

**THE EXTENT TO WHICH GOVERNMENT PROVIDED HOUSING
COMPARED TO SELF-HELP HOUSING EMPOWER OR FURTHER
DISEMPOWER POOR COMMUNITIES.**

by

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

The Reconstruction and Development Programme and the People's Housing Process were both introduced in an effort to address the existing challenge of providing housing for low income earners in South Africa. Both these programmes had intended to empower its beneficiaries in the process. However, there is a lack of evidence to demonstrate whether this was achieved. The aim of this research was to determine the extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or further disempowered poor communities. The objectives of this research were as follows:

- to develop an understanding of what empowerment is;
- to identify determinants associated with empowerment definitions; to develop indicators that can be used to evaluate empowerment;
- to use the indicators to evaluate the presence, decrease or absence of empowerment in relation to the two selected study areas in the field investigation; and
- to compare the results yielded from the field investigation in order to draw a conclusion and respond to the main aim of the study.

A field investigation was conducted between two study areas namely, the Lebone Development Trust (PHP project) and the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project (RDP project). Both these projects are located in Botshabelo, a township situated in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality in the Free State Province. The data was collected from a total sample of 50 households in two phases. The intention of the first phase was to gain the beneficiaries' views concerning what empowerment means and from their understanding, confirm the determinants that can be used to evaluate empowerment in this study. These determinants, together with those identified in the literature review, were used to evaluate empowerment in the follow-up interview. The results of the study revealed that there were weaknesses and strengths in both the projects when comparing them with each other. Though there were no beneficiaries that were disempowered, the beneficiaries of the PHP project appeared to have been more empowered in some determinants than the beneficiaries of the RDP project.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC: African National Congress

ePHP: Enhanced People's Housing Process

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

NDoHS: National Department of Human Settlements

PDoHS: Provincial Department of Human Settlements

COGTA: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs

PHP: People's Housing Process

RDP: Reconstruction Development Programme

Stats SA: Statistics South Africa

UNIFEM: United Nations Development Fund for Women



"The notion of empowerment in the South African context has fostered an expectation that someone, somewhere owes one something or some favour. Second, empowerment is condescending, some may argue, because it suggests that as an individual or even on a collective basis, one stands in need of something that can only be given, bestowed or conferred by somebody else and, therefore, whoever is the recipient must somehow be beholden to the bestower of that privilege. In other words, empowerment does not derive from within the individual themselves. It has to come from somewhere else. The problem with that, however, is that it could also just as well be withheld." (Mnyandu, 2013: no pagination)

1. CHAPTER 1: Background and Rationale for the Study

1.1. Introduction

There is a growing concern regarding the implications of fully subsidised low-cost housing in South Africa, varying from environmental, spatial, social and economic effects. What this research was more concerned with was to identify the effects of subsidised low-cost housing on the empowerment of its beneficiaries. Judging from the literature review that was conducted for this study, in-depth investigations that focus primarily on the different dimensions of empowerment as a concept have not been dealt with in great detail. The goal was to determine what the effects of receiving RDP housing in comparison to self-help housing were and whether the beneficiaries felt more empowered post their occupancy. With the understanding that economically, a household income of R3500 or less makes it challenging to meet basic human needs (shelter, education, health), the government assumed the role of assisting in various areas to simplify the burden on these households. However, how much of a role does this assistance play in empowering poor communities?

1.2. Background

The introduction of democracy in South Africa came with a number of legislations and policies which aimed at redressing the inequality implemented by the previous government. One of the major priorities that emerged at that time, and unfortunately still remains a pressing issue, is the provision of low-cost housing for low income earners and people who are inadequately housed (Department of Housing, 2004:399). This is in an effort to reduce poverty and improve their quality of lives (Department of Housing, 2004:399). Migration to urban areas, as well as high levels of poverty lead to a massive and complex housing challenge in 1994. The housing backlog at that stage was estimated to be 1,5 to 2 million according to the 2001 Statistics of South Africa and Newton and Schuermans

(2013: 580). Besides the people living in poor conditions in the rural areas, the occupants of urban hostels and shack dwellers living on registered plots also had expectations that the new government would better their living conditions. When the African National Congress (ANC) took office, they aimed to deliver one million dwellings within a period of five years (Mitlin and Mogaladi, 2005: 6; Newton and Schuermans 2013: 580). Various methods were established in order to address this challenge and to meet the housing backlog. However, these methods have had various negative implications on our space, economy and social fabric.

There are three methods of housing delivery in post-apartheid South Africa: houses are built by the private sector; provided by the government or self-provided (Landman and Napier, 2010: 301). The current housing model for state provided housing has been criticised numerous over the years and its sustainability across various development aspects was questioned. Mitlin and Mogaladi (2005: 8), for example, expressed their concerns regarding the location, construction quality, user participation and user involvement in the housing subsidy programme. Huchzermeyer (as cited in Newton and Schuermans 2013: 581) emphasises that this housing model tends to "sustain or even reinforce the existing patterns of spatial segregation and social inequality" that were seen in the apartheid regime, while the initial intent was to achieve more compact and integrated cities (Newton and Schuermans 2013: 580). One of the "problem statements" in the Western Cape's publication of its 6th strategic objective (2010: 4) emphasises that the housing need can never be met through the use of this existing housing model and they also emphasise some of the social, environmental and economic consequences of this housing model. With this growing concern regarding the sustainability of subsidised housing (Ramasodi and van Bergen, 2005: 2), there is an even more persistent concern regarding what the next step should be to substitute these so-called RDP houses. Turner's theories have also made a perceptible contribution in the literature by comparing state built housing to self-help housing (Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999: 93). The comparison between these two housing models has generated interest for many others including Landman and Napier (2010) and

Newton and Schuermans (2013); all this in an effort to establish a way forward for low-cost housing in South Africa.

Many researchers have gone into the long term economic effects of these housing programmes. People more concerned with the built environment have dissected the physical implications of the programmes. However, this research will focus more specifically on the social implications of the two low-cost housing delivery methods, because social deficiencies just like economic and spatial deficiencies can also have long term consequences on future generations. This research will interview the beneficiaries of the two housing projects in order to determine whether they felt empowered or disempowered by the different housing models.

1.3. Rationale

There is a need to determine people's perceptions towards the settlements they reside in. There is a need to determine whether their homes uplift them and contribute to their sense of pride. Not much attention was paid to these fundamentals by policy makers. Bradlow et al (as cited in Newton and Schuermans 2013: 581) states that the government had placed so much emphasis on delivering formal housing solutions that they neglected to produce a people-centred approach. He explains that a people-centred approach would ensure that the generic structural meaning of housing is combined with more intangible meanings such as "what it means to live somewhere, to create a home and a living" (Bradlow et al, as cited in Newton and Schuermans 2013: 581). The intentions of the programmes dealing with low-cost housing were built upon respectable principles and solid objectives. For instance, the objectives of the People's Housing Process was to deliver improved human settlements and produce outcomes including job creation, community empowerment, skills transfer, etc. (National Department of Human Settlements , as cited in Carey, 2009: 13). The Reconstruction and Development Programme intended to mobilise people and the resources of the country to build a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future (African National Congress, 2011). One of the aims of the Reconstruction and Development Programme was to redress

some of the negative implications infused by the apartheid government policies on historically disadvantaged communities. Additionally, it aimed to empower low income households by providing them with shelter as they were unable to acquire the asset themselves. However, the relevant question is whether these programmes have produced an empowering impact in its true sense? It is the reality of the challenges faced when implementation and reviewing of the outcomes takes place that has many people questioning whether there is not any other way to address the housing problem for low income earners in South Africa.

It is critical that people take steps to eventually address their problems in their own capacity. "If low income families are to rise above the poverty line, they must be encouraged to be self-sustaining" said Ejigiri (1996: 37). People should essentially be afforded the opportunity to define their own problems and be able to collectively come up with sustainable solutions. That is marginal a method that communities can follow to empower themselves. However when it comes to acquiring shelter in poverty stricken communities, the solution is not very simple. That is where the government mediates, however important it is for the government to intervene, their involvement should be limited to assisting the poor to be self-sustainable (Ejigiri, 1996: 41). The question is whether the solutions provided thus far have been able to achieve self-sustainability.

1.4. Aim of the Study

The aim of this study was to determine the extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or further disempowered poor communities.

1.5. The Objectives of the Research

The researcher aimed to understand and determine various definitions of empowerment across various disciplines and then focus more on its meaning in a housing context. Following this, key determinants linked to empowerment

definitions could be drawn, which could be used to form indicators to assess empowerment in the two study areas. Once the indicators for evaluating empowerment were in place, the presence, decrease or lack thereof in the two study areas could be determined. In summary, the objectives of this research were as follows:

- To develop an understanding of what empowerment is;
- To identify determinants associated with empowerment definitions;
- To develop indicators that can be used to evaluate empowerment;
- To use the indicators to evaluate the presence, decrease or absence of empowerment in relation to the two selected study areas in the field investigation; and
- To make a comparison from the results yielded from the field investigation in order to draw a conclusion and respond to the main aim of the research.

1.6. Selection of Projects and Research Methods

The two projects that were chosen as study areas for the purposes of this research were the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction project (RDP project) and Lebone Development Trust which was the PHP project. Both these projects are located in a township called Botshabelo. This township forms part of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality and is located 55 km east of Bloemfontein, between Bloemfontein and Thaba Nchu (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013: 41). These two projects were in-situ upgrades of the informal dwelling units in that section. There were a 101 beneficiaries of the Lebone Development Trust. The Botshabelo 900 pamper project is meant to have 900 beneficiaries. However, only 313 houses had been completed at the time of the study.

