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Using Role Play to Build Tolerance among Adolescents with regard to Homosexuality. A Case Study of Supreme Educational College, South Africa.

By

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this research report is my own work unless where appropriately acknowledged and that it has not previously been published or submitted at any academic institution for a degree or examination.

Name: Ronald Ahirirwe Junior

Signature: 

Date: 20/09/2012

Dedication

For you, my Grandfather and Grandmother, Mr & Mrs Eliphaz Kangungu

Acknowledgement

My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor, Professor Hazel Barnes. Your meticulous and empowering supervision is just amazing! You are such an inspiration!

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Research Aim

The aim of this research was to influence the building of tolerance among a selected group of 20 adolescents in regard to homosexuality by using role play. Research (Avert 1997) indicates that there is prevalent homophobia among South Africa adolescents as well as in other age groups of the South African community despite a legal framework having been put in place to protect and uphold the rights and freedoms of people who engage in homosexuality. It is therefore because of this failure of the legal institution to curb homophobia that this research intended to attempt to build tolerance in a more interactive way by use of role play. This research intended to build on role play's efficacy to trigger emotional engagement and the understanding that emotions play a crucial role in learning (Jensen 2008). Literature (Booth 2000) reveals that role play could be an effective catalyst for genuine emotional engagement with issues of human concern such as tolerance, which could in turn be the beginning of an emancipatory learning process.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite policy shifts and legal reforms that guarantee legal and constitutional rights and freedoms for homosexuals in South Africa, as spelt out in the South Africa Constitution and implied in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, homophobia continues to be a major problem in South African communities

(Eliason 1996, Graham, T. & Kiguwa, S. 2004, Harris 2004, Nel 2005). There are many different ways in which homosexuals experience homophobia, including malicious gossip, name-calling, intimidating looks, internet bullying, vandalism and theft of property, discrimination at work, isolation and rejection, sexual assault, and even murder (Boswell 1980). All forms of homophobia are destructive, not just for people living openly as homosexuals, but for society as a whole. Homophobia is in contravention of articles 1 and 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that call for equal human dignity and against any form of discrimination based on sexual affiliation (Avert 1997).

Living in a homophobic environment forces many homosexuals to conceal their sexuality, for fear of the negative reactions and consequences of coming out. The UNAIDS Report of 2010 indicates that homophobia has far reaching consequences to HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. The report indicates that, unlike in sex work, the high HIV prevalence among men who have sex with men has not been documented, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. As a result, there has been a common failure to prioritize focused HIV prevention programmes for such key populations and the level of resources directed towards focused prevention programmes for such groups is typically quite low, even in concentrated epidemics, yet this should be a key national AIDS response. Even where there has been an effort to address this gap, the response has not been sufficient. The report has, partly, related this to the homophobic tendencies that exist in almost all of these countries (UNAIDS 2010). For people who have

been brought up to believe that homosexuality is wrong, the realisation that they might be homosexual can cause feelings of shame and self-loathing, leading to low self-esteem. Suppressing homosexuality involves denying an important part of a person's identity, and can have a serious impact upon their life and relationships. Furthermore, the dilemma of whether to 'come out' or not can cause a great deal of personal distress. (Graham, T. & Kiguwa, S. 2004).

Much of the legislative attempts to ensure tolerance operate at a safe neutral level without the space for emotional engagement, yet the understanding that emotion plays a crucial role in learning has not been given much attention (Jensen 2008). It should be noted that tolerance is a complex behaviour and since role play's primary function is to bring about a change in behaviour, the methodology which was employed in this research is an appropriate one. Nebe (1991:39) notes that behaviour modification, through role play, serves to increase role usage, role flexibility, role taking, skill acquisition for various role situations, and importantly, the understanding of personal attitudes and other people. This is exactly what the goal of this research was, especially to enhance empathy among the participants.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Main Questions

How can role play be effectively used to explore the subject of homosexuality with adolescents at Supreme Educational College?

How can role play techniques be used to facilitate the participants towards tolerance, with specific reference to homosexuality?

1.3.2 Sub-questions

In what ways have the participants become more tolerant towards homosexuality?

What techniques have been effective in enhancing empathy among the participants?

1.4 Motivation

My motivation to engage in this research came from the stories I heard and read about “Corrective Rape” in South Africa. I was incensed to find out that much as the Constitution of South Africa guarantees the rights and freedoms of homosexuals such cruel acts could still be carried out. Corrective rape is a criminal practice whereby men rape lesbian women, purportedly as a means of “curing” the woman of her sexual orientation (Nel 2005). The brutal rape and murder of Ms. Nogwaza in Johannesburg and the rape of a thirteen year old

girl in Pretoria (The Guardian, 9th May 2011) sparked off my interest to engage with this subject. I was also motivated by my belief in experiential learning, believing this method to be more effective in changing beliefs than legislation (Itin 1999). To read or hear about something is not the same as experiencing it, and it is often only by actual experience that understanding and change can come about. It is easy, for example, to read the law emphasising tolerance but to actually experience this noble virtue is a different matter. Goffman (1959) argues that through taking on a role, one is likely to experience a different perspective.

1.5 Rationale

Criminalisation and legal sanctions typified life for homosexuals under apartheid. Post-apartheid, in contrast, brought constitutional reform and facilitated the protection of rights, enabling homosexuals to develop their identities. Identity is shaped by complex social forces, and the law may be viewed as one facet of a more complex set of social relations which influences identity formation (Van der Hoven, A. & Maree, A. 2005).

The equality clause in the South African Constitution's Bill of Rights (1996) is the first to expressly prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. Progressive decriminalisation through law reform since the mid 1990s enabled lesbians and gay men to claim their citizenship as equal South Africans. Far-reaching judgements in respect of medical aid parity, sodomy,

custody of children, adoption, insurance, immigration and inheritance have benefited lesbians and gays. The Civil Union Act of 2006 also brought legal recognition of gay marriages, positioning the country as the first to do so in Africa and the fifth to do so internationally (Van der Hoven, A. & Maree, A. 2005).

It is because of the above that I set out to influence the building of tolerance using role play, since legalisation of homosexuality did not seem to have changed many of the prejudices of South African society towards homosexuality. It is clear that it is the attitudes and not the legal status that is problematic and therefore the relevance of this research was that it dealt with attitudinal changes as opposed to emphasising the human rights-based model. The negative attitude and reluctance to 'accept' homosexuality could also be linked to levels of education and awareness of people, the rural-urban divide, age, culture, and religion. Tolerance and positive attitudes may have something to do with the recognition of difference, equality and dignity which are values that can arise out of a slow process of negotiation through experiential learning.

Understandably apartheid had a strong psychological basis of indoctrination, and perhaps acceptance of 'homosexuality' has less to do with a legal framework, and more to do with consciousness raising and openness to differences in South African society (Isaack 2007). This stresses the importance

of consciousness raising and openness to difference in the struggle to reduce homophobic tendencies in South Africa, thereby endorsing the value of this research whereby through the use of empathy in role play, it is hoped that the participants became more conscious of the problem and became more tolerant of difference.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by and attempted to answer the research questions through the lens of critical pedagogy's social constructionist theory. This theory is believed to have been posited by Peter L Berger and Thomas Luckmann (Berger and Luckmann 1966). This theory views learning as an active process in which learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through action and reflection. Social constructionism is a sociological theory of knowledge that considers how social phenomena develop in social contexts. A social construction is a concept or practice that is the construct of a particular group. When we say that something is socially constructed, we are focusing on its dependence on contingent variables of our social selves rather than any inherent quality that it possesses in itself. The underlying assumptions on which social constructivism is typically seen to be based are reality, knowledge, and learning. Social constructs are generally understood to be the by-products of countless human choices rather than laws resulting from divine will or nature. This is not usually taken to imply a radical anti-determinism, however. Social constructionism is usually opposed to

essentialism, which instead defines specific phenomena in terms of inherent and transhistorical essences independent of conscious beings that determine the categorical structure of reality. (Berger and Luckmann 1966)

This theory was crucial to this study because at its basic level, all who ascribe to the social constructionist theories believe that sexuality is defined against a backdrop of temporal and cultural factors (Burr 1995). In effect, physically similar sexual acts, such as homosexuality, have different meanings and significance throughout various cultures and historical periods. This therefore means that sexual behaviour is a product of social conditioning rather than biological factors. It involves looking at the ways social phenomena are created, institutionalized, known, and made into tradition by humans. Kelly (1955) argues that the social construction of reality is an ongoing, dynamic process that is (and must be) reproduced by people acting on their interpretations and their knowledge of it. Because social constructs as facets of reality and objects of knowledge are not "given" by nature, they must be constantly maintained and re-affirmed in order to persist. This process also introduces the possibility of change: what is “unnatural” and what it means shifts from one generation to the next.

This research also borrowed from Role Theory (Moreno 1972, Van Ments 1983, Goffman 1959) as a lens through which the research questions were answered. Role theory is a perspective in sociology and social psychology that considers most of everyday activity to be the acting out of socially defined positions such

as mother, manager, and teacher. Moreno notes that there are two levels - the playing of the roles, and the somewhat more distanced capacity to observe and modify how the roles are played. This second level allows for greater self-reflection which is what is more important for this study. Van Ments notes that role is a concept that derives from the theatre, but has become a word that has evolved to refer to any function within a complex system. Its dramatic origins are still important, because the word suggests an actor and a theatrical play, and this metaphor suggests itself as a way of more concretely understanding how a person can become more psychologically aware (Moreno 1972). One thus thinks of oneself as an actor in a play, one who has a life apart from the role played, and one who can take direction in how to improve the playing of the role. The direction comes from the reflective functions within the person's own psyche (Goffman 1959). We thus can change the way we look at and play our roles, and much of actual adaptation involves the making of appropriate changes. This theory was instrumental in interpreting the participants' roles and the steps they took to modify them. (Moreno 1972).

1.7 Research Design

This study, which falls under the interventionist paradigm of research, was designed according to a case study approach. This design was appropriate for this study because through this case study I was able to understand the behavioural conditions through the participants' perspective. I was well aware

of the criticisms of the case study approach to data collection, but since this study aimed at a holistic and in-depth exploration of social and behavioural issues towards homosexuality within one particular group, this design provided great potential (O'Toole 2006).

Critics of the case study method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings. Others feel that the intense exposure to study of the case biases the findings. Some dismiss case study research as useful only as an exploratory tool. Yet researchers continue to use the case study research method with success in carefully planned and crafted studies of real-life situations, issues, and problems such as the one this study sought to undertake (Yin 1994).

This Case study research allowed the exploration and understanding of homophobia which seemed such a complex issue. For this reason therefore this method can be considered a robust research method particularly when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required. Recognised as a tool in many social science studies, the role of case study method in research proved to be more helpful when issues with regard to community-based problems, such as homophobia are concerned. Yin (1984) argues that the investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context is what makes this method important in the study of social phenomenon.

1.8 Research Methodology

This study was carried out through the Participatory Action Research methodology that is believed to have been developed by Kurt Lewin, a German social and experimental psychologist (Mcniff and Whitehead 2009). Action research is known by many other names, including participatory research, collaborative inquiry, emancipatory research, action learning, and contextual action research, but all are variations on a theme.

Put simply, action research is "learning by doing" - a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were, and if not satisfied, try again. What separates this type of research from general professional practices, consulting, or daily problem-solving is that the researcher studies the problem systematically and ensures the intervention is informed by theoretical considerations. Much of the researcher's time is spent on refining the methodological tools to suit the dynamics of the situation, and on collecting, analyzing, and presenting data on an ongoing, cyclical basis. Several attributes separate action research from other types of research. Primary is its focus on turning the people involved into researchers, too - people learn best, and more willingly apply what they have learned, when they do it themselves. It also has a social dimension - the research takes place in real-world situations, and aims to solve real problems. Finally, the initiating

researcher, unlike in other disciplines, makes no attempt to remain objective, but openly acknowledges their bias to the other participants.

O'Toole describes action research as not being about describing or interpreting what happens but about change and about using research to solve real problems. This research was indeed about influencing some real change among the participants. Participatory action research has emerged in recent years as a significant methodology for intervention, development and change within communities and groups. It is now promoted and implemented by many international development agencies and university programmes, as well as countless local community organizations around the world. Participatory Action Research builds on the critical pedagogy that was originated by Paulo Freire (1998)

There are five phases to be conducted within this type of research. Initially, a problem is identified and data is collected for a more detailed diagnosis. This is followed by a collective postulation of several possible solutions, from which a single plan of action emerges and is implemented. Data on the results of the intervention is collected and analyzed, and the findings are interpreted in the light of how successful the action has been. At this point, the problem is re-assessed and the process begins another cycle. This process continues until the problem is either resolved or time runs out (O'Toole 2006). It is important to note that this study followed the same cyclical process of identifying and

exploring the problem of homophobia, possible solutions were explored and tried out until the time available for the research was up. It was never the intention of this research to come up with one single solution to homophobia but to explore as many as we could so that each participant could pick whatever situation related to him or her.

Through the lens of Participatory Action Research, my role as a researcher was to implement the Action Research method in such a manner as to produce as many alternatives as possible for all participants as regards tolerance to homosexuality, with the process being maintained by them afterwards. To accomplish this, I adopted many different roles at various stages of the process, including those of planner, facilitator, listener, observer and synthesizer among others.

Within the Participatory Action Research methodology, Role Play was used to engage the participants and generate data. Van Ments (1983) gives a simple description of role play which was the predominant methodology used in this research:

> The idea of role play, in its simplest form, is that of asking someone to imagine that they are either themselves or another person in a particular situation. They are then asked to behave exactly as they feel that person would. As a result of doing this they, or the rest of the class, or both, will learn something about the person and/or situation. In essence, each player acts as part of the social environment of the others and provides a framework in which they can test

> out their repertoire of behaviours or study the interacting behaviour of the group. (16)

Researchers and practitioners from a range of disciplines have found that the use of role-play as a learning activity has improved learner understanding and engagement especially among young people (Heathcote and Bolton 1995). Details of role play and how it was used will be discussed later in chapters 5 and 6.

1.9 Ethical Considerations

Because this action research was carried out in real-world circumstances (at the school), and involved close and open communication among the participants involved, I had to pay close attention to ethical considerations in the conduct of my work.

I therefore made sure that the participants, the School authorities and the University Research Ethics Committee were consulted, and that the principles guiding the work were accepted in advance by all. The participants were allowed to influence the work, and the wishes of those who did not wish to participate were respected. Permission was obtained before making observations. The participants were advised to sign consent forms which duly described what the research was about, how it was going to be carried out, the role of the participants and the use of the data collected. The consent forms

also emphasised the need for confidentiality and explicitly stated that the participants' personal identities would not be revealed.

1.10 Documentation of the Process

I documented the process by using the following tools;

I kept a journal right from the beginning to the end of the process in which I reflected on the processes.

I employed the services of a note taker, who was a person with an informed understanding of role play and role theory. The note taker documented all the sessions.

I also documented some of the processes by taking still pictures.

1.11 Chapter Layout

This research report is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one provided an introduction to this research expounding on the research aim, rationale, research questions, theoretical framework and the research methodology.

Chapter two examines the genesis and the historical development of homophobia specifically during the eras of apartheid and post-apartheid in South Africa. This chapter also examines the different theoretical perspectives on homosexuality and homophobia in general terms.

Chapter three contextualises the participants within the research taking a deeper look at the theoretical perspectives of the adolescent stage of human development and its implication to this research.

Chapter four interrogates the poetics and politics of tolerance since it is central to this research. Having described what tolerance means, this chapter also examines the paradox surrounding the virtue of tolerance.

Chapter five expounds on role play which was the primary tool for this research. This chapter explores what role play is all about, its classification, the different role play techniques as well as the arguments for using role play.

Chapter six describes and analyses the research data and workshops. It particularly expounds on how role play techniques were used, sometimes unconventionally, to facilitate the building of tolerance. This chapter also points out specific scenarios that suggested some shifts towards tolerance.

Chapter seven draws general conclusions from the study and also cites the limitations to this methodology. Some implications of this study are also pointed out.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF HOMOSEXUALITY AND HOMOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 Overview

This chapter attempts to explore the historical context of homosexuality and homophobia in South Africa. The literature explored in this chapter reveals that the apartheid system seems to form the backdrop to homophobia and other hate crimes. To contextualise this subject, this chapter takes a closer look at the theoretical perspectives on homosexuality and homophobia in general.

