

# CHAPTER 1

## 1.1) Introduction

The South African education system is one that could be considered to be among those that once embodied the worst disparities based entirely on race that there has ever been in contemporary times. The effects of the now defunct apartheid regime's unjust policies which denied the black majority citizens quality education can still be felt almost fifteen years after its demise. If previous attempts by government or 'non-governmental organizations' (NGO) attempts to reduce illiteracy are anything to go by then this challenge is most likely to remain for many more years. Many people, particularly blacks, have not had any schooling whatsoever. According to South Africa's last National survey conducted in 2001, an estimated 9, 6 million adult people were classified as being illiterate. This figure is divided into two of which 4, 7 million comprises unschooled and the difference is made up of those who dropped out of school before reaching grade seven. Although there are varying statistics highlighting the enormity of the challenge, what is apparent in all cases is that illiteracy is an affront to human dignity that no self respecting people can afford to ignore.

Various initiatives that were aimed at addressing the existing inequalities bore a multitude of unintended social, psychological and even cultural consequences. Consequently, the present democratic government is constantly grappling with the above issues in an attempt to finding solutions. This research evaluated Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign which is intended to reach the first group of unschooled citizens so as to enable them to become literate in one of the eleven official languages. In light of this the country's vast landscape whose natives speak nearly if not more than a dozen different languages does not make such efforts aimed at addressing rampant illiteracy any easier.

## 1.2) Structure of Kha Ri Gude

According to the Ministerial Committee on Literacy (2007:15) it is stated that “The organizational structure will have five levels of operation: national, provincial, district, local and site. However, for this study the highest ranking officials involved were coordinators people who fall within the district level. One coordinator was responsible for twenty (20) supervisors. One supervisor was responsible for ten (10) educators) and a class had to have a maximum of eighteen (18) learners. Below is an organogram of Kha Ri Gude

CASCADE FOR DELIVERY

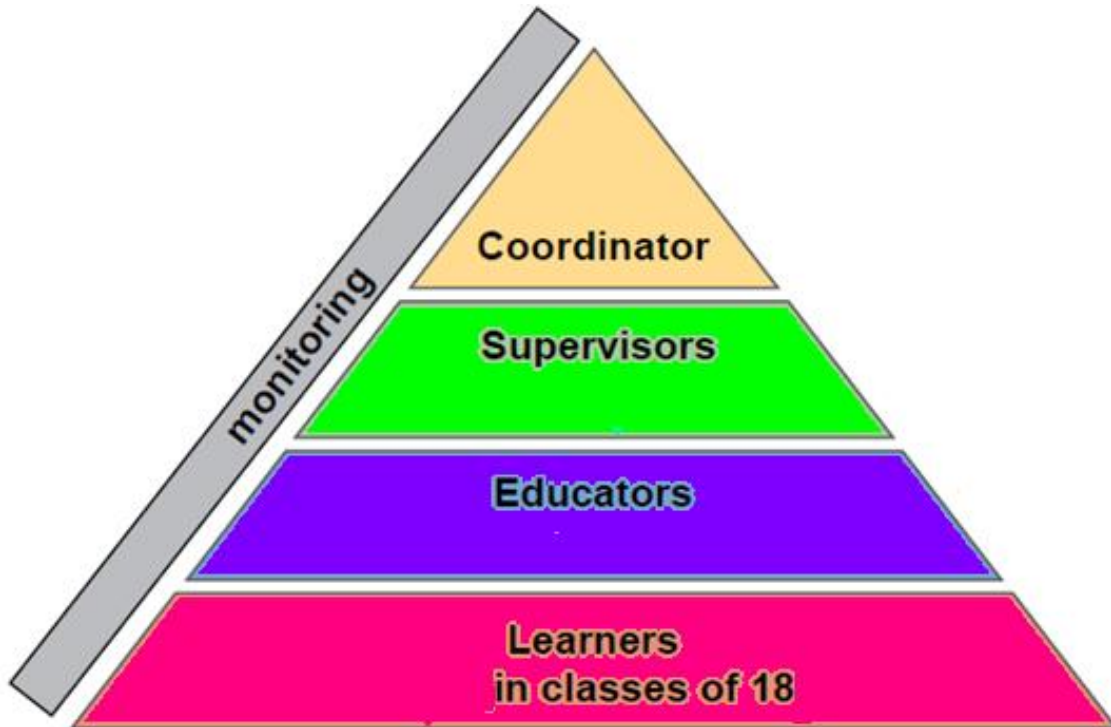


Diagram 1: Department of Education report (2009:13).

### **1.3) Statement of Research Problem/Purpose**

Almost all Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) providers that have operated in South Africa and have at one time or another set up literacy campaigns have all had a common purpose. In almost all instances what has been common has been their aim to equip participants with skills to improve their quality of life. The former president of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki, once referred to this situation in which ABET providers have been trying to alleviate as a resemblance of two nations one made up of rich whites while the other comprises a vast majority of poor blacks. An example of adult education initiatives can be traced back to the dark days of apartheid era in which private adult learning centers were registered with the then department of education and training (DET) as required by legislation. It was illegal to run adult education centers aimed at serving black people without official permission. They had to operate under restrictive conditions and received no assistance from the State. In 1999 when the second general elections were held since the collapse of the Apartheid regime the African National Congress (ANC) won by a two-thirds majority and a new Minister was appointed to Education and Training. On 29 June 1999 the new Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, made a public statement that all 9 million illiterate adults would be able to read and write in 5 years time. Contrary to these proclamations to date the country continues to face an ever increasing number of illiterates. For instance, the Ministerial Committee on Literacy (2007:5) states that "...South Africa's system of Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) is not reducing the number of illiterates in spite of the constitutional right of all South Africans to basic education in their own language".

Similarly, several distinguished academics and researchers have noted that previous literacy campaigns have not worked effectively. This is despite that government has twenty three education districts whose ABET programmes are overseen by the national ABET directorate. This is done through the National Education strategy 'Tirisano' which is Setswana for 'let us work together'. Baatjes (2004:3) says "Learners at ABET centers are dropping out before reaching the exit level, ABET level 4". Similar sentiments are echoed by Millar (2010:3) who says "Low attendance in ABET programmes can only mean that the consumers (learners) are not getting what they want". The above sentiments are further supported by Aitchison (2010:1) who

says “It is irrefutable that the official adult education and training (Abet) system is thoroughly dysfunctional and highly unattractive to uneducated and ill-educated adults”.

This is in spite of tuition at ABET centers being made free whereby learners do not pay fees other than a minimal registration fee which is not compulsory. Despite such efforts being put in place, still it seems the battle against illiteracy is far from being won.

It has been noted within most ABET initiatives be it government, civil society or NGOs that outcomes ought to contribute to developing peoples’ capacity to function in society with reading, writing and general knowledge skills. For instance the KPMG Foundation in Carroll (2010:2) identifies five long term costs of illiteracy difficulties which are crime, health, educational costs deriving from special needs support, educational costs involving exclusions and unemployment and low wages. If one is to read reports published by various civil society organizations and even by the South African government departments such as Statistics (SSA) one will find that the rates of crime and unemployment are unacceptably high in this country. In most instances statistics regarding crime in various parts of South Africa show a higher occurrence in high density areas mostly inhabited by poorer citizens. In these areas individuals are often harmed for things such as cellular phones or any form of designer clothing they may be wearing. Other petty crimes include robbing people of their cash so as to finance various behaviours such as alcohol or drug abuse. This is something rare in more affluent areas mostly inhabited by individuals who usually travel by motor vehicles during late hours when such incidences are most likely to take place. If then illiteracy is a contributing factor to the above societal ills, then one cannot successfully empower individuals since for example introducing skills development programmes would not succeed if people are not literate or semi-literate.

So as to overcome the above challenges, it is necessary in particular that literacy and numeracy instruction be of a quality and quantity that ensures that the literacy skills gained can be practiced and retained by the participants. The importance of this is noted by Lyster in Hutton (1992:12) when she says “Literacy is a highly perishable skill. Without use it atrophies, unlike a more enduring skill like riding a bicycle”. In other words when an individual learns to ride a bicycle say at a very young age, the same individual can stay without ever riding one up to say adult age but still manage to ride again without much difficulty when required to.

#### **1.4) Background to the Problem**

The launching of the Education for All (EFA) goals in Jomtien in 1990 signaled the importance of literacy in the world of education. In South Africa, efforts aimed at eradicating illiteracy have been initiated with varying success. Those who have come to the party include the State, parastatals, Non-governmental Organizations, Community Based Organizations, Section 21 Companies, Commercial providers and Religious Organizations.

The name Tshwane which is the area where the research was conducted is said to be the original indigenous name of the present day administrative capital city of South Africa also known as Pretoria. With the advent of a new political dispensation that led to the demise of the then apartheid government the name to use when referring to this capital city has become a bone of contention. Tshwane is situated about fifty kilometers north of the gold rich city of Johannesburg. Due to its close proximity to Johannesburg, its rural face from the time it was under the rule of the late chief Tshwane quickly changed to an urban metropolis which provided cheap labour to the nearby settler gold mines in Johannesburg.

This important historical background helps one understand how various economic as well as political policies came into existence. If we accept the hypothesis that policies then referred to as apartheid policies, as they matured became more and more labour intensive it therefore made economic sense that a larger pool of cheap labour had to be sought from areas beyond Tshwane. One way of ensuring a constant supply of cheap labour was enacting preventative education strategies that up to this day are made visible by the unacceptably high levels of an illiterate black populace which formed a majority of the labour force within these mining communities.

For example, Horrel (1968:19) supports the above assertions by identifying early responses aimed at alleviating illiteracy. These included among others initiatives in the 1920s and 1930s in which Churches, NGOs and political organizations in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pietermaritzburg established night schools and literacy classes which were later forced to close down after the enactment of the Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953. The act prescribed restrictive terms for registration and admission to night schools. As a result any available

financial assistance was reduced and administering the schools in such circumstances became cumbersome leading to their closing down.

When the new democratic government came into power, several initiatives were implemented albeit with very little success in an attempt to reverse the injustices caused by apartheid policies. These failed attempts and several others finally led to the birth of the current campaign known as Kha Ri Gude (KRG). Kha Ri Gude is Venda for 'let us learn'. It targets 4, 7 million South Africans who have never been to school. In the campaign's projected 5 year period, it is expected to incorporate a further 4.9 million people who are deemed functionally illiterate as most may have dropped out of school before grade seven. According to a UNICEF report that evaluated the campaign in 2009 the South African government had initially committed 6.1 billion rands towards this mass adult literacy campaign. It was expected to run from 2008 to 2012. However, because of budgetary cut down and constraints, the Treasury released only R890 million in 2008 and 2009. This amount was less than anticipated. This necessitated the extension of the campaign period to 2015 instead of 2012. Hopefully, this would allow South Africa to nevertheless continue with its aim to meet the Education for All (EFA) Goal 4.

As the campaign is supposed to act as a feeder to ABET its participants cannot therefore compete for space with ABET learners. This means classes will take place mostly at those places that may have been left vacant by ABET learners such as churches, garages, homes or even under the trees. These classes are held at times convenient to the learners and also wherever learners can be found.



Picture1: Learners using a room in an informal settlement



Picture 2: Learners using a garage/carport at a RDP house



Picture 3: Learners using a garage in an informal settlement

According to the Ministerial Committee on Literacy (MCL) (2007:3) the targeted number of learners to kick off the programme was 1, 2 million. However, a Department of Education report entitled 'Where Are We Now?' (2009:2) states that on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2008 a countrywide campaign managed to reach approximately 360 000 participants, which is about a third of the initial target. The consequences of such an enormous shortfall in terms of the initially targeted participants cannot be overemphasized. If anything this is a reflection of previous literacy initiatives and challenges that sound too familiar. To an extent it confirms fears that resulted in the Kha Ri Gude campaign's very first Chief Executive Officer, John Aitchison resigning during the planning days of the campaign. The government had failed to put in place among other things measures that would guarantee political non interference. For an example these included assurances that there would be no diversions of campaign funds to other areas the government may come up with at a later stage thus jeopardizing the ability to meet initially set goals. Illiteracy being so prevalent among South African people failure to stick to the proposed budget for instance by taking money from the campaign would impact on the poor masses something committed and passionate individuals could not fathom.

Calls for literacy programs meant to redress past imbalances have been heard from various quarters. McKay (1995:162) argues that many South African communities have been damaged



by the apartheid regime's educational policies that were biased against non white citizens. Therefore, ABET could provide people with skills they needed to rebuild these communities.

In an attempt to introduce alternative means of addressing unacceptably high levels of illiteracy as well as achieving the goals set out in Education for All (1990), initiatives such as Kha Ri Gude have been introduced. This literacy campaign's promises to among other things enable participants to read, write and calculate in their mother tongue and to learn spoken English thereby halving adult illiteracy by 2015. Although there are varying figures of the number of individuals who are illiterate in South Africa, Kha Ri Gude derives its figures from the South Africa National survey conducted in 2001 which makes a total estimate of 9, 6 million illiterate adults. This figure includes two groups: illiterate adults (those with no prior schooling) who number 4, 7 million and semi-literate adults (with some schooling) numbering 4, 9 million. It is important to note that the campaign will have a deliberate bias of targeting women who due to cultural as well as other factors happen to be the ones forming a majority of illiterate people.

### **1.5) Research Context**

In 2006 the then Minister of Education Naledi Pandor established a Ministerial Committee on Literacy (MCL). The committee was among other things charged with the task of developing a strategic plan for a mass literacy campaign in South Africa. The campaign was proposed as a response to addressing the ever increasing illiteracy levels the country was experiencing. In line with the country's democratic principles the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, declares education, including adult basic education as a right. Despite this background and in light of the fact that South Africa has one of the most progressive constitutions in the world, it is unacceptable that according to the 2001 census 9, 6 million adults above the age of 15 years still remain illiterate. It is also important to note that upon interrogating the above figure, what comes up is a strong reflection of apartheid era patterns of 'racial' disadvantage. In South Africa non whites are the ones who were most affected by the previous regime's apartheid laws particularly the notorious Bantu Education Act No. 47 of 1953 which relegated non white education to

something that ensured an inferior curriculum that did not offer its recipients an opportunity to be anything other than remain second class citizens who could not be expected to contribute meaningfully towards the development of their communities, livelihood or country.

The ravages of HIV/AIDS have contributed to the dissipation of the previously supportive family structures whereby children who are supposed to be attending main stream schooling find themselves taking up parenting roles. It is very common in most communities to find teenage children taking up parenting roles after the death of all their parents. One of the resulting circumstances that these children normally find themselves in is adverse poverty since they in most cases would have not matured enough to be in a position to provide for their younger brothers and sisters be it financially, emotionally or otherwise. What makes matters worse is that despite government and non-governmental efforts to alleviate these families' suffering is often hampered by greed or avarice and corruption by various officials which keeps worsening the problem. It is not surprising to read about various officials having been found diverting aid for their own use. On the other hand instead of government dealing decisively with such unacceptable behavior by for instance effecting stern penalties to identified culprits, it seems too often it 'shoots itself in the foot' by giving light sentences or redeploying officials who would have been found guilty of such misconduct. In other cases incompetence or lack of investigating skills by investigating officers often sees culprits continuing to walk free.