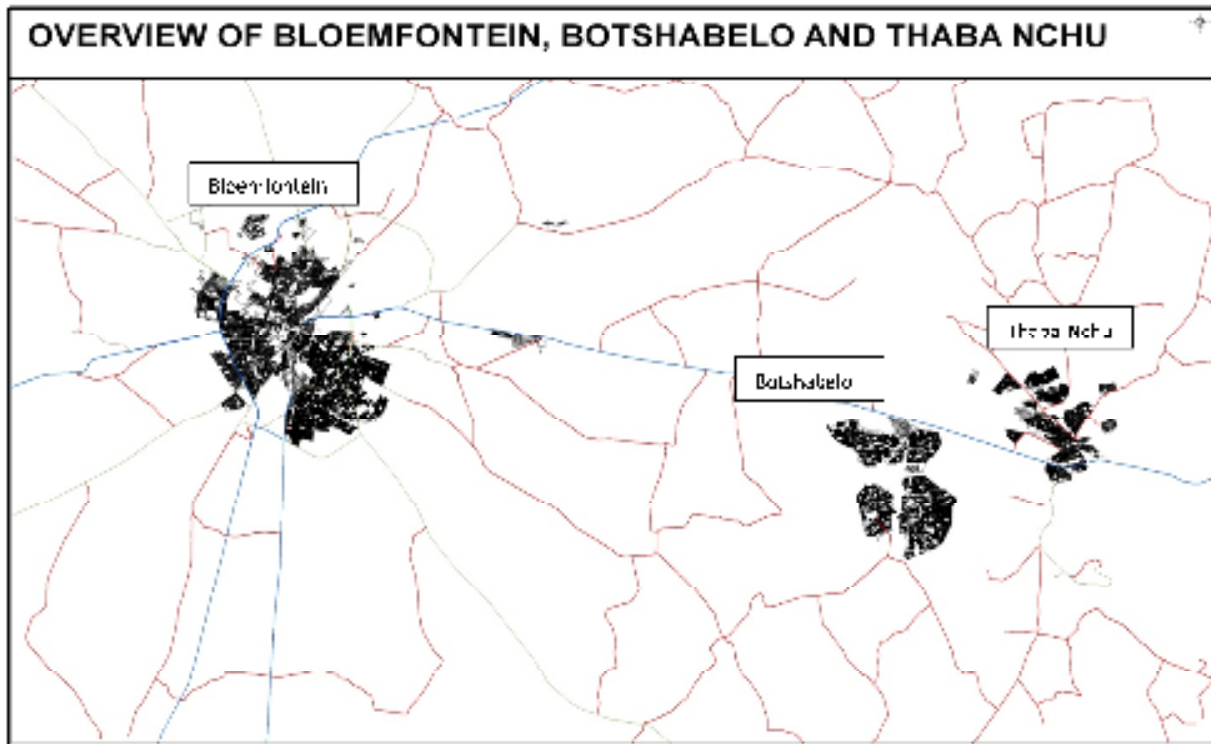


Figure 1: Overview of Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba-Nchu

The data gathering stage was divided into two phases. The reason for this is that the researcher did not want to only use empowerment determinants that were gained from the literature to assess empowerment in the two projects. Instead, the researcher wanted to first understand how beneficiaries viewed empowerment and which factors they felt had an influence on empowerment. That way the beneficiaries could provide their own determinants which could be merged with the determinants from the literature review. Thereafter, only in the second phase did the researcher evaluate the extent of these determinants in the two projects. A total of 50 household representatives were interviewed. In the first phase 20 household were interviewed (10 from each project) then in the second interview 30 beneficiaries were interviewed (15 from each project). Further information concerning the two projects and the information gathering phase will be provided further on in chapter 3.

1.7. Definitions

This research makes reference to the terms “low-cost”, “RDP”, “self-help” and “PHP”. The definitions of these terms in context of this study will be clarified in this section.

1.7.1. Low-cost Housing

This research made use of Le Roux’s (2011: 5) definition of “low-income housing” which is “Housing for people whose combined monthly household incomes are below R3 500 per month”.

1.7.2. RDP Housing

RDP housing is a term used to refer to public housing for households earning less than R3500 per month. It was named after the establishment of the Reconstruction and Development Programme in which one of its outputs was to promote housing delivery post 1994 (Landman and Napier, 2010: 302).

1.7.3. Self-help Housing

Self-help housing is a practice in which low-income households resolve their housing needs through the contribution of their own resources and also in the same manner take the major responsibility of decision-making regarding their dwellings and environment (Zhang, Zhao and Tian, 2003; Dewar, Andrew and Watson, as cited in Ntema, 2011: 6).

1.7.4. PHP Housing

The Peoples Housing Process (PHP) is one of the government’s housing delivery programmes in South Africa which provides funding to groups of beneficiaries to pool their resources and contribute their labour so as to make the most of their

housing subsidies (Ramasodi and van Bergen, 2005: 5; National Treasury, 2009: 99). It is a process where beneficiaries actively participate towards the building of their houses by taking decisions that influence the housing process and product and also contribute towards the construction (Roper, 2011). The programme's expectation is that beneficiaries will combine their resources and contribute their labour, so called "sweat equity", towards building their houses through the PHP support centre (Ramasodi and van Bergen, 2005: 5; Landman and Napier, 2010: 302). This process is related to the original self-help housing process and is defined by Khan and Thring 2003 (as cited in Ntema, 2011: 6) "as a state-assisted self-help housing programme, in which individuals, families or groups are supported by the state to take the initiative to organise the planning, the designing and the building of, or actually building, their own homes" (Ntema, 2011: 6).

1.8. Summary

This chapter offered an indication of the focus of this research by providing an introduction of the housing context in South Africa and its challenges, followed by an in depth reasoning of the importance of this research for South Africa and for policy makers. The main objectives that the research aims to achieve in this study have also been underlined for clarity.

The chapter to follow examines all literature relevant to this area by covering topics related to housing delivery methods, empowerment definitions in different fields and how it has been evaluated previously in order to identify a suitable method to use in this study. The third chapter discusses the research methodology. The findings are presented in the fourth and fifth chapters, followed by the conclusion in the sixth chapter.

2. CHAPTER 2: Towards a Theoretical Framework to Evaluate Empowerment Related to Various Housing Models

2.1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to undertake a theoretical assessment of what empowerment is, how it can be evaluated and which indicators have been used in other studies to assess empowerment in an environment or a project. This chapter begins by assessing the role a home can play in an individual's life and whether people actually have a relationship with their urban environment. This is discussed in section 2.2 and 2.3. Without fully understanding these aspects, it can be challenging to relate back to whether housing does have the potential to impact on the community's level of empowerment. The majority of the studies that were examined for this paper regarding how empowerment can be evaluated indicated that when evaluating empowerment, a theoretical background of empowerment and its meaning should be examined. The dimensions (in this case determinants) considered to influence empowerment should be decided upon, then tools such as surveys or interviews can be used to assess these dimensions. This is the method that was decided upon and thus this chapter follows that structure. A theoretical background of empowerment and its meaning is examined in section 2.4. Thereafter, section 2.5 discusses how empowerment has been evaluated across various disciplines. This was done to determine the most suitable method that can be used for this study. Thereafter, determinants that can influence empowerment are selected and discussed in section 2.6 using the definitions that were provided. Indicators for these determinants are developed, which can be used to identify and assess the evidence of empowerment determinants or lack thereof in the two projects. Section 2.7 provides a background of the different housing models. This was done in order to assess whether the housing determinants could already be drawn in the process prior to investigating it with the beneficiaries of the housing projects and the findings thereof are discussed in section 2.8. The last section concludes the findings of this chapter and highlights the main empowerment

determinants and indicators that can be used to evaluate empowerment in the two study areas.

2.2. The Role Played by a Home in an Individual's Life

The need for housing in a South African context was responded to by The Constitution of The Republic of South Africa, Section 26(1), as "the right to adequate shelter". However, Marcus as cited in Beamish *et al* (2001: 1) emphasizes that housing is more than merely a shelter, "It is the essence of something called a home" and describes the needs that can be fulfilled by one's home including "a place of self-expression". Lee (2005: 1) additionally states that the primary function of a house is not only to provide security and protection but it is also a place where self-identity, social relationships and human activities can be developed and structured. Housing needs describe the role that a home can play in the life of a person to assure survival and perhaps to thrive as a human being (Beamish *et al*, 2001: 2). Collectively "protection from man and nature, need for a sense of place or rootedness, need for a wholesome self-concept, need to relate to others, need for social and psychological stimulation, creative or transcendental needs, and the need to fulfil values" are the seven human needs that are fulfilled by the home environment (Montgomery as cited in Beamish *et al*, 2001: 2). Turner (as cited in Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999:93) believed that the physical form of a house is not the most critical aspect but rather what the house can do for a family dwelling in it in terms of bringing the family closer to urban related opportunities i.e. employment opportunities, services and social amenities.

Supporting Turner's beliefs was the South African Policy when it moved from making reference to "housing" and established a new vision of "sustainable human settlements" in 2004. The intention of this new initiative was to get South Africa to move past its notion of seeing housing as merely shelter but to start viewing it as a larger entity of the spatial environment that can contribute to achieving more efficient cities, towns and regions (Department of Human Settlements, 2004: 12). The government made a commitment to start developing more "liveable, equitable

and sustainable cities” (Department of Human Settlements, 2004: 11) and to integrate previously excluded groups into cities in order to get them closer to the socio-economic opportunities offered in urban areas (Housing Development Agency: 2014).