2.2 What is homosexuality?

Boswell (1980) notes that although the word "gay" is now regularly used in English and numerous other modern languages to refer to a person who prefers erotic contact with his or her own gender, its use in scholarly circles has so far been resisted. The reasons for this opposition are not obvious, and it is not as if "homo-sexual" is such a satisfactory alternative. It is precisely because of this rejection that I have opted to use the word "homosexuality" for this research although it is probable that the word "gay" is the most commonly used in South Africa.

Friedman (1990) who seems to argue that homosexuality is mostly influenced by nurture, notes that homosexual is a word sometimes used to describe men

being sexually and emotionally attracted to men, and women being sexually and emotionally attracted to women. This experience of same-sex orientation can be described as same-gender attraction. Friedman also points to the fact that it is the terms, gay and lesbian, that are mostly used in everyday life rather than homosexual.

The word *homosexual* is a Greek hybrid with the first element derived from Greek *ὁμός homos*, 'same' thus connoting sexual acts and affections between members of the same sex. This meaning is quite adequate in reference to a relationship or sexual act: a sexual relation involving two parties 'of one sex' is indeed a homosexual one (Davidson 2007). 'But what is a "homosexual" person? Is this someone "of one sex"? By extension, one supposes, a "homosexual" person is one given to "homosexual" acts" (Boswell 1980:41). The word "homosexual" was actually coined in the late nineteenth century by German psychologists, introduced into English only at the beginning of the 20th century, and vehemently opposed for decades after its appearance precisely because of its bastard origin and vague connotations (Scott 2009).

The word "gay" probably antedates 'homosexual" by several centuries and has generally been employed with far greater precision (Foucault 1986): most speakers here in South Africa use "gay" to describe persons who are conscious of erotic preference for their own gender.

Mohr (1988) asks and answers the question; who are these homosexuals? They are your friends, your minister, your teacher, your bank teller, your doctor, your mail carrier, your secretary, your congressional representative, your sibling, parent and spouse. They are everywhere. It is for this same reason that this research has been motivated. One may ask, why this research? As has been noted in the rationale for this research, homophobic tendencies affect our friends, brothers, sisters, teachers and spouses and ultimately the whole of society, thus the need to be concerned. Homosexuals are not separate from the South African Community. They make up the South African community.

But aren't gays unnatural? Mohr (1988), Germond and de Gruchy (1997) answer this question by indicating that what the charge of unnaturalness lacks in moral content is compensated for by the emotional thrust with which it is delivered. In ordinary discourse, when the accusation of unnaturalness is applied to homosexuality, it is usually delivered with venom of forethought. It carries high emotional charge, usually expressing disgust. Probably it has no content other than its expression of emotional aversion. This kind of intolerance is what manifests in violent acts like corrective rape.

2.2.1 Nature or Nurture?

There is a growing debate over nature versus nurture in regard to sexuality and sexual orientation and this has played an important role in the struggle for civil rights for homosexuals, with science becoming increasingly closer to

recognizing that genetics play a significant role in determining one's sexual orientation. Nature debates over sexuality centre around a person's sexual orientation being decided by heredity and genes. It is suggested that the homosexual orientation is in place very early in the life cycle, possibly even before birth. Nurture proponents, who have typically included populations that view homosexuality as sinful, have rejected any sole biological influence for homosexuality, and suggest that one's sexual orientation is an individual choice and/or is caused by environmental factors dictated after birth. Although the nature side seems to increasingly gain evidence, this research is simply focused on influencing a culture of tolerance, whether homosexuals are homosexuals by nature or not. This is so because the South African legal framework already recognises the status of homosexuals who are supposed to enjoy the same rights as heterosexuals and thus the need for a culture of tolerance (Sullivan 1995, Mohr 1998, Germond and de Gruchy 1997).

The fact that historical and anthropological research (Mohr 1988) has it that opinion about gays has by no means been universally negative, gives hope to this research that it is possible to cultivate a culture of tolerance towards homosexuality in this country. Mohr notes that in America, for example, homosexuality is not only tolerated but its acceptance has even become a universal and compulsory part of social maturation. Within the last thirty years, American society has undergone a grand turnabout from deeply ingrained, near total condemnation to near total acceptance on two emotionally

charged “moral” or “family” issues: adult contraception and divorce (Mohr 1988: 44). This indicates that attitudes towards human behaviour are continually undergoing change in relation to moral judgement.

2.2.2 Forms of Homosexuality

Although various scholars have posited various types of homosexuality, especially based on the reasons for indulging in the practice, I chose to consider the three common forms known to most South Africans and on which homophobia breeds. Although one may argue that two of these (Transgender and Bisexuality) don’t actually fall under homosexuality, it is important to note that much as this is true, to most South African heterosexuals, there is no difference between all three.

The first and most common is the form where people are romantically and physically attracted to people of the same sex: Females who are attracted to other females are lesbian; males who are attracted to other males are often known as gay although as seen earlier, the term gay is sometimes also used to describe homosexual individuals of either gender.

The second category is bisexuality. People who are bisexual are romantically and physically attracted to members of both sexes although the South African heterosexual community chooses to see them predominantly as homosexuals.

Although transgender is a general term applied to a variety of individuals, behaviours, and groups involving tendencies that vary from culturally conventional gender roles to culturally evolving ones, most of the people that fall under this category are usually referred to as homosexuals.

A close analysis of the above categories of sexual orientation indicates that homosexuality becomes dominant to the extent of overshadowing the other categories and thus formed the basis for this research. However the complexity of sexuality and gender is recognized.

2.3 What is homophobia?

Homophobia is a term used to refer to a range of negative attitudes and feelings towards homosexual people and behaviour. Although the negative attitudes and feelings towards bisexual and transgender people and their behaviour is usually covered under other terms such as biphobia and transphobia (Gramick 1983), this research intended to use the word homophobia to cover all the three categories of sexual orientation other than heterosexuality for the simple fact that there is normally not much distinction between them when it comes to homophobic tendencies by those that subscribe to heterosexuality. The fear and contempt of and aversion to homosexuality is observable in critical and hostile behaviour such as discrimination and violence on the basis of a perceived homosexual or any non-heterosexual orientation (Epstein 1995).

The term *homophobia* was formed like the names for many other phobias from homoios, a Greek word that means *same* and phobia which means *irrational fear.* Its origins date back to the late 1960's in the United States of America (Weinberg 1973).

Popularised by sociologist Weinberg (1973) the word homophobia originally meant "an irrational fear of homosexual persons" (15). Over the years, however, homophobia has been expanded to include disgust and anger (MacDonald, 1984). It has come to be used not only to refer to the reactions of heterosexuals, but also the internalisation of negative feelings by homosexual men and women (Maylon 1982, Sears 1992). Furthermore homophobia can be viewed as fear and loathing towards same sex sexual partners (Eskridge 1996, Scarce 1997). Expressions of homophobia can range from innocent assumptions regarding heterosexuality to vicious incidents of anti-gay violence (Lewin & McDevitt 1993, Scarce 1997). It can be expressed by children through schoolyard taunts or upheld through academia, for example the unfounded contention that homosexuality did not exist in pre-colonial Africa (Wyatt 1997). Attacks on gays and lesbians are by no means an unfamiliar occurrence in South Africa. In recent years, violence and hostility against this sector have escalated to horrifying proportions in many parts of the world (Nel 2005).

Despite its popular usage, the term homophobia has been contested by various researchers who have proposed alternative terms to describe prejudice and

discrimination against homosexual people. *Homoerotophobia* was the alternative term coined by Wainwright Churchill (1967), Boswell (1980) suggested *homosexophobia*, *Homonegativity* was used by Hudson and Ricketts (1980) while Gregory Herek (1990) suggested sexual prejudice.

Germond and de Gruchy (1997) suggest that for heterosexual people, there seems to be a homosexual problem, and that for homosexual people, there seems to be a heterosexual problem. This therefore points to the fact that we cannot talk about homosexuality in exclusion but alongside heterosexuality. This debate eventually develops into the deeper question about our understanding of what is normal and what it is to be a human being. Germond and de Gruchy further argue that the tendency for heterosexual people to use the Bible in order to criticise homosexuality is intellectually weak. What is important is the 'complexity inherent in the struggle to be a human being in relation to others, to God and to our sexuality' (4). They argue that the reading and interpretation of the Bible is based on the "hermeneutical circle" (189) which bases biblical interpretation on the perspectives of the reader and the writer.

Germond and de Gruchy also advance an argument that it is also not fair for heterosexual people to demonise homosexuality on the basis that the practice is not African. Although traces of homosexuality in the African tradition remains a debate, the argument that the two scholars advance is that

demonising homosexuality on that basis is equal to saying that Africanness is equal to fair and pure morality. Not all that is considered culturally acceptable is actually just and fair. They seem to suggest that fairness and justice needs to be based on the need to realise true humanity (1997), which implies inclusiveness.

2.3.1 Classification of Homophobia

Homophobia manifests in different forms, and a number of different types have been postulated but this research looks at a few that were of pertinent interest.

2.3.1.1 Religious-based Homophobia

Several world religions contain anti-homosexual teachings on the basis that homosexuality is both unnatural and against religious teachings. It is important to note these two arguments at the onset because most of the participants' arguments for their homophobic tendencies were based on these premises.

Many pastors teach that the salvation of gay people is in question. Some pastors and churches go as far as to indicate gay people will not be saved. From the pulpits, gay people are taught to fear God and to fear themselves. Portraying homosexuals as being beyond God's grace is one of the worst forms of religious-based homophobia. Nobody is too evil for God's grace. When

churches explicitly or implicitly teach that gay people cannot be saved, they engage in theological and emotional terrorism. Gay church members and adherents are spiritually and emotionally terrorized from pulpits and Sunday school podiums in far too many churches (Germond and de Gruchy 1997).

Germond and de Gruchy argue that theological homophobia is based on a poor understanding of the gospel. Indicating that a group of people are beyond God's grace is really stating Jesus Christ did not pay the price for the sins of humanity, because some sins are too big for Christ's atoning blood. John 3:16 indicates whosoever believeth can be saved. The verse does not state whosoever is heterosexual may be saved. They believe gay people can and are being saved (1997).

The religious argument also claims that homosexuality is not natural/normal. It is argued that the purpose of marriage is to have children which connotes a purposeful – and thus "natural" – design for human sexuality (Boswell 1980).

2.3.1.2 Social homophobia

The fear of being identified as gay can be considered as a form of social homophobia. Thomas (2000) has suggested that homophobia can be rooted in an individual's fear of being identified as gay. Homophobia in men is correlated with insecurity about masculinity. Thomas argues that a person who expresses homophobic thoughts and feelings does so not only to communicate their

beliefs about the class of homosexual people, but also to distance themselves from this class and its social status. Thus, by distancing themselves from homosexual people, they are reaffirming their role as a heterosexual in a heteronormative culture, thereby attempting to prevent themselves from being labelled and treated as a homosexual person. This interpretation alludes to the idea that a person may posit violent opposition to "the Other" as a means of establishing their own identity as part of the majority and thus gaining social validation. Homophobia can therefore be viewed as a method of protection of male masculinity (2000).

2.3.1.3 Internalized homophobia

Internalized homophobia refers to negative feelings towards oneself because of homosexuality. It causes severe discomfort with or disapproval of one's own sexual orientation. Such a situation may cause extreme repression of homosexual desires. In other cases, a conscious internal struggle may occur for some time, often pitting deeply held religious or social beliefs against strong sexual and emotional desires. The label of internalized homophobia is sometimes applied to conscious or unconscious behaviours which an observer feels are used to promote or conform to the expectations of heteronormativity or heterosexism. This can include denial coupled with forced outward displays of heteronormative behaviour for the purpose of appearing or attempting to feel "normal" or "accepted". This might also include less overt behaviour like

making assumptions about the gender of a person's romantic partner, or about gender roles (Thomas 2000).

2.3.1.4 The Sexist Perspective

Some gender theorists interpret the fact that male-to-male relationships often incite a stronger reaction in homophobic people than female-to-female (lesbian) ones, which means that people who are homophobic feel more threatened by the perceived subversion of the male-superior gender paradigm. Many even go as far as to tolerate or embrace female homosexuals while still disapproving of homosexual men. According to such theorists as Miller (in Hoad 2007), male heterosexuality is defined not only by the desire for women but also (and more importantly) by the denial of desire for men. Therefore, expressions of homophobia serve as a means of accenting their male nature by distancing themselves from the threatening concept of their own potential femininity, and consequently belittling homosexual men, as not being *real* males. According to this theory, the fact that male homosexuality is considered worse than female homosexuality is sexist in its underlying belief that men are superior to women and therefore for a man to *"replace"* a woman during intercourse with another man necessarily degrades his own masculine status (Hoad 2007).

2.4 Homosexuality and Homophobia during the Apartheid Era

Apartheid was a system of racial segregation enforced by the National Party governments of South Africa between 1948 and 1994. Under this system, the rights of the majority 'non-white' inhabitants of South Africa were curtailed and white supremacy and Afrikaner minority rule was maintained. Apartheid was developed after World War II by the Afrikaner-dominated National Party and Broederbond organizations (Beck 2000).

Racial segregation in South Africa began in colonial times. However, apartheid as an official policy was introduced following the general election of 1948. New legislation classified inhabitants into four racial groups (native, white, coloured and Asian), and residential areas were segregated, sometimes by means of forced removals. Non-white political representation was completely abolished in 1970, and starting in that year black people were deprived of their citizenship, legally becoming citizens of one of ten tribally based self-governing homelands called *bantustans*, four of which became nominally independent states. The government segregated education, medical care, beaches, and other public services, and provided black people with services inferior to those of white people (Wople 1990).

With regard to homosexuality, the Apartheid government was hostile to the human rights of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender) South Africans. Homosexuality was a crime punishable by up to seven years in

prison; this law was used to harass and outlaw South African gay community events and political activists. Despite opposition, several South African gay rights organisations formed in the late 1970s, during the time when the ruling National Party strengthened the national sodomy law in 1976. However, until the late 1980s gay organisations were often divided along racial lines and the larger political question of apartheid. The Gay Association of South Africa was a predominantly white organisation that initially avoided taking an official position on apartheid, while the Rand Gay Organization was founded as being multi-racial and in opposition to the racist political system of apartheid (Harris 2004).

From the 1960s to the late 1980s, the South African Defence Force forced white gay and lesbian soldiers to undergo various medical "cures" for their sexual orientation, including sex change operations. The treatment of gay and lesbian soldiers in the South African military was explored in a 2003 documentary film, titled *Property of the State* (Harris 2004). Conservative social attitudes among both white and black populations are traditionally unfavourable to homosexuality; such attitudes have persisted to some degree in post-Apartheid society. To some extent, the outbreak of the HIV-AIDS epidemic in South Africa, forced LGBT South Africans to reveal their sexual orientation, in order to be able to together fight the spread of the disease and to ensure that those who are infected have access to life-saving medicines.

This history of institutionalised discrimination under apartheid and colonialism therefore forms the backdrop for hate crimes in South Africa. It is therefore not surprising that the production of 'otherness' and 'abnormal' has become a virtually automatic and inherent practice of identity construction in this society (Harris 2004). Traditional identity markers that have served so long as vital pillars of power - nation, race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation - are all powerful anchoring-points both for the establishment and perpetuation of difference (Out 2007). It therefore becomes imperative that programmes targeting people's attitudes and norms are encouraged to make a difference. It is on this premise that this research is based. Sexual orientation-based hate crimes are extreme expressions of homophobia (Hattingh 1994) through criminal acts (such as rape, assault, or damage to property) committed against people, their property, or organisations because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation (Eliason 1996). Violence against homosexual people motivated by sexual orientation related bias is not an individual injury alone, but can be classified as a 'hate crime' that is part of a larger system of domination against homosexual people (UCAP & Out 2008b). This links hate crime to issues of identity, social power and public attitudes (UCAP & Out 2008b). Such crimes against LGBT people are often calculated to send a message to the victim/survivor that his or her sexual orientation and/or gender non-conformity is deviant and must be changed and this is clearly expressed in the reasons advanced for corrective rape. It is said that

perpetrators of corrective rape argue that they do this to correct the sexual abnormality of the victim and this is a microcosm of the larger societal attitude towards homosexuality in South Africa.

2.5 Homosexuality and Homophobia in the Post-Apartheid Era

South Africa has emerged from a bitter history of colonialism and apartheid into an era characterised by a democratically elected and Constitutional government with a Bill of Rights which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, colour, gender, religion and ethnicity. Since South Africa's transitional period, a new constitution was put in place in 1994. The Republic of South Africa is now a sovereign, democratic state founded on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms, non-racialism and non-sexism, among others (Beck 2000).