Building up an efficient organization or effective structures was essential for a campaign of this magnitude. Although the Department of Education oversees all educational issues in the country, Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign is specifically run by the Adult Education Directorate which in turn has a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as its head. The CEO is supported by a team of directors who also head various units such as curriculum and finance among others. In South Africa Adult Basic Education (ABE) which is the term commonly used around the world is referred to as Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET). The aspect of training is essentially derived from the country's historical background of trying to redress past imbalances in which a majority of the affected people cannot afford to solely concentrate on education as are usually bread winners who need to continue providing for their families. Organizations were therefore encouraged to offer some form of upgrading or up skilling of their workforce something they had been denied by the then apartheid government. Van Niekerk (2002:66) is of the view that the

new South African Education and Training policy combines education with training in an attempt to jettison the traditional notion that these activities are opposing dichotomies and to create an integrated and holistic approach. This gave rise to the concept of ABET. Implications for adults include formal education or schooling beyond just literacy and numeracy and market related skills training. ABET can therefore be defined as adult education and training, equivalent to the ten years free and compulsory schooling legislated for our children. The completion of ABET is recognized by the issuing of a General Training and Education Certificate (GETC) or National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 1. The State provision of formal adult education at a schooling level was initially provided through the Night School system. It mirrored the syllabus, assessment methods and qualifications of the formal education provided by schools for black children. It generally took place during the evenings (18h00 - 21h00). The school leaving certificate was a Matric or Standard 10 and the system was administered by the now defunct Department of Education and Training (DET). The DET was responsible for all black education during the Apartheid era and was one of seventeen education departments at the time.

Seeing that some of the people's education levels were far below ABET level 1 research, recommended a need for some form of intervention before individuals could be enrolled in ABET centers. Kha Ri Gude therefore was introduced as a feeder to ABET and not as a competitor.

This evaluation of Kha Ri Gude is research that received no funding from any source such that due to various factors it was necessary to use probability sampling as a method of identifying participants. Due to for instance time limits and limited funds the research concentrated on five institutions in Tshwane that are involved in the campaign. In support of the above McMillan and Schumacher (2006:119) acknowledge that when probability sampling is done correctly not only can a small percentage of the population be selected but this also saves time and money without necessarily sacrificing accuracy. Over and above, with a campaign of such magnitude it is impractical and probably unnecessary to measure all elements of the population of interest.

Kha Ri Gude classes are in most instances held in communities more often at places most convenient to participants and wherever learners can be found. In this regard it is the Volunteer educator's prerogative to mobilize learners within various communities and for this to be effective Volunteer educators most importantly ought to be familiar with people and areas they hope to operate in.

To be able to have a fairly representative sample of the study, focus was directed at centers that are located in different areas where there is likely to be a diverse number of participants that speak different languages. Former townships or predominantly black high density residential areas demarcated under apartheid became the areas of choice. Such random sampling eliminates bias since each member of the targeted participants from the eleven indigenous language groups holds a relatively fair chance of being represented in the sample.

### **1.6) Significance of the Research**

In South Africa, challenges within the education sector in general and the ABET sector in particular have been well documented. Ordinary and concerned individuals, academic, non-governmental and civic organizations were often heard raising concerns with regards to numerous short comings within the sector. However, before the advent of democracy these concerns were rarely taken serious. Some of the country's renowned academics such as Baatjes and Mathe (2004:397) say

“Subsequent to the April 1994 election, literacy and ABE activists were soon disappointed by the seemingly slow pace of development in the Adult Basic Education sector. ABET did not seem to be a major concern of the new Government...nor of the national Ministry of Education”.

It is important to note that such displays of indifferent attitude by various government authorities is something that to date has become a cancer that pervades most facets within various government sectors. Masses continue to be taken for granted as accountability does not seem to matter much.

For instance similar sentiments could still be heard almost two years later from Rule (2006:2) who states that

“While the emphasis on formal schooling is absolutely justified and necessary, the neglect of adult literacy is not...Before examining the state of ABE in South Africa, it is important to acknowledge that the high rate of functional illiteracy among South African adults is a legacy of apartheid...”

These sentiments are confirmed by the Minister of Education’s Ministerial Committee of 2006 which put the figure at 4, 7 million South Africans who were denied access to education and training under apartheid of which the present democratic government is trying to reduce if not completely eliminate.

In 1994 when the African National Congress (ANC) was elected into power one of its priorities was to redress the inequalities that existed within the education sector. Unfortunately, this did not seem to be an easy task as stated by Baatjes (2004:3) when he says

“The number of illiterate people in South Africa is on the rise and it suggests that current adult basic education and training (ABET) policy and programmes are failing to prevent the further marginalization and exclusion of our undereducated adults”.

Similarly, Aitchison (2001:16) had previously stated in reference to a failed campaign that

“There has been no ‘breaking the back of illiteracy’...This suggests that what provision there has been has not been enough, to do much more than stop the illiteracy situation from getting worse”.

The above sentiments were finally acknowledged by the Ministerial Committee on Literacy (MCL) (2007:5) when it confirmed after its appointment by the then Basic Education Minister Naledi Pandor by confirming that “...South Africa’s system of ABET is not reducing the number of illiterates in spite of the constitutional right of all South Africans to basic education in their own language”.

### **1.7) Aims Of the Research**

The aims of the research are:

- to investigate various ways in which Kha Ri Gude either prepares or fails to prepare adult learners for further learning in the ABET systems.
- investigate who Kha Ri Gude serves well as well as find out who has been left out.
- to suggest ways in which Kha Ri Gude might develop or change in response to future needs.
- to interrogate government's resource allocation to the Education sector in general and Kha Ri Gude campaign in particular.

### **1.8) Research Questions**

The research attempted to address the following key questions:

- How do educators assist learners whose mother tongue they are not good at?
- In what ways is Kha Ri Gude addressing or failing to address the problem of illiteracy in South Africa?
- What philosophy of education underpins Kha Ri Gude?
- Do learners progress to ABET? If not what difficulties inhibit their progression?
- What resources are available and how are they used?

## **1.9) Research Methods**

When conceptualizing this research, what has always been of paramount importance is the need to seek methods that encourage participation and collaboration between and among all stakeholders. The importance of this is aptly stated by Chilisa and Preece (2005:13) who assert that "...to address inequality the research design must consider the disadvantaged first, rather than rely on reaching simply those most easily accessible". Naturally, due to the previous government's apartheid policies, among non-whites black people were the worst disadvantaged and as such they formed a majority of the population researched.

To classify South Africans as a homogenous nation would in this case be a contradiction of why Kha Ri Gude is being offered in peoples' indigenous languages. To evaluate Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign methods applied in convenience sampling were used. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:125) say convenience sampling or available sampling works where a group of subjects is identified and then selected on the basis of being accessible. In this case Literacy centers were selected based on convenience due to geographic location. As already stated that the research was not funded the researcher had to implement the most cost effective methods in most if not all aspects of the research. Most importantly data was to be gathered in such a manner that it would not be necessary to get to a stage where verification of initially gathered data would become necessary. For instance having conversations with learners, volunteer educators and supervisors the researcher used these opportunities and information given to address possible shortcomings that could arise from how the research had been planned or issues that had not been foreseen. Although data gathered would not necessarily be generalized, the characteristics of the learning centers were similar to a majority of centers in other parts of South Africa. Given that participants in the campaign almost operated under similar circumstances such as having similar learning materials, having educators trained to use same teaching or facilitation methods and in most cases operated under similar physical learning environment this minimized differences in findings at various learning centers. Furthermore, since more than one group was involved in the research this increased the overall credibility of the results.

Data gathering techniques used were informed by the purpose for which the data collected was used for. For example learners during interviews were asked what they liked most about the programme they were engaged in. Similarly, volunteer educators were asked how they went about meeting their learners' needs. Similarities in these two questions which were deliberately directed at different participants ensured that the researcher was able to identify gaps or mismatches on how the programme was being run so as to be able to come up with recommendations that would hopefully be of benefit to the success of the campaign. This is to say in most instances and as much as was possible, effort was made to ensure that all data collected through for example questionnaires or verbal interviews would also be able to sufficiently answer the research questions. As such various methods were used in order to offset whatever weaknesses one particular method could have had. Data gathering methods included a review of related campaign documents, instructional materials, observations, documentary analysis from learners, volunteer educators and supervisors, interviews that were both individual and incidental involving campaign personnel and any other interested stakeholders such as community members especially those living in areas near where campaign classes were held.

Being familiar with the authorities that manage the campaign somehow made it easier to conduct the study. This however did not mean that the researcher could just visit learning centers without getting necessary authorization which included presenting among others plans how the researcher would deal with various ethical issues. In this case, set out channels or guidelines applicable to all research activities in government institutions were followed. This involved applying for requisite government authorization to conduct the study at various centers in Tshwane where classes take place.



### **1.10) Scope, Limitations and Assumptions of the Study**

This study is an evaluation of Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign. To this end, it was important to first of all identify the philosophy of education that underpins Kha Ri Gude. Such an understanding enabled one as stated by Parlett and Hamilton (1976:84) who assert that “Illuminative evaluation, rooted in social anthropology, seeks rather to describe and interpret, and takes account of the contexts in which educational innovations must function”. In other words the central concepts that had to be understood included the instructional system and the learning milieu or environment in which Kha Ri Gude operated.

The study was conducted at centers in Tshwane only, mainly for convenience purposes. It is important to note that when the country overcame apartheid rule, there was an influx of people who travelled and settled in urban centers from the rural areas mostly in search of employment. Due to this background, it is very rare if not impossible, particularly in former townships where a majority of black people live to find an area where there will be people who speak only one language like what is common in rural areas. For instance in none of the areas visited during the study such as Mamelodi, Atteridgeville, Winterveld or Lotus gardens can one find only Sesotho or Setswana speaking people only since they are the original inhabitants of Tshwane. This is confirmed by the different language speakers found in the visited Kha Ri Gude classes in the above areas.

To minimize the threat of validity that could arise from a possibility of failing to pick up some important nuances that may help explain various issues due to a lack of poor language command by the researcher certain measures were put in place. For instance during visits the researcher was always accompanied by a campaign supervisor who would act as an immediate interpreter during the lesson observations. This was a measure to try and eliminate the likelihood of forgetting various proceedings since explanations or clarification could be given immediately. This strategy proved valuable during the research since there were no disruptions by the researcher who if the situation had been different would have to rely on the Volunteer educator who in turn would have to attend to the researcher at the expense of learners.

Cronbach (1983:2) says “The social scientist ought to undertake an evaluation only if it appears that the political system will give serious hearing to all findings, welcome and unwelcome”. This means it would be naive to assume that all findings from this research would be welcomed by particularly the Department of Education as well as the Directorate Adult Education who happen to be some of the most important stakeholders. Kha Ri Gude is a national campaign and for logistical purposes only five learning centers were used. As such results cannot be generalized though the sample size as well as the geographical location ensured the validity of the findings.

Despite explaining to participants what the researcher’s capacity within the study was, it was still difficult to judge how the participants continued to view the researcher. For instance at the time when arrangements were being made to visit identified learning centers correspondence was mostly done using the electronic mail service. Since the electronic mailing address in these correspondences was of a government organization or rather para-statal organization the researcher works for, this was misinterpreted in such a way that word went around that a state official would be visiting learners. Preparations which were made in anticipation of the researcher’s visit were in some cases done under the belief that the researcher was some sort of government inspector whose visit could lead to participants losing their jobs if there were issues or processes that would have been found not perfect. To an extent though much effort was made to clarify in what capacity the researcher was visiting as. However, what was observed could be interpreted otherwise. For instance, at one of the centers visited there where charts that had been prepared for a lesson and were therefore neatly displayed on the walls. Most if not all the charts were related to a topic that was being done. On the following day the Volunteer educator started teaching a new topic but no learning aids had been prepared. Since these learners did not have a proper classroom to have their lessons one would have expected various charts to be removed after each lesson or have someone put them around the learning area as neat as on the first day the researcher had seen them. Unfortunately learners could be seen wiping dust from their chairs and desks using charts that had fallen to the ground. Although all the charts were related to one lesson they were never changed nor did the volunteer educator prepare new ones that would at least be related to the new topic. In general it raised the question whether participants were or were not affected by the presence of the researcher during the visits. To try and overcome this possible limitation more visits were made to learning centers as a way to try and observe more realistic environment as participants got more time to get used to the researcher.

### **1.11) Overview**

This report is an evaluation of a five year literacy campaign known as Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign that was embarked on by the South African government starting May 2008. However, prior to the campaign kicking off it is important to note that this actually was a culmination of an Inter-Ministerial Committee that consisted of Ministers of Education, Defence, Correctional Services, Safety and Security, Arts and Culture, Trade and Industry, Science and Technology and the Presidency. The campaign is a country wide programme that is intended to enable 4,7 million people to read and write using their mother tongue. This means the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) is any one of the eleven official languages of South Africa namely seTswana, sePedi, xiTsonga, isiXhosa, isiZulu, TshiVenda, seSotho, English, Afrikaans, isiNdebele and siSwati. People with disabilities are also taken care of such that Braille is offered in all the above languages as well. The final report of the above committee was presented to Cabinet on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2006. This committee had been mandated to come up with a plan to address issues such as the scarcity of literature in African languages, mobilization of society, the use of electronic media, the role of civil society and the contribution that could be made by retired professionals such as principals, teachers, nurses, and magistrates.

On the main, this report's focus was to evaluate how the campaign was addressing illiteracy, an issue which the Ministerial Committee on Literacy (MCL) 2007 had identified as something that warranted government attention. The MCL had identified Illiteracy as something that was hampering peoples' ability to enjoy the full benefits of the country's democracy and economic successes. To be able to implement a programme of such great magnitude the government opted to follow the Cuban model which had achieved great success through the use of volunteers. In this regard besides top management such as the CEO and various directors who are entitled to a salary all other participants only receive a stipend. However, it is important to note that with high unemployment and poverty the stipend which differs according to what the participant does in most cases happens to be the only source of income for these people. For example, the lowest paid individuals who happen to be Volunteer educators receive one thousand two rands (R1200, 00) which is way above the government child grant of two hundred rands (R200, 00) which is

paid to single mothers who ironically form quite a significant size of Volunteers within the campaign.

In light of failures of previous campaigns it was the aim of this research to evaluate Kha Ri Gude so as to mitigate chances of it falling into a similar predicament. This report starts with an introduction which attempts to put the study into context. To date there has only been one study related to Kha Ri Gude. This is the recently completed evaluation by UNICEF. However, there are numerous similar campaigns that have been embarked on particularly in Africa, India and South America that one can draw comparison with. These include to name but a few the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI), Wona Sanana in Mozambique, Alfa Sol (Alfabetizaçaõ Solidária - Solidarity in Literacy) in Brazil and The National Literacy Mission of India.

The second chapter reviews literature related to literacy. To be able to narrow this rather wide concept a definition that attempts to contextualize how literacy is viewed in this situation is first of all highlighted. The literature is related to teaching in learners' mother tongue as well as discussing how learners value mother language particularly in the African context where there are myths that may be attributed to the people's colonial past and or socialization. The chapter also discusses pedagogical and in the case of adult learners andragogical variables that impact on learners' hopes and success within the programme. The third chapter looks at the methods that were used in order to achieve the aims of the study as well as answer the questions posed in the research.

The fourth chapter presents the results of the study. These are results obtained through visiting learning centers, scrutinizing teaching documents, looking at learners work books and conducting interviews with various participants. The fifth chapter gives insights gained, recommendations arising from the study and limitations of the research.

## **CHAPTER 2-Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1) INTRODUCTION**

Janks (2010:1) argues that “many languages do not have a word for literacy”. This in effect is the situation with most African languages including Tshivenda of which the term ‘Kha Ri Gude’ is derived from. For instance, during a lesson observation in which learners were being taught in seTswana, they were able to realize that there are words that had become part of their daily vocabulary which had been borrowed from other languages such as Afrikaans and English. Some of the words included ‘Waslappie’ which is Afrikaans for a face-cloth. Learners could not find a word for a Banana neither could they find a word for a toothbrush. For a vehicle steering wheel a learner called it ‘Isidirayivo’ which is actually derived from the English word drive. Due to the fact that things like facecloths and cars are things that came to be part of African life with the coming of Europeans it could be true when Scott- Goldman (2000:5) says “It is clear then that in practice it is difficult to divorce literacy from language and context”. For instance instead of reinventing the wheel Africans have simply adapted words such as ‘isidirayivo’ that is a vehicle steering wheel and ‘waslappie’ which is a face cloth.