2.3. Understanding People and How They Relate to Their Surroundings

Understanding people in relation to their urban environment is an integral part of policy making. “Environmental Psychology” assists to provide a clearer understanding of this relationship.

Environmental psychology deals with how an individual relates to his or her living space (Moser and Uzzell, 2004: 1). It pays close attention to how environmental conditions affect people’s behaviours and in turn how an individual observes and acts in the environment (Moser and Uzzell, 2004: 1). In the effort to study individuals and groups in their physical context, environmental psychology gives a “prominent place for environmental perceptions, attitudes, evaluations and representations and accompanying behaviour within this context” (Moser and Uzzell, 2004: 1). Moser and Uzzell (2004: 1) emphasise that they were also able to understand and deal with the global environmental change issue respectively by taking into consideration individual and societal attitudes to the problem. Over and above this, environmental psychology has been proven to have a critical role to play within policy formulation together with the help of various disciplines, including but not limited to psychologists, educationalists, engineers and planners (Moser and Uzzell, 2004: 1).

With this basic understanding of environmental psychology, it becomes clear that there is evidence of a relationship between people’s perceptions, behaviour or attitudes their surrounding physical environment. It confirms that these kinds of studies have the potential to impact on policy. This confirms the relevance of this study to the decision-makers and policies of the built environment.

As noted in the first chapter of this study, the social implications of different low-cost housing methods and the long term consequences of them are critical to acknowledge. After low-cost housing projects are implemented, beneficiaries should be left in a much better position than they were prior to the project, otherwise the efforts of the project become ineffective. Empowerment can ensure that progress is reached and this is why achieving it is one of the objectives of low-cost housing policies. Due to this, identifying what it means to be empowered and how empowerment can be evaluated becomes significant.

2.4. Understanding the Term Empowerment

2.4.1. Generic Definitions of Empowerment

This study made use of the most common route that researchers took in establishing the most suitable method to assess empowerment. A clear theoretical understanding of the concept empowerment was investigated, and then factors or domains that influence the concept were identified. This allowed the researcher to gain an understanding of how empowerment was understood across different disciplines and identifying factors that can influence it made it less challenging to analyse it. This section went into that detail by assessing the concept of empowerment across various disciplines; the different levels of analysis necessary and factors that influence it.

Empowerment is a concept that is growing but however inconsistently defined (Segal, Silverman and Tempkin, 1995: 215). It may mean different things for different disciplines and may vary from one individual to the next (Zimmerman, 1995 as cited in Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181-182). Empowerment is defined as “the means to attaining power” by Laverack (2006: 113). It is a procedure in which people who are powerless work together in an effort to intensify their control over issues that determine their lives (Laverack, 2006:113). Kasmel and Anderson (2011:801) concur with this definition by stating that empowerment “promotes the participation of people, organizations and communities for increased

individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of life and social justice”.

Kasmel and Anderson (2011:800) make reference to three interrelated levels of empowerment: individual, organizational or community empowerment. These three levels of empowerment are all related in a sense that “in empowered communities, empowered organizations exist, and an empowered organization is reliant on the empowerment levels of its members” (Kasmel and Anderson, 2011: 801).

Nelson, Hall and Walsh-Bowers (1998: 58) talk about personal empowerment as both feelings of control and instrumental skills such as the ability to function independently. Empowerment implies a procedure in which individuals with minimum power eventually gain control over their lives and begin to influence the organizational and societal structures they live in (Segal, Silverman and Tempkin, 1995: 215).

Community empowerment is referred to as the process in which “communities are able to assume power to act effectively to change their lives and environment” (Kasmel and Anderson, 2011: 800). Laverack (2006:113) also refers to community empowerment by saying it is “a process that involves continual shifts in power relations between different individuals and social groups in society”. Community empowerment is evaluated in the ability for its members to not only initiate but also sustain activities leading to changes in their quality of life (Kasmel and Anderson, 2011: 801).

In Chamberlin’s (1997: 44) exercise of discovering what empowerment means, concepts including, but not limited to the following were disclosed: having decision-making power; having a vast variety of options which one can choose from and equipping oneself with skills deemed important by that person. Luechauer and Shulman (1993 as cited in Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183) perceive it as “the humanistic process of adopting the values and practicing the behaviors of

enlightened self-interest so that personal and organizational goals may be aligned in a way that promotes growth, learning, and fulfilment".

However, one of the most profound principles of empowerment highlighted by Laverack (2006:113) was that empowerment cannot be given, but should rather be pursued by those who seek it. Erstad (1997: 332) emphasizes the same notion that empowerment is not something that can be passed on, but is rather a procedure which requires an established vision, a learning environment, participation and implementation tools and techniques in order to achieve results.

2.4.2. Empowerment in self-help agencies mental health

Segal, Silverman and Tempkin (1995: 215) draw a link between empowerment and power by quoting Dodd and Guatierres (1990) who state that "power is the ability to get what one wants, and the ability to influence others to feel, act and /or behave in ways that further one's own interests". They add that power is "the capacity to influence the forces which affect one's life space for one's own benefit" and therefore conclude that the process of acquiring such power is empowerment (Segal, Silverman and Tempkin, 1995: 215).

2.4.3. Self, Psychological and Individual Empowerment

Spreitzer (1995: 1443) states that minimal research had been undertaken to understand empowerment from an individual perspective, focusing on the psychological experience of empowerment. Conger and Kanungo (1988 as cited in Spreitzer, 1995: 1443) narrow down empowerment to an individual perspective by defining it as a motivational concept of self-efficacy (i.e. an individual's power or capacity to produce a desired effect).

Labonte (1998 as cited in Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181) indicates that individuals encounter more of a psychological form of empowerment i.e. an increase in self-esteem or confidence. Psychological empowerment is a concept

that incorporates the person's perceptions and actions within their social context (Zimmerman, 1990 as cited in Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181).

Narayan-Parker (2005: 125) debates that aspects of subjective wellbeing such as pleasant moods and emotions are precedents of psychological empowerment. He uncovered that when positive emotions are encouraged, they often lead to "predictable consequences including self-confidence, leadership and dominance, flexible thinking, active engagement with the environment" amongst other things, which were identified as a similar state to that of psychological empowerment (Narayan-Parker, 2005: 125).

Narayan-Parker (2005: 125) further elaborates on the external and internal empowerment by stating that while external conditions are essential for achieving empowerment, they are not enough without "psychological feelings of competence, energy and the desire to act". Thus empowerment entails a combination of both the ability to control one's environment (external empowerment) and the belief that one can do so (internal empowerment) (Narayan-Parker, 2005: 125).

2.4.4. Empowerment in education

Senge, 1990 (cited in Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183) states the importance of empowered learners in a learning organization as that it is the responsibility of people and not the organizations to learn. Thomas and Velthouse (as cited in Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183-184) define empowerment as consisting of four dimensions:

1. "Meaningfulness" which is the level of alignment between the task at hand and one's "individual beliefs, ideal and standards";
2. "Competence" is described as the person's feeling toward how qualified and capable they are to perform the task to achieve the desired result or goal;
3. "Impact" questions whether the individual perceives the task to make a contribution towards the goal; and
4. "Choice" refers to the degree to which individuals can determine their own means or methods to achieving the desired goal.

Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) definition of empowerment, though expressed for the purposes of work environment as opposed to education, makes reference to three of the four above-mentioned dimensions (Spreitzer, 1995: 1443). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) indicate that empowerment is seen through improved task motivation in a person's work where a person understands the meaning and impact that his/her role has in the overall picture, but also feels competent and has the determination to complete his or her tasks (Spreitzer, 1995: 1443).

2.4.5. Empowerment in the workplace

Empowerment is seen as the "means to enable employees to make decisions" (Bowen and Lawler, 1992 as cited in Erstad, 1997: 325). It is reliant upon the notion that individuals are to take accountability for their own actions (Pastor, 1996 as cited in Erstad, 1997: 325). It highlights that though the definitions of empowerment may differ, ultimately the end goal is to improve individual performance and potential as well as the organization (Long, 1996 as cited in Erstad, 1997: 325).

Nixon's (1994 as cited in Erstad, 1997: 326) five-point empowerment strategy includes the following:

- I. Establishing a vision;
- II. Prioritizing and acting only where most impact is possible;
- III. Developing strong relationships with colleagues;
- IV. Expanding networks;
- V. Using internal and external support groups.

This strategy was developed in order to create an organization where people can work as individuals and also in teams towards achieving common goals (Erstad, 1997: 326). Spreitzer (1995: 1444) draws up a few points regarding empowerment in the workplace that are critical to this research. He states that empowerment is not an on-going characteristic that can be generalised across

situations, but it is rather a set of perceptions shaped by the surrounding environment (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990); it is about people's perceptions about themselves in relation to their environment (Bandura, 1989) and it is a continuous variable meaning "people can be viewed as more or less empowered, rather than empowered or not empowered".

2.4.6. Empowerment in Housing

As previously noted in Chapter 1, there is minimal research available that evaluates empowerment as a concept in low-cost housing, especially by looking at all the various determinants which contribute towards the concept of empowerment collectively. Gounden and Merrifield's paper (1995) made a brief reference to the topic but did not focus entirely on it. Also lacking was the detail of how empowerment was evaluated. Papers by Gounden and Merrifield (1995); Ntema (2011) and Davy (2007) were studied concerning the topic and participation by the community surfaced to be the most critical aspect to achieve empowerment in low-cost housing.