In contrast with constitutional guarantees of freedom and human rights for all, homophobic victimisation has continued to manifest as evidenced by the corrective rape incidents. Research conducted in Gauteng province illuminates the nature and prevalence of prejudice - motivated hate speech and victimisation against LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people. These research findings, based on self-reported data, indicate a disconcertingly high prevalence of homophobic discrimination. The findings indicate that patriarchal gender roles and religious beliefs are linked to increased rates of

certain forms of homophobic victimisation. The relationship between gender presentation and vulnerability to victimisation points to the highly gendered nature of homophobic discrimination (Nel 2008). Whilst existing policy frameworks through the National Victim Empowerment Programme go some way in addressing homophobic discrimination, service provider deprioritisation, marginalisation, exclusion and targeted victimisation, are everyday realities in many communities. This is especially true for those who are perceived to differ from, or challenge, social and gender norms (Harris 2004). The lack of targeted strategies to address LGBT discrimination negatively impact on the extent to which the criminal justice system and other service delivery agents can adequately respond and thus the rationale for this research.

A comparison of the findings of seven USA anti-gay violence victimisation surveys (1988 - 1991) with a South African study conducted in 1992 found that, while South Africans were less likely to experience verbal abuse and threats of violence than their American counterparts, they were more prone to be physically assaulted and substantially more often sexually assaulted (Theron & Bezuidenhout 1995). In their research with a predominantly white male sample, Theron and Bezuidenhout report that 22% of gay hate victimisation involved rape or sexual assault, 22% physical assault, and 67% involved hate speech. Similarly, a study by Theuninck (2000) found that 75%

of the sample, again consisting primarily of white gay males, had experienced hate speech, 22% had been physically assaulted, and 17% had been victims of sexual assault.

Limited research on LGBT issues in South Africa, including on homophobic hate crimes against lesbian and gay people, has been conducted and, as indicated, previous studies focused primarily on white middle-class gay men. Even less is known of the experiences of bisexual and transgender persons. The studies that do exist, as discussed later, and a growing body of anecdotal evidence (Isaack 2007), however, suggests that LGBT people are often targeted for discrimination as a result of their sexual orientation. Violence is not experienced equally across class, race and gender lines in the general population of South Africa and women from lower socio-economic levels are more susceptible to gender-based crimes, such as rape, domestic violence and child abuse (Van der Hoven & Maree 2005). The role of physical appearance as well as the intersection with other identities (race, class and gender) are critical to understanding LGBT hate crimes. For, a LGBT person may experience intersecting forms of discrimination on one or more of the listed grounds in section 9(3) of the Constitution (i.e. race, sex, gender, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability etc.) (Isaack 2007; UCAP & Out, 2008).

Despite the post-apartheid shift from the prior criminalisation of homosexuality to jurisprudential and legislative support for the equality of lesbian and gay people, homosexuals in South Africa remain vulnerable to hate crimes. This goes further to indicate that legalisation alone is not enough but must be complimented by programmes that aim to shift people's attitudes towards homosexuality and cultivate a culture of tolerance. This is the gap that this research is trying to fill. In many communities a disproportionate number of homosexuals continue to face sexual orientation - and gender presentation - related oppression, marginalisation, discrimination and victimisation. 17 Section 28(1) of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) provides that 'if it is proved in the prosecution of any offence that unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or disability played a part in the commission of the offence, this must be regarded as an aggravating circumstance for purposes of sentence' (2000). This legal provision is good but is not enough to capture the prevalent subtle homophobic tendencies occurring in society. It also does not serve to change society's attitude which, I believe, has continued to hamper victims from reporting homophobia cases. It is hoped that role play with its power to challenge and shift the attitudes of people from different backgrounds can play a major role.

The findings of the Out Gauteng study (2007) suggest that constitutional guarantees for rights and services cannot be assumed to have addressed systemic homophobic prejudice in its varying manifestations. All interventions crafted to address homophobic victimisation require a strengthened partnership between public sector programmes and LGBT service providers. This should include integrating the respective competencies of governmental bodies and Civil Society Organisations into a comprehensive framework that will increase the accessibility and relevance of appropriate victim support services for homosexual people. This confirms that the methods of building collective morality in South Africa have not been adequate enough as they have hinged more on the legal provisions and not on paying much attention to programmes that relate to people's lives and attitudes. Proponents of role play posit that role play has the potential to fill this kind of gap and thus the rationale for this research.

The last two decades have been marked as the rebirth of a democratic South Africa, celebrating diversity and breaking from the shackles of prejudice, discrimination and intolerance, and embracing principles of inclusivity, tolerance, and mutual understanding. Internationally, modern societies have for decades been questioning whether traditionally negative societal attitudes and behaviours towards homosexuality are morally wrong. In post-apartheid South Africa homophobic behaviours and attitudes are anti-constitutional,

with sexual orientation viewed as a basic human right. As commented by Wood Wetzel (2001), ""When the new Republic of South Africa, a formerly homophobic country under apartheid, ratified its constitution, it became the first nation to incorporate sexual orientation in its anti-discrimination doctrines. Having experienced unending abuses, the framers and the people agreed that they wanted their new country to be a nation of rights" (19). Although it was essential to try and cultivate the culture of tolerance through legal means, this needed to have been reinforced by programmes to shift people's attitudes because attitudes do form the core of people's homophobic tendencies. What kind of attitude do the law enforcers hold towards homosexuality? How does this affect their effectiveness in doing their job? As critical pedagogy suggests, in such a situation people should be encouraged to explore and challenge their own attitudes in order for them to construct their own learning.

Astbury (1991) seems to reiterate the argument for this research when she argues that it is one thing to change the legislature of a nation, but an entirely different matter to change the hearts and minds of a population. One can attempt to eradicate overt homophobic behaviours by the passing of laws, but covert homophobia is not easily legislated against. Anti-gay sentiment is compounded in South Africa by a strong patriarchal Christian ethic that views homosexuality as sinful and wrong. In this context, reaction against

homosexual rights are seen, for many, as upholding religious beliefs and therefore something to be proud of and actively encouraged.

The Sunday Independent reported that while at a South African Triangle Project Conference, Archbishop Desmond Tutu apologised on behalf of the Anglican Church to members of the gay and lesbian community asserting that the Church was wrong in condemning homosexuals for who they are. He pledged his support for those who continue to stand for who they are without any apologies (Sunday Independent 21st October 2001). This apology by Archbishop Desmond Tutu indicates that religious beliefs are part of the underlying factors of homophobia and even if he did come to a realisation that this kind of discrimination is unfair, it is not that all religious people will necessarily come to the same realisation unless and until they are brought to confront their own attitudes.

In a press statement issued on the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, the Democratic Alliance Youth condemned the homophobic acts that have been perpetuated on youths. References were given to young victims like 24 year old lesbian activist Noxolo Nogwaza of Kwa-Thema Township who was raped and brutally murdered on 24 April 2011, a 14 year old transgender victim who was raped in Pretoria on 5 May 2011 and Nqobile Khumalo who was raped and brutally murdered in Kwa-Mashu also in early May 2011. The Democratic Alliance (DA) Youth called for more tolerance from South African society although they did not specify how this is to be achieved. This research

intends to make use of role play to influence tolerance (DA Youth Website 17th May 2011).

Remafedi (1990) contends that among all members of society, adolescents are most damaged by internalised and externalised homophobia. Sullivan and Schneider (1987) state that homophobia has a profound impact on the lives of homosexual youths. Most adolescents have heard others laughed at and taunted for being “faggots” or “dykes.” As a result, they begin to fear similar humiliation or even physical violence. Most gays internalise at least some homophobic stereotypes, and some experience self-hatred resulting from their beliefs and fears about their homosexual feelings. When some adolescents attempt to share these feelings with a trusted adult, the feelings are sometimes dismissed as being “only a phase”. This can result in feelings of betrayal, invalidation and humiliation for the adolescent who has taken this risk (Sullivan & Schneider 1987).

The religious, patriarchal, paradigm strongly influenced education in South Africa's history, and therefore education has carried a conservative legacy, which has typically been discriminatory towards minority groups. Currently, education is undergoing radical transformation in South Africa. According to Deacon et al. (1999), these “conscious attempts to transform South African education” (164) were largely driven by “the legislative flagship” (164) of the 1996 South African Schools Act. However, they go on to clarify that “despite

the law being on the statute books, however, much remains the same within the schools themselves, where old styles of school governance and pedagogy remain intact" (164). This situation continues to make school environments favourable grounds for homophobia and thus the conscious choice for this research to be carried out in a school environment.

The societal discrimination against homosexuals, especially in schools, makes the coming out experiences of young South African students even more difficult. Teenagers are self-identifying as homosexual at an earlier age than at any time in South Africa's history, and as a result, are commencing their coming out process during their early and mid-adolescent years. For many, adolescence is a confusing and troubling time, as young people try to find their identity and sense of self in the world. As adolescents spend a significant amount of time at high school, peers and teachers have a role to play in the resolution of this uncertainty. For the gay or lesbian adolescent, societal views that condemn self-identification as gay or lesbian, perpetuated in the classroom, have the potential to curb and even damage psychosocial development (Jordan 2000).

The structural, political and heteronormative nature of schools create environments that do not easily accommodate diversity, including sexualities that are alternative to the dominant male/female gender binary. Schools go beyond being simply unfriendly places for gay and lesbian adolescents. The

peer pressure that most adolescent students face in schools makes the environment less conducive for homosexuals. The school environment, in positioning adolescents as less powerful, creates contexts in which adolescents seek to assert their power in other ways (Chamberlain 1985). Peer groups and social spaces within the school environment present opportunities for such demonstration of power. Adolescents, who are perceived to be homosexual, suffer a double oppression and become easy targets for adolescents wishing to assert their power and standing in peer groups. Bullying, name calling and other more physical forms of harassment of homosexual adolescents are facilitated and condoned by a school environment that asexualises the learner. Because the school system, more often than not, views learners as non-sexual or sexless beings (Gay and Lesbian Network Report 2011).

The school context, as a site of power and control, places homosexual learners at a particularly high risk for academic and psycho-social problems due to incidents of harassment and feelings of isolation and rejection. Research has indicated that gay and lesbian adolescents experience higher levels of underachievement, failure and dropout (O'Conor 1993/4), loneliness, substance abuse (Jordan 2000) suicide and attempts at suicide (Morrison & L'Heureux 2001) in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts.

It is precisely because of the homophobic tendencies within South African communities, and especially among the adolescents in schools, that this

research was initiated to engage some adolescents through role play in order to build a culture of tolerance amongst them.

This chapter has contextualised homosexuality and homophobia in the history of South Africa. The apartheid system seems to have been an underlying contributing factor towards homophobia in South Africa. This chapter has also indicated how, even after the apartheid regime, the hate and discrimination against homosexuals is still prevalent especially among youths.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEXT OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

3.1 Overview

This chapter presents current understandings of the adolescent stage of human development dwelling on factors that are pertinent to this research. The chapter pays special attention to the factors that might render this research difficult and those that might provide a good opportunity for this research. This chapter also gives a brief context to the research participants.

3.2 Adolescent Stage of Human Development

The rationale to work with adolescent scholars for this research is supported by Taylor (1994) when he argues that the ever-present threat of verbal and physical abuse can be very stressful for homosexual youth in the school situation. Due to the legal requirements of school attendance, these youth provide a 'captive' audience for homophobic bullies in these contexts as most gay adolescents remain in mainstream settings. They are often harassed and even sometimes physically attacked in these school settings.

Taylor supports the argument that most homosexual adolescents have had experiences of being avoided, rejected and isolated in high schools and this has served to perpetuate their low self-esteem. As a result, most adolescents live in “hiding” until they feel more comfortable with their sexuality. Those that come out are faced with feelings of being different that are normally fuelled by

rumours, gossiping, name calling and exclusion from social activities. Taylor contends that most adolescent homosexuals experience these feelings most acutely during high school (19940. It therefore made sense for this research to target adolescents in high school.

Who are these adolescents? Although each teenager is an individual with a unique personality and special interests, likes and dislikes, in general, however, there is a series of developmental tasks that everyone faces during the adolescent years (Coleman and Hendry 1990). Adolescents usually have behaviours that are consistent with several of the myths of adolescence. The one relevant myth is that that they are "on stage" and other people's attention is constantly centred on their appearance or actions. This normal self-centeredness may appear (especially to adults) to border on paranoia, self-love, or even hysteria (Steinberg 2008).

The term adolescence comes from a Latin word *adolescere* which means growing up (Freud 1958). It is a developmental stage of life that is shaped by changes in the body and mind, and by the environment. Throughout the adolescent years, the body and brain grow and change, and while becoming accustomed to these changes, the adolescent must learn to negotiate new responsibilities, evolving relationships, and a new sense of self (Erickson 1959).

Dreyer (1980) however argues that although adolescence is generally considered to be the period between the beginning of puberty and adulthood,

there is no precise timetable for adolescent development; each young person will develop in his or her own way and time. Adolescent development is therefore non-linear. Steinberg (2008) argues that our ideas about adolescence, and our expectations of adolescents, change over time and across cultures. The age at which puberty typically begins has dropped over the last century.
This research sought to borrow from Erickson's theoretical perspective on adolescence (1959) to understand the stage of adolescence in greater detail since all the research participants were between the ages of 16-19 which Erickson considers adolescent. According to Erikson, development during the adolescent stage mostly depends upon what adolescents do rather than what is done to them. While adolescence is a stage at which one is neither a child nor an adult, life definitely becomes more complex as one attempts to find one's own identity, struggle with social interactions, and grapple with moral issues.

The task, at this stage, is for one to discover who one is as individuals separate from their family of origin and become members of a wider society. Erickson notes that during this process, many adolescents go into a period of withdrawing from responsibility, which he calls a "moratorium." And if they are unsuccessful in navigating this stage, they will experience role confusion and upheaval.

It is also at this stage of human development, according to Erickson, that adolescents strive to establish a philosophy of life and in this process they tend to think in terms of ideals, which are conflict free, rather than reality, which is

not. The problem is that they don't have much experience and find it easy to substitute ideals for experience. However, they can also develop strong devotion to friends and causes. It is no surprise that most of their significant relationships are with peer groups (1959).

According to Freud's theories of psychosocial development (1958), adolescent sexuality has been a controversial topic for virtually every generation. Although most scholars often discuss adolescent sexuality in terms of "risk", it is important to remember that sexuality, sexual behaviours, and sexual relationships are an important and necessary part of human development. During adolescence it is essential that individuals form a sexual identity and a sense of sexual well-being. These processes determine adolescents' comfort with their own emerging sexuality as well as that of others. It is important for adolescents to become comfortable with their own changing bodies, learn to make good decisions about what sexual activities they wish to engage in, and how to be safe in the process (Brooks-Gunn & Paikoff 1993). Adolescents also are beginning to become involved in intimate relationships, which is a context where sexual activity often occurs.

3.2.1 Relativistic thinking

Compared to children, adolescents are more likely to question others' assertions, and less likely to accept facts as absolute truths. Through experience outside the family circle, they learn that rules they were taught as

absolute are in fact relativistic. They begin to differentiate between rules instituted out of common sense and those that are based on culturally-relative standards including homosexuality. This normally leads to a period of questioning authority in all domains (Adelson 1980).

3.2.2. Cognition

Child psychologist Jean Piaget (1972) described the mechanism by which the mind processes new information. He said that a person understands whatever information fits into his established view of the world. When information does not fit, the person must re-examine and adjust his thinking to accommodate the new information. Piaget described four stages of cognitive development and relates them to a person's ability to understand and assimilate new information. It is at this stage of adolescence that cognition gets to its final form. The adolescent no longer requires concrete objects to make rational judgements. At this point, he is capable of hypothetical and deductive reasoning. Therefore trying to build a culture of tolerance for the adolescent may be wide ranging because he will be able to consider many possibilities from several perspectives.

Erickson (1959) contends that as in other stages, bio-psycho-social forces are at work during the adolescence stage of development. No matter how one has been raised, one’s personal ideologies are now chosen for oneself. Oftentimes, this leads to conflict with adults over religious, political or sexual orientations.

Once someone settles on a worldview and vocation, will he or she be able to integrate this aspect of self-definition into a diverse society? According to Erikson, when an adolescent has balanced both perspectives of "What have I got?" and "What am I going to do with it?" he or she has established their identity.