The above observation first came to light when Breir, Matsepela and Sait in Janks (2010:1) highlighted the same in their study whereby during their conversations with Xhosa and Sotho speaking taxi drivers during a literacy research project they were conducting they came to realize that these languages did not have words for literacy and illiteracy. As such, it will only do justice to this study that firstly the meaning of literacy be clarified so as to ensure a common understanding hereafter.

With the use of indigenous languages which is one of the most important guiding principles in Kha Ri Gude mass literacy campaign, opportunities for these previously marginalized speakers of languages used in the campaign to name and communicate their experiences in ways that create new concepts, terms and categories of analysis are to some extent easily availed. To this end Chilisa and Preece (2005:74) say

“Adults as active research participants have a lot to contribute because of their indigenous literacies, accumulation of experiences that is a function of age, and expectations that research should improve their lives. In this context, the role of the adult educator is to listen, learn more and create space for African communities’ indigenous knowledge systems”.

In other words this goes to show that although indigenous languages may not have a word for literacy it is a concept one would say is normally referred to in particular contexts. For instance, when learners in a literacy class come across a challenging situation while learning or trying to solve issues affecting them, by being able to incorporate foreign concepts and or words as a solution would be an example of having reached a stage of being critical thinkers. Although Africans may have not been using face towels at some point in time, for the mere fact that they will have adopted it hence also referring to it as a ‘waslappie’ enables them to communicate more effectively.

South African education policies generally assume that education and skills development lead to development. This is seen in the way literacy objectives are aligned with those of other government programmes such as Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA), Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) and the National Skills Development Plan. As such, the second theme explored is that literacy teaching must be functional and integrate with social, economic and political aspects of society.

It is important in this research to show why an evaluation of the Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign was important. In fact this is supported by comments regarding previous literacy projects in the country made by individuals such as French in Hutton (1992:74) in which he asserts that there is a tendency to abandon rather than to evaluate and improve ailing programmes.

## **2.2) Theoretical Context**

The literature reviewed in this chapter attempts to provide a grounding on which this study is based. It is some form of a map that does not necessarily prescribe a fixed path or shortest route possible but rather encourages the freedom of meandering like a river in search of the best possible route to the sea. It is important to emphasise that this study is largely qualitative hence this section tries to set parameters and evaluation criteria in a theoretical context rather than a rigidly defined theoretical framework or foundation. All evaluations, however, ought to have some form of pre-determined conclusion and evaluation criteria. The works of Brookfield and Millar were chosen as some of the most relevant in offering some guiding theoretical contexts and criteria underpinning this study.

Kha Ri Gude being a campaign that was thought of as an alternative to a myriad of failed initiatives towards the eradication of Illiteracy in South Africa could have led powers that be searching for new ideas. To an extent these challenges may have led people to try and think differently for they did not necessarily need to reinvent the wheel. Brookfield, (1985:46) defines adult education as "that activity concerned to assist adults in their quest for a sense of control in their own lives, within their interpersonal relationships, and with regard to the social forms and structures within which they live." It is important to realise that most Kha Ri Gude participants missed the opportunity to gain meaningful education mainly due to apartheid policies which subjected non whites to an inferior form of education known as Bantu education. One of Bantu education's aims was to relegate non whites to second class citizens. With Kha Ri Gude aimed at equipping participants with life skills it therefore would appeal to adults who desperately need to take control of their own lives. In the South African context where ABE has a component of training as indicated by a "T" in Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) could be the reason why Brookfield, (1985:46) argues that training is a set of previously defined skills, knowledge and behaviours which are transmitted to trainees in a manner previously defined by a trainer. Nevertheless, he does however recognise training as a necessary activity in many facets of human activity.

Brookfield proposes the following six principles of critical practice in adult education;

1. *Participation is voluntary*; although in Kha Ri Gude Volunteer educators and Supervisors go around their communities recruiting learners participation is entirely on individuals own volition.
2. *Respect for self worth*; In Kha Ri Gude most participants are grown ups and it is paramount that attention to increasing their sense of self-worth underlies all educational efforts. However, it would be naïve to assume that criticism is absent from educational encounters. What need to be avoided at all costs are practices or statements which belittle others or which involve physical or emotional abuse.
3. *Adult education is collaborative*; It has to be realised that most Adult education participants are not tabula rasa. Knowledge they bring to these encounters ought to be acknowledged by means of offering different group members opportunities to share their knowledge with others. This form of collaborative learning ought to be continuous so that adult education involves a continual renegotiation of activities and priorities in which competing claims are explored, discussed and negotiated.
4. *Praxis is at the heart of adult education*; Participants have to be involved in a constant process of activity, reflection on activity, collaborative analysis of activity, new activity, further reflection and collaborated analysis and so on and so forth.
5. *Adult education fosters a spirit of critical reflection*; With Aids/HIV dissipating families and human life, opportunities such as Kha Ri Gude that prompt participants or adults to consider alternative ways of thinking and doing things couldn't have come at a better time.
6. *The aim of adult education is the nurturing of self-directed, empowered adults*; No words can say it any better than Brookfield (1985:48)who says “adults will see themselves as proactive, initiating individuals engaged in a continuous re-creation of their personal relationships, work worlds, and social circumstances, and not as reactive individuals, buffeted by the uncontrollable forces of circumstance”.

Brookfield's six principles of critical practice for adult education provide evaluation criteria teaching and learning and also for exploring social contracts between Volunteer educators and



learners. Although these ideas are embedded in and emanate from European and North American contexts and from experiences in both workplace and community based adult education as well as representing an ideal situation in a developed world, it is important for one to interrogate as to what extent these principles are applicable to the South African situation.

On the other hand Millar (1989:11) proposes four dominant philosophical paradigms in adult education with five questions though in relation to nursing education. This map is intended to help those intimately involved in an education system to help diagnose problems and prescribe solutions which is what one would hope to do in this evaluation of Kha Ri Gude campaign. Below is a table which attempts to explain different aspects of adult education practice.

ADULT EDUCATION PRACTICE: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK				
	TECHNOLOGICAL	HUMANIST	LIBERAL	RADICAL
What social problem is taken most seriously by this form of practice?	(Re)production	meaninglessness	Barbarism	Oppression
What metaphor best describes the nature of the educational process?	Moulding	Growth	Initiation	Empowerment
What is the educator's task?	Instruction	Support	Conversation	Conscientisation
Each form of practice has its own understanding of what really counts as "knowledge". What is this?	Performance	Wholeness	Judgement	Praxis
An educated person is one who is...?	Competent	Integrated	Responsible	Liberated
What theory of social development does this form of practice rest on?	Modernisation	Dialogue	Incorporation	Social Transformation
What is the key value in this form of practice?	Efficiency	Acceptance	Reason	Freedom

Table 1.Theoretical Framework from Millar, (1989: 13).

Not to be confused with the questions asked in the above table, five key questions are asked as a means of helping diagnose problems and prescribe solutions. Kha Ri Gude is substituted for nursing education. These are:

- \* What form of practice predominates in Kha Ri Gude? Why?
- \* What form of practice is most alien? Why?
- \* In what directions should Kha Ri Gude change? Why?
- \* What might block this development?
- \* What might enable this development to take place?

Millar admits that the model is simplistic and how well it will work depends on implementation. Should this be as it may, it ought to be taken seriously in the South African context as many commentators have been heard saying that the country has very wonderful policies which unfortunately rarely succeed due to poor implementation. Millar's model is also biased towards the technological approach. In Kha Ri Gude it becomes problematic since the technological approach relies on good instructional methods of which Kha Ri Gude Volunteer educators may lack due to insufficient training. Furthermore there are large areas in South Africa that do not have basic services making it difficult to provide infrastructure that enhances modernisation. In this case modernisation would entail providing services such as building tarred roads which cannot be done before people have flushing toilets with running water as opposed to the bucket system that still exists in various areas of the country. However, this map is intended to help those intimately involved in an education system to help diagnose problems and prescribe solutions which is exactly what Kha Ri Gude needs in these early stages of its existence. It has also been based within a South African context albeit prior to the advent of democracy. The use of this framework has therefore been chosen to locate the provision of Kha Ri Gude in a particular philosophical paradigm to help understand better its provision in terms of its management philosophy, purpose, values and expected roles of Volunteer educators and Supervisors.

### **2.3) What Is Literacy**

One could argue that if people were either literate or illiterate, there would be a moment in time when they pass from one to the other which would simplify definitions and the assessment of literacy. However, literacy is in other words a series of similar items in which each is almost the same as the ones next to it but the last would be very different from the first. This is to say as people learn they become more literate and numerate and so definitions become a rule that may be unfair to some. To this Lyster (1992:10) says “When we examine attempts to define literacy we see that they all deal in varying degrees, and with varying degrees of success, with questions of content, standard and context”.

Smythe, in Alkenbrack (2001;113) states that it is difficult to simply give a definition of literacy since understanding of literacy need to reflect the views, attitudes, values and goals of those who happen to be within a particular context. Similarly, SIL International (1999) contends that literacy ought to be looked at in two different perspectives namely autonomous and ideological. Autonomous literacy refers primarily to literacy as a set of cognitive skills and abilities and their generic use. For example literacy would enable people to be detached. This also means the ability to be rational in order to progress as an individual or as society. In contrast, ideological literacy refers to the social conceptions and uses of literacy. It is regarded as the defining framework of society meaning it is what society does with literacy and to some extent what literacy brings to society. Freire (1970:112) looks at the concept in a rather different view for he posits that its power lies not in a received ability to read and write but rather in an individual's capacity to put those skills to work in shaping the course of his or her own life. This would in other words be interpreted to refer to one's ability to change one's world and maybe overthrow oppression.

On the other hand Gillette and Ryan in Lyster (1992:10) say “A person is literate who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life”. However in this definition there is very little about what the individual can do with his or her literacy skills or where and why they have any meaning at all. Lyster (1992:12) goes on to say “Definitions of literacy are much more about what is regarded as possible than what is regarded as ideal”. This

is to say there may not be a single, simple, individual competence which can be referred to as literacy.

It is important to note that there are different types of literacies and these different literacies could be required in different contexts. The relevance of literacy also varies dramatically in different contexts. For instance the consequences of being illiterate are far less serious in a rural African setting than say in London.

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) department (2005:863) argues that in common usage, literacy is understood to be the ability to read and write and was formed as an antithesis to illiteracy in 1883. Given the western origins of this definition it is not surprising why the word literacy is not found in most African languages which only started the art of reading and writing after the arrival of the white people in Africa.

On the other hand Janks (2010:2) asserts that more recently literacy has been defined as a social practice. The notion of a literacy practice implies patterned and conventional ways of using written language that are defined by culture and regulated by social institutions. In other words different communities do literacy differently whereby each form of literacy produces specific skills related to that particular literacy. For instance a child growing up in a rural area in Zimbabwe will know various types of edible wild fruits he or she can eat while herding goats or cattle in the bush. On the other hand a child growing up in an urban suburb such as Hanover Park in the city of Cape Town in South Africa where gang violence is rampant will learn how to react when gangs start shooting each other. The same child may get to know when a machine gun is being fired or be able to identify the sound of a pistol being fired. On the other hand a rural child may be able to recognize the sound of his or her stray cow when it moos.

## **2.4) Value Of Using Mother Tongue When Teaching**

One of the tenets in adult education is that adults learn for a purpose. More often there have been challenges finding a balance between the providers and learners with regards to the choice of language for literacy learning. In most cases providers are convinced that literacy learning should first be in the mother tongue of the learners. This is an issue UNESCO has championed to the extent that it has gone even further by monitoring dying languages. In other words UNESCO champions mother-language education because it has been shown that it is better. This is so since its studies have shown that it leads to more engaged students, better thinking and better assimilation of fundamental concepts.

Basel (2004:366) says researchers from the University of the North (now known as the University of Venda) and Fort Hare undertook a study on an adult learning project known as Ikhwelo in 2001. They noted that learner participation was restricted when facilitators used the English language. Researchers also noted that when Ikhwelo facilitators used English a ‘formal’ atmosphere developed in which learners became very passive. However, when educators taught through the learners’ mother tongue they participated actively in the learning process. Furthermore, similar observations were made at several centers whereby learners would engage in fruitful discussions in their mother tongue about the logic and realistic aspects of other learners’ comments. This supports Johnston and Maguire’s (2005:21) observations of which in their study of a literacy programme they claim that chances of success in a programme that works with established groups of people who share a common purpose are high, which also applies to programmes that start from livelihood skills. To illustrate the importance of sharing a common purpose one can give an example of the dramatic low levels of criminal activity that prevailed during the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. It is not unusual in some areas in South Africa to see black foreigners being attacked or mugged in full view of the general public which instead of restraining perpetrators may just turn a blind eye. However, during the world cup it was shown that it is possible for all Africans to live together without displaying xenophobic tendencies as they were able to unite in support of African teams that were participating in this world show piece. Criminal activity was almost nonexistent and for once no foreign African was called by derogatory names such as ‘Kwerekwere’ which is commonly used to refer to black

immigrants in South Africa. At this time the common goal for Africans was to see any African team succeed. On the other hand it was generally believed that if foreign visitors who had converged for the World Cup had a memorable experience in the country they would in turn spread the good word about the country thus attracting future foreign tourists something that could create employment for the locals. All these benefits had been communicated to all and sundry in a language local people understood. For instance the 2010 World Cup slogan “Ke Nako” meaning its time was in a local language. The results showed that indeed people had accepted that it was time not only to put their differences aside but to join hands and rid themselves of all social ills such as xenophobia from their midst. In some instances the Ghanaian national soccer team known as ‘The Black Stars’ which happened to be the only African soccer team to progress to the quarter final stage in the competition came to be affectionately referred to as BaGhana BaGhana, a name derived from the host nation team ‘Bafana Bafana’ which had unfortunately been eliminated in the first round.

On the other hand Street (1994:12) suggests that “using mother tongue simply as a bridge to second language literacy may be “demeaning” to the local literacy...” This is obviously against the generally accepted understanding that learners who will have understood various concepts in their mother tongue will be in a better position to transfer the same knowledge when required to much easier when similar information is presented in a different language. To a great extent this is the belief that may have resulted in the South African government policy for Adult learners (ABET) to try and assist learners attain functional literacy in their mother tongue first before enrolling in English classes. Unfortunately the policy that guides Kha Ri Gude campaign and maybe what has been happening in the education sector in general is that teaching in mother tongue language is always abandoned as soon as learners begin learning in a second language. Results from this study show that it is necessary to continue with both. In the United States of America for example, after several studies of regarding poor performance of children of Mexican origin whose home language was Spanish, the then existing single language school policy was seen as a contributory factor hence it was eventually amended to dual language. To this end Barrera and Jimenez (2008:2) argued that

“Teachers with insight into the problems of Spanish-speaking children have to come to realize that two separate but parallel purposes need to be pursued. One is

to help the Mexican-American student adjust to the dominant “Anglo” culture. The other is to foster in him a pride in his Spanish speaking culture and Mexican origin....to recognize the Spanish-speaking ability of Mexican –American students as a distinct asset and to build on it rather than to root it out”.

Despite the study having been done on young and school going learners its findings can be applicable to adult learners in various contexts.

On the other hand a study conducted on a group in Uganda; Sentumbwe (2001:2) says “...it is equally arguable that many learners are hesitant to learn literacy skills in their own local languages when they are aware that they cannot use such skills to achieve any purposeful change in their own lives”. As such demands of these participants nevertheless differ from place to place. However, in relation to one of the objectives of Kha Ri Gude which is to act as a feeder to ABET the above author goes on to state that “Our experience with adult literacy learners from different ethnic groups has shown that if they are to continue with literacy skills learning after the initial literacy cycle, then a shift from local or mother tongue instruction to English instruction should be attempted. This is due to issues of power and status, which some languages are associated with and ...it appears English, has both”. However, there is mounting evidence that second language learning is better and faster if literacy skills in mother language are advanced. Therefore, even if no status is attached to indigenous languages (which is a tragedy) there is still value in prolonged mother tongue study.