"Development must be woven around people, not people around development and it should empower individuals and groups, rather than disempower them" (Gergis, 1999 as cited in Davy, 2007: 63). Gounden and Merrifield (1995: 93) propose means in which RDP houses can be used to encourage empowerment to low income communities through housing delivery methods. They emphasise the importance of the relationship between community participation and empowerment within the housing delivery system (Gounden and Merrifield, 1995: 94). Ntema (2011, 106-107) suggests that when it comes to PHP projects and its foundations being based on a people-centred approach, it only makes sense that its performance should be evaluated by both its ability to achieve empowerment and development.

Merrifield et al, 1993 (as cited in Gounden and Merrifield, 1995: 94) say that empowerment "implies that the community adopts a more collective and more

political stance towards external agencies, and that they may use that empowerment to challenge the conditions under which development takes place". Davy (2007: 11) compliments Monaheng's (2000: 135) views on empowerment by stating that it is the "development of skills and abilities to enable rural people to manage better, have a say in or negotiate with existing development delivery systems". Ntema's (2011, 106) understanding of community empowerment relates to affording the community the opportunity to collectively participate and take decision towards their socio-economic needs. Ntema (2011, 106-107) examined a few PHP projects in the Free State. In this study he has a section where he addresses how these projects were able to empower and develop the communities the projects were based in. He states that the projects yielded the following results which were able to empower the community: job creation; improvement of community relationships and inclusion of previously marginalised groups (women and people with disabilities) into the construction industry. According to Ntema (2011: 106) a successful housing project should not only be evaluated in terms of structure, but also in accordance to whether it empowered and developed the community. He states that community development cannot happen in isolation from community empowerment (Ntema, 2011: 106). All the studies agree that increasing community participation in housing projects is more likely to promote community empowerment (Gounden and Merrifield, 1995: 95; Ntema, 2011: 106; and Sowman and Urquhart, 1998 as cited in Davy, 2007: 3). As the development moves through the process of community participation (i.e. capacity building, cost-sharing) community empowerment is enhanced (Paul, 1987 as cited in Gounden and Merrifield, 1995: 94). The reason for this is that the community takes on more responsibility for project delivery as opposed to external development agencies (Merrifield et al, 1993 as cited in Gounden and Merrifield, 1995: 94).

Davy (2007: 3) highlights the importance of "appropriate participation strategies" in housing developments in order to achieve empowered people-centred development. "Authentic and empowering public participation" can only be achieved if all stakeholders have participated in the development (from inception to completion), the decision-making process of the housing project and if they have the ability to

change predetermined objectives (Davy, 2007: 3). He adds that it is crucial for people to have influential power over decisions that affect their lives because the lack thereof will result in development being ineffective (Davy, 2007: 11). De Beer (as cited in Davy, 2007: 31) refers to the type of decision-making that is strictly returned to the people who have the ability to provide the detail required (defined needs) to add value to the project.

Davy (2007: 27) argues that interpreting empowerment as being synonymous to public participation would be a weak reflection of the truth and adds that empowerment should include self-mobilization and public control and thus allow beneficiaries to take control of the development process in a sustainable manner. It is important for people to be able to define what their real interests are, because creating better opportunities for them to participate will not be sufficient to create the change if they do not have a predetermined goal (Lawson and Kearns, 2009: 1462).

2.5. Evaluating Empowerment

“Processes of development and social change are never easy to measure though, and results can be elusive and difficult to evaluate. It is easier to count schools than to measure the impact of education.” (Jupp and Ali, 2010: 7)

Limited efforts have been made to provide the means of evaluating whether policy interventions are having an empowering effect (Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland, 2006: 30). Direct indicators of empowerment are often found within project monitoring systems as opposed to national sample surveys or poverty monitoring systems (Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland, 2006: 17). It is argued that a universal approach of evaluating empowerment may confuse the understanding of the concept by interpreting its effects as static outcomes rather than as dynamic experiences (Zimmerman, as cited in Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181). It is stated that empowerment may not mean the same thing for every person, organization or community everywhere (Zimmerman, as cited in Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181-182). Laverack and Wallerstein (2001: 181) indicate that before one can go

on a quest for evaluating community empowerment, the design of its methodology must begin with the following: a clear theoretical understanding of the concept, both as a process and as an outcome; the different levels of analysis (individual, organizational and community) and lastly the domains or factors that influence the concept of empowerment (Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 183).

This section will present some of the diverse methods researchers have used to evaluate empowerment in their study areas.

2.5.1. Kabeer's method

In this study Kabeer attempts to evaluate women empowerment by making use of this basic approach: Resources (pre-conditions) + Agency (process) + Achievements (outcomes) = Dimensions Choice (exercising choice) → Is an indicator of Empowerment

Kabeer (1999: 435) first identifies empowerment by assessing individuals' ability to make choices that affect their lives. Furthermore he elaborates that it is a condition by which those who have been previously denied the option to make choices attain such an option (Kabeer, 1999: 437). Kabeer (1999: 435) refers to three dimensions of choice, namely resources (pre-conditions), agency (process) and achievements (outcomes) and believes that together they are a valid means for evaluating empowerment.

"Resources" in Kabeer's paper (1999: 437) are not limited to material resources but also include human and social resources that enable one to exercise choice. These resources can be obtained through a variety of social relationships in different institutional structures i.e. family, market and community (Kabeer, 1999: 437). "Agency" is defined as the ability to define one's goals and act upon them, the sense of drive and motivation behind an individual's actions (Kabeer, 1999: 438). When Resources and Agency are combined they form the ability (Sen, as cited in Kabeer, 1999: 438) to "Achieve" objectives. This is how Kabeer (1999) uses these

three dimensions to evaluate empowerment. He further elaborates that there may be instances when individuals fail to meet their desired goals due to a number of reasons. However, when the reason is due to some entrenched constraints on one's ability to choose, it is only then that the circumstance can be considered as a manifestation of disempowerment (Kabeer, 1999: 438).

2.5.2. The Just Governance Group's method

The Just Governance Group's (2011: 2) efforts are to evaluate empowerment in international development projects. In the paper, empowerment is understood as "the ability of an individual or group to utilize resources for the achievement of a (desired) result that leads to an improvement in their political, economic, legal, and or social condition". Similarly to Kabeer (1999), the Just Governance Group understands the notion of empowerment as the ability for individuals to utilise resources in an effort to achieve a specific result. The Just Governance Group further reiterates that the "existence of opportunities and the possibility to make choices" is vital for empowerment (2011: 2).

The Just Governance Group (2011: 2) makes reference to the following dimensions for evaluating empowerment; "resource and opportunity structure" as well as "agency" (2011: 2): The "resource and opportunity" dimension refers to the existence of social, economic, political, and cultural domains or structures that enable an actor to make a choice to bring about a desired outcome (Just Governance Group, 2011: 2). The "agency" dimension explores the ability for individuals to be major role players in the process of making choices that affect their lives and bring about change (Just Governance Group, 2011: 2).

In evaluating empowerment the Just Governance Group reiterates that the evaluator should be able to examine whether opportunity structures are present, the existence and extent of self-advocacy (previously referred to as agency) in the process of choice is apparent, changes that occur when choice is exercised should be recorded (Just Governance Group, 2011: 2). Report cards, focus groups,

interviews, surveys, document reviews etc. are said to be the most common tools used to evaluate empowerment (Just Governance Group, 2011: 2). A mixed method approached of both quantitative and qualitative data is advocated and then lastly, a participatory and inclusive approach is of great importance (Just Governance Group, 2011: 2).

The Just Governance Group (2011: 2) differs with other researchers such as Kabeer's (1999) in that they argue whether "obtaining a desired result" is indeed a reflection or a prerequisite for empowerment. They add that failure to obtain such a "desired" result does not always mean that a person was not empowered. They argue that through the process of exercising one's choice, the outcome achieved may not always be the initial "desired" one (Just Governance Group, 2011: 2). They state that in instances where the "desired" result is not achieved researchers are advised to analyse the causes that lead to a different outcome (Just Governance Group, 2011: 2).

2.5.3. Ali and Jupp's method of evaluating empowerment

In Ali and Jupp's (2010) effort to find an efficient and practical method of evaluating empowerment they state that "there is no other way to start than with the voices and opinions of the people living in poverty, who know what empowerment means to them and who have developed their own way of assessing change" (Ali and Jupp, 2010: 21). They take a different approach towards evaluating empowerment compared to the two previous studies. They take a more participatory and people based approach by allowing the members of the community to define what empowerment is to them and to monitor the change themselves (Ali and Jupp's, 2010: 38). This participatory method ensures that empowerment or disempowerment of the local people is no longer defined by the views of external opinions (Ali and Jupp, 2010: 38). In this instance a social movement was introduced in Bangladesh and the aim of the researchers was to let the community identify the benefits they gained from the movement and to assess both the positive and the negative changes (Ali and Jupp, 2010: 12). Through a

participatory method, the local communities identified 132 indicators which they used to assess themselves (Ali and Jupp, 2010: 9). The groups made use of very interactive and creative methods to give a report back, including theatrical methods by creating a drama (short story) of how their lives were previously and how change occurred due to the social movement (Ali and Jupp, 2010: 21). Ali and Jupp (2010: 38) are of the view that researchers should allow community members to evaluate their own level of empowerment to ensure that their empowerment is no longer defined by the views of external opinions.

