes, and lack of communication. These all contributed to my failure (as I perceive it) to systematically and continuously document the weekly and fortnightly evaluations. Much of the time my mode was as much reactive as proactive, and my focus would always immediately go on ensuring the existence and smooth completion of the project.

Gaps in evaluation were perhaps also due to the turn that the research took, with a strong pull towards a performance-based model - the emphasis on the spectacular, the desire to be seen that comes with hierarchising of participants (Olwage, 2003), the institutionalisation of power where the knowledgeable and educated acquire a certain status that differentiates them from others. Offenders wanted to present and project themselves as performing offenders with new goals, so as to be different from the ordinary offender. Thus for a while we lost the emphasis on the five-point plan evaluation of PAR although I continued to do my own evaluation of the reports in preparation for the final report and this thesis. Ngxisho's continued absence also impacted negatively on evaluation: I did not realise until the end of July for example that Mduduma had been redeployed to the East London prison, together with the circle learners of the Choir, and Double Quartet music cycles, although members of the Recorder and the Double Quartet, also dually engaged in the Choir music circle, were able to continue with their activities while in East London. Mduduma managed to get them together in one cell for continuation with the MPAR objectives. Then, just before the third cycle-end meeting was due to start, Mduduma left the DCS - and the project - to take up a teaching appointment in a school in Idutywa.

Furthermore, even the cycle-end meeting of Cycle 3 was affected by external pressures and I talk about this in Part 2 of this chapter. As with previous chapters, this one is divided into two parts, the first comprising discussion of music circle meetings and the second presenting the way research actors formally talked about their work in the cycle-end meeting.

4.2 Cycle 3: Part 1

This cycle went from 03 July to 29 September 2007.⁵¹ It was the first one really built on 'research' generated from the previous cycle. The cyclic plan of PAR was, therefore, of essence in this cycle. As Goodall points out, the "stages of working" (Ibid: 15) are set up so that research actors reflect on their actions in the music circles and decide (in her case on not more than two points) what they could experiment with in improving the learning situation for them and their circle learners. They are then guided by research coordinators

⁵¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all dates in the chapter are in 2007.

and facilitator to develop the topics themselves and decide how they are going to tackle their two points. After this they plan (in Goodall's case) classroom activities and implement these, once they are clear about what to do. While these plans are carried out a record of events, problems, opinions and results from learning activities (reflection and evaluation) are what is kept in the journals and presented as oral and practical reports at the cycle-end meetings. Goodall refers to this process as "an experiment in teaching" (Ibid) or "experimental try-outs" according to Lammerts (1988: 88). These are significant moments in PAR, and I felt that with Cycle 3 we were finally getting the sequence of these moments right.

4.2.1 Growth and development in Cycle 3

Cycle 3 built on the momentum of Cycles 1 and 2, offering continuity, growth and change in topics and in the number of circles and learners. We had agreed at the activating workshop in Cycle 1 that new participants could join the PAR project at the beginning of January or July, an idea that I gleaned from Goodall's work, and indeed the number of research actors grew from 97 in the second cycle to 147 (excluding me, Mlandu, Ngxisho and the three research coordinators). The number of circles was the same (11) but there were three new genres: hip-hop *kwaito*, visual arts and spiritual dance (see Fig. 11 below) and some of the old music circles assumed new names. I talk more below about the reasons for these developments.

Fig. 11 Music circles and their topics (Cycle 3)

Name of the Circle	Focus / Genre	Research Leader	No. of Circle Learners
<i>Thuthukani Mampondo</i>	<i>Uhubhe / Imfene</i>	M. Madikizela	8
The Choir	Choral music	T. Papa Msawu & V. Tshayimpi	30
The Conquerors	Double Quartet	C. Qoboza	9
The Peacemakers	<i>Isicathamiya</i>	S. Mabho	10
The Recorder	Learning to play the recorder	M. Mpopo	6
The juvenile Gospel and Keyboard	Gospel singing and learning to play the keyboard	V. Majanti	7
<i>Indlame yase Nyandeni</i>	<i>Indlame</i>	Mawawa	33
<i>Nyandeni yakuMdepha</i>	<i>Indlame</i>	N. Dubula	32
The Spiritual Dance	Dance	N. Nomesi	6

The Hip-Hop <i>Kwaito</i>	Hip-hop <i>kwaito</i>	S. Mshiywa	4
The Visual Art	Painting and design	S. Maqungo	2

It was also possible for participants to move up the ranks, because of the research skills and knowledge they had gained, to facilitating a cycle or coordinating one. Unlike most other PAR projects, some of these developments in mine were initially circumstantial. One music circle had three research leaders and had research actors participating in leadership roles in more than one music circle. This had occurred before but mainly with the choir music circle, but it became a trend in Cycle 3. This phenomenon of on-going change relates to what MacIntyre (2008: 49) calls the context-specificity of PAR, where “activities, methods, participants’ roles, objectives and collection techniques are determined by the context in which the project takes place”. Participants draw on a variety of strategies and methods suitable, adaptable and adjustable to their situation to construct knowledge, thus making PAR a dynamic process.

The dual roles played by the two research leaders who became both research leaders and local coordinators, ‘Papa’ Msawu and Mosa Mopho, are a case in point. Mpopo was a female DCS intern under the tutelage of the local coordinator, Makroza Alfred Ngxishe, and in his absence she would be left to handle the internal affairs of the MPAR. Msawu on the other hand was an elderly offender charged with the task of cleaning DCS administration offices and was in an advantageous position to assume activities as local coordinator, especially during weekends and other public holidays when the other local coordinator was off duty. Because one of the major goals of AR is to “generate local knowledge that is fed back into the setting” (Herr and Anderson 2005: xv), the dual roles played by the two research leaders *cum* local coordinators are significant growth aspects.

I had expected growth and development but I did not bank on losing one of my research coordinators, Lungamzi Ngoma, at this stage of the project. He got employed as a full-time teacher in one of the schools in Mthatha, just before the cycle began. The plan of having three research coordinators for Cycle 2 was to ensure equitable distribution of the workload, but we had to begin Cycle 3 with a heavier workload and only two research coordinators. It was only in the last month of this cycle that I was able to find a replacement for Ngoma, namely, Andiswa Mdokwe, the one and only female research coordinator, who worked with the Spiritual Dance music circle together with Gobingca.

The other two research coordinators managed four music circles each: Gobingca was in charge of the Spiritual Dance, Double Quartet, Recorder, and Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard music circles; Mafunda worked with the Choir, *Indlame*, *Imfene* and *Isicathamiya* circles; Mlandu came back in the last month towards the cycle-end meeting; she played the self-appointed role of facilitator of the cycle-end meeting and research coordinator of the visual art group; while *Nyandeni yakuMdepha* and Hip-Hop *Kwaito* were kept afloat with coordination shared between myself, Gobingca and Mafunda.

Compared to the previous chapter, there are far more excerpts from DVD footage which are going to stand in for other forms of evidence for this cycle. This is a result of the groups such as *indlame* and *imfene* whose members and research leaders were largely illiterate and also groups such as *Isicathamiya*, Spiritual Dance, Recorder, and Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard; they all made limited use of the journals. Further, there were inconsistencies in the use of journals; Hip-Hop *Kwaito* is a case in point: the research leader's journal appeared with only the words of the songs he had composed for the group. He had hardly used it to reflect on anything pertaining to the events, challenges, achievements, plans, and so on of the music circle.

4.3 Activities of the music circles

In this section I focus attention on progress made as indicated in the journals. In some ways use of journals was problematic. The older research leaders and circle learners were gaining momentum in understanding them, but not the newcomers. Meanwhile, I was inundated by phone calls from officers outside the project with requests to come in and assist or clarify issues even outside the normally agreed upon circle (classroom) visits. I now proceed to discuss the attempts of the individual music circles in researching their topics and in building up efforts towards the cycle-end meeting.

4.3.1 Thuthukani Mampondo - UHubhe Music Circle

This music circle continued to be led by Mchayiswa 'Mirror' Madikizela with the same circle learners as Cycle 2. Their topic and action plan shifted focus to develop new dance

skills by learning new sequences and styles, as articulated by the leader in his journal entry of 04 July:

Asikajiki kulanto besisoloko siyenza kodwa ngoku sizakufunda izitayile ezitsha, kufuneka ababafana bafunde ukutala ndifuna nokubaqinisa umntu eze nesitayile sakhe. Uzakubakho umahluko wena Mama uzakubona.

[We have not changed our topic but we are now going to research new dance styles to incorporate, I want these dancers to learn graceful movements. I also want to encourage them to create their own styles.]

This suggested a positive leap forwards and this music circle continued to be as diligent as they were before. They were determined to make improvements to an extent that they acquired a spacious venue in the hall in the juvenile section of the prison and also at times held their meetings in the open. Their research generated a lot of dialogue between the leader and the research actors with regard to stylistic choices and performance. An elderly man known by his clan name, Msimango, who because of prison regulations was selected by the prison authorities to oversee and monitor the activities of the group since Madikizela himself was an adult offender working with juveniles, was knowledgeable about the genre, volunteered information, and continuously supported their efforts by consistently highlighting the differences between the *indlame* of the various ethnic groups of the Ngunis such as Bhacas and Zulus.

Madikizela's journal entry of 11 July, a week later, showed an increase in the number of days in which they met and discussed their work. At the same time his journal entry was laden with the same challenges they had experienced before: "*Ngenye imini siyavulelwa ngenye singavulelwa*" [Sometimes we are allowed to go out of the cells, sometimes it is the opposite]. He indicated the negative impact this had on his leadership because he sounded like a leader who did not keep his promises. At some point the numbers of circle learners in his group had dropped down from 26 to 10 because people were discouraged and wary of being disappointed and harassed. However, the following day, 12 July, he managed to meet with his group and encouraged them, explaining the problems he was experiencing with venues and meeting times. His journal report of the same day indicated the success they had and the determination to carry out their action plan as indicated earlier:

Izinto eziyimpumelelo esizifundileyo, sifunde imfene nendlame, ukudlala ngokuzimisela kuba senza into esiyithandayo, sibambisene sikwafunda ezinye isteps ezahlukeneyo ezimnandi futhi ngoba besizithanda.

[However, we had successes in so far as our action plan was concerned. We continued to perfect *uhubhe/imfene* and we learnt *indlame*. We further learnt new dance steps for *imfene*, different ones from the previous ones, which were exciting and there was more enjoyment and fun in doing these.]

Even though the logic and arrangement of ideas was somewhat haphazard here, the journal addressed salient points about the acquisition of new knowledge. There was also an obvious growth in reflexivity; it seemed Madikizela was becoming more conversant with the capturing key points, an essential element of the process.

According to Gobingca (pers. comm.15 July) what sparked their resolve to learn *indlame* was “the release of Dubula from prison, so they were worried that nobody seemed to be performing *indlame* for the MPAR project and they felt that it should remain part of the activities”. This rich source of knowledge and understanding about traditional music genres among these participants was striking and my analysis is that it helped them concretise aspects of their research activities and take control of the knowledge that they produced through critical dialogue. As matters were, the crucial thing for Madikizela was to ensure that members continued to meet and rehearse whenever they got the opportunity. I translate parts of his conversation with the research coordinator from the DVD:

I had told you, Gobingca, that things are not easy in this prison. Now that Mr Ngxishe is not here they are doing everything in their power to frustrate us and yet when we were praised at the university they also received recognition as people who are in charge of us, but now they have forgotten about that. Things are difficult in this prison. When we get the opportunity we are going to work hard because we know what we want to achieve. Things are difficult in this prison.

There were no further entries from Madikizela, but their meetings were filmed until 4 August when Madikizela bitterly complained about the non-availability of his dancers:

Yho! Hayi kengoku indaba ye sport iyandibhuqa. Kodwa ke andikhali kakhulu ngoba abafana aba baxakeke yinto ekwaluncedo kubo. Sekungcono nje ukuba sele ininzi into esesiyenzile nokuba kungathiwa nantsi i cycle-end ngomso sakupatanisa.

[Pow! Now my problem is sports activities, this is too much! However, I am not that upset because the young men are busy with something worthwhile and useful to them. Things are looking much better since we had already accomplished a lot as a music circle, even if the cycle-end meeting were to be called for today, we could put up a formidable performance.]

These circle learners had very clear plans, managed to implement them, but were often sabotaged by negative attitudes from officialdom. The panopticon was working against

them and clearly reciprocity got lost. As Madikizela says, the officers had even forgotten that they also benefit from the praises they receive. I also realised that prison challenges were on and off and sometimes only once-off, but the group was progressing despite them.

4.3.2 The Choir Music Circle

The new action plan continued from the previous one, exploring the topic of conducting and training in choral music. The circle learners and leaders continued to make strides in researching technical and artistic aspects and the choir brought in an interesting innovation where two research leaders tried their hands at directing and training the choir in breathing and breath control, tone placement, tone classification, articulation of vowel sounds, interpretation of dynamic levels and expression marks in their repertoire, and movement regarding folksongs. Papa wrote in his journal as follows:

Our plan is to practise whenever we can. The choir is one of the activities we do all the time. *Ndiyabona ukuba abahlekazi aba bayayithanda i-choir. Kude kwabakho nekwayari yamapolisa, phofu noMinister uyawuthanda lomculo wekwayara ndikhe ndibone xa siye kwezizinto uyagida naye ngokwakhe.* [I can see that our officials like choral music. There is even a correctional officers' choir in this prison, even the Minister Ngconde Balfour likes choral music, when we have events he comes up, sings and dance with the choristers]. But today I want us *khesenze laa ntoye* [to work on] tone classification. Please *sinceedise ke* [assist us] Skhulu. There is a problem that I see here, people do not know *ukuba umntu ufanele ukucula eyiphi i-part, nathi ke xasishota kwi-part ethile sivele sithi abafuna ukucula la-line mabangene* [which part they are supposed to sing, even where we have a shortage of singers in one part or another, we simply ask volunteers to sing a particular line.]

According to his journal, they continued with this lesson on voice classification and voice types with Mafunda struggling to clarify certain musical concepts and aspects in the vernacular:

Ke manene ndifuna sijonge lamazwi ethu siwabeke ngokwe [now gentlemen, I propose that we decide who will sing which part], 1st and 2nd tenors, first and 2nd basses. Gentlemen I would like us today to work on this issue and decide which appropriate voice parts people should sing, the 1st and 2nd tenors have the same voice range but one tenor sings one melody line and the other tenor sings the second melody line, otherwise *nokuba uyaziguqula aba be-2nd bacule i-1st akukho mahluko kwi-voice range* [even if you reverse the order in such a way that the 2nd tenors sing the first tenor melody or *vice versa* there is no difference in the voice range and all should manage any of the two parts]. *Ndiyayivuyela lemfundo*

iyasivula noko isenza abantu abanomnconwana othile ngomculo [I am glad that we learning about this musical aspect, it makes us sound like knowledgeable musicians.]

The last statement indicates the success of the research endeavours of this group. As in the previous cycle they still met several times a week. I enjoyed reading through their journal entries as they seemed to have grasped the use of journals and the action research process. Their action plan was clear, prior knowledge was used, yet they continued to develop their methodology.

The next entry of 12 July reads:

Ndifuna sijonge i-action namhlanje. Siyifumana inzima lento kaloku abanye abantu ngamaqhitala ngendalo. Besiyithatha kancinci lento yokuba ne-action le ifuna ukupracticizwa.

[I want us to work on movement and actions in our folksongs. We seem to have difficulty in this aspect, remember some of us are naturally clumsy, It looks like we undermined the fact that even actions need constant practice.]

It was good to see difficulties expressed, not always successes. In the next meeting of 21 July Mafunda reflected, “What I want to do today, I want us to research and learn about conducting. Each one must choose a pattern and a song to conduct”. This was quite a move forward from the reflections of other research leaders. Brief as it was, the action plan, method and purpose were clearly and succinctly indicated with a forward-looking strategy of how the knowledge would be applied; a sign of maturity on the part of the coordinator, especially as four participants were immediately identified to lead the ‘cascade’ of teaching-learning conducting patterns. DVD footage captures Msawu, Tshayimpi, Zamuxolo Bam and Vuyolwethu Maqungo all conducting the choir at different intervals, obviously trying out the patterns. Of essence in this exercise was the interactive and participatory approach that Mafunda used, to and ensure they were understood and applied. The cascade model was very efficient and effective. Also, I noted with excitement the depth and determination to research fundamental technical and artistic aspects in this cycle. Ways of working were interactive, problem-based, project-oriented, using thematic studies and working in groups or teams: the kind of “praxial music education” advocated by Leonhard and House (1972: 73).

Msawu led the circle for two weeks, after which Tshayimpi took over: “In the same way as Papa did, Tshayimpi today is your turn to teach a conducting pattern” (Mafunda, pers.

comm. 04 August). On 05 August Tshayimpi had a plan for the next round of meetings, and was able to get into the following kind of detail:

Today we did tone placement and articulation of vowels. This helps with diction in singing, how you sing and place the different vowels. *Uyabona manene kukho i-vowels ezinobuzaza nje ngo 'i', 'a' no 'e'* [You see, gentlemen, we have vowels like 'i' 'a' and 'e' which are problematic and difficult to sing]. *Nansto ke ingxaki, 'i'* [That is where the problem is], they must sound like 'i', 'a' like 'a' *njalo njalo* [and so on]. *Masithathe iculo sisebenze ngalo. Masithathe u Long Day Closes, ingxaki ibakho kula esingesi kanye* [Let us take a song and apply this, let us take *Long Day Closes*, the English songs are usually where these problems occur].

This illustrates a grasp of the fit between theory and practice, and shows his teaching background emerging quite strongly as a strategy.

Looking at the work that was being done in this music circle, on DVD, I was thrilled by the level they were at. Notions of lifelong learning in the education of adults as suggested by scholars such as Fejes and Nicoll (2008), Freire (1993), and Habermas (1996) seemed to be represented in this music circle in Cycle 3. Through “dialogue which requires critical thinking” they were “also capable of generating critical thinking” (Freire 1993: 57). They seemed to have reached the point where, as Habermas (Ibid: 56) posits: “knowledge and skills [are] directed through processes of self-directed learning ... communicated through deliberations between learners and teachers [and] understood [as] an activity that [is] fun and naturally rewarding”.

Tshayimpi on the same day discovered the usefulness of what he had been doing with the school choir prior to incarceration:

It is true that whatever you have learnt is not in vain, my experience with the school choir is helpful. Also Mafunda's presence made things a lot easier. Oh, I have a plan, *masithathe iculo ngalinye sijonge i -directions pha kulo* like *i-expressions ne- dynamics ezipha sizenze* practically *ngokweculo ngalinye* [let us take one song and discuss its dynamics and expressions and then apply these as we sing the song]. *Ndiyibambile nalaanto ithi* [I have also understood the explanation that] they must be contextualised to the meaning of the song, *yiyo ke lento ndi-suggesta ukuba sizenze ngokwamaculo la, singaneli nje kukwazi ukuba u-p* [hence the suggestion to work on these as they appear in the songs, besides just knowing that 'p'] stands for piano and means soft, the question is how soft is soft in this particular song? *Xa lona iculo eli lithetha ngantoni?* [Is it not important to know what the song is about?]. *Umzekelo, u--soft we-lalluby akanakufana no-soft ka Amandla Omthandazo, ngoba i-lullaby kwayona ihleli i-soft ngoba liculo*

lokulalisa umntwana kanti Amandla Omthandazo [for instance, ‘p’ in a lullaby cannot be applied in the same way as ‘p’ in the song entitled ‘The Power of a Prayer’ because a lullaby is in its nature a soft song since it is about putting a baby to sleep while *Amandla Omthandazo* is a powerful song that tends to be more on the loud side so, ‘p’ in *Amandla Omthandazo* will be relative to its loudness which is generic throughout the song.]

This connectedness Mafunda discovered came about through self-reflexivity and led him to think ahead:

Mr Tshayimpi, I must remember *ukucela uMamTwani anenzele i-copies ze-expressions ezisetyenziswayo kwa-music, wayekhe wazenzela eza-groups ze-music literacy, ukwenzela ukuba wonke umntu abenazo, futhi ke zona nakuzisebenzisa umlibe* [to ask Mrs Twani to make more copies of the learning support material that she gave to the music literacy groups which gave explanations of some of the expressions that are commonly used in music.]

Msawu and Tshayimpi were quite methodical and systematic in their research attempts, but the last journal entry from Mafunda in this cycle brings out a further problem:

The choir is doing very well and the two research leaders know how to schedule and divide the work to be done. *Into endiyibonayo iyancipha ngoku ikwayara kumana kumka abantu* [I can see that the choir numbers are dwindling because of the releases]. I wish they can continue with the work even outside prison. *Nalento yokumana sifika abantu bekwayara bengekho iyahlupha. Ndifuna khe ndibuze u Mr Ngxishe ukuba kwenzeka ntoni?* [I need to find out from Mr Ngxishe what is happening about the choir because the unavailability and invisibility of the choir music circle is disconcerting.]

The absence was not because offenders were being ‘released’ in the sense of discharged, but because of their performances in the NOCC in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town. This had a regrettable impact on the cycle-end meeting, where more insights would have been gained with the practical demonstrations of the work of this group.

4.3.3 The Conquerors - Double Quartet Music Circle

This is one of the groups that had been going since Cycle 1 under the leadership of Qoboza and coordinated by Gobingca. The members of this music circle were making steady progress musically and had decided to continue with the topic of learning theory of music, focusing on staff notation in addition to tonic sol-fa. Their plans were carried out

with immediate effect, and Qoboza's journal entry of 05 September is meticulous in terms of needs, concerns and methodology:

The group met again with only the absence of Mr. Mveleli. Mr. Cingile Qoboza reported on his meeting with Mrs. Twani. music books colored pencils a new report book. The group was overjoyed and grateful. The introduction of the two songs meant extra work for the group. It was resolved that we share the meeting time in half between learning about staff notation and practicing the songs. Exercises were done to familiarise the group with new concept. Mr. Vumile Tshayimpi then led the group on time signatures. he progressed to the end gave the Group homework, although they were still off colour even in his session. Also, challenges and solutions to these within the group were well documented.

I assumed what Qoboza meant by 'off colour' was the incident around the 'test' that nearly saw the group disintegrate in the previous cycle. On 07 September he reports that "[t]he group did not meet on this day as all members went on an outing with "NEW BORN BROTHERS" The medium correctional centre's choir", and on Sunday 09 September:

The group met a little bit late than scheduled. The group leader explained Mr. Bam's absence as truancy. Mr. Bakokele Jonas led the discussion on grouping the BEATS pp 21-22. He also tackled pg 23 which is grouping quavers. Due to the late start the group could not get to practice music as had been previously planned. It was agreed that on Monday 10 Sept. 2007 less time would be spent on music theory and lots of time would be spent on practising the songs.

His use of the word 'truancy' takes us back to the association of the project with formal schooling, and suggests Qoboza himself taking a somewhat a panoptic stance in the way in which he was scrutinising and surveilling each and every movement by Bam. The reference to 'late start' also indicates some impatience. By the next meeting on 11 September there was "[a] discussion on the absence of members on previous sessions". There were some changes which sought to extend their action plan to integrate music and drama in a bid to encourage members to try their hand at composition and creative writing. However, Qoboza was not happy about the continuing absence of members. The group decided to revise their code of conduct so as to "provide clear-cut sanctions for conduct unbecoming or detrimental to the group's interests" (Qoboza, pers. comm. 12 September). They continued to make progress on musical terms, using *A Fun Way to Learn Theory of Music: Grade One*. There was a report back on creative writing exercises, and the whole group was encouraged to engage in creative writing and artistic work. They continued to have exhaustive practice sessions.

What this group was increasingly experiencing, especially now they were making such good progress, was the oppressive nature of prisons and the way institutional life impeded such progress. The problem of venues had been resolved within the project, yet still some officers tried to unsettle the gains made within the MPAR. They kept on course anyway. Qoboza's entry for 16 September reads:

The group did not meet on this day. The reason was that we had scheduled a music theory session @ 12h00. The group met @ E-section Hall. The group then proceeds with practicing the song "The long day closes". After sufficient time the group moved to practice a second song "Magnify HIM endlessly" by A. Lukope. Mr. Tshayimpi then introduced 2 theme specific songs on HIV/AIDS, which were well received by the group.

The challenges that were emerging were immediately counteracted by positive thinking and action, to ensure progress. The participants seemed to be gaining ground in understanding the panoptic nature of the environment and how to respond positively to it. I could not help but think about Andries' reflexive comments on 'positive thinking' and 'constructive ideas', for example in one of his action plans in Chapter 2. Also, I remembered the comments by Mirror, Mluleki and Qoboza from the early days of the activating workshop about '*ijele*' and how things could suddenly turn around for participants. Qoboza's clarity of thought and consistency in attempting to solve problems, as well as his tenacity, were admirable.

September was this music circle's busiest month as shown in a variety of daily records (entries). Their level of education and literacy helped. Close examination of his journal entries reveal Qoboza as more self-reflexive than others, about why they had made certain decisions and about the project and their progress, but all the entries demonstrated the teamwork of a group that is pulling together. The delegation and distribution of teaching was learner-centred and self-driven. Challenges and solutions were well documented. Further, the interactive approach that they seemed to adopt was intelligently applied according to availability and knowledgeability of the various people who led the research process. They emerged as good planners: for example, seeing there was no progress with the drama script, they turned their focus to poetry. They drew facilitators from the whole group; it was not only left to the research leader to facilitate things.

Non attendance was their main challenge and almost like an obsession, as Qoboza keeps writing about it:

WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2007. The group then decided to revamp the code of conduct, so as to provide clear-cut sanctions for conduct unbecoming or detrimental to the group's interests, in their next meeting. The group then practiced the song "the long day closes" as composed by Arthur Sullivan and whose lyrics are written by Henry F. Charley. The terminology noted earlier was demonstrated in the music sheet. Mr. Tshayimpi led the session on the music practice. The group had to stop the music due to the start of ABET PRE-LEVEL CLASS, which we share the same venue with. We are desperate in-need of a proper venue with facilities like a piano.

On 16 September Qoboza notes: "It is obvious some intervention is needed to secure better co-operation from the officers of the said section". I wished all research leaders could display this level of confidence. The groups's plans kept up with changes and disruptions and it only remained to be seen how far they would progress by the cycle-end meeting.

4.3.4 The Peacemakers - *Isicathamiya* Music Circle

This music circle experienced shifts in leadership at least three times in the life of the project, with stop-gap leaders who had to keep carrying the process forward. When Cycle 3 started they were under the leadership of Siphathiso Mabho but by the third week of the cycle it was Vusumzi Majanti. How it came to be Majanti is still a mystery to everyone, given the life issues he had been having throughout the project. Initially I thought it was because of Mabho's change of status from juvenile to adult offender, but learnt later that Mabho's interest had shifted away from this genre. In the process of leading this circle Majanti again slipped in behaviour. He committed a series of minor offences and was suspended from any activity for two weeks. I was rather disappointed with his unchanging behaviour and also the lack of musical progress within the group as a whole. Majanti's suspension left a vacuum but it was at this point that Sive Nqetho came to the rescue and led the group to the end of the cycle.

They continued to 'polish up' their repertoire but 'were not ready' to embark on any new topics. Majanti's suspension offered little time to make significant changes in the circle.

Gobingca, the research coordinator working with this group, made the following observation on 11 August:

I think there is something going on with this group, but I am not sure exactly what, they seem to be secretive about things. They come to their meetings but all they ever do is to rehearse their old songs and I have captured all their practise sessions on DVD, even when I am there they do not want to talk, that is discuss things. *Nam ndiyoyisakala ngabo ngoku, Mam ikhona into eqhubekayo phaya and bayafihla* [I am also becoming disappointed in them now, but there is something going on there, they are too secretive]. What I find strange is that when they are in the other music circles like, *imfene*, recorder and choreography, they get on well and there is progress. There is just no progress [here].

Gobingca's entry relates to what Herr and Anderson call the problem of "intersubjectivity" (2005: 16) between outside and the inside researchers.

In meeting, there is the possibility of reciprocal participative knowing and unless this is truly mutual, we don't properly know the other. The fullness of the other is found in the fullness of our open relation when we each engage in our mutual participation. Hence the importance of cooperative inquiry with other persons involving dialogue, parity and reciprocity in all its phases (Ibid).

On some levels the relations in this project were very open, but only as open as they could be inside a prison. 'Secrecy' as we have seen already, was not necessarily a sign of mistrust in a research coordinator but a sign of not wanting to risk saying or doing anything that might jeopardise parole. In this circle there was a particular configuration of people who perhaps did not trust each other well enough to speak to Gobingca in front of the group. There is always the possibility, in this project, that offenders see a research coordinator as an 'authority' of the same kind as an officer. This slight breakdown is what Freire (1993) and Habermas (1976) as referred to earlier call 'dialogue and communicative deliberation', and was compounded by the unavailability of Ngxishe.

I could not take a decision about whether to continue with this music circle or not. My own position was challenged by the secrecy, and although I knew that "the level of engagement can vary during the life of the study" (Speljavik cited in Herr and Anderson 2005: 42). I nevertheless felt my values and those of the MPAR were being interrogated. This is what Elden and Chisholm meant by "AR is value-laden" and Jean McNiff by "a deep problematising of values" in PAR; and here I was, in the midst of it. At this stage I found myself problematising and thinking about incorporating a value commitment for the groups to remain in the project in order to accommodate the research's key goals, and I

had to tread carefully, since the project also was geared towards development work and I did not want to exclude anyone, but rather ensure sustainability of the groups's enthusiasm.

I let The Peacemakers remain in the project in the hope that the new leader, Nqetho, might be able to turn things around. They did come up with new songs, 'cover numbers' to which they created their own dance steps although I felt they were capable of being more innovative. I was persuaded by Ngxishe to be patient with Majanti as he could just be going through a rough patch in his life. Journal entries were not forthcoming and the DVD footage did not show anything different from the previous cycle. Majanti was slow in becoming a "dandy" (Hattingh 1994: 14) his behaviour was not getting any better and was constantly absent from circle meetings even during our circle visits. Consequently, efficiency and improvement was stifled in this music circle and reflexive and "reflective evaluation" (Herr and Anderson 2005: 17) were suffering as the circle learners continuously avoided divulging what was going on in their meetings. Panoptic power relations and reliance on the missing research leader were conflicts of interest that seemed to create resistance to the research at this stage. Gobingca's report of 22 July brought a flicker of hope that things might improve: "Isicathamiya group are doing well, their daily practices are paying off. Maybe even their behaviour will change".

4.3.5 The Recorder Music Circle

This circle continued under the research leader Mosa Mpopo, struggling as far as musical progress was concerned. I am sure her negative experience in the previous cycles did not exactly spur her on, and I had to accept this as one of the failure moments in the MPAR. The two older circle learners who took initiative in learning to play the recorder were Msawu and Qoboza, research leaders in other circles. The younger circle learners were not very patient in learning to play music instruments; to me they seemed to be looking for quick fixes. Then Gobingca noted on 12 July:

We had a problem of entering the prison today, it took us a long time to be allowed inside because we were alone and Mrs Twani was not with us. The officers at the gate refused to call Mr Ngxishe or his assistant or even Mosa. We were asked a lot of questions before we could meet with the research leaders. Eventually we met with Mosa. It seems as if today was a day of problems, Mosa was complaining that

they needed to be taught the recorder rather than them discovering for themselves because all of them have no clue about playing the instrument. Meanwhile the other circle learners were complaining that Mosa, who was the group leader had less interest in the music circle. This was a problem that took us long to resolve. We could not see other groups except for the Recorder group and even with this group there was not much progress but to solve problems. We were told that other members had other commitments like Sports.

I did not find this as disturbing as Gobingca did, for problem solving is one of the key features of PAR, and as I explained to him later on, progress and acquisition of learning was not just about tangible things but about how to confront issues, discuss them and find solutions, so all was not lost. Gobingca was becoming frustrated by the lack of musical progress in this circle, for his report of 08 August says:

Today was another day for the Recorder group. We taught them to play the C major scale on the recorder as they had requested to be taught rather than to discover. We then started to play the National Anthem which they had started learning in cycle two of the project and they played from memory. But this had problems because they found it difficult. They have a problem of forgetting what they were taught. We then had to come with our own discretion to teach them music theory starting from the note values and time signatures. They then started to understand. What is the use because they do not practise and later forget what we have taught them. I was playing two roles, teaching them to play the anthem and at the same time filming the lesson on DVD. Papa is progressing well in recorder playing and Cingile [Qoboza] is another one who tries hard because of their daily practice. Some members still have difficulties in playing but if they practise everyday they will make progress bit by bit.

In my meeting of 21 August with research coordinators, well into the cycle, I learnt how the idea of a Spiritual Dance Group had come about: Gobingca had brought up the idea when he realised that the Recorder Group was not functioning properly at the end of the previous cycle. This together with Madikizela's failure to learn to play the guitar and the Adult Gospel Group circle members' failure to play the keyboard, brought out strongly that the playing of musical instruments could be very difficult in the prison environment. Needless to say a careful approach varied teaching strategies and a longer time to accomplish goals would have helped, and the challenges were also linked to literacy challenges. At least with the guitar Madikizela had showed a lot of enthusiasm and determination and it was clear that lack of educational and musical background was why there was no progress.

This evidence recalls some of the issues John Fonti (2004) addresses in his research on young offenders in Parklea Correctional Centre (UK), which ultimately shows that the performance-based medium can facilitate in developing other life skills (communication, cooperation, leadership, inter- and intra-personal skills) and not necessarily the intended music skills, as in the case of ex-offenders and MPAR participants who went on to pursue business ventures. I needed to take heed of his argument that the objective for introducing music instrument playing in prisons should not be to produce ‘professional musicians’ but rather to use the potential of each individual to the full, build personal esteem (and cultivate a desire for other educational activities). Perhaps I should be satisfied with the fact that at least two of the participants in this music circle managed to learn the first part of the South African national anthem and later, after the project, they may be motivated to continue. Exposure and involvement in educational programmes in prison might well generate a desire to learn in the future, to continue what Per Andersson (2008: 129) calls “lifewide, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal, professional or economic reasons [which] not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but also competitiveness and employability”. That, at least, was my hope.

The self-motivated pursuit of keyboard playing for Nkuthalo Nomesi may well have been as much for (later) economic as for (current) personal development. Prison had a different impact on him than it did on some others, which perhaps may be linked to a different set of intrinsic and external motivations. In essence, anyway, the Recorder music circle became a two-member circle. The newly formed Spiritual Dance Music circle’s activities I discuss below.

4.3.6 The Juvenile Gospel and the Keyboard Music Circle

This also was in existence from the beginning of the project, under Majanti who is the same person who had a leadership stint with the *Isicathamiya* music circle and had behavioural problems (as discussed above). I wondered if Majanti’s confused state of mind was because of possible overload with and the new leadership of this circle. Like the *Isicathamiya* music circle they incorporated very little or no new musical nuances in their research endeavours. Even the concept and resolve of composing their own Gospel songs

in Cycle 2 was forgotten in Cycle 2 and they continued to imitate songs composed by other people and simply added movement. The reason they kept going was the increased capacity for learning to play the keyboard shown by Nomesi. As Mafunda remarked, his name Nkuthalo, meant diligence and he was “displaying it to the book”.