3.2.3 Peers

Coleman and Hendry (1990) contend that peer groups are especially important during adolescence, a period of development characterized by a dramatic increase in time spent with peers and a decrease in adult supervision. Adolescents also associate with friends of the opposite sex much more than in childhood and tend to identify with larger groups of peers based on shared characteristics.

> During early adolescence, adolescents often associate in cliques, exclusive, single-sex groups of peers with whom they are particularly close. Towards late adolescence, cliques often merge into mixed-sex groups as teenagers begin romantically engaging with one another (Coleman and Hendry 1990:109).

Despite the common notion that cliques are an inherently negative influence, they may help adolescents become socially acclimated and form a stronger sense of identity. On a larger scale, adolescents often associate with *crowds*, groups of individuals who share a common interest or activity. Often, crowd identities may be the basis for stereotyping young people, categorizing them as

homosexuals and therefore unnatural. Because these peer groups greatly influence one's perception and behaviour, it was important that this research was conducted in a group learning environment to explore those peer group attitudes (Coleman and Hendry 1990).

3.2.4 Peer pressure

Dreyer (1980) contends that during adolescence, peers play a large part in a young person's life and typically replace family as the centre of a teen's social and leisure activities. Coleman and Hendry (1990) posit that teenagers have various peer relationships, and they interact with many peer groups. Some adolescents give in to peer pressure because they want to be liked, to fit in, or because they worry that others may make fun of them if they don't go along with the group. Others may go along because they are curious to try something new that others are doing. The idea that "everyone's doing it" may influence some adolescents to leave their better judgment, or their common sense, behind.

Erickson (1959) posits two levels of peer pressure. The first is in the large group: for most teens at school, a youth group, or home group are examples. This is the setting that gets the most attention. The second is in the close relationship with one or several best friends. This is the setting that is sometimes overlooked. The large group exerts a general pressure on its members. It directs the trends in clothing, music, entertainment, and "political

correctness". The pressure to conform varies. It is not usually a spoken or written guideline; it's just what "everyone" is doing. The pressure can be avoided by keeping quiet or by putting on the appearance of conformity. The pressure which takes place among close friends is not so easy to escape. You can't fake it with them; they know what you stand for, what you really believe. The nature of close friendship is that you care more about them and their opinions than those of anybody else. What your best friend approves of or disapproves of exerts great pressure on you. This pressure is personal and forceful.

3.3 Religious and Social Beliefs of the Participants

The research engaged with 20 (10 females and 10 boys) students of Grade 10 ranging from the age of 16-19 years. Although the religious beliefs of the participants were not specifically asked during this research, some of the constant references to religion while discussing the issue of homosexuality pointed to the fact that, just like most of the South African population, most of the participants believed, followed or at least had a fair knowledge about religion especially Christianity. From the participants' constant reference to the Bible, it pointed to the fact that most of them had a Christian background.

It was also observed from most of the arguments advanced by the participants that most of them had a strong patriarchal background and belief. For most of them the degree to which a man is thought to have gay feelings is the degree of

his unmanliness. Because patriarchy presents sexuality as man over women, men are conditioned to have only that in mind as a model of sexual expression. Sex with another man meant being dominated, which seemed scary and unacceptable.

3.4 Supreme Educational College

Supreme Educational College is located in Braamfontein, Johannesburg just opposite Wits University and teaches students of all sexes from Grade 0-12. This public school is made up of students from many different backgrounds including children from various ethnic groups and families with different economic levels. There are also a considerable number of students that hail from other countries like Zimbabwe, Botswana, Nigeria and Cameroon, among others. One of the guiding principles of the school is non-discrimination based on race and gender, including sexual orientation. The school has a good range of qualified teachers although their system of teaching still follows the traditional methods of lecturing and less of allowing student-teacher engagement. The students also seem to have adapted to this kind of learning and my research method of involving all the participants seemed to be strange to many of them although they seem to have enjoyed that freedom of learning. The school does not have enough physical space and most of the buildings are congested within a small area. Because of lack of enough space, the school does not have enough space for sports activities. There is therefore less of

sports and games. In terms of the arts, the school has classes in drama that excite most students. There are classes in career guidance and life orientation. In fact my research workshops were conducted during these class times. Overall, the school seems to fall among middle class South African schools.

This chapter has attempted to highlight some of the elements of adolescence that are crucial to this research. It has been noted that it is during this stage of development that human beings begin to form their own attitudes and outlook on the world they live in and therefore it becomes important that a culture of tolerance be nurtured at this stage. It has also been highlighted that it is during this stage of human development that homosexuals face homophobia from their peers. It was important for this research to contextualise these elements to be able to engage the participants relevantly.

CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TOLERANCE

4.1 Overview

Tolerance seems to be a very complex virtue. While it is rational for someone to tolerate another's views or behaviour that the former does not approve of, the question remains as to whose feelings take precedence. The tolerator could as well argue that his intolerance should be tolerated. I therefore came to the conclusion that tolerance may be subjective depending on where you stand. For this research however, tolerance is not a matter of subjectivity but a legal requirement as well. The constitution of South Africa enshrines the rights and freedoms of homosexuals in South Africa and therefore gives us a clear perspective on tolerance. The research is therefore geared towards enhancing the attitude of 'living and letting others live too', although one may not approve of their way of living. Many people have different perspectives on homosexuality, as previously discussed, which may take a long time to reconcile and therefore the essence that this research focuses on is the virtue of letting others live as they believe right while not necessarily approving of their lifestyle. It is for this reason that this chapter attempts to explore some of the theoretical perspectives that have been posited about tolerance so as to contextualise this research.

4.2 What is Tolerance?

Peterson (2003) defines tolerance as the appreciation of diversity and the ability to live and let others live. It is the ability to exercise a fair and objective attitude towards those whose opinions, practices, religion, nationality and so on differ from one's own. In the light of what Peterson posits, this research was carried out on the premise that tolerance is not just agreeing with one another or remaining indifferent in the face of injustice, but rather showing respect for the essential humanity in every person. If this research can influence positive shifts in attitude and/or the appreciation of unity in diversity, it is hoped that the levels of tolerance will be raised among some of the participants.

King (1976) explains that 'to tolerate' generally means to endure, suffer or put up with a person, activity, idea or organisation of which or whom one does not really approve. My research drew on King's notion that tolerance calls for a certain degree of acceptance and self-restraint. Acceptance in this circumstance generally means the suspension of some negative act that would normally have followed on from the initial negative assessment. In this sense, tolerance is basically an exercise in restraint (King 1976).

Although I have chosen to use the two terms interchangeably, *tolerance* usually signifies an articulated normative principle whereas *toleration* refers to attitudes, virtues, practices and institutional regimes (Bader 2011). Toleration, according to a broadly accepted definition by King (1976), means that a

tolerator tolerates beliefs or practices with which he does not agree even if he or she has the power not to tolerate. This therefore means that the power to interfere is not something that is forgotten or omitted: the tolerator explicitly and consciously refrains from interference. The reasons and motives to interfere or not to tolerate vary from situation to situation and from individual to individual. For purposes of this research I considered tolerance to mean a minimum standard or precondition for peaceful co-existence in diversity.

Conversely, intolerance is the failure to appreciate and respect the practices, opinions and beliefs of another group. For instance, there is a high degree of intolerance between Israeli Jews and Palestinians who are at odds over issues of identity. The result is continuing inter-group violence. This resonates with the issue that this research sought to address. There is a great deal of intolerance between heterosexuals and homosexuals in South Africa over the issue of sexual orientation and this has led on many occasions to expressions of homophobia. This was observed during the research workshops with the participants. Though tolerance may seem an impossible exercise in certain situations, being tolerant nonetheless remains key to easing hostile tensions between groups and to helping communities move past intractable conflict. That is because tolerance is integral to different groups relating to one another in a respectful and understanding way. In cases where communities have been deeply entrenched in violent conflict, being tolerant helps the affected groups endure the pain of the past and resolve their differences. In Rwanda, the Hutus

and the Tutsis have tolerated a reconciliation process, which has helped them to work through their anger and resentment towards one another (Peterson 2003). It is this view of Peterson's that gives this research hope.

The objective of toleration can be motivated by individual conscience or belief. In the context of this research, the tolerated individual raises a claim, such as to be allowed to practice homosexuality. "This therefore implies that the conceptual structure of toleration may be seen as a tension between two components objection and acceptance" (King 1976: 44). These two components need to be balanced so that acceptance is sufficient for non-interference without invalidating the reasons for objection. Toleration is never pure or complete. It includes the "ineliminable reference to the less than ideal and the forbearance of toleration is motivated by reasons that override but that do not cancel out reasons for rejection" (Horton 1992: 65). Reasons for rejection and reasons for acceptance thus stand in a difficult relationship that makes toleration a balancing act. The above attempted description of toleration no doubt raises some pertinent questions which some scholars have referred to as the paradoxes of toleration.

4.3 Paradoxes of Toleration

This is the first paradox. For toleration to count as a virtue, initial reasons for objection need to be morally defensible. But if this is so, we might as well ask why objection should be overridden at all (Mendus 1989). How can we prioritize

moral reasons for acceptance over moral reasons for objection? The concern is that this would open the doors to some kind of value relativism. Toleration would then seem to be a position of moral cowardice, and this, in fact, is very much the thrust of contemporary attacks on tolerance. This ”paradox of moral toleration” has led political theorists to invoke the distinction between moral and ethical reasons, and to specify toleration in terms of acceptance that is ethical rather than moral. Morality is about the evaluation of specific actions. An ethical reason for toleration, by contrast, would be the appreciation of human beings regardless of their particular convictions and actions as involved in ongoing efforts to justify their values and their conduct. This would be a human characteristic that is worthy of consideration and some form of qualified respect (Mendus 1989). Regardless of whether we follow this particular resolution of the paradox, it shows that toleration involves difficult decisions and the weighing of reasons. This research was therefore conducted on the premise that some participants may shift their attitude from a moral stand point while others may only do this from an ethical perspective. Both possibilities were explored with an objective of achieving a level of tolerance that will act as a minimum standard or precondition for peaceful co-existence in diversity.

The other paradox regards the question of boundary-drawing (Brown 2006). On the one hand, the argument goes, there must be boundaries as tolerance would

otherwise be meaningless. On the other hand each boundary that is drawn reflects particular values. It can always be questioned by whom and in what name boundaries are drawn. This holds true also for the construction of the refusal to tolerate intolerance as the definition of intolerance is also subject to particular values. Toleration means that one agent assumes evaluative authority over the beliefs and practices of the other. It is thus at risk of perpetuating social hierarchies and relationships of domination (Brown 2006).

This final 'paradox' of toleration raises the difficult question of how to think of the nature of power in toleration (Brown 2006). After all, even in situations of non-interference power may continue to be exercised and positions of subordination or domination may be perpetuated. Toleration may appear to involve a discretionary exercise of power, based on the arbitrary will of the tolerator. Those who are tolerated may still be subject to the threat of interference, should the tolerator change his or her mind about refraining from interfering.

Toleration is a process and is dependent on prior social contact, encounters, relationships and learning. The major reason that makes toleration possible does not usually come in a flash of inspiration but as a result of drawn-out social relationships that come about from increased social interaction. David Heyd provides a better account of this.

> Tolerant people overcome the drive to interfere in the life of another not because they come to believe that the reasons for restraint are weightier than the reasons for disapproval, but because the attention is shifted from the object of disapproval to the humanity or the moral standing of the subject before them… [Toleration] consists of the capacity to ignore, or rather suspend or 'bracket,' a set of considerations, which do not thereby lose any of their original force. (Heyd 1996: 12)

The movement towards toleration is thus to be understood as a "perceptual shift" or a "switch of perspective, a transformation of attitude, based not on the assessment of which reasons are overriding but on ignoring one type of reason altogether by focusing on the other" (Heyd 1996: 13). Put simply, experiencing difference in actual social relationships may change one's estimation as to how what is different can be tolerated. Toleration is about relationships between individuals and groups in society; it is dependent on how differences and identities are socially perceived and negotiated and this is exactly why this project sought to use role play to explore these relationships.

Tolerance is not only seen as a political or legal requirement but also as an educational one (McKinnon 2006). It would be simplistic to expect education only to transmit knowledge about tolerance to subsequent generations. Learning is rather seen as a complex process of meaning making through *interaction* which is where role play becomes an important educational device (McKinnon 2006).

This chapter has attempted to survey the different perspectives on tolerance and toleration. What is more important for this research is the view that one may choose to tolerate another's behavior because one understands the motivations leading to that behavior whereas another may decide to put up with someone's behavior simply because it is civil and enhances peace in the world. This research endeavored to engage the participants hoping that they may take on either of the reasons for tolerance.

CHAPTER 5: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ROLE PLAY

5.1 Overview

This chapter attempts to locate the origin of role play by examining the concept of role. Since role play is the methodology used in this research, the chapter makes a detailed account of what role play is, its classification, role play techniques and makes a case for why it is essential to use role play.

5.2 The concept of Role

The term "role" seems to have originated from the "rolled-up" script that actors used over thousands of years ago in Ancient Greece. As the script became the part, then actors were said to play the “role” of characters like Hamlet or Othello and thus the term role playing. Role simply meant the actor’s part. The extension of the concept of role to the way people behave in everyday life is similar to the expectation people have about someone’s behaviour and appearance that happens to define his role. The role of a priest, President or mother has certain expectations in terms of behaviour and appearance. These social behaviours are what people have attached to those social positions and in most cases they are predictable. Van Ments (1983) notes that roles are defined in terms of the context and the role behaviour changes with the surroundings. He further posits that role may also be defined in terms of function and purpose. Van Ments explains that when people tend to behave in

a certain manner expected from the social position they are taking, they are then said to be role taking (1983).

Sociology also reiterates the importance of role. Role highlights the social expectations attached to particular social positions and analyses the workings of such expectations. Role theory was particularly popular during the mid-20th century, but after sustained criticism came to be seen as flawed and became less widely used. However the concept of role, properly understood, remains a basic tool for sociological understanding. The structural account of roles locates a position in society, such as that of a teacher, and then tries to describe the standard bundle of rights and duties associated with an ideal type of this position. These expectations, which are socially based, constitute the role (Scott & Marshall 2005).

5.3 Role Play

One can however play a role without the *roll,* which is now commonly known as the script, and in fact children do this all the time when they play. It is this kind of imaginative activity and the accompanying spontaneity that intrigued a young physician in Vienna around 1910. This young physician, Jacob L. Moreno sought to revive theatre by inviting the actors to improvise, and his early "Theater of Spontaneity" in 1921 became one of the first "improv" troupes (Blatner 2000).

Moreno discovered that the activity of dramatic improvisation was therapeutic for his actors, and began to think about applying this approach as a type of individual and family treatment. As a psychiatrist, Jacob Moreno discovered that his patients often found greater success in dealing with their emotional problems by acting out scenarios that would address these issues, rather than by talking about the issues directly. He called this process of embracing a character in order to tackle one's psychiatric issues "role-playing." After immigrating to the United States in 1925, Moreno developed these ideas into a method he called "psychodrama." In addition to applying it to help psychiatric patients, Moreno found that the basic techniques could be modified to help groups address social problems, and called this approach "sociodrama" (Hollander 1978). Most scholars have therefore referred to Moreno as the father of role play.

By the 1940s, the world of business began to embrace the act of role-playing. Through the acting-out of a variety of scenarios, one could prepare to handle the issues of a job without having any real-life consequences. For example, through role-play a salesman could practice a pitch and deal with common customer-relations issues without risking losing a sale. This then points to an important feature of role-playing namely that it encourages reflection on one's behaviour and possible change of behaviour. This involves rehearsing real life situations but in a safe space without any real-life consequences, the very

notion that motivated the use of role play to explore the sensitive issues of homosexuality (Blatner 2009).

With this background, various scholars have sought to define what role playing is from different perspectives.

Mann and Mann are considered to have given one of the earliest definitions of role play. They define role play as occurring when a person is asked to perform a role which is not normally his own, or is explicitly asked to perform a normal role but not in a setting where it is normally taken (Yardley-Matwiejczuk 1997: 68).

The American Heritage Dictionary defines role-playing from a psychological perspective. Role playing is defined as a therapeutic technique, designed to reduce conflict in social situations, in which participants act out particular behavioural roles in order to expand their awareness of differing points of view (2000).

