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rhap
The African Religious Health Assets Programme

PIRASH

PARTICIPATORY INQUIRY into RELIGION and ADOLESCENT SEXUAL HEALTH

Practitioner's Workbook
Version 2: September, 2007

Restricted for use by trained ARHAP facilitators

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WORKSHOP INTO RELIGION AND THE HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS

Introduction

This is intended to be a practitioner's workbook, to aid ARHAP field researchers to undertake participatory workshops around the theme of religion and adolescent sexual health in Africa. It is crucial that the facilitator has had basic training in (i) the ARHAP framework and theory, (ii) participatory approaches to research, and (iii) the PIRASH workshop itself. ARHAP offers this training in a number of different settings, and interested persons should make contact with the Programme at <www.arhap.uct.ac.za>.

It is important to recognise at the beginning that this workshop is the intensive mid-point in a longer and more extensive research and empowerment process. The three steps in this process can be identified as follows:

Step 1: Preparing the workshop

A great deal of preparation needs to be undertaken prior to the workshop, both in setting up the workshop and its participants and in preparing the team and the materials necessary to run the workshop

Step 2: Running the workshop

An intensive one day workshop or two evening workshop that requires attention to the PIRASH logic and the participatory dynamics

Step 3: Valuing the workshop

This involves both the outside facilitators/researchers, and the participants gaining value from the knowledge that has emerged, and making use of this in a variety of ways. (This is not to be confused with *evaluating* the workshop, which is a small part of step 3)

The Theoretical Underpinnings of this Methodology

ARHAP seeks to develop a systematic knowledge base of religious health assets (RHAs) in Sub-Saharan Africa to align and enhance the work of religious leaders, public policy decision-makers and other health workers in their collaborative efforts to meet the challenge of disease such as HIV/AIDS, and to promote sustainable health, especially for those who live in poverty or under marginal conditions. In the PIRASH instance, ARHAP is most particularly interested in the relationship between religion and the sexual well-being of adolescents.

PIRASH has a broad theoretical 'DNA', which can be briefly summarised in the following way, (those who are interested are encouraged to explore these terms in greater detail).

<i>appreciative into the contribution of to</i>	Participatory Inquiry into Religion Adolescent Sexual Health	<i>Rural Appraisal young people/youth well being</i>
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participatory approach is that in work to do with seeking to find the connections between religion and health in an African context. We are entering a field that has only recently begun to be explored, and we are doing it in dialogue with ordinary people in a range of communities in Africa. To this end, we need the help of local people who are the experts, and we need to find ways of opening up discussion and reflection so that we are helped, and in the process the participants feel stronger and motivated.

In these circumstances, Robert Chambers’ reflection on Participatory Rural Appraisal in *Rural Appraisal: Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory*, (IDS discussion Paper 311, University of Sussex, 1992) is worth quoting in full:

The core of good PRA is our behaviour and attitudes. It involves:

- Being self-aware and self-critical
- Embracing error
- Handing over the stick
- Sitting, listening, adapting
- Using our own best judgement at all times

So we can ask:

- Who lectures? Who holds the stick? Whose finger wags?
- Whose knowledge, analysis and priorities count?

Ours? Theirs, as we think they should be? Or theirs as they freely express them?

Good PRA is empowering, not extractive

Good PRA makes mistakes, learns from them, and so is self-improving

Good PRA spreads and improves on its own

So START. Do not wait. Get on with it. Relax. Try things. Learn by doing. Fall forwards. Experiment. Ask – what went well? What went badly? What can we learn? How can we do better? How can we help others to do better?

Remember the three pillars:

Behaviour & attitudes

Methods

Sharing

It is crucial then that when we engage in a participatory inquiry (such as PIRASH), we are conscious of our behaviour and attitudes. While we are tasked with finding information that meets our research objectives, we must constantly remember the wider ARHAP concern to deliberately avoid an extractive research approach, and at all times to ensure that all knowledge and insights are ‘owned’ by the people who have offered them in the participatory setting.