The DVD footage demonstrates the contribution to knowledge creation of the Juvenile Gospel music circle. (See DVD chs. 8A and 8B.) While ch. 8A on the DVD focuses on the verbal presentation by Majanti, the research leader at the cycle-end meeting, ch. 8B, which I deliberately made longer, illustrates a number of key features of the PAR method and, therefore, the MPAR: freedom and fun in learning; the nature of knowledge creation and production through inclusivity in problem-solving; demonstration and imitation learning strategy; keyboard skills acquired by Nomesi; discussion and dialogue in the meetings and guidance and support.

The insert below from Gobingca’s 03 July report is an indication of the progress that was being made in this circle, however minimal:

In today’s lesson, the group leader Vusumzi once more introduced the group members and proceeded to explain how they learnt their songs and movements during their meetings. They start with the soprano and then tenor followed by the alto and bass. They sang a song ‘*Nkosi Sikelela*’ [Lord Bless]. Although the group members were participating there is a lot of work that needs to be done in the gospel group. Many of them were just singing for the sake of singing, not meaning what they sang about. There were no attempts at interpreting the meaning of the song and making use of expressions. Emotionally I felt they were so far removed from the song. But, after advising them here and there, at least there was some improvement. I do not know what is wrong with them something is not alright.

On 22 July Gobingca is able to say, “The Gospel group is improving ... They showed us how they have taught one another a new song and how the new keyboard player had managed a new song. Nkuthalo starts by playing keyboard and then help the tenor to hum the tune and later the bass will follow”. The DVD footage shows that improvisation and rote learning were the way things were learnt. The way Nomesi acquired his keyboard skills is related by him in his report/journal? of 8 July:

When Sbu left I had prepared myself to take over at all cost. *Phofu ndandisendiqlile. Indincedile lanto yokuncamathela kuye. Naye ebedlala ngendlebe and uthi wayedlalela i Lord Comforters yase Zwelitsha. Nam ke ndiqale ngokumana ndimamele ndidlale loo note ndicinga ukuba yiyo, ithi kanti i righti. But eyona nto indincedileyo kukufunda itheory, ngoba ndatsho ndazazi iinotes*

nokuba zindawoni kwikeyboard. Ngokuba beselendizazi iinotes bekulula ke ngoku nokuqikelela nokuzazi ezise zantsi neziphezulu. Ndandikhona ngokuya uMama noGobingca babethetha ngeekeys, hayi, ke itheory yandivula. Izinto zeerhythm ke ziza zona ngokumamela ingoma le ukuba ixesha layo lithini, uhambe nabo ke. [I had already started. Staying closer to Sbu helped a lot. He also played by rote and he told me that he used to play for a recording Gospel group from Zwelitsha (in the Eastern Cape), The Lord Comforters. I also started by listening and then by trial and error. But what really helped me was the theory of music lessons that I took in Vuyo's (Mduduma's) music circle, I then learnt about the note names, positions and ranges of notes. It was also easier to determine the note registers. I was in the room the day the Adult Gospel Group, was told by Mrs Twani and Gobingca about keys but! theory of music lessons came through for me. I also learnt about rhythm through improvisation and listening to the singers and then I would understand the beat and time signature]. I think the more you play *kubalula* [it becomes easier]. *Ndiyavuya gqitha ndikwazi* [I am happy I can play the keyboard], but it is not easy, I think you need to listen careful *and nawe ube creative* [you also need to be creative.]

He had obviously grasped the art of documenting his findings and thoughts in the journal. His longer period in the project was perhaps paying off, but he was someone who progressed as a circle learner in more than one genre - *Isicathamiya* and Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard - to become the occasional research leader for the spiritual dance music circle and ultimately the all-rounder keyboard player in the MPAR for Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard, and Hip-hop *Kwaito* circles. He told me that he thought he should document things as he had seen with others and that in case somebody had to talk about these developments at the end of the cycle. He felt that if anybody needed to say anything about his development as a keyboard player it should be him as he would do more justice to it than a research leader who could not play the instrument; and in case it did not work out that way, then the research leader would be able to express his views and ideas.

His other journal entry on 20 August indicates how he improved:

Besekumnandi ngoku ngoba akakho omnye umntu obekwazi ukudlala, indim ndedwa. Iyeyaphela nala ngxaki besinayo yokubolekisana ne Adult gospel group ngomntu wokudlala. Because I had iaccess kwi keyboard bendiyendicele pha kubahlekazi ukuba ndiyigcine nasesiseleni ngamanye amaxesha kuvunywe ngamanye kwaliwe. So ibiba kum ixesha elininzi ndikwazi ke ngoku ukumana ndi practisa ndifunde nezinye iingoma ezintsha. Esiseleni bendicela lamanene sicula nawo about four of five bacule mna ke ndidlale ikeyboard le.

[It has been a pleasure to learn to play the keyboard, especially that now I am the only one who can play and everybody looks up to me. Even the problem of sharing a player with the Adult Gospel Group (in Cycle 2) no longer prevailed. Because I had access to the keyboard, I would request permission from the officers to keep it in my cell all the time where I would practise and even learn new songs. I would

also ask about four or five of the inmates who also sang in the Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard music circle to practice with me, *indincedile loo nto ngokuba nam* [that has helped me because] I saw the difference.

Nomesi was not a research leader at this stage so his documentation was admirable, showing dedication and good qualities as a leader. His (to me) meteoric rise was a positive spin-off in which his determination played a major role. Another quality that he showed was his unselfish attitude as he took one of the other members to try his hand at keyboard even though his progress was slower than his own. The method of rote learning and learning by observation proved to be effective in facilitating this.

4.3.7 Nyandeni Cultural Group - *Indlame* Music Circle

This circle continued under the same research leader, Ndoyisile until his release on 02 August when 'Mawawa' took over. Seemingly the new leader was not aware of how to become part of the MPAR project and also he did not communicate the group's decision to continue under his leadership. As a result I was not aware of their existence as part of the project and neither were the research coordinators. Their failure to communicate jeopardised the existence of the group in that none of their research endeavours and meetings were documented in any way. It was only during the *impromptu* cycle-end meeting of Cycle 3 that we discovered them. I was pleasantly surprised, although obviously this was a situation to be addressed at a meeting with the research leader and the research actors. I did wonder whether their claimed existence as part of the MPAR project was perhaps seen as ticket to Mawawa's release on parole.

The envisaged meeting never happened, however, because as things unfolded with all the music circles there were disruptions due to the two training programmes that were implemented at the Centre (alluded to above).

4.3.8 Nyandeni *YakuMdepha* - *Indlame* Music Circle

A new era dawned for the *indlame* music circle in Cycle 3, still under the leadership of Ndoyikile Dubula but operating from outside prison after he was released on parole on 02

August. The name slightly changed with the addition of the location of the group, ‘YakuMdepha’: the name of one of the villages at Nyandeni where the amaMpondo of the Eastern Cape are found, to which Dubula returned. His account was that as soon as he got released, the opportunity that he had been yearning for while inside prison had presented itself for him to start a new group and to put into effect the whole concept of formalising an existence of a performing arts company. (Recall his frustration with lack of progress in generating a business plan and a constitution with the *indlame* music circle while he was inside prison.) This was the first spin-off from the MPAR project outside prison, and continues to this day, which I know because some of the research leaders of music circles in the MPAR project still maintain contact with me.

In the same breath let me hasten to explain that with the departure of Dubula from MMCC, *indlame* continued to exist, yet a rather more direct contact and dealings were maintained with Dubula’s *indlame* music circle from outside prison at his insistence, hence its new look in this cycle.

I welcomed this because I wanted to assess whether the efforts he had made with the inside group would hold, or if his success here was simply due to the long-standing existence of this group, since most of them were long-term offenders, like Dubula himself. The newly formed *indlame* music circle outside, which was evidence of successful reintegration into a community, was strikingly different from the one inside in that it consisted of youths of schoolgoing age. This is what Dubula said to me in a telephone conversation about his release from prison (pers. comm. 24 August):

Ndandikuxelele Mama ukuba izinto zase jele zihamba eyazo indlela. Ndavele ndaxelelwa ngolwesine emveni kokuba nanipha ukuba mandilungise izinto zam ndiyahamba, ndashiya yonke into ngolohlobo ndaqokelela okwam ndahamba ndingakhange ndikwazi nokukuxelela, kodwa ke ndancedwa kukuba iiphone number zenu noSkhulu noGobingca ndihleli ndinazo, yiyo ke lento ndandisediphona ndicela ukuza kukubona phaya eofisini yakho.

[I told you, Mrs Twani, that the way things are done in prison is very unique, Here I am. Without any notification I was informed on a Thursday morning, a day after you had visited the prison to pack my things and go home, I just left everything like that, there was no time to inform anybody and not even you and the research coordinators. My only consolation was that I had always kept your cell numbers, which is how I was able to call you and ask for an appointment to see you in your office.]

This scenario is indeed a ‘very unique’ aspect of the way the panopticon operates negatively in prison. He came back on 26 August and this is what he said happened after his release. I quote it at length because of the way it illustrates both individual empowerment and what rehabilitation into the community means, on the ground:⁵²

Since my release from prison and my arrival at the village, I found Mr Ntshilibe encouraging community members to form sports clubs and traditional music and dance groups to celebrate our culture and heritage. Because everyone in the village knew that I was a keen *indlame* dancer, I then told them about the MPAR project and my involvement in it and the kind of things I learnt. In as much as I was happy to be released from jail, I was at the same time not very happy to leave the project at that stage because I had not done all the research I wanted to do, and I did not know how to write a business plan and constitution. When I spoke to Mr Ntshilibe, he was quite happy and explained what he had recently advised members of the community at a meeting about forming these groups and he promised to assist me in forming one. He then called a meeting for community members, and informed them about my plans, also what assisted me was that most people in the community knew about my imprisonment and the reason thereof, further everyone knew that I was not a troublesome person but I was arrested unfairly, almost everybody accepted and supported my plans to form an *indlame* group, hence the 32 members. Mrs Twani, the members of this new group are keen and happy to be associated with the university.

I quickly managed to get hold of the two research coordinators and we assembled in my office. The joy and excitement at seeing Dubula and spending time with him was and is still beyond words. We were all delighted at his release from prison but even more so at the speed with which he had continued with the work he had been doing within the project, particularly that he had already made strides in forming a group of 32 members who were eager to be involved and determined to participate in the cycle-end meetings of Cycles 3 and 4.

⁵² Some of the very long IsiXhosa passages towards the end of the thesis I put in footnotes, as here (see next page):

Ekubeni ndiphumile pha eprison, ndifike uceba welali, ubawo uNtshilibe ekhuthaza abahlali ukuba mababenamaqela esport nemixhentso ukuphuhlisa inkcubeko nezithethe zethu. Kuthe kuba bendisaziwa kwaselalini ukuba indlame ndiyayisina, ndachaza pha kuceba ngale projethi yakho Mama nezinto ebesenza pha. Ewe noxa bendikuvuyela ukuphuma etrongweni kodwa iyeyandihlupha into yokuba bendingenkayigqibi indima yam kule risetshi and ndinesikhalo sokuba laplani yokuseka iqembu bendisoloko ndinomnqweno wokuyenza. Ndithe ke ekuthetheni nobawo uNtshilibe wayivuyela loo nto ngelithi kiwimthingi ebenayo nabahlali ebethetha kanye ngemicimbi eloluhlobo, watsho esithi ke uza kundincedisa. Uyibizile ke imithingini nabahlali, abazali nabantwana wavakalisa ke umbono wam, kwathi kuba ke nam noko ibali lam liyaziwa apha elalini yaye ke nam ndingemntu obehlupha kakhulu, ndabanjwa ke ngendlela endabanjwa ngayo, abahlali abawuchasa lombono weqembu le ndlame. Ndilapha ke namhlanje ukuba siqhubeleke neprojekthi, kwaye ke mam uTwani sesiqalile ukusebenza nalegenge, futhi siyaqhubeleka neprojekthi ye resetshi selendibaxele bayayivuyela into yokudibana neyunivesithi.

We decided on a month's action plan for this new music circle dating, 27 August to 28 September, which detailed the meetings needed with participants and the councillor, the drafting of a constitution, collection of minimum subscriptions of R25 per participant for the group to open a bank account, a visit to the bank, submission of ID numbers for registration of the new company, and drafting and submission of the research leader's MPAR report. All of this was achieved before the final cycle-end meeting because of the leader's hardwork and enthusiasm. In the meantime the action plan got extended to include a circle visit to the village Mdepha in Nyandeni District by me and Skhulu, some 100km from Mthatha as part of the leader's report in time for the cycle-end meeting of 29 November 2007.

The action plan had a list of specific tasks to do for almost every day in order to keep the momentum going and avoid delaying goals that needed to be achieved for effective progress. There was no doubt that far more could be achieved quickly outside prison than in it, so the plan could be of a different kind. Dates were changed as we went along, for example, the opening of the bank account could not happen without a constitution for the group. An indicator of Dubula's determination to succeed was his pledge to contribute R300.00 that he had earned while in prison, for the registration of the music circle or company as a cooperative which would allow for the inclusion of all the members as shareholders, rather than register it as a closed cooperation which would have limited the number of shareholders.

As discussed in Cycle 2, even members of this new *indlame* music circle were school going youths and the other community members who were supportive of this circle were illiterate, therefore there was a close collaboration between the research leader, coordinator and facilitator to ensure efficiency and accuracy of information for successful attainment of goals. I appreciated the consistency and sincerity with which Dubula and his team put to the project; also his enthusiasm and determination did not wane. I felt they were conscientised to the core. It was indeed a pleasure even to assist them with a financial gift to top up registration fees for the company. I shall discuss his cycle-end report in the context of others in 4.4 below.

4.3.9 The Hip-Hop Kwaito Music Circle

This new circle comprised four members from the juvenile section of the Centre. They sang music composed by the leader, Sbusiso ‘Sbu’ Mshiywa. Other group members were ‘L’Vovo’ (Luvo Mapinda), ‘Mavusi’ (Vusumzi Majanti) and Tukulo Molefe. Two members from the group, with the exception of the leader and Molefe preferred to be called by their stage names. This group initiated their own entry into the MPAR project through the research coordinators. When Gobingca went to the juvenile section on 5 July 2007 to work with the groups there, he was approached by Mshiywa with their request to be part of the project. He already had with him a research journal with notes recorded in it, which confused Gobingca into immediately accommodating them in his schedule and recording their meeting on DVD, where they announced the following ‘action plan’:

This is our fist [first] meeting, Gobingca sayd we write action plan for the group. We have 14 songs I compose so we sing those for this time. Since *ingoma izezam ndizakufundisa abanye* [since I have composed the songs, I am going to teach the others]. I lead the song, Mavusi sing bass, and L’Vovo and Molefe sing tenor 1 and 2. So I sing one line and teach *omnye* [one of the parts], then I go to next part and sing with that one until all parts *zingene, siyihlanganise kengoku* [I sing all the individual parts with the relevant singer until all of them have been harmonised]. Our problem is that we cannot play the keyboard.

As an action plan in the MPAR sense this should have included aims, methods, challenges, solutions, meeting dates and times, resources and a meeting venue, whereas only the methodology aspects were recorded. This was nevertheless commendable, for a new music circle to detail their method of researching (although they do not call it research). A much more intensive meeting with the group was clearly necessary to fill in the gaps as a kind of ‘on the job training’, and visits to this music circle more often. They sang a mixture of music genres such as rap and hip-hop with lyrics in IsiXhosa.

Regardless of the circumstances in which they started, the group proceeded with their research and I appreciated their efforts to communicate in English; they had to resort to their mother tongue from time to time as demonstrated in the insert above. Again, rote learning proved to be a preferred model of learning for this performance-based music circle. They held a number of meetings and rehearsal sessions, and I could see from the DVD footage that the research leader seemed to know most about the genre as he had some experience with a group from outside prison known as the Hip-Hop Kwaito BBG,

which he had started in his hometown Mcubakazi in Butterworth in 2003. Another interesting observation from the footage was that this music circle was constantly under self- and peer evaluation as well as research coordinators' evaluation, each time they met, rehearsed and discussed things. Apart from the keyboard player Nkuthalo Nomesi, there would always be two other inmates who were also part of the project who would offer comments seriously and immediately. In the footage of 17 July, I saw how Mshiywa belted out the instructions to his performers:

Step one: Turn around four times, that is, to all the sides of the room. *Xa sijonge ngaphambili kwakhona ndiyangena mna ndithi: 'elokishini xa sigcwala bafeth' elokishini*'. Then, guys, you must make sure that we listen to the pace of the song so that our movements are the same as the song [meaning are on time]. [Sive Nqetho:] 'No guys, *mna ndibona ngolunye uhlobo* [I suggest a different approach], *xa nijike najonga ngaphambili*, [count one Sbu and then all of you rap the words] *'elok'shini xa sigcwala bafeth' elokshini*' [when we roam around in the township] at the same time. If *nenza njalo* [you do it like that] you will be on time *'uyabona Sbu lento yokulibiza lonke igama, njengo 'elokishini', izakumosha ixesha, lishunquleleni*' [you see Sbu, the idea of pronouncing the complete name is going to interfere with the time and beat, so, exercise some poetic licence and cut the name short].

They started the song again and it was in a call and response form with the lyrics accompanied by the keyboard which was the source of music:

Call (from the lead rapper): *Elok'shin' xa sigcwala bafeth' elok'shin*

Response: *elok'shin* [count one silent beat], *elok'shin*

Call: *Elok'shin' xa sigcwala bafeth' elok'shin* [two silent beats]

Response: *elok'shin*, [one silent beat], *elok'shin*

Call: *Elok'shin' sesijonga kwenzekani, abantwana sesibabon'*

Response: *elok'shin besipheth' ifashion elok'shin*

Call: *elok'shin senz'izint' ebesicinga zi right*

Response: correct, [one silent beat], correct

All in alternating style, the lead rapper and followers imitated each other in rapping 'correct, correct, correct, correct' [four times]. Nqetho commented that 'i pace *aniyichani madodo, iyatshintsha tshintsha. Uyabona Sbu kufuneka simana sikuqhwetha ukuze ungene. Kufuneka ubale kakuhle*' [your tempo is not accurate, gentlemen, it keeps changing].

I found them quite systematic in their research here; they were focused on one music aspect, the rhythm. They repeated the song a number of times until they had improved but their movements needed more refinement; it came with less emotion from the participants. The opportunity to seek clarity about this matter from Mshiywa came only much later, in July 2008. When I went back to the prison that day to hand out certificates of participation, I enquired from him whether his methodology was by default or agreement.

It turned out that Sithembiso Mavume, who was involved in both the *Isicathamiya* and the Juvenile Gospel music circles had experience from performing this genre at high school. Mshiywa requested him to be present to ensure that they were on the right track. Asked as to why he was not part of the Hip-Hop *Kwaito* circle, Mshiywa responded that Nqetho wanted to learn other music genres that he did not have experience in so as to broaden his horizons while the project existed but was happy to assist the group led by Mshiywa. Nqetho clearly did not see the MPAR project as just a music education programme for he could have easily assumed the role of a teacher in something he knew; he rather preferred to use it as an opportunity to learn other music genres that he had less knowledge of.

According to Mshiywa, too, Nqetho wanted to ensure the existence of the group since his own attempts at recruiting members seemed to fail. So there was peer feedback, but the research leader's journal was mainly different lyrics of songs that they had composed for their circle, so seemingly he did not understand the concepts behind the MPAR project. In hindsight, the error of the lack of induction of this group into the project was catching up with all of us. It was taking this music circle longer to understand the issues, and reflexivity was difficult to detect and measure. The messages of their songs, as deconstructed from the lyrics, provide insight to their progress towards rehabilitation. These revolved around youth against crime, life in prison, and they would also sing about love for parents, for life and beautiful 'ladies'.

I nonetheless allowed things to continue as they were. Nomesi, the keyboard player, continued to grow and develop in this group as he did in the Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard music circles. Time and again Gobingca, now nicknamed the 'choreography expert' in the MPAR project, offered direction regarding synchronisation of movements, and actually choreographed some movements for the group.

4.3.10 The Spiritual Dance Music Circle

This new group, as mentioned above, was under the leadership of Nkuthalo Nomesi, the other members being Vusumzi Majanti, Sithembiso Mavume, Bulelani Matroos and Mpendulo Mbalo. Most of the work was performance-based, their movements and sequences learned by imitating the coordinator, Gobingca. Part of their research and

learning activities included developing listening and improvisatory skills since they had to marry the lyrics with the movements and also mirror the meaning of the words through the movement patterns and make these appropriate to the different sections and words of the songs, from which the dance sequences were improvised. This group sometimes held meetings three times a week and in Cycle 2 created dance steps based on two songs, *Let Your Glory Come* and *You Are the Source*. To date I have never seen a journal from the Spiritual Dance circle leader but the DVD footage was helpful in capturing not only the visual aspects but also the views, attitudes and feelings of group members. The footage of 25 September shows Gobingca explaining how the Spiritual Dance circle was started:

Today I'm going to prison with one aim: to concentrate on the Recorder group and to start a Spiritual Dance group. As I arrived in prison the response was poor, they did not all show up for the Recorder circle. I asked people who were interested on spiritual dance. It was as if I was speaking Latin language because no one had an idea or even understood what spiritual dance was. The Recorder circle members came without their recorders and it was difficult for them to go back to their cells to fetch them. They knew that I was coming but for some reason decided to leave their recorders. I assisted the choir with Skhulu (Mafunda) for about thirty minutes. After which I found another venue for the five Recorder people who were there. I simply instructed them that we are not going to depart without doing any work, so I am going to teach them spiritual dance. They were very reluctant and took some time to decide. I played the music and started dancing to it and asked them to watch and that was the beginning of the Spiritual Dance music circle. On this very day we selected a leader for the group on the basis of who made fast progress in learning the steps, so Nkuthalo (Nomesi) passed the test and became the leader of the Spiritual Dance music circle.

In section 4.4 below I pick up on the reluctance displayed by the members of this music circle to try their hand at spiritual dance. The DVD footage shows Gobingca and the circle members in action, learning to dance to the song entitled *Let Your Glory Come*. (See DVD ch. 9). Gobingca also made suggestions as to how to count in the steps and how to remember the sequences. One of the ideas was for them to sing the tune to themselves in order to remember the sequences and know when to change the steps, quite an interactive process which involved indicating how they should position themselves for the dance so that each one stood on their own, in a way that each would be visible to the audience and the emphasis was on dancers never standing behind one another.

An exciting development in Cycle 3 was the introduction and induction of the new research coordinator, Andiswa Mdokwe. Initially she served as Gobingca's assistant and observer in preparation for Cycle 4, but we had already identified her in replacing Ngoma,

who left the project at the end of Cycle 2, and when there were indications that the Recorder music circle was disbanding and Mpopo was likely to join the Spiritual Dance group for Cycle 4, her inclusion fast-forwarded the leadership of Mdokwe.

The methodology they used in this circle, in which the dance is repeated several times for each member to grasp the steps and refine movement and synchronisation, can be seen on the DVD (ch. 9). Chs. 9A and 9B on the DVD illustrate ways of learning in this circle, in which the dance is repeated several times for each member to grasp the steps and refine movement and synchronisation. In between, the research coordinator gives guidance and dances with them for “better coordination and close observance of the steps as well as to raise their confidence levels” (Mdokwe, pers. comm. 25 September), as in ch. 9A, where Gobingca belts out instructions and corrections. Regardless of the fact that this group started to learn spiritual dance towards the end of the cycle, they made such rapid progress that by the time of the cycle-end meeting they were ready to showcase what they had learnt in four weeks. This was true of Mdokwe’s participative learning style, which, I speculate, might have helped in overcoming some initial barriers to success in this music circle, which I report about in the next chapter.

4.3.11 The Visual Art Music Circle

This new ‘music’ circle focused on painting. Its only two members, Sonwabile Malindi (an artist) and his assistant Patrick Gobeni had heard about the MPAR project and towards the end of Cycle 3 Malindi approached me as to the possibility of them being part of it. (I was not sure about Gobeni’s role.) There were not many occasions where Malindi could show his art to anyone in the prison environment and he was worried about the reception of his work by the general public. Timing for the setting up of this group was not great so we tried to use the last three weeks of the cycle to set them up for entry into Cycle 4. I allowed them to go ahead to avoid the problems and frustrations that we had encountered with the Hip-Hop *Kwaito* group, but I ensured that they were taken through the research process and procedures, especially the use of the journals. On 09 September, Mlandu, their self-appointed research leader, held a meeting with them:

Soso [Malindi] and Patrick, *niyaqonda ukuba ningene sele kulate kwesisigaba sesithathu se projekti* [you are aware that you joined the third cycle at a late stage]

so what we are going to do we are going to plan for the fourth one. *Futhi ndizakuthetha nani i- English* [Also I am going to communicate with you in English] because *niyayazi kaloku kudala ndisebenza nani, kwaye ke nomsebenzi wenu ndiyawazi*, [I know you can communicate in English and you know the language, remember it is not the first time that we have worked together, and I am aware of your artefacts]. *Andithi Soso?* [Soso, is that not so ?] I bought two of your paintings, *lamfazi ubeleke umntwani nala ndoda itshaya inqawa* [the woman with the baby on her back and the man who is smoking a pipe].

I welcomed her volunteering her services and to coordinate this circle as well as leading the choir music circle. It would ensure that she herself had grasped the MPAR processes and procedures despite her illness. Her enthusiasm was clear, as she indicated in her journal:

I see my involvement with this group as the biggest break and impact on my career as an educator because at school I am expected to teach all the art forms and I have not had an opportunity to link music and art. I see my involvement with this group as my moment to impart my knowledge about visual art and practise how I could take this further at my own school with the learners (Mlandu pers. comm. 09 September 2007).

This was another indication, to me, of the ripple effect that the project had on participants and the impact it might have at yet another level. I was excited that the MPAR was beginning to offer such opportunities to people who could explore and experiment with them in their daily lives. Needless to say I cautioned Mlandu to take things one step at a time and use the last few days of the cycle to ensure that both she and the two circle learners were well grounded in the MPAR, and were also getting the action plan for Cycle 4 ready. The profile they generated on 11 September said, “Our group is about moving from crime industry to music industry, the leader is me, Soso. We want and I am willing to do my group out when I’m finishing my sentence and teach the young generation about crime. Our dream is to open my own gift shop”.

Here, was a strongly worded expression about rehabilitation. Soso’s next entry was about his educational background: “I start learning drawing with a correctional official Mr. I do not know to say the name in case. Patrick is new in this and I am going to teach him because he wants to learn and helps me a lot so I am always with him so that he can observe when I do my work and we are homeboys,⁵³ so he must learn”.

⁵³ Homeboys are people who come from the same place of domicile, for example, township, village, or city.

The benefits of involvement in the programme were obvious for Malindi, as he had started drawing in prison and was (already) ready to teach another. The ideals of restorative justice with its focus on transference of skills among participants was in evidence here and was also reflected in Malindi's profile, where I learnt that he had learnt drawing from a correctional officer. From the profiles I could see their understanding of the research process and was also able to make sense of why Gobeni became part of the circle. I was looking forward to the action plans and their attempts at research in the next cycle. I found some thoughts expressed by Mlandu in her journal of 16 September quite intriguing, indicative of a participatory, experiential and practical approach to learning:

I have an idea, my plan is to take Soso and Patrick to all these other music circles each time I go to prison, especially that I see the choir almost every day. I want them to see what is being done by other groups and how Gobingca and Skhulu work with the groups. I can also learn from them. Rather than just telling them all the time what to do and how to do things, *ininzi gqithi lanto yayisenziwa kwi workshop ukuqala konyaka soze siyigqibe*, [so much was covered and discussed at the first workshop at the beginning of the project, we will never finish] this will help. *Enye into izakubanceda badibane nabanye bazokuziqonda ukuba nabo bakulento* [Again, visiting the other circles will be quite useful and helpful for them, to experience how things are done]. Maybe it will help us think of ways of how we can as a group link up with the project, *lento yokudibanisa umculo ne art* [particularly the idea of integrating music and art], since we are going to be doing art mainly.

I appreciated this view of fast tracking the learning of the research processes and was thrilled at this discovery of an alternative method to introduce new members to the project. It signalled a development which sought to further outdo the panoptic trends in the prison, bringing to mind Freire's notion of *conscientização* (discussed in Chapter 1) in the way research actors' awareness of the power of knowledge they possessed and their capacity to change was raised by finding alternative ways of doing things. It would help them position themselves for participation in a meaningful way and locate themselves within a process well under way.

4.4 Cycle 3: Part 2: The cycle-end meeting

A peculiarity of this cycle was the impromptu nature of the cycle-end meeting, for which there were various reasons. The ABET programme and a Bricklaying Course were running

simultaneously with the MPAR from July to December, and about 23 offenders in the MPAR were also involved in these programmes. Ngxishe had not been available during this cycle to assist with the organising of the cycle-end meeting, particularly with regard to prison regulations and security of offenders. Moreover, about five juveniles in MPAR were engaged in sports tournament inside and outside prison, and without Ngxishe it was difficult to ascertain dates of their availability.

The growth that occurred in Cycle 3, especially the way research actors were conscientised, I felt, to an extent that they were able to “name their world” (Freire 1990: 47) outweighed the problems and interruptions experienced. Indeed, people got so overwhelmed by determination and their confidence rose to such levels that when the date fixed for the cycle-end meeting turned out to be impossible because of the absence of many people, on the spur of the moment everyone agreed to hold an ad hoc cycle-end meeting on 29 September. Participants were ready to display their research outcomes, had begun to turn the panopticon to their advantage as ‘speaking bodies’. As soon as I agreed to the cycle-end meeting, preparations commenced with zeal and vigour even though there was only one day to prepare. The research leaders seemed to grasp the opportunity with a vengeance.

Mlandu and Mosa - both used to working hand in hand with DCS - played the role of the local coordinators. They managed to assemble all research actors from the various sections of the prison into the Juvenile Section since the hall that we normally used for cycle-end meetings was being used for ABET classes. Dubula’s *Indlame yakuMdepha* music circle could not be part of this meeting as they operated outside prison and time did not permit for them to participate. Choristers in the Mthatha choir and circle learners from the Conquerors (Double Quartet) had already been bussed to East London earlier in the week to prepare for a late celebration by DCS of Heritage Day that was to be held in East London.

With the help of Gobingca and Mdokwe, a programme was quickly compiled with Kholiswa Mlandu as the programme director. Mafunda made the Opening Prayer. Only six of the 11 music circles managed to present and showcase the results of their action plans but this included presentations by the new Spiritual Dance, Hip-hop *Kwaito* and *Indlame* circles. In addition the Youth Gospel and Keyboard music circle, *uhubhe / imfene*

and *isicathamiya* groups made presentations. This was quite good for a day's notice, even though everyone had been expecting the event all along. A closing prayer by Gobingca brought the cycle-end meeting to an end. I was glad that it took place because through it there were shift in roles: everyone got involved and all worked together to ensure its success.

The absence of a printed programme and the cramped venue were the only visible evidence of a quickly mounted cycle-end meeting. The presenters spoke off the cuff but gave sensible and powerful reports, evidence of the way participants were by now attuned to the research process. Mafunda was the media manager of the event, and it was because of his efforts that it was recorded.

On this day we also had an open discussion to assess the cycle-end meeting and the presentations. I was here mindful of what Macguire (1987: 9) says: "PAR demands that those most affected be involved in setting research parameters". My intentions were to get everyone at the same time to agree and decide on what would be presented in the final cycle-end meeting and what should go in the final report with regards to the participants' contributions. The open discussion served as some kind of evaluation and a platform for critical reflection and dialogue among the MPAR research actors, as it involved a variety of people in different roles and functions in the project - facilitator, research leaders, coordinators and music circle learners - all freely debating and discussing on the same platform.

4.4.1 Integration of music and other life skills in the *Isicathamiya* music circle: The Peacemakers

The first presentation of the afternoon was from the new *Isicathamiya* leader, Sive Nqetho. It was necessary to ensure that he had grasped the skills of report preparation and presentation, which is the crux of PAR. Although he was only six weeks into the leadership position he managed to prepare and present a report from memory. One of the exciting extracts from his report was on the methodology the group used to learn new steps. Once all the members had tried their hand in creating the steps, he said, they would then as a group go through a process of selection and merging of the most appropriate

steps and movements for adoption as sequences for a particular song. To me this plan signalled Habermas' (1996) communicative action through consensus, which is one of the educational and empowerment goals of PAR.

His report brought a fresh perspective on the importance of physical training and how this impacted on vocal technique and voice production. This awareness about healthy living exemplified other rewards of learning that occurred over time and emphasised the social nature and praxial (action and reflection) value of music (Plummeridge: 1991; and Alperson cited in Regeleski 2002), that is, music's ability to affect other socio-cultural and psychological domains at both theoretical and practical levels. Circle learners had spent some days running around the field and doing push-ups before embarking on singing exercises and singing of the songs. Nqetho took some time talking about career directions in music and pricking their minds on the music genres they would like to be involved in. Seemingly their involvement in the project revived the research actors' hopes and plans to pursue music as a career outside prison. Obviously such discussions were intellectual exercises that brought to life their opinions and views about their future. For me, this reflected a higher cognitive level of thinking about what they were doing, especially dramatic given that earlier in the cycle the group had so clearly been unwilling to progress and develop musically and intellectually. Clearly Nqetho's leadership had brought some fresh ideas to the group as well as new members. In his report Nqetho gave reasons for recruiting new members, which I have translated thus:

We decided as the *Isicathamiya* to recruit them to be part of the group before they get contaminated by the ills of the prison. The other reason is that they were in our age group and it was necessary for us to demonstrate to them that they can use the prison environment and the programmes offered to change their lives and identities and involve themselves in constructive ventures. Also, we wanted to demonstrate to them that one's life is never at a standstill because of imprisonment, instead they can use the time to redo their lives and learn new things.

The idea that 'life is never at a standstill' even inside prison relates to the panoptic-wise sense that these musicians behind bars were acquiring. Nqetho also shows here why he would choose to promote the singing and performance of *isicathamiya* music in his community, because it is a means to communicate the value of traditional music in changing people's lives. The reflectiveness of the quotation above is also evidence of his grasp of the self-reflexive process of PAR.

4.4.2 Acquisition of PAR-related skills and knowledge: The Hip-Hop Kwaito Music Circle

Research leader Sibusiso Mshiywa and circle learners were new in the life of the MPAR project. During the dialogue between the research coordinators and myself on 30 September I had advocated flexibility, drawing the attention of the participants to current educational goals and strategies that emphasise diverse “ways of arriving at the same educational result” (Goodall Phase 8 1997: 11). The research leader’s report commenced with a background to the formation of the group and how it was reduced to four circle learners with the transfer of five potential members to another prison. He explained their struggle in finalising their absorption into the MPAR because of delays in meeting with the local coordinator. The group found freedom within the controlling prison environment by composing their own songs, the texts of which highlighted advocacy for change in criminal behaviour and their attempts at rehabilitating themselves. This raised them to higher levels of creative use of incarceration time and recalls DeNora’s (2000) notion of music for aesthetic agency and Foucault’s principle of use of music as a technology of the self (1978).

A further highlight from this report was Mshiywa’s comment on the valuable support they got from Nqetho even though he was not part of this music circle, and Nomesi, who made it possible for them to have some instrumental intervention with his newly acquired keyboard skills. This allowed them an opportunity to learn to perform to accompaniment rather than just “singing *a capella*”. The fact that they used the term *a capella* was further evidence of their having absorbed an increasing music vocabulary.