According to Stacie Nicole Smith, senior associate, director, and curriculum writer for the Workable Peace Project, role playing is defined as a form of experiential learning that gives participants opportunities to have ”direct experience with content and to practice or develop new skills” (Weil and Calhoun 2000).

Moreno, similarly to Smith, sees role playing as an experiential technique, not as a teacher or therapist-directed technique. Role playing, according to Moreno (1972), is a function of both role perception and role enactment. Role playing, by the very nature of its name, suggests a certain degree of spontaneity and Moreno's concept of role play fits this description.

Van Ments (1983) gives a simple description of role play that largely guided this research;

> The idea of role play, in its simplest form, is that of asking someone to imagine that they are either themselves or another person in a particular situation. They are then asked to behave exactly as they feel that person would. As a result of doing this they, or the rest of the class, or both, will learn something about the person and/or situation. In essence, each player acts as part of the social environment of the others and provides a framework in which they can test out their repertoire of behaviours or study the interacting behaviour of the group (16).

The situations given in role play may be simple or elaborate, familiar or strange. The facilitator may describe the situation in detail or may leave it to the imagination of the role players. Mann and Mann posit that the action in role play may be played out for a few minutes, hours or may even last for days and that the learning that takes place may be first hand or second-hand; it may be acquired by participation or observation (Yardley-Matwiejczuk 1997). Van Ments argues that the learning that takes place in role play may be a change in attitude, and this was exactly what this research was aiming at (1983).

It is at this point that I want to clearly distinguish between role-playing and acting which difference or similarity seems to create confusion. I experienced this confusion for quite a long time during my formative drama learning. I would like to use Van Ments' (1983) distinction.

> The essential difference is that acting consists of bringing to life a dramatist's ideas (or one's own ideas) in order to influence and entertain an audience, whereas role-play is the experiencing of a problem under an unfamiliar set of constraints in order that one's own ideas may emerge and understanding increase (19).

5.4 Classification of Role Play

Wohlking and Gill (1980) have attempted to classify role play into two types; structured/method-centered and unstructured/developmental role-play. In the former, there are predetermined goals and relationships and the whole process is planned well in advance by the facilitator/teacher. In this type of role play, there is normally a problem and the objective is to find a solution. This type of role play is normally used in professional training most especially in sales departments. This research did not find this type of role play suitable to the research objectives and aims and therefore much of what was employed is the unstructured/developmental role-play.

Developmental/unstructured role-play is concerned with learning about attitudes and motivations. This type is less structured and relies on the participants' knowledge and experiences. Much of what comes out of this kind

of role-play is spontaneous reactions and feelings that are deemed to be in line with the role taken on. Shaw argues that in this kind of role-play there are opportunities for reflection for the participants. Analysing these two types of role-play through the eyes of critical pedagogy, which forms the basis for this research, the structured role-play seems to be teacher centered and didactic while the developmental one seems discovery-oriented and participant centered.

5.5 Role Play Techniques

Over the years, scholars and practitioners have developed various role playing techniques from different perspectives and for different purposes. Some of the techniques are more effective in drama therapy, others in education while others are more effective in professional training. For purposes of this research, I will highlight those techniques that have been instrumental in carrying out this research and those that I think had potential to impact this research had they been employed.

5.5.1 Role Reversal

This is probably one of the techniques that I found most helpful in carrying out this research. Role reversal seems to have its roots in psychodrama dating back to the days of Moreno. In psychodrama, role reversal is a technique where the protagonist is asked, by the psychodrama director, to exchange roles with

another person on the psychodrama stage. The former assumes as many of the roles of the other as possible and vice versa. In that way, one is able not only to experience a different perspective of the situation (to walk in someone else's shoes), but also to witness one's own behaviour from the other side. Thereby, the role reversal can bring significant abreactive and mental catharsis, insight, and transformation. In the context of this research, this technique was extensively used to facilitate the participants to experience a different perspective of homosexuality from their own for greater understanding and empathy, which are building blocks of tolerance (Moreno 1972).

5.5.2 Teacher in Role

Teacher in role is an invaluable technique for shaping the dramatic process. As the name denotes, Teacher in role has its roots in Drama in Education and was coined by Dorothy Heathcote. Simply put, the teacher assumes a role in the dramatic world and relates to the pupils as a character in the drama and not the teacher. This may be as a leader, a peer, or a subservient role - whatever is useful in the development of the drama. The teacher may ask questions of the students, perhaps putting them into role as members of a specific group. The advantage with this technique is that it changes the relationship of the facilitator to the participants and allows the facilitator to control the drama from within. A role can be adopted quite simply to communicate the key attitudes and emotions of a particular character. A token piece of costume, a

hand prop or special chair can be useful to denote when the teacher steps into and out of role (Heathcote and Bolton 1995).

5.5.3 Hot seating

Hot seating has its origins in theatre of the oppressed that was developed by Augusto Boal. Under the technique of hot seating, a character is questioned by the group about his or her background, behaviour and motivation. The method may be used for developing a role in the drama lesson or rehearsals, or analysing a play post-performance. Characters may be hot-seated individually, in pairs or small groups. The traditional approach, which is the approach that this research employed, is for the participant playing the character to sit on a chair in front of the group arranged in a semi-circle. It is helpful if the teacher takes on the role of facilitator to guide the questioning in constructive directions. Although some roles obviously require research it is surprising how much detail students can add from their own imaginations. It is important that the rest of the group are primed to ask pertinent questions. During this research, it was pertinent that participants were not bogged down in facts during hot seating, but concentrated on personal feelings and observations instead. This process was so much more to do with feelings than facts (Boal 1993). This process seemed to enhance my emotional intelligence (EI) and that of the participants as the ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of oneself, of others, and of groups increased (Goleman 1998).

5.5.4 Mantle of the Expert

Mantle of the Expert, just like Teacher in Role, has its origins in Drama in Education and was coined by Dorothy Heathcote in the 1960's. It involves the creation of a fictional world where students assume the roles of experts in a designated field. Mantle of the Expert is based on the premise that treating children as responsible experts increases their engagement and confidence. They can perceive a real purpose for learning and discovering together in an interactive and proactive way which provides them with skills and knowledge they can apply to their everyday lives. This encourages creativity, improves teamwork, communication skills, critical thought and decision-making. Normally, a problem or task is established and the pupils are framed as a team of experts using imaginative role-play to explore the issue. During this research, the students were enrolled as expert Members of Parliament who had to deal with a case of homosexuality in their country. This helped the participants explore the issue of homosexuality at an expert intellectual level thereby enhancing different perspectives for the participants. The facilitator's role is to guide the drama, stepping in and out of role as necessary, providing encouragement and motivation to the experts (Heathcote and Bolton 1995).

5.5.5. Forum Theatre

This technique was pioneered by Brazilian radical, Augusto Boal (1993) where a play or scene, usually indicating some kind of oppression, is shown twice. During the replay, any member of the audience ('spect-actor') is allowed to shout 'Stop!', step forward and take the place of one of the oppressed characters, showing how they could change the situation to enable a different outcome. Several alternatives may be explored by different spect-actors. The other actors remain in character, improvising their responses. A facilitator (Joker) is necessary to enable communication between the players and the audience.

This strategy breaks through the barrier between performers and audience, putting them on an equal footing. It enables participants to try out courses of action which could be applicable to their everyday lives. Originally the technique was developed by Boal as a political tool for change as part of the Theatre of the Oppressed, but has been widely adapted for use in educational contexts. Boal clarifies that this practice is not intended to show the correct path, but rather to discover all possible paths which may be further examined. The theatre itself is not revolutionary, instead it is termed a rehearsal of revolution. The spectators learn much more from the enactment even if done in a fictional manner, since it stimulates the practice of the art in reality.

Closely related to spect-acting, and for those participants who may choose not to act out their suggestions, is simultaneous dramaturgy. Simultaneous dramaturgy is a technique used to define a type of actor-audience interaction. It is the technique where amidst the middle of a theatrical work, the actors on stage will stop the play and ask the audience for solutions to their situation. The audience will voice their opinion toward a solution.

This approach, just like spect-acting, also bridges the gap and increases interaction between actor and audience. It promotes consistent dialogue, and breaks barriers that might otherwise divide the two. The audience now becomes empowered to direct the course of the play. More importantly, a sense of empowerment is bestowed upon the audience (Boal 1993).

5.5.6 Image Theatre

Image Theatre is another technique that was pioneered by Augusto Boal. Although Image Theatre does not look like a role play technique, it actually is. Participants take roles in an image, which roles might represent beings other than themselves. In Image Theatre, still images are used to explore abstract concepts such as relationships and emotions, as well as realistic situations.

Participants rapidly sculpt their own or each others' bodies to express attitudes and emotions. These images are then placed together and 'dynamised' or brought to life. The method is often used to explore internal or external oppression, unconscious thoughts and feelings.

Image Theatre is a flexible tool for exploring issues, attitudes and emotions both with groups who are confident with drama and those with little or no experience. No one has lines to learn or has to 'act' in front of others. Imaging can enable students to explore their own feelings and experiences in a less forbidding way than that offered by improvisational techniques.

This technique was employed in this research especially to survey the participants' attitudes about homosexuality and how these can be reconstructed.

The technique of thought tracking was particularly employed to dynamise the still images. In this technique, a group makes a still image and individuals are invited to speak their thoughts or feelings aloud - just a few words. This can be done by tapping each person on the shoulder or holding a cardboard 'thought-bubble' above their head. Alternatively, thought tracking also called *thought tapping* can involve other members of the class speaking one character's thoughts aloud for them (Boal 1993). This technique has similarities with Moreno's (1972) technique of doubling where a participant, perhaps asked by the psychodrama director, supplements the role of the protagonist, usually by standing behind them and saying things that the protagonist might want to say or is withholding. In this way one is able to hear things that may reflect what they feel or think thereby helping to provoke insight.

5.5.7 Role Cards

A role card is something a facilitator gives to a participant that gives them instructions on what they should do, or more specifically, what role they will be playing. Role cards in a role play session tell us what our characters will be. This can be as detailed as possible or as brief as possible to encourage creativity and spontaneity from the role player. The advantage of using role cards is that they define the role of the players thereby giving the players a clear focus although too much detail limits the players' creativity.

5.6 Why use Role Play?

Much of South African educational practice operates at a safe neutral level without the space for emotional engagement, yet the idea that emotion plays a crucial role in learning has been discussed by many educational researchers (Jensen 2008). Literature and personal experience reveal that drama could be an effective catalyst for genuine emotional engagement with issues of human concern, which could in turn be the beginning of an emancipatory learning process (Booth 2000).

The use of role-play in adolescent education has been examined in numerous educational contexts. Researchers and practitioners from a range of disciplines have found that the use of role-play as a learning activity has improved learner understanding and engagement especially among young people (Heathcote &

Bolton 1995). Role play has exhibited potential to engage learners emotionally while maintaining a safe learning environment. Of particular interest to this research is the relationship between emotions, learning, and social learning activities. Caine, Caine and Crowell (1999) make the relationship between emotions and understanding explicit in their argument that students' understanding is affected by the emotional nature of their interpersonal relationships. They argue that it is the emotional nature of social experience that secures meaningful learning and shapes concepts. Similarly, Nuthall (2000) suggests that when students work together inclusively and co-operatively they are not merely learning social skills but rather the associated emotions of these social experiences. This is the basis on which role play as a learning strategy is premised.

The idea of tolerance towards homosexuality conflicted with some of the participants' conceptions but this aroused discomfort was crucial to the learning process. Often learners will experience strong emotions such as anxiety and confusion when ideas being introduced through particular learning activities come into conflict with their preconceptions. The cognitive conflict experienced by learners when their ideas are challenged by others is central to Piagetian theories of cognitive development (Piaget 1972). Ames and Murray argue that group interactions in classroom settings show that the cognitive conflict that occurs between peers when they approach an issue from different

perspectives is highly conducive to cognitive development (Ames & Murray 1982). Drawing on Vygotskian learning theory, New (1998) describes how, when teachers encourage exchanges of multiple perspectives, increased knowledge construction occurs. She attributes this increased knowledge construction to the notion that learners have to work through the emotional confusion and disturbance engendered by differing views.

Wohlking and Gill (1980) suggest that emotional participation in role play can lead students to gain a greater comprehension of another's motives and a willingness to change opinions as a result of this involvement which was the primary objective of this research. While the emotional potency of drama is well established, Courtney (1988) provides insight into how emotional engagement in drama is also a safe experience for learners. He observes that when drama engages the emotions, it becomes a genuinely educative act, as participants are given the opportunity to adapt to emotionally difficult situations within the safe confines of a fictional world that offers little by way of repercussions in the real world. The subject of homosexuality needed comprehension by the participants and role playing offered this possibility with no consequences in the real world.

Role play's primary function is to bring about a change in behaviour. This is the fundamental principle on which all role play is based. Behaviour modification, through role play, serves to increase role usage, role flexibility, role taking, skill acquisition for various role situations, the understanding of

personal attitudes and other people and this is exactly what this research intended to do especially utilising empathy amongst the participants (Nebe 1991). According to Van Ments, in education and training, role play is designed for participants to study, and hence assess 'the interacting behavior of the group'. Through assessment, participants come to understand their own behavior, and other people's behavior (1983). Role play, according to many practitioners, enhances our understanding of other people and their situations. Bolton (1999) describes this as the essential core of role playing. This research was conducted with the objective of helping the participants' understand themselves in relation to their attitudes towards homosexuality. The participants were also helped to gain insight into other people's behavior and appreciate why they act in the way they do. It is this kind of experiential knowledge that helps build tolerance. Van Ments articulates the thesis for using role play as an experiential process:

> To read or hear about something is not the same as experiencing it, and it is often only by actual experience that understanding and change can come about. It is easy, for example, to have an intellectual grasp of deprivation and poverty, or to discuss the feelings of those who are disadvantaged or oppressed. To actually experience being powerless or discriminated against is a different matter. (1983: 23)

There seems to be common agreement that role play facilitates the release of feelings. While Van Ments describes it as a means for students to express hidden feelings, he also suggests that it trains students to control feelings and

emotions (1983: 25). Training the participants to control their feelings and emotions is crucial in the process of building tolerance especially since tolerance also means learning to keep up with other people and behaviours even though one may not actually approve of them. It is acting in restraint.

Dorothy Heathcote (Johnson and O'Neill 1984), one of the 'mothers' of process drama posits that a broad definition of educational drama is role taking to experientially explore and understand a social situation more thoroughly. Heathcote posits that dramatic activity involves people putting themselves in the place of others so as to understand how they actually feel, metaphorically standing in their shoes. She remarks that this empathetic activity can be a re-enaction of a lived situation or an imaginative situation, something that one has never experienced before as this helps one to emotionally live the experience without necessarily having to actually live it in real life (Johnson and O'Neill 1984). Heathcote suggests that if the role is well thought through it will provide the participant with decision making situations that will challenge the existing attitude and help in forming a more sensitive attitude based on the experiential process. This breeds more understanding, the kind of understanding that is needed in order to deal with homophobia in South Africa (Johnson and O'Neill 1984).

Heathcote contends that role-taking is so flexible in its application in education that it works for all personalities and under all teaching circumstances and so for this reason I chose role play for this research since the participants were

different individuals with different learning capabilities. This also points to the fact that this method can be extended for use with another different group (Johnson and O'Neill 1984) and therefore the research might have application beyond this particular case study.

Heathcote maintains that problem-solving is the basis of learning and maturation in role play, and since this research focused on the problem of homophobia which seems to have persisted even after legislation then the use of role play becomes an important tool (Heathcote and Bolton 1995).

Cecily O'Neill writes about distancing in role playing in which she argues that if an ironic approach is used to initiate a role play, it will draw the participants into the dramatic world, challenge them to active response, and promote both judgment and interpretation. This provides a safe space for the participants to explore sensitive issues like homosexuality more easily and helps them to actually discover their own attitudes and the consequences of their actions (O'Neill and Lambert 1982).

Bolton argues that modification is the most significant form of learning directly attributable to role playing. He explains that when the learning is carried out experientially, then greater understanding takes place. It is this understanding that shifts the participants' attitudes, what Bolton calls 'modification' (Bolton 1999). It is clear from the aim of this research that modification is the main research objective with regard to building tolerance of homosexuality. It is

important that the participants, in a safe space, get to learn and explore homophobia so as to appreciate its effect and hopefully through this, as Bolton asserts, they will refine and modify their attitudes.