In the same text, Chambers writes of the key principles of behaviour and attitudes in PRA:

Facilitating - they do it: facilitating investigation, analysis, presentation and learning by rural people themselves so that they present and own the outcomes,

expressed as 'handing over the stick' (or pen or stick) to consider starting a process and then sitting back or waiting for the other person to start or interrupting.

Self-critical awareness and responsibility: meaning that facilitators are continuously examining their behaviour, and trying to do better. This includes embracing error - welcoming error as an opportunity to learn to do better; and using one's own best judgement at all times, meaning, accepting personal responsibility rather than vesting it in a manual or a rigid set of rules.

Sharing: of information and ideas between rural people, between them and facilitators, and between different facilitators, and sharing field camps, training and experiences between different organisations.

All of this reflects issues of power, and power lies at the heart of participation, research, information and knowledge. We need to be very conscious of all of this as we embark on PIRHANA, and be attentive to our attitudes and behaviour in the context into which we are going. It is for these reasons that ARHAP is very clear that the PIRHANA process should be conducted by those who have received training in the approach.

The PIRHANA exercises are designed to uncover the *perceptions* of the participants about the relationship between religion and religious entities on the one hand, and health, healing and wellbeing on the other, and to do so in a public manner.

(a) Qualitative data

'Perceptions' is the key word, and it is important that those undertaking the research are aware that they are not getting cold objective 'truth' (if there is such a thing!), This means that we are getting primarily *qualitative* data, and we are dealing by and large with the opinions of those who happen to be present in the workshops. However, PIRHANA goes beyond just qualitative research.

(b) Quantitative data

The benefit of the kind of participatory exercises used in PIRHANA means that these perceptions are *quantified*, and that at the end of most exercises we end up with quantitative data in the form of lists and rankings that enables us to compare and contrast across sites, and to slowly build up an understanding of religious health assets in Africa.

(c) Transparent data

One extremely exciting thing about a participatory approach to data collection is that this takes place in a *transparent* manner. While we are dealing with the perceptions of the participants (as noted above), this is done in an openly peer-reviewed manner where these perceptions can be tested and moderated. Because they are subject to open public scrutiny this helps to ensure that what PIRHANA is identifying is 'common knowledge' shared by those on the ground, rather than 'weird, wonderful and off-the-wall opinions' of a few isolated individuals.

(d) Democratic data

The PIRASH exercises are generally designed to ensure the democratic participation of each participant, so that in most exercises each person has the same 'power' to share ideas and insights. Generally in qualitative research workshops such as focus groups, the ideas and opinions of powerful individuals in the community can predominate. These exercises are carefully designed to avoid this, although it cannot

ators need to be aware of this all the time -
pancies.

(e) Interpreted data

A further exciting thing about PIRASH is that the public nature of the exercises means that it is easy to move from the data itself to the interpretation of the data, so that as outsiders we are not left in the dark about what the data means but can test it immediately with the participants. So, for example, when a certain factor is strongly identified in a certain workshop, it can lead to a open - and usually energetic - conversation.

(f) Appreciated data

The beauty of the PIRASH workshops is that wisdom and knowledge that is 'just known' by participants is exteriorised via the exercises and presented in visual manner through things such as time-lines, indices, ranking matrices, and spidergrams; and then once it exists in an 'objective' form, it can be explored in greater detail. In this way participants see and experience their opinions and perceptions being appreciated and taken seriously.

(g) Empowering data

The data that emerges in the workshops is open, transparent and public. It belongs to the group in a very immediate and obvious way, and the appreciative approach enables communities to recognise and acknowledge the wisdom and capacity - the assets - that they have. The workshops always end with an exercise focused on 'local commitment'. This reminds us that the first aim of the tool is to empower the agency of local communities in action and advocacy for health and wellbeing.