In a report that looked at the state of adult learning and literacy campaigns in the sub Saharan region for UNESCO it seems most countries are indeed in support of using mother tongue. For example in Somalia they ran a literacy campaign known as the ‘Somali Literacy Campaign’ whose name was derived from a local language widely spoken in Somalia. Similarly in Mozambique there was ‘Wona Sanana’. ‘Wona’ literally means seeing, watching, protecting and ‘Sanana’ means children in Bitonga, a dialect spoken in the Inhambane province of Mozambique. This is also highlighted by Aitchison and Alidou (2009:32) who state that “The current dominant view that learning to read and write is best done initially in the mother tongue is generally adhered to...”

## 2.5) Literacy Teaching

Roberts (1997:45) says “It is sometimes helpful to remember, however, that human beings survived without literacy for hundreds of thousands of years” Similarly, Graff in Roberts (1997:45) supports the above observation as he contends that humans have inhabited this earth for such a long period yet literacy has been a feature of everyday life for but a fraction of the total period of human existence. This is aptly stated by Pattison (1984) who says

“Over the last four hundred years reading and writing have been the primary skills by which Western civilization has expressed its consciousness of itself as a language-using organism, and so we are accustomed to regard the attainment of these talents as synonymous with literacy itself, but our own common usage and that of other cultures belies so simple an equation”

Be that as it may, the ability to read and write is often regarded as an indispensable prerequisite for active participation in the contemporary world. With the passage of time, the issue of literacy has become intertwined with larger issues such as social, political, economic development and even such questions as social equity and the responsibility of the state to redress past patterns of discrimination such as injustices of the now defunct apartheid system. As such literacy teaching must be functional to an extent that it integrates with the above issues.

Roberts (1997:48) again says “As soon as ideas and events become inscribed in writing, it becomes possible to revisit them and pinpoint faults and contradictions. This leads to a more critical orientation toward the world”. Kha Ri Gude teaches participants to read and write. For instance when individuals are able to take down minutes of various communal projects they undertake they will be able to follow up on issues they will have agreed upon to ensure that they are executed for their benefit. By the same token, when individuals are also able to record times people work on a project that attracts remuneration, this ensures that no one is overpaid nor underpaid. The ability to write and keep correct records among other things eliminates conflicts. Obviously in a society such as in South Africa where the legacy of violence still affects most, issues that can easily be solved nonviolently sometimes easily deteriorate and become fatal. It is not uncommon to read stories in daily papers in which individuals get seriously hurt or kill each



other over issues that can be avoided if people concerned had something as simple as a written document that binds them as well as serve as proof to various agreements.

According to Freire in Fritze (2000) he states that “consciousness is determined by the socio-economic and political context, and also by cultural conditioning through one’s upbringing, education and religion”. However, it is important to note that in the main Freirean view of literacy is the opposite of functional literacy. In this case though it seems he is of the view that literacy must be functional by means of dispelling what he refers to as ‘false consciousness’. False consciousness includes various myths that may arise from peoples’ upbringing such as saying “women belong at home and their function is to be responsible for and look after the family”. In South Africa where occupations previously reserved for males and whites can now also be occupied by females and non whites. It is therefore important that literacy teaching for instance deal with human rights issues such as non discrimination be it in terms of religion, race, tribe, colour or creed.

Similarly, Holland et al (1998:43) state that “functional literacy has emerged as a way of describing the degree of literacy necessary to cope with the demands of society and the workplace”. For instance in 1978 UNESCO observed that through the possession of skills perceived as necessary by particular persons and groups this led them to fulfill their own self-determined objectives as family and community members, citizens, consumers, job- holders, and members of social, religious or other associations of their choice. This includes the ability to obtain information they want and to use that information for their own and others’ wellbeing, the ability to read and write adequately to satisfy the requirements often set for them or by themselves as being important for their own lives, the ability to deal positively with demands made on them by society and the ability to solve the problems they face in their daily lives. For instance through Kha Ri Gude participants have identified benefits such as being able to open bank accounts. Not only have they become better at saving and budgeting they are able to avoid losing the little they have through fires that are a common occurrence in the informal settlements where most participants live, especially during the winter period.

On the other hand Bhola (1994:133) says “An objective of functional literacy is, of course, to enable adult learners to function effectively in their societies...to continue learning to stay functional in societies that are ever-changing”. In the midst of the current world recession, it is

not surprising to find people regretting having missed opportunities to learn things that could be assisting them to cope better in these difficult times, hence some see the need to join Kha Ri Gude. Those who eventually gather courage to rectify life's missed opportunities are the one, one would find attending literacy classes. In such circumstances it is only prudent that they are offered opportunities that equip them with the skills to cope with various challenges in their lives. Kha Ri Gude's emphasis is on the need to link literacy, numeracy and language to work with development needs and initiatives within the areas classes are held agrees with the above assertion. Participants are encouraged to read local papers that highlight issues within their communities. These could include issues such as combating crime, fire prevention either in homes particularly among informal settlement dwellers or forest fires, HIV and AIDS and many others are dealt with.

## **2.6) Conclusion**

Of the many terms that exist in academic circles, literacy is surely one that has proved difficult to define in a modern context. For instance, having the ability to read and write usually in western cultures has sometimes been regarded as an absolute prerequisite for an individual to be classified as being literate. Street in Alkenbrack (2001:13) argues that this approach has done little but brings about conceptualizations of literacy as embodying an autonomous view, where literacy regardless of context was seen as producing particular universal characteristics and giving rise to particular good effects. Instead Street who is considered a pioneer in the area of New Literacy Studies (NLS) is the one from which the arguments above are derived from. It has been shown that literacy is social in nature and depends strongly on ideology. This approach is what is regarded as the ideological view of literacy.

From the above discussions in this chapter, it has been made clear that various efforts or studies are mainly in support of literacy that enables participants to better face immediate challenges in their lives. This has been deliberate because since the demise of apartheid various literacy initiatives have failed to reduce illiteracy as would have been expected. This has in turn made the

use of participants' already existing knowledge of mother tongue, for example, a better tool to utilize in order to tackle existing challenges among different communities.

## **CHAPTER 3-Methodology**

### **3.1) INTRODUCTION**

This section of the evaluation of Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign shows precisely how the research was carried out. In order to clearly highlight how this was achieved it is necessary to among other things start by highlighting the aims of the study, identify the methods that were used in gathering information as well as justify why particular methods were deemed more appropriate than others.

It has already been shown by means of highlighting various social commentators and academics' proclamations of the challenges that have resulted in previous literacy initiatives' failure to achieve set objectives. It was therefore the aim of this research to investigate various ways in which Kha Ri Gude either prepared or failed to prepare adult learners for further learning in the ABET system. In this endeavor it was always born in mind Roger's (2002:25) assertion that "the main aim of literacy learning programmes is to encourage use of literacy skills in daily lives rather than learning of literacy skills in the classroom". Similarly, policy makers must have taken heed of this by ensuring that the campaign's aims were in line with various communal development programmes of which the marginalized communities could benefit from such as the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP), Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA), and the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP).

South Africa also initiated Kha Ri Gude with the aim of meeting the United Nations Education for All goals. The aims coalesce with the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) of Education for Sustainable Development which are intended to inter alia support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction, women's empowerment and HIV and AIDS. What also further strengthened the government's resolve to embark on Kha Ri Gude campaign were findings from an International literacy survey in Scott-Goldman (2000:7) which states that "Poor literacy skills increase one's vulnerability and dependency on other people". It is generally accepted that education or whatever policies in almost all African countries were deliberately formulated in such a way that they conditioned people to become dependent on the

powers that be as opposed to creating entrepreneurship or self sufficiency. This mentality of dependency manifests in the ever increasing number of people on the government housing waiting lists commonly known as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and social grants beneficiaries. Government efforts to address such challenges have brought about other unintended consequences. In some cases people seem to have become too complacent as they have come to believe that the government is in all circumstances obliged to improve their living conditions by for instance building them houses. In other cases young women are reported to have unplanned children so that they can access child grants. Furthermore some well to do individuals have found loopholes in the system such that they are able to also access various government assistance they do not deserve, to the detriment of rightfully targeted recipients.

2009 saw the intake of the second stream of learners into Kha Ri Gude and the third in 2010. The third intake showed commitment and leadership among the people involved in the campaign. South Africa having won the bid to hold the first Soccer World Cup on African soil presented various logistical challenges. Almost all citizens were eager to be part of this once in a lifetime spectacle. The games commencing in June which was a month after Kha Ri Gude classes were supposed to have started it required campaign supervisors and volunteer educators to be innovative. This was to ensure that new intakes did not lose any learning time. On the other hand companies contracted to supply learning material were operating on skeleton staff as workers, like in most organizations, took days off from their places of employment. This had an effect of delaying the delivery of learning material to learners. As if these challenges were not enough UNICEF reported a budget cut in the first evaluation of the campaign that the government had commissioned. It states that treasury had released only R890 million in 2008 and 2009 out of the R6,1 billion it had committed to the campaign. Of course this amount was less than anticipated. This necessitated the extension of the campaign period to 2015 instead of 2012 hopefully allowing South Africa to nevertheless aim to meet the EFA goal 4 of reducing illiteracy by at least 50% by 2015.

### 3.2) Subjects

This research was an evaluation which took an eclectic form dominated by a qualitative approach. Schofield and Anderson in Worthen and Sanders (1987:50) identify the following advantages for using such an approach as follows:

“it gives the opportunity for the research to be conducted in its natural settings, the researcher is the data gatherer and data analyst, a qualitative approach emphasizes ‘thick description’ that is obtaining ‘rich, deep’ data which illuminate everyday patterns of action and meaning from the perspective of those being studied, tends to focus on processes rather than primarily or exclusively on outcomes and employs multiple data gathering methods”.

On the other hand Guba and Lincoln (1989:50) support the conducting of an evaluation in that among other things phenomena can only be understood within the context in which they are studied. This is to say despite getting ideas from other countries such as New Zealand, Brazil, Cuba and India countries that had implemented successful literacy campaigns, its success or failure had to take into consideration the South African context.

The above is aptly stated by Parlett and Hamilton (1976:100) when they say

“When an innovation ceases to be an abstract concept or plan, and becomes part of the teaching and learning reality...it assumes a different form altogether. The theatre provides an analogy: to know whether a play works, one has to look not only at the manuscript but also at the performances; that is at the interpretation of the play by the director and actors. It is this that is registered by the audience and appraised by the critics. Similarly, it is not an instructional system as such, but its translation and enactment by teachers and students, that is of concern to the evaluator and other interested parties”.

This means South Africa’s history which tells of previous literacy campaigns that have failed could not afford to sit back and hope that this time around results were going to be different. Kha Ri Gude having started in 2008, two years later was a reasonable time to subject the campaign to

some scrutiny which would highlight whether or not things were going according to plan. The above is put in simpler terms by Rogers (2002:25) who refers to an illuminative evaluation as something that “help those who produce texts to adapt texts to people rather than expect people to adapt to the texts”. The aspect of illuminative evaluation would to an extent enable outsiders to pinpoint or draw stakeholders’ attention to areas they would have never been able to notice or critique. This can be caused by many factors such as insiders or people directly involved in the campaign not being in a position to presenting or coming up with alternative views as opposed to interested outsiders who are prepared to look at the campaign using a different lens.

Teachers who in this campaign are referred to as Volunteer educators and learners formed the crux of the study. Learners’ views in particular were crucial since they were the primary recipients of the campaign. Without their input the campaign would have been difficult if not impossible to evaluate. Knowles et al in Nafukho et al (2005: 10) say “If adult learners can discover the gap between where they are now and where they want to be, they will become more conscious of their “need to know” new knowledge and skills”. The assumption is if human beings are faced with challenges they will try to find means to try and overcome or lessen the problems they may be faced with. For instance, some of the refugees who are participants in the campaign enroll so as to get opportunities to learn local languages or use such opportunities as a means of gaining acceptance within the communities they live in. On the other hand some locals participate in the campaign probably because they feel the need to be able to use banks and automated teller machines (ATM). Often this would be after the realization that people who normally assist them often end up cheating them as they take advantage of their lack of knowledge. Therefore, due to the above reasons what participants hope to achieve or their understanding of the expected gains from participating in the campaign becomes very important for the study. Some of the participants who came to be included in the study were people who by virtue of living in the localities where there were learning centers were incorporated in the study. These people are the ones who were referred to as ‘others’ in this study. They comprised individuals such as school leavers, the unemployed or the self employed within the identified communities where there were Kha Ri Gude classes. Kha Ri Gude being a Mass Literacy Campaign getting to find out how popular or visible it was became important as it also gave light with regards to how the general community felt about initiatives that took place within their neighborhoods. If for instance these people looked down on Kha Ri Gude participants, in a way

this could demoralize participants and maybe the campaign would end up not benefiting from possible marketing these people could give if they viewed it as beneficial.

The other group of people who provided information regarding the study were the various Kha Ri Gude coordinators. Coordinators provided immediate logistical support to the Supervisors who then worked more closely with Volunteer educators. Views from the campaign's top management were also sought. Last but not least views of various academics that were either once involved with the campaign and had left or had an interest in adult education also formed part of the participants in this study.

### **3.3) Instruments**

When conducting this study multiple data gathering methods were employed. These included observations, interviews, discussions and use of questionnaires (see appendices). Recordings were made on the observation schedule, notes were taken during verbal interviews which were guided by a verbal interview guide and a questionnaire for Management and Facilitators was handed out.

Observations were in the form of class visits which provided a wider scope for witnessing participants' realities and reviewing learning and teaching documents or instructional materials. A total of five centers were visited for observations. These centers were located in different suburbs of Tshwane namely Mamelodi, Atteridgeville, Saulsville, Lotus Gardens and Winterveld. From these, two were in informal settlements, one was located in a new formal residential area inhabited by people who had been moved from an informal settlement through a government programme referred to as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) hence houses they live in are commonly referred to as RDP houses. Probably due to a show of appreciation to government as recipients of RDP houses this was one of the most enthusiastic groups which fully supported the campaign. It is important to note that the campaign has developed instructional material that is translated into all eleven official languages. A researcher cannot rely on word of mouth about what the campaign is all about hence to be able to come up



with more accurate findings it was necessary to acquaint oneself with what happened in the so called “black box”. In this process various strategies were applied depending on the prevailing situations. For instance, at one centre where the learning situation was tense probably due to participants assuming the researcher was a government official this was neutralized through subtle participation during the learning process by the researcher. The learning environment in which classes were held was something that was looked at during the study. This involved looking at the physical infrastructure lessons were conducted in. Since most participants are adults and in some cases quite old people it means they are easily susceptible to ailments caused by various conditions such as cold weather. As such participation of learners is usually affected if classes take place in open spaces under cold conditions. The same could also apply if learning takes place in hot conditions. These non conducive learning environments are best illustrated by picture number two in the background to the study section which shows learners using an open garage at one of the centers visited.

Looking at learners’ class work ensured that the researcher accessed the language and words of the participants in written form. In this way one was able to determine how well learners were able to put their thoughts or translate what would have been learnt in written form. Interactions with educators offered one a better understanding of their interpretation of policies they were supposed to implement. Various documents such as learners’ work and text books were used to illuminate the evaluation of the campaign. If need be appointments with other officials such as campaign coordinators were made in cases where clarification was needed with regards to why certain things were done in a particular way or manner.