Role-playing as a learning strategy is advantageous in that it raises the student's interest in the topic in question. Research has shown that "integrating experiential learning activities in the classroom increases interest in the subject matter" (Poorman 2002:32). Fogg (2001) tells of a college professor who felt that his history classes were boring and not involving the students. After trying out a role-playing type game one semester, he observed that students were much more interested in the material. Similarly for a subject like homosexuality that most people would prefer not to engage with, role play acted as a viable strategy.

There is an advantage of increased involvement on the part of the participants in a role playing session. Participants are not passive recipients of the facilitator's knowledge. Rather, they take an active part. Poorman (2002) observes that "true learning cannot take place when students are passive observers of the teaching process'" (32). One student at Barnard College who was enrolled in a role-playing class noted that role playing lures you into doing so much work (Fogg 2001). The result of the involvement is increased learning (Fogg 2001).

Another strength to using role-playing as a learning strategy is that it teaches empathy and understanding of different perspectives (Poorman 2002). This is the foci of the research since empathy and understanding form the basis of tolerance. A typical role playing activity would have students taking on a role of a character, learning and acting as that individual would do in the typical setting. Poorman (2002) found "a significant increase among students in feeling another's distress as their own" (34). Role-playing has also been seen to be effective in reducing racial prejudice (McGregor 1993). Students who role-play the part of homosexuals suffering from homophobia, for example, develop greater empathy and come away with a better idea of the experience than they would in a typical lecture setting (Steindorf 2001).

This chapter has explored the different techniques and made an argument that for this kind of research, role play was appropriate to use to influence the building of empathy. The power of role play to work at the emotional level has been emphasized. The next chapter will expound in detail how the above discussed techniques were employed and what effect they had.

CHAPTER 6: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH DATA AND WORKSHOPS

6.1 Overview

This research report has so far contextualised the relevance of role play in influencing the building of tolerance among adolescents with regard to homosexuality. This chapter attempts to present and analyse the research data and workshops in relation to the research aim and research questions. Workshop by workshop, this chapter takes a critical pedagogical analysis of the activities and behaviour exhibited by the participants. The chapter attempts to describe what happened, how it happened, how it was influenced and what that means for the building of tolerance. The chapter is divided into six sections with each section focusing on one workshop. The data presented in this chapter was mainly gathered through participant observation.

6.2 Workshop 1

This first workshop had two main objectives. The first objective was to get to know each other, build trust and introduce the project to the participants and set ground rules for our interaction.

The second objective was to try and survey the participants' attitudes towards homosexuality which was to form the basis of the research. Much as the literature reviewed indicated that homophobia is prevalent in most South

African High Schools (Avert 1997, Graham, T. & Kiguwa, S. 2004, Isaack 2007), I could not take that fact for granted with this group and thus I sought to carry out a survey in a more spontaneous and embodied manner.

It is important to reiterate the fact that I was working with 10 female and 10 male participants of Grade 10. Our drama sessions took place during the Life Orientation lessons that came in the middle of other lessons for a period of one hour each.

6.2.1 Warm Ups and Ice Breakers

The fact that I met with the participants after other lessons, meant that some of them were tired and 'inactive" since most of the other lessons took the format of lectures. It is with this in mind that warm ups and ice breakers were of utmost importance.

The first thing I did, after being introduced by the teacher, was to briefly greet the participants and brief them on what the task was. It was in a classroom full of desks and the participants were all seated and others were resting their heads on the desks. The participants' energy levels were visibly low. This was further evident when I requested them to move the desks to the sides so that we could have a working space in the middle. Very few actively participated.

So, this was the right moment for my planned warm-ups and ice breakers. I started off with a simple exercise where I asked the participants to move

around the space and enact the emotions and situations that I mentioned. I varied the situations and emotions from relaxing to energetic but making sure that this activity raised their energy levels. I used emotions and situations like victory, partying, relaxing by the beach, late for a test, running away from a dog among others. I noticed, and non-verbally encouraged the playfulness that came along with this for most of the participants. This was a desired foundation for the workshop. I did this until I noticed that there was some energy raised although not everyone fully participated. This warm up acted to transit the laid-back mood that I felt in the class at the beginning into a more energetic and playful one. This warm up was so essential because it acted to energize the participants away from what was normally a dull and formal class atmosphere. It was necessary to systematically take the participants through a journey from being passive in class to a point where they are active in every activity.

Although the participants were from the same class and therefore more likely to know each other, it was important for me to forge a group identity for our workshops. I therefore decided to play a name game not just for me to get to know the participants, but also for them to create this group identity through developing trust. As Erickson (1959) notes, I was aware that adolescents feel more conscious about how others perceive them and therefore this feeling might determine what they decide to do or not to do if they don't feel a sense of security in the prevailing environment. So the ice breakers were aimed at

breaking this overly self-consciousness. Much as this game was aimed at getting to know each other, it was also to arouse concentration. A participant mentioned a name of another while pointing at him or her and the same reaction had to be spontaneous otherwise the culprit had to leave the circle. Knowing that there is a great sense of competition among adolescents (Dreyer 1980), I envisioned this game to have an involving effect. Indeed whoever left the circle was laughed at by their colleagues and this elicited a motivation to want to get it right the next time. When we did another round of the game, almost everyone was on the alert in order not to fail. This game helped me learn most of the participants' names and it made them feel "known" every time I referred to them by their names, which is an important part of building trust and respect. It was an enjoyable game as well. When I tried to bring this to an end, the participants requested to play for another round. The participants were beginning to enjoy themselves collectively as a group which is a very vital ingredient for working creatively with groups (Benson 2001).

While responding to their request to play for another round, I modified the game. In the new game, every person had to choose a name of a country by which he or she would be known by everyone else. Someone would randomly call out a name of a country and move to where the person with that country's name is and the counter-response would be to call and move to another country's name. The participants found this game even more enjoyable because it challenged them more since, unlike the name game where they all knew each

other, this game called for more focus and concentration. By the end of the game, I could see that the group was alert, focused and co-operative. It should be noted that at the very beginning, female participants were on one side of the space while the males were on another. Although this is typical with adolescents in relation to the opposite sex (Erickson 1959), by the time this game ended, the two sexes were mixed together and there seemed to be a sense of freedom, of spontaneity and ease, in the group. One could safely notice that this session worked as an effective way of starting to build a team. This interactive and enjoyable session helped to relax the adolescent participants. Much as the participants are self conscious around their peers, they like fun and play. Fun and play overtook their fear. Heathcote notes;

> I must first attract their attention. If I have their attention, I can gain their involvement. Then I have a chance for their investment and from that their concern. If I have their concern, I have hope for obsession (Johnson and O'Neill 1984:49)

6.2.2 Rules of Engagement

At this point, I could notice the excitement in the room. As Morgan and Saxton (1987) note, I could notice that most of them were very attentive, watching, listening and reacting accordingly. But for some, the excitement had the potential to be destructive. It was time to agree on the rules of procedure. I suggested to them that to work together co-operatively, we should have a few

guidelines and so I mimed a cooking pot in the middle of the circle. Everyone was required to put an ingredient in representing what she or he thinks should be respected or avoided during our workshops. This ritualistic activity also seemed to have an element of playfulness as participants added their ingredients in dramatic fashion. Respect for each other and opinions, time keeping, listening to each other, switching off cell phones, confidentiality, having fun, full participation by all, no judging of others were some of the rules that the participants suggested. We all agreed on them and stirred the soup for everyone to take a sip that acted as a ritual binding oath. The participants decided that whoever violated the rules should be cast out of the group. This made me realize the feeling that being part of this group had already become a blessing for them and that being pushed out of the group became a punishment. I knew that these rules would be more important when we get to the sensitive subject of homosexuality and yet I needed to keep the same energy within the group. The participants had to have a feeling of safety in the space in order for them to explore and experiment.

6.2.3 Survey of attitudes

I decided to use Moreno's sociometry exercise as a tool to survey the participants' attitudes towards homosexuality. Although this technique is not specifically designed for this kind of work, I creatively utilized its spontaneity,

creativity and embodiment for the sake of a survey of attitude. Moreover Moreno (1972) notes that;

> The …science of group organization - it attacks the problem not from the outer structure of the group, the group surface, but from the inner structure. Sociometric explorations reveal the hidden structures that give a group its form: the alliances, the subgroups, the hidden beliefs, the forbidden agendas, the ideological agreements, the 'stars' of the show (1972:92).

First, I asked the participants to shout out the colours they like. From that, I picked three colours - black, white and purple that I wrote on three papers. I placed the three papers in three different corners and requested participants to stand by the colour they like most. This created excitement as people made choices to and from colour to colour. Once everyone was settled and had made their final decision, I asked them why they were placed wherever they were. They unanimously argued that they were where they were because that is the colour they like most and it is their choice. When I asked whether they have any problem with people by the other colours, no one had a problem because it was their choice. However two important observations came up. One female participant jokingly said that she had a problem with another female participant who was by a different colour. When I asked her why she had a problem with her, she, laughing, said that it was because she was “gay” although she continued to indicate that it was just a joke. The two were actually friends - she was just trying to get at her. This revealed the kind of attitude that the participant and her friend had about homosexuality since

they could use it to have a ”go at each other.” It should be noted that at this point I had not specifically indicated to the participants that the subject we were going to explore was indeed homosexuality. I planned to only clarify after the survey of attitudes because I thought that introducing the topic before-hand was likely to skew my findings. The second observation was when I asked the participants who were by the white colour why they had chosen white and not any other colour. They said that the white colour represents purity and is therefore void of evil acts like homosexuality. This too indicated the attitudes those participants had towards homosexuality.

I again asked the participants to move around the space as I replaced the coloured papers with other papers with words; *I don't mind homosexuals, I hate homosexuals, I cannot stand homosexuals.* Similarly, I asked the participants to place themselves next to the statements they identify with most. When the participants read the words, most of them exclaimed "Yoooooo!*"* "Yoooooo" is a local expression of shock and surprise. They were more like saying "Here it comes! How can you ask such a thing?" It was clear that most participants took time to place themselves, probably not because they did not know where they belonged, but because the exploration and discussion of the subject of homosexuality is near to taboo among adolescent students (Nel 2008). Finally, through most of them wandering around, everyone made up their mind. Almost 80% of the participants were on the paper that had *I cannot stand homosexuals*, with none on the *I hate homosexuals* paper while 20% were on

the *I don't mind homosexuals*. It was never my intention to discuss why they had chosen their particular positions. I just wanted to get a feel of the participants' attitudes but when I was winding up this exercise, the participants asked me why I was not asking them like I had asked them about their colour choices. This was a moment of crossroads for me as a facilitator. It was never my plan to have the participants discuss the sensitive issue of homosexuality in a non-fictitious atmosphere. I aimed to distance the participants, in terms of space and time in a role play situation so that they could feel more secure to explore the concept (O'Neil 1995). I had to make a choice whether to stick to my plan or play with the moment. In the interest of freedom of learning (Rogers 1969) and critical pedagogy's social constructionist theory (Berger and Luckmann 1966), I decided to go with what the participants wanted since they seemed interested to talk about it. When I asked the participants who had placed themselves on the *I cannot stand homosexuals* paper whether they had a problem with others who placed themselves elsewhere, they all answered in the affirmative. When I inquired why that was so, just as most of the literature reviewed indicates (Nel 2008, Avert 1997, Harris 2004, Isaack 2007), they argued that homosexuality;

> Is unnatural, it is dirty, it's ungodly, homosexuals are confused, homosexuals do not know what they want, like poles repel, it is shameful. (participant A)

When I asked why they now had a problem yet they did not have a problem with the colour choices, they responded thus;

> Colours is easy, this is real life, colours is different, this is real. (participant B)

When I asked the participants about the *I don't mind homosexuals* paper, whether they had any problem with others that had placed themselves elsewhere, they all answered in the affirmative. When I asked why, they indicated that the people who cannot stand homosexuals are just not considerate. They indicated that they have a problem with them because they always think that they are the ones who are right. In fact some of them indicated that such people probably have some homosexual feelings too.

Although the comparison between the colours game and the homosexual one indicated to the participants that there were double standards of accepting others' choices in one instance and denying their choices' in another (Mohr 1988), the participants who were by the *I cannot stand homosexuals* paper still maintained their position, that however much they may seem unfair, homosexuality is wrong and cannot be tolerated. This clearly indicated to me the kind of difficulties that lay ahead of this research while at the same time it confirmed that this group provided a suitable opportunity for this research.

It was at this point that we brought the workshop to an end with a de-rolling exercise of making sounds and movements that end in a more relaxing mood to shade off all the high energies that had developed during the session. The fact that the participants looked satisfied with the session and were eager to know when next we were having another workshop, pointed to the fact that I was

slowly catching their attention which was a way to their engagement just as Heathcote notes.

6.2.4 The Microcosm

Although I was working with 20 participants, during the process, one participant drew particular attention and I decided to specifically engage him and keep a closer eye on his shift in attitude or lack of it during this process. This was because when I did the sociometry exercise, he was very vocal against homosexuals. When I requested the participants to place themselves in relation to their attitude towards homosexuals, he shook his head, reached for the door, opened as if he was going out but I made it clear that participants did not have to take part in this exercise if they did not want to. It was at that point that he returned and finally placed himself by the paper that read *I cannot stand homosexuals.* During the discussion, he was very vocal and said that "I do not want any homosexual to come near me…because they even stink". He was strongly opposed to listening to a different view. I felt that he provided the research with a good opportunity to see if this process would have any impact on him since he seemed to actively participate in almost all the workshop activities. So I felt that I could use some of his experiences as a microcosm of the group process. I will therefore, alongside the whole group, give him special focus and attention in my discussion.

Through this session, I realized that although role play might be useful, it was important to keep the workshops process oriented if they were to have an effect because issues to do with group dynamics play a major role even during role playing. Breaking the ice and forging a group identity and unity is very crucial. I felt that this first workshop had largely achieved its objective in those regards and had also opened up the subject of homosexuality, giving me a sense of how the group thought about it.

6.3 Workshop 2

The objective of this second workshop was to introduce the participants to drama and more specifically to role playing. Elements of role playing, group participation, ownership, authorship and commitment (Heathcote and Bolton 1995) were emphasized and clarified. With the participants' subject of choice, they developed and improvised several role plays. This activity was aimed at bringing everyone to the same level of understanding of how role play works because this was the methodology to be employed in our proceeding workshops.

When I arrived for this workshop, quite a number of the participants were excited to see me. They quickly moved the tables to the sides creating a working space at the centre of the class room. Some rushed out for their colleagues who were not yet in the space at the time. Interestingly, the participants were quick to send out the other students who were not part of the

process. This, I interpreted as interest from the participants for what we were doing. It also appeared that they had formed and identified with the group. The energy was visibly high as compared to the first time I met with them.

In a circle, I inquired about how everyone was feeling and they had to express their feelings through action. I noted that most of them were feeling excited and once again, they were turning this activity into a playful activity by coming up with dramatic gestures. At this time, I asked if they knew of any warm up exercise that they wanted to begin with. They agreed on a countdown exercise where they counted from number twenty to zero using both their hands and feet one after another. This exercise worked well because everyone knew it and it surely got their blood running. This exercise also acted as a concentration exercise since the counting down of numbers called for some degree of concentration. This was surely getting them ready to play.

As they relaxed from this physical exercise, I asked them about what they remembered from the previous week's workshop. They vividly remembered almost everything that was done during the workshop and reiterated the fact that they enjoyed it. They specifically pointed out that they enjoyed the sociometry exercise most but that there was not much time to adequately discuss and resolve the issues that came up. I assured them that they would have ample time to discuss the issue at length.

I introduced a miming exercise where, I passed round a piece of cloth that everyone had to change into anything he or she wished other than what it was and use it before handing it to the next person. This was to elicit their sense of creativity that is essential in role playing. I realized that the participants had considerable levels of creativity as they turned the cloth into objects like gun, guitar, mobile phone, bicycle, mirror, baby, snake, wind, among others. It was amazing how dramatically they used the imagined objects. From this activity, which they also seemed to enjoy, I realised that the participants had great improvisation skills which are the basis for role playing (Van Ments 1983).