4.4.3 Teaching and learning strategies in the *Indlame yase Nyandeni* Music Circle

As already indicated in 4.3.7 above, the existence of this group came as a surprise after the departure of Dubula, and their continued existence as part of the MPAR was not properly communicated until the cycle-end meeting. The new research leader ‘Mawawa’, presented his report as one of the new research leaders, whom we had decided had to be part of the day’s programme since they were being evaluated for the first time here. Mawawa’s report explained to me why there were delays in the continuation of this group. After the

departure of Dubula a number of other members of music circle were also released from prison, so only four of the older members remained, including Mawawa, who was by consensus requested to lead the group (pers. comm. 29 September):

Kuzo zonke iingxaki ebesikuzo, bekufuneka ndicenge amapolisa ukuba asivumele sisebenze njengoko ililungelo lethu elo. Ndithe xa ndibona ukuba bayandisokolisa ndaya kwi ofisi ka Recreation. URecreation ke andikwazi ukumcenga xa kufikelela kulomba ngokuba nguye okufuneka ebonile ukuba amabanjwa ayafundiswa and ayafunda njengoko imithetho yeejele isitsho kwelilizwe.

[Once I got tired of begging them I decided to work through the unit of Sport, Recreation and Arts and Culture whom I did not have to beg to assist us as they were charged with the task of ensuring offenders' rehabilitation through the arts. It was part of their mandate, according to the laws of the country].

His report indicated the nature of the struggles the circle had to work at their research endeavours. It was doubtful how much they interacted and how much debate and dialogue ensued as his report was more personal than collective, devoid of any reference to team work:

Ndithatha umntu oseletitshekile. Ndiyajonga ndithi Oh! lo akatitsheki ke andinakuhamba naye ndiye kude. Kufana nomcimbi we-venue, nokuba kuyanetha zininzi iindawo zokusebenzela, apha ejele maninzi amaholo nala okutyela, sisuka siswaye izitulo sisebenze.

[I focused on those who were knowledgeable. I look at them and decide on who has progressed and who has not and make a decision that I would not go far with those who are behind. The matter of venues is not a problem since there are a lot of halls in prison including the dining halls where we can simply move away some chairs and create space for learning.]

The first part of this was worrisome, as it ran contrary to the idea of “cultural action for freedom” (Freire 1970: 57), defeated the purposes of dialogical learning and communicative action advocated by Freire, who saw discussion and agreement “taking the place of revolution as a mode of change” (Ibid: 54). Mawawa seemed to see himself as a leader with followers. Part of his report indicated his selection procedures for those who would participate in events. He highlighted how the elderly members complained about him not selecting them to be part of the team but he did not allow anything to distract or discourage him. His next comment explained how he saw it:

Ewe ndiyavuma ukuba apha ejele siphethwe ngamapolisa kodwa inkcubeko ne nguqu kwizimo zethu ixhomekeke kuthi. Yiyo lonto ndithi xa ipolisa lisayokukhupha amabanjwa ndishiyeke mna nidigaxela izinxibo zendlame ukwenzela ukuba nokuba ibanjwa beseliphoxeke kangakanani libone ukuba mna njengamphathi ndizimisele ukusebenza nokuba ixesha lincinci kangakanani.

Malithi libuya lifike mna sendinxibile, kwaye xa ndiyokukhangela oogxa bam kwenye i-section nabo babone ukuba sendilungele ukusebenza, itsho ke loo nto ibenze nabo bakhawuleze banxibe bangatyhafi.

[I agree that in prison we were under the rule and authority of officers but our rehabilitation and learning depended on ourselves. The idea was for them to pluck up courage and get ready to work, no matter how little time was left. My aim was to ensure that when the officer in charge came back from releasing offenders, they also should realise that we were serious about the research we were involved in. And in my opinion that would encourage them to immediately get ready to work and forget about other things.]

His enthusiasm and determination was not against the idea of the group and but challenged the ‘rule and authority of officers’. Indeed, it impacted on the participants as the circle learners grew from four to 19 by the middle of the cycle and eventually to 47 by the end of Cycle 3. This, in my opinion, was not ideal! But at least the circle had become substantial, and people could influence the style of the group in future.

4.4.4 Teaching and learning strategies in the Spiritual Dance Music Circle

Nomesi’s presentation simply indicated their initial reluctance in taking up Gobingca’s challenge to incorporate spiritual dance in their programme of activities, and highlighted their method of learning (which we have seen). It was obvious that his report writing still needed attention. It was quite short and glossed over problems. I was not sure whether this resulted from the last-minute arrangements or was due to our failure to make the leader hand in his journal. I was only hopeful that there was another cycle to come which would give them a chance.

4.4.5 Practical presentations

The next phase of the programme was performances by Hip-Hop *Kwaito*, *Imfene*, Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard, and Spiritual Dance. The whole cycle-end meeting was much shorter than previous ones: two hours compared to five or six. Gobingca, Mlandu and myself as evaluators with Mlungisi Ntlekeni, an assistant of Ngxsishe, focused on making skills-related observations. The presence of an internal DCS officer was an important bonus: it served to complete the five-point evaluation in this cycle.

To great applause, the Spiritual Dance, gave two items. They danced to two recorded tracks by the popular South African Gospel group, Joyous Celebration: *I Love You* and *Let your Glory Fall*. Coordination still needed refinement, so between items we gave immediate feedback to the performers and confirmed the day for the next cycle visits. This immediate intervention was partly due to the impromptu-ness of this meeting, which became an advantage here as it created an opportunity for research actors to analyse their performances, talk, and creatively feed into their failures and successes on the spot. (To some extent, this made up for the lack of journaling.)

Mlandu advised them to improvise more sequences and variations to accommodate the length of the songs. They were also challenged by the evaluators to concentrate on their physical fitness for agility and dexterity in performing the dance. The Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard music circle even got an opportunity to be taught two new songs, arranged by Mlandu, to add to their repertoire. These songs, presented by Mlandu for everybody including the performers and the audience (juvenile offenders, MPAR research actors and two DCS female officers), became the closing items for the day, after which we managed to talk about attire for the new music circles.

4. 5 Concluding thoughts

This cycle-end meeting was different in more than one way. Firstly, it was impromptu and there were no invited research participants or external evaluators; second, it took place in a small venue; third, it was the first time in the MPAR project that we were able to give immediate feedback to the music circles that presented their work, and I found this very effective and fruitful; fourth; the presentation of the reports demonstrated some understanding and knowledge of the research process and procedures as well as the importance of the journal for most of the presenters. Even the new research leaders were competent and comfortably on board. The reports echoed the presenters' knowledge and goals about rehabilitation and what it meant for them as participants in the project.

The problems encountered through the attitudes of DCS officers needed addressing, but from my observations there was greater progress in the performance skills of the research actors in Cycle 3: despite the disruptions, they had a lot to show. As Freire notes (1993:

53), becoming conversant with the process needs a lot of understanding, patience in debating issues, care, levelling of playing fields, and the will to “raise the awareness for successful emancipation of people from oppressive situations”. This, he added, is what “dialogical learning thrives on” (Ibid).

The absence of the Choir music circle was disturbing since we then had no way of checking their progress. I had already expressed concern to Ngxisha about not being informed by the managers about the continued absence of the choir, and about the empty promises to ensure their availability for the cycle-end meeting. While the organisational processes in the prison system affected the smooth running of the MPAR project, the organisational and management skills of the research actors were elevated to a higher level than in Cycle 2. I was glad that we still had another cycle to refine things and assist offenders towards seeing their attempts as part of the process of rehabilitation, towards changing their lives for the better.

CHAPTER 5: FOURTH CYCLE: END OF MPAR PROJECT

5.1 Introduction

The cycle-end meeting on 29 September 2007 brought Cycle 3 to its conclusion and ushered in Cycle 4, with researchers continuing with or improving, the same topics. Cycle 4 effectively commenced on 01 October 2007 and finished on 29 November 2007, spanning two months instead of the usual three and, since this was the final cycle and a closure of the MPAR project, there was quite a large group of experts who participated as invited research actors in the cycle-end meeting, for the fifth level of evaluation.

The shortness of the cycle was not originally envisaged. I was alerted only at the beginning of the cycle by the offenders and Kholisa Mlandu that because of DCS security regulations there was an official moratorium on the activities of offenders outside prison from 30 November to the second week of January each year, in all South African prisons. The panopticon seemed to be working against the MPAR project at this juncture particularly as none of the officials had informed me about this important regulation. Although worrying, this news proved to be another indication of the research actors' commitment to and grasp of the PAR method, which here included taking care of the completion of the project. Once I knew, we had to replan (as is customary in the PAR cyclic pattern anyway) and shift the cycle-end meeting forward, but knowing the limitation of time well in advance, it was easier than it had been in Cycle 3 to draw up a list of invited guests and more importantly, evaluators.

The number of music circles (11) and the number of research actors (147, excluding myself, Makroza Ngxishe, the community expert (Kholisa Mlandu), and the three research coordinators) remained the same. No one left or joined the project in Cycle 4, although there were 'applicants', and had we planned to continue, numbers would have increased. The groups, which were not any different from the previous third cycle, were as follows (see Fig 12):

Fig. 12 Music Circles and their topics in Cycle 4

Name of the Circle	Focus / Genre	Research Leader	No. of Circle Learners
<i>Thuthukani Aampondoo</i>	<i>Uhubhe / Imfene</i>	M. Madikizela	8
The Choir	Choral music	T. Papa Msawu & V. Tshayimpi	30
The Conquerors	Double Quartet	C. Qoboza	8
The Peacemakers	<i>Isicathamiya</i>	S. Mabho	10
The Recorder	Learning to play the recorder	M. Mpopo	6
The Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard	Gospel singing and learning to play the keyboard	V. Majanti	7
<i>Indlame yase Nyandeni</i>	<i>Indlame</i>	‘Mawawa’	35
<i>Nyandeni yakuMdepha</i>	<i>Indlame</i>	N. Dubula	32
The Spiritual Dance	Dance	N. Nomesi	6
The Hip-Hop <i>Kwaito</i>	Hip-hop <i>kwaito</i>	S. Mshiywa	4
The Visual Art	Painting and design	S. Maqungo	2

As with previous chapters, Part 1 deals with the cycle activities and events and Part 2 with the cycle-end meeting. This cycle was even more goal oriented than the previous three and activities centred on preparations for the cycle-end meeting. Although none of the research actors were told to do so, they all focused attention on having skills to showcase at the cycle-end meeting; they were bent on showing themselves as panoptic-free musicians who could perform and speak well in front of a diverse audience. Majanti (pers. comm. 13 October), and his circle learners who experienced shifting attentions, moods and interests as the project continued were now preoccupied with showing that “*singabantu ababalulekileyo kwi-community esiphila kuyo apha jele nathi sinngawenza umahluko*” [we are important people in the prison community and we can make a difference].

We redesigned our schedule for visits to prepare for the cycle-end meeting, the four research coordinators (Gobingca, Mafunda, Mdokwe and Mlandu) working tirelessly as they went to the Centre almost daily except for weekends. They ensured that at least two coordinators were at the MMCC every day, because it was evident that the groups met every day, so there was lots of activity and I shall give details of the music circle’s

activities below. I continued to visit them once a week and twice weekly in the last two weeks. At this juncture I swung among participants as an administrator, organiser and funder: designing and developing evaluation material and programme, arranging the venue, communicating and making arrangements with and for the guests, sending out invitation letters, organising sponsorship for catering for the day, and purchasing costumes for at least three circles (*Imfene*, *Indlamu* and Spiritual Dance) and art material for the Visual Art circle. This is another area where the MPAR differed from projects like Goodall's (1997): there, the participating teachers were able to develop financial management skills from budgeting and accounting for the transport money for their group members. In the prison environment the acquisition of financial resources and the opportunity to empower research actors with such basic finance skills was out of the question. Even those who earned meagre wages from chores were allowed access to those funds only when released from prison.

As part of the preparations of the final cycle-end meeting, from the first week of November, Mlandu had embarked on a physical fitness programme for the offenders, one of her typical impromptu but development-focused ideas which came out of the previous cycle. Here, offenders were subjected to a daily routine of morning field exercises and track running of at least five laps per day. Although there were daily visits and obviously lots happening *during* the cycle, there was also problem-solving and a developing idea for finalisation of the reports of the research leaders at the end of it. More attention was inevitably paid to the evaluation at the first three levels: self, peer, and research coordinators' evaluations inside prison. One challenge that stood out was Mpopo's refusal, during the cycle, to have the two gender-centred spiritual dance cycles combined and to present a report for the female spiritual dance cycle. Also, more pronounced for me was the absence of about 42 members from three music circles: the Choir, the Double Quartet, and the two-member Recorder Group. These three music circles worked on higher cognitive level music knowledge and skills acquisition.

The drafting and editing of presentations (part of the first three levels of the five-point evaluation plan) was surprisingly limited to grammatical and language editions and most of the draft presentations were this time around more reflexive and specific about what the circle learners had achieved and what they hoped to do in the future, after the MPAR. By this time I was left with one DCS official, Mpopo - the intern since Mduduma had left in

the middle of cycle three for Idutywa. My major focus at this stage was, having done some preliminary analysis at the end of cycle two, identifying any new emerging themes as possible data for further analysis and interpretation but there was none. Little did I know that on the day of the cycle-end meeting more surprises would emerge. I further expand on this in part two of this chapter.

Both the Double Quartet and the Recorder group members were *inter alia* choir members, and the choir was bussed to Fort Glamorgan Correctional Centre in East London for preparations for a festival and other DCS activities. Consequently, about 40 circle learners from these music circles did not function at all in the fourth cycle, save their telephone report that they were continuing to work while in East London in anticipation of the cycle-end meeting, for which their availability was (sadly) not to be. In the rush to get all prison activities done before the 30 November, DCS had also in the process organised a graduation for new DCS officers in Port Elizabeth where the offenders' choir was to perform, and immediately from that event they were rushed off to Cape Town for the DCS festival. Both these DCS activities of which the MPAR had no control over, affected the whole cycle including the cycle-end meeting as a number of offenders were in East London at the end of cycle three and in Port Elizabeth in the middle of cycle four, and on the 29 November, the day of the cycle-end meeting, they were in Cape Town. The festival was a new venture with DCS after the NOCC and we did not know that it was scheduled to take place on the same day as the final cycle-end meeting. All efforts to get the choir members to the MPAR final cycle-end meeting failed, including soliciting help from the area commissioner and the minister of DCS.

Effectively, then, three music circles, the Recorder, the Choir and the Double Quartet did not take part in the last cycle, and the recorder music circle was reduced to two-members; others dropped out of the recorder music circle. Much as we were affected by this and also very pressed for time, for the first time in this cycle I was able to have an open discussion with all the available MPAR members on 5 November, around the programme of the final cycle-end meeting, and confirm biographical data of the participants for my archives as we were nearing the end of the project. Also, this was my way of bidding farewell and seeing all participants as one large group before the cycle-end meeting. Further, I intended to conscientise and encourage them to gear themselves up for taking responsibility of their learning and implementing the skills and knowledge gained from the MPAR in their future

in and outside prison. Having accomplished my purpose with this meeting, in Part 1 below I discuss what happened during the cycle despite the difficulties.

5.2 Cycle 4: Part 1

Needless to say, there was insufficient time for the 11 music circles' research actors to develop their topics much, let alone venture into new ideas. The cycle built on strengths acquired from Cycle 3, strengthened weaknesses discovered in Cycle 3, and psychologically, physically and musically prepared participants for the close of the research project as well as the cycle-end presentations. Cycle 4 was used to gird all efforts towards the final presentation, in which eight out of 11 music circles participated, including *Indlame yakuMdepha*, which since Cycle 3 had operated from outside the prison.

5.2.1 Nyandeni yakuMdepha - Indlame Music Circle

This music circle was my most immediate concern once we knew this cycle was going to be short, because it was a relatively new group operating from *kuMdepha* village, about 157km away, not easily accessible to other participants in the MPAR. Ndoyisile Dubula remained the leader and continually tried to persuade me to visit them and gain first-hand knowledge about their research efforts, and I was pleasantly surprised that he still called it research even after he had left prison. And so it was that on 13 October Dubula, Mafunda (the research coordinator) and I were on the way to visit the group in their village. Dubula had come back to Mthatha specially to bring us back to his village, and he and I finalised the arrangements for the trip the day before we left.⁵⁴

Our conversation on the journey ranged from how Dubula had received the support of the village ward councillor (known by his clan name Ntshilibe) to start the group, to stories about prison life, including the lighter moments that offenders shared with the officers,

⁵⁴ As with the previous cycles, I present some of the translated conversations, stories and events as narrated by the research leaders in inserts because they are quite lengthy, while the verbatim IsiXhosa original quotes are footnoted on each relevant page.

especially when they were performing at events outside prison. As we travelled, in a joking manner he told a story of how they would post letters to and from their girlfriends inside prison. Although told as if it were a joke, the story provided additional insight into the harsh realities of incarceration and the power relations that prevailed there. I also understood why he could not have shared this story while still serving time:

To communicate with our 'girlfriends', we would take soil and form it into a ball and wrap the 'letter' around it with a twine or wool or whatever we would find and throw it over the wall where the female courtyard was in the hope that the offender who found it first would hand it over to the relevant person whose name and that of the author appeared, not even knowing if they were outside at the time or who was on the other side. Sometimes the letter would land and knock hard on the chest of the officer in charge, Boy! The owner of the letter was in trouble! Some days much later you would then receive a response with news on how she got into trouble and beaten up because of that letter. This handkerchief that I am using is one of such 'post office deliveries', I got it from a female offender (Dubula, pers. comm. 13 October).⁵⁵

This showed some creativity, and showed how the offenders continued to try and live as normal a life as possible. For them all was not lost if they were sometimes successfully able to communicate with female offenders secretly; if relationships could still be formed even in prison, regardless of the inauspicious circumstances. This story also demonstrates how offenders generated positive energy and creativity to overcome their panoptic circumstances and thematically and discursively present transformative and humanistic actions to articulate a set of individual/and collective reflections even in the confines of prison and the dilemmas of communicating openly under surveillance. I would also like at this point to remind the reader of Dubula's odd behaviour while imprisoned with numerous attempts at dodging submission of his journal as told in Chapter 3 above.

Dubula told us about his conversion to Christianity through Umtata Christian Church's prison ministry members, whose visits made an impact on him. Other information more

⁵⁵ *Into esasiyenza besithatha umhlaba siwenze ubeyibhola sibophelele ileta le apha kulomhlaba ngentambo or loo nto unokuyifumana, uyiphose ke ngoku ngaphaya kodonga. Elo xesha awazi nokuba kukho bani kwelacala. Mhlazimbi lomhlaba ubethe mpu! esifubeni sepolisa. Wow! Hayi ke umnikazi phepha usengxakini ngoba kaloku besi bhala phaya ukuba ivela kubani ileta le kwaye isiya kubani. Uve ngeny' imini, kudala, ephedula ukuba 'ndabethwa'. Yindlela ke ebesizonwabisa ngayo ke leyo nangoku elitshefu ndalifumana pha ejele koloposo lweleta, ndayifumana kwi- female.*

relevant to my research concerned the problems he had encountered trying to address the issue of prison gangsters:⁵⁶

Those people are troublesome, they think because they have a number (an indication that they are gangsters) they can use it wherever and whenever to intimidate us who do not have it. That thing is a waste of time, they do not realise that they can spend the rest of their lives in prison because of it. What is interesting with them is that they think they can have their cake and eat it, they want to be in music groups to get parole, at the same time they want to be gangsters, and the two do not go together. In dealing with them in the music circle as they try to make things difficult for me, I would tell them that we were not there to join gangster groups but we had gathered to learn to dance *indlame*. Besides, I would call Mr Ngxishe and tell him that they were trying to practise or turn us into gangsters. The next thing you know, they are nowhere to be seen⁵⁷ (Dubula, pers. comm. 13 October).

I was not sure of the validity of these claims by Dubula but at the same time I had no reason not to believe him, and I recalled Sandiso Cekiso in my Masters work sharing similar thoughts about gangsterism among offenders (Twani 2002: 34). Such revelations shared, this time, by Dubula brought me to realise that some offenders involved in gangsterism might have accessed the MPAR project.

Weis and Fine (2004: 96) have drawn our attention to the roles and responsibilities of outside scholars in relation to inside scholars in the PAR context to “seek to organise all aspects of the intervention and research through democratic participation *and choice of information for inclusion in the research project* [my emphasis]”; like other projects, they add, “our practice did not always live up to the design”. This is also true of the MPAR because it was only after Dubula’s release from prison that he could narrate such stories and the inclusion of such stories in the thesis was a decision that Dubula and I had to agree on. Areas like this highlight the extent to which PAR researchers in prison can (or cannot) speak the truth, which affects how their reports are made. Weis and Fine (2004: 98) refer

⁵⁶ Hayi ababantu bayahlupha, kaloku bacinga ukuba kuba benenombolo bazakuyisebenzisa naxa behleli nathi thina singenazo. Lanto le iyalibazisa, abaqondi ukuba ingamgcina ejele umntu ubomi bakhe bonke. Loo nto ke bazifuna zonke ezizinto, bafuna ukuphuma ejele kodwa nenombolo bayayifuna kanti azihambi zonke. Bendiye ndithi xa ndibona ukuba bayaqala bayandisokolisa ndithi ndizakubiza umhlekezi uNgxishe ndimxelele ukuba wena ufuna ukusijoyinisa inombolo apha kanti ke thina sizokusina indlamu. Umbone elahleka, angaze aphinde abuye.

⁵⁷ Hayi ababantu bayahlupha, kaloku bacinga ukuba kuba benenombolo bazakuyisebenzisa naxa behleli nathi thina singenazo. Lanto le iyalibazisa, abaqondi ukuba ingamgcina ejele umntu ubomi bakhe bonke. Loo nto ke bazifuna zonke ezizinto, bafuna ukuphuma ejele kodwa nenombolo bayayifuna kanti azihambi zonke. Bendiye ndithi xa ndibona ukuba bayaqala bayandisokolisa ndithi ndizakubiza umhlekezi uNgxishe ndimxelele ukuba wena ufuna ukusijoyinisa inombolo apha kanti ke thina sizokusina indlamu. Umbone elahleka, angaze aphinde abuye.

to this dilemma as the “intellectual and political power of organic intellectuals” that have to tread carefully about what they report on to avoid jeopardising chances of, for example, parole, at the risk of successful data presentation and analysis because of the limits of telling the truth. In some ways such actions may be dubbed as people using PAR opportunistically but Habermas (1971: 47) talks about the fundamental challenge of PAR called “scienticism” or what Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) and MacIntyre (2008) have called ‘official knowledge’.

Such knowledge to me illuminates the intellectual growth among the MPAR participants who became panoptic wise in realising what would work or not while inside prison. Also, it emphasises the importance of close collaboration, the leveling of the playing field and stabilising of power relations between the inside and outside researchers where decisions about what is documented and what is not becomes the prerogative of the two. This reinforces the importance of the values of the researcher and ethical considerations in presenting and analysing data of which both parties have to have control over by dialoguing and agreeing on what is eventually documented. With similar commitments, Hans Toch (1967) speaking about PAR in prison refers to the knowledge of convicts and the humility of outside researchers. All of these ideas and Dubula’s dilemma reveals the way participants have to position their values as members of the various music circles, around issues that may not be easy to handle.

I was disturbed about the things that Dubula was telling me which he apparently could not say when he was in prison and it was also the first time that any of the research leaders directly alluded to criminal activity inside prison. Writing on South Africa’s prison gangs, Jonny Steinberg (2009) asserts that what the politicians think and even what public sentiment might be, the solution to crime and criminality can never be simply locking the door and throwing away the key. According to Steinberg (Ibid: xix) “prison gangs are a century old and avowedly political and yet horribly pathological. They illuminate the fact that crime has a history and a future”. To this end he posits that we need to understand how the practitioners of crime think, that their actions have a past and determine the future which is why in my view practitioners of crime have to be stopped, and conscientised into understanding that it spirals into a host of political and social problems that impede the economics of industrialisation. I resigned myself to discussing this with the local

coordinator - Makroza Ngxishe, who I hoped would have more to share and advice on dealing with this matter.

All the way up to Mdepha, Dubula received about three different calls from circle and community members who were waiting in anticipation, checking on whether we were indeed on the way. After a while we finally arrived in the village and as we were waiting for the performers to showcase what they had learnt I felt privileged to be in the company of Councillor Ntshilibe, who told us how the group started:

About these children, Mrs Twani, we decided as parents in this community to find ways of keeping them busy because there was a criminal element that was emerging. Also what helped us was my work as a councillor for local government where I learnt about ways to keep the youth busy, there are even projects for adults. We had already started when Dubula got incarcerated and I asked his brother to lead the group in his absence. They are all gifted children; even their grandfather and father were great *indlame* dancers. There are a lot of other things that they are involved in, in this community, we have two soccer teams and a group of *uhubhe/imfene* dancers. Dubula came at the right time because we wanted somebody to train the youngsters. When Dubula came back there was no problem with the community using him; instead he got support because everybody knows that he is not a troublesome person, it was only in his drunken stupor that he did what he did, even the whole community feels that the parents of her girlfriend were just mean to him. We are happy that he is moving forward in life especially that we are also able to connect with the university through him, which gives us hope. All the participants are eager to go and perform at the coming function at the university, you will see, we will not disappoint you.⁵⁸

The ideas expressed by Ntshilibe above strongly articulate the amount of active citizenship that permeated this poor village community and how conscious they were about curbing idleness, which much of the time results in apathy and crime. The DVD footage with Ngushe brushing up on his dancing skills and the solo woman dancer, are a case in point.

⁵⁸Ababantwana wena Mam'uTwani sadibana singabazali sabonisana ngoba kwakusekuqala ubundlobongela kule lali kuba kaloku akukho nto ibibagcina bexakekile. Kuba ndisebenza kwa local government ndafumanisa ngeendlela zokugcina abantu belali nabantwana bexakekile bangazokwenza izinto ezi wrongo. Yena lomfana wathi ukwenzeka kwesasehlo sakhe ndafak' umntakwabo ukuba abe efundisa abanye aba. Baphiwe wena phaya kokwabo, utat' omkhulu noyise wabo babeya kwasina lendlame. Zininzi ke nezinye izinto abazenzayo, bonke abangafuni isikolo savumelana singabahlali ukuba xa bengafundi bengaphangeli mababe nento abayenzayo. Ikhona ke ne team yesoka, nomxhentso wemfene bayawenza. Lomfana lo ufike ngexesha elifanelekileyo kuba besifuna ukufaka abantwana ababelali. Sithi siphuma isikolo kube kuqala esisasekuhlaleni. Lo mfana naxa ebuya khange kubekho ngxaki ngakuye samthemba ukuba aqale eliqela kwaye aliphathe ngoba wonke umntu apha elalini wayesazi ukuba yaba yingxaki nje yotywala, noko yena ubengengomntu wankathazo, nakula mzi wakulala ntombi yakhe wonke umntu apha elalini wayothukile ngendlela abenza ngayo, babe mmunyela nje. Siyavuya thina xa kucaca ukuba uqhubela phambili, ingakumbi ke xa sikwazi nokuthetha neUnivesithi, kum lithemba elo. Ababantwana bazimisele, ke nakulo mnyadala uzayo pha eUnivesithi, Hayi! Uzakubabona abanakusiphoxa.

(See DVD chs. 10 and 10 B.) It was strikingly beautiful and these days unusual to be interfacing with a traditional rural community that was so conscious, sensitive and committed to community development and capacity building, thus creating other ways of ensuring creative, sustainable and constructive transitions to and from the different stages of life for all the community members. The spontaneity and communality of African cultures, where members of the audience are incited, to encourage the dancers and the community at large with words of wisdom, spurring them on in their endeavours, is evident in the DVD footage (See DVD ch. 10 C). This conscientisation of the community about the importance of civic participation and the significance of Dubula's return were heartening. It augured well for Dubula's intentions and that of the group, which were to register a company and establish relations with the Department of Sport, Recreation and Arts and Culture.

Once the group's presentation began Mafunda recorded DVD footage and took photographs and I made notes. Dubula had achieved much within a short period of time, particularly as the group he put together had only four original members from the 12 that his brother had worked with (the rest of them had got jobs in the mines). All the dancers were males, aged 14 to about 30, while the singers and hand clappers were young and old females, as is typical of Nguni music in South Africa. All together the music circle was made up of about 32 to 35 members. What Dubula had achieved indicated his successful use of the PAR method, in the sense Goodall means when she says, "All of us can become a kind of teacher through action research if we pay careful attention to what the method helps us to do" (Phase 8 2000: 4). It also showed one of the action research principles that research "does not cost us money. It does not totally depend on our further funding" (Ibid). Even at this stage their dance steps were synchronised and uniform, enthusiasm and enjoyment could be openly read from their faces, they displayed a professionally coordinated performance. I noted in my journal, "Wow! I have never seen anything like this; it is so refreshing, the originality, the dedication, its all so amazing".

Their repertoire was also varied and interesting. Dubula had composed all six songs: *Ndaba ngatheng' iselula* (Even as I had bought a cellular phone); *Molweni maAfrika* (Greetings to Africans); *He! Mam'uTwani yizokubona* (Hey! Mrs Twani, come and see); *Thabo Mbeki*; *Ingulaza* [Aids], and *Isidlalo somphathi* [the leader's free style performance] in which Dubula did solo sequences. They combined singing, chanting, and

co-ordinated dancing, interspersed with free-style movements from the leader. (See DVD chs. 10 A and 10). Because this was the first example I had of the long-term potential of the MPAR, my journal entry on the day read, “I am flabbergasted, and this is so touching and I did not realise the appreciation the people felt about my work”.

The activities of this music circle were afterwards communicated by telephone as we prepared for the cycle-end meeting, but visiting the group in its location gave me a good sense of what, where and how they were moving forward, and I was able to make sense of their readiness for the cycle-end meeting. Dubula came a week later for a day to finalise the presentation of his report with Mafunda the research coordinator in charge of this music circle, and a few days before the cycle-end meeting Dubula called to request advice about attire for his group. Before I could find a solution Mr Ngxishe came to our rescue: in fact, Dubula had already contacted him to see if the two *indlame* groups could use the same dress alternately, and so the matter was settled. I later learnt that they did not need to share because the other *indlame* group (from prison) was not ready for the cycle-end meeting (Ngxishe, pers. comm. 20 October).

5.2.2 *Indlame yase Nyandeni* - *Indlame* Music Circle

Recall that at the cycle-end meeting of Cycle 3, I had been surprised when ‘Mawawa’ came up to present a report for this group because we were not aware that it continued to exist after Dubula was released and all arrangements we had tried to make to meet with the group had failed. Thus Ngxishe and I doubted that it would continue and was anyway suspicious that the MPAR was being used as a ticket out of prison. Ngxishe now went as far as to say, “In my opinion, Mrs Twani, they will not be ready for the evaluation programme. I think we should just focus on Dubula’s new group, *ngoba uDubula ke yena uthetha into yenzeke* [because Dubula is true to his word]” (pers. comm. 21 October).

Ngxishe himself had not been available for sometime for the project - the last time he had effectively collaborated was a week after Cycle 2 ended - but the group did indeed seem nonexistent while we were frequenting the Centre in Cycle 4. The daily circle visits of the research coordinators revealed, however, that Mawawa had been allowed by the prison officers in charge of his section to go to the cycle-end meeting as a research actor in

recognition of his attempts at leading a music circle and also as an observer since he had no music circle to participate in but not as a research leader. Once I knew this, I encouraged him to attend the cycle-end meeting as a prospective research leader. Ultimately he did participate in Dubula's music circle since he was familiar with the dances.

This incident reminded me how power play in the prison environment can contribute to the problem of conducting PAR in such an environment: something to be constantly aware of in manipulating situations and preventing problematic tactics. Such a situation was in fact an example of what happens when a PAR project in prison is not monitored enough, which was something I was *also* researching. In any event, it took us seven weeks to detect the problems that emanated from this music circle, although it brought out the way micropolitics is so crucial in PAR and the way one must always keep strategising about how PAR exposes itself for intellectual scrutiny.

Mawawa's idea was taking over the music circle after Dubula's departure but he did not communicate this nor did he understand the procedure and process of being a research leader but at any rate his circle did not function as a circle, so that left us with 10 circles, nine inside and one outside prison, of which at the cycle-end meeting the Choir and Double Quartet could not participate. *Indlame yase Nyandeni* somehow regrouped later, because when after six months I visited MMCC on Family Day on 28 June 2008 to hand over certificates to MPAR participants, Mawawa's were one of the groups that performed. They had recruited new members and learned the dance steps, which considering that he had almost new performers was commendable. I was glad that the effects of the MPAR had rubbed off on to him in such a positive manner, as he himself reported to me (Mawawa pers. comm. 28 June 2008).

5.2.3 The Recorder Music Circle

The two-member Recorder Music circle (Qoboza and Msawu) worked on their own without a research leader, under the guidance of Gobingca (and research leader Mpopo was focusing on the Spiritual Dance circle), so there were no journal entries from the group. It was difficult at this stage to work out whether she had abandoned the group

altogether as there was no formal submission from her to this effect, only frequent hints to Gobingca that she mistrusted some of the offenders. This was another failure, perhaps, attributable to running PAR in a prison environment. The research coordinators had one misfortune after another during Cycle 4, for example:

Our cell phones were for the first time taken by a prison warder at the main gate and we had to sign for them in a book. As we finally got into Mr Ngxise's office, our usual waiting room, we had to wait for yet another hour for Mr Ntlekeni to attend to us and remember it would still be another wait for him to fetch and bring the offenders for the circle visits. I could not help but notice Mosa's facial expressions which were showing amazement at Ntlekeni (Gobingca, pers. comm. 13 October).

Further, the actions, and utterances of DCS officer were laden with unspoken meaning, these in turn causing significant "facial expressions" that signified disbelief. These utterances and expressions are part of what forms the kind of 'text' that I was already beginning to deconstruct. In teasing out such "figural and rhetoric features" of a text, a deconstructionist view such as Derrida's takes it to mean that you learn about unexpected relationships between participants and behaviour from what the different players say or do (Derrida 1997: 132). Clearly a story was being communicated by Mosa's facial expressions that we could not immediately understand.

Gobingca's journal entry of 19 October, shared further insight into the shifting moods that lie behind visible signs of emotion:

I was not happy that Cingile did not come and there was no reason forwarded, maybe he is not aware that we are here since he is in other cells. I now realised that the problems experienced by other members were not because it was difficult to learn to play but they were just not practising what they had learnt in the lessons and then forget.

We realised that nevertheless this circle was attempting to fulfil some obligations to end the year on a positive note, even if just a quest for parole releases. For me it became of increasing importance to acknowledge that we allow the circle learners to invent their ways, processes, and goals in order to make their own sense of their role, responsibilities, participation and achievements in the project, especially as it was progressing to its closure.

Gobingca's journal entries about the Recorder Group indicate some inconsistencies: at some point in Cycle 3 there were four members, but only three or at times two in Cycle 4. I could only deduce that he was fighting against all odds to keep the group going. His observations on 19 October brought some relief to my conscience:

I introduced a new piece for descant and treble recorders entitled *My Sarie Marais*, an Afrikaans piece. I first played the piece for them, playing it on both the descant and then on the treble recorder. I asked them to imitate the notes I was playing starting with Papa on the descant and followed with Vusumzi. After singing it, we went back to the instruments and played with them their parts one after the other. All this time we were working on bars 1-4. When I left they could play bars 1-4 very well. The day was hectic but I enjoyed doing the thing that I like most, making music and helping somebody to learn.