Interviews were another means by which information was gathered. As regards to learners only verbal interviews were conducted. On the other hand responses to both written and verbal interviews involved Volunteer educators, Supervisors and Coordinators. For almost all learners since their reading skills were poor the contents of the consent form (see appendices) were explained to them before they could give out information. The conducting of these verbal interviews was in other cases incidental. Since the researcher had to travel to various centers where campaign classes were conducted it was not always easy to make appointments to conduct these interviews since participants had many other activities and responsibilities to fulfill as learning adults. This was particularly the case with learners as verbal interviews were the only

way of gathering information relating to the campaign. Not much if any was going to be received from learners in writing since most can only write a few sentences mostly by means of copying from textbooks, chalkboard or flipcharts.

Discussions with mixed groups of participants also offered another dimension to this study. In this way one was able to assess the relationship between and among participants be they learners, Volunteer educators, Supervisors or Coordinators. To an extent, being able to view power relations in such settings offered explanations as to the kind of relationships that existed at various centers. Such knowledge is important in an adult learning setting where issues can be taken personal and sometimes emotionally. A good knowledge of peoples' backgrounds with regards to expectations, wants and needs has an impact on things such as learner class attendance and participation. Discussions regarding the campaign also involved the general public. What participants learnt from Kha Ri Gude had an impact in their communities. It was therefore important that views from general members of the community who had any form of knowledge regarding to Kha Ri Gude had it noted. In a subtle way if members of the community had a positive view of the campaign then they would in one way or another support it. This could be by way of encouraging other possible learners to join thus offering a hand with regards to recruitment.

Questionnaires were also used as another method of gathering information. (see appendices for management and facilitator questionnaire). It is important to note that learners were deliberately exempted from this form of data gathering. The researcher would in most cases ask respondents to complete the questionnaires in his presence so that he could clarify any issues not clear to respondents. This also ensured that the questionnaires were returned since if they were taken away it would be difficult to get them back completed. If for instance an appointment was made to take place before classes sometimes one would find the educator attending to unannounced visitors or other unexpected household chores as some classes took place in their homes. In all circumstances an effort to make sure that all questions whether from the questionnaires or verbal were directly related to the aims of the study was always made. Below is a table showing the research design followed:

Research Instrument	Source of Information	Data gathering Method	Sample Size
Information Sheet	Campaign participants	Reading and verbal explanation	1 CEO; 1 Monitor; 3 Supervisors; 10 Volunteer Educators; 64 Learners
Questionnaire for Management and Facilitators	Volunteer educators; Supervisors; Monitors	Questionnaire	1 Monitor; 3 Supervisors; 10 Volunteer Educators
Interview Questions Guide	Volunteer educators; Supervisors; Monitors; Learners	Verbal Interviews	1 CEO; 1 Monitor; 3 Supervisors; 10 Volunteer Educators; 60 Learners
Observation Schedule	Volunteer educators; Supervisors; Monitors; Learners	Observation; Verbal interviews	64 Learners; 10 Volunteer educators

Table 2 – Research Design

### 3.4) Procedure

Most participants within the Kha Ri Gude campaign are either working or volunteering on a full time basis. Gagne and Driscoll (1988:2) say “Besides the student who is learning, the most important agent in an educational program is the teacher. The teacher is responsible for arranging the student’s environment to promote learning”. This seems to be one factor that strongly defines the way the campaign operates. The teachers who in this campaign are referred to as volunteer educators are the ones who have to go around their communities recruiting learners as well as finding venues for learning. These are indeed not easy responsibilities as shown by other Volunteer educator’s failure to secure vacant learning space in schools or community centers nearest to their homes. It might be very discouraging for some of these Volunteer educators as they sometimes have to deal with school principals who regard public schools as their private institutions.

Those who happen to be involved in other work besides Kha Ri Gude in most cases their jobs would be complementing each other. For example, at one Kha Ri Gude learning center visited,

there was a volunteer educator who was a Church Pastor. Having realized that since his pastoral work generally dealt with communities, in a way Kha Ri Gude acted as an extension of his social responsibility that in turn made his pastoral duties easier to manage as participants learnt how to among other things read, a skill they could use in church to read a bible or hymn book.

Data collection involved quite a wide and varied process. Before data could be collected permission had to be sought from the campaign management. Electronic mails were sent to management briefing them of the research purpose and general background as well as asking for permission to work with some of their members of staff at selected centers. Telephone calls were made to make appointments to meet the campaign management. Ironically, these meetings turned out to be the first forms of data sources of which conversations that resulted from these meetings revealed a lot of pertinent information as regards the materials learners, volunteer educators and supervisors used. Information as to why certain topics were found to be appropriate for the Kha Ri Gude learners also came out of these meetings. The researcher got to know what management was planning to do in order to take the campaign to a higher level through highlighting challenges that had not been anticipated and intervention measures that were being put in place were revealed. This information was transcribed and it was during this period that the researcher realized that there were other people who could contribute information that could be used in the study as well besides the already identified learners, volunteer educators, supervisors, coordinators and monitors who had initially been targeted. This means renowned academics in the field of Adult education that happened to be prepared to say something about Adult Education in South Africa and Kha Ri Gude in particular had their views noted. Input from two such individuals was used in this research. For instance some undocumented issues regarding the background of the campaign such as why certain original members of the Kha Ri Gude management had withdrawn and political interference that affected or could affect the campaign was revealed. This information helped the researcher understand why for instance funds initially budgeted specifically for the campaign was not being disbursed as initially planned.

It is equally important to note that due to South Africa's hosting of the 2010 Soccer World Cup it affected availability or recruitment of learners for classes to commence on time. Initially Kha Ri Gude classes had been scheduled to commence beginning of May 2010. Companies that had

been contracted to deliver learning material contributed to classes starting late as its employees went on leave mainly for the World Cup thus contributing to further delays as some material could not be delivered on time. This gave the research an opportunity to further widen its coverage. General members of the community from areas where Kha Ri Gude classes operated were then seen as another source of information from which the study could benefit from. The researcher solicited information from people met in public transport such as trains and taxis. It is natural for strangers in such environments to converse and the researcher used this opportunity to find out what non Kha Ri Gude participants or general members of the community felt or how much they knew about this “Mass Literacy Campaign” taking place in their neighborhoods. It was quite encouraging to hear some of the comments from these strangers who of course had different opinions about the campaign. All the same it was up to the researcher to note what was relevant and discard what was seen as insignificant to the study. One lady in a taxi to Winterveld, for instance, was so appreciative of the campaign’s role with regards to the impact it had had on her family life. She stated that she lived with her grandmother and two younger sisters who were learning in primary school. The grandmother who was attending literacy classes had become so enlightened about the importance of education such that she had started monitoring her younger sisters’ home work while she was away. As the children did their homework she would also reading her seTswana Bible or one of the grandchildren’s school text books. The lady was so impressed by such developments because this had brought so much discipline among the children who previously would stay until late playing in the streets. She expressed regret why the campaign had not started earlier as her grandmother would have provided similar guidance to her which could have helped her do much better at school thus giving her an opportunity to look for a better job than what she did.

Before visiting learning centers the researcher asked supervisors to complete consent forms and questionnaires. From the five centers visited each had one supervisor who was also responsible for ten other centers within the area. After completing them they were collected and verbal interviews were conducted. These verbal interviews would in most cases help clarify issues that would have not been clearly stated in written form. Furthermore, during these interviews emphasis was made by the researcher to ensure that supervisors conveyed a correct message to the learners and volunteer educators regarding the study. This was important to ensure that nobody felt threatened in any way. Later on this proved to have been a very important process

since most centers were being run by either school leavers or individuals who had had very little training of facilitation or teaching. Most had had only been exposed to the two or three day courses they received upon recruitment. Bearing in mind that the research was not intended to expose their shortcomings or poor performance that could lead them to losing their roles in Kha Ri Gude no names were mentioned in questionnaires or anywhere else. In most cases Kha Ri Gude offered them the only source of income in an environment they felt had very little opportunities for them to get other forms of employment in the event something happened to them. Having allayed fears of a possibility of future victimization, when it came to observing lesson deliveries the researcher's presence did not change the mood of both learners and volunteer educator. It was good to realize there was not much tension or fear among all participants. However, this was not always the case such that when the situation was seen to be tense or subdued the researcher would occasionally chip in by passing a comment related to what was being taught in the form of an 'ice breaker' or 'comic relief'.

Most areas that offer Kha Ri Gude Mass literacy campaign are located in former black townships. There are some however in residential areas that have sections that house poor white people such as Akasia in Pretoria. It is usually in these areas that one finds the greatest number of people who live below the 'poverty datum line'. In most cases not more than one person among the different households would be formally employed. If there happens to be someone employed in such a household usually the type of job they would be doing would be low paying.

One of the centers visited was an area called Lotus Gardens. Participants comprised people who had recently been resettled from informal settlements and allocated houses through a government funded housing programme known as Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The houses are commonly referred to as RDP houses. From the five centers that data was being collected from these were the only ones who had decent accommodation (see picture number 2 in the background to the study section above). However, due to the small rooms in which they live in an outside carport was being used as a learning area.

Luckier learners were the ones in the picture below (picture number 4) as they were fortunate enough to be allowed to use a school classroom. However, most of these learners had to travel long distances to get to this learning centre since they live in an informal settlement where there is no formal school for them to use.



Picture 4: Kha Ri Gude Learners using a formal classroom

### **3.5) Limitations of This Research**

While the research attempted to investigate how effective the use of mother tongue is in enhancing learning in literacy classes, there were no ways in which one could ascertain that learners' cognitive development had indeed occurred and could be sustained. This is an area that the research was not able to fully explore. This was so since one could argue that by merely relying on learner discussions that occurred during lesson deliveries, learners by virtue of their age could simply be using knowledge accumulated through their life experiences and yet the

literacy they were expected to gain could only be tested in real life situations. This could therefore be an area of further research that this study was not able to deal with

For instance, to accurately ascertain that one was able to use an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) at a bank for example could only be determined through using a real machine as opposed to the theoretical knowledge they got through seeing pictures in their books while not having opportunities to test the knowledge practically. In other words teaching an individual how to drive a motor vehicle requires one to practically experience how it feels or how a car responds if one does not for instance correctly push down the clutch when changing gears as well as be able to know at what point to release the clutch so as to accelerate. In other words this research was not able to fully deal with how the campaign was addressing the issue of immediacy of applications to allow participants to participate more in the economy. With a lot of unemployment it would be worthwhile to determine how much contribution the campaign is making in developing entrepreneurship among communities it is serving.

In a class that is dominated by women or in other cases made up of women only, given a situation in which these adult learners are made up of mixed sexes it would be interesting to observe the interaction and participation of learners. This is in light of the African cultural background which often regards males as heads of households where in most cases their voices carry more weight. Assuming that the husband and wife found themselves in the same literacy class where they are expected to regard each other as equals, a situation which would be different from their home environment then it would have been interesting to observe if such a situation would not affect the free flow of opinions and ideas. The research did not have a situation where such a scenario could be tested. This limitation arises from the fact that during observations participants would often murmur some things in low tones while looking at the male researcher as if to ensure that they were not overheard. In this case the research did not look at cultural issues that can impact on learning particularly within the African context.



# CHAPTER 4-Results

## 4.1) Introduction

In this chapter a summary of the analysis of the data collected shall be highlighted. Ideally, results of this study will be presented while at the same time explaining how various aspects of the Campaign that will not have been highlighted earlier function. This shall be done by means of explaining what was found from the various learning centers that were visited. Different learning centers visited will be referred to as cases. Walcott (1984:179) says descriptions of each case shall be given with the aim to give a clear impression of the ‘total scene’ and begin the process of illustrating how individuals involved make sense of and give meaning to what goes on. It is also important to note that results that will be presented in this section will be related to the questions the research set out to address. Some of these questions include the following:

- How effective is the use of mother tongue in enhancing the learning process?
- How do educators assist learners whose mother tongue they are not good at?
- In what ways is Kha Ri Gude addressing or failing to address the problem of illiteracy in South Africa?
- What philosophy of education underpins Kha Ri Gude?
- Do learners progress to ABET? If not what difficulties inhibit their progression?
- What resources are available and how are they used?

As is the case with most areas in South African cities, it is common that informal settlements are found in and around where established residential areas exist. This is mainly because these settlers find it convenient as they are able to take advantage of the already existing infrastructure in the surrounding residential areas. These informal settlements are mostly inhabited by people who started migrating into urban areas soon after 1994 from rural areas, small towns and other African countries in search of either employment or a better life. This rural urban migration was sparked by the abolition of various restrictive apartheid population influx control laws that

included the much hated pass laws which ironically is now used to control the influx of particularly non South African black people from other African states. Due to a high influx of these immigrants providing decent accommodation became a challenge for the democratic government. On the other hand because these settlers did not have any form of skills they found themselves doing menial jobs of which the remuneration could not afford them to pay for rentals demanded in established residential areas.

#### **4.2) Volunteer Educators and Their Contexts-Case 1**

Mamelodi is a predominantly black township in the east of Tshwane. It is in this former black township where Kha Ri Gude literacy classes visited take place at a primary school known as Balebogeng primary school (see picture 4 of learners using a formal classroom in chapter 3.4 above).

A majority of participants at this centre live on the outskirts of the township and walk for about twenty to thirty minutes to get to class. It is therefore not surprising that this group is mostly made up of people aged between twenty six (26) and forty seven (47) years. This was the first centre to be visited during this research. There were three volunteer educators and one supervisor who were assisting learners during the three day visits done. However, only one volunteer educator was appointed to run the centre. The other two were coming in as observers and also as a way of showing their recruits that they were available while awaiting material to start teaching their own classes. This class was there specifically for sePedi learners though the two volunteer teachers occasionally assisted their own learners who enrolled to be taught in seTswana and isiZulu. However, the plan was that seTswana and isiZulu learners would at a later stage move to the informal settlement where their lessons would be conducted as soon as their material had been delivered.

One of the volunteer educators for learners at Balebogeng primary school started teaching Kha Ri Gude learners in 2008 when the campaign was launched. Her mother tongue is sePedi and she has a Matric certificate obtained in 1999. Before getting involved with Kha Ri Gude she had

never been formally employed. Due to a lack of funds she had been unable to further her education though she says she would have loved to pursue a career in education and particularly teaching. She has previously attended a two day training that was offered to Volunteer educators for the Kha Ri Gude Campaign. She is one of the lucky ones to have an opportunity of teaching in a formal classroom as opposed to using garages, verandas or whatever structure is normally available for these learners to use. However, she has reservations about the status given to Kha Ri Gude campaign. She says before she was allowed to use the classroom she had to teach her learners from a dilapidated veranda outside her house. This was quite demoralizing since her house is situated just a short distance from the school. She had to struggle to get permission to use the classroom at a school she says is where she also did her primary education. She simply could not understand why she had to struggle to use communal property for the betterment of the community the school purports to serve. The table below shows daily attendance during the researcher's visits.