Research Question:

- *What is the role of religion in the sexual lives/sexual health of young people in SA?*
- *What is the impact of belonging to a religious body on the sexual perceptions and practices of adolescents?*

Methodology:

Participatory Inquiry Workshops

Two Workshops of 90 minutes on two consecutive Friday evenings

Workshop 1:

Exercise 1: Ranking of the sources of information on sex/uality

Exercise 2: Ranking the relative importance of the religious organisation's messages about sex/uality

Workshop 2:

Exercise 3: Ranking the conceptions of sex/uality among the group

Exercise 4: Ranking perceptions of sexual behaviour among the group

Exercise 5: Testing the "effectiveness" of the YG's messaging about sex/uality

Exercise 6: Completing the Questionnaire

Sources of Information about Sex/uality

Objectives	1. A participant driven ranking of the relative importance of <i>the sources of information</i> about sex/uality for the group 2. A reflective discussion on the significance of these sources of information for the participants
Data capturing	1. Photographs of the index 2. Written record of the rankings 3. Tape/Video recording of the discussions
Equipment	1. A marker pen for each participant 2. At least 5 large posits for each participant 3. Three sheets of newsprint
Time	45 minutes
Tasks	1. Brainstorm - creating the Bar Graph 2. Creating the Index 3. Reflective discussion on the index

Task 1: Brainstorm

Participants are given **three** posits and a marker pen.
They are asked to write down the answer to the following question:

- *What do you think are the three most influential sources of information about sex for young people?*
- *The participants write down the one source per card in large writing.*

The question can be written up and stuck up on a wall.

Participants are told that this exercise is a brainstorm, and that there will be a chance to think more about this, so they need not be too anxious to get the perfect answer.

If the group appears to be stuck, examples - TV, school, parents, and peers - may be suggested.

The posits are collected and stuck up randomly on the wall while they are read out aloud for the benefit of the group. Duplicates are noted but not laid down - some clustering of common ideas/words under an agreed on word probably needs to take place.

Task 2: Creating the Bar Graph

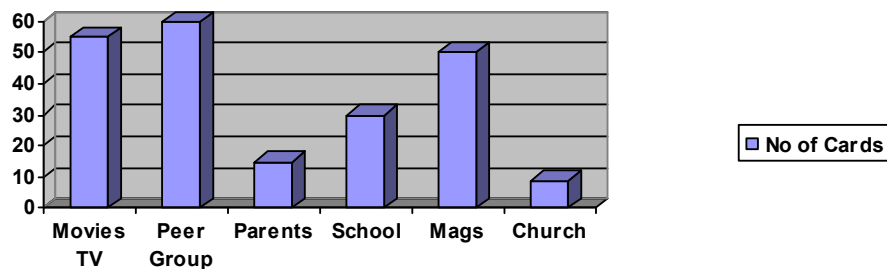
The first task is repeated, but now the participants are asked to choose what they consider to be the **two** most important sources *from the posits on the wall*.

most influential sources of information about sex
own the one source per card in large writing.

The question can be written up and stuck up on a wall.

These postits are collected and then stuck to the wall. When a posit repeats a previous posit it is stuck above it. Again the facilitator needs to group words together that express the same idea (eg Hollywood = TV = Movies).

In this manner a bar graph of the key sources of information about sex/uality for the participants is created, and the participants can see for themselves what they believe to be the key sources. Eg:



Task 3: Reflective Discussion on the Index

The Bar Graph is then reduced to an Index on a sheet of newsprint on the wall.

Eg:

Peer Group	60
Movies/TV	55
Magazines	50
School	30
Parents	15
Church	8

Through probing questions participants are engaged in reflective discussion on the relative ranking of the sources: specifically probe for the relative significance of religion as a source on information about sex/uality.

This discussion should be recorded for later transcription.