Circle learners also complained that we take too long to come and this is the reason they do not show up. Inmates denied this and say not all of them are involved in sports but Mosa tried to explain why they cannot come for music when there are sports because all staff are at the sports with nobody to guard them when they are up here. Things are not easy in prison.

Gobingca used graphic notation as a tool for learning to play the instrument, and what I liked the most was that he discovered it through experimentation. I felt that the meeting with the research coordinators on 19 November was critical because the powers of reflexivity of my research partners was being stretched quite strongly as we dialogued and debated about their experiences during the circle visits and how they perceived the nature of prisons and behaviour patterns among its residents.

What transpired from the incident on 13 October was that the officers liked to be associated with the project as it added value to the performance of their duties (the success factor of the project was a credit to them), at the same time, they got irritated if 'their peace' seemed to be disturbed. Mlandu had an interesting take on this issue.

The way prison system operates, is very queer, Mrs Twani, and it irritates me because these policemen always boast about the trophies that they have won as Mthatha prison but when they have to work for them, they become aloof and you are on your own, as if you have come to dictate terms for them and yet you are here to assist them. You will find them rejoicing rushing to hug you when their choirs are winning in the competitions. Now they are disregarding us, they are all excited about going to Cape Town and yet even the choir they are taking to the Festival was developed by us to be where it is now (pers. comm. 19 October).⁵⁹

⁵⁹ *Into yalapha ejele isisimanga wena Mrs Twani and inyandicaphukisa, ngoba lamapolisa la, uyakufika eqhayisa ngezitrophies kodwa xa kufuneka besebenzile bamela kude, ibengathi wena ubaphethe kakubi*

What Mrs Mlandu has observed about the officers is a kind of ‘dual consciousnesses, where they appreciate success but not the effort of attaining it. By this stage in the MPAR, however, the offenders were quite aware of that effort. It is evidence, for me, of a weakening of the power of the panoptic gaze on the officers’ side: ‘we want to see them successful, but we don’t want to acknowledge that the effort is theirs, not ours’. Or putting it another way: ‘we want to see them but not at the cost of people seeing us; we want to be the ones seen, too’. Their making people wait, confiscating cell phones etc. is a way of wielding power in a situation where the officers perhaps see themselves losing it. This, however, is no cause for celebrating the success of my project: it is another ‘useful failure’ that I can learn from.

Other research coordinators commented on the unfriendliness and abrupt manner in which officers dealt with them as if they were strangers who had come to assist offenders to be disobedient. Mpopo felt the officers’ sudden negative attitude of unwillingness to fetch or allow her to fetch offenders from their cells was inconsistent, since yet they had apparently shirked this duty for quite some time and requested Mpopo to coordinate it. She was, after all, an employee, an ‘insider’. All of these comments took the research to another level, with the coordinators’ recognising local practice and regulations rather than taking things for granted. We had to recognise that the stakes for offenders were much higher than for outside researchers. Should we broach some forms of cooperation, honesty, or critical action, the consequences could be devastating. What appeared as panoptic anxiety or even paranoia could just be local wisdom; and anyway, the officers were not in our pay roll. To them participation and MPAR were not priority and part of their job; they were only responsible to and functioning under, prison regulation.

In my frustration I began to ponder as to whether the situation would have been any different if more officers were involved as research actors. Initially I was comfortable and understood why only three officers were participating (Ngxisha, Mpopo and Mduduma), but I did not bargain for reactions of this nature from those who were not involved. The complexity of the situation was also due to the fact that the participating offenders

kodwa uzokunceda kwabona. Uyakufika bevuya bezo kuku haga xa ikwayara zabo ziwina pha kwi competitions. Ngoku abasihoyanga bathe ti kukuya eKapa and yet nala mabanjwa bahamba nawo ngala ebe trainwa sithi apha. Wena Ms Twan iungomnye ondicaphukisayo ulunge gqithi.

belonged to various cells manned by a variety of officers who were not necessarily always conversant with the project. Probably the coordination link could have been a lot tighter within the local environment.

Again, this took me back to the repressive nature of prisons where there are strong boundaries between who was who in the prison environment, for example, offenders *versus* DCS officers, hence existence of offenders' choirs and DCS members' choirs. Also, the unit for Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture was populated with only three officers, Ngxishe and Ntlekeni and one intern, Mpopo. Further, the sampling process was conducted under strict control of the three heads of department and the area manager where the unit for Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture was the preferred section to be involved in the research. Earlier in the project, officers did communicate their ill-feelings about the project targeting offenders rather than themselves; however, there was not much I could do about it, especially at this stage of the project.

The problem created an opportunity for the research team from inside to take coordination of the project into their own hands so that they could manage to stand on their own. As Freire (1993: 17) notes, "in participatory action research ... the silenced are not just incidental to the curiosity of the researcher but are masters of enquiry into the underlying causes of events in their world". On the other hand, the offenders needed to understand issues of understaffing in the department or unit, and lack of management skills among officers, better realizing that the staff had no reason to deny them opportunities for involvement in music engagement. Rather, the issue highlighted the need for effective communication.

Regarding the recorder circle itself: in a phone conversation with Msawu I learnt that they were frustrated by their elongated stay in East London and were worried about missing the cycle-end meeting for which they had worked hard and which was their final hope of demonstrating what they had learnt through the project. Gobingca's report captured the circle's events for three successive days: 7, 8, and 9 November.

We continued to work on Sarie Marais with the different circle learners at different levels in learning to play the song. Things are a bit complicated in that, I teach them and they do not practice, as a result it is very difficult for them to learn recorder playing. We were also joined by a new member 'Bro Joe' [Jongilizwe Mthathi], who is coming very well with recorder playing. 'Bro' Joe is promising

even though he has joined late compared to others who started to play the recorder since the start of the project. All in all, I think at this moment it can be two people who are ready for the concert, Papa and Bro Joe.

I indicated to Gobingca that he should not feel discouraged by the seeming lack of progress among other recorder music circle participants, because even if two members were ready for the cycle-end meeting and some had improved in their playing, this was achievement of goals at different levels; all were being ‘concientised’, in Freire’s sense. The fact that the circle’s action plan became attractive to a new member even at this late stage was also indicative of progress, although as Gobingca noted in his journal on 10 November, ‘Hey, I do not know about this business with Bro Joe, It is so late in the project but the guy plays well and fast, maybe we should just allow him to play ... I should try and get his profile, may be in this way we shall learn something about him and his education’. Gobingca and I agreed that the three people could perform at the final cycle-end meeting even if there was no verbal report to be tabled, since two of them were also research leaders in the Choir and Double Quartet.

The three could play the South African national anthem and ‘Sarie Marais’, and by 20 November Msawu was phoning to say how they were being envied by offenders in the East London prison for their recorder playing skills.

5.2.4 The Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard Music Circle

This music circle was another one riddled with personal challenges and behavioural problems, especially its research leader, Majanti who continued to receive counselling from the research coordinator, Gobingca. In the almost one-year history of the MPAR there had not been any remarkable changes in leadership or people moving up the ladder, from being circle learners to research leaders, in this group, and the research actors’ musical progress was generally stagnant. The one positive spin-off was the individual efforts of Nkuthalo Nomesi, the keyboard player. By Cycle 4 Nomesi had also started accompanying hymns sung by the Choir music circle, using his theory of music knowledge. By merely listening to the hymn that was sung and fitting in relevant chords to support the singing, he improved tremendously and was becoming more confident as an accompanist. This had a positive impact on the singing of the of the Choir circle learners

to sing in pitch with reasonably regulated tonal balance among the various parts and their continued research endeavours were recorded on DVD footage.

Despite daily circle visits, the research leader's use of his research journal was still a problem. He was coaxed to produce a report in preparation for the cycle-end meeting, to no avail. Seemingly we would have to rely on his verbal report yet again. In the facilitator's and research coordinators' meeting of 10 November, Gobingca concluded:

I suspect Vusumzi [Majanti] has challenges in writing, the last time he had written anything on his journal was in the first two cycles, even then there were only two half pages that had notes. Maybe today I should share with you what I discovered from the counselling session I had with him. One of his problems was 'smoking'. This is one of the reasons he had been having problems in behaviour and discipline, which led to his suspension by prison authorities at some stage. If you notice his research journal is not as thick as it was and compared to those of other research leaders, why? I suspect he uses the paper from the book for his smoke.

On the one hand, the way Gobingca shared this story was quite amusing, but it also made me realise the value of involving greater numbers in our data collection because had it not been for the involvement of research coordinators in this research project some valuable data would not have surfaced. I appreciated Gobingca's skilful narration of some aspects that emerged from his counselling sessions with Majanti because he was able to tease out the relevant facts without compromising confidentiality of the discussions. This brought to mind what ontological theory in action research is all about: the researchers' position with regard to values where they constantly interrogate and negotiate their values.

On reflection, Majanti's profile compiled in Cycle 1 and some of his comments during the workshop "*abanye bethu saphuma kusekwangoko esikolweni*" [some of us left school before the time] indicated his low level of education and thus illiteracy was a challenge within his music circle. I constantly mused on why certain actions were prevalent among certain research actors, why there were regular and major discipline and behavioural challenges among participants. Some of them had never been taught to distinguish between right and wrong or good and bad behaviour; some of them had never lived with adults, or had parents, never gone to school, never been employed - all of which would have provided the essential encounters for important life attributes. I was pleased that the project was going some way to injecting some measures to minimise such shortcomings. Gobingca's last comments before the cycle-end meeting were,

At least these guys have improved although they are not a finished product. Lastly, I think what we have seen on Friday [16/11] as a Music Participatory Action Research team speaks for itself [he was referring to the two new songs that the circle learners had incorporated into their repertoire in an effort to demonstrate improvement]. I am talking about all the performances, starting with Spiritual Dance, Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard, *Isicathamiya* and *Imfene* music circles. They were wonderful; I think the only problem I came across was on Wednesday, 14 November when I worked with only one research actor from the Recorder group, Mabho. All other learners were locked up in the cells because only four DCS officers were available as others attended a memorial service. Mabho was allowed to go out because he worked as a cleaner and had to work as usual, I also took that opportunity when he had finished his duties and gave him a lesson. In conclusion, in the last two weeks things were fine despite the challenges. There is more hope for these guys (pers. comm. on 7 to 9, 12, and 16 November).

Gobingca's overall evaluation of the groups was informed by his observations throughout the project. At the same time, consciously or not, he was also reflecting on his own practice. His comment about seizing the opportunity to give Mabho a recorder lesson made me conclude that even though the team from outside prison was only meant to provide guidance and support, power relations and operations in the prison environment induced in us creative measures to forge ahead, seizing every available opportunity to produce results. We had to navigate through circumstances and manipulate situations in order to succeed.

The Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard group's remaining part of the project itself showed development of some new skills, not necessarily music skills, (see DVD ch. 8A) although some areas of their singing improved, as one can see from the DVD (ch. 8 B) taken on 14 November, where their singing is aimed at producing blended and well balanced parts. When I commented on this, Majanti remarked joyfully and jocularly to the laughter of everyone in the room, *Uxela ukuba ngoku sicula into ethe ngqo? Injani yona i-phrasing, Mama? Kaloku sifundile ukuba ii- phrases mazibheke phambili ukuze i-melody izokucaca.* [You mean we are now singing with a more focused tone? How is the phrasing, Mrs Twani? By the way we have learnt that phrases must be forward driven for the melody to sound beautiful and for it to have a shape.]

The general feeling of the research actors in this music circle was that the cycle-end meeting would be the climax of the project as a whole. Even before I could comment on

the questions raised by Majanti above, Mlandu in her typical lively manner complimented them on their achievement and went further to indicate areas that needed attention:

Listen, the one thing you need to work at is breathing, as a singer you need to be able to control and manage your breath. Now as you come to the end of the bar you are finished and the phrases collapse because of lack of air. Also, you, young people! stop smoking if you want to be a singer. That is why you cannot hold your breath longer. Let us do some few exercises together now. What I will do with you as we plan for next week, I am going to concentrate on physical exercises with all the participating groups. You should know that in singing, physical fitness is important; that is why you must do exercises. Those of you who are smoking, you'd better prepare yourselves and vomit it out, otherwise it is going to be tough for you!

Even at its last days the MPAR project was taking the participants to another dimension regarding the aims of the research. The space constraints that initiated this process tended to start looking like a blessing in disguise as they directed our efforts to find common ground in preparation for the forthcoming final evaluation and cycle-end meeting.

5.2.5 Hip-Hop *Kwaito* Music Circle (Skwatta Boys)

The hip-hop *kwaito* circle, soon to be called the Skwatta Boys, met almost every day, as the amount of DVD footage of their sessions testifies. In discussing the progress of this music circle, I shall start from the tail-end, with the impressions the research coordinator Gobingca recorded on 7 to 9 November:

It is a new group formed by four members. The one major experience they have been involved in so far is the semi-formal cycle-end meeting in prison in Cycle 3. It has four members. Their methodology includes demonstration and imitation and rote learning of songs with the leader starting the song and helping other parts to harmonise their lines. One challenge the group has is that of lack of resources - like a keyboard and attire. The keyboard that Tholi [Nkuthalo Nomesi] is using to accompany them and other music circles is not his, it belongs to an official who has given Tholi out of trust and because he also accompanies the police Gospel choir. They are on the right track although I cannot say they are fully prepared. There are things that I am working e.g. confidence, conducting themselves on stage, etc.

It was satisfying that knowledge was able to spread successfully from one cycle to the next, "a very important principle of development work", as Goodall notes (2000: 8). This

is especially so if learning can develop without expanding the budget too much, even though the financial aspect is essential for continuation of the work.

My concerns were mainly about the research actors' stage management (for the forthcoming concert) and the lack of coordination between music and movement. On 09 November I reflected: "What sustains them best is quality compared to the previous cycle, and their usage of the journal. They have grasped the five-point evaluation framework successfully and I am confident that they would be able to pass on the AR method". I found them developmental in their approach as they insisted on being evaluated as they implemented their action.

In Cycle 3 Sithembiso Mavume was their 'chief peer evaluator', who constantly attended their meetings and evaluated their sessions with immediate feedback. This time around there would be at least two other people, Mabho and Nqetho witnessing their discussions and practice sessions. This augured well for the second level evaluation principle, that is, peer assessment, one of the anchors of evaluation in action research. Commenting on evaluation generally Goodall (2000: 62) makes a point that "evaluation helps to check where our successes are, where our values lie and where we could improve". The following is a transcript from the DVD of Mavume making valuable comments on 11 November (See DVD ch. 11 A).

Mshiywa already cautions them not to look down but to face the audience when they perform, in line with Gobingca's comments above that he worked with them on improving their conduct on stage. *Hayi niyayishaya bafethu futhi* [No! You are indeed excellent, my brothers] you have improved from last time. *Ingxaki yenu yileyokuba izandla zenu aihambelani nomculo* [your problem is that your hands do not coordinate and they do not go together with the speed of the song] (he demonstrates how the text should be linked to the text and how their hands should move). *Ngokomculo lo nokuyiva ingoma hayi niyayishaya, futhi niyekile nokuba nentloni qha ke i- action nezandla zenu zifuna ukulungiswa* [with regard to the singing and feeling the music, you are good, also you are more confident but your movement should be coordinated 'Sbu' - Mshiywa].

... *Omnye umntu owenza ingxaki ngu L'Vovo* because *akayibambi i-pace, uyaxakwa nokuba aqale nini and ndawoni apha engomeni kangangokuba kuye kufuneke ukuba ndidendimqhwethe ndimkhumbuze ukuba makaqale. Kufuneka ubale L'Vovo*. [The other person who contributes to our problem is the vocal leader L'Vovo, because he does not keep pace and he does not know when to come in and at which point in the song. At times I have to nudge him to start. You have to count, L'Vovo.]

Problems brought to light here are rhythm, note values, coordination, late and ill-coordinated entries of the singers. The movements were all over the place with lack of coherence. There were also issues of tempo fluctuations from fast to slower and slow, with the keyboardist struggling to keep the pace. The tempo was normally programmed by the keyboardist before a song started and had to be adjusted and readjusted as the song progressed because of the tempo fluctuations. The satisfaction and enjoyment that Nomesi displayed, however, did much to enliven the performance.

Two days later, on 13 November, the four-member cycle had shrunk into a three-member one because Majanti was attending a disciplinary enquiry emanating from his suspension that I alluded to in Chapter 3. Their meetings at this stage, like all the other groups', were goal-oriented towards the cycle-end meeting with a view to showcasing their talents. Their use of the research journal was still a priority, and although more revision of the research leader's presentation according to the suggested template was essential, I was satisfied with the improvements I picked up on the action plan of 13 November written by Mshiywa:

Action Plan, learning to sing and perform hip-hop kwaito songs.
Members - myself Sbu, L'Vovo, Molefe (Vusumzi)
Plan - We prepare three songs for concert, *Elokishini* [In the Township], *Lumk'ka Uzokwenzakala* [Beware, You shall be Hurt] and *Sijonge Phambili* [We are Moving Forward].
Resources needed - attire and our own keyboard.
How we do them? - as leader I teach the others to sing their parts. Tenor 1 and tenor 2 and they sing the same as me for their parts. Then, *siyidibanise ingoma*. [We ask others to listen and make corrections].
 Action follows, *isafuna ukusetyenzwa, kukhona nokuqina apha kuthi* [we still need to work hard at it, some of us are stiff]. The members enjoy singing but the moving part is hard.
Success - we know to sing all the songs and at least with Tholi playing for us we are getting somewhere. The action is hard but we try.
 Evaluation of progress - People, inmates like our music, they always come and watch and tell us what we do wrong. We like to hear from other people. *Okoko uSbu ebekhona, esi supporta no Gobingca becebisa* [Sbu was always there with Gobingca also giving us advices]. The DVD for last time helped because *siyazibona ii mistakes zethu* [we can now see our mistakes].
Challenges - *Yho!* Its action, may be if we try the exercises like, Peacemakers we can be better.
 I don't know about Vusumzi, he was there but now he says he cannot come, Gobingca to help us. May be we check next meeting if he knows and is better then we can use him, at least four is better than threy [three]. *Yingxaki le* [this is a problem].

All the necessary aspects of the report were indicated and it detailed the topic of learning to sing and perform two hip-hop *kwaito* songs, plus the action plan included methodology and resources, challenges, successes and evaluation of their progress by two peers and themselves. I was excited because this was the first time in the MPAR project that we had a subtitle ‘evaluation of progress; previously any form of evaluation would be some off-hand comments assessing progress of a single performance. Two days later their performance was better than what we recorded on 15 November, as seen in DVD ch. 11B which shows the song, *Elokishini* with Nqetho [Sive] and Mabho [Siphathiso], the two invited evaluators, commenting:

Sive: *Yha! eyi niyayicwaba majita and ni impruvile nakwi speed, iyahambelana ngoku ne keyboard nengoma yenu* [Wonderful, you are doing well guys, and you have improved the pace, your speed is the same as that of the keyboard].

Siphathiso: *Hayi, neh, niyayishaya madoda qha ke ngoku kufuneka nilungise izandla zenu, zihambelane nengoma and futhi nenze into efanayo, uyabona ngoku umntu ngamnye izandla zakhe zihamba indlela yazo engafaniyo neyomnye.*

Otherwise niyayishaya. Sendingxamele la date!

[No, great! You can do it gentlemen, but now you need to work on the movement of your hands so that they can move according to the lyrics of the song. At the moment each person is doing his own thing which is different from what the others are doing and the hands do not depict the meaning of the words. Otherwise, this is great. I cannot wait for that day!]

Musically they had added at least two more verses in the lyrics of their song with ideas ranging from encouraging the youth to join cultural groups for them to contribute to development in their communities, to warning the youth of the dangers of crime. Another added verse is the chanting by the whole group where they are in agreement and encouraging each other that with the changes that are happening in their lives, they are on the right track: “We are correct, correct, correct, correct, correct *maarn!*”.

Finally, we addressed the need for the research leader to submit individual profiles for the leader and the circle learners as part of the MPAR process that was followed by other music circles. On the same day, 15 November, we finalised the report and presentation of the Hip-Hop *Kwaito* music circle in preparation for the cycle-end meeting.

5.2.6 Spiritual Dance Music Circle

This music circle was introduced in Cycle 3, like the Skwatta Boys. It was also new to MMCC and its participants did a lot to popularise it. In this final cycle the circle met daily and there was rapid development even in terms of growth in membership. Andiswa Mdokwe took up its coordination in Cycle 4. Mdokwe took over from Gobingca for two reasons: firstly, more females were needed because Mpopo had indicated her decision to take up spiritual dance in the fourth cycle; secondly, she was one of the best female choreography students at WSU's music department where I drew research coordinators from to assist in the MPAR project. As she assumed her role as research coordinator, another female intern, Nokulunga Mbobo, together with Mpopo, who wanted to increase her capacity as a circle learner in another genre. All this affirmed the decision to enlist Mdokwe as a research coordinator.

In the process Mpopo made it clear that as a female research leader she would not dance with the men, as Mdokwe's report of 3 October shows:

Mpopo: I am glad that guys you are here, as you know I am joining the spiritual dance in this cycle but Gobingca you know my issue as indicated last time. I am not going to do spiritual dance with the guys, I want to be on my own if it comes to a push but there is a colleague who wants to join and we can do it together as a separate female group. I am prepared to talk to Mrs Twani because she will know and understand my reasons, you do not know of a problem I had with the guys in the recorder ensemble, so I will not blame you if you do not understand.

Gobingca: I do not know how we can have a music circle with only two circle learners and especially that choreography or any dance for that matter needs more people, Also my problem is that there will not be enough time for us [meaning him and Mdokwe] to create new dances for you so I thought the new members, you and Nokulunga (Mbobo), will learn what the guys learnt in the third cycle and they are continuing with these even in this cycle. I do not know what Andiswa feels like since she (Mdokwe) is going to be your coordinator.

Mdokwe: I think for today let us do as we had planned, that I work with the two ladies so that they can try and catch up with the guys while the gents do their thing, and we discuss this further with Mam [Mrs Twani] or does she know about this arrangement?

Mpopo: I have not spoken to anyone about it; you are the first, even she does not know.

Mdokwe: Then, I think let us do as we had planned for today, go back home and talk to Mrs Twani and when we meet again we can give Mosa an answer.

This matter became one of the agenda items in the coordinators' and facilitator's meeting of 5 November. Action research scholars like Carr and Kemmis (2005), Sheila Stark

(2005) and Jean McNiff (pers. comm., 6 October 2008) all emphasise the way values are positioned in action research, requiring constant and critical attention from the (main) researcher. In this cycle it was indeed occupying centre stage. Carr and Kemmis (2005: 337) point out that some findings reveal cultural dimensions within groupings involved in the research that could impede the actual research process, for example the gender discourse raised by Mpopo. Further, Sheila Stark (2005) asserts that adverse effects such as over-familiarity amongst participants who have known each other for quite some time, fear of criticism and of whatever nature, complacency, lack of time, and dependency on the facilitator, also can impact negatively on research proceedings and hence on results.

On the other hand Wilfred Carr and Stephen Kemmis (2005) bring to the debate a way of seeing the iterative fundamental cycle or four stages of action research (plan-act-observe-reflect) as an attempt not only to identify contradictions between educational, individuals' and institutional practices, but as actually creating a *sense* of these contradictions for the self-critical communities or groups of participants involved. The cyclic nature of the research does this by asserting an alternative set of values to the bureaucratic and personal values within the research process as circumstances and situations unfold. This problematising of different values and regulation of modalities of daily reality (Van Beinum 1988) in this music circle at this juncture was a priority and required sensitivity in its treatment. Time was against us.

My response was that of re-emphasising the reasons that Gobingca advanced about the nature of dance genres but yet allowing the females to be left on their own while the research coordinators and I tried to figure out a way of combining the two groups. Meanwhile, Mpopo's interest was gaining momentum in the females-only Spiritual Dance circle, while the male group also continued on their own, resulting in a split in the Spiritual Dance circle. Speaking to Mpopo about this matter, I decided to let her carry on in the manner she wished but requested her to reconsider her idea, because a dance (particularly the dances they were doing) is only a dance and spectacular if it is done by a sizeable group. Besides, their male counterparts were dancing the same dances to the same music excerpts, so splitting the group did not really make sense. We therefore agreed that we would keep the females separated from the males for as long as they were still learning the two dances that the males were refining.

Hopefully with time and once they were confident we could at times combine the two groups for evaluation purposes to see whether they were all at the same level of performance regarding the dance sequences and uniformity of movement and so on. Also, we agreed that while the groups remain separated there would be two presenters, Mpopo and Nomesi, one each from the female breakaway group and their male counterparts.

Further, I encouraged the research coordinators Mdokwe and Gobingca to continue interacting and dividing meeting times between the two splinter groups in every meeting to give the participants space to exercise their freedom and rights and also to get used to the idea of performing together. DVD footage of the two groups demonstrates the separation and combining of the two splinter groups in action, with Mdokwe and Gobingca equally sharing the coordination of the music circle, as Mdokwe's journal entry of 12 October shows:

Yho! Bendisoyika pha ekuqaleni, ndibone uMosa ethintiliza ukuthatha indawo [I was scared at the beginning because I could see Mosa was delaying to take up position] as we were about to start. *Kodwa uGobs* [but Gobs (Gobingca's) nickname] handled the situation very well, he introduced dance as something performed out of love and respect, so each of the dancers has to remember that all the time. I think what made it to work was his view that in dance there has to be uniformity but even in uniformity each individual dancer must strive to be the best and most likeable by the audience. *Andazi uGobs uzicinge njani ezizinto ebezithetha* [I do not know how Gobs came to think about the things he said there] *ngoba* [because] everyone wanted to outshine the other. *UNokulunga ude wathi hayi Mosa asinakogqithwa ngababafana especially that bangamadoda* [Nokulunga even commented that these men cannot be better than us in dancing]. *Haayi uMam* [No, the Mrs (referring to me) will hear good news about spiritual dance today. I am so excited and everything worked well. I liked Mosa's comment that even if they had started late to learn, today proved that they can do it.

The atmosphere in the next meeting three days later was much more relaxed as the two gender-separated groups joined efforts on the second song, *I love you*, as indicated in Mdokwe's journal entry of 15 November:

Today again was different even Mosa was in a joyful mood. As we took up our positions, I thought she was a bit tense as she requested "our leader must be in front *kaloku sizokuba ne confidence*" [for us to be more confident]. But the smile on her face was not that of worry, that made me relax and Gobs asked "utsho mna or u-Mdokwe?" He went further to explain that he wants to move around to see if there are people who will need help and that it is better if I dance with them so that they can check their steps with mine. Today was interesting with everybody smiling. Gobs directed the group well with call outs and interjections with some of the movements, reminding us of the sequences and counting out loud. It was nice

and people were singing along. Mafunda while on the camera also made a comment that “*masiqaphele ukuba siqala kweliphi icala* and that *sonke siqale kwicala elinye*” [we should all decide whether we start on the right or left side and then make sure that we start on the same side].

The breakthrough that the research coordinator experienced was obviously a joyful accomplishment. Mdokwe later on indicated that they had not particularly planned to combine the groups that day but she felt that a two-woman dance of the same dances and songs for the men was more than ridiculous and that having worked with the ladies for a week she felt that they were ready to test their attempts. They agreed to join the others and “it worked perfectly” as Mpopo reported on 15 October:

I feel excited that Nokulunga and I know the dances after only a week’s attempt. Practicing with the guys helped. I am glad that we shall be ready for the cycle-end meeting. But, this does not mean I want to perform with them, we shall do our own thing with Nokulunga. I need to talk to Mrs Twani about presenting a report, I am not ready for that since we have just started. Maybe Nkuthalo can do it, they had done spiritual dance in cycle three and again now. I like the dance and I enjoy it. We are fast learners

In the following weeks they maintained the ideas of separation and combination, with Mpopo constantly reminding them that they were to present their work at the cycle-end meeting as planned, that is, as two groups. Even though we had agreed that two people from both the male and female divisions would present reports, I did not want to put pressure on the two leaders, especially Mpopo, I still felt she needed time to deal with the psychological issues around the music circle. We simply agreed that we would look at both reports towards 29 November, the date of the cycle-end meeting.

The method of demonstration and imitating the research leader continued with Gobingca coming in between sessions to evaluate progress and assisting Mdokwe in ensuring uniformity of movement and mastery of sequences by all dancers. The obvious enjoyment, freedom and laughter among research actors in the combined sessions cannot be concealed. (See DVD ch. 12.) The separated and combined meetings continued to the end of the cycle. However, a surprise moment took place on the day of the cycle-end meeting, as I shall report in Part 2 below.

5.2.7 The Peacemakers - *Isicathamiya* Music Circle

This is one of the circles that had shown very little progress musically but remarkable growth intellectually and in their approach to practice. The group outlined an interesting action plan on 02 October:

Topic - improving performance of our songs

Make everyone involved. How? We are all going to contribute.

Introduce new dance steps

Method: all do something, like sing something new, make new steps and we all imitate and learn from the first person who introduce. Demonstrate and imitation. We continue with fitness exercises. Listen to the songs and act.

Challenges: all the songs are old, the challenge is which one to take and leave which one?

Problems: ask for advice where we fail. So far so good.

Presentation: I do it and we perform two or three songs. I wish we can do more but people like our music so we shall be able to do more if they want *enkosi* [encore].

Resource: we have attire but need a hi-fi set later.

I liked the fact that Nqetho as a new leader had an action plan, especially as the last action plan from this circle had been in Cycle 1. As Nqetho's notes of 05 October reveal, there were some musical and dance variations in the performance of their old songs:

Today I am going to do something new and different. Starting with the song - *Ndiswel' amandla*, Sithembiso, once the choir has started singing, I am going to repeat the second verse and you music come with movement to join me in front and you imitating the same movement I am doing. It is quite monotonous to see the same person in front all the time throughout all the songs, but if we bring in variations, it makes our music and performance interesting. After that, having sung together with the same movement, you are going to improvise a countermelody and sing it on any vocables (nonsense syllables) of your choice because you sing the first part and higher than me anyway. Again, having sung for a while I would like two or at least three people time and again to jump up in front and improvise short free style playful acts, please do not come up to the front at the same time, try and pace yourselves at intervals. You will see even our choreography will generate more interest to the audience.⁶⁰

⁶⁰Namhlanje madoda ndizakuqala into entsha. Siqala kula ngoma ithi, *Ndiswel' amandla*. Uyabona, Sithembiso xa se i-choir ingenile ndizakucula u verse two kwakhona and wena uzakuza nge- action undi joyine apha ngaphambili ulinganise lento ndiyenzayo. Iyadika lento soloko ingumntu omnye ngaphambili, kodwa ukuba simana sitshintsha sikhe sibeyi two ngelinye ixesha, inika umdla loo nto. Emva kwangoko xa sesicule sobabini kabini and senze i-action efanayo, uzakufakela eyakho imelody ephezulwana kunam, moss ucula i-first part andithi, uculu nje like uhu, wiwiwi, ezonto zinjalo. Futhi xa sesihambe mgama nengoma ndifuna kumana kuphuma umntu oyedwa azokutala apha ngaphambili, at least two or three people bashiyane, ningayi ngexesha elinye madoda. Uzakubona izakutsho inike umdla ne choreography yethu

Indeed these were interesting changes to the old songs, which to me was an indication of creativity on the part of the leader, who understood some of the fundamental music nuances that create form in music. This brought new life to the performances so as far as I was concerned there was musical progress. I commented in my journal, “the pendulum has swung; the offenders are definitely in control of their learning”. They were ‘redoing their lives’ in a way similar to Hattingh’s notion of the “dandy” (1994: 14) as a man redoing his life. With the change in leadership new ideas began to flow, although the leader’s journal entries do not put it like this. His next journal entry, 07 October, indicated further new things to come:

Gentlemen, today I am going to emphasise something we have done before that of everybody creating dance steps and we shall take collective decisions on which ones to take and which ones to change. We are going to take the same song, that we know, *Sanibonani nonke kulomuzi* [welcome to everybody in the house] and create new dance steps for it. Everyone is going to participate and in deciding which ones to take or not and which ones to change or not, we are going to give reasons to motivate our decisions. My aim is to get people to the idea that the dance is not the leader’s but everybody owns it, also we need to learn to lead at some stage.⁶¹

This participatory approach to learning and the idea of creating new dance steps for an old song was another way of generating variety and contrast which, to me, was a stroke of genius in the way it avoided monotony and over familiarity, thus injecting new energy and life to the group. Also, it was a measure of how conscientised they were about the method and about development. Communicative action and dialogue seemed to propel their attempts forward and they were very much in control of their progress.

5.3 Cycle 4: Part 2: Cycle-end meeting

The cycle-end meeting of Cycle 4 (and the final meeting of the MPAR) was held on 29 November 2007. The programme followed the usual pattern of research leaders’ reports followed by practical presentations by the music circles and - because this was the final

⁶¹ *Manene ndizakuphinda namhlanje ndibethelele into esasikhe sayiqala. Namhlanje sizakuthatha laa ngoma ithi, Sanibonani nonke kulomuzi. Wonke umntu uzakufaka i-actions ezintsha. Sizakwenza ngoluhlobo, sizakuhlanganisa zonke ezi- actions, sixoxe senze isigqibo ngezo sizakuzisebenzisa nezo sizakuzitshintsha futhi ndifuna umntu atsho kutheni esithi mayithathwe enye, ingathathwa enye and kutheni sizakutshintsha enye njalo njalo. Iijongo zam kukuba sazi ukuba nokuba ndiyi-leader kodwa umxhentso lo sonke siyawenza kwaye sinezinto ngoku esizifundileyo nesizaziyo, kaloku wonke umntu kufuneka aqonde ukuba angalikhokhela iqela.*

meeting - input from a research coordinator and an overview of the project by my supervisor, who was an evaluator; other evaluators added their own comments too. For reasons already discussed in Part 1 of this chapter, eight music circles presented and were evaluated:

Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard Music Circle
The Peacemakers - *Isicathamiya* Music Circle
Spiritual Dance Circle
Hip-Hop *Kwaito* Music Circle (*Skwatta* Boys)
Choir Music Circle
Visual Art Circle
Thuthukani Mampondo Music Circle
Nyandeni yakuMdepha - *Indlame* Music Circle

DVD footage and photographs highlight some of the climactic efforts of the various research actors in the project. The sense of climax was expressed in various ways. Juvenile Gospel and Keyboard Music (under the leadership of Vusumzi Majanti), suddenly acquired a new name and presented their work as the Youth Gospel - Voices of God, a sign perhaps of seeing themselves beyond the project as a viable performing group that had become rehabilitated through religion. Their presentation was two-fold, an oral presentation by the leader, Majanti and a performance of three songs. Majanti's oral presentation expressed the "discourse of redemption" (Weis and Fine 2004: 106) as well as ideas that place the blame for social problems squarely on him and other individuals. He indicated his realisation of how people he had always looked up to before incarceration had a negative influence on his life, on which he blamed his regression and delayed progression in the project. Weiss and Fine (Ibid: 107) argue that "by staying within the story of two separate selves, offenders can assert judgement over their past actions without having to face the pain of integrating complicated histories, past selves now despised, past behaviour now regretted - into their present selves." I reckoned that my task as a researcher in analysing such data became that of looking across the data for "connective tissues" (Ibid) between past and present selves for instances where offenders like Majanti reflect critically on their lives. I felt this was a good step in the right direction; at least he knew how he came to be incarcerated and what to do to rebuild his life.