I then introduced the participants to another improvisation game called The Park where someone sits in the middle of the circle that is an imagined park and another comes in to interact with him or her. The person coming in decides on what the person in the park is and the relationship between the two. There is no discussion about this, it is just improvisational. The person in the park is required to respond appropriately. The participants tried out this game until most of them had had a chance to participate. It was during this exercise that I emphasised the issues of ownership and authorship in role playing. I emphasised the fact that whatever the participant felt would be the appropriate response, is the appropriate response for him or her. There was no wrong or right response as long as one felt it was appropriate in the moment. I also emphasised the need to seriously consider feeling rather than showing when role playing. The responses needed to be natural as opposed to being just

"dramatic". As the improvisation exercise went on, some of the participants were beginning to pick up on the clarified elements of role play.

At this point, I asked the participants what they would like to do a drama about. After some deliberations, they agreed to do a drama about the first time a boy approaches a girl and confesses his undying love for her. They decided that the two characters should be 12 year olds in Grade 6 and that it's their first time to talk to the opposite sex about a love relationship. The setting is a school in a South African township. At this point I asked for volunteers who wanted to take part and a few of them came up.

It was clear that this scenario did not lend itself to whole-group role play and I consciously decided to fuse this exercise with elements of forum theatre. I employed spect-acting in order to explore more options and have most participants experience the process.

The volunteers acted out a scene where the boy approached the girl during break time at school. He brought her a sandwich and had a chat before he told her that he has been watching her all this time and admired her. He would like her to be his girlfriend. The girl was happy and also told him that she really likes him. They hugged and went off. This sparked a lot of murmurs in the audience who disagreed with most of what had been acted. Through spect-acting, one boy tried to act as a 12 year boy would. He was finding it more difficult to communicate his feelings to the girl than had been acted out. He

instead preferred to leave the girl with a note that spelled out his love for her. One female participant similarly acted as a 12 year old girl would react to such a situation. After being told by the boy that he loves her, she just became shy, laughed and kept quiet. One boy preferred to call in another actor on stage with whom they talked about his love for the girl from a distance. Much as he felt the need to move and tell her, he could not do it. These were among the various alternatives acted out and during the reflection, there was a unanimous agreement that the original actors had acted as 17 year olds rather than 12 year olds. The participants pointed to what I had emphasised about focusing on the feeling rather than the showing. By the end of this exercise and the reflection, I felt that the participants were now more attentive to the feeling level in role playing than just the showing which is what most adolescents would be concerned with (Erickson 1959).

During the reflection, the participants indicated that they had learnt that acting does not actually mean showing off. They noted that prior to this, they thought "showing off with great acting skills was the best acting". The participants also commented that they were grateful that they all had a chance to act out their alternatives. They noted that in the end, they "were all actors on the day".

The participants agreed that we do the countdown exercise as we closed the workshop which we did. I felt that this workshop was very important in laying

the foundation for our proceeding role playing workshops because the participants were beginning to understand the concept of authentic role playing which is important to experiential learning. The objective of introducing the participants to role playing was largely achieved. This also served to dispel the fears of many of the participants who were skeptical about their participation for lack of acting skills. Their fears were dispelled by the fact that role playing is simply being authentic to the situation and not showing off great acting skills.

6.4 Workshop 3

The objective of this workshop was to explore the participants' attitudes towards homosexuality. Although these manifested in the very first workshop during the sociometry exercise, this workshop was aimed at a more embodied and experiential way of exploring the participants' attitudes towards homosexuality. It should be noted from the onset that I took a conscious decision during this session and for the most part of this research to employ unstructured role playing. This was because as Wohlking and Gill (1980) note, this kind of role play is more suitable for dealing with attitudes and motivations. This type of role playing is less structured and relies on the participants' knowledge and experiences. Much of what comes out of this kind of role-play is spontaneous reactions and feelings that are deemed to be in line with the role taken on. Wohlking and Gill argue that in this kind of role-play

there are experiences of reflection for the participants which was the main objective of this research.

For this workshop, we started with a song that was suggested by the participants. They attempted to teach me the song as well. This was aimed at eliciting a sense of ownership among the participants. The participants enjoyed the experience of my trying to learn the Zulu lyrics, which is a foreign language to me. After this experience, I realised that I could win more trust and confidence from the participants if I came across to them as an ordinary human being so that they could stop looking at me as a Masters student from the prestigious Wits University. I then decided to tell them a story of my first time in Johannesburg and how I got lost because of the tall buildings. Although the participants enjoyed my story with episodes of uncontrolled laughter, it affirmed to them that I was in fact an ordinary human being with weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Rooth (2004) contends that a facilitator should be friendly, humorous and show that he is human too. The facilitator may show his warmth as well as his vulnerability, laugh and share with the group. This element is crucial in building a partnership between the facilitator and the participants and indeed after my story, most participants started to relate to me at a more personal level than just their facilitator.

I then asked the participants about what they remembered from the previous workshop because it was important in the work that we would be doing. They

pointed out most of the elements pertinent to role playing that I had clarified. I introduced them to a focus game where certain words are assigned to certain actions and that pattern is to be followed by the participants even when I, the leader, mismatch them in order to confuse them. The objective is to elicit a sense of focus and concentration among the participants and prepare them for the role play. This game also has an element of competition to it as there are some winners since people who get it wrong have to drop out of the circle. It is a playful exercise that prepared the participants to not only focus and concentrate but also to engage their imaginations and spontaneity in improvisation.

It was now time to role play. It should be noted that it was a conscious decision not to use symbol and metaphor as a device of distancing. Morgan and Saxton (1991) argue that the facilitator must know when the participants are ready to leap into a high-threat situation. I felt they were ready. I chose not to distance the subject away from the participants but only distance them in terms of time and place. The reason was the fact that facing and talking about homosexuality, which is considered taboo, is one of the elements that continues to inhibit tolerance (Astbury 1991). For me, participants going through a process of facing and exploring this subject in its real form was the first step towards tolerance.

I then called for volunteers who wanted to act out the first scenario, that would then give everybody else a chance to try out their ideas and alternatives. The participant who I had decided to keep a closer eye on after the first workshop, was the first to come up plus several others. I decided to employ the technique of the Mantle of the Expert as posited by Dorothy Heathcote. I asked all the volunteer actors to go outside the room and indicated to them that the moment they come back into the room, the drama will have started and they should be in character as "people who are informed and knowledgeable about the subject to be raised". When they came back in, I was putting on a robe and a hat and ushered them in as Members of Parliament for a Country called Mbeza. I handed them role cards some of which requested the participants to make an argument for homosexuals to be recognised in the country while the other cards requested the participants to argue against recognising homosexuals in Mbeza Republic. As I ushered them in and gave an introduction brief as the Speaker of the Parliament, I systematically built the context of the parliament and the issue at hand. As it was the first time for the participants to engage with this technique, I made sure that enough of the context was indicated until belief had been built and everyone was at ease. I intentionally did not choose to first introduce the participants to this technique because I hoped that this surprise would eventually spur them into more creativity and experimentation. I then opened the debate and noted that the side with more convincing arguments would win. The participant that I was keeping an eye on was the

first to take to the floor making arguments against homosexuality. It was interesting how he quickly embraced the role of Member of Parliament, referring to his arguments as arguments for the people he represents in parliament. He argued that;

> Homosexuality should not be tolerated in Mbeza Republic because it is unnatural, against the culture of the country and religion. God did not create man and woman for nothing. HE had a plan. These are just bad manners copied from the western countries and they should not be embraced. We should keep to our culture.

This participant argued with a lot of emotion and zeal. His facial expressions and gestures were expressive. It was clear that he was speaking from a feeling level and not just acting out a situation. This technique of mantle of the expert helped me to keep order and focus among the participants as I reminded them of their "honourable" status every time they wanted to digress. Most of the arguments of other participants who spoke against the acceptance of homosexuality were in agreement with what this first presenter had argued. Most of the arguments the participants presented against homosexuality were not different from what the reviewed literature suggests, although the embodiment of role play ensured that this exploration of attitudes engaged the participants at an emotional level. Jensen (2008) contends that literature and personal experience reveal that drama is an effective catalyst for genuine emotional engagement with issues of human concern, which could in turn be the beginning of an emancipatory learning process (Booth, 2000).

The participants arguing for homosexuals to be recognised in the Republic argued on the one hand that if homosexuality is an inborn quality the people who are born homosexuals can do nothing about it and should be accepted the way they are. That means that it is the way God wished it to be. They challenged the opposition group on their authority to challenge nature and God's will. On the other hand, they argued that if homosexuality is by choice, then the human rights of those who choose homosexuality should be respected. They emphasized that homosexuals are also people, reiterating Mohr's (1988) argument that homosexuals are our brothers, sisters, teachers among others. What was most interesting was the zeal and emotional debate that ensued with each side wanting to win the argument. It is precisely that emotional engagement that provided an opportunity for participants to feel what it is like to be in the 'others' shoes' and probably gain new insights about the subject. The other participants, who acted as members of the gallery, were also given a chance to make their arguments and they largely made clarification on the points already raised. It was interesting that at certain points one could not tell the difference between the role player's arguments and the role's. This was an important achievement because, this lack of distancing, allowed the role players' feelings to easily mix with the roles'. This was my main rationale for not using symbol and metaphor as tools of distancing. Moreover this session was aimed at exploring the participants' attitudes towards

homosexuality. I argue that this emotionally charged debate was a learning process. In fact Caine, Caine and Crowell (1999) argue that it is the emotional nature of social experience that secures meaningful learning and shapes concepts. This discussion indicated that the participants had stronger emotions against homosexuality than they had for it. This was revealed when I decided to reverse the roles where those previously arguing for were now arguing against homosexuality and vice versa. I did this mainly because the participants who were to argue for homosexuality felt that they had been given a “raw deal”. It was prevalent in both debates that the participants arguing against homosexuality were the most vocal and had the most charged emotions. As Moreno (1972) suggests, this reversal of roles enabled the participants not only to experience a different perspective of the situation (to walk into someone else's shoes), but also to witness their own behaviour from the other side. I am inclined to argue that for one to be tolerant, he or she needs to experience a different perspective of the situation and probably feel how the other person feels for better understanding. Without this empathic experience, especially, at a feeling level, tolerance might be hard to embrace. The role reversal also pushed those participants concerned out of their comfort zone which the lack of distancing, mentioned previously, allows.

It was interesting to witness the participant, who had once vowed not to discuss the subject of homosexuality, make arguments for homosexuality with

zeal after I had reversed the roles. Although it can be argued that he could have done this just to win, it is no doubt that this task challenged him to look at the subject from a different perspective from his own. It is from such emphatic exploration that one may gain more insight.

It was important that as the facilitator, I did not choose to bring this discussion to an end by deciding on the winner. I informed the *Members of Parliament* that this issue certainly needed more discussion before it could be closed and promised to call them for another session in due course.

In a closing ritual, we made a circle, joined hands, closed our eyes and passed a squeeze with our hands around the circle in total silence. This was maintained for about four minutes as everyone relaxed from the heated debate. This exercise was meant to unite us together again and drop the heated debate and the raised emotions.

I felt that the objective of exploring attitudes towards homosexuality was largely achieved although I felt that the way in which the technique of Mantle of the Expert was used did not provide enough room for the participants to embody the process but engaged them at an emotional and intellectual level. Compared to the other techniques, Mantle of the Expert in this case did not seem to have provided the participants with the kind of playfulness that was crucial in this

process. Although I was happy with the result of the workshop, I felt that the process could have been better with better use of the technique. As a facilitator, I was left wondering whether I could have employed this technique in a more playful manner or whether the seriousness of approach is in the nature of the technique itself.

6.5 Workshop 4

The objective of this workshop was to enable the participants to explore what kind of difficulties their homosexual colleagues face due to homophobia. It was hoped that through this exploration, at an emotional level, the participants would develop some empathy.

We began the workshop with a warm up game called the Fruit Salad. The participants were grouped into three fruits and all took up chairs in a circle apart from one. When the participant without a seat called out a fruit, the participants for that fruit left their seats and found other seats across the circle. The participant who failed to get a seat then called out another fruit or called out a *fruit salad* where everyone left their seats to find others. This game elicited a sense of competition and also has an element of isolation which was a crucial element in the day's workshop.

After the fruit salad game, we reflected on the previous workshop and most participants intimated that even if they experienced looking at homosexuality from a different perspective, it was always difficult to put up spirited arguments for it. I felt that this was helpful, moreover the objective was not as much about arguing for homosexuality as experiencing a different perspective. Theorists (Peterson 2003, King 1976, Horton 1992) who posit tolerance clearly indicate that tolerance is not about liking or arguing for something that you don't agree with but the ability to keep an open mind about it. In the light of this, I felt that the previous workshop had had some impact on the participants. The participant who had sworn never to discuss the subject of homosexuality found himself arguing for it in a role play. The fact that he could tolerate this discussion, even though it was in a safe drama environment, points to the fact that something about him had changed. There was some kind of tolerance exhibited although transferring that same tolerance to the real world would be another argument altogether, however (Boal 1993) argues that what is done in a role play can be a rehearsal for real life.

I then asked the participants about what they felt about the workshops so far. I asked them to show this through still images. Most of what they enacted pointed to enjoyment although some images pointed to complex situations. I picked up on these latter images and asked the participants to create and show group images of how they think homosexual students feel in school settings

where there is homophobia. The images created had elements of isolation, distress, suffering and one image had an element of suicide. When we discussed the images, almost all the participants argued that it was very possible for the above elements to come up and they related this kind of experience to their own life experiences. One male participant said that it is like a guy who is isolated by his colleagues because "he is not brave enough to approach a female. Such a guy feels so bad about himself and he is normally called names". A female participant also shared how distressful it is when "one girl is ugly among a group of beautiful girls. It is a bad situation and one finds herself crying in her bed all the time!" The participants felt that such a situation is not desirable by any human being. When this was related to the same kind of feeling that homosexuals face because of some of homophobic acts, the participants could identify with the pain but were reluctant to justify the practice of homosexuality all the same.

I then requested the participants to turn their images into role plays focusing more on the feelings of the homosexual who faces homophobia. What was interesting during this exercise was the difficulty all the groups faced in deciding which people should play the homosexual characters. None of them was comfortable enough to "take the risk" of being pointed at as a homosexual even in a role play. This pointed to the embedded negative attitude the participants had towards homosexuality. The groups called me in to mediate

but all I did was to assure them that this was just a role play and whoever takes on whichever role would be simply role playing it. I left it for them to decide on who plays what.

I felt that the negotiation on who plays what, what to play and how, was an essential part of exploring the subject and getting to negotiate the politics surrounding it. This is the very reason I chose to employ the unstructured role play method because it is developmental in nature. There was a lot of group dynamics explored and experienced by the participants in the process. Skills in decision making, leadership and group work seem to have been enhanced during this process. The difficulty the participants went through trying come to terms with the subject of homosexuality and finally agreeing to act as homosexuals was the very beginning of the long journey to tolerance.

The role plays that were created and presented emphasized the ideas that had been explored in the still images brought about by name calling, isolation, abuses and physical violence. In one of the plays, a homosexual student was slapped for trying to be friends with a group of boys who were “straight”. Also in one of the plays, a homosexual who had faced homophobia decided to commit suicide. It was fascinating to note that even though the homophobic victims suffered, the perpetrators of homophobia never cared about this suffering. In fact most of them laughed at this suffering. It is at this point that I

decided to role reverse for some vocal perpetrators of homophobia including the participant that I had decided to keep a close eye on. It was interesting to watch the new players experience homophobia and how the other participants unleashed it on them. This was a crucial moment in the drama for me as I watched the players experience a different perspective to their perception which is crucial in building tolerance.

After the role plays I decided to further explore the feelings and motivation of the participant who had decided to commit suicide because of the homophobic acts through hot seating. As he talked about how he felt worthless and useless in the world, I could notice a sense of sympathy from the other participants. This feeling was not just being taught to them in a class room; it had come about as a result of this experiential learning through role play. I also decided to hot seat the participant that I had decided to keep an eye on. He was being hot seated as a victim of homophobia. Since the participants knew about his attitude, they were tough with him relating what he felt to what his attitude does to the homosexual victim. One participant challenged him about his feelings and seeking for sympathy in role as a homosexual when he is the perpetrator outside the drama! The role player did not answer but shook his head and looked down. I believe that through this interaction with his fellow participants, he may have gained some new insights. The learning for all the

participants was not just on the surface, it was at a deeper emotional level which Bolton (1995) argues is the basis for real learning.

I argue that this workshop provided real insights into what homosexuals who face homophobia go through and that the participants had the opportunity to consider how their actions contribute towards this suffering. As Moreno and Boal suggest, this learning that came about through an emotionally charged experience would be helpful in real life situations that resemble what the participants explored in the role plays. The assertion by Boal that what we do in the play could be a rehearsal for real life makes sense as I believe that this experience will always become relevant for the participants in similar situations. I believe that this experience became part of their lives and may become relevant at some point in life. There is no way they can run away from this experience, just like I cannot.