Content of the Religious Messaging

Objectives	1. A participant driven ranking of the relative importance of <i>the messages about sex/uality</i> the group receives from the Religious Group they are members of. 2. A reflective discussion on the significance of these messages for the participants
Data capturing	1. Photographs of the Bar Graph 2. Written record of the Index 3. Tape/Video recording of the discussions
Equipment	1. A marker pen for each participant 2. At least 6 large cards for each participant 3. Three sheets of newsprint
Time	45 minutes
Tasks	1. Brainstorm - creating the Bar Graph 2. Creating the Index 3. Reflective discussion on the Index

Task 1: Brainstorm

Participants are given **three** cards and a marker pen.
They are asked to write down the answer to the following question:

- *What are the three most important messages at* (your religious organisation) *about sex?*
- *The participants write down the one message per card in large writing.*

The question can be written up and stuck up on a wall.

Participants are told that this exercise is a brainstorm, and that there will be a chance to think more about this, so they need not be too anxious to get the perfect answer.

If the group appears to be stuck, examples - sex is good, no sex before marriage - may be suggested.

The Postits are collected and stuck randomly on the wall while they are read out aloud for the benefit of the group. Duplicates are noted but not stuck up - some clustering of common ideas/words under an agreed on word probably needs to take place.

Task 2: Creating the Bar Graph of messages about sexuality

The first task is repeated, but now the participants are asked to choose what they consider to be the **two** most important sources *from the Postits on the wall*.

- *What are the two most important messages at (X) about sex that you hear?*

words for each of the two messages on each

The question can be written up and stuck up on a wall.

These cards are collected and then laid out on the floor. When a card repeats a previous one it is laid down above it. Again the facilitator needs to group words together that express the same idea.

In this manner a bar graph of the key messages about sex/uality for the participants is created, and the participants can see for themselves what they believe to be the key messages of the religious group.

Task 3: Reflective Discussion on the Index of messages about sexuality

The Bar Graph is then reduced to an Index on a sheet of newsprint on the wall.

Through probing questions participants are engaged in reflective discussion on the relative ranking of the messages.

This discussion should be recorded for later transcription.

Exercise 3: Ranking the Conceptions of Sex/uality and the Perceptions of Sexual Practices of the Participants

Objectives	1. A participant driven ranking of the a. Participants' own <i>conceptions</i> of sex/uality b. Participants' <i>perceptions</i> of peer group sexual practices 2. A reflective discussion on the meaning and significance of these Conceptions and Perceptions
Articulation	1. The propositions used to generate the participants' responses should be informed by findings of Exercises 1 & 2
Data capturing	2. Photographs of the groups 3. Written record of the numbers in each group 4. Tape/Video recording of the discussions
Equipment	1. Three sheets of newsprint with agree, disagree, and uncertain written in large 2. Newsprint to record the numbers in each group against the questions asked (<i>use PowerPoint?</i>) to be used in the reflective discussion
Time	30 minutes
Tasks	1. Proposition and Response 2. Creating the Index - Display percentages 3. Reflective discussion on the Index

Task 1: Proposition and Response

Prominently displayed on the walls are three signs:

Agree

Disagree

Uncertain

The participants are asked to respond to a series of propositions (not questions), which are read out clearly by a facilitator, by moving, in silence, to stand beneath the sign that best represents their response to the statement. The propositions should be projected/put up one by one for clarity.

Eg: *God has created sex as something good and holy.*

Participants then go to the sign which best represents their response to the statement - agree, disagree, or uncertain.

The numbers in each group are calculated and written up on newsprint.

The participants remain under the sign while the next proposition is read out.

This process should be done as silently as possible - the participants should not discuss their responses amongst each other. The process should begin with a few simple and humorous statements leading into increasingly more probing questions. The aim is to generate a profile of participants'

- a. Own conceptions of sex/uality, and
- b. Perceptions of what the sexual practices of their peer group (age cohort) and their fellow youth group members are.