<b>DAY</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	5	8	13
<b>2</b>	6	8	14
<b>3</b>	3	7	10
<b>4</b>	3	5	8

Table 3: Balebogeng attendance register

The classroom the Volunteer educator uses is a grade 5 class but unfortunately she is not able to put her charts on the walls and if she has to at the end of the lesson she will need to pull them down. She is concerned about her learners because most of them are young people and in her words she thinks Kha Ri Gude is not really recognized as a qualification to further one's studies hence she does not see most of her learners getting optimum benefit from the campaign. For her it is mostly suited for elderly people whose attendance is not consistent due to various factors. These include sometimes extreme cold weather since these classes were taking place during the

winter season. This is shown by the poor attendance experienced on the fourth day (see table 2 above) which was very cold. Sometimes hunger and poor health prevents people from attending lessons. As shown by the attendance table above males are fewer than females mainly due to their roles within various households in which they are usually expected to provide for their families. During the researcher's visits the first day was more of a revision of what learners had previously been taught. This made the researcher explain to the volunteer educator not to change her usual way of teaching as this was not an inspection to assess her performance for official reasons. On the next day she had some teaching aids that she had prepared. As she put them up on the chalk board one could not help noticing the excitement they brought as they drew learners' attention. The work covered was writing about oneself in which learners were being taught to correctly shape letters of the alphabet. Learners were also writing sentences about who their names were. Availability of desks and chairs in the classroom that was being utilised made learners' work better than what was observed at other centers where learners did not have appropriate furniture. Explanations of how the class exercise was to be tackled was given in at least three indigenous languages which ensured that most learners got to understand what was to be done. The use of learners' mother tongue promoted interaction something that would have been limited had any other language been used. However, it was clear that when the educator switched to another language, learners not familiar with the language may have missed some important things something the educator seemed to be aware of. In such cases the educator therefore always tried to repeat the same thing using different languages something that seemed to have a great impact on time for the lessons. Maybe because of the teaching aids learners were able to ask a lot of questions which sometimes needed the educator to ensure that learners focused on the task at hand.

#### 4.3) Volunteer Educators and Their Contexts-Case 2

Saulsville is a township situated in the west of Tshwane. It is located next to Atteridgeville and the two are separated by a busy street. For an outsider it would not be easy to tell that by merely crossing onto either side of the road one would be in a different suburb.

Julia (not her real name) lives on the outskirts of Saulsville in an informal settlement. She uses the sitting room of her corrugated iron built house in the informal settlement as a Kha Ri Gude class. She is a very energetic, enthusiastic and intelligent young woman who hails from the Limpopo province. She arrived in Tshwane in 2008 while following her boyfriend who she lives with.



Picture 5: Saulsville Kha Ri Gude venue

She says ever since she arrived in this province of Gauteng she has been applying for employment to become a nurse, teacher, or police woman. She says for now she does not mind what kind of job she does since all she wants is to contribute to her household budget and make sure she leaves the informal settlement before she has children since she lives with her boyfriend.

DAY	Number of Males	Number of Females	TOTAL
1	0	5	5
2	0	4	4
3	0	4	4
4	0	6	6

Table 4: Saulsville Attendance register

Julia started teaching Kha Ri Gude learners in 2009 and she is proud to have made a difference in some of her learners' lives. She says

“I don't think what I m doing would make my life any better than what it is today. For me it is all about making a difference in my community. It gives me so much pleasure to see my learners come to class carrying these bags and books without hiding them. I am happy when my learners are able to implement what I will have taught them. I m so pleased to see these old people being able to operate ATMs and count their money”.

The above thoughts Julia expresses are what Gagne and Driscoll (1988:3) could have been referring to when they say

“If learning is a process that occurs in a person's head, how can one know when, or if it has occurred? ... The answer is that learning is a process that enables organisms to modify their behavior fairly rapidly in a more or less permanent

way, so that the same modification does not have to occur again and again in each new situation. Teachers, then can recognize that learning has taken place when they note a behavioural change in the learner and also when they note the persistence of this change”

From Julia’s words about what she expects to gain from what she does it is most likely that she derives more satisfaction from the contribution and improvement of her community as opposed to the stipend she gets at the end of the month.

She goes on to say that she actually has to visit some of her learners at their houses as most would normally fail to attend classes due to family commitments. The above table (Table 3: Saulsville attendance) shows the number of learners that were observed during the course of the study. Sometimes her learners have to take care of their children and or grandchildren. She says some of her learners attend during weekends since they go to work where they do not have time to learn to read and write. Julia has not really had any training in Kha Ri Gude but assistance from her supervisor has seen her excel in what she does.

Although Julia says she has not attended any training for teaching Kha Ri Gude she was able to integrate what she taught with what happened in society quite well. As all her learners are female there was always a lot of debate and sharing of knowledge among participants. This research was conducted at the time when the 2010 Soccer World Cup was taking place. During intervals she would use local newspapers to facilitate discussion about what was happening in the world of football a topic and event which was gripping the whole nation at the time. Above all what made these discussions interesting was the fact that they were conducted in seSotho a language spoken by most learners. Despite the newspapers having been written in English the Volunteer educator was able to translate various articles in such a manner that most understood the story. At times you would find a learner looking at a particular article showing great interest though unable to read the English language as the discussions took place. By realising that these learners were able to identify letters of the alphabet which they could match with those of seSotho a language they were learning in, it was on its own a great achievement and was a confirmation of learners’ progress.

#### **4.4) Volunteer Educators and Their Contexts-Case 3**

Winterveld is an area located in the northwestern part of Tshwane. It is the last township one passes on the way to the Northwestern province or Platinum rich city of Rustenburg.

The center visited was run by a young lady who had completed her secondary education after doing what is commonly referred to as Matric in the year 2007. Despite obtaining good grades she had failed to proceed with her studies due to lack of funds. She got involved with Kha Ri Gude through her sister who had been involved with the campaign since its inception in 2008. Winterveld is one area visited during the research which had managed to attract the highest number of participants among its community. It was actually through the Winterveld community's positive response to Kha Ri Gude campaign that a second class of learners became necessary. The Volunteer educator of the centre visited claimed that in their area recruiting participants was not as difficult as it was when compared to other areas. This was mainly because the task of recruitment was not done by the Volunteer educator alone. The churches in the area from which different participants belonged had embraced this role with so much vigor such that its various activities also became aligned to what Kha Ri Gude hoped to achieve. For example Bible study groups became well established and were used to improve participants' reading and discussion skills. Political parties encouraged people to learn so as to improve their own livelihood as opposed to waiting for the government to provide them with all their needs. Furthermore the existence of a large population of immigrants from other African countries provided a wider pool of participants who may have seen this as an opportunity of not only learning the local languages but integration as well. For the Volunteer educator this was a good opportunity to make money which she could save and later use to pursue her studies preferably at a tertiary institution. However when asked what exactly she hoped to do she said

“To be honest I don't think I am going to be choosy about what I want to study at the moment. For instance there are people I went to school with who got excellent passes in Matric yet they are doing menial jobs. Some are working in local shops and supermarkets. Those who have lucky enough to get financially support are running their



own Kiosks around this area. However, I have always been fascinated by water such that a career in the navy would be a fulfillment of my dream”.

The Volunteer educator’s father is a self employed motor mechanic and after speaking with him she had been allowed to use the garage as a classroom. In a way this has brought in some positives in her life as she is now able to drive a motor vehicle. Because sometimes her father will be too busy to move the cars brought for repairs in and out of the garage, one day she was taught to reverse the parked cars out of the garage by one of her students and ever since she has been doing that by herself. This has also prompted her to want to get a driving licence so that she can also drive in public roads.



Picture 6: Winterveld KRG Centre - Vehicles moved out of the garage

The photo above on picture 6 shows some of the vehicles moved out of the garage so that learners could use the garage for the lessons.

The class observed was made up of local learners who spoke seTswana, sePedi and seSotho. Among these local language speaking learners were other learners who spoke languages spoken in countries they came from such as Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In order to manage such a seemingly complex situation the Volunteer educator had devised a strategy that seemed to work well for her. She had come up with a very innovative method of addressing this challenge. What she did was to arrange with her learners that they start at different times. Usually this was a difference of thirty minutes. On the first day the researcher visited she started by teaching sePedi learners. However, among these sePedi learners immigrant learners who preferred sePedi to other languages were also there.

The Volunteer educator explains that when she started teaching it was a matter of trial and error and there were a lot of negotiations with her learners on how best to manage their circumstances. For instance she says at first some of her former school friends most of whom she had attended school with used to assist her. Since they were unemployed they used to assist by taking care of different groups of learners. However, this arrangement did not last long as these friends soon started working hence they could not continue helping. She says after this she had an arrangement with her sister who is also a volunteer educator to come and assist but this arrangement also did not last long after their teaching times clashed. Her sister started teaching on the same days as her and therefore she found herself alone again. This was when she started staggering starting times for her learners. The picture below, picture 7 shows some of her learners where by some are having a written exercise while some listen to the educator.



Picture 7: Winterveld- Different language learners in class

Sometimes she starts by teaching sePedi or seTswana or seSotho learners. Their times alternate on a weekly basis but even if when a sePedi learner arrives early during a seSotho class they are allowed to participate. What makes this arrangement practical is that learners take quite a few breaks during learning and in a way this arrangement ensures that most learners are able to learn to write using the few desks available. This alternating and changing of activities has many advantages for both the educator and the learners. The Volunteer educator gets an opportunity to concentrate on a particular group of learners without being disturbed by other learners especially in a case where group work is concerned.

This Kha Ri Gude literacy centre differs from other centers visited in that it has the highest number of male learners as well as the highest number of relatively young participants. The group of participants from other African countries also forms the largest cohort of learners. The table below shows the number of learners who attend classes on a regular basis. It is important to note that in fact there are more learners who attend than the stipulated number such a class ought to consist of. The enthusiasm and tolerance for each other among different African people within this informal area is something that needs to be commended as well as encouraged among different people regardless of origin, race, colour, creed or any other issue that could be used to differentiate humans.

	sePedi		seTswana		seSotho		Other		Total		Overall Total
Day	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	0	3	0	5	1	5	4	6	5	19	24
2	0	3	0	4	1	4	5	5	6	16	22
3	0	3	0	4	1	4	5	5	6	16	22
4	0	3	0	3	1	2	5	6	6	14	20

Table 5:Winterveld-Attendance register

It should be noted that at this centre despite there being times for different language speaking learners they were still free to attend proceedings for different languages. The enthusiasm and tolerance for each other among different African people within this informal area is something that was recognized by the Kha Ri Gude campaign CEO and deputy Minister of Basic Education such that they made time to visit the centre as a token of appreciation to the Winterveld community. Their visit was captured by the researcher as shown on Picture 8 below.





Picture 8: Winterveld- Visit by the KRG CEO and Deputy Minister of Basic Education

#### 4.5) Volunteer Educators and Their Contexts-Case 4

The last centre visited was one run by a Volunteer educator whose mother language is isiZulu. As is common among all centers the Volunteer educator is also female. She is a married woman with three children of school going age. She lives with her husband and children in an area known as Lotus Gardens where residents have recently been allocated houses by the government through the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) scheme. She used to conduct lessons at her house but because of renovations that she is undertaking she had to ask one of her

learners to assist with a learning venue. The learner accepted and they conduct their lessons under a carport.

She says when she walks from her house to the new learning venue she usually checks whether or not her learners will be attending classes. On one occasion, the researcher was able to walk with her to class. While walking this short distance one could not help noticing the large number of unemployed youths in this neighbourhood who loiter around and spend time sitting on the street corners. These youths see people leaving their houses unattended to go to the literacy classes but she says ever since she started running these classes not a single house has ever been burgled or broken into. She thinks this is because most residents used to live together in the informal areas where mob justice was used in dealing with law breakers. On the other hand she says through discussions they sometimes have during their classes people have realized the benefits of working together and the benefits of exposing miscreants.

Having got to the learning centre one of the learners who arrived late for the lesson contended that she had thought there were no classes since the Volunteer educator had not shouted her name as she was passing by her house as she usually did. This simple strategy the Volunteer educator employed seemed to work as far as encouraging participants to attend classes. When asked to comment further about this strategy the Volunteer educator said that this was one way she used to market the campaign within the community such that almost everyone knew what the chit chat will be all about at particular times of the day.

The Volunteer educator says she thinks getting to class early to her is a way of showing seriousness in what she does. She says:

“If I were to arrive late for these classes no one would take me serious. I always try to impress upon my learners by being exemplary. I give them homework that I am able to mark and in class when I mark their work my discussions with them are meant to give me an idea of how they think so that I can be able to assist them better”

Her sense of satisfaction is visible as she shows the researcher one of her learners living at a house near the center who managed to complete the course. She spoke at length explaining how the lady's life had changed for the better. She said due to Kha Ri Gude the lady could now count

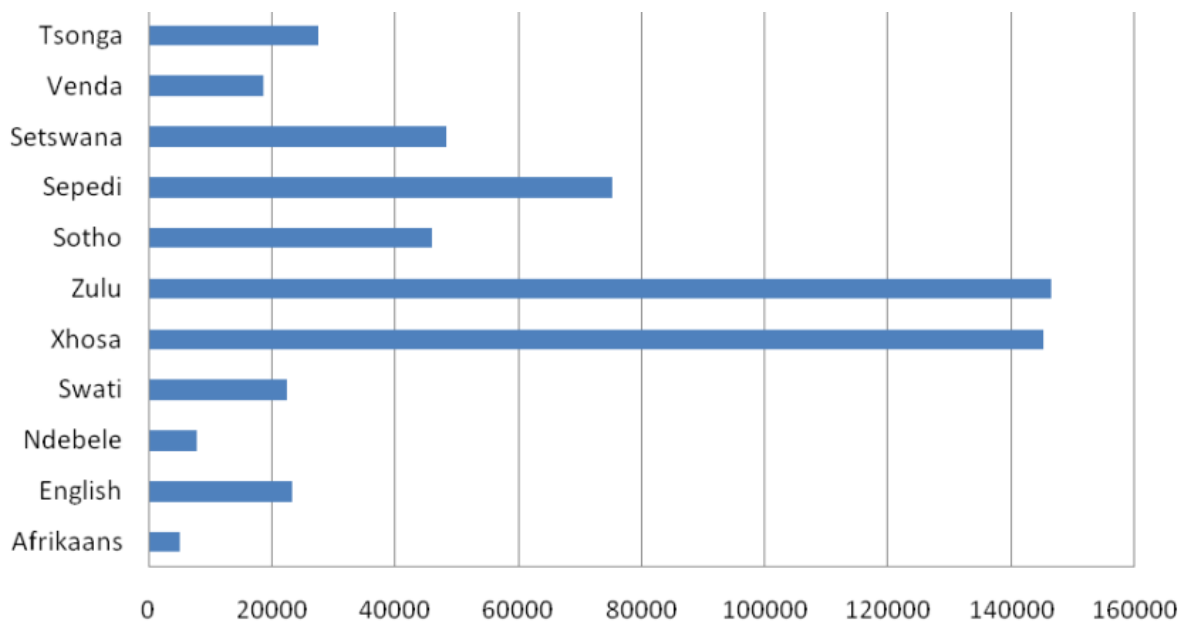
money well, read the bible and had even started her own business of selling sweets and chips to the local school kids so as to augment her pension.

However, the Volunteer educator thinks Kha Ri Gude is marginalized as it does not seem to enjoy the same status as other government programmes. She thinks in the advent of HIV/Aids which was so rampant in her community, such that every weekend there was a funeral then Kha Ri Gude could be used as one platform where people could use to try and address the scourge. For instance she says, if it wasn't for Kha Ri Gude most people in the area would still not be having bank accounts or be able to use automated teller machines (ATMs). She says some did not know the value of having documents such as birth certificates and identity documents. Participants were having opportunities of sharing information which in most cases was very helpful to their daily lives. This was mostly made possible by the flexible hours the classes were held. Despite this she feels people give up easily hence they need constant encouragement in order to complete the course.

At their learning centre they use tables that the community contributed money to buy for use during funerals in the area. This to an extent shows the approval the community has in Kha Ri Gude.

The Volunteer educator's mother tongue is isiZulu but a majority of her participants just like most other residents of Tshwane speak seSotho, seTswana and or sePedi. She says when she started she was able to recruit enough isiZulu speaking learners. However, as time went on they had become very few. This has made her teaching more interactive than before as she has to constantly utilise other learners when she has to explain words or concepts in sePedi, a language she is not very good at. A graph below shows national figures of learners by language.