2.5.4. The World Economic Forum's method

In this study, the World Economic Forum (2005: 1) evaluates women empowerment by assessing the current gender gap (inequality between men and women) in 58 chosen countries. It states that there have been global attempts to empower women through increasing social, economic and political equality; improving basic health and education (World Economic Forum, 2005: 1) amongst other things. In this study they attempt to evaluate the extent to which the women in the 58 countries have been empowered in those critical areas in order to assess the current gap between the men and the women.

The study considers a few dimensions which are deemed to be critical for evaluating women empowerment, these dimensions are as follows: economic participation; economic opportunity; political empowerment; educational attainment, health and well-being (World Economic Forum, 2005: 2). These dimensions are drawn from United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), relating to global patterns of inequality between men and women (World Economic Forum, 2005: 2). Each dimension is examined using two types of data: 1) published national statistics and data from international organizations, and 2) survey data of a qualitative nature from the annual Executive Opinion Survey of the World Economic Forum (World Economic Forum, 2005: 3). In the case of the Executive Opinion Survey an established scale of 1 (worst value) to 7 (best value) was used to evaluate each of the dimensions (World Economic Forum, 2005: 3).

Therefore the first step that the World Economic Forum took was to determine the dimensions to be assessed when evaluating women empowerment. Then they used a combination of two different methods to assess these dimensions in order to attain their deductions. The first method was to assess existing data in order to evaluate these dimensions. The second method was to collect additional data through the use of an already established survey tool.

2.5.5. Brook and Holland's Mixed-Method Approach

This paper explains the piloting of a mixed method approach for monitoring empowerment in the context of an on-going social policy in Jamaica (Brook and Holland, 2009: vi). The method used in this approach is a combination of an already established tool, a community score card (CSC), and ethnographic research (Brook and Holland, 2009: viii).

The CSC was established as a "monitoring tool" used by various countries in an effort to obtain people's perceptions regarding the quality, accessibility and relevance of provided public services (Brook and Holland, 2009: vii). In the paper, the researchers added five extra indicators to the CSC in order to evaluate youth empowerment. The so called "enhanced CSC" was distributed amongst youth focus groups in three separate communities (Brook and Holland, 2009: viii). The participants responded by providing numerical ratings on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being very poor) and then had discussions on the reasons for their ratings (Brook and Holland, 2009: viii).

Therefore Brook and Holland (2009) took the more common approach by making use of an already established and reliable tool, but also added extra dimensions to ensure that the survey captures all the dimensions they deemed were critical for evaluating youth empowerment. Additional to that, they observed and interacted with the groups they were studying in their own environment in order to attain information from them (referred to as ethnographic research).

2.5.6. Masser's evaluation of legal empowerment

The study aimed to evaluate legal empowerment of poor communities by exploring a number of methodologies and theoretical frameworks to establish a tailored method for the subject at hand (Masser, 2009). Legal empowerment in this study is referred to as "a process of systemic change through which the poor and excluded are enabled to use the law, the legal system, and legal services to protect and advance their rights and interests as citizens and economic actors" (Masser, 2009: 4). The researchers establish a narrowly defined and subject-centric approach for this study and argue that it is best suited if it is context specific as compared to the conventional broad-based, top-down approach (Masser, 2009: 3). In their assessment of different types of methodologies, they discovered that while these conventional broad-based methods can provide a variety of valuable information, they fall short when required to make an assessment on micro levels i.e. sub national, ethnic and social groups (Masser, 2009: 3).

Masser (2009) discourages the use of these generic surveys which he deems to not be context specific and push a top-down agenda, but rather promotes a subject specific method or framework that narrows down the analysis by examining established activities within a specific environment (Masser, 2009: 20). In his study, he develops a framework that examines individual choices, dynamics that influence their decisions, obstacles and how they can be resolved, etc. (Masser, 2009: 20).

2.5.7. Summary of methods to evaluate empowerment

We can see from this analysis of methods that there are many ways of evaluating empowerment, though some have common traits. There is a rich pool of approaches that one can utilise for their specific study. The decision is influenced by the kind of information you hope to attain for your study.

Some of the common steps that were identified in the review were that the researchers began by investigating how other researchers in the past approached

this challenge of evaluating empowerment. They followed up by communicating what they thought empowerment is or what it means in their specific study context. Subsequent to that, they made a clear statement of which method they thought would work best for their study. This analysis further alluded to Zimmerma's comment (as cited in Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181-182) that the term empowerment may not mean the same thing for every person, organization or community everywhere. This consequently makes it very challenging for a researcher to take an already established tool and apply it to his or her study. Some universal approaches have been developed and used by other researchers. For example Kabeer's (1999) method and the Just Governance Group (2011) looked at similar dimensions (resource, agency and achievements or desired results) then used a community score card to evaluate these dimensions which they believed influenced empowerment. The one thing the researchers agreed on, is that whichever method one decided on should be suitable and context specific to the study at hand.

The other critical aspect raised is that focusing too vividly on the outcomes or on achieving the so called "desired results" when evaluating empowerment can take away the value of what empowerment is. For example, indicating that a specific person or community is disempowered based on the fact that they could not achieve the goals they had initially proposed is somewhat deceiving when there is no clear understanding as to what caused the person or community to fail to meet the desired results.

The common aspect found in all the papers, with the exception to Ali and Jupp's study (2010), was that a theoretical background of empowerment and its meaning was examined. The dimensions considered to influence empowerment were decided upon, then research tools such as surveys were used to assess these dimensions. The results retrieved from those research tools were used to draw conclusions on the level of empowerment in that study area.

2.6. Common Determinants Around Empowerment

As specified in the beginning of the chapter, the intention of analysing empowerment across different disciplines was to identify common empowerment determinants. The section to follow extracted those determinates that were found to be common from the previous section. The determinants can guide the researcher on how to identify potential indicators in the housing environments.

2.6.1. Power

A few references to power were made when defining empowerment throughout literature. Laverack (2006: 113) stated that empowerment is the “means to attaining power”, which was further elaborated on as people who were previously powerless working together to attain control over issues that affect their lives. Kasmel and Anderson (2011: 800) spoke more specifically on community empowerment, where the community is able to assume power to effectively change issues that affect their lives. Laverack (2006: 113) insisted on the necessity of continual shifts in power relations between different people and groups in a society. Chamberlin (1997: 44) referred to the power of decision-making which is having the power to make decisions regarding issues that affect one’s life and also having a variety of options to choose from to enable one to exercise that decision-making power.

2.6.2. Control

The literature of Laverack (2006: 113) and Segal, Silveran and Tempkin (1995: 215) referred to the importance of control in empowerment. Both studies referred to a situation where people who are powerless or people who have minimum power eventually gain control over issues that impact them and begin to influence their environment (i.e. organisational and societal structures). Naraven–Parker (2005: 125) adds that the ability for one to control one’s environment has to be coupled

with the belief or confidence that one is capable of controlling or influencing their environment.

2.6.3. Participation

Participation is highly emphasised as a good determinant for empowerment in the context of low-cost housing. Ntema (2011), Davy (2007), Gounden and Merrifield (1995) specifically put great emphasis on this. The importance of the collective effort of the community in challenging the circumstances in which development takes place was highlighted (Merrifield et al, 1993: 322).

As previously mentioned, Laverack (2006: 113) defined empowerment as a process in which a group of powerless people start to work together in order to change issues that affect their lives. While in Erstad's (1997: 326) study of empowerment in the workplace, there is reference to Nixon's (1994) five-point empowerment strategy which included the following: developing strong relationships with colleagues; expanding networks and making use of internal and external support groups (Erstad, 1997: 326). It became clear from these studies that the affected people need to form strong relationships and expand their networks amongst themselves and to other organizations (i.e. the Department of Human Settlements (DHS) in South Africa) in order to have control and change matters concerning their living conditions.

2.6.4. Growth and Skills Development

This determinant was identified from the studies written by Erstad (1997), Chamberlin (1997), Frymier, Shulman and Houser (1996) and also Nelson, Hall and Walsh-Bowers (1998). In Chamberlin's (1997: 44) paper, he emphasised that the process of empowerment has to show evidence that the person being empowered is being equipped with new skills that he or she deems important. The implementation of tools and techniques together with a good learning environment were amongst some of the attributes mentioned by Erstad (1997: 332) for the

process of achieving empowerment. Luechauer and Shulman (1993 as cited in Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183) spoke of the alignment of organizational goals together with personal goals which at the end of the day promote learning, fulfilment and personal growth. The improvement of individual performance and potential is seen to be the ultimate goal when evaluating the evidence of empowerment amongst project participants (Long, 1996 as cited in Erstad, 1997: 325).

2.6.5. Improved Self-confidence

Terms such as confidence (Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181), self-esteem (Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181), pleasant moods and emotions (Narayan-Parker, 2005: 125) then lastly fulfilment (Luechauer and Shulman, 1993: 13) were all stated to be indicators of empowerment. These four elements by the different studies were summed up into one determinant called "improved self-confidence".

2.6.6. Meaningfulness and Impact

"Meaningfulness" and "impact" are two of the four dimensions discussed in Thomas and Velthouse's study (1990 as cited in Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183-184) concerning empowerment. Spreitzer (1995: 1443) made reference to these two dimensions which explained the importance of an individual or group of people in understanding the weight of their individual tasks on the project as a whole. Impact was specifically explained as how an individual views his or her task contributing towards the goals that were set.

2.6.7. Self-Accountability

The importance of self-accountability as one of the determinants of empowerment was derived from a few studies including: Pastor (1996 as cited in Erstad, 1997: 325); Senge (1990, as cited in Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183); Van Bergen and Ramasodi (2005: 2) and lastly, Mehlomakulu and Marais (1999: 93).