Propositions:

- I had a wonderful week
- I like wearing the colours blue and green
- I am short
- Sex before marriage is a breaking the rules
- There is a verse in the bible that says that sex before marriage is a sin
- Intercourse is sex
- Kissing is sex
- The Bible/Qur'an/your sacred text says oral sex is a sin
- Seeing a person of the opposite sex naked is a sin
- Most teenagers in (X) are sexually active
- Teenagers who belong to your religious group are sexually active
- Young people who attend your religious group are sexually active
- Teenagers in (X) think it is important to be a virgin when you get married
- It is important to marry a virgin
- All young people who are virgins are sexually pure
- When it come to sex the bible has unrealistic expectations for teenagers in 2007
- Churches/Religious institutions should teach about abstinence and condomisation

Task 2: Creating the Index

While the exercise is being conducted a facilitator must be writing up the responses to each statement on newsprint (or PowerPoint) and calculating the percentages which will then be displayed for discussion purposes for the whole group.

Through probing questions participants are engaged in reflective discussion of the responses.

This discussion should be recorded for later transcription.

Exercise 4: Scenario Exercise

Objectives	1. Testing the degree of internalisation (effectiveness or reception) of the discourse on sex/uality of the Youth Group 2. Gender and age differentiated information
Articulation	1. The scenarios generate should be informed by findings of Exercises 1 & 2
Data capturing	1. Photographs of the groups 2. Record of the demographics of each group 3. Recording of the group discussions
Equipment	1. Scenario sheets 2. Pens for all participants 3. Newsprint to record the group responses 4. Recording equipment
Time	30 minutes
Tasks	1. Generate a set of scenarios for the group to discuss 2. Creating gender and aged cohort groups 3. Monitoring and facilitating group discussion 4. Generate an Index of the responses

Task 1: Generating Scenarios

This task must be completed prior to the workshop

A set of scenarios and responses to them, which depict plausible and relevant cases for the participants to discuss and make decisions about, must be generated.

Some of these might be workshopped with Key Informants/Youth Group Leaders in advance

The scenarios should use the data from Exercises 1 & 2

The scenarios must be designed to generate responses to the scenarios that provide insight into participants' integration/understanding/use of Youth Group messaging in their understanding and decision making about sex/uality

Task 2: Small Group discussion of the Scenarios

Break the group up into gender and age based groups

Explain the task to the groups

Distributed the scenarios to the groups

and the voting on the responses to the scenarios
on the responses to the scenarios

Scenarios

Scenario 1

Jennifer (17) is a member of Teens Ignited. She is a Christian and has been attending youth faithfully. Jennifer has been dating John (who does not attend youth) for a year and for the last two months Jennifer and John's relationship has been sexual. Jennifer feels guilty but loves John and believes that they are in a committed relationship and having sex has strengthened their relationship.

What is the best advice you would give Jennifer?

- a. Jennifer should end her relationship with John immediately.
- b. She should continue the relationship but must tell John that the relationship include sexual intercourse anymore.
- c. She should continue the relationship but must tell John that they must avoid any physical intimacy as that may lead to intercourse.
- d. Jennifer need not feel guilty if she believes that the relationship will be long lasting and she has prayed about it.

Scenario 2

Siyabonga (15) and Thato (15) are both members of Teens Ignited and started dating 5 months ago. Last week Siyabonga and Thato had sexual intercourse for the first time. Thereafter the Thato insists that because they are Christians they must get married, either now or in future, Siyabonga is not sure that this is necessary.

What is the best response?

- a. Siyabonga agrees with Thato that because sex should be reserved for marriage, in God's eyes they are already married and should start planning their future together.
- b. Siyabonga agrees with Thato that because sex should be reserved for marriage, in God's eyes they are already married and suggests that they can continue having sex as long as they are committed to getting married when they are both 18 years old.
- c. Siyabonga disagrees with Thato and says that they only need to get married if they have sex regularly and for a long time.
- d. Siyabonga disagrees with Thato and says that marriage should not be determined by sexual relationships.

Scenario 3

A Teens Ignited youth member (male/female) tells a youth leader that he/she has recently started feeling strong sexual feelings. Because he/she believes in abstinence from sex before marriage and has started masturbating.

What should the leader advise him/her to do?