The Peacemakers in their report emphasised education in values and the importance of traditional music in harnessing discipline and order among the youth - an interesting perception. As Maori theorist, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (cited in Weis and Fine 2004: 99)

posits, the PAR method is useful in recognising not only the knowledge accumulated in indigenous communities but also “traditional values, beliefs and behaviours that must be incorporated into the praxis of PAR for participants to respect local custom and practices as a site for possible learning and long-term social change”. Although they showed little musical progress in terms of repertoire or skills, they performed well, and the report claimed progress in other areas. First, their dance skills were tested to the limit, the leader said, with each member contributing to the crafting of choreographic steps. Second, leadership skills were shared: the presentation of the report by the new leader, Nqetho, a case in point. On DVD the music circle sings a song that demonstrated their understanding of rehabilitation, enhanced by the meaning of the text. (See DVD Ch. 14.). A verbal comment from one of the evaluators at the time confirmed: “The group displayed 100% readiness, excellent artistic abilities and excellent technique. Excellent performance and excellent teamwork” (Sir G, pers. comm. 29 November) and another said, “a natural performance with no effort or struggle and that is the secret of the arts” (Mandi, pers. comm. 29 November).

In the Spiritual Dance Circle Mpopo and Nomesi were to present separate reports, but just before the members ascended the stage, Mpopo called me aside and said there was a change of plan and she would do a single report, and there would be a joint dance, under her leadership. This was a welcome turn of events indicating maturity and personal growth on her side since throughout the cycle she had been adamant about keeping the groups separate. Also, this was a significant moment for her: the first time she had tabled a report in the MPAR, let alone perform, which suggests that she had broken new ground in identity construction that derived from at least three levels of development: the first being that this dance circle had never done an oral presentation, the second being that Mpopo’s report revealed how she came to be part of the project, her failures and successes; third, she carefully outlined the skills and knowledge about music that the group members had acquired especially given that some of them, like her, did not have a vaguest idea about music before their involvement. Also, she clearly articulated her own development and growth in knowledge and skills, highlighting her shifting positions and responsibilities from being a research leader with no music background to becoming a research leader and local coordinator with some capabilities. The notion of being evaluated did not deter her, either, and the panel commended the research actors on a number of issues including their

choice of white attire, which was seen to be symbolic of the new-born 'pure' identities they had constructed for themselves.

The Hip-Hop *Kwaito* Music Circle (*Skwatta* Boys), giving its second presentation in the life of the project showed that the research leader Mshiywa had grasped some of the PAR procedures. His report tabled the difficulties experienced in the previous cycle-end meeting where they had paid so much attention to the performance and neglected the verbal report. This time around, their insistence of being peer-assessed on a daily basis obviously paid off, as the evaluation comments dictated. One professor commented: "Stage manners are very good because the mannerisms are fitting to the new generation. I liked their blue suits, the overalls". A government official said: "They show strong artistic ability and they can do better, however, the *tsotsi* element is letting us down". One evaluator focused on the message of the songs: "the presentation had a message of encouragement, a good attempt indeed. The youth can change if they listen carefully". Another commented, "you composed your own songs, congratulations". With this encouragement, I reflected in my journal that "the time spent on regular meetings, the numerous dialogue and communicative action sessions was not in vain". I marvelled at the usefulness of the four levels of vigorous and constant evaluation (self, peer, coordinators and facilitators), processes that the group embarked on during the entire cycle. These, to me, were strong pillars of ongoing participation, created and sustained as a safe context for serious conversation - reflection, revision, and reimagining of the music circle.

A unique and special presentation was given by the Choir Music Circle, some of whose members were in the offenders' choirs that went to the DCS choral festival and other activities in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. One of the music circle learners, Bakhokele Jonas, volunteered to present a report even though he was not a research leader. He shared interesting views on how three conductors had shared leadership and teaching in the circle as shown in DVD clip ch. 7 A, B, and C and told how the officials showed their liking for this genre and music circle by 'flocking' to their meetings as he fondly recalled:

Bekubamnandi pha emculweni xa sidibene ingakumbi xa sizakuphuma. Uyakufika noophopho,⁶² ootata nomama bethu be gcwele pha eholweni bezokusikhuthaza, sikhe singxoliswe nokungxoliswa.

⁶² *noophopho* is a figurative and sarcastic way of referring to the officers - it literally means those who think they are better off than others.

[We really had fun in the choir especially if we were preparing for an occasion. You would find the officers flocking our rehearsals in the hall encouraging us, sometimes we would even be scolded].

A good example of the way the prison community especially the officers rallying around the Choir Music Circle can be seen on the DVD. (See DVD ch. 13.)

Jonas' report elicited a spontaneous and highly emotional outburst from Kholisa Mlandu, in which she attacked the prison administrators for sidelining and undermining community members serving in prisons, by taking their contribution for granted while enjoying the enhancement of rehabilitation they brought, from which they got recognition. Because of this, she said, the officers tended to view the researchers' contribution as their entitlement, yet other people laboured for them. The absence of the Choir, the Double Quartet (Conquerors), and the two members of the Recorder music circles were direct results of this assumed entitlement, which had led to clashes in the scheduling of events. The initial local coordinator had long distanced himself, none of the officers who were directly acquainted with the project (except one HOD) ensured participation of the three missing music circles in the cycle-end meeting. They themselves did not attend this meeting; even attempts to get the area commissioner and minister to intervene failed. The participation by the volunteer, Jonas, from this music circle was for her the cherry on top; and the meeting could hear the fine work done in this music circle.

Mlandu's speech was emotionally charged (she broke down at the end). It vehemently expressed her disappointment, anger, and feelings of betrayal from DCS heads and officers, and it was deeply disturbing, bringing to a head how really insidiously and deeply DCS bit into people's psyches. Also, the presentation by Mlandu strongly reflected on the nature of the prison environment where communication channels and processes (albeit often for security reasons) became a hindrance to planning - for other programmes too, not just the MPAR. At that moment in time I also felt robbed of something valuable even though I did not think much of it before: her speech made me feel that we had been taken for a ride.

Her moment of comfort came with her own calmer presentation of how development advocates and practitioners need to remember that their efforts should benefit those they impact on: "what is important is for us, Mrs Twani, to remember that at the end of the day

we are here to help the inmates and not the officials, and in that way we can never be discouraged”. This reminded us all of the good work that had been done and those achievements had benefited the offenders: like Dubula, Mduduma, already enjoying the fruits of participation. In concluding her presentation, she focused on motivating the research actors, encouraging them to continue with the project and make sure that the young ones in the MPAR get education that would put them in good stead in the future.

The Visual Art Circle had a largely visual presentation with interjections by the research leader, ‘Soso’ (Sonwabile Malindi). He demonstrated his creation of painted t-shirts for some of the MPAR music circle members and explained how he was assimilated into the project even though he was a visual artist, urged by Mlandu to think of integrating his art into the project. Malindi had called me requesting art material to paint the t-shirts for *Thuthukani Mampondo*, so he created DCS and WSU logos for the t-shirts (the DVD footage captures these artistic designs very well). Also, he had designed music symbols like the clefs on the front of the T-shirts. The designs were exciting but needed some refinement, particularly the painted t-shirts, where (for example) the logos and music symbols were not always accurate. But his presentation was interesting as it emphasised the integration of the arts and conveyed his excitement at acquiring some elementary music knowledge that may not have been possible outside the MPAR.

The penultimate presentation was by *Thuthukani Mampondo* Music Circle, whose leader, Mchayiswa Madikizela, presented his report in typically jocund manner. One of the evaluators dubbed him “an excellent entertainer”. To the laughter of everyone, Madikizela - as he had in the second cycle-end meeting - boasted, “I know that I am good at dancing and teaching others, but I never knew that I could even teach *uhubhe* to a university student. I wish you had witnessed our practices at the Centre with Gobingca trying his hand at the dance, I can even show you the photographs”. Madikizela, obviously emancipated from his own prison of ignorance, boldly informed the audience how he persuaded me to buy them a new uniform: and indeed they were the only music circle with a new uniform. They displayed a strong stage presence. One of the evaluators made this significant comment about the characteristics of the genre: “Typical of AmaMpondo, they like to face the wall and give their backs to the audience and show the movement of their backs and pelvis too. Well Done!”

Nyandeni yakuMdepha - Indlame Music Circle gave the final presentation, showing one of the after-effects of PAR, because in less than eight weeks, it had amassed 32 members. Dubula explained that he now owned a performing arts company, and his presentation mostly centred on its successful formation, the bank account they had opened (with my help) and the constitution they had produced. He paid tribute to the MPAR for exposing him to the performance and artistic world outside prison. His experience in forming a music group in prison was ‘holiday’ by comparison: “*He madoda ndifuna ukunixeleva ukuba akukho lula phaya ngaphandle, kunzima*” [Let me tell you, gentlemen, things are not as easy as they look out there]. He cited the importance and value of education, and his motivational speech was followed by their spectacular performance, which brought an appropriate close to the performances presented on this landmark day. When Dubula, later in the year, indicated acceptance and approval of their application to take part in the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown,⁶³ I was reminded of his speech.

5.4 Concluding thoughts: Overview of the evaluation process

I conclude this chapter by first, giving a summary of the evaluation, as it featured and impacted on the work of the research actors in the MPAR. Secondly, I highlight the broad overview of comments made by the invited research actors and my own observations with regard to how evaluation contributed to the research as a whole. My reason is mainly to bring to the fore what emerged from the process and to interrogate this cycle-end meeting for what it did and did not do by way of a culmination of a whole year-long music participatory action research project. The other reasons involve issues of validity and ethics for PAR in the evaluation process. Addressing notions of researchers bracketing themselves to avoid bias in PAR, Herr and Anderson (2005: 60) speak to approaching validity through ‘critical subjectivity’ by allowing themselves to also go through an evaluation as with all other participants, hence the idea of involving invited research actors for the fifth level of the five-point evaluation process. Here the evaluators were invited to give value judgements even on the main researcher’s report, however; it was only in the

⁶³ They left the Festival two days before their due date and could not stay for the complete duration of the festival, risking loss of possible revenue from their booked performances because of budgetary constraints.

last cycle-end meeting that my presentation was remarked upon, apart from verbal asides about the goodness and necessity of the MPAR project.

“Performance evaluation method” (Maguire 1987: 34) became a major focus in the MPAR as one of the analytical methods I used in this research to analyse data following the ‘diversity of methods’ used in PAR as suggested by Maguire (Ibid) for knowledge creation. As MacIntyre posits, (2008: 49) PAR is context specific allowing the researcher to draw on a variety of ‘quantitative, qualitative and creative-based methods’ to engage participants in the construction of knowledge. The evaluation concerts at cycle-end meetings were but one of such methods. Whyte *et al* (cited in MacIntyre 2008: 49) remind us of the PAR leading researchers into unfamiliar pathways with the process probably stimulating participants to think in new ways to “generate provocative ideas”. The way research actors prepared themselves for the cycle- end meetings makes me believe that, through the MPAR and the evaluation process, they were conscientised to explore aspects of their lives and to present themselves in new and unique ways.

In their comments the invited participants highlighted areas where research actors (both the research leaders and their circle learners needed to improve. Research actors were highly commended on their levels of presentation on stage. Seemingly, the levels of the presentation, performance and other life skills that were displayed by the various research leaders and their groups were found to be impressive and, participants were encouraged to continue with the work they had been doing even after the project and after prison. Some evaluators hinted warnings to participants against becoming too dependent. They should realise even at this final stage of the MPAR that they had been empowered for a whole year and probably more with life skills that could never be undone in their lives and that the onus was on them to hone those skills further.

In the project, evaluation as a five-tiered plan had various consequences both during the cycle and at cycle-end meetings. The first level was that of simply assessing offenders’ performance, which could have consequences for their future community involvement in music in and after prison. Level 2 was that of assessing offenders’ abilities in other ways (organisational, verbal, stage management, presenting themselves in public and so on), which could have consequences for how the Parole Board saw them and how they dealt with rehabilitation. Level 3 was that of assessing their *progress* musical development, (not

just their immediately visible and audible stage skills), which could have consequences similar to those at both 1 and 2. Level 4 related to my research, which had consequences for the extent to which the research actors would be engaged in the data analysis process for production of an academically qualifying research (especially given the nature and literacy disparities of some of the participants), and finally what I was to write up in the thesis for final academic evaluation. Level 5 was the one of gathering evidence that the PAR approach matched DCS ideals and thus could be expanded. Collectively, all these levels seemed to emerge from the evaluations - which in turn emerged from the activities within the cycle and the evidence given in the cycle-end meetings.

Part of this process was planned to include presentation of certificates of participation and gifts in recognition of the efforts and time that the offenders, in particular, spent on the project. The handing over of the certificates was partly to further validate their participation further, it was also to validate the possibility of achievements from a structured learning programme offered in prison and ultimately serve as a motivational factor since, perhaps, a number of them would have something to show for their attempts at changing their lives for the better. However, because of logistical problems with an external funder of the certificates, only the gifts could be handed over and the certificates were handed over (as already mentioned) on 29 June 2008.

In assessing the work of the MPAR my one regret and cry was the gap left by the physical absence of the Choir music circle, and the unrepresented efforts of the Conquerors - Double Quartet and the Recorder music circles since they also focused on learning of music theory, among other skills and knowledge. Be that as it may, the presentation by the Choir circle representative, Jonas, and their learning of the high order musical skills as discussed above somewhat compensated for this void. In my address, this was important to mention in the context of Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre since the missing music circles focused on a comparatively higher level of intellectual skills and knowledge needed for participants in music programmes other than just performing skills presented by the music circles that featured at the cycle-end meeting. Their presence and presentation would have further elucidated the success of the method at MMCC.

My observation of this final cycle and the MPAR as a whole was that the spectacular moments of the presentations tended to overshadow the other purposes of the verbal

presentations, for example, with focus biased towards the performative aspects. At this reflection I cannot help but accept that the panopticon and its special focus on the 'spectacular' (Foucault 1978 and 1995) with regard to the retributive justice of punishment finally got the better of the MPAR workers; even my pleas to the highest authorities in DCS about the Choir, Double Quartet and Recorder members' attendance of the final cycle-end meeting did not help. It was a cry in the wilderness, showing that one might not get the necessary support of one's communities at all times. However, I strongly believe that music would help propel the participants forward in using the skills and knowledge acquired for further transformation goals.

CHAPTER 6: INTERPRETATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6. 1 Introduction: Identification of themes arising out of the project

I have adapted the thematic content analysis approach (TCA) advocated by Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) to identify the main themes (issues) which emerged from various sources of data across all four cycles of the research: DVD footage, photographs, verbal and written reports, including the evaluators' reports and weekly journal entries. The definition of theme I use here is Saldaña's: "an outcome of coding categorisation and analytic reflection" (Saldaña 2009: 13; 'category' here being an explicit segment of data). With this "process-oriented" approach (Wilkinson and Birmingham 2003: 56) to "themeing data" (Saldaña Ibid), I set about identifying the themes which emerged. I did this in three stages.

I have already presented a hypothesis and framework for themes in Chapter 1 followed by an enormous amount of data in Chapters 2-5, thus the purpose of Chapter 6 is not to add new data but interpret what I have already presented. To do so, I first did a preliminary pilot search in Chapters 2-5 for what I expected to be the most common words, simply using the 'find' function in the Edit Menu, beginning with 'learn' and 'research'. The word 'learn' and its variants, 'learners' and 'learning' appeared 166 times in Chapter 1, the word 'research' 116 times. In Chapters 2 to 5 however, the word 'learn' (and variants) appeared only 123 times and 'research' only 61. This interesting mismatch between my understanding of research and the research participants' was to be expected however, for as I have several times in this thesis shown, despite my best efforts, the research actors, especially the research leaders continued to see themselves as learning rather than researching.⁶⁴

The second stage was to use the nine themes identified at the end of Chapter 3 - ways of learning, use of journals, changes in plans of action, musical progress, gaps in education,

⁶⁴ I refer the reader to Fig.3 in chapter 2 and the glossary of terms at the beginning of this thesis for the explanation of research actors and the various roles they performed in the MPAR.

prior knowledge, behaviour, and discipline, the nature of prisons and life skills - to see how they developed in Chapters 4-5. I particularly looked for areas that different themes had in common which came up the most frequently. These were formal education, management skills, music education, leadership and life skills, music skills and knowledge, power dynamics, motivation, ways of teaching and learning (methods), communication, careers in music, participation and achievement, cultural and religious values, shared leadership and community development.

The third stage was a process of refining these themes by comparing and sifting them and by further reading. I eventually arrived at 11 interrelating themes that seemed to satisfactorily encompass both the historical progress of the project (a diachronic view) and the main recurring issues within it (a synchronic view). I group them below under the three headings: 'Hopes and expectations' - what everyone brought to the project and interpreted it and how content and strategies developed, 'Developing and learning against the odds' - how progress was made despite the prison environment, and 'The acquisition of life skills and the emergence of notions of rehabilitation'. Each of these three areas is further subdivided as shown below.

Hopes and expectations

1. Hopes and aspirations - what inspired the participants
2. Gaps in education - their shortfalls in musical and general education
3. Prior knowledge brought in by participants
4. Grasp of the PAR method and implementation in their music circles.

Developing and learning against the odds

5. Programme content and how it enabled knowledge and skills to be acquired
6. Learning strategies used by participants to acquire and improve knowledge and skills
7. Interactions among participants - how they produced knowledge together
8. The learning context and how it affected the experience of learning
9. Prison conditions - regulation (the Panopticon) and how they influenced progress.

Life skills and emergent notions of rehabilitation

10. New life skills and values acquired and their relation to teaching and learning
11. How rehabilitation was understood and applied and how perceptions were altered.

6.2. Hopes and aspirations

This was a focus right from the start, expressed by both the DCS and the participants in many different ways, but it continued to appear as an issue throughout. In the first meeting of 16 October 2006 the area commissioner of DCS said, “we are grateful that people like you have become involved ... It is certainly a credit to this centre and me as the area commissioner” - in other words even the presence of the project fed into his aspirations. The aspirations of the research leaders were somewhat deeper: the one with the music degree said, “Now I have a chance to teach what I learnt at UPE” (Mduduma, pers. comm. 16 January 2007); and the female intern aspired to supplement her sports management diploma by learning music. On the other hand, the research leaders who were music students looked forward to gaining research skills and community outreach experience through working with illiterate and disadvantaged people. A research coordinator was focused on rehabilitation: “we want to develop the good habits in them, so that when they go out they can be better people in their communities” (Mdokwe, pers. comm.). Meanwhile the community music expert, who was already a music teacher, hoped to fill gaps in her educational practice as an arts and culture teacher: “I see my involvement with this group as my moment to impart my knowledge about visual art and practise how I could take this further at my own school with the learners” (Mlandu journal entry 09 September 2007).

The first (nine) offenders involved saw the MPAR as an opportunity to get back into the education stream and supplement existing musical skills: “*lithuba lokufunda izinto ezintsha* [it is an opportunity to learn new things] that I have always been interested in, but could not do them outside because of my age” (Msawu, pers. comm. 16 January 2007). Some offenders hoped to join established cultural organisations or form youth groups in their communities after prison and were emphatic about their wishes and plans. Dubula, as we have seen, realised this aspiration with the formation of the Nyandeni yaku-Mdepha music circle.

Achievement was high on the list of expectations, with emphasis on seeing concrete incentives for achievement: “Mother, I want to know what the benefits for joining this project are?” (Gogobala, pers. comm. 16 January). He also expected there to be a learning process: “Are we going to write examinations and get certificates for participating?” This

question presupposes a certain status being attached to a person who has achieved something.

Olwage's (2003: 28) proposition of "the work of the certificate for hierarchising" explains the trajectories and expressions of aspirations and hopes of the research actors in participating in this educational venture. Victorian choralism used music to slot individuals into hierarchical social strata through graded choral music training for self-improvement, societal occupation, and status (Ibid). This, by implication, inspired individuals through a subtle and manipulative process of set standards in participating in the MPAR to be productive, to improve music skills and knowledge to move up the social ladder, even in the prison environment. Here conformists were rewarded with certificates for participation and parole releases.

6.3. Gaps in education

Notwithstanding hopes and fears, the gaps in education at entry level into the project were also clear from the start, and obviously affected learning within the MPAR, especially incomplete schooling and (il) literacy, as various research actors articulated in Cycle 1. Only two of the 11 research leaders had university qualifications and the rest were semi-literate or illiterate offenders. Examples of perceived gaps abound in personal conversations of 16 January 2007 already: "I am happy to be learning again since I left school quite early" (Gogobala); "I cannot read or write" (Dubula); "My first school was Luthuli J.S.S from STD or Sub A. And it was also my last school [because] I ended at STD" (Madikizela). Some blamed their lack of schooling and illiteracy on natural causes, "Unfortunately I took ill and became sickly until I had to leave school". Others blamed teachers: "I was failed when I was about to start STD 6" (Mabho). A few had elementary knowledge, for example, "pass STD 3, I can play umrhube instrument. I can also sing. I did study music but I did not pass. I study music theory from STD 2" (Higa, pers. comm. 16 January). One offender said, "I was arrested when I was doing STD 7" (Nomesi).

Halfway through Cycle 2 the gaps appeared to be less evident, or rather less important to the participants. They were tempered by the MPAR experience, and people often expressed tolerance or sympathy: "I enjoy working with Madikizela, he has no inhibitions

about his lack of education ... he informed us that their action plan was late because they are not educated. All the members of this music circle left school at primary ... I left in Sub A” (Ngoma pers. comm. 15 April 2007). The *maskhandi* guitarist reflected, “Despite his limitations [Madikizela] is willing to learn and he does practise but [it] is a huge struggle and frustration on both of us because he cannot read properly” (pers. comm. 1 June). Likewise Madikizela said of the offender guitarist, “He is uneducated, he has never been to school, like me, so it should be easy for us to teach each other”. Such observations and expressions help concluding that research actors were now, because of the new knowledge they were acquiring, in a position to wield power. They were better able to scrutinise situations, reflect on these, make value judgements - even on each others’ behaviour, nature of participation, and resultant achievements and failures.

The impact of such limitations was still felt nevertheless, showing in the growing tension between ‘learning’ and ‘research’ in Cycles 1-2: namely, the calls for uniforms, books, examinations, and certificates. The expectation for an education to be somehow ‘completed’ was very strong at the beginning, but great efforts were brought to this process by the participants. Even when writing reports, for example, they were bent on expressing themselves in English, as if they were in school. English is not their first language and several of them struggled especially to write it. Language problems, spelling challenges and grammatical errors manifested even in the educated, as this example from the Theory of Music circle’s action plan of 3 April 2007 shows: “Although they are still young their behaviour is good except some other eggender [agenda] also involve in other activities so we have to find a suitable time”. The limitation of language was also partially related to the extent to which participants understood the PAR method, although the explanations were almost entirely in IsiXhosa.

The panoptic-wise research actors were once again conscientised to much higher level as they were in charge and taking control of their future. They were caught up in the legitimisation process as ‘knowledgeable’ musicians behind bars, hence the desire to express themselves in English - the language of the educated. They were perhaps even conscious of the change in their educational status.

Gaps in the education and literacy levels of research actors continued to be a concern throughout the project. The efforts to play musical instruments carrying inadequacies in

education are a case in point. Illiteracy did a lot to stifle attempts at documenting events in the journals. Reflexivity in the journals was the most difficult task because even what school education they had, had not prepared people for self-reflexivity. Through deliberation and dialogue about this issue, some success was eventually obtained. In some cases behavioural and disciplinary problems that sometimes come with low levels of education and literacy stifled musical progress, as happened in the Juvenile Gospel and to a certain extent the *Isicathamiya* music circles. In some music circles, it took three cycles before research journals could be examined. One traditional music group relied on one person (who was not even the leader) to make journal entries, throughout the project, and consequently a lot of their meetings were captured by DVD footage. What emerged from this was a need for a more structured approach to general education in prisons and the creating of wider access to it for participants.

Had the MPAR project taken a longer life span as in Detterbeck's or Goodall's project, better results may have been experienced in this area. Some research actors' experiences and achievements gained after the MPAR suggest this. Gogobala, on his release on parole, went back to school to complete his high school education. Madikizela went on to form an Uhubhe cultural dancers club which now exists as a registered entity of mainly in-school youths in collaboration with his brother (a teacher) and has gained the respect and confidence of the community. This signals to me the significant implications of life-long learning as one of the benefits of empowerment programmes like the MPAR.

The education enterprise offered by the MPAR helped construct new identities for participants, for example using the prerogative to choose fellow research actors with whom to learn. They were able to discourse on the manner in which the MPAR was to be organised (procedures and processes) in the activating workshop in Cycle 1 as shown in Chapter 2. Data further demonstrated that learners' 'positioned' themselves within the MPAR process as they developed from one level to another (research leader to coordinator, for example). This relates to the idea of Rose (cited in Fejes and Nicoll, 2008: 115) that "[w]ithin advanced liberalism through education, inhabitants are positioned". The identities of power that positioned the research actors as independent and responsible participants for making choices in the project could only occur through an educational resource such as the MPAR offered. This situation was tantamount to the belief that "people are incited to act as well-oriented consumers, making choices about, for instance,

the form of education that they take up and pursue” (Zackrisson and Assarsson cited in Fejes and Nicoll 2008: 114).

I argue that research actors in the MPAR had successfully demonstrated that the panopticon, originally designed as a manipulating strategy of power (to benefit prison officials and to monitor and surveille offenders, was in fact used by research actors, especially the offenders, as a way of enacting their own power. As Foucault points out (1978: 26-27), power is a strategy exercised on others and an ongoing exchange in which the dominated can collude: here power and knowledge imply one another. There was a shift of power from officials to offenders, with which officials struggle more, I suggest, than offenders. Offenders for their part began to use their knowledge as performing musicians to exercise the power of their acquisition of music skills, life skills, self-confidence, organisational skills, and problem-solving skills - even within their dominated position, which on the surface seems not to allow for this kind of personal growth. My PAR methodology provided a strategy for shifting the balance of power, which the DCS itself aspired to but found difficult to attain.

6.4. Prior knowledge brought in by participants

Educational gaps were balanced to an extent by prior knowledge, especially musical, although this theme was not apparent all at once at the beginning, but became extended as the research progressed. In the context of the MPAR, previous knowledge that participants, especially the offenders, had before the research project often provided the basis for action plans intended to improve their skills and fill in gaps in their knowledge. For example, a number of participants had performed in various competitive artistic forums before and during incarceration, some representing the prison in NOCC and DCS events throughout the country.

One of the very obvious ways in which prior knowledge was concretised for the team visiting it was seeing *Mdepha* village, site of Dubula’s roots, “We had already started [*indlame*] when Dubula got incarcerated and I asked his brother to lead the group in his absence. They are all gifted children; even their grandfather and father were great *indlame* dancers” (Ntshilibe pers. comm. 13 October 2007). Recognition of the experience that

comes through informal prior learning plus some knowledge about the phenomenon, which the MPAR allowed for, provided the stimulus for progress, and helped people to construct new identities in some cases: “Even though you are educated people in a university, I am more educated than you are because you cannot do what I have come here to do and I am going to show you, *in fact* teach you how to perform *imfene*” (Madikizela, cycle-end meeting 3 July 2007; his emphasis). In outlining the plan of action Tshayimpi (pers. com. 5 August) reflected, “It is true that whatever you have learnt is not in vain, my experience with the school choir is helpful”.

Interwoven in the theme of prior learning is the notion of lifelong learning, because many of the participants were adults who did not see the project as completing something they lacked but giving them something they could continue to work on. This contributed in constructing learner identities differently, and I saw them shifting from one position to another as they were acquiring knowledge and applying some of it within the research process. Tshayimpi’s request to have copies of my musical expressions handout made for the music literacy groups, so he could give them to his group is an example of this. Another one is Mpopo’s shift from being a research leader to a research coordinator. Also, her later shift from being a defiant participant in the Spiritual Dance circle to being a formidable leader of that group is worth noting for its significance in identity construction within an educational enterprise. At the spur of the moment she presented an inspired report at the final cycle-end meeting and astonishingly performed with male offenders which she vehemently refused to do in the last two months of the project.

The original nine offender participants were purposely chosen because of their previous roles, before the MPAR, as leaders of music groups; some were conductors in the MMCC, for example. Prior learning was then apparent in some of the expectations expressed in Cycle 1’s workshop, such as, “It would be quite nice if we could leave the project knowing how to read and write both tonic sol-fa and staff notation” (Qoboza pers. com. 16 January). Comments such as “I see staff notation as the most important thing to learn for me since I am interested in singing opera music” and “I need to learn staff notation” (Mathida pers. com. 16 January) shows what they hoped to build on. Wanting to learn to sing opera in German or Italian, wanting rewards for achievement, and action plans to acquire music literacy skills, all relate to aspects of formal aesthetic music education about which they must have had very limited knowledge, but enough to know what was

possible. Even by the end of Cycle 1 I think offenders were already speaking with the ‘power of knowledge’ partly because of what they brought to the project, very clear about what they needed to transform in their situation and lives, already to some extent ‘speaking bodies’.

The huge repertoire of the choir music circle which resulted from years of experience with the NOCC is another case of prior learning. Indeed, musical prior learning was arguably the most useful form of prior learning in evidence, mainly because of its active, performative element. The data in all four cycles revealed participants’ determination to be actively involved, presenting findings even from the first activities of their music circles, decide on venues, time schedules, and dates for their meetings. The research leaders came from a wide spectrum of the community with a wide variety of skills, education and qualifications, helping to create the necessary symbiotic links between academia and ‘local knowledge’ (Green 1988: 2 and Babbie and Mouton 2006: 62). Jennifer Green asserts that PAR should include as many participants as possible, for this reason, to enable it to serve one of the fundamental principles of democracy and active citizenship.

DeNora’s idea of people using music in their daily lives as “a survival strategy” (2000: 53) also relates to the principle of recognition of prior learning: because of it, some participants were able to be considered for access and assessment in the MPAR. Research actors familiar with Gospel and Choral music showed eagerness in promoting the teaching of music genres they knew little about. With the lives of some research actors transformed beyond the MPAR, music knowledge and skills acquired through the MPAR project proved to be a survival strategy as they continue to prosper as renewed and economically active citizens in their communities. With their acquired knowledge and skills, particularly other life skills, a number of research actors went on to start up business ventures. For example, Dubula is managing and directing a registered cooperative with 32 members, and he has travelled overseas. To date they have acquired land for farming and in order to build an arts and culture school. He is well known to the political leaders in both the local (Ngqeleni) and (Nyandeni) district municipalities, the district and provincial Department of Sport, Recreation and Arts and Culture officials, and has participated in the annual Provincial Wild Coast Festival and the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. Nomesi, while performing with his recently formed Isicathamiya and Gospel groups is currently in the process of registering the two entities. He has made significant progress as an

entrepreneur and works in a registered close corporation poultry farm with his two brothers, which is currently serving at least three Mthatha Spar supermarkets with chickens and eggs. Malindi, from the visual art music circle, likewise, has acquired a job at the Mthatha Holiday Inn Garden court, while at the same time selling his paintings to tourists who frequent the hotel and the town.

6.5. Grasp of the PAR method

After the PAR method was explained in Cycle 1 there was a concentration of effort on organising music circles, addressing discipline, and beginning the implementation of action plans. A grasp of PAR was at first revealed indirectly in the evaluations, which I think reflected a good level of understanding. The success or failure of the PAR method was constantly reflected upon by myself, of course, and as the project progressed many other journals and reports (and informal conversations) that spoke to the acquisition of new skills, improvement of existing ones, failures, challenges, and problems that sometimes impeded progress - all showed a grasp of the method. Some people were very aware of their action plans as research: “We have not changed our topic but we are now going to research new dance styles ... I also want to encourage them to create their own styles” (Madikizela, pers. comm. 4 July 2007). A week later he noted, “we had successes in so far as our action plan was concerned ... We further learnt new dance steps for *imfene*, different ones from the previous ones”.

Gobingca commented several times on improvement in the implementation of action plans, and other comments such as “the two [choir] research leaders know how to schedule and divide the work” (Mafunda pers. comm. 5 August 2007) and “The Gospel group [has] a keyboard player who has taught one of them to play [so they] then had an exhaustive practice session of the Long Day Closes” (Qoboza pers. comm. 14 September) reveal an understanding of the need to keep at it, to regard the work as an ongoing experiment. By November the Juvenile Gospel was still “on the right track “in terms of the MPAR “although I cannot say they are fully prepared. There are things that I am working e.g. confidence, conducting themselves on stage, e.t.c ... What sustains them best is quality compared to the previous cycle, and their usage of the journal. They have grasped the five-point evaluation framework successfully and I am confident that they would be able to

pass on the AR method” (Gobingca pers. comm. 7-9 November). This also shows Gobingca himself, of course, having grasped the method very well.

Nomesi’s individual success story in becoming a keyboardist for more than one MPAR music circle was not only a major breakthrough in terms of his acquisition of skills (see Chapter 4), but a success as far as his ability to use the project constructively was concerned. The peer evaluation by Nqetho and Mabho on 17 October) (see Chapter 5) is another example of procedural understanding.

The main tension about coming to grips with the idea of action research was the way some actors kept interpreting and articulating the MPAR as formal schooling rather than as research, with their emphasis on uniforms, examinations, and books. Even later in the project one research leader boldly informed the audience how he persuaded the facilitator to buy new uniforms for his music circle, and said that they were the only music circle that had new uniforms. This also highlighted another tension, between process and goals, specifically, the goal of performance, which is linked to the idea of ‘looking good’. Participants in MPAR assimilated the desire for spectacle and attached high importance to being seen to be doing something positive and good.

Music performance became the main feature of cycle-end meetings, tending to overshadow reports, as music circles displayed strong stage presence, from which, indeed, they received admiring remarks from the panel of evaluators such as “He is a natural entertainer”. The performative aspects at successful moments recalls John Fonti’s (2004) work at Parklea Correctional Centre (UK), where the performance-based medium dominated. It demonstrated success in developing participants’ life skills and emphasizing objectives rather than producing professional musicians. The acquisition of higher order knowledge, as in the struggle for reflexivity in the journals of participants, and the acquisition of instrumental skills is a case in point.

How to use journals, and what journals were, was another tension, as indicated in Chapter 3, until I provided the template (Appendix 4), and then the keeping of journals was largely successful. Part of the problem was the lack of realism about it. One of the reasons people had problems with journals was not keeping them but submitting them, such as in the

Indlame music circle. This was out of respect of confidentiality or reticence because of an internal prison investigation around a participant, particularly towards the final cycle-end meeting. This may have been due to lack of understanding of the reflection stage of the PAR process. By the end of the MPAR, as discussed in Chapter 5, all music circles, even the Hip-Hop *Kwaito* group, had mastered the use of the journals and there were no prominent changes in plans of action, as there were in the earlier cycles. Plans were geared towards the final evaluation concert. I can conclusively say that the process, whatever method was used, was self-directed and learner-centred, judging from the research journal entries, and the approaches were resource-based and needs-driven with groups requiring material resources to support and complement their research endeavours.