Their studies emphasised the importance of the beneficiaries of a project being involved, making meaningful contributions and taking ownership of the project as this would increase their sense of accountability which they deemed to be an important attitude necessary for achieving empowerment.

2.6.8. Initiative

Kasmel and Anderson (2001: 801) referred to empowerment as the ability for people to take the initiative and sustain activities leading to a long term change. Narayan-Parker (2005: 125) referred to it as the desire to act. This all comes down to individuals or a group of people taking the initiative to make a positive change towards something that dissatisfies them.

2.6.9. Choice

The availability of options enables people to attain that decision-making power that Chamberlin (1997: 44) referred to in his study. When people are deprived of choice they are equally deprived of taking any decisions as they have to settle for what is being offered.

2.6.10. Desired Change

The desire for a change and the evidence of change were identified as common determinants. Kasmel and Anderson (2001: 801) referred to a change in people's quality of life. When an individual or a group of people are dissatisfied with the status quo, they desire a change and therefore set up objectives to achieve the change that they require. Erstad (1997: 326) also emphasised the importance of establishing a vision. This means that throughout the process, there should be evidence of change evaluated against a set of objectives.

2.7. Background of RDP Process Versus PHP

Having explored the diverse definitions of empowerment, how it is evaluated and its common determinants, it was important to dissect the processes and conditions of the two housing models that are being examined in this study. This section explains the steps that every applicant in need of an RDP or a PHP house goes through in South Africa. How they apply for the house, which criteria is used in order to determine whether each applicant is eligible to be a beneficiary of the RDP or PHP projects and which parties are involved. Understanding the processes and conditions enabled the researcher to identify whether the determinants of empowerment are evident or lacking in the two housing models. Which is what the study will assess in the section following this one (section 2.8).

Chapter one gave an introduction to the different housing delivery methods that can be found in South Africa. The housing models that are the focus of this study are government provided (RDP) and self-help housing (PHP) which are two of the three models which are available (Landman and Napier, 2010: 301). RDP housing is one of the outcomes of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, which is subsidised by government and applicable to households earning less than R3 500 per month. PHP housing is a form of state aided self-help housing in which the government provides funding to groups of beneficiaries to pool their resources and contribute their labour so as to make the most of their housing subsidies (Ramasodi and van Bergen, 2005: 5 and National Treasury, 2009: 99). While the construction and delivery of RDP housing is solely controlled by government, in the case of PHP housing the beneficiaries take part towards the building of their houses by taking decisions that influence the housing process and product and also contribute towards the construction (Roper, 2011). Due to their apparent dissimilarities in procedure, these two housing models can present different results when the process of evaluating empowerment in them is undertaken.

2.7.1. RDP Housing Processes

2.7.1.1. Application process

Receiving or qualifying for an RDP house has an application process in which individuals in need of a house complete an application form and submit it to their ward councillors (van Wynegaa, 2010). This application can also be submitted at any Housing Department in the local municipal area (Mhlanga, 2012). The names of the applicants are added to the database and consequently to the housing waiting list (Mhlanga, 2012). The municipality itself is not in charge of the actual processing (screening, etc.) and building of the RDP houses, it merely supports the national and provincial government by making the forms available at the municipal level and by collecting the names and identification copies of the applicants (van Wynegaa, 2010). However, the Constitution of South Africa (section 156) and the Housing Act of 1997 (section 10) states that municipalities can be accredited to administer the National Housing Programmes if these functions can be delivered effectively within the municipality (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2014: 235). Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality has been accredited with level 2 for housing delivery. However, the Provincial Department of Human Settlements is currently still doing the majority of the administration.

2.7.1.2. Criteria for qualification

One can only qualify for an RDP house if he or she is a South African Citizen; is over 21 years of age, is married, living with a partner or is single with dependents and if the total household income is less than R3500 (Mhlanga, 2012; Educational and Training Unit, 2002; Corruption watch, 2014). The total household income referred to means that in an instance where a married couple is applying for an RDP house; their combined income should not be more than R3500. Beneficiaries who have owned a house or property previously in South Africa cannot qualify for a housing subsidy (Mhlanga, 2012; Educational and Training Unit, 2002).

2.7.1.3. Conditions of the house

The following conditions apply to RDP housing beneficiaries. Beneficiaries can only get one housing subsidy, meaning in the event that they apply for a housing subsidy while married, both names of the partners will be recorded on the database. Should the couple undergo a divorce the separate individuals will not qualify for another subsidy even when remarried to different partners (Mhlanga, 2012; Educational and Training Unit, 2002).

2.7.2. PHP housing processes

2.7.2.1. Broad Background of PHP and ePHP

People's Housing Process (PHP) housing is a term used in South African to refer to state aided self-help housing. The process of a PHP housing project "involves beneficiaries actively participating in decision-making over the housing process and housing product" the policy emphasizes that individuals and community members are empowered collectively through taking charge of the housing process themselves (Bathembu, 2010). The identification of land, acquiring necessary approvals, layout planning of the settlement and acquiring resources to start the development is basically in full control of the beneficiaries (Bathembu, 2010). The key principles of the initially developed policy of the PHP were the following: "partnerships, a people-driven process, skills transfer, and community empowerment" (NDoHS, 1995 as cited in Carey, 2009: 2).

A new Government Programme of Action (PoA) was established in 2007 with housing forming part of the social transformation programme (NDoHS, 2009: 8). Through this PoA, government repositioned the previous PHP programme and introduced the Enhanced People's housing process programme (EPHP). The ePHP takes a much broader approach with greater flexibility while keeping the innermost principles of people-centred development (Carey, 2009: 13 and Himlin 2008). The ePHP states that it "encourages communities to actively contribute and participate

in the housing development process so that communities take ownership of the process and do not just act as passive recipients of housing” (NDoHS, 2008 as cited in Carey, 2009: 13 and Himlin 2008). It builds on livelihoods currently existing so as to capitalise on an already established social capital (NDoHS, 2008 as cited in Carey, 2009: 13 and Himlin 2008). The NDoHS (2008, as cited in Carey, 2009: 13) states that the main objective of the PHP programme is to deliver improved human settlements and that can only be achieved through “developing livelihoods interventions” which lead to outcomes including job creation, community empowerment, skills transfer, etc. (NDoHS, 2008 as cited in Carey, 2009: 13 and Himlin 2008).

2.7.2.2. Qualification Criteria

One of the main entry level requirements is that individuals need to be part of an organized community group, individuals can indicate that they want to be part of such a group should it exist or a group of individuals can establish such a group (Bathembu, 2010 and NDoHS, 2009: 19). Beneficiaries can also be individuals who are part of an organised savings group (Western Cape Government, 2013)

The pre-application requirements of individuals who want to be part of the ePHP process is very similar to those of RDP housing, though allowing much greater variety as compared to the RDP housing process. However, the ePHP process still requires that the individuals be South African citizens, be married or have dependents, be individuals who have not yet benefited from housing subsidies, amongst other conditions, further elaboration on these conditions can be seen in the National Housing Code (NDoHS, 2009: 21-25).

The ePHP housing projects appear to appeal to a much broader scale and offer a great amount of choice in comparison to the generic RDP housing settlement (NDoHS, 2009: 19-20 and Western Cape Government, 2013). The programme can be applied in rural areas where a Permission to Occupy (PTO) has been acquired, it can be applied to green fields development, hostel refurbishments,

informal settlements upgrade, in-situ upgrades, it can accommodate different housing densities and different products and processes are highly encouraged (NDoHS, 2009: 19-20 and Western Cape Government, 2013).

2.7.2.3. Conditions of the PHP

There are conditions that apply to an ePHP project that differ to conditions of RDP projects. For example, an ePHP project can only be applied where approved Community Resource Organisations (CROs) have been established in a Province (NDoHS, 2009: 20). These CROs can be any consortium put together specifically for the purposes of development (NGO, FBO). Once the CRO has been screened (for necessary skills) and approved, it is then that it can be placed on the approved list. Then the community makes their own choice regarding which CRO they prefer to make use of within their province of jurisdiction (NDoHS, 2009: 20). The other condition is that an ePHP will only be applied where communities are prepared to make minimum community contributions (NDoHS, 2009: 20).

2.8. The Application of Empowerment Determinants in Housing Processes and Literature

With the empowerment determinants in place and the processes of the two housing models discussed in detail in the previous sections, it is now relevant to investigate whether the empowerment determinants can be identified in the two housing models. The indicators for each of these determinants will be presented first which can be useful for identifying and evaluating the evidence of empowerment determinants or lack thereof in existing literature and housing documents or policies regarding the two housing processes.

2.8.1. Power

Beneficiaries having authority over matters concerning the houses they are to reside in give way to decision-making power (Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999: 93).

Having decision-making power and having the opportunity to make meaningful contributions on how your house is to be designed, constructed and managed stimulates individual and social wellbeing (Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999: 93). Even though South African housing policy emphasises a people-centred approach, that means effective community participation and an active role for the beneficiaries to partner with the public and private sectors in developing these houses (Miraftab, 2003: 226), studies have proved that despite the initial intent, community participation has been very minimal in housing developments (Miraftab, 2003: 226). Mehlomakulu and Marais (1999: 93) state that authority and decision-making power are important for achieving “subjective wellbeing” and subjective wellbeing is a critical indicator of empowerment (Narayan-Parker, 2005: 125), however studies are showing that such authority and decision-making power through community participation mechanisms has been limited (Miraftab, 2003: 226).