## BREAKDOWN OF LEARNERS BY LANGUAGE



Graph1. Department of Education (2009:6)

From the above graph which is according to a Department of Education report (2009:6) it is clear that isiZulu speakers comprise the highest number of participants. According to her, since she started working with learners who do not speak her mother tongue she finds everyday to be a learning day not only for her learners but for her as well. She says if it wasn't for these classes her knowledge of these other languages wouldn't have improved as much it she has. She says at her house she speaks isZulu with her family and most of her friends from church and stockfel are also isZulu speakers. As such Kha Ri Gude is the only environment which she is able to interact at length with other language speakers.

Her ability to portray to her learners that they are not 'tabula rasa' hence she can also learn from them has enabled her to create a very impressive and conducive atmosphere for an adult class. Sharing of information is visible during proceedings as participants would regularly turn to various individuals for opinion or input on various matters they may think certain individuals among them would be more attuned with.



#### **4.6) Learning Materials and Records**

In all the centers identified above, learners' learning material such as text books and writing exercise books were some of the research instruments that were looked at. These also formed a very crucial aspect of the study as they provided documentary evidence of what actually happened on a regular basis.

During visits to each of the centers the researcher always started by explaining to learners the importance of having to look at some of their work. It was also made clear that this would only be done on a voluntary basis as a means of helping them do their work better. This explanation prompted some learners to bring their written work to the researcher after every lesson such that from all the centers visited almost every learner's work had been looked at. In all centers it was clear that more than 90% of learner's written work was done in the language they had chosen for learning. What was also observed was the fact that most class work was completed. This was quite encouraging since during lesson observations learners were usually asked to complete unfinished work as homework that was to be done after school. Encouraging participants to do home work was seen as something that could also contribute to building a culture of learning in homes these people came from. However, during various writing exercises participants would often submit scrap papers or note books to the Volunteer educator to check before writing class work in official school exercise books. To an extent this may have had an effect on the authenticity of the assumed abilities of learners which was identified during the verification exercise which the Department of Basic Education conducted at the end of the course.

The researcher also looked at the various texts learners used. By so doing the researcher was able to see how much class work was related to what was prescribed by the texts they used. More than 90% of the written exercises were taken from the prescribed writing exercises.

#### 4.7) Questionnaires

There were various questionnaires designed for this study. These were meant for different participants and the only participants who had no questionnaire to respond to were learners. This was mainly because most if not all learners were assumed to be involved in the campaign only if their education level was pre ABET level 1. As such an individual whose educational level is below ABET level 1 would still be at a stage where they will still be learning to read. Other activities for someone at this stage would include correctly shaping letters of the alphabet and writing would also involve learning to hold a pencil and even learning to correctly identify different letters of the alphabet.

Volunteer educators, Supervisors, Coordinators and Monitors are the ones who were asked to respond to various questionnaires. However, when the researcher started visiting the learning centers Volunteer educators from nearby centers who had been alerted of the researcher's visit also came and were thus welcome to participate in the study by responding to the questionnaires. To an extent this was an unforeseen but welcome opportunity which provided a wider and more diverse view about the campaign. As such out of the initially targeted five Volunteer educators who were responsible for each of the five centers at least one more Volunteer educator in most cases from a nearby centre came to participate. This was infact the first sign of how much dedicated participants involved with the campaign are.

Each Kha Ri Gude Supervisor is responsible for ten Volunteer educators while the Coordinator is responsible for twenty Supervisors (see appendices-diagram1 showing structure of Kha Ri Gude). In this research only three Supervisors were involved and all three were able to respond to the questionnaires. However, of the two Coordinators involved in the research only one questionnaire was returned. Nevertheless the researcher had an opportunity to conduct extensive verbal interviews with both Coordinators such that enough information was gathered from them.

From the responses given in the questionnaires almost all respondents thought learning using learner's mother tongue not only enhanced learners' participation in class activities but also reduced time spent explaining concepts. Respondents felt that if learning was to be done in English language among seSotho speakers or any other local language speaking learners for

example not much would be covered in the time allocated for the campaign. This also means almost all Volunteer educators felt the six months learners are expected to complete their course was insufficient for them to have fully mastered the course content. Despite the short time allocated for the course almost everyone agreed that the use of mother tongue made learners feel at ease when trying to understand what was being taught. One Supervisor says “I don’t usually get blank faces when teaching as what my mathematics teacher used to say to us when I was at school myself”. This means no individual felt intimidated or was left behind at any given time. What was of great concern though was the large number of Volunteer educators who had not had enough training to for them to fully understand as well as be in a better position to competently execute their duties. Although Supervisors were available to assist in this regard this did not seem to be the case as Supervisors mostly dealt with administrative issues such as ensuring that there was enough stationary, helping educators maintain full classes as well as dealing with Volunteer educators’ irregular stipend issues. Given that a majority of participants in the campaign regard it as their only source of income inefficient and unreliable payment systems waste a lot of time that could have been used to teach learners had it been up to standard. This is reflected by one responded who says “Sometimes we don’t get paid and some educators even die without getting their money. If we ask they don’t know where the money will be”. One cannot stop to imagine how much inconvenience having to deal with such matters is or how demoralising it can be to those who fail to get assistance from relevant authorities.

A lack of clear development pathways for both learners and Volunteers was something that was of concern to most respondents. It seemed Volunteer educators did not know how to assist learners who wished to progress to higher levels with their education. Uncertainty regarding their employment future seemed to affect most participants. Besides the monitors no one else seemed to know that the campaign had a timeline of which it was expected to run. This lack of information made it difficult for participants to make informed decisions about their future plans.

#### **4.8) Observations**

During observations the researcher paid particular attention to various aspects that could have had an impact on participants' learning. These included among others infrastructure, how the Volunteer educators interpreted the learning materials for delivery purposes, pacing, learner teacher interaction and most importantly language usage during teaching of different language learners.

During the first lesson it was clear at almost all the centers visited that during class discussions that learners seemed to have been coached or trained on how to perform various activities. This was in a way because the researcher was probably the first outsider to have visited the centers. Alternatively this showed how poor communication was in the program. It was only after again explaining the purpose of my visit that uncertainties were cleared. In most cases learners never seemed to exhibit individual behaviours or uniqueness. This could have been the reason why at some centers on the researcher's first visit there were displays of learning aids of topics far from being done.

Amongst all the centers visited only one centre used classrooms which provided learners with chairs to sit and desks to use when writing. For example at one centre learners used a room of a shack in an informal settlement (see appendices-picture 1). The room was so small such that it was difficult for first time learners to concentrate or sit properly especially when it came to writing.

Unlike main stream schools where educators prepare lesson plans and schemes of work thus ensuring children learn in a linear way, Kha Ri Gude Volunteer educators rely on using primers which enable them to pick out themes in context so as to keep their learners motivated. This is in line with the understanding that adults learn usually to meet an immediate goal. This is to say they learn through the meaning of various materials which stem usually from the situation they live in.

The manner in which the Volunteer educator manages his or her class determines the interest instilled in them to continue learning. It is therefore important that learners know and understand

how they will be taught as well as what they will be taught. Because learners have a choice to choose the language they wish to be taught in this ought to make the learning much more accessible to the participants as they will in most cases choose the language they are familiar with. As such during various observations, learners' active participation was an indication of an understanding of the existing content which if it were presented in a different language not much debate if any would have been experienced. The Volunteer educator's pace when teaching was something that was also of interest during observations since this showed whether or not they managed to finish whatever they were expected to teach in the given six months period. Unfortunately pacing and the ability to control discussion activities or lack thereof seemed a challenge for most Volunteer educators.

It was also important to look at the way the volunteer educators interacted with their learners. An ability to capture participants' attention ensured that no learners were left behind. In cases where there were language differences it was not always easy to move along with all the learners during various learning activities. At times learners' blank stares were left unaddressed.

Because most learners in Kha Ri Gude are adults who may be having various physiological problems such as poor eyesight or poor motor skills then it is up to the educator to always be on the lookout of who may be in need of special assistance.

#### **4.9) Interviews**

Interviews offered probably much deeper understanding of the challenges and best practices of the campaign. These interviews were done with almost all participants involved in this research (see appendices-table 2). During interviews it was when participants were able to express themselves much better and in greater detail.

It is important to note that some of the interviews were structured and some were incidental. Structured interviews were conducted mainly with Coordinators, Supervisors, Volunteer

educators and learners. In this case an interview guide was used to ensure that the interview did not deal with issues outside of the scope of this research. Since some areas had a large number of learners interviews with them were at times held in groups. Below is a summary of participants' views:

<b>LIKES</b>	<b>DISLIKES</b>
Teaching methods	Elderly people sometimes felt as though they would be holding back other learners particularly the young who in most cases seemed to grasp concepts faster by asking educators to repeat what was being taught now and again. Sometimes they ended up not asking questions even if they wouldn't have understood.
Government and Management's attitude towards learners	Most influential people from government were not visible enough hence learners continued to operate in squalid conditions.
Learners' rating of their Educators	Most learners expressed satisfaction with the performance of their educators
Relevance of issues taught	Younger learners in particular felt the need to proceed with their education but did not know what paths to follow in order to achieve that.
Language of teaching and learning	Being taught in mother tongue enabled most learners to understand better. However, a lack of English was a concern for some hence they felt the need to prolong the course so they could learn more English language as well.

Table 6: Interviewees' responses

#### **4.10) Conclusion**

The way in which Kha Ri Gude is structured especially where supervisors are always at hand to provide support to the volunteer educators has managed to provide a clear framework which most Volunteer educators are able to follow as well as implement.

As regards the socio-cultural context, volunteer educators and supervisors are all working within communities they live in. These individuals who are responsible for Kha Ri Gude's daily operations are individuals known within these communities. No other socio-cultural factors such as race, gender, class or religious background have been the focus of this research.

Participants are paid in the form of a stipend on a sliding scale whereby Volunteer educators get the least amount of One thousand two hundred rands (R1200.00). According to a UNICEF (2009:9) report this is despite the fact that most of the volunteers, 66% of them are in possession of some form of tertiary qualification but unfortunately the economy has not been able to absorb them given the extremely high unemployment rates in South Africa. This high level of education among participants was something that the research was able to identify and can safely confirm the findings of the UNICEF report.

The curriculum for all learners who enroll aims to assist them with reading, writing and calculating using their mother tongue. To help them achieve this various textbooks are written in learners' eleven official languages of which each has a choice of the language they wish to be taught in.

## **CHAPTER 5 Discussions of Results**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the researcher will show how the study's research questions as presented in chapter 1 were answered. As soon as the researcher embarked on the field trips, where he began interacting with various participants, it became important to open up to what was happening so as to be able to describe various situations as accurately as possible. In order to achieve this it meant various participants' responses were to be presented verbatim. This enabled one to get a feel of the dynamics of Kha Ri Gude classes and campaign from various participants' perspective. At times it was necessary to have comments and interpretations in order to place the descriptions in context. However, an effort to separate the researcher's voice from that of participants was necessary so that one can be able to judge for oneself.

Furthermore, this chapter also discusses responses by participants that are specifically related to various research questions. This was done in order to enable one to understand how various research questions were answered in the study.

### **5.2 How do educators assist learners whose mother tongue they are not good at?**

From participants' responses regarding the number of languages they can speak, it is clear that a majority of South Africans especially urban dwellers generally speak at least two other languages besides their mother tongue. This means most people in Tshwane where the research was conducted are most likely able to speak at least any three of the following languages seTswana, seSotho, sePedi, Afrikaans and English. Although isiXhosa and IsiZulu are the languages that have the highest number of speakers in the country, Tshwane is home to the descendants and subjects of the late chief Tshwane hence Tswanas and Sothos are a majority.

One of the questions the researcher asked Volunteer educators and supervisors was related to language. It was important to find out what language the Volunteer educator spoke since the campaign aimed at teaching learners using their mother tongue. Two Volunteer educators



involved in this study gave much information with regards to the issue of language. One was Zulu and the other Tsonga speaking. What immediately aroused interest was their background. The Zulu Speaker said she was born and grew up in KwaMashu a predominantly Zulu speaking former black township in Durban. This is one place in South Africa which experienced a lot of bloodshed during the apartheid regime. She says during apartheid there was a lot of political fighting in her area and anyone who did not speak IsiZulu was in danger of being branded an enemy or from the opposition. Most people were expected to support the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) which was regarded a pro Zulu political party. As such there were rarely people who spoke any language besides IsiZulu who could live and survive in that area. It was apparently due to the tense political situation that she fled to Johannesburg with her family. When she got to Johannesburg she got in touch with friends who were Zulu speaking and thus she continued to speak her language. Apparently she says the only opportunity she had to interact with people who spoke other languages was on the rare occasions when she used public transport. This unfortunately did not give her enough opportunity to learn other languages. She came to live in Tshwane in 2005 when her husband got a job at a factory in Pretoria.

Her learners are mostly seTswana and seSotho speakers. When asked how she deals with this situation she says: “I used to recruit mostly IsiZulu speaking learners but now most of them have gone through the programme. The experience I gained from working with them and the fact that the material learners use is the same since it’s a translation of one language to another, it makes it easy for me to know what to teach and how to teach it”. However, on observing the lessons what became apparent was that she used fast learners to assist the slow learners whenever explanations were needed. To an extent this worked well as learners had come to regard her as a facilitator who acknowledged their knowledge.

The same strategy was employed by the xiTsonga speaking Volunteer educator as well. However, with the xiTsonga speaking Volunteer educator she could speak both seSotho and seTswana fluently. She seemed to need most assistance when learners had to do reading or writing. The fact that both Volunteer educators did not necessarily regard the strategy of peer assistance as acceptable and very appropriate in adult education situations it therefore denied them an opportunity to take full advantage of this strategy for the benefit of all.

### **5.3 How does Kha Ri Gude address or fail to address illiteracy?**

For the purposes of this study, only two ways to conceptualise literacy were considered, namely total illiteracy and functional literacy. A proxy measure for total illiteracy is when an individual has no formal education, while functional literacy is the attainment of a grade seven (7) level of education. One may argue that if a country ensures that every child completes his or her primary schooling then illiteracy would be eradicated, by the same token, someone else may argue that such a view would not be realistic if one takes into account variables such as drop out that can result from a myriad of factors such as war and poverty, calamities most African countries are faced with.

What is important to note though is that many countries have managed to reduce illiteracy considerably. Kha Ri Gude is a government initiative which has embraced the understanding that one can best learn using one's mother tongue. On the other hand Kha Ri Gude has been linked to national and international policies and initiatives such as the Dakar Education for All (EFA) goals, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), AsgiSA, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and many others. Above all ABET is enshrined as a right in the South African constitution.

Despite the various policy interventions, access to ABET programmes has been inadequate. For instance one Kha Ri Gude Volunteer educator says: "I think 6 months is a short time for slow learners. At least 1 year it will be better..." A similar sentiment is echoed by another Volunteer educator who says "...6 months is too little for all learners to adapt". Another challenge within Kha Ri Gude is a lack of opportunities for progression for both Volunteer educators and learners. After graduating in Kha Ri Gude learners who wish to further their studies do not get any form of qualification that enables them to proceed to a higher level. According to the Department of Education (2008:28) it is stated that "Recognising this limitation, the Minister of Education appointed a Ministerial Committee to render advice on the revising of the adult education and training system". Encouragingly the committee has managed to submit a report which outlines how the system can be restructured. On the other hand Kha Ri Gude Volunteer educators are not adequately equipped to deal with the challenge of illiteracy. When asked how they got involved

with the programme more than 80% said it was because they needed to survive and therefore regarded this as a form of employment. However, less than 50% had received relevant training which was basically a one week course.

#### **5.4 What Philosophy of education underpins Kha Ri Gude?**

During the researcher's visits to different centers, what was used as a guide to be able to identify the type of education learners were receiving was based on theoretical questions in chapter two (2). This means the researcher had to find answers as to what social problems the campaign hoped to address. By first of all talking to learners in particular during the verbal interviews, asking why they joined and what they hoped to achieve through their participation one was able to reconcile whether teaching methods or learning materials used were able to address challenges faced by participants. For instance one learner said she joined the classes so that she could be able to count her social grant money which she felt her grandchildren were siphoning off her account. Not only did this show that the lady wanted to be liberated she also wanted to be empowered, issues the radical and liberal philosophies inculcate.