As a way of closing and de-rolling, the participants decided that we sing a local song that signifies unity. This is a very powerful action-filled song that everyone seemed to enjoy that provided a good way to wind down the session. In retrospect, I find the choice of song by the participants after this session to speak volumes about how they had started feeling about one another. The fact that they chose to sing a UNITY song says a lot about the impact of the

workshop. I felt that there was an unconscious need for the participants to either identify themselves as a unit or to identify with victims of homophobia.

6.6 Workshop 5

Building from the previous workshops, the objective of this workshop was to enable the participants to re-evaluate some harmful homophobic attitudes through role playing in a forum theatre model.

After checking in on how everybody was feeling on the day, I invited the participants into a circle. I handed out blind-folds and requested the participants to help blind fold one another. I then went around the group, giving each person the name of an animal. The challenge was to be able to find all other animals of one's own kind. No one could talk, only animal sounds could be made. This warm up game helped to elicit a sense of concentration and listening which were essential for the spect-acting that was to follow.

After this exercise, the participants reflected on the previous week's workshop and most of them acknowledged that because of that workshop, they had started to feel sympathy for the homosexuals who face homophobia. One female participant noted "Sometimes when we do things in groups because that's what everyone does, we don't realise how the other person feels".

At this point I introduced an improvisation game to get the participants ready for role playing. In a circle, I began a story with just a sentence and the next

person was supposed to take it on and add another sentence or word that made logical sense and develop the story. It took some time for this exercise to run smoothly but after it did, the participants exhibited their creativity and had fun with it. This exercise helped the participants to overcome some of their fear to spontaneously improvise as was later exhibited in the forum theatre exercise.

I then called on volunteers to act out a model scene for the forum. This time round I encouraged the participants who had not had a chance to act out in model scenes before to take part. I asked them to choose from the previous week's scenes that explored the feelings of the homosexual student who faces homophobia but to focus more on the perpetrators' actions this time round. They created and showed a scene in a school environment where during lunch, a group of students "invaded" a table occupied by a homosexual boy. The group threw many abusive comments at the boy blaming him for wasting food since he was now a woman who did not need the energy that real men need. They called him all sorts of names and finally dropped left-overs in his food. At this point, he stormed out of the dining hall. As a homosexual girl passed by, she was called by one of the girls in the group. When she came over, the girl sarcastically told her that there are some boys interested in her and they would like to talk to her. As she turned to go, the boys "pounced" on her and told her how they pity her parents who "made a loss" in her. They assured her that being a man is not just about pretending! One is born a man and therefore she

should forget trying to act like one and encroaching on their girls. They teasingly wanted to know and see what kind of sexual organ she has. At this point she just stormed off as they laughed uncontrollably.

The challenge was now for the spect-actors to come in with plausible solutions to the problem shown. It should be pointed out that the rules of Forum Theatre as posited by Boal were varied to an extent. Although Boal calls for the replacement of the oppressed during spect-acting, in this particular case it was the oppressor who was being replaced. This more or less transformed into the "Theatre of the Oppressor". How else could the oppressors have acted in the situation and why, were the guiding questions. When the spect-actors came in to suggest alternative ways, it was interesting to note that most of them came up with the idea of standing up to their group members and urging them to be more considerate with other people. They related their arguments strongly to the kind of suffering that had been explored in the previous workshop as arguments to stop homophobic acts. They particularly noted that homosexual people are people too and if what they are doing is not pleasing to the group, they should just ignore them rather than choosing to attack them. It should be noted that during this spect-acting exercise, I from time to time varied my role from Joker and jumped into the drama using the teacher in role technique whenever I felt that some issues and feelings needed to be interrogated more. My choice to jump into the drama using the teacher in role technique was motivated by the fact that I could influence the drama from within as a role

player rather than just intervening as a Joker, which stops the drama, might seem more didactic and which also engages directly with intellectual debate. Being in role allowed me to deepen thinking while at the same time, I maintained the emotional engagement in the role play. I did most of this through in-role questioning in order to help participants consider different perspectives. I used a school bag to symbolise my entering into role. The challenge I faced using the two techniques was that sometimes, the participants would engage me within the drama forcing me to abandon the Joker role. It is at this point that I felt that co-facilitation would have been able to solve this dilemma. I was particularly impressed by the constant connection the participants kept in making their arguments based on what had been explored earlier. It exhibited that something had been learnt and not forgotten. This was a good foundation for tolerant behaviour by the participants.

It was interesting to note that the participant who had sworn not to ever discuss the subject of homosexuality also took to the stage and acted out a scenario that pointed to the fact that ignoring homosexuals would be a viable possibility. So he had not only tolerated talking about the subject but also thought about an alternative way to deal with homosexual people who he obviously did not like. I argue that this was a shift in perception and attitude for him, and probably for some other participants too.

As a way of de-rolling and closing, we mimed a burning fire in the middle of the circle as we closed our eyes and had a moment of silence. When we opened our

eyes, each participant took a turn to throw into the fire the negative feelings or energies that the workshop might have evoked and which the participant felt he or she needed to leave behind.

This re-evaluation of homophobic behavior may have just been evoked and carried out in the drama environment, however, I have a feeling that this process, and the different perspective that the participants gained through role play, will become an experience in their life which they will remember whenever they find themselves in situations similar to what was explored. I feel that should any of the participants be tempted to engage in homophobic acts, this experience is more likely to mitigate or even hinder his or her involvement. This experience might become a point of reference for most of the participants. Most probably, they might take on the alternatives that they "rehearsed for real life".

6.7 Workshop 6

The objective of this workshop was to enable the participants to explore the different practical ways in which tolerance of their homosexual colleagues can be expressed.

We began this last workshop with the game The Train. This is a game where participants were asked to move around the space and whenever I mentioned a number, the participants would quickly group themselves into that number and whoever was not in the formed groups would be out of the game. This

exercise involved spontaneity, breaking the ice and enhanced unity among the already forged group.

We then reflected on the previous workshop and what was outstanding during this activity was when a female participant told the group about how she had come face to face with a group of youths in her township who were carrying out the same exact homophobic acts that had been explored in the workshops. She said that all that had been explored in the workshops suddenly became alive. When her colleagues challenged her on what she had done, she said that there was not much she could do. She jokingly said that maybe I should go engage that group in these kinds of drama workshops. I noted two things about this participant's story; first that her learning had happened at an emotional level and had become a point of reference, secondly that she also believed that these drama workshops had the efficacy to bring about a shift in perspective (Bolton 1995).

In a bid to introduce the participants to image theatre, I asked them to show individual still images of how they wished this last workshop to go. They all showed elements of excitement, fun and happiness.

I then asked them to consider all that we have explored in previous workshops and identify what they think is the root cause of homophobia. After identifying the problem, they were to show this in a still image. I was exploring what Boal (1993) calls the Real Image. The participants created images that showed fear,

hatred, religion and culture. To specifically identify these problems, I employed the technique of thought tracking where whenever I tapped on an individual in an image, he or she would utter out a word or phrase representing what he or she represented in the group image.

I asked them to shake out a bit and then identify what they would like to see once the problem is solved and show it in a group image. They created elements of happiness, equality, fairness, sympathy and understanding. Again, to specifically identify these, I employed the technique of thought tracking. This is what Boal referred to as the Ideal Image.

I asked the participants to consider both images, discuss among themselves and create a role play that explores how the situation in the first image could be realistically changed to the second image. Although in image theatre, Boal calls for a transitional image as the link between the Real and the Ideal image, I chose to replace the transitional image with a role play because I felt that embodying the process would work better than reflecting on the image. As Van Ments (1983) notes, I felt that role playing trains students to control feelings and emotions (1983: 25). Training the participants to control their feelings and emotions is crucial in the process of building tolerance especially since tolerance also means learning to live with other people and their behaviours although one may not actually approve of them. It is acting in restraint.

The two groups came up with role plays that pointed to two main alternatives to deal with the situation of homophobia. One group acted out a scene where they showed that they don't necessarily agree or support homosexuality but decided to ignore the people practicing it. The other group acted out a scene where instead of being homophobic, they decided to understand and appreciate people practicing homosexuality as people too. There was a heated debate on whether the second option was realistic to people who strongly don't agree with homosexuality. At the end of the reflection on the role plays, there seemed to have been an agreement that the degree of tolerance will vary from individual to individual. A female participant noted that "if one is able to understand and appreciate homosexuals as people too, that is his or her choice, but if one cannot then ignoring them and letting them be was the best option". These alternatives clearly resonate with Peterson (2003) and King's (1976) perspectives on tolerance. What was important here was the fact that whether the alternatives suggested were realistic or not, there was an apparent appreciation that homophobia is wrong and something has to be done about it. The suitability of the suggested alternatives can be left to individual choice. I noted that the participant who had sworn never to discuss the subject of homosexuality was in support of the view that "if we don't like them, we just ignore them". He indeed had come from far and through his journey, I felt that the process had an impact not only on the participants but on me as well as I will explain in the general conclusion.

To close this workshop we all went around the room acknowledging and thanking each other with every one using facial expression and gestures and not words. We then came into a circle, joined our arms by the shoulders as I thanked them for their brilliant cooperation during the process. We finally broke into a song of gratitude as we dispersed.

As already pointed out during the analysis of the workshops, I felt that this research largely achieved its objective of utilising role play to influence the building of tolerance with regard to homosexuality. Through the use of role play techniques like role reversal, spect-acting and the varying of Theatre of the Oppressed techniques, there was an indication that some degree of tolerance was beginning to emerge in the group. Particularly the tolerance to talk about the subject of homosexuality by the participants within and outside of the workshop space was evident.

CHAPTER SEVEN: GENERAL CONCLUSION

7.1 Overview

This research undertook to investigate how role play can be utilised to influence tolerance building among adolescents, towards homosexuality. It is a case study of a group of 20 Grade 10 adolescent students from Supreme Educational College in Johannesburg, South Africa. This research was motivated by the fact that even after a legal framework had been put in place to ensure tolerance among South African communities towards homosexuality, cases of homophobia still remained on the increase. The choice to work with adolescents was motivated by the fact it is during this stage of human development that humans begin to form independent attitudes towards the world they live in.

7.2 Summary of Research Findings

Role play has vast potential in influencing tolerance building. The ability of role play to elicit empathy and allow for exploration of situations from different perspectives has a major bearing on tolerance building. The previous chapters have noted that various role play techniques are essential to provide the enabling environment in which tolerance thrives especially if they are used in a more process-oriented manner. This research found the techniques of role reversal and spect-acting particularly crucial for the participants to build empathy for others through the experience of role play and role reversal, of

imaginatively engaging with what it is like to be a different kind of person to oneself. It was particularly through the use of these techniques that some participants started to gain a sense of empathy towards homosexuals who experience homophobia. These techniques stimulate reflection and in many cases learning was expressed and re-inforced during the discussions these roleplays aroused. The facilitator's role as questioner is important in deepening thinking throughout such discussion.

It was noted that the *presence* of the facilitator has a major impact on how successful the role play techniques are in building tolerance. The ability of the facilitator to notice the mood and energy of the group and decide on the appropriate tasks appeared to be crucial during this research process. It called for high levels of attention and flexibility.

The research validated Heathcote's idea of capturing the participants' attention if they are to be engaged and learn something (Liz and O'Neill 1984). Greater shifts in understanding and tolerance were noticed from the participants who seemed engaged in the process than from those who were not. The research noted that the element of playfulness was very central in capturing the participants' attention and ultimately their engagement.

This research noted that tolerance is a process and is dependent on prior social contact, encounters, relationships and learning which the research workshops provided. Increased toleration does not usually come in a flash of inspiration but as a result of in-depth social relationships that come about from increased social interaction.

It was noted that the unstructured role play techniques enabled and challenged the participants to “wrestle” with this sensitive subject of homosexuality in its real form. It was a conscious decision of this research not to use symbol and metaphor to distance the subject from the participants but rather to distance them in terms of time and space. This less sophisticated technique enabled the participants to face and confront their fears and perceptions about homosexuality which was crucial in gaining new and different perspectives.

It was noted that role playing facilitated a safe environment to freely and honestly explore the sensitive issue of homosexuality and homophobia as well as enabling the participants to experience different perspectives on the issue. Through maintaining role playing rules, the participants found themselves taking on different perspectives from their own, but because they had to be real in the role taken, they used their knowledge, experience and senses to play the role convincingly. It is this process and the interaction of the “self” and “other"

that provided opportunities for shifts in perspective. Most times, the participants took on roles because it was a process of playfulness and performing to their friends, without realizing that this process actually placed demands on them to search their "hearts and heads" for authentic role playing. It is this learning through playing that proved powerful. As discussed in the previous chapters, from some of the participants' stories, it was noted that most of the learning was happening at the emotional level and was not just another teacher directed learning. I argue that there was a shift towards tolerance for the participants by the fact that by the end of the research workshops, most of them were able to freely discuss and explore the subject of homosexuality both within and out of the role play environment. This is a shift because at the very beginning, most of them did not want to even attempt to talk about homosexuality because for them, this was taboo. Through playfulness, they found themselves becoming comfortable with talking about this subject, at least among themselves and with me - this I consider as a very big shift especially considering the fact that intolerance also manifests itself at the level of discussing the subject. The participant that I decided to keep an eye on particularly provided a good case in point for this argument.

7.3 Impact on the Researcher

It is worth noting that I, the researcher/facilitator, was also affected by this research process at a personal level. It is probably crucial that I first mention

that in my home country, Uganda, the culture of homosexuality is currently not that pronounced and the levels of intolerance are high. I was not raised any differently from most other Ugandans and my attitude towards homosexuality as a practice was negative. When I came to South Africa, where homosexuality is legally recognised, I had to adapt to the new environment. Because I am educated and have engaged with Human Rights initiatives, I was tolerant towards homosexuality at that level - the intellectual level. However having reviewed literature on homosexuality and homophobia, and having participated in this research in a more emotionally engaging manner, my level of tolerance seems to have shifted. I have now started looking at homosexuals not just from an intellectual and human rights perspective but from a humanistic perspective. The experience of engaging with the participants, especially witnessing the action of homophobia on stage, particularly had a great effect on my perspective.

7.4 Implication of the Research findings

This research aimed at exploring how role play can be utilised to influence tolerance building among a selected group of adolescents towards homosexuality. Jensen (2008) notes that much of South African educational practice operates at a safe neutral level without the space for emotional engagement, yet the idea that emotion plays a crucial role in learning has been discussed by many educational researchers. This argument was further

reiterated by the research findings. This understanding therefore calls for an integrated approach to education especially when it comes to education geared towards behavior change. Experiential learning through role play has exhibited great potential in facilitating learning at an emotional level. This research also points to the fact that efforts to address homophobia should include engaging the wider population and not just empowering homosexuals. As shown by this research, it might always prove difficult to engage the non-homosexual populations around this subject unless a more playful approach is employed. This is where role play has exhibited great potential. This research has also pointed to the fact that sustained interventions are necessary if most participants are to have a more meaningful shift in attitude. A one-off intervention may not help much for such deep rooted attitudes. This research has reiterated the pivotal role the facilitator plays if the process is to be successful. The facilitator should be knowledgeable enough with skills to ably facilitate this learning through role play otherwise there is a possible danger for the process to reinforce the negative attitudes. The facilitator should be alert and should be a skilled questioner, knowing how to deepen thinking through appropriate questioning and understanding when to intervene as questioner.

7.5 Limitation of the study

It should be noted that even if this research has been presented as having been largely successful in terms of what it set out to achieve, there are some

unavoidable limitations that surrounded it and within which conclusions to the study must be confined. The fact that this research was carried out on a case study basis means that the results may not be generalised to other adolescents in a different space and time, although insights may be drawn.

The other limitation was the limited time within which this research had to be carried out. The research workshops, which were pivotal to the research, were carried out in six weeks with a one-hour workshop per week. This time was observably not enough to facilitate a more realistic shift of attitude for most participants. This social interaction needed more time to allow the process of change to take root.

It should also be noted that most of the data and its analysis is largely based on my subjective interpretation. This lack of scientifically proven data analysis could mean that most of the findings are skewed by my individual paradigm and not necessarily the reality although I tried to mitigate this by using theories that have been posited and used by many other scholars.

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