2.8.2. Control

This determinant collaborates with the determinant of power, and makes reference to whether people have the power to control issues that affect their lives and whether they are able to influence their environment (Laverack, 2006: 113; Segal, Silveran and Tempkin, 1995: 215).

Mehlomakulu and Marais (1999: 92) draw a clear distinction of the level of control for the beneficiaries of RDP houses versus those of self-help housing. They highlight that building your own house means you are in control of the building decision-making versus government building a house for you limiting your ability to take decisions (Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999: 92). In theory, self-help housing beneficiaries appear to have much more control over development processes (Bathembu, 2010) as compared to RDP housing beneficiaries.

2.8.3. Growth and Skills Development

This determinant is concerned with whether individuals are being equipped with new skills (Chamberlin, 1997: 44 and Nelson, Hall and Walsh-Bowers, 1998: 58), learning new tools and techniques (Erstad, 1997: 332), and improving their performance and potential (Erstad, 1997: 325) within the process of the project. This is done to eventually enable individuals to function independently (Nelson, Hall and Walsh-Bowers, 1998: 58).

Thwala (2005) is of the opinion that low-cost housing has great potential to address unemployment, poverty and skill shortages in disadvantaged communities if proper labour-intensive programmes could be established for housing projects. He states that experience has shown that South Africa has not been very successful in executing this (Thwala, 2005: 6). He adds that the challenge with creating employment opportunities through labour-intensive methods is the fact that no pilot projects with training programmes or sufficient time to allow for proper planning at a national scale was done (Thwala, 2005: 6). He says individual skills were not improved and that the training that was available fell short of being useful for post-project employment (Thwala, 2005: 6). Contrary to Thwala's findings (2005: 6), Ntema's (2011: 109) study on PHP projects in the Free State revealed that greater opportunities were afforded to women and people with disabilities in the construction process (these are groups that were previously marginalised in the construction industry), these two groups finally had a role to play in the housing project and the PHP projects created job opportunities for the local people (Ntema, 2011: 109).

2.8.4. Meaningfulness and Impact

As discussed earlier, the reference to impact aims to determine whether a person understands the meaning (Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183) and impact his or her role has on the overall objective (Spreitzer, 1995: 1443).

Ntema (2001, 107) states that one of the impacts that were evident in the PHP project that he was studying was the improvement of previously strained relationships within communities. The beneficiaries explained that working together in an effort to achieve a common goal assisted the community members to bury the hatchet concerning old grudges and this eventually lead to improved community relationships (Ntema, 2001: 108). This proves that the community could identify the importance of their individual roles in the overall goal and that working together was critical for the success of the project. One of the beneficiaries from the PHP project in Bothaville stated that "Because of this project, we learned to care and support each other" (Ntema, 2011: 109).

2.8.5. Self-accountability

Van Bergen and Ramasodi (2005: 2) state that knowing the history of South African politics there is "an urgent need to foster an attitude where members of society take ownership and become citizens". Mehlomakulu and Marais (1999: 93) add that when people are given the opportunity to provide meaningful contributions to the development of their dwellings, it increases their levels of "personal responsibility and ownerships" thus leading to improved maintenance and management of the buildings.

The ePHP's benchmark is to allow the communities to contribute and participate in the housing development process to ensure that communities take ownership of the process (NDoHS, 2008 as cited in Carey, 2009: 13 and Himlin 2008).

2.8.6. Improved Self-confidence

"People tend to seek out places where they feel competent and confident, places where they can make sense of the environment while also being engaged with it." (Alexander and Fairbridge, 1999: 223). This is one of the determining factors of preference of one place over the other when individuals seek a place to live in.

Elevation of “citizenship and pride” is one of the added benefits of self-help housing when compared to RDP housing according to international donors and NGO’s (Landman and Napier, 2010: 300-301). In Ntema’s study (2011: 109) one of the beneficiaries from a PHP project in Bothaville indicated that the project assisted them to regain their pride and that assisting other people gave them fulfilment. Aigbavboa and Thwala (2013: 1332) state that satisfaction by occupants towards the final product of the house will be determined by their level of participation as they are in a better position to communicate areas that need consideration during the development process and addressing such areas will ultimately lead to housing satisfaction (Aigbavboa and Thwala, 2013: 1332).

2.8.7. Choice

Previous studies carried out to understand the full spectrum of housing preferences have acknowledged several factors that influence housing choice (Beamish *et al*, 2001: 3). Housing needs and values, economic ranking, cultural customs and phases in a life cycle of a family, are amongst the few attributes that were highlighted in the study (Beamish *et al*, 2001: 3). Somerville (1998 as cited in Lawson and Kearns, 2010: 1463) states that empowerment in housing should put residents in a position where they can choose their own way forward. Residents should be able to choose their preferred type and level of participation, control (ownership or management) and independence (Somerville, 1998 as cited in Lawson and Kearns, 2010: 1464).

In terms of development choices, ePHP projects provide greater variety, for example, their projects can be executed for greenfield developments, hostel revamping, informal settlement upgrade and in-situ upgrade (DoHS, 2009: 20).

2.8.8. Desired Change

There are two aspects of change, the first one is the desire for change and the second one is the evidence of change. Desired change in this context can be

interpreted as a need, in this instance a need for formal shelter. The stimulus for this particular need can originate from a number of various factors eminent in poor households including an individual's need for independence, dignified shelter, bigger living space, secure tenure, amongst other factors.

One of the main points of criticism regarding RDP housing is their inability to structurally meet the quantitative housing needs of its beneficiaries (Harms, 1992 as cited in Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999: 93) or general needs of low income earners (Turner, 1976 and Gilbert and Gugler, 1992 as cited in Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999: 93). According to international donors and NGO's, this challenge can be curbed should the government promote the option of self-help housing as it maximises participation, enables beneficiaries to design houses that meet their specifications and needs (larger and better houses), thus ensuring higher levels of beneficiary satisfaction (Landman and Napier, 2010: 300-301).

As much as community participation is emphasised as a major prerequisite to achieve many of the empowerment indicators, Lawson and Kearns (2009: 1462) argue that "if people are not aware of their real interests, simply creating greater opportunities for involvement and participation will not be sufficient to empower them to argue for or make necessary changes". This means that the beneficiaries need to be aware of their vision; desired goal and "real interest". That understanding, together with their active participation can be a major driver in arguing for the change they desire, meeting that desired goal and thus achieving empowerment. Thwala (2005: 6) further elaborates on this by explaining that one of the reasons employment creation through the provision of low-cost housing has not been successful in South Africa, is due to the fact that there is a lack of clear objectives linking short and long term visions of a project.

2.8.9. Initiative

In Harris' investigation (1998 and 2003 as cited in Marais *et al*, 2008: 3) on the origins of self-help housing he indicates that the "idea of government support to

enable families to build their own houses came from the people themselves, and not from government or international experts". Meanwhile, self-help housing in South Africa traces back to the colonial era "where the preference was for owner-built housing for Africans to save costs" (Landman and Napier, 2010: 300).

In the case of PHP housing, the process that has to be followed demonstrates that the beneficiaries are the main initiative takers and drivers of the course of action (Western Cape Government, 2013). As previously noted, one of the conditions for individuals to benefit from PHP projects is to take the initiative to form or be part of an organised community group (Bathembu, 2010 and NDoHS, 2009: 19). Bathembu (2010) also notes that the policy on PHP housing emphasises that individuals and community members are empowered by taking charge of the housing process themselves.

2.8.10. Participation

Davy (2007: ii) states that public participation is essential for achieving sustainable development. Due to housing being a development practice, the public should be given the opportunity to participate in the process (Davy, 2007: 1). The determinants of empowerment (as identified earlier on in this chapter) are reiterated by Davy (2007) in his assessment of the relationship between public participation, development and housing. He indicates that public participation is an essential part of human growth as it develops "self-confidence, pride, initiative, responsibility, cooperation" (Davy, 2007:1). The relationship between the empowerment determinants and development is also mentioned by Burkey (1993 as cited in Davy, 2007:1) when he states that the process taken for people to "learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems" is the fundamental nature of development and Davy (2007) believes that this can be achieved through effective and efficient public participation processes. Sowman and Urquhart (1998 as cited in Davy, 2007: 3) note that in matters concerning housing development, community empowerment can be achieved through encouraging public participation in decision-making processes. "The lack of

appropriate public participation strategies in housing will result in a failure to establish authentic and empowering people-centred development” (Davy, 2007: 3).

The ePHP is designed to involve the community and offers them the platform to form effective partnerships in order to participate and have decision-making power over the project from the start to the end of the development process (Carey, 2009: 1 and Bathembu, 2010). The policy states that it encourages communities to participate and have a sense of ownership over the project as opposed to being “passive recipients” (NDoHS, 2008 as cited in Carey, 2009: 13 and Himlin 2008).

The initial PHP policy was understood as a process that would involve the community in organizing, decision-making and management of the development, however South African NGOs advanced it to saying that it includes the establishment of effective partnerships; citizenship and that people get directly involved in the development process of their communities (Carey, 2009: 1).

The initial intention of the Reconstruction and Development Programme was that its process would be driven from within the communities meaning that the affected communities would be involved with the planning and implementation of the development (Aigbavboa and Thwala, 2013: 1334). The National Housing Act of 1997 further obligated all the spheres of government to consult with the communities affected by the housing development and to ensure that the projects are “administered in a transparent and equitable manner” (Aigbavboa and Thwala, 2013: 1334).