Through lesson observations it was possible to tell what the Volunteer educator's task was. For instance, at a centre in Lotus Gardens where the Volunteer educator was not fluent in some learners' mother tongue, the researcher looked at how she delivered her lessons. By being able to initiate and guide discussions it was easy to conclude what the role of the Volunteer educator was. This meant that learners were not being given education for domestication but were being encouraged to engage in conversations so as to come up with their own judgements.

Looking at the learning materials learners used it was possible to tell what kind of individuals the campaign hoped to produce. It was clear that an ability to function efficiently in a society with high technology was encouraged by for instance teaching learners how to use automated teller machines to access banking services. By teaching learners about the world and its people, it means the campaign hoped to produce individuals who would be confident enough to participate in civic life as well as have an understanding of the surrounding world.

During class visits the researcher was always conscious of the above issues such that he came to a conclusion that the campaign incorporated elements from mainly the humanist, liberal and radical philosophies.

### **5.5 What resources were available and how were they used?**

Kha Ri Gude forms a small unit within the Department of Education and comprises a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Operations Officer (COO), and Directors for Finance, Learners with Special Needs, Curriculum and Coordination. Below these there are Monitors, Coordinators, Supervisors, Volunteer Educators and finally the learners. Classes are held in communities, at times convenient to the learners. These take place in homes, churches, schools or wherever people in need are. Venues for learning seem to be the most problematic issue participants have to deal with. It could be assumed that learning can take place at any time and at anyplace. However, to ensure that Kha Ri Gude participants accept this notion seems difficult for most as much as they find it difficult to understand why they in most cases are not given permission to use schools or community centers within their neighborhoods. This concern was highlighted by most participants. A group at a centre in an informal settlement of Saulsville seemed most hurt by this since they operated next to a school and community centre with facilities they could not access.

They did not believe that their slowness to learn to write using their laps could have been caused by a lack of practice. Instead they seemed convinced that their situation could have been much better had they been given permission to use vacant classrooms at a nearby primary school or given permission to use the local community centre which had tables they could use as desks.

Learners are given materials to assist them to learn reading, writing and numeracy in an integrated way. The same materials are also adapted for use in Braille in the eleven official languages. Life skills ideas that are seen as being shared by most in South African society are taught and these include health, gender, the environment and social justice. Above all these are provided at no cost to the learners.

## **CHAPTER 6- Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **6.1) Introduction**

As the saying goes “chisingaperi chinoshura”, literally translated, ‘what does not come to an end signals a bad omen’. These wise Shona words are usually used to explain that all things must come to an end. This is true in many aspects and in relation to this study. Bhola in Arnove and Graff (1987:3) describes a literacy campaign as “a mass approach that seeks to make all adult men and women in a nation literate within a particular time frame”. Likewise this evaluation of Kha Ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign also had to come to an end hence it set itself a five year time frame.

The focus of this chapter is to attempt to spell out the insights gained during the period in which this research was conducted as well as identify alternative ways which can be followed in order to meet the goals of the campaign. Since it forms the concluding part of the research, comments shall be given in relation to the aims and questions of the research while looking at the results obtained. Because of the qualitative, ethnographic research methodology the insights are specific to literacy teaching though they might be illuminating to practitioners and academics working in other fields and most importantly Department of Basic Education policy makers. Most importantly this section will also discuss the implications of the research specifically for adult educators and make recommendations for further research and development.

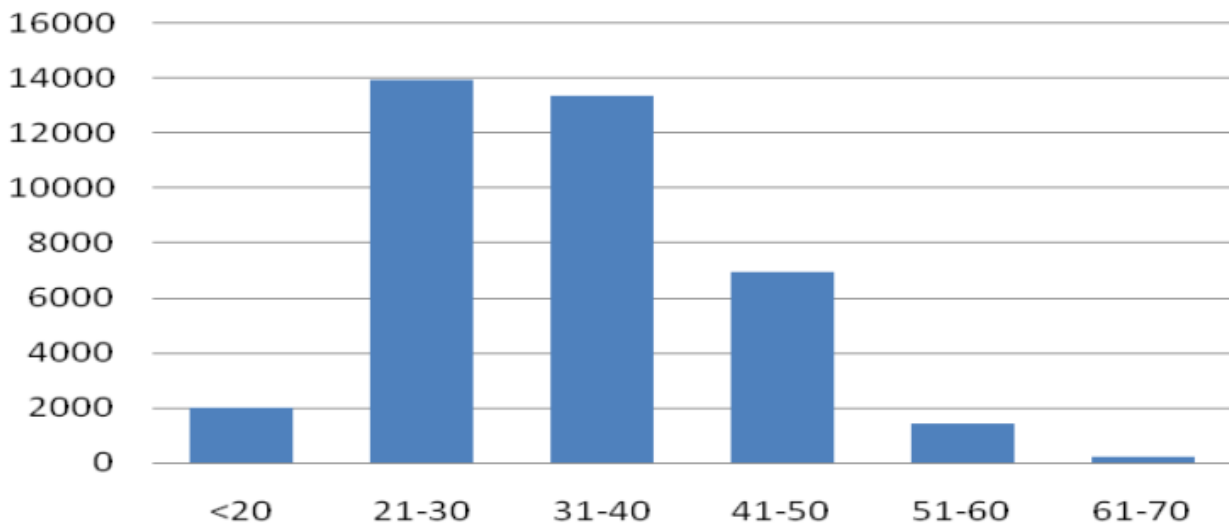
## **6.2) Factors that inhibit progress**

Volunteer educators formed the second largest group of participants within the campaign after learners. They were basically the backbone of the campaign of which without their participation it would be difficult for the campaign to become operational. As such their role ought to be acknowledged by the powers that be. It would only derail the gains made so far if participants continue worrying about minor issues such as late payments of stipends and resistance by school principals to give access to share the use of surrounding school facilities. Lack of facilities during the cold and rainy seasons affects classes.

What was also apparent was the fact that almost all Volunteer educators were females while males began to appear among monitors and coordinators. This says a lot about the marginalisation of females in various social or financial spheres of the South African society. From the look of it women formed a larger part of the participating illiterate members of society within campaign. On the other hand issues related to a lack of self confidence and self esteem seemed to affect participation of males particularly in environments dominated by females. This seemed to be more valid in the case of centers attended by black people where some form of financial opportunity existed as opposed to African cultural beliefs which regarded males as heads of families. Their absence may have been caused by their need to seek some form of employment irrespective of their education level so as to provide for their families. Unfortunately no visits were made to white areas in which the campaign also existed to be able to compare the ratio of males and females if one was to assume that white households are more tolerant in situations where females are bread winners.

In a report published by the Department of Education (2009:12) it is shown that a majority of volunteer educators were under the age of thirty years (30) (See graph 2 below) while learners were mostly in the range of thirty five years and above.

## AGE BREAKDOWN OF VOLUNTEER EDUCATORS



Graph 2: Department of Education (2009:12)

However, age difference between volunteer educators and learners did not feature as a deterrent to learning. Among these volunteer educators there were almost similar numbers of single unmarried mothers and single parents who would have lost partners through death. The importance of such a background meant that there were no other opportunities of learning through family socialization other than interaction mostly outside of the home. Despite limited opportunities for family literacy practices to occur it did not mean a parent could not learn from his or her younger children. What is important in this case is the value of experience that is gained through age of which children in various single parent homes would most likely not be having.

Most of these Volunteer educators were individuals who had other ambitions. However, due to poor economic circumstances they found themselves in, it meant their hands were tied. The fact that some of them had never met any official other than their supervisors left this cohort of participants with a lot of unanswered questions that resulted in a lot of uncertainty regarding their future in the campaign hence it also affected their moral. For instance when it came to issues of late or nonpayment of stipends someone other than the usual supervisor who acted as a go between needed to avail themselves so as to give credibility and legitimacy about the

campaign while dispelling suspicions that some form of chicanery was going on. Arnove and Graff (1987:3) say "...a limited time frame is considered to be a defining characteristic of a mass campaign..." However, due to various commitments individuals attending Kha Ri Gude have, the six months period allocated for the course proves too little a time to successfully acquire the intended skills let alone the syllabi.

This is compounded by the existence of Volunteer educators who have not had any training to teach literacy classes. On the other hand, the Ministerial Committee argues that five full days of initial training for tutors would be an optimum length subject to situational variations. During class observations contrary to the above some Volunteer educators despite having received the five days training still lacked andragogical knowledge required to deal with adult learners. Most of them were not able to manage teaching time in their classes while some lost focus as they failed to keep learners focused on various tasks at hand.

Supervisors are usually available to give support to Volunteer educators on various issues regarding their work. However, when this is not done correctly especially in front of learners, it could be misinterpreted as failure or lack of expertise on the part of the Volunteer educator by the learners. As such in future it becomes difficult for the Volunteer educator to convince learners on controversial issues in the absence of the Supervisor. Such a situation was observed in one class where the Volunteer educator was teaching a language she was not good at. There were several situations in which there was uncertainty regarding the correct spellings of some words. Sometimes learners were left to find answers by themselves exercises in which no follow up was done during the next lesson. It is therefore necessary that time for feedback is made available while at the same time ensuring that Volunteer educators are equipped with skills to search for answers related to issues they would not be familiar with.



### **6.3) How Kha Ri Gude is addressing or failing to address illiteracy in South Africa**

Supervisors are the ones who are in most cases the first people to be called upon should anything be amiss by both learners and volunteer educators. Unfortunately, sometimes especially with regards to administrative issues they sometimes do not have satisfactory answers which leave participants helpless. One Volunteer educator says,

“If they can be given snacks that would be much better. Perhaps they won’t disturb the class by being hungry. Where is the material? We are still waiting for the material. Let stipend be monthly in time to help/encourage VEs to work. Other VEs works they don’t get paid until the following classes for the next year start. They don’t get paid and we don’t know where the money gone”

On further interrogating various participants, mainly the Volunteer educators and Supervisors who are the ones that receive a stipend, one realizes that since this is the only source of income for most of them any problems that arise cause a ripple effect. Given that a majority of Kha Ri Gude Volunteer educators and Supervisors are single mothers failure to get payment affects not only their execution of duties but their dependants as well. For instance Supervisors are sometimes required to use their own money for transport to go and collect learning material, submit Volunteer educator pay sheets as well as submit learner portfolios for verification. Despite such activities being official duties they are no structures for reimbursement. As such this worsens the financial burden participants are trying to overcome.

To expect eighteen adult learners to be accommodated in a room built using corrugated iron, the size of the ones in most informal settlements is just impossible. Eighteen is the recommended number of learners one Volunteer educator ought to have. For example during hot seasons some learners who use such rooms in informal settlements simply do not attend. On the other hand learners who make use of open spaces during cold weather also do not attend on regular basis. This has an impact on their performance and completion of the course.

On the other hand it is primarily the responsibility of the Volunteer educator to recruit learners. Nevertheless, due to the commitment and determination of participants to contribute to the

betterment of their communities you find that learners recruit each other, while Supervisors also help Volunteer educators with the recruitment. Although participants do need the money that is promised as a stipend one participant best describes the sentiment held by most in the campaign when she said “For me I think doing this is my little contribution to the betterment of my community”. Indeed you find that recruits are reached through verbal announcements in churches, community meetings, schools and wherever learners can be found. In this regard it shows that government is lucky to have found a ready partner in addressing one of the research questions which sought to find out in what ways Kha Ri Gude was addressing or failing to address the problem of illiteracy in South Africa. In light of this it is therefore essential that government take advantage of this commitment so that the goals of the campaign can be attained.

#### **6.4) Recommendations Arising From This Research**

It is important to note that figures that are normally given by various organizations and researchers regarding the number of illiterates in South Africa differ quite considerably. Basically, various factors such as the need to satisfy certain agendas by particular concerned parties or inaccurate data gathering methods all contribute to such inconsistencies. However, it is nevertheless clear that for South Africa, raising literacy and numeracy skills is an urgent need. Failure to this would mean the eradication of the intolerably low literacy levels would remain but an illusion.

Although it emerged in some circumstances that not all people participate in Kha Ri Gude solely for financial reasons, the magnitude of participants who felt that more needed to be done was very high such that ignoring this issue could contribute to poor success of the campaign. For instance, it was found to be necessary that the systems that are used in the payment of stipends in particular become more transparent. If for instance if a Volunteer educator has a query with regards to his or her payment some form of statement or record has to be given as proof that their concerns are being addressed. On the contrary if say a Volunteer educator has a payment query he or she would need to go to a Supervisor who in turn goes to the Coordinator who then calls the outsourced company that deals with the Kha Ri Gude campaign finance issues. This to an extent is too long a process for someone with a financial problem.

Kha Ri Gude needs more marketing for it to be more visible within communities. For instance given that word of mouth easily gets circulated among people it could help if bags in which learner material comes in could be branded so that those who can read are offered a different way of knowing about the campaign whereby they will in turn spread the word amongst those they know could benefit from attending Kha Ri Gude classes. In other words more innovative ways need to be explored to enhance access to centers that offer Kha Ri Gude.

On the other hand new educators in particular need to be given more support so that they are able to handle different situations that are common in adult learners' classes. For instance, if a class has a mixture of young individuals who maybe fast learners and adults who exhibit some form of learning difficulties, then the Volunteer educator needs to be assisted so as to be able to handle a

situation where for example slow learners do not become afraid to ask questions when they do not understand something for fear of being seen as holding back other learners.

Younger learners were also found to be keener in furthering their education. It is therefore important that Kha Ri Gude offer them such an opportunity by maybe certifying them so that they can proceed to ABET level one or two depending on their performance and ability. A programme such as Kha Ri Gude ought to impart knowledge that enables people to understand the modern economy that South Africa is fast approaching as this would keep individuals afloat during times of recessions famine and even feasts. One way this is addressed within the campaign is mostly theoretical hence the need for more practical teaching methods such as in the use of computers.

It is important to conscientize all the people involved with adult education so that they are aware that Kha Ri Gude is not a competitor but a feeder to Adult Basic Education and Training. This knowledge reduces the risk of uncertainty about progression which in turn minimizes the chances of the campaign fading away from say a lack of participants. This can be expanded to say availing both main stream schools and Abet centers which in turn destigmatizes adult education.

On the other hand Kha Ri Gude Volunteer educators in particular feel that the time that learners are expected to complete their course is too short for them to have acquired enough knowledge to proceed to ABET level 2 let alone having fully mastered Kha Ri Gude content, as such more time than the stipulated six months may need to be extended.

### **6.5) Conclusions**

This study dealt with intervention measures that can be used to alleviate the political deprivation which caused massive adult illiteracy especially among a majority of black adults in South Africa. Paramount to this was the notion that people will generally learn best if they are taught in their mother tongue. Furthermore, the study has shown among other issues that teaching adults is different from teaching young children. It is therefore important that learner-centred methods that relate to the lives and experiences of learners be used. In today's world which is brought closer and closer every day by technological development, it is crucial that people are equipped with the necessary knowledge for them to be able to respond to the challenges of life. Kha Ri Gude is a mass literacy campaign aimed at alleviating the high rate of illiteracy among illiterate South Africans using any of the eleven official languages of their choice. It has been demonstrated that in order to achieve such a mean feat it requires more than political rhetoric but unwavering support and dedication from all and sundry. This means an integrated approach that would put in place the universalisation of primary school education could be the way to go. Given that illiteracy is a national problem which requires urgent attention, it is necessary that the findings presented be taken seriously and the recommendations be considered for implementation in the alleviation of illiteracy.