- a. Continue masturbating, it is the best alternative to sexual intercourse.
- b. Masturbation is not a sin but you should fight the urge to masturbate, but you can if the feelings get very intense.
- c. Masturbation is a sin. You should repent from it completely.

Scenario 4

Samantha (16) is a Christian and very faithful member of Teens Ignited. Samantha has been abstaining from sex but has concerns about the future. First, Samantha does not believe in marriage because too marriages end in divorce and so it doesn't work for everyone. However, she doesn't want to be celibate forever either. If she doesn't want to marry must she be celibate? Second, Samantha is concerned that even if she decides to marry she may not find a suitable person to marry?

- e Samantha?
ow, one day you will find the right person and get married.
- If you want to have sex then you must marry, regardless of your fears or concerns.
 - If you don't find someone suitable to marry by the time you are thirty, God will forgive you if you have sex after that.

Task 3: Index of Responses and Reflective Discussion (*Can/should we do this?*)

Generate and Index of the responses with the scenarios and group responses presented
The newsprint (PowerPoint) Indexes should be prepared before hand, so that only the individual group responses need to be entered
Through probing questions participants are engaged in reflective discussion on the responses.

This discussion should be recorded for later transcription.

Exercise 5: Completion of the Questionnaire by the Participants

Objectives	1. A full demographic profile of the participants, including race, gender and age 2. Individual, confidential insight into participant's own perceptions and practices
Articulation	1. The questionnaire should be informed by findings of Exercises 1 & 2 2. It should be designed to probe for individual's responses 3. It should test responses to Exercises 3 & 4
Data capturing	1. The questionnaire
Equipment	1. The questionnaires 2. Pens for all participants
Time	15-20 minutes
Tasks	1. Generate the questionnaire in preparation 2. Distribute questionnaire 3. Collect questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

completely voluntary. You may choose to omit any
tion

Demographic Information

Write the answer or tick the appropriate box

1. Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Race: ☐ White ☐ Black ☐ Coloured ☐ Indian ☐ Asian
☐ Other Please specify: _____

Write an answer

3. How old are you? _____

Religion and Sexuality

5. How long have you attended the youth group?

More than 1 year	6-12 months	3-6 months	Less than 3 months
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6. How often do you attend the youth group meetings?

Every week	Often	Twice a month	Seldom
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7. Are you currently in a dating/courtship relationship? _____

8. Have you ever been in a dating/courtship relationship? _____

9. Have you ever had sexual intercourse? [Sexual intercourse refers to vaginal penetration]

10. If yes, how old were you when you had sexual intercourse? _____

11. Have you ever kissed in a sexual way? [Kissing in a sexual way refers to kissing that is sexually arousing]

12. Have you ever touched someone in a sexual way? [Touching in a sexual way includes necking, petting, touching body parts for sexual pleasure]

13. Have you ever had oral sex? _____

14. Have you ever had a same-sex sexual experience? _____

14. Masturbation

14. Do you know what your youth group teaches about sexuality?

YES	NO
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15. If yes, do you agree with and practice these teachings

AGREE AND DO NOT PRACTICE	AGREE AND PRACTICE	DISAGREE BUT PRACTICE	DISAGREE AND DO NOT PRACTICE
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Paul Germond, Director



PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOP CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the Participatory Inquiry Workshop into Religion and Adolescent Sexual Health held today Friday 5th October, 2007 in Potchefstroom as part of the Arhap Research Project into religion and adolescent sexuality.

I understand that my comments and answers will be combined with those of others in the workshop and will be used to help ARHAP and gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between sexuality and religion in Africa and of the ~~assets~~ and ~~capacities~~ of religion, most important for the development of healthy sexual lives.

I grant permission for my photograph or image to be captured during the workshop, and to be used in reports and documents reporting the findings.

All information will be anonymous, and will be kept in protective storage during and after the research.

I understand that a report on this research workshop will be made available to me if I request it.

I understand that I may withdraw from this process at any time.

This series of declarations has been read in English.

Name

Signature

Date