In her last report on the AR project among music teachers in KwaZulu, Natal Sallyann Goodall emphasises the importance of grasping the method so as to achieve results in the shortest possible time, even in informal situations: “we started very small ... but gradually ... they could achieve good results in a short time with music, even if they were not formally trained” (Phase 6 2000: page 4). Her participants, however, were educated beyond school even if not trained in music, and they were all literate. The Hip-Hop *Kwaito* circle, which emerged only in the third cycle of the research had particular difficulty in grasping the PAR method and struggled to understand the use of the journal. They nevertheless managed to achieve some results in a very short time (by the fourth and final cycle).

Despite the problems, all the research actors remained enthusiastic and interested in the project; hence the growth in numbers, the development of the way plans were drawn up and alternative plans to learn things that were less challenging made, making progress more manageable within the music field. Those dually engaged, for example the Double Quartet music circle and the Choir music circle, and *isicathamiya* members in *Thuthukani Mampondo* and Juvenile Gospel music circles, were even more motivated and determined to achieve greater levels of participation.

The successes and failures in the MPAR were evidenced by aspects of progression and non-progression in the early cycles. However, the events and developments that occurred in the third and fourth cycle outweighed the problems and interruptions that the research actors experienced. (The impact of the environment on the MPAR method is addressed

under theme 9. below.) Our data definitely recorded an intensification of momentum and excitement with regard to achievement of goals in the music circles. The registration of three new genres (hip-hop *kwaito*, visual arts and spiritual dance) were impressive, especially their new focus on integration of music with other art forms. Also, the existence of two *indlame* music circles was positive sign of the method working. Perhaps the best sign of success in understanding the method was the growth in the number of participants from 16 research actors in Cycle 1 to 70 by the end of Cycle 2 and 153 by the end of the project in November 2007, the ‘multiplier’ effect of the PAR method being one of its most important characteristics. All of this, I posit, may have been influenced by the idea of the ‘public spectacle’ (Foucault 1995: 7), triggered by the desire to be seen as belonging to a certain league of performing offenders, the musicians behind bars.

6.6. Programme content

The next five themes are concerned more with what happened, and how development took place. Programme content may not seem an obvious theme but it is one presupposed by the action plans, which identified and specified content right from the beginning. Content was a key element in the way circles gathered momentum as a result of the strengthening of action plans, and music knowledge always underlay programme.

The notion of formal education as opposed to informal and non-formal education (very strong in the early cycles), that underpins any learning programme, emerged strongly from the data. As music circles focused more and more on the acquisition of musical knowledge less mention was made of uniforms and examinations, and in cycles 3 and 4 more emphasis was placed on the level of programme content. It revolved around several things seen as key to musical development, such as notation, keyboard and other instrumental skills, conducting, repertoire.

“It has been a pleasure to learn to play the keyboard, especially that now I am the only one who can play and everybody looks up to me. Even the problem of sharing a player with the adult gospel group, no longer prevailed. Because I had access to the keyboard ... I would practise and even learn new songs”, said Nomesi proudly (pers. comm. 20 August 2007.) This strongly highlighted not only the importance but the advantages of learning to

play music instruments, particularly the keyboard. Research on musical aspects of content went deeper in the later stages. Since choristers in the Choir Music circle for example had acquired some music literacy skills, concentration in the later cycles was on cultivating a good choral sound, and breathing techniques: “Listen, the one thing you need to work at is breathing, as a singer you need to be able to control and manage your breath. Now as you come to the end of the bar, you are finished and the phrases collapse because of lack of air” (Mlandu pers. com. 14 November).

Technical aspects of content gradually extended to all groups that dealt with the voice, even physical exercise: “You should know that in singing, physical fitness is important; that is why you must do exercises. Those of you who are smoking, you’d better prepare yourselves and vomit it out, otherwise it is going to be tough for you!” (Ibid). Attention to detail in content emerged in the way improvisation became a tool: “having sung together with the same movement, you are going to improvise a countermelody... Again, having sung for a while I would like two or at least three people time and again to jump up in front and improvise short free style playful acts” (Nqetho pers. comm. 5 October).

Data revealed from the onset that elements of both traditional and western music were considered important content. This may have come from the model of the NOCC’s categories of prescribed pieces, which I explained in Chapter 1. Also, school curricula in the 2000s were used to accommodating the diversity of cultures in the country and it is something to be welcomed and consciously built on in the context of prisons.

Paulo Freire notes that, “The starting point for organising the programme content must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations and needs of the people” (1970: 15). That situation in MMCC was largely vocal, especially choral, and this was reinforced by the inception of the DCS choral competitions in 1997, which in turn were not seen as a ‘programme’ but as a copy of music activities in communities outside prison. In the project, the research actors with the panopticon in their hands demonstrated greater possibilities for the NOCC as a potential space where music education might play a role, offering a new knowledge base and an empowering set of skills transferable outside prison, thus demonstrating rehabilitation to all concerned. With such interactive and interpersonal strategies used by offenders in the MPAR, other educational values that were embedded in the form of dialogue and communicative deliberation rely on reciprocity,

mutuality and interpersonal skills where the dialoguer (Freire 1993) needs to be passionate and committed to the development of others.

Regardless of the nature of improvement, the evaluations emphasized the spectacular effects of achievements, with less comment on the cognitive aspects of the work. Maybe my failure here is due to the design of the evaluation grid, which offered less opportunity for comments of a cognitive nature. However, in the evaluations, progress in skills were sometimes linked to a sense of moving into new 'content', as when an evaluator commented about one of the presentations: "Congratulations! You composed your own songs" (Professor 1, pers. com. 29 November); or moving up to a new level of content: "Stage manners are very good" (Professor 2, pers. comm.). Obviously the revelations were that the research actors were not just progressing at a superficial level but were also improving their standards of performance.

However, some music circles could be considered stagnant in terms of content because they never ventured into new music topics, not even in an attempt to try other music genres. This to me was an indication of complacency and perhaps fears of the unknown and preference for remaining in the comfort zone. Nonetheless, there was marked progress in other areas, like life skills, and perhaps the lack of progress indicated the need for more psycho-social components to stir music circles into action. I posit that these are some of the constraints in conducting a PAR type of research like the MPAR, where two sites and structures were involved: the prison and academic confines. There seemed to be clashes of interest with regards to achievement of goals. Earlier in the research offender-participants tended to progress faster on life skills and slower on musical skills which was the crux of the MPAR for academic participants. For the prison community changed behaviour was the underlying goal to demonstrate notions of rehabilitation, as evidenced by earlier plans of action that focused on doing certain things: organising, being organised and regulatory concerns of constitutions, agendas and codes of conduct, and showing themselves differently at cycle-end meetings on the one hand. On the other hand, time frames in academia matter and are strictly adhered to.

6.7 Ways of learning

The varied approaches to learning, resulting in different kinds of interactive and inclusive participation, were not surprising, given there were several facilitators and assessment was ongoing. Cycle 2 reflects a prevalence of empirical strategies and approaches: learning by rote, role play, imitation. All of these are closely linked to performance-based approaches. Story-telling, typical of the oral tradition of African cultures played an important role in the oral reports at cycle-end meetings; the narration about the history of *indlame* and notions of civic participation in Mdepha village by Ntshilibe. The ‘cascade model’ proved to be the most convenient way of increasing the pace of learning as discussed in the report of the *Isicathamiya* group in Cycle 3 about three members learning the songs and choreography steps and then teaching them to two or three other members, and so on, down to the last person.

Gobingca’s description of the Recorder music circle on 19 October learning to play part of the National Anthem (Cycle 4) illustrates rote learning, while the development of choral technique and dance steps in the *UHubhe* and Choir circles emphasise self-discovery. Trial-and-error was used in the Masifundisane music circle, as participants discovered possibilities of transcribing music from tonic sol-fa to staff notation using known songs. The Spiritual Dance circle learnt their dance steps through demonstration and repetition and in the *imfene* circle each learner created a series of dance steps according to how they felt the various music phrases. The approach featured in the Recorder music circle on 8 August 2008 was more conventional: “We taught them to play the C major scale on the recorder as they had requested to be taught rather than to discover”.

Sometimes “exercises were done to familiarise the group with new concepts” (Qoboza pers. comm. 5 September) and integrate music, language, drama, and dance. Later, in the project integration of the art forms played a significant role. One research leader requested art material to paint t-shirts for the Visual Art group, four music circles integrated music and dance, and two new ones, Spiritual Dance and Hip-hop *Kwaito*, emerged. The next theme examines the nature of the environment in which the various types of learning thrive.

The data also indicated a shift in leadership strategies within the music circles where some research leaders brought fresh ideas that included recruitment of new members. One of many such new considerations was this comment, made on 8 June 2007: “We decided as the *Isicathamiya* to recruit them [the new offenders] to be part of the group before they get contaminated by the ills of the prison system”. Such statements illustrated high levels of intellectual capability and maturity of the music participants. Leadership within the project took further strides as the Choir music circle continued operations under three research leaders. The emphasis here is on shared leadership particularly since a number of other research actors participated in leadership roles in several music circles. In the meantime, research coordinators and the music expert took leadership to another (higher) level by taking charge of organising and evaluating the work of the research leaders and their circle learners at an *ad hoc* cycle-end meeting. Data revealed the willingness and eagerness of the research actors to assess whether they had mastered their management tasks.

Participation and interaction among participants was a major learning strategy, connecting with how knowledge is acquired and produced. The data give much evidence of dialogues, debates and discussions held to reach consensus in order to continue learning. I argue that the methods used by offenders generated through discussions and dialogue about what was observed, what should change and how, through immediate and direct hands-on involvement of the participants, brought to the fore positive results from the benefits of approaching learning as communicative action (Habermas 1996) and needs-driven (*White Paper on Corrections 2005*).

Education as an aspect of rehabilitation and aftercare of offenders played a significant role for some of the participants. Through the varied methods of music making and learning, one learnt to understand what music meant to the offenders, emphasising a consideration of the function of music in their local and aesthetic context, their different ways of “musicking” (Reimer 1970: 77), making music in performance. As ethnomusicology research makes clear, ‘music’ is not always a strictly musical activity.

Members of the Spiritual Dance developed the capacity to teach music and other skills through interaction, free deliberation, dialogue and achieving consensus among themselves through democratic participation in generating and determining knowledge that would be useful to them in and after prison. By contrast, are Mawawa’s undemocratic

comments and autocratic style in his verbal report on 29 October 2007: “I focused on those who were knowledgeable. I look at them and decide on who has progressed and who has not and make a decision that I would not go far with those who are behind”. It is no wonder that the music circle he tried to continue with after the release of the original leader disappeared. This is a clear demonstration of what could go wrong when participants have misunderstood the PAR method and its goals of emancipation and empowerment.

Still, the “culture of silence” (Freire 1993: 13) was steadily being shattered as the research actors were swinging the panopticon pendulum through dialogue and action, shaping and moving the project forward with visible results, freely voicing their ideas and opinions in ways presupposing a perspective of lifelong learning since education is never ending and is futuristic. This, I argue, is a question of shifts in knowledge organisation and production within a community, especially breaking down the divide between, on the one hand, formal and, on the other hand, informal and non-formal learning. Lifelong learning also emphasises making use of the learners’ perspective as a starting point even in deciding on the nature and content of music education in prison. Regardless of how short the time and how novice the teachers-researchers were, the MPAR with its emphasis on praxis (Freire 1993) and active communication (Habermas 1996) assisted research actors to demonstrate development, as in the meeting of 3 October.

Another example of fresh approaches to learning comes from Cycle 3, with research actors in the choir. The approach was no longer that of simply imitating the singing of the conductor (rote learning) but rather implementing acquired theoretical knowledge, acting on it, observing its effects and drawing conclusions about it; that is, praxis (action and reflection). This is the basis on which the Conquerors - Double Quartet were able to advance their learning of the theory of music, by implementing it in their choral songs, which in turn advanced learning in the choir. To this day, Qoboza still assists choir conductors in training the GET school choirs in his village – who have since his involvement achieved impressive results in the zonal and district South African Schools Choral Music Eisteddfod (SASCE). I argue that the journals also provided educational opportunities in the sense that they used the technique of note taking, something to be encouraged, as it eliminates the cost of having to repeat things. Qoboza was one of the most diligent research leaders in this regard throughout the project. Documentation in

journals becomes the immediate point of reference when participants have to implement actions.

The varieties of teaching strategies indicate a number of processes and means. These include praxis; metacognition, recognition of prior learning and lifelong learning for praxial music education. I explain the two approaches of recognition of prior learning and lifelong learning in the next chapter. Metacognition involves: knowledge, and awareness of own thought processes and learning styles, knowledge of the strategies that might be used for different learning tasks, and control or self-regulation (keeping track of your thinking processes), regulating and evaluating them (Plummeridge 1991).

Lastly, a valuable learning strategy everyone was involved in was assessment. This operated within circles: “Tshayimpi then led the group on time signatures. He progressed to the end [and] gave the Group homework” (Qoboza pers. comm. 5 September), and all circles were assessed at the cycle-end meetings. Outside the circles, co-ordinators were evaluated: by the end of the project, the MPAR had evaluated two local coordinators and produced three in total. Assessment is a vital part of the development strategy within PAR as Herr and Anderson (2005: xv) have shown. They regard it as one of the major goals of AR to “generate local knowledge that is fed back into the setting”, and this cannot happen without assessment. I further theorise that the successes gained in the MPAR reflect the self-initiated and needs-driven process that energises all AR and PAR projects, as emerging from the different styles, approaches and strategies and techniques in which knowledge was solicited and generated.

6.8 Interaction and knowledge production

One of the new themes that emerged strongly in Cycles 3 and 4 was how the participants interacted with each other. During meetings discussion and dialogue prevailed from the first to the fourth cycle, and was the predominant mode of interaction. Managing every situation required dialogue, and even planning for dialogue, as shown by conversation between Mdokwe and Mpopo over the Spiritual Dance circle resolving their differences, on 3 October 2007:

Mdokwe: I think for today let us do as we had planned, that I work with the two ladies so that they can try and catch up with the guys while the gents do their thing, and we discuss this further with Mam [Mrs Twani] or does she know about this arrangement?

Mpopo: I have not spoken to anyone about it; you are the first, even she does not know.

Mdokwe: Then, I think let us do as we had planned for today, go back home and talk to Mrs Twani and when we meet again we can give Mosa [Mpopo] an answer.

Here, the empowering effects of intelligent management and regulation of circumstances were at play. Dialogical moments were found in situation of assessment, for example when Nqetho [Sive] and Mabho [Siphathiso] assessed the work of the Hop-hop Kwaito group (pers. comm. 17 October):

Sive: Wonderful, you are doing well guys, and you have improved the pace, your speed is the same as that of the keyboard.

Siphathiso: No, great! You can do it gentlemen, but now you need to work on the movement of your hands so that they can move according to the lyrics of the song. At the moment each person is doing his own thing which is different from what the others are doing and the hands do not depict the meaning of the words. Otherwise, this is great. I cannot wait for that day!

To Freire (1970: 53), interaction presupposes the investigation of “generative themes” through the awakening of the critical consciousness method which takes place at various stages of the investigation. In this sense, dialogue is a consequence of action and reflection (which may flow from discussions and debates) combining theory and practice from which knowledge is acquired. Teaching and learning occur as the participant in the dialogue interact, and is thus an extension of praxis and an interaction of both praxis and consciousness-raising. The five-point evaluation plan embraced these ideas at different levels where the circle learners alone dialogued among themselves and later interacted with the research coordinators and facilitator in preparation for the cycle-end meetings. The final stage of dialoguing was the four cycle-end meetings where music circle learners dialogued with the evaluators who evaluated their contributions for production of new knowledge about the MPAR and the participants themselves.

For the offender-participants, in particular, the transfer of skills did not occur from just observing others, as it was with my earlier research (Twani 2002), but by participation, and in particular ways in which dialoguing and doing were critical along with reflection, observing, and planning. One of the first areas of interaction was the interviews conducted by research leaders at the beginning of Cycle 1, through which they started to gain

confidence as leaders. The activating workshop in the introductory cycle sought to develop a community of learner-researchers within the confines of the prison. Working together was also a factor in discipline among members, and is reflected in the music circles' codes of conduct and constitutions. The hierarchical nature of the management roles within the research, where some become drivers (strategic planners) and others operators (implementers) did not impede dialogue. Rather, research actors benefited from the way their roles assumed a variety of shapes such as the research facilitator, research coordinators, local coordinators, research leaders, music circle learners and invited research actors (the experts/ evaluators).⁶⁵ As Elden and Chisholm (1993) and Alice MacIntyre (2008: 2) suggest, PAR juxtaposes individualism and collegiality and the building of alliances between researchers and participants in the planning, implementation and dissemination of the research process.

6.9 Learning context and production of knowledge

The research skills of the participants I worked with were not yet at the level where they could contribute and generate knowledge to a very high level, but the whole atmosphere of the research was that of knowledge production. There was more positive than negative reinforcement: "Nkuthalo's speech was very encouraging and gave us new hope that anyone of us can take up the leadership position. We have to keep the morale high" (Higa pers. comm. 1 June). Personal determination was crucial: "the likes of Papa (Msawu) and Mavusana [Majanti] showed determination and a great interest on each and every lesson ... The day was hectic but I enjoyed doing the thing that I like most, making music and helping somebody to learn" (Gobingca, 19 October).

The attempts at balancing psychological modalities between participants made the learning context enjoyable even when they were correcting and reprimanding other. "Oh! I had such fun with the recorder group... everyone including the officers was excited about the 'new' instruments" (Gobingca pers. comm. 20 May). Failed attempts at acquiring instrumental skills could even be sites of comedy, as the photograph of Madikizela demonstrating his guitar playing with group members laughing behind him shows (see

⁶⁵ Also known in the MPAR as invited participants, as explained in the glossary of terms and Fig 3.

Chapter 3 Fig. 7). Relaxation and confidence were sometimes explicitly noted: “Our leader must be in front ... for us to be more confident. But the smile on her face ... made me relax” (Mdokwe pers. comm. 15 November).

The interrelationship between the arts was another context that helped in producing good results quickly, as shown when the new Visual Art circle emerged at the end of cycle three and Mlandu conceived the plan “to take Soso and Patrick to all these other music circles each time I go to prison ... I want them to see what is being done by other groups. Maybe it will help us think of ways of how we can as a group link up with the project, particularly the idea of integrating music and art” (Mlandu pers. comm. 16 September).

There was enough flexibility in the context to accommodate newcomers: “Bro Joe” in the Recorder circle: “it is so late in the project but the guy plays well and fast, maybe we should just allow him to play. We do not even have his profile maybe he is also new in this prison, but a lot of them know him” (Gobingca pers. comm. 10 November).

In some cases strong beliefs and expressions of cultural and religious values came out. There was also some evidence of emphasis on moral values among research leaders as they documented code of conduct clauses such as: “We do not touch drugs in this music circle”. Ray Pratt (cited in Dougan 1999: 10) speaks about the potential music has as an “impulse of opposition” (music being a free art form) to existing repressive conventions and socio-cultural spaces, and in meeting of the strong moral values of offenders (which might itself seem oppressive to some) and the repressive atmosphere of the prison, one wonders how this impulse works. Research actors expressed opinions about who they were and what they believed in, fairly freely. What was of important within the learning context was the sharing and soliciting of ideas, including ideas about how they wanted to be viewed by others as performers, and not as mere criminals.

Freire asserts that in instituting action one must become conscious of how an ideology reflects and distorts reality, and what factors influence and sustain the false consciousness which it represents, especially, “reified powers of domination” (Freire 1993: 53; Foucault 1978: 212). Consequently, within the jurisdiction of the MPAR, I believed it was important to maintain balance and allow the research actors to exercise autonomy for music groups undertaking learning in prisons (an environment that denies freedom and

severs connections to social situations). The success of conscientisation and “communicative action” (Habermas 1996: 24) allowed participants to freely negotiate their future, inform themselves of their plight and take responsibility for their emancipation and development. This is manifested in the discussions, debates and dialogue among participants in the weekly and fortnightly music circle meetings. The full DVD footage clearly demonstrates the autonomy and independence of the music groups in finding their own solutions and mapping their future.

One of the things that impeded knowledge production was communication between officers and research actors: officers not seeing synergies between the prison’s calendar events that impacted on the research, for example. A number of research actors had to leave MMCC well before the third and fourth cycle-end meetings because of this, the consequences of which were that three of the 11 music circles could not take part in all the evaluation processes of the MPAR, and these were moreover music circles that had worked on higher cognitive skills topics. Mrs Mlandu could not help breaking down at the last cycle-end meeting when all her hard work was discarded without a word of apology because “none of us were informed about the unavailability of the choir”. Such occurrences might even be seen as undermining of efforts to assist in the rehabilitation process, by the community outside DCS.

Other learning issues related to discipline, time management and attendance. As Goodall (2000: 2) notes, in AR projects, “one of the biggest difficulties for members is for them to keep a good attendance record, which spoke to mandatory disciplinary aspects of training or education. People easily start with enthusiasm but when they must get down to hard work or when they feel there is an obstacle, they easily stop making an effort. Their enthusiasm goes away”. In this, there is probably little difference between learning in prison and learning outside prison. Problems of discipline are everywhere. In the MPAR they abounded in the Juvenile Gospel music circle led by Majanti. There was serious non-attendance and there were time management challenges, largely experienced in Cycle 2 and 3. This, in part, was due to panoptic tension, with officers not allowing offenders to attend meetings, and not making venues available. This leads to one of the most important discussions in this chapter, about the whole prison environment.

6.10 The prison conditions

This theme looks into conditions in which power effects played a role. Largely, the power dynamics were dominated by officers exercising power over the offenders by virtue of status in the prison environment and this had an impact as articulated by the participants throughout the research process. Generally, participants reflected on the bureaucratic and territorial attitude of some offenders and especially officers. “Prison conditions are different and we as offenders have our own issues of undermining one another. Questions of how and why, for example, I was chosen [for the MPAR] may be raised by other offenders, even those that will be part of the groups” (Madikizela, 16 January 2007). And I was warned in the activating workshop: “You may not be aware, Mrs Twani, about this environment. Some days we may encounter problems such as the officials themselves not letting us out of our cells to go and meet with even those circle learners we have chosen” (Ibid).

Later he referred again to the project “being undermined by the officials ... I do not understand why Mr Ngxisho does not live up to his promises ... Mrs Twani is going to struggle in this centre” (Madikizela 5 April 2007). A conversation on 11 July transcribed from the DVD footage provides further insight: “I had told you Gobingca that things are not easy in this prison. Now that Mr Ngxisho is not here they are doing everything in their power to frustrate us and yet when we were praised at the University they also received recognition as people who are in charge of us, but now they have forgotten about that”. For a while Madikizela appeared to be the only one who experienced (or voiced) his frustration, but the research coordinators also felt it. On 12 July 2007 Gobingca recorded: “We had a problem of entering the prison today, it took us a long time to be allowed inside because we were alone and Mrs Twani was not with us. The officers at the gate refused to call Mr Ngxisho or his assistant or even Mosa. We were asked a lot of questions before we could meet with the research leaders”; and on 19 October: “Our cell phones were for the first time taken by a prison warder at the main gate and we had to sign for them in a book”.

Dubula’s remark (pers. comm. 24 August) about his ‘sudden’ release from prison is also telling: “I told you, Mrs Twani, that the way things are done in prison is very unique. Here I am. Without any notification I was informed on a Thursday morning, a day after you had

visited the group, to pack my things and go home. I just left everything like that; there was no time to inform anybody”. Mrs Mlandu, not being an offender, could use words more plainly, as shown in her frank opinion about the officers and their boastfulness about the choir trophies (see Chapter 5).

We have seen how educational processes were affected by the unpredictability of the environment. To me, the challenges of obtaining venues for meetings, not letting circle learners keep appointments, the errands offenders had to do in the prison, were all largely obstacles and power struggles relating to the panoptic gaze of the authorities. They seemed sometimes to be against creating an education-friendly prison environment. This tended to frustrate the efforts of the research actors, particularly offenders, to transcend their ‘prisoner’ sense of self, or prove their readiness for reintegration into society as reformed citizens. Nevertheless, I strongly believe that participants cleverly reversed the gaze, and instead of giving up, offenders became more determined to succeed, their surveillance spurring them on in their efforts to emancipate themselves from such controlling situations. In so doing, they began realising their potential to change their environment, think and act independently, and rehabilitate themselves.

The panoptic-conscious offenders realised that they were being scrutinised and judged not only in their music but also in their behaviour; thus they could use the opportunities provided by the research activities to their advantage. This gave them the psychological freedom (Pratt cited in Dougan 1999) to imagine themselves living a better life outside it. However, they were not completely panoptic-free as they were physically, but not mentally and intellectually, still ‘behind bars’ as performing offenders, but they had a certain freedom that made possible their transformation into performing inmates, and therefore musicians, even though inhabiting the restricted space of the prison system.

In the early stages of the project, absenteeism was sometimes connected to a lack of understanding of the value of acquiring skills through the MPAR. The preference was for menial and manual job offers inside prison like working in the laundry or cleaning the administration offices, rather than attending music circle meetings. Such affected offenders often responded, when asked about their absenteeism, that they had a job. It took a while for them to own the MPAR project sufficiently to see that it, too, had status that might be attached to employment prospects in prison and afterwards.

Almost all themes that emerged from the data had something to do with the prison environment, whether directly or indirectly and whether positive or negative in impact. Offenders were always very much aware of who they were (prisoners) and where they were (prison), but participating in the MPAR caused them to aspire to be music practitioners even while in prison, and ultimately, by their own choice.

Such notions present PAR work with two types of researchers working together to find common ground: the academic-oriented outside researchers and the prison-based inside researchers. Our relationship at MMCC provided a basis for survival because we lived in a community where everything was tied together and we operated in a closed environment. Even decisions about what to put in or take out and consideration for ethical values related to protecting individuals, the MPAR community within the prison. In this sense, insider participants were not alone in making choices. Smith (1994) asserts that self-censoring comes from the instinct for self-protection in a context that is one of total control over one's personal freedom, a survival strategy (DeNora 2000). The panoptic lens was in this case self-imposed and internal, since essentially human beings are 'objects to be controlled' (Weis and Fine 2004) and this successfully regulated the issues of unequal power relations among the MPAR teams. Weis and Fine (Ibid) contend that the PAR method itself, if well executed, challenges traditional dynamics of power relations between those who do research and those who are research objects, particularly in the prison environment.

The case of Dubula exemplifies self control as self-censoring. He never revealed (until his release from prison) an incident of how an officer tricked him into agreeing to a name change, from his true *Ndoyikile* (I got scared) to *Ndoyisile*, (I have become victorious); in case he believed that the officers would be scared of him. It is interesting how he use his powerlessness, and then finally became truly 'victorious' as a community musician, director of his own company, and national and international *indlamu* performer. Self-censoring is a reality that I continuously grappled with myself in making decisions about what data to put in (or not). As Weis and Fine (2004: 113) assert, "We worry that writing something negative about the prison or a programme may lead to negative consequences". I constantly worried about creating tensions between offenders and officers on the one

hand and the outside MPAR participants with officers on the other. Ensuring that all research actors related to one another as peers with freedom to participate and air their views was one of the major considerations in the discussions and dialogues in the music circle meetings.

A dual reality is always present in the mind of an inmate doing PAR work in prison or an offender researcher who is trying to survive among other inmates and get out of prison unscathed (Ibid). As outside researchers we are always seeking for truth or the closest to what we perceived as truth, while as offenders we are always asking “is it safe to say this?” Evidence of self-censoring linked to the nature of prisons and truth about how and what things could be, emanated from such loaded utterances as “things are difficult in this prison” by one research leader. Here, self-censoring is a part of being an ‘inmate’ researcher who is using available opportunities for a better life without revealing too much about deeper prison life secrets, especially among offenders. This is a constraint that does not apply to academic researchers outside prison.

According to Foucault (1978), power is exercised by individual or collective human beings when they act upon each other’s actions, in other words, the action of one affects the actions of another. Power in this sense will be an inescapable feature of any social interaction and resistance is always possible. Resistance provides evidence that there is a capacity for relatively autonomous action by individuals with respect to certain areas of social life; otherwise power would always be unobtrusively operating upon their actions and thoughts. The insights gained through the struggles within the prison and the MPAR process were liberating in that research actors could recognise the reasons for their problems. Notwithstanding prison conditions, participants had the opportunity to take control over their destinies *within* a paradigm of power and surveillance, hence reverse the panoptic gaze, or at least render it less powerful. It is in this sense that I regarded the research actors as having been conscientised to alter their situation and lifestyles, despite the prison.

6.11. Life skills and values acquired

A number of life-skill areas were positively affected including those discussed earlier, especially the cultural and human relations aspects. Other examples that emerged later

included judicial reserve (“I think there is something going on with this group, but I am not sure exactly what”; Gobingca pers. com. 11 August), goal-orientedness, and determination. Maturity in leadership and management were also shown, and the notion of being a self-appointed research leader emerged in the case of Mlandu, who became the leader of the Visual Art circle. I also recall Dubula’s warning about gangsterism he picked up from his music circle which became an internal investigation which he handled with vivid confidentiality: “Those people are troublesome, they think because they have a ‘number’ (an indication that they are gangsters) they can use it wherever and whenever to intimidate us who do not have it. That thing is a waste of time, they do not realise that they can spend the rest of their lives in prison because of it” (journal entry, 26 August).

Other data revealed rising confidence levels among offender-participants, in negotiation for example, one of the key aspects of the “dialogical man” (Freire 1993: 13). Some research leaders successfully managed to negotiate the holding of meetings and favourable time slots to continue in various other venues near their prison cells. Other life skills were communication skills; interpersonal skills; respect for each other’s views; tolerance of each other’s mistakes; accommodating each other’s likes, dislikes and fears.

The way ‘uncontaminated’ new participants were recruited into the music circles, as in the case of the *Isicathamiya* circle, indicates a consciousness of the different status afforded by being part of a progressive ‘culture circle’ (Freire 1978); a culture circle where members would have the privilege of learning new things through interaction, engagement in democratic processes of dialoguing, debating and discussing with like-minded fellow researchers, in order to bring about change. The leader of this group saw the promotion of this genre around his village as a means to communicate to people the value and importance of traditional music genres in changing the lives of people.

In acquiring life skills, I argue that participants found that their identities were being reconstructed. They were engaged in a process of legitimating themselves within the four stereotypes of criminals, entertainers, learner-researchers, and as managers and leaders within the MPAR. Pratt (cited in Dougan 1999: 14) argues that “life as a convict-musician with its temporary freedom and chance of stardom is better than simply being a convict”. Planning, delegation and leadership permeated the cyclic nature of the research. Through critical self-reflection and self-critique as participants debated and discussed. The

development and encouragement provided to offenders in the MPAR was premised on the idea of rehabilitating offenders so that their mindset and new ways of doing things were changed since they also had the responsibility of renewing their lives, which led to new ways of seeing the world and viewing life, something to turn to in their spare time besides crime.

The overall organisation of the MPAR also allowed research actors to acquire skills in managing the music circles. Group decision-making and collective management was part of the process. In some cases research actors had to make impromptu decisions, as in the case of the research coordinators who influenced the decision to organise and stage the third cycle-end meeting.

Emphases on ‘being different’ were picked up from the data: “in reality we need to be different from others” (Gogobala, per. com. 16 January). These are examples of persistent desires from research actors to distinguish themselves from other offenders not involved in the research. A great number of them found strategies to manipulate discourse to their own ends and therefore conclusively demonstrate that identities are discursive constructions, especially in the prison community where a variety of management and leadership styles interact.

Verbal and written communication improved, partly because research actors were bent on communicating in English regardless of the flaws, rather than their mother tongue, especially when presenting reports. I believe that this situation arose out of the historical context of the English language, which was regarded as the language of the employer. It was a status symbol for the educated since it has always been and still is a medium of instruction at all levels of education.

6.12. Perceptions of rehabilitation

This theme is central to the hypothesis of this thesis and to its findings: that the MPAR enhanced in some way the lives of prisoners, contributing towards an earlier discharge from prison, and towards their rehabilitation into society after prison. It began to emerge quite strongly in the later cycles. Dubula, Madikizela, Gogobola, Nomesi, Malindi and

recently (August 2011) Sbu (from L’Vovo, the Hip-hop kwaito music circle) are examples of people for whom the MPAR project was clearly linked with rehabilitation. They were conscientised about civic participation and the need to continue improving and acquiring more skills outside prison. The success story related in Chapters 4 and 5 of Dubula and the *indlame* music circle is the most significant case, because it shows the continuity between what Dubula achieved in prison and how he managed to sustain it afterwards. Part of the evidence for his readiness to rejoin his community was the way he understood what he had managed to achieve and not achieve: “I was at the same time not very happy to leave the project at that stage because I had not done all the research I wanted to do, and I did not know how to write a business plan and constitution”. He nevertheless called a meeting for community members, both children and parents and informed them about his plans: “Mrs Twani the members of this new group are keen and happy to be associated with the University”, as he put it.

From the beginning participants understood the effect that the MPAR would have in supporting rehabilitation goals. “As I see it, Sir, rehabilitation is about redirecting our thinking and attitude about crime so that we can feel empowered with skills that we can use in our communities after incarceration, even if those people who contributed to our being convicted will not see any good in us” (Dubula pers. comm. 16 January). Madikizela had even greater insight, perhaps: “so when we are involved in projects like this one, that indicates we are sorry. It is for us to use this opportunity to change our behaviour and conduct. No one among us can say they have not committed crime, as some usually argue when deceiving each other, because you would not be in prison if you did not commit crime”. Similarly, the Visual Art leader later expressed understanding of being part of a project that was geared towards changed behaviour: “Our group is about moving from crime industry to music industry ... We want and I am willing to do my group out when I’m finishing my sentence and teach the young generation about crime. Our dream is to open my own gift shop” (Malindi pers. comm. 11 September); and indeed he is selling his artistic wares, working at a hotel in Mthatha.

The improvement in reflexivity and life skills noted earlier, undoubtedly helped to foster the awareness of what participants ‘wanted and are willing to do’, as did the attitude research coordinators such as Mpopo and Mlandu. The latter noted: “what is important is for us, Mrs Twani, to remember that at the end of the day we are here to help the inmates

and not the officials, and in that way we can never be discouraged” (pers. comm. 29 November 2007). The offenders could see this, even without her saying so.

The dynamics involved in *effecting* the changes that are an integral part of the rehabilitative process, are very complex, and almost all the examples given so far in this chapter can be seen in one way or another as embedded in those dynamics. Comments such as “I was scared at the beginning because I could see Mosa was delaying to take up position as we were about to start ... but Gobs handled the situation very well” (pers. comm. 12 October) is typical of the levels of awareness that were consistently raised during the project. In her research coordinator’s report at the final cycle end meeting (discussed in Chapter 5), reflection was focused on rehabilitation: “if the project can reach all the correctional services centres and all inmates, it can help in lowering the crime because we don’t go there for teaching them how to sing and dance but the main aim is rehabilitation”. What Mosa and perhaps Gobingca to a certain extent meant by rehabilitation is questionable; perhaps it was in a sense of ensuring that those who have gone through educational programmes in prison might contribute to issues of recidivism in whatever way humanly possible. Here, change of attitude, behaviour and ideas about the dangers and impact of crime in their lives seem to be a focal point for individuals to do something for the community, to right the wrongs of their past and be seen as different persons after their prison terms. This then is a holistic view in which rehabilitation includes successful reintegration into the community as useful citizens.

My thesis, in part, is that rehabilitation is not simply a question of ‘lowering crime’ in a general sense. For the individual rehabilitation is about giving something back to the community through what has been learnt in prison. “We wanted to demonstrate to them that one’s life is never at a standstill because of imprisonment, instead they can use the time to redo their lives and learn new things”. In the MPAR what was learnt most obviously were music skills and knowledge. Involvement in the project revived participants’ hopes for pursuing careers in music, as in the case of those who wanted to sing opera, for example. With the new knowledge and capabilities they were accumulating, research actors were “naming their world” (Freire 1993: 13).

Data concerning the struggles research actors encountered in meeting - “Sometimes we are allowed to go out of the cells (and hold meetings), sometimes it is the opposite”

(Madikizela, pers. comm. 11 July) - and data reflecting the importance of sound leadership skills in regulating the emotions of the circle learners and forging ahead with rehabilitation ideals, were other related factors. “They are doing everything in their power to frustrate us [but] when we get the opportunity we are going to work hard because we know what we want to achieve” (Madikizela, Ibid). The way struggles were understood and overcome augured well for me to look at how these might have contributed to the successes and failures experienced within the process.

Motivation was a theme that permeated the research: it could come from within an individual or from constant encouragement from outside, and I think the evaluation aspect of the process showed how participants could determine areas of success and failure, which is a crucial element in continuing to be motivated. It is common knowledge that motivation to perform (whether musically or otherwise) emanates from steps of achievement and encourages people to even higher levels. Foucault’s idea of the ‘governmentality’ of an individual’s intrinsic or extrinsic power in interacting with other people is related to this (Foucault’s 1991), as is his notation of the technology of the self, taken up by DeNora (2000), who contends that subsequent actions become a medium for aesthetic agency, helping individuals to alter their behaviour and regulate their emotions, by aligning their thoughts and actions to produce the desired outcome. This in turn serves as motivation to produce.

In the MPAR research actors were both physically and psychologically induced to perform and show productive signs. They were made to learn on their own in the music circles (perform) and demonstrate results of their learning (productive signs) at all meetings. Their previous docile state of mind (that of limited musical knowledge) was dependent on a system of rewards, hence they were locked into what Olwage (2003: 181) refers to as “utility-docility”. The research leaders induced in themselves and influenced others (music circle learners) to reproduce their ideas in their own ways of thinking for successful social transformation, for the benefit of the individual and others involved, effecting what Freire’s advocates through his notion of *conscientização*: the development in people of a critical understanding of situations and awareness of their capacity to change society or circumstances. Thus, the research became a social transformative process that induced from within the research actors’ self-initiation and motivation to take part in order to change their situation.

The value of education was linked to the idea of rehabilitation, as in, “learning theory of music is important if you want to sing opera”, another example being the action plans of the Double Quartet and Mduduma’s Theory of Music circle, when they purposefully attempted transcription of their songs and scales from one music notation to another. For me, this kind of thing should also lead to a new way of thinking within DCS where consideration of the type of education curriculum for offenders is an important element in the construction of their rehabilitation goals. The ideals represented by ‘rehabilitation’ among offenders definitely saw education as a key tool in the ability to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national and individual needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities.

6.13 Summary of findings: Successes and failures

Evidence of success can be seen at a number of different levels. At the meta level, the whole project was successfully carried out and completed over the course of a year despite setbacks; the organisational problems were all solved in one way or another; the DCS and many other people came on board and worked together on the whole in a very constructive way; and the project elicited a massive amount of data for my research and for my recommendations to the DCS. It involved more and more people as it went along; it empowered offenders and other research actors in many different ways; it showed the DCS possibilities for cultural education and activities beyond the ‘choir competition’ model.

At the group level, a sense of comradeship was developed that had not existed before through people from many different educational levels and social backgrounds working together collaboratively. They created an environment - and created the view of the possibility for that environment - that was far less competitive and hostile and more tolerant and positive, improving group dynamics for some of the offenders. (I did not follow up on how that was sustained later.) All groups succeeded to a greater or lesser degree in developing or improving their administrative and management skills as a group; all of the groups made musical discoveries, and most made musical progress. Groups

produced good action plans, and the maintenance of the 11 music circles right through to the end can be seen as a success; and an additional group outside prison was established.

On the individual level: research co-ordinators learnt an enormous amount about managing research and managing people and difficult situations which also involved learning how to solve problems. Research leaders managed to give satisfactory reports in the main, and they maintained momentum for their groups and consistency in their goals, while still allowing goals to be constantly revisited - as is the purpose of PAR.

As PAR is context-specific, areas of success and failure, even notions of success and failure, differ from one project to another, and this is what makes PAR work so significant as a social science research method (MacIntyre 2008). The results are never predictable. For this reason, Wadsworth (cited in MacIntyre 2008: 67) advocates PAR as “a theory of possibility rather than a theory of predictability”. In the case of the MPAR in MMCC in 2007, the notion of success was pegged quite low: the very fact of being able to do this project in a South African prison in an economically very poor and educationally very inadequate part of the country, was a success in itself. But as projects like these progress, the bar is raised even on the notion of success as it goes along, and although I tended to be over-optimistic, seeing success even in challenges and setbacks, I was not unrealistic. I also do not think most people involved were unrealistic, except perhaps some of the younger offenders, who may have expected instant results and were frustrated at having to work hard for them. There is a sense in which everything that comes along in a piece of action research like this, everything done or said, discussed, acted on, changed, all resolutions of difficulties, can be seen as contributing to growth and development, and hence as evidence of success in the broader picture.

Given the enjoyment and personal fulfilment that I experienced in conducting the research and observing its effects in life after the project, I would rather consider the successes of the project than the failures. It is nevertheless important to examine the project for the constraints on success, and decide what the failures were. Even though there is no fixed formula for designing, practising and implementing PAR projects, there are typical characteristics. In establishing what worked and what did not in the MPAR (compared to other PAR studies), I theorise that people expected to ‘learn’ and thought in terms of ‘school’ far more than I would have liked, even at the end. However, I am also mindful of

the nature of the research itself, which allows for critical reflection and dialogue that is often not possible in the formal education system. And as Maguire (1987: 9) asserts, PAR work demands that “those most affected be involved in setting research parameters and feeding into the process for further discourse”, so the reasons why some things went better than others is partly a factor of the input of ‘those most affected’. Failures have to be seen as relative to goals, and relative to the way discourse developed.

One of the downsides of the process was the bias towards a performance-based medium of empowerment and development, perhaps influenced by ethos of “the work of the certificate” (Olwage 2005: 28) - prevalent not only in prison but in education generally. The attempts of research leaders at analysis of the findings were superfluous for a number of reasons. Firstly, the academic exercise did not involve the research participants to the end since they felt inadequate in dealing with such academically inclined exercises. Secondly, they were only satisfied with me presenting their work and involvement in a positive light and hierarchising their status as performing offenders with a better status than ordinary offenders. They were concerned with projecting a positive image, once again. Thirdly, I found the research actors, particularly the offenders, rather too careful about specifications pertaining to prison conditions that constrained their participation, except for Madikizela. Maybe their ‘policing’ of themselves - ‘self-censoring’ (Weis and Fine 2004: 113) for fear of extension of their sentences, stifled the data interpretation process. Very often such matters were communicated as “izinto zalapha ejele” [prison issues] and such utterances were often void of elaboration no matter how much you tried to draw participants out. It was only after Dubula, for example, that we got to learn about encroaching gangsterism in his music circle in prison and we may perhaps never know what contributed to the slow musical progress of the two music circles that involved the youngsters in the project, particularly, the Juvenile Gospel music circle under Majanti. Fourthly and finally, the limited schooling experience and broken family structure of some participants (evident from their profiles) who grew up without parents or guardians, may have contributed to a lack of reflexivity about wrongs and rights, and therefore, reflecting on one’s opinion and ideas did not come easily.

Their attempts at interpretation of data, however, both verbally (at the cycle-end meetings) and in written reports (in the journals) were somewhat engaging and often well articulated, particularly around aspects that pertained to what they had learnt, what had changed in

their lives and how they had benefited from the project: all the more pleasing since a large number were released on parole immediately after the end of the MPAR project.

I had to maintain a certain level of academic rigour in the analysis and interpretation of data and this ultimately was my prerogative as the main researcher. Normally, in PAR studies, all participants would be involved at all stages of the research. Their granting me the sole opportunity to do the final analysis and interpretation of data was congruent however with ensuring the production of an academic report of Doctoral standard.

The nature of the environment in which we operated and the limited educational and musical background of participants, were the two major challenges. Areas of slow progress, musically, also emanated from the time span itself: four cycles over one year, the first of which was in any case preliminary, was too short a time to see 'development' in a hugely significant way. Usually AR and PAR projects span more than a year: even Detterbeck's (2002) short stint on AR within a larger project in KwaZulu Natal was spread over 18 months; Goodall's (1997-2001) project was completed over five years. Our year was made shorter by the sudden winding down of DCS activities at the end of the year, which shortened the last cycle. Indicators of the significant life-changing effects of the project and the grasp of the method were not so obvious at the time of the MPAR and finalising of the thesis. Life after the MPAR is beginning to tell a different story, as individual participants time and again surface to report to me on their progress and achievements.

The MPAR fulfilled its specified period with the handing over of certificates of participation in June 2008. This event strengthened ties with the research actors, more so because a number of the research actors were already released but came for the ceremony and some with their new music groups performed in the ceremony as guest performers, for example Dubula and Madikizela's groups. Mawawa's group and the Hip-hop Kwaito music circles also featured in the programme.

The shortness of the project might have left participants feeling disappointed, even let down. (I did not ask about this, and it is subject to further research enquiry.) To date I still support some of the MPAR's former participants in establishing their own projects, which is positive in some ways but also speaks to a degree of dependency for information

seeking, and I am hoping that there will gradually be greater self-sufficiency for both DCS and MPAR research actors as they re-establish themselves in the society.

For two years (2009 and 2010) DCS put on hold the NOCC, but continued with internal music activities because of political changes in the country and the FIFA Soccer World Cup in 2010. Recently, the area commissioner from the MMCC contacted me and Ms Mlandu for input in reviving the NOCC for the local and national competitions in October 2011. Also, the research unit of DCS which initially sanctioned the research have expressed their interest in a seminar-type of meeting where I am to present my findings and recommendations.

With notable exceptions, few participants acquired instrument-playing skills, and at times musical progress was static. The amount of notation - a skill on which great emphasis was placed when people set their goals - that could be mastered in three short cycles was very limited. There was a rather high drop-out rate in the recorder music circle, (but on a positive note the group re-convened to form the spiritual Dance circle), guitar lessons were abandoned, and the keyboard lessons that were the goal for one group never materialised. However, at least one participant acquired keyboard skills, two participants acquired recorder skills, and by the end of the project the keyboard player had started furthering his knowledge and skills by teaching a fellow participant. Although skills and knowledge as represented here by musical progress is not a necessary requirement of PAR, but rather, a sideline, or offshoot, to the extent that goals were set in this direction that were not reached. Expectations in this regard should be viewed not as failure but a reality of music education, where instrument-playing skills are usually acquired over a far longer period than a year. A performance-based medium for instrument playing among offenders is only the starting point for unleashing potential.

However, I see these shortcomings, as explained above, as disappointments rather than failures, because there *was* musical development and *after all* these were ‘experimental try-outs’ (Rob Lammerts 1988: 88), particularly in the area of the traditional music genres. *And* there was performance-based music development; people learnt how to present themselves on stage, for example. There was an increase in music vocabulary, e.g. ‘*a capella*’, and a list of musical terms had to be generated for the Choir music circle as they became aware of professional music standards required for an artistic performance. They

also wanted to polish their dance styles so that they could “perform with professional standards”.

In defining failure and success in PAR, Reason (1993: 1268) also reminds us that “PAR takes place within a community of enquiry which is capable of effective communication and self-reflection” and this self-reflection is not a licence “for ‘anything goes” (Ibid). In the MPAR critical dialogue balanced reflexivity most of the time, and although there were discipline problems, they did not arise from a misunderstanding about reflexivity.

The main things achieved cannot be measured against the criterion of objective truth but only against the criterion of whether the people involved are better off because of their experiences as participants in the MPAR. This is why I see most failures as disappointments or ‘short-falls’ in terms of expectations set at the beginning. The musical progress made by participants could have been faster but expectations were scaled down once people saw how hard it was to progress, and continued to make more limited but steady progress. The upside was that teaching each other became more important than it first seemed to be, the ‘cascade’ method being a case in point. Even though the achievement of technical (i.e. motor) skills was not high, there was some achievement in the sense of creating aesthetic awareness, and respect for the diversity of complexity of music as a mode of performance and writing.

More could have been achieved by the Choir music circle had the intervening variables of other DCS programmes not affected their early stoppage. Of the 148 insider participants, only 18 research actors acquired music literacy skills. However, some methodological aspects of music teaching and learning were addressed, and this, according to Goodall (2002), is a key to the empowerment process within PAR: knowing even in a short time and in a limited way how to use the method to maximise results, was significant.

I believed from the outset that participants needed to know that findings of the research would be presented and published to various communities, academic and otherwise: hence the ethical considerations at the beginning of the project and the need for consent given by participants. Also, the five-point evaluation plan was specifically geared towards participants’ work being presented and disseminated at various points and occasions to others. This did not always go well, especially when research leaders had to make

corrections on their reports before cycle-end meetings; the focus was always on showcasing what they could do as performers. Even though I continually explained such intentions to the research actors they were not interested in reading through the summaries and translations of their narratives when I took them to them. There would be a variety of responses such as, “You should just write things that show we have changed”; or, “As long as we are there to show them that we are good”.

But as MacIntyre (2008: 55) says after having conducted a three-year PAR project: “Talking about how one’s life will be presented in published work and then seeing one’s life on paper are two different experiences and engender different sets of feelings and response”. It would have been interesting to see how the research actors would have portrayed themselves on paper. On the whole, when on stage they were but excellent performers just ‘naming their world’. The academic discourse that my analysis and interpretations were embedded in were not so glossy a picture, particularly the offenders. I believe that their visibility through the panopticon was once again in control for the eye of the officials to see them as good performers behind bars, perhaps, to influence parole releases among offenders and for permanent absorption into the payroll of DCS by job-seekers like Mpopo for instance. Also there was a sense in which I remained the authority, the ‘mother’, the ‘university person’ whose task was to assist them, rather than vice versa. For a greater number of them, presenting their reports at cycle-end meetings was as far as they could go, which is not to downplay the importance of such presentations. I however was the sole participant in analysing and interpreting data; the research coordinators assisted only in ensuring that all DVD footages were edited. The fact that most of the participants were released from incarceration by the end of 2007 would have made it difficult for them to continue to be associated (they went back to many different areas of the Eastern Cape). It also made it difficult for me to do much follow-up work, so I was reliant on their contacting me, as and when they needed to.

Within the music circles one faded away and three started up, and the final cycle-end meeting left the project with seven still to be evaluated. Growth in the research project cannot however only be measured only quantitatively and range of skills, but also by how these were used and how they contributed to the intellectual development of participants, and to their general life-skills development. Skills of a cognitive nature as research

participants became more reflexive increased, and they sharpened their skills in working together, understanding how to manage difficulties, and how to lead.

The DCS will need to ensure that projects such as this are not once-off, and that in the context of education in prison music education should filter through all correctional centres and be made accessible to all offenders who use music to transform their lives. In the next (and last) chapter I propose some directional changes and pointers to the kind of music education programme that could be appropriate for the prison environment and its inhabitants, as these emerged from data collected through the MPAR process.

6.14 Concluding thoughts

The results from the data were strong indicators, to me, of a number of issues pertaining to education in general and music education itself. Matters of concern that took centre stage included methods and approaches to teaching and learning, content, skills audit, problems and challenges experienced (illiteracy rating as the number one problem), values attached to education and education. I argue that the key aspect in thinking about designing and implementing a music education curriculum for South African prisons is the manner in which the elements of education such as those emerging from this research manifested themselves. Here, these elements were not imposed on the participants but naturally flowed from their individual and collective efforts through active participation and discovery that was self-initiated.

I agree that to a certain extent at the beginning of the process some amount of influence and consciousness-raising was essential through the activation workshop. However, the process was not in any way prescriptive; hence participants were given the opportunity to choose with whom they were going to learn. The what, why and how of the learning was their guided responsibility. I use the term ‘guided responsibility’ since the outside researchers played a major role in coordinating, supporting and facilitating the research, its procedures and processes, as is characteristic of any PAR project, including the MPAR. This was of the essence since the knowledge base of the inside researchers was largely locally contextualised to the prison environment. My data shows that before the

intervention there was no formally structured and recognisable music education forum in the environment apart from the music competitions.

Findings of this study indicate that participants see education as a tool for lifelong learning, something that will benefit them even in future. This is especially so with skills-related learning both in music and elsewhere. These will need constant refinement through practice and interaction. The results generated by the research also indicate that learning is not a once-off thing and is not static, as facilitated by the cyclic nature of the research. Furthermore, some of the results, especially the music education themes, which illustrated that music teaching and learning, is extensive and a longer time-frame than a year is crucial. The failure to acquire skills in playing of instruments is a case in point. Further, out of the 153 research actors in the MPAR excluding the five outside researchers and the male intern, only three inside researchers managed to learn some skills in instrument playing.

In the next and final chapter, because of a strong link between education and the findings of the research, I suggest strategies and ideas that could strengthen the vision that both DCS and offenders have about music in prison by introducing the teaching and learning of music as an examinable subject in prisons. In this way, career directions in music for offenders during and after incarceration may be followed. As I advocate for a music education curriculum in prisons, I am reminded that such a curriculum should, among other things, be used to create a favourable musical environment, one in which every learner can undergo the maximum musical growth consistent with his ability and his interests. This suggests that *all* learners should be provided the time and assistance to realise their potential and that DCS officials should receive the necessary training to manage this developmental strategy.

The stories told here demonstrate some values of resistance, defiance and compliance interwoven with lifelong learning and these microscopic technologies of power underlying these stories are useful in the description of power dynamics involved in planning for a curriculum. Such power dynamics in curriculum design should help the planners in realising that formal learning, typically concentrated in the earlier stages of life, can no longer sustain an individual throughout their life. The praxial theory will attempt to address this in Chapter 7. Through the MPAR I have examined the lessons learnt from

musicians in real life from the point of view of praxial philosophy of music education. These lessons could be used to inform classroom (curriculum) practices and principles for curriculum design. It should be noted that the best methods are those that involve people in meaningful experiences.

The procedures within the MPAR, including the evaluation process, were themselves emancipatory for all participants, who constantly and continuously exercised choices about topics, ways of learning, wants, needs, likes and dislikes. Issues of mutuality and reciprocity in negotiating their freedom and development as knowledge contributors prevailed in a meaningful and free environment during the learning process. Regardless of how careful we were in the MPAR in normalising and regulating power relations, the contradictions of institutionalised power/knowledge relations were sometimes inescapable. Foucault's notion of panopticism as a technology of power comprised within the MPAR a whole set of different instruments and techniques of institutionalised power at both macro (the prison environment) and micro (individual learning) levels.

In this scenario music could, arguably, not be said to have been a contributor to the change of status of research actors, but rather served as an aesthetic agent allowing participants, especially offenders and first time musicians like Mpopo, some elements of psychological freedom to make their own choices and acquire life skills useful in society. It is in this sense that I see the MPAR as having been a successful enterprise. In a situation where nothing like it existed, or had ever existed, it ensured a positive identity construction for offenders for reintegration into society as normal and economically active citizens. The sustainability, degree of rehabilitation and extent of individuals' development and empowerment through the MPAR will continue to unfold as they interact with others in the communities where they live.

CHAPTER 7: A DIALOGICAL LIFELONG LEARNING MODEL FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF OFFENDERS THROUGH MUSIC EDUCATION: SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DCS

7.1 Introduction

The situations depicted in previous chapters invite DCS to respond to new realities and opportunities for music education in prisons, where there are differing time-frames for attainment levels and outputs, and where different approaches to the achievement of goals and assessment, on-the-job training, and notions of lifelong learning are implied (Fejes and Nicolle 2008). DCS should learn from the experiences of selected and volunteering musicians behind bars, and draw up a model for inclusive music education where participants will engage in more ‘experimental try-outs’ (Lammerts 1988: 88) along the lines of this MPAR. This would ensure that the challenge of rehabilitation is centralised to all educational activities and that music programmes assist in maximising delivery on corrections, development, security, care, facilities and after-care for all offenders. The thinking in DCS about rehabilitation already points in that direction, but it could go further.

The music education curriculum and the learning model I propose call for curriculum content to be related to real life and be needs-driven and problem-based, so as to enable participants to identify with what is taught. My focus in this final chapter is thus not on recommending more MPAR projects in other prisons, but on developing an ideal music ‘curriculum’ or programme for prisons in South Africa, and on advocating strategies and educational approaches that may be useful in such a programme. Such a programme may be more widely applicable to the music education system in South Africa.

These recommendations emanate from the experiences encountered through the MPAR at MMCC, but also arise out of the fact that I was asked by the then MMCC senior management to report back on my project and make recommendations. In this final chapter, then, I argue for a music curriculum approached from a lifelong learning and dialogical perspective that is interwoven and neatly stitched to action and reflection characteristic of the PAR method in prisons. The proposed curriculum covers the varying

literacy levels of participants, ranging from illiterate to semi-literate and, the need of the adult learners to understand through dialogue and discussion what, why and how certain educational experiences are engineered. Firstly, I explain what music education is and why it should be taught in South African prisons. Secondly, I explain the concept of lifelong learning. Thirdly, I give a version of what dialogical learning is. Finally, I suggest my own model of dialogical lifelong learning as an instrument to drive music education for offenders in South African prisons.

7.2 Music education

According to Lundquist and Sims (1996) supported by Regeleski (2002: 73), “The teaching and learning of music is more than merely notes and rhythms; it seeks to develop the whole person. It touches on the development of the affective domain, including music appreciation and sensitivity,” an observation that Mti (2001) and Skosana (2003: 7) made on hearing offenders sing in the National Offenders Choir Competitions. Skosana said music was “A very important tool in the hands of those responsible for the rehabilitation of the offenders ... It gives the offenders a sense of self-worth and it enhances their self-respect”. It is in this vein “that the Department supports this competition”.⁶⁶ Skosana particularly noticed the good conduct of offenders during the competitions; in the 12 years of the biennial NOCC, “not a single escape of prisoners has ever occurred” (Skosana Ibid). On that score, I also regard the teaching and learning of music as essential in prison, since it directly and indirectly moulds the character of individuals engaged in music practices.

There are a number of other valuable and well known reasons why music education should be taught in any situation and to any human being. Firstly, it helps to develop fine-motor skills in students who play instruments or dance, and it expands cognitive development through the recognition and interpretation of music notation. Secondly, it can play an important part in personality development. It can encourage the capacity for creativity, improvisation, and understanding and appreciation of the beautiful and the good. Thirdly, the incorporation of music training from pre-school to post-secondary education is common in most nations because involvement in music is considered a fundamental

⁶⁶ www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm. Accessed on 10 February 2004.

component of human culture and behaviour, hence my proposal that it be extended to prisons.

In some communities, and even entire national education systems, however, music is given very little support as an academic subject; music teachers feel that they must actively seek greater public endorsement for music education as a legitimate subject of study. This perceived need to change public opinion has resulted in a variety of approaches commonly called music advocacy. Some forms of music advocacy are based upon legitimate scholarly arguments and scientific findings, while other examples rely on unconvincing data and remain rather controversial (Plummeridge 1991).

An important aspect to consider in organising music curricula is that each culture possesses a musical language that reflects its traditions, concerns, and activities. In recommending a music curriculum for South African prisons, I fully appreciate the view that traditional rationales for music education have focused almost exclusively on the idea of “aesthetic education”, in this sense defining it as having a formal or expressive aesthetic essence which needs proper (formal) schooling (Reimer 1970: 1989). I align my proposition to research in ethnomusicology which makes it clear that musical things are not always strictly musical and therefore, if one follows the traditional approach, extra-musical relationships that pertain to music’s function in society and its praxial function and value may be compromised if the sociological and anthropological aspects of music are ignored. These aspects have important ramifications for a music curriculum in prisons.

Because of the social nature of music, for a music curriculum to be successfully implemented in prison an attempt should be made to understand music in terms of the variety, meaning and values evidenced in particular contexts and communities in actual practice, thus a praxial view is needed as suggested by Alperson (cited in Regeleski 2002: 76). This view seeks to understand what music has meant to people, emphasising a consideration of the function of music in an aesthetic context. This kind of curriculum approach responds to contemporary life by developing a flexible general musicianship that can serve various forms of “musicking” (Ibid: 77).

Good teaching cleverly intertwines the intimate connection between music and personal and social needs. With this in mind musical value should always be related in some key

way to the needs at stake, such as the personal benefits of musicking and the present value, the rewards of acquiring and improving knowledge and skills. The ideal music curriculum I am arguing for should make a difference in the participants' lives. This kind of music education can be individual, involve lifelong learning, and be provided in community contexts.

7.3 Lifelong learning

Nicoll and Fejes (2008) in defining lifelong learning, focus on its universal nature. They assert that "Lifelong learning is thus promoted as a powerful policy lever for change within contemporary societies, and it requires serious contemplation". They also stress the transformative quality of it as they acknowledge it as "A truth, as a required response to an increasing pace of change ..." (Ibid: 1-2). However, the definition of lifelong learning that impacts on the individual human being is what Zackrisson and Assarsson (cited in Nicoll and Fejes 2008) express as "It is the lifelong, lifewide, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons". As such, it not only enhances social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but also competitiveness and employability.⁶⁷ The term 'lifelong learning' recognises that learning is not confined to childhood or the classroom, but takes place throughout life and in a range of situations, even in prisons. This means that learning can no longer be divided into a place and time to acquire knowledge such as school and a place and time to apply the knowledge acquired as in the workplace. Sometimes lifelong learning aims to provide educational opportunities outside standard educational systems, which can be cost-prohibitive, if available at all.

Lifelong learning presupposes that education is never-ending and futuristic. I recommend lifelong learning as a tool to enhance music education in prison, because the future is constantly changing, and so must the citizen. The assumption is that everyone is educable and needs to be a lifelong learner. In recommending lifelong learning as part of the construct of a music curriculum in prison, I would stress that the basis on which lifelong learning operates should be clearly understood; it does not rely on the use of traditional

⁶⁷ www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lifelong_learning#cite_note-eric-0#cite_note-eric-0. Accessed 14/11/2009.

lectures, other approaches to teaching can be appropriated in the same way that praxial music education does. Lifelong learning suggests particular ways of working such as problem-based learning, project-oriented learning, thematic studies and working in groups or teams.

Generally, then, knowledge and skills are identified by learners through processes of self-directed learning. Lifelong learning is understood to be interactive and concerns activities that can take place anywhere; it should be represented as something that is fun and naturally rewarding. As we saw in the MPAR project and according to the literature, lifelong learning seems to generate other creative outlets and help vary the practices of validation which fabricate subjects differently. Validation of lifelong learners assists in examining the knowledge base, prior or after a learning action, to position learners as people who have acquired some new knowledge, in one way or another, thus advancing their individual, societal and economic aspirations. The emphasis here is on varied strategies of validation techniques for observation and normalisation of the lifelong learner (who in prison would be offenders and DCS staff, if they choose to be part of the programmes) to provide something new, yet provide them the means to be more productive through the examination.

Given the fact that adulthood is usually longer than childhood, and that the emphasis is on extending opportunities, lifelong learning is largely associated with adult learning. It is presented by its advocates as a tool to handle a diverse society with different dilemmas, as well as supporting humanistic and democratic values and it includes everyone. Generally, it is understood to be able to solve the dilemmas of some of the unemployed, people with disabilities, and all adults who have not previously earned qualifications. I believe that even some of the offenders when released from prison, and having gone through music education and training, may find that their employment problems are solved, as in the case of Dubula.

If DCS opts for a music curriculum, they can make use of existing legal and constitutional operational frameworks such as the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in South Africa and collaborate with such government departments as DE, DSRAC and the Department of Social Development (DSD) to tap into their experience and expertise. Such collaborations could assist in

validating both ex-offenders and offenders for employment opportunities. The MPAR has gone some way in paving this path for DCS. I also suggest that the formal administrative units devoted to the discipline of adult education and lifelong learning existing in a number of universities could also become an important resource for accreditation and collaborations that can be explored, as exemplified by the Academy of Lifelong Learning, which is an administrative unit in the university-wide Professional and Continuing Studies Unit at the University of Delaware and the Centres of Learning and Teaching (CLTD) at local universities.

Learning to learn, that is, learning how to recognise learning strategies, and monitor and evaluate learning, is a precondition for lifelong learning. This suggests validation of both prior and current learning which determines future learning. At the same time, lifelong learning in the eyes of Foucault (1991) is a practice and a figure of thought of disciplinary power that functions through the examination; it presupposes recognition of prior learning since validation looks into the past, the present and the future. This means that when recognition of prior learning is validated, new knowledge about both the lifelong learner and the environment is created, as in knowledge about an individual's prior knowledge, the prior experiences through which they learnt this knowledge, the location of these experiences and the many ways in which individuals such as these within a population might have had their learning supported in advance through the organisation of flexible learning opportunities.

Foucault (1990: 126-127) refers to "validation or governmentality" as a measurement. Validation should act to encourage learning and to position the people (in this case the offenders) to discipline and normalise their lives. The people would be invited to learn to gather knowledge that might have a value in a coming validation process. The very possibility that people might have their learning validated in the future acts to normalise their lives and that is learnt within the present. The offenders in the MPAR always prepared feverishly and with great commitment for the cycle-end meetings since they viewed them differently, rather than as mere offenders. I also recommend validation as an aspect of the process of any teaching of a lifelong learner because, firstly, it gathers knowledge about the individuals; and secondly, I see assessment and the dialogical processes involved in it as the starting point for gaining knowledge about the subject.

Without this process, formalisation and documentation of the learner's competences are impossible, and perhaps particularly so in the prison environment.

With the process of validation, lifelong and lifewide experiences and everything that the learners acquire should constitute experiences and events that may well guide the participants towards changing their identities for the better. If DCS adopt my recommendation, I would propose that the MPAR routines which the research actors went through be incorporated. Such discourses of validation and other things could help to normalise the idea that informal learning should be formally assessed as well as formal education, but also informal and non-formal learning.

Validation methods not only measure what has been learnt in the past, nor do they only provide a mechanism of power for the extension of the panoptic gaze lifewide; but they are also techniques for governing learning in the future. Methods should promote flexible and individualised learning and intensify currently known ways of governing. I, thus, recommend that validation should be built into the present in order for assessment to be understood by all the actors in adult and informal education as part of the process so that they know that they will always be assessed whether in or out of prison.

Discourses of lifelong learning imply that the education of adults should vary in order to give a choice (Fejes and Nicoll 2008). Choices as to whether lifelong learners should be assessed or not do not feature in this debate, otherwise validation would help in promoting and normalising learning, which may otherwise be dubious if learners had not gone through such assessment processes. It could serve as motivation and promote further attainment of educational goals. Validation could also help determine the starting point for operationalising lifelong learning. I recommend a validation scheme for lifelong learning in promoting music education. With validation in place, dialogue, reciprocity and mutuality are inbuilt as the learning provider and the lifelong learner dialogue about experiences, aspirations, hopes, likes and so on through validation, preferably using a variety of techniques. This leads me to explore dialogical learning as one of the strategies to facilitate music education.

7.4 Dialogical learning: Its underpinnings and a description

In describing dialogue, Freire (1970) suggests it as a human phenomenon whose essence is that of *the word with* its constitutive elements. This means that within it we find two dimensions, reflection and action (praxis), an essential aspect of facilitating teaching and learning. These dimensions explain that without action and reflection there can be no transformation, no acquisition and improvement. Also dialogue, the essential prerequisite for lifelong learning, is equally essential for music education in prison or anywhere else to flourish. Learning out of praxis to Freire (Ibid) negates true education and makes dialogue impossible. It lies at the heart of music education. In recommending the implementation of a music curriculum in South African prisons, with dialogical learning as one of the tools, I am aware that dialoguing will not necessarily be easy with the current prison structures. It could work if the DCS officials and offenders would make serious attempts at initiating the process of dialoguing from the very beginning.

The description above suggests that dialogue is thus a necessity, it is the encounter and interaction in which the “united reflection and action of the dialoguers [lifelong learners and the teachers] are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized” (Freire Ibid: 54). This dialogue (Ibid) cannot be reduced to the act of one person ‘depositing’ ideas in another; nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be ‘consumed’ by the discussants. Here, one cannot “name [speak] on behalf of other [another]” (Ibid): that is domination. This means that both the offenders and the DCS officials need to come together, debate, discuss and agree on the characteristics and implementation of music education in prison. In support of Freire, Jürgen Habermas (1996) in his theory of communicative action proposes that the act of coming together and agreeing takes the place of revolution as a mode of change.

The kind of dialogical learning I am advocating here, suggests a number of other elements of dialogue that are value-laden. For Freire (1970: 55), one such element is love for the world and for people, since love “is an act of courage, not of fear and love is commitment to others, for it is a commitment to their cause [including their empowerment]” (Ibid). Other values embedded in the form of dialogue advocated include: reciprocity, mutuality, interpersonal skills and a passionate commitment to the development of others. The other element is humility, since the “naming of the world” (Freire Ibid: 53) through which

people constantly recreate and transform their world cannot be an act of arrogance. I suggest that for music education to be implemented successfully in prison, the dialoguers must attempt together to learn more to advance in thinking on the subject.

Another dimension of dialogue according to Freire (Ibid: 93) is an intense faith in humankind, faith in the power to make and remake, to create and recreate, faith in the vocation to be more fully human (which is not the privilege of an elite, but the birthright of all including offenders in prison). Also, dialogue cannot exist without hope. Hopelessness is a form of silence, “of denying the world and fleeing from it” (Ibid: 57). Freire firmly believes that dialogue cannot be carried on in a climate of hopelessness and faithlessness, for without them dialogue is a farce that inevitably degenerates into paternalistic manipulation. With faith comes trust. And trust is vital if the dialoguers are to engage in critical thinking. “For the critic, the important thing is the continuing transformation of reality. Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking” (Ibid). This could be evolving if music education is implemented and approached from the dialogical and praxial perspective.

Seemingly, without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education. Education, which is able to resolve the contradiction between teacher and student, takes place in a situation in which both negotiate their roles through dialogue in recognition of the contribution that both can make in the teaching and learning space. Thus, the dialogical character of music education as a practice of freedom does not begin when the teacher-student meets with the students-teachers in a pedagogical situation, but rather when the former first ask themselves, *what they* will dialogue with the latter *about*. Preoccupation with the content of dialogue is really preoccupation with the programme content of music education. Here, Habermas suggests that no individual or group of people could legitimately exclude others from deliberating on any matter that interests them. He maintains that the rights of people to participate in deliberation are legally institutionalised for all (Habermas 1996: 147).

I align myself with Freire’s (1970) belief, that the starting point for organising the programme content of music education must be the present situation reflecting the aspirations and needs of the people. These sentiments relate to validation where both

dialogue and lifelong learning interact. This suggests that people, in naming their world - transforming their lives - should be allowed to negotiate, agree, learn from others and with others and debate about their aspirations and interests for true dialoguing to prevailing situations. In such situations notions of determination, flexibility, patience, goal-orientedness and lifelong learning are embedded. It is for these reasons that I recommend that a dialogical lifelong learning routine and method is essential if a music education curriculum is to be run in prison.

7.5 A dialogical lifelong learning (DLL) method

The dialogical lifelong learning method can be used for a music curriculum in prison that will facilitate empowerment of offenders even after release from prison, thus in rehabilitation. A number of principles are involved in dialogical lifelong learning. Firstly, it is a process model that is deeply rooted and intricately woven into the PAR method. It suggests shifts in knowledge organisation within communities and countries, especially over the previous boundary between formal and informal or non-formal learning.

Secondly, it emphasises making use of the learners' perspective as a starting point even in deciding on the nature and content of the recommended music curriculum for prisons. The dialoguers applying the method would engage in an exploratory kind of learning where matters are debated, discussed and agreed upon before decisions are implemented about how, what and why things should be learnt. Further, decision-making should be an open-ended process where decisions on academic and administrative matters are left to the experts for refinement to the agreement of everyone, with opportunities to review issues through dialogue, as the need arises. In addition learner-centredness should be emphasised in teaching and learning in the interest of exposing learners to new learning and new ways of learning.

Thirdly, dialogical lifelong learning should be seen as a routine which includes a series of principles as discussed above; and a method that emphasises a variety of strategies to achieve goals. With this method, the lifelong learners could be reconfigured as adults who would be responsible for their own learning, who would want to learn, desire to discuss

and debate particular aspects of life and teaching and learning. After the experience of the MPAR project, I am confident that lifelong learners in this scenario would want to participate in knowledge creation and production; participants would use the recommended music curriculum to fit their own patterns of life. In this way, emancipation and freedom to participate become a valid part of this construct.

Fourthly, this kind of approach to education is liberating as it consists in victory of knowledge over power. It is for this reason that the dialogical lifelong learning processes can never be carried out and understood as a one-sided exertion of power but as shared enterprise - a dialogical point of view that espouses mutuality and reciprocity. It might be a good idea to adapt and adjust processes and the learning content to allow for disparities in different prison contexts. Literature has also shown that praxial methods, including dialogical lifelong method, are context-specific. Lastly, validation has a strong role to play in serving how this kind of method caters for further purposes ahead - positioning, restoring and reintegrating the offenders as responsible economic players in the country. After all, the ultimate goal is acquisition of music knowledge and skills for the betterment of humankind, more especially in the prison community.

I conclude by recommending the dialogical lifelong learning model framed on PAR processes and procedures as a vehicle for driving the implementation of a music curriculum in South African prisons. These days the buzz word is ‘metacognition’ - thinking about thinking, a higher order of thinking that lifelong learners try to achieve to be better people. The elements of dialogical lifelong learning that I have discussed above enrich the concept and make it a holistic approach to emancipating lifelong learners who are critical in their thinking. They cannot be better people on their own, but by dialoguing with others whose experiences and knowledge may contribute to the process of constructing new identities for offenders. My recommendations to DCS can thus be succinctly expressed as in the section that follows.

7.6. Recommendations for DCS

These recommendations are geared at proposing a music education curriculum model suitable for the prison environment in South Africa, given the levels of education and

knowledge about music in prisons as means to equip participants with knowledge and skills sustainable beyond incarceration. The model I am recommending should address specific aspects and have distinct characteristic traits that would ensure democratic practices and intellectual rigour expected of any curriculum with specific outcomes that would ensure products that can reason and apply the knowledge and skills attained independently and in varying situations. It is my view that such a model should be premised on and include the following aspects:

- a) A participatory action research approach to music education in prisons will be quite useful and successful as evidenced by the MPAR. Also, future PAR projects, with more involvement of DCS officers, not just as interns, is highly recommended for valuable projects that will realise DCS strategy of initiatives on 'needs-driven approaches' to rehabilitation and aftercare of offenders (*White Paper on Corrections in South Africa* (2005)).
- b) Maximised learner participation with needs-driven skills and knowledge, where opportunities at decision-making about content, strategies and approaches to learning are undertaken with all participants including offenders as the targeted learners. It should be characterised by opportunities to debate and discuss democratically in open dialogue among all stakeholders regardless of their office or position.
- c) Assessment should play a vital role with a variety of assessment strategies including, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, formative and summative evaluation with external stakeholders for credibility and accreditation of learning and achievements at the end of the learning period.
- d) Administratively, priority should be given to soliciting partnership with relevant departments such as: DoE, DSRAC, DSD, Labour and the relevant SETAS for clearance certificates of ex-offenders for job security. I strongly recommend that preferred programmes once agreed upon, be SAQA compliant for access to the job market and the education sector, thus creating opportunities for participants to be economically active and viable.
- e) In relation to the recommendation in (d) above, strong connections should be formed with both in-school and out-of-school education programmes offered through Further Education and Training (Junior Secondary to High schools) and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) FET Colleges. They should be roped in to ensure access into

their programmes for those who aspire to acquire degrees, diplomas and certificates in higher education.

- f) The programme content should be carefully considered and crafted to include: elements of both traditional and western music which will vary according to the needs of the learners in the short, medium and long term goals, to accommodate the diversity of cultures in the country and in prisons. Thus, aspects of formal, informal and non-formal education should also be incorporated, hence my recommendation to consider lifelong learning goals for acquisition of specific skills and knowledge for sustainable livelihoods. Such a programme would include non-formal, formal and informal approaches to teaching and learning such as workshops, learner-centred and problem-based approaches, classroom-based learning and evaluation and performance-based content for aesthetic and cognitive development of the participants.
- g) Evidenced by the MPAR experience, values in education should be an important part of this construct of a music education programme in prisons, particularly those values that enhance humaneness, respect, tolerance and various manifestations of sound human relations, and recognition and paying attention to notions of collective consciousness and individuality of participants as human beings.
- h) DCS would have the prerogative to employ music educators according to her departmental imperatives, however, I can only emphasise that those tasked with the duty to teach in the programmes should be qualified and accredited according to SAQA requirements that are already in place.

7.7 Concluding comments

Drawing on the theories of Michel Foucault and Paulo Freire, I have tried to use participatory action research to reveal how institutionalised power (as represented by the prison environment) operates through underhanded ways to exclude and frustrate offenders in transforming their lives. For example, even the participation of offenders in NOCC may be one main such way in exposing the abuse of power, by giving superficial choral experience with no thought of improving the musical skills of offenders, thus leaving development in this area to chance. Their long span of 18 months spent to learn the prescribed songs and yet reading music scores upside down after the 10 years of existence of the NOCC is more than enough to make me draw the conclusions above. Up

to now, I have not been able to come across another thesis that has devoted itself to the MPAR project for music education and how it can empower people in prison. My interest in this newly expressed topic is tangential and just bears on the main objective - developing a music curriculum for South African prisons through action research or action learning.

In this instance, I have reflected on what policy and programmes do to those involved. However, conscientisation and exposure to realities of transforming situations and lives, and matters of mutuality, reciprocity and resistance to technological power do much to help participants in initiating self-driven emancipation from such oppressive situations. The trajectories of hindrances in the prison environment as experienced in the MPAR, while offenders were given an opportunity by the same DCS officers to redo their lives, enact the panoptic nature of prisons and call for emancipation of the imprisoned mind of some of the officers themselves. From the findings of this research, I have come to realise that everyone is educable and needs to become a lifelong learner, including the DCS officials, if the music education curriculum is to succeed in prison as they are charged with the task of rehabilitating and reintegrating these future citizens who are behind bars, yet who have a lot to offer South Africa.

With dialogical lifelong learning, authentic music education will not be carried on by “A” for “B” or by “A” *about* “B,” but rather by “A” *with* “B,” and “A” alongside “B”, mediated by the issues that impress and challenge both parties, giving rise to opinions about it. Thus, dialoguers learn with and alongside each other. Their views, impregnated with values and concerns such as love, faith, trust, anxieties, doubts, hopes, hopelessness, and commitment, imply significant themes on the basis of using the dialogical lifelong learning method for which the programme content of a music curriculum in prisons should be needs-driven and problem-based. Such a curriculum would address the knowledge and skills gap of participants and would aim at solving socio-economic challenges by empowering participants with knowledge and competencies that would ensure employment opportunities of whatever nature, including providing access to further education. All of this can be achieved through the dialogical lifelong learning method for South African prisons, and it is my belief that it is one of the most valuable ways in which a project such as the one I conducted in MMCC can be developed into something more sustainable and systematic.

REFERENCES

Adel, C. and A.C. Kemp. 1992. Case Study and Action Research. In *Some Approaches to Research in Music Education*, ed. Anthony Kemp, ISME Research Commission 5, 111-137. London: International Society for Music Education.

Andersson, P. 2008. Recognition of Prior Learning as a Technique of Governing. In *Foucault and Lifelong Learning*, eds. A. Fejes and K. Nicoll, 126-137. London and New York: Routledge.

Argyris, C., B. Putnam and D. Smith. 1985. *Action science: concepts, methods and skills for research intervention*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Babbie, E. and Mouton, J. 2006. *The Practice of Social Research*. Cape Town. Oxford University Press.

Bently, L. 1999. *Paulo Freire: A Brief Biography*. <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-freir.htm>.

Biesta, G. 1998. Encountering Foucault in lifelong learning. In *Foucault and Lifelong Learning*, eds. A. Fejes and K. Nicoll, 193-205. London and New York: Routledge.

Bogdan, R.C. and S.K. Biklen. 1982. *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory methods*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Carr, W. and S. Kemmis. 2005. To mark the passage of more than twenty years since the first publication of *Becoming Critical: Knowing through action research*. In *Educational Action Research: An International Journal* 13 (3), 317-320.

Conway, C.M. and J. Borst. 2001. Action Research in Music Education. In *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*. 19 (2), p.3-22. Accessed 07 March 2005. <http://www.wits.ac.za/library/InfoTracWeb>: Expanded Academic Search ASAP. Braamfontein. University of the Witwatersrand.

Clandinin, J.D. and M.F. Connelly. 1999. *Narrative Enquiry*. Toronto: Vintage Books.

Czarniawska, B. 1998. *A Narrative Approach to Organization Studies*. London: Sage Publications.

Davis, B. and D. Sumara. 2005. Complexity Science and Educational Action Research: Toward a Pragmatics of Transformation. *Educational Action Research - An International Journal* 13(3), 453-464.

DeNora, T. 2000. *Music in Everyday Life*. London. Oxford University Press.

Department of Prisons. 1965. *Prison Institutions of South Africa* (Policy Document). Pretoria: Department of Prisons.

Department of Prisons. 1969. *Prison Administration in South Africa* (Policy Document). Pretoria: Department of Prisons.

Department of Correctional Services. 2001. *Restorative Justice - Healing the Wounds of Crime, Working for a Safer Community* (Policy Document).
<http://www.dcs.pwv.gov.za/correctionalservices/departement>.

Department of Correctional Services. 2004. *Annual Report Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons 2003/2004*. <http://www.polity.org.za/article/skosana-correctional-services-management-board-02122002-2002-12-02>. Accessed 24/11/2002.

Department of Correctional Services. 2005. *White Paper on Corrections in South Africa*.
<http://www.info.gov.za/whitepapers/2005/dcs.pdf&w=white+paper+papers+corrections+correction+south+africa+2005&d>. Accessed, 18/08/2006.

Derrida, J. 1967. *Writing and Difference*. London: Routledge.

Detterbeck, M. 2002. *South African Choral Music (Amakhwaya): Song, Contest and Formation of Identity*. University of Natal: unpublished PhD. thesis.

Dougan, J. 1999. The Mistakes of Yesterday, the Hopes of Pop Music, and the Prisoners. *American Music* 17(4), 447. Academic Search Premier. Accessed 03 March 2005. Mthatha: Walter Sisulu University.

Elliot, D. 1993. Music as Knowledge. In *Philosopher, Teacher, Musician: Perspectives on Music Education*, ed. R.E. Jorgensen, 21-40. Chicago: University of Illinois.

_____. 2005. Introduction. In *Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Fejes, A. and K. Nicoll, eds. 2008. *Foucault and Lifelong Learning, Governing the Subject*. London and New York: Routledge.

Fonti, J. 2000. A Rationale for Music Education in the Corrective Services Environment. In *Educational and Social Action Conference. Rehabilitation in Prisons Workshop*, 38. Accessed 03 March 2005. Academic Search Premier. Mthatha: Walter Sisulu University Library.

Foucault, M., ed. Colin Gordon. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon Books.

_____, ed. Paul Rainbow. 1984. Docile Bodies. In *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, 179-187. London: Penguin. New York: Pantheon Books.

_____. 1995(1978). *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. 2nd edition. New York: Vintage Books.

Freire, P. 1993(1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin Books.

Goodall, S. 1997-2000. *Music and Development*. The UDW Music Education Action Research Project, Report Phase 1, 6 and 8. Durban: UDW Music Education Action Research Project.

Habermas, J. 1971. *Knowledge and Human Interests*. Boston. Beacon Press.

_____. 1976. *Communication and the Evolution of Society*. Trans. T. MacCarthy. London: Heinemann.

Habermas, J., transl. W. Rheg. 1996. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Hattingh, J. P. 1994. Can Foucault Help Us to Decolonize the Mind? In *Beyond the Question of African Philosophy: A Selection of papers presented at the International Colloquia, 1994-1996*, ed. A.P.J. Roux and P.H. Coetzee, 123-128. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Herr, K. and G.L. Anderson. 2005. *The Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty*. London: Sage Publication.

Leonhard, C. and W.R. House. 1972. *Foundation and Principles of Music Education*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Hughes, I. 2001. Why Do I Choose Action Research? In *The Sage handbook of action research: participative inquiry and practice*, ed. Reason P and Bradbury, H. Portland: Oregon Health Sciences University.

Kalogerakis, G. 1997. Songs of Survival: Paradise Road. In *People Weekly*. 47(17), 9. Electronic Collection: A19348818. Accessed 7 March 2005.

<http://www.wits.ac.za/library/InfoTracWeb>:

Kemmis, S. and R. McTaggart. 1988. *The Action Research Planner*. 3rd edition. Geelong , Victoria: Deakin University Press.

_____. 2000. Participatory Action Research. In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln, 567-605. California: Sage.

Keynote Address by the Commissioner of Correctional Services, Mr Linda Mti, at third National Offenders Choir Competition, Kroonstad, 30 March 2001.

<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm>, accessed 31.10. 2008.

Keynote Address by the Minister of Correctional Services, Mr Ben Skosana, MP, at The National Prisoners' Choir Competitions, Good Hope Centre, Cape Town, 8 May 2003.

[http:// www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm](http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm), accessed 31.10. 2008.

Keynote Address by the Minister of Correctional Services, Mr Ben Skosana, MP, at the National Youth Day Celebrations in Pietermaritzburg Management Area. 17 June 2003.

[http:// www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm](http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2001/010403145p1001.htm), accessed 31.10. 2008.

Krippendorff, K. 2004. *Content Analysis: An Approach to its Methodology*. California. Sage Publications.

Lammerts, R. 1988. Activating Research. In *The Complexity of Relationships in Action Research*, ed. B. Boog et al, 81-98. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.

Leonhard, C. and House W. R. (1972), *Foundation and Principles of Music Education*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Lewin, H. 2002. *Bandiet: Out of Jail*. Cape Town: Random House Publishers.

Lewin, Kurt. 2010 (1946). Action Research and Minority Problems. In *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol.2. (4), 34-46. Online Publication.

Lundquist, Barbara R. and Winston T. Sims. 1996. African-American Music Education: Reflections on an Experience. In *Black Music Research Journal* Vol. 16(2), 311-336.

MacIntyre, A. 2008. *Participatory Action Research. Qualitative Research Methods Series* 52. California: Sage Publications.

Maguire, P. 1987. *Doing Participatory Action Research: A Feminist Approach*. Amherst, M.A.: University of Massachusetts Centre for International Education.

Mandela, N. 1995. *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Chicago: Gardners Books.

Mannak, M. 2008. *Africa: Prisons under the Magnifying Glass*. Cape Town: Inter Press Services (IPS). Accessed on 20 August 2008.<http://allafrica.com/stories>.

Miriam Mannak, Court?, Inter Press Service (Johannesburg),

McTaggart, R. 1991a. Principles for Participatory action Research. In *Adult Education Quarterly*, 41(3), 168-187.

McTaggart, R. 1993. Dilemmas in Cross-Cultural Action Research. In *Health Research: Political, Ethical and Methodological Issues*, eds.D. Colquhoun and A. Kellehear, 65-96. London: Chapman and Hall.

Mngoma, K. 1986. Music in African Education. In *Proceedings of the first national music educators' conference*, ed. C. Lucia, 115-121. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal.

Mouton, J. 2001. *How To Succeed In Your Masters and Doctoral Studies. A South African Guide and Resource Book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Ndlovu, C.M.J. 1996. Religion, Tradition and Custom in a Zulu Male Vocal Tradition. Rhodes University: unpublished PhD. thesis.

Nhlapo, P.J. 1993. *Choral Music: the voice of African song*. Braamfontein: Skotaville.

Nicky, G. 1993. Arts-Related Activities in Prisons. In *Convergence*, 00108146, 26 (3). EBSCO-EBSCOhost Online Research Database.

Olwage, G. 2003. The Work of the Certificate. In *Music and (Post) Colonialism: The Dialectics of Choral Culture on South African Frontier*. Grahamstown: Rhodes University PhD thesis.

Olwage, G. 2005. Discipline and Choralism: The Birth of Musical Colonialism. In *Music, Power, and Politics*, ed. Annie J. Randall, 25-46. New York and London: Routledge.

Palmquist, M. 1998. *Transactions: Teaching writing in computer-supported and traditional classrooms*. Greenwich, CT: Ablex.

Penny J. Timothy. 2000. Educating Prisoners: Lock Them Up, But Don't Throw Away The Education Key. In *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 0042742X. Vol. 67, No. 4. Accessed 03 March 2005. Academic Search Premier. Mthatha: Walter Sisulu University Library.

Plummeridge, C. 1991. *Music Education in Theory & Practice*. London: The Falmer Press.

Prison Institutions of South Africa. 1965. Pretoria: Department of Prisons.

Reason, P. 1993. Sitting between appreciation and disappointment: A critique of the special edition of Human Relations on action research. *Human Relations* 46 (10), 1253-1270.

Regelski, T. 2000. 'Critical Education', Culturalism and Multiculturalism. In *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 1(1) (April 2002), 14-39.

Regelski, T. 2002. On "methodolatry" and music teaching as critical and reflective praxis. *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 10(2), 102-123.

Reimer, B. 1989(1970). Music Education in a New Key: The Dissonance of Competence, Connectedness, Culture and Curriculum. In *Action, Criticism and Theory for Music Education*. Electronic Article. 15 of 39. Accessed 14 November 2009.
<http://www.Ebscohost.ac.za>.

Riding, P., S. Fowell, and P. Levy. 1995. An Action Research Approach to Curriculum Development. *Information Research* 1 (1), 1- 6. <http://InformationR.net/ir/1-1/paper2.html>.

- Sachs, A. 1990. *The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs*. Canada. Harper Collins Publishers.
- Stark, S. 2006. Using Action Research Learning for Professional Development. *Educational Action Research: An International Journal* 14 (1), 23-43.
- Steinberg, J. 2004. *The Number*. Johannesburg & Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers.
- Toch, H. 1967. The convict as researcher. In *Style and substance in sociology*, Trusty & Colvin. 497-500. Bank Street College of *Education*, New York.
- Twani, Z. 2002. The History and the Music of The Peacemakers. University of Pretoria: unpublished M. Mus. (Music Education) Thesis.
- Van Beinum, H. 1988. Engaging in Action Research. In *The Complexity of Relationships in Action Research*, ed. Boog, B. et al., 65-79. Tiburg: Tilburg University Press.
- Vokwana, T. 2003. Expressions in Black: A History of South African Black Choral Music Amakhwaya / Iikwayala. Unpublished manuscript.
- Young, I.M. 2000. *Inclusion and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wadsworth, Y. 1998. What is Participatory Action Research? Paper 2. In *Action Research International*. <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/p-ywadsworth98.html>
- Wilkinson and Burningham. 2003. *Using Research Instruments: A Guide for Researchers*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Weis, L. and M. Fine. 2004. *Working Method. Research and Social Justice*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Whyte, W.F. 1991. *Participatory Action Research*. California: Sage.

Zackrisson, K.S. and L. Assarsson. 2008. Adult Learner Identities under Construction. In *Foucault and Lifelong Learning. Governing the Subject*, eds. A. Fejes and K. Nicoll, 114-125. New York: Routledge.

APPENDIX 1: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH LETTER



**DEPARTMENT: CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag 31194, Pretoria 0001 Tel: 012 359 1549 Fax: 012 359 5611
121 Church Street 2nd Floor, Sandton Building, West Bank, Pretoria

Ms Z Twani
Private Bag X1
Unitra Campus
5117

Reference: 8/7/1

Enquiries: Ms B.J. Matshego
Date: October 2005

Dear Ms Twani

Re: Permission to Conduct Research on "Music Behind Bars: Exploring the Role of Music among Inmates at Umtata Prison"

It is with pleasure that I wish to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on the above topic has been approved.

Kindly ensure that the terminology used is in line with that in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005).

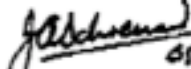
Ms A. Bonani (Regional Head Development and Care: Eastern Cape) has been appointed as your internal guide. You are requested to contact him before you commence with your research project at telephone number 043 706 7801.

The relevant Area and Regional Commissioners will be informed of your pending research project. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your visiting times. It is recommended that your identity document and this approval letter be in your possession when visiting the centers.

Should you have any enquiries regarding this process, please contact the Directorate Research for assistance at telephone number 012-305 8043/307 2359.

Thank you for your application and interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours faithfully


05.10.28
CHIEF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER: CENTRAL SERVICES
J A SCHREINER (Ms)

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT AND INVITATION AGREEMENT

05-OCT-2005 14:42 FROM CORR ADMIN

TO 0475022481

P.06/10

ATT.: ~~Jorge Mathego~~

ATT. PROF LUCIA

AGREEMENT REGARDING CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO RESEARCH DONE IN
INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE COMMISSIONER OF
CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT AND INVITATION AGREEMENT contd.

05-OCT-2005 14:42 FROM CURR HUMIN

TO 0475022481

P.05/10

3

- 1.2.4 Research Instrument such as questionnaires/schedules for interviews must be submitted to the Department (Internal Guide) for consideration before they may be used.
- 1.2.5 The Department (Internal Guide) must be kept informed of progress and the expected completion dates of the various phases of the research an progress reports/copies of completed chapters furnished for consideration to the Department should this be requested by the Department. The Research Ethics Committee must be provided with an unbound copy of the researcher's report at least two months prior to presentation and publication for evaluation (see par.9 of Policy).
- 1.2.6 Research findings or any other information gained during the research may not be published or made known in any other manner without the written permission of the Commissioner of Correctional Services.
- 1.2.7 A copy of the final report/essay/treatise/thesis must be submitted to the Department for further use.
- 1.2.8 Research will have to be done in the researchers own time and at his own cost unless explicitly stated otherwise at eh initial approval of the research.

1.3 CONDUCT IN PRISON

- 1.3.1 Arrangements to visit a prison (s) for research purposes must be made with the Area Manager of that particular prison. Care should be taken that the research be done with the least possible disruption of prison routine.
- 1.3.2 Office space for the conducting of tests and interviews must be determined in consultation with the Area Manager of that particular Prison.
- 1.3.3 Research instruments/interviews must be used/done within view and hearing distance of a member (s) of the South African Correctional Services, otherwise only within view of a member (s) of the Department.
- 1.3.4 Documentation may not be removed from files or reproduced without the prior approval of the Commissioner of Correctional Services.
- 1.3.5 Any problem experienced during the research must be discussed with the relevant Head of the Prison without delay.
- 1.3.6 Identification documents must be produced at the prison upon request and must be worn on the person during the visit.
- 1.3.7 Weapons or other unauthorized articles may not be taken into the prison.

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT AND INVITATION AGREEMENT contd.

05-OCT-2005 14:42 FROM CURR HUMAN

TO 0475022401

P.00/10

3

- 1.2.4 Research Instrument such as questionnaires/schedules for interviews must be submitted to the Department (Internal Guide) for consideration before they may be used.
- 1.2.5 The Department (Internal Guide) must be kept informed of progress and the expected completion dates of the various phases of the research an progress reports/copies of completed chapters furnished for consideration to the Department should this be requested by the Department. The Research Ethics Committee must be provided with an unbound copy of the researcher's report at least two months prior to presentation and publication for evaluation (see par.9 of Policy).
- 1.2.6 Research findings or any other information gained during the research may not be published or made known in any other manner without the written permission of the Commissioner of Correctional Services.
- 1.2.7 A copy of the final report/essay/treatise/thesis must be submitted to the Department for further use.
- 1.2.8 Research will have to be done in the researchers own time and at his own cost unless explicitly stated otherwise at eh initial approval of the research.

1.3 CONDUCT IN PRISON

- 1.3.1 Arrangements to visit a prison (s) for research purposes must be made with the Area Manager of that particular prison. Care should be taken that the research be done with the least possible disruption of prison routine.
- 1.3.2 Office space for the conducting of tests and interviews must be determined in consultation with the Area Manager of that particular Prison.
- 1.3.3 Research instruments/interviews must be used/done within view and hearing distance of a member (s) of the South African Correctional Services, otherwise only within view of a member (s) of the Department.
- 1.3.4 Documentation may not be removed from files or reproduced without the prior approval of the Commissioner of Correctional Services.
- 1.3.5 Any problem experienced during the research must be discussed with the relevant Head of the Prison without delay.
- 1.3.6 Identification documents must be produced at the prison upon request and must be worn on the person during the visit.
- 1.3.7 Weapons or other unauthorized articles may not be taken into the prison.

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT AND INVITATION AGREEMENT contd.

05-OCT-2005 14:42 FROM CURR ADMIN

TO 0473022481

P.05/10

4

1.3.8 Money and other necessary articles that are worn on the researcher's person are taken into the prison at his own risk. Nothing may be handed over to the prisoners except that which is required for the process of research; e.g. manuals, questionnaires, stationery, etc.

1.3.9 The research must be done in such a manner that prisoners/members cannot subsequently use it to embarrass the Department of Correctional Services.

1.3.10 Researchers must be circumspect when approaching prisoners with regard to their appearance and behavior, and researchers must be careful of manipulation by prisoners. The decision of the Head of Prison in this regard is final.

1.3.11 No prisoner may be given the impression that his/her co-operation could be advantageous to him/her personality.

2. INDEMNITY

The researcher waives any claim which he may have against the Department of Correctional Services and indemnifies the Department against any claims, including legal fees at an attorney and client scale which may be initiated against the latter by any other person, including a prisoner.

3. CANCELLATION

The Commissioner of Correctional Services retains the right to withdraw and cancel authorization or research at any time, should the above conditions not be adhered to or the researcher not keep to stated objectives. In such an event or in event of the researcher deciding to discontinue the research, all information and data from the liaison with the Department must be returned to the Department and such information and data may in no way be published in any other publication without the permission of the Commissioner of Correctional Services. The Commissioner of Correctional Services also retains the right to allocate the research to another researcher.

4. SUGGESTIONS

The researcher acknowledges that no other suggestions except those contained in this agreement; were made which had led him/her to the entering into this agreement.

Signed at MTHATHA on the 06 day of OCTOBER month
2005 year.

RESEARCHER: Z. Twani

APPENDIX 2: INFORMED CONSENT AND INVITATION AGREEMENT last page

OCT-2005 14:43 FROM CURR ADMIN

TO 047022481

P.10/10

5

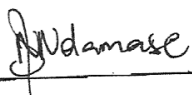
WITNESSES

Abovementioned researcher signed this Agreement in my presents.

Name & Surname: NOLWAZI NDAMASE Date: 06 OCTOBER 2005

ENDORSEMENT BY PROMOTER OR EMPLOYER OF THE RESEARCHER WHERE APPLICABLE

I have taken cognizance of the contents of this agreement and do not have any problem with the conditions/have the following reservations about the conditions of this agreement.

Signature: 

**APPENDIX 3: SUBJECT INFORMATION SHEET:
MUSIC BEHIND BARS MUSIC PARTICIPATORY ACTION
RESEARCH PROJECT (MPAR)**

A number of subjects who I call research actors are involved in the research as tabled in the research methodology section of Chapter 1 and in the subsequent five chapters of the research. It is envisaged that other 60 or so offenders will later be added into the research and this number might escalate to even 100 participants as music circle learners (subjects) in the research. However, consent has been requested from the 15 core researchers who shall be called research leaders of the various music circles (classrooms) and they have all consented to being photographed, recorded on DVD (DVDs) and their real names and surnames be used. Their names appear below as follows:

1. Mr M. Ngxisha – Head of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture unit at DCS – Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre
2. Vuyo Mduduma – DCS intern with a degree in music
3. Ms Mosa Mpopho – DCS intern with a diploma in Sport Management
4. Mrs Kholisa Mlandu – music graduate, teacher and volunteer choir conductor and coach at Mthatha Medium Correctional Centre
5. Mkhuseli Gobingca – undergraduate student at Walter Sisulu University (WSU)
6. Sikhululekile Mafunda - undergraduate student at WSU
7. Lungamzi Ngoma – postgraduate student at WSU
8. Ndoyisile Dubula – offender
9. Mluleki Gogobala – offender
10. Vusumzi Majanti – offender
11. Thembekile Msawu - offender
12. Mchayiswa Madikizela – offender
13. Nkuthalo Nomesi – offender
14. Cingile Qoboza - offender
15. Siphathiso Mabho - offender
16. Zoliswa Twani - facilitator / main researcher

APPENDIX 4: RESEARCH ACTORS' JOURNAL TEMPLATE

This journal is part of the research into the potential role of research leaders in decision-making, reporting about research activities, meetings, teaching and learning with their peers in the music circles and reporting at cycle-end meetings at the end of the four cycles of the research in Music Participatory action Research (MPAR) Project which forms part of the PhD thesis by Mrs Z. Twani, the facilitator and main researcher in this project. You are requested to use this template each time you prepare your report for the cycle-end meetings for each cycle. The reporting format therefore should include:

1. The Title – Action Plan should appear at the top of the page.
2. Name of Group and Research Leader
3. Topic covered for the cycle
4. Methods to be used to cover the topic
5. Achievements
6. Challenges and ideas to improve these
7. Resources needed
8. Future Plans or Topic for next cycle

Also, the function of a journal is for you to reflect on the activities of your music circle and to set down on paper your thoughts, ideas, problems, challenges, successes and failures or difficulties about a specific issue or topic. In this case your journal is about your role as a research leader and that of the members in the music circles as well as for your participation as research actors within a group (music circle) and the project as a whole. You must attempt to answer in short story form as if you are talking to a friend.

Thank you for your co-operation. You will be assured of the confidentiality of your responses.

APPENDIX 4: RESEARCH ACTORS' JOURNAL TEMPLATE contd.

Nangu umzekelo nesikhokhelo sokukuncedisa ekubhaleni ireport yakho njengoko kuchaziwe apha ngaphezulu: Below is an example and guide into responding to the template for effective reporting as suggested above:

1. *Nizakufunda ntoni kulomjikele nileliqela? Ingaba nizakufunda ukucula okanye ukudanisa?* What is your topic your group will research on or what are you going to learn in this cycle? For example are you going to learn to sing or dance?

2. *Nizakufindisana luhloboluni kulomjikele? Kha unike inkcazelo ephangaleleyo yalendlela nizakusebenza ngayo. Khumbula ukuba ninalo ilungelo lokuzitshintsha ingcamango zenu, kwaye xa nikwenzile oko, niyibonakalise lonto ukuba izingcinga ezisezakwenzeka okanye ibeyinxaki ebikhona.* How are you going to learn or research the topic you have chosen? Give a detailed plan. Remember you are free to revise your plans and where you have done this, indicate these as challenges or future plans.

3. *Nivune ntoni kulo umjikele?* What did you achieve in this cycle?

4. *Zinto zini ezintsha enizifundileyo nileliqela? Nifunde ntoni?* What new things have you learnt as a group?

APPENDIX 4: RESEARCH ACTORS' JOURNAL TEMPLATE contd.

5. *Kwelithuba nikule music circle, nizixazulula njani iingxaki nemicela mingeni? Ingaba nibanalo ithuba lokuxoxa niphikisane nivumelana nileliqela? Ingaba ninalo ngokwaneleyo ithuba lokuxoxa nokuphikasana nivumelana?* Since you have been part of this music circle, how do you approach your problems and challenges? Do you discuss and debate these as a group? Do you have time for discussion or not?

6. *Kha unabe wandise lenkcazelo uyinike kulombuzo uku 4 apha ngasentla ngokuthi unike izizathu nemizekelo, ngokunjalo uchaze ngempumelelo okanye ukungaphumeleli kweliqela kwezozinto bezikumgaqo wenu. Kananjalo nibonise izizathu enicinga ukuba zizise impumelelo okanye ukungaphumeleli.* Please state possible reasons or examples for your answers in Q4 above and write down a few where you have been successful / not successful. Reflect on what made you to fail or succeed?

7. *Ngaba zikhona izinto enizinqwenelayo ezinokunincedisa kwimpumelelo okanye ekwenzeni ngcono nileliqela?* Do you have any need (s) as a music circle in order to improve or do better?

8. *Nicinga ukuba ikhona impumelelo eningayizuzayo nileliqela xa ninokuthi niguqule umgaqo okanye inqubo yale music circle ukuze nibenempumelelo?* What difference do you think your changes will bring to your music circle and success?

APPENDIX 4: RESEARCH ACTORS' JOURNAL TEMPLATE contd

9. Uziva njani ngempathiswano nokusebenzisana kubafundi bale music circle? How strongly do you feel about the participation of your music circle learners?

10. Zithini izicwangciso zenu malunga nelixa elizayo kungenjalo isihloko enizakufunda phantsi kwaso kulomjikelelo uzayo sithini? What are your future plans or what is your next topic?

11. *Ingaba nifumanisa kululutho okanye akunjalo ukuba yinxalenye yale MPAR, ungabakuthaza okanye hayi abanye ukuze babeyinxalenye yayo kwilixa elizayo?* Do you feel you have benefited from being a member of the MPAR and would you encourage others to participate in future?

12. *Nceda ukhululeke ubhale ngayo nayiphina enye into malunga ne music circle yakho kungenjalo nangayiphina enye into ekuxhalabisayo njengomkhokheli nokuba ayibhalwanga kule template.* Please feel free to respond to any other issue concerning your music circle or anything that worries you as a research leader even if it is not mentioned in this template.

Enkosi kakhulu ngempathiswano yakho. Thank you very much for your co-operation.

APPENDIX 5: EVALUATION GRID

MUSIC PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH (MPAR) PROJECT

GROUP NAME : _____

GROUP LEADER : _____

MUSIC GENRE : _____

1. STAGE PRESENCE Stage Manners; Going in and out of Stage; Stage Readiness.	
2. COSTUMES / ATTIRE Appropriateness and Creativity.	
3. PRESENTATION Artistic ability; Technique; Movement / synchronisation	
4. ARTISTIC IMPRESSION Overall Impact	
5. GENERAL COMMENTS Other Remarks	