Though the importance of public participation in housing projects is greatly emphasised in the Housing Act of 1997, Hassen (2003 as cited in Davy, 2007:19) states that it has not occurred in that manner in practice as “participation is often interpreted to mean acquiescence and voluntary contributions of labour and resources by low income beneficiaries who have no real influence on a project’s goals and design or in establishing the rules within which it must operate”

2.9. Summary

The review showed that environmental psychology has recognised and often studied the relationship between people and their physical surroundings. Research showed that a house has a multifunctional effect on human life; it is able to strengthen social relationships; give a person a sense of identity and also serve as a connection to urban opportunities.

Numerous techniques for evaluating empowerment were investigated and analysed. Knowledge was gained with regards to the limitations of evaluating empowerment. All different studies made use of different techniques that were appropriate for their context. The techniques included identifying empowerment indicators, then using them in a survey. Other methods were more people-centred and involved the community that is being studied to define what empowerment means and if they were allowed to evaluate it themselves. Other researchers made use of already established surveys and expanded on them for their unique circumstances. This analysis of various techniques which were used to evaluate empowerment assisted to define the best possible approach to take for this study.

The end of the literature review explains the two housing processes in detail. This made it possible to identifying empowerment determinants in the different literature sources on low-cost housing in South Africa. What became a challenge is that some determinants were more evident in PHP housing literature than RDP housing literature and vice versa. This judgment does not necessarily mean empowerment was evident in one housing project over another, but rather that one specific study or report (e.g. report on PHP housing) referred to those determinants in more detail compared to another study done, for example on RDP housing. For instance, the power determinant could be picked up from a study done specifically on PHP but that same extent of detail would not be found in a study done on RDP housing. Even then, the studies did not go as far as to analyse the level of these determinants in each housing processes. Therefore, a strong case on the evidence or lack of empowerment in the two housing processes could not be built. This

necessitates further investigation. Given this, the intention of the field investigation is to provide further information that could not be retrieved from the literature review, targeting the beneficiaries themselves.

An extensive evaluation of the definition of empowerment was carried out. This was done in order to achieve a method to recognise and thus analyse empowerment in different environments. In the course of understanding empowerment and the common language that was used to explain it, determinants around that “common language” were drawn. Below is a list of the determinants that were identified and the indicators that can be used to analyse these determinants.

2.9.1. The Power Determinant and its Indicators

The evidence of “decision-making power” can be assessed by questioning the beneficiaries on how well they were involved in the decision-making of the final product of their house. This includes the location, structure and design of the house amongst other elements. They can also be asked to indicate in their opinion who they thought had the most decision-making power in the project.

2.9.2. The Control Determinant and its Indicators

The indicators for the control determinant can be related to the power determinant by asking beneficiaries if they had any control over the location, structure and design of the house.

2.9.3. The Growth and Skills Determinant and its Indicators

To analyse this determinant, an assessment can be done on the types of skills the beneficiaries obtained by being part of the project and whether they deemed those skills to be important for their lives. The beneficiaries can be requested to indicate what they learnt from the project or by being part of the project and whether they considered what they learnt to be important or useful for future purposes. The

processes that were followed for the completion of the housing projects can also be evaluated whether they promoted a good learning environment for the beneficiaries.

2.9.4. The Meaningfulness and Impact Determinant and its Indicators

This determinant can be analysed by getting the beneficiaries' views on how they understood their roles in the overall project and how they felt they contributed or made an impact towards the successful implementation of the project.

2.9.5. The Self-Accountability Determinant and its Indicators

Self-accountability can be analysed by evaluating how the individuals contributed and involved themselves in the project. The level of ownership taken and responsibility towards the final product of the house can also be used to analyse accountability amongst the beneficiaries.

2.9.6. The Confidence Determinant and its Indicators

The four dimensions (confidence, self-esteem, fulfilment, pleasant moods and emotions) that formed this determinant can be used in the interview schedule to determine whether there was an improvement or decline of self-confidence amongst beneficiaries post the project. Beneficiaries can be asked to indicate whether they felt fulfilled, motivated, encouraged and confident about their new homes.

2.9.7. The Choice Determinant and its Indicators

The evidence of options that were offered regarding the location, design or structure of the house can be evaluated and used to analyse the choice determinant.

2.9.8. The Desired Change Determinant and its Indicators

Change can be analysed by asking the beneficiaries to state what their vision or objectives were with regards to the house that they wanted or the project and to indicate how well they felt they achieved that vision or objectives.

2.9.9. The Initiative Taking Determinant and its Indicators

The beneficiaries can be questioned on which steps they took independently to be part of the housing project and which steps they took throughout the course of the project to create a positive change.

2.9.10. The Participation Determinant and its Indicators

The evidence of effective communication and participation platforms between project stakeholders (i.e. the beneficiaries and the Department of Human Settlements) can be evaluated as well as the evidence of strong community relationships and networks formed during the project.

These empowerment determinants and their indicators can be summarised in a table as follows:

Determinants	Indicator
Power	Evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making power amongst beneficiaries and • Beneficiaries possessing the power to control the project process and the final product (RDP or PHP house).
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficiaries having control over the project process and final product of the house.
Participation	Evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong working relationships amongst beneficiaries/community. • Expanded networks amongst beneficiaries and stakeholders of the project. • Effective communication and participation

	platforms between beneficiaries and other stakeholders of the project.
Growth and Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the beneficiary was equipped with new skills that he or she deems important. • Evidence of a conducive learning environment for the beneficiaries.
Improved Self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of fulfilment, motivation, encouragement and confidence from the beneficiaries' point of view.
Meaningfulness and Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of beneficiaries understanding their individual tasks to the overall project outcome.
Self-Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that beneficiaries take ownership and responsibility over the project.
Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that beneficiaries took self-initiated steps prior and during the project.
Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of options regarding the location, design or structure of the house.
Desired Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of previously set vision and or objectives (or expectations) by beneficiaries. • Assessment of how well the vision or objectives (or expectations) were met.

Table 1: Empowerment Determinants and Indicators

The next step was to examine whether these determinants and indicators can be used to evaluate empowerment in the context of low-cost housing. This posed challenges because analysing determinants such as power, control, improved self-confidence, meaningfulness and impact can only be based on the beneficiaries' opinions and do not possess any tangible evidence that can be evaluated. This can cause different responses from beneficiaries within the same project. The remaining determinants (participation, growth and skills development, self-accountability, initiative choice, change) can be more manageable to assess. Their attributes are quite straight forward and the evidence of what is being evaluated can easily be identified.

Though there are determinants that will be more challenging to assess as compared to others, they all still possess some similarities, more especially their indicators, which confirms that they are interrelated and compatible towards evaluating the same attribute, empowerment. With all these confirmations in place one can begin

to evaluate whether beneficiaries of these two housing projects were empowered or further disempowered, which will respond to the main aim of the research.

The next chapter will discuss the data gathering phase and will give more detail on the designs and methods that were used to gather information for the study. This is the phase where questions will be structured around the empowerment determinants and indicators and these questions will be used to gather information from the beneficiaries in the two housing projects.

3. CHAPTER 3: Research design and methods

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the research methodology that was applied in this study. The chapter begins by presenting some of the limitations that the researcher experienced in collecting data. Thereafter a background of the township Botsabelo and the two projects to be used in this study follow. The section thereafter presents the method that was used to select the study area. The reasons why projects located specifically in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality is provided as well as the reasons why the two specific RDP and PHP projects were selected which relates to the research design. The research design, approach and method that were selected are explained in that order. The research design explains why a non-equivalent group design was decided on and how external factors were controlled to ensure that the projects and sample were as comparable as possible. The research approach explains why the researcher decided on making use of a qualitative approach versus a quantitative one which influenced the sample selection method and sample size which is also elaborated on. The research method engages on the content of the tools (semi-structured interviews) that were used to collect data from the participants of the two housing projects. The validity and reliability of the study is discussed in the last section of the chapter and explains how the data that was collected in the study areas was processed and analysed.

3.2. Challenges Experienced with Data Collection

Every study has obstacles that threaten the effective execution of the research. It all depends on how well the researcher manages these challenges and limitations as that will determine how successful the research is. Even then, there may be challenges eminent in the research that is beyond the control of researcher. The

following represents the challenges that the researcher experienced when collecting information and data for this research.

3.2.1. Having to Explain Empowerment

In conducting the first round of interviews, the researcher wanted to understand how beneficiaries viewed empowerment in terms of how they would define it and the factors which they considered to have the greatest influence on empowerment. However, what was found was that only one beneficiary understood the term. This meant that the researcher had to provide a basic description of the term in order to continue with the interviews.

3.2.2. Unwillingness to Participate

Some beneficiaries were not willing to participate in the study even though it was explained that the study was purely for academic purposes. Some beneficiaries were of the opinion that the researcher was a representative of a particular political party.

3.2.3. Credible and Reliable Information

This was one of the most prominent challenges that the researcher experienced. Obtaining credible information from the Department of Human Settlements was challenging. The system that the officials use is not user friendly in terms of allowing the user to filter only the information that is needed. Therefore obtaining information especially about the RDP projects was very time consuming due to the nature of this system. On the other hand, officials in the department that worked with PHP projects indicated that they could not provide me with reports as the information contained in them was confidential. Therefore the researcher got information through an exploratory interview session with the officials. Concise credible information was obtained towards the end of the study from consultants who were appointed to update the information system of the department. Precise

information regarding the exact number of units that had been completed and paid for was obtained. The initial system reflected that 487 houses of the RDP project had been completed. However, this system confirmed that only 313 houses had been built. This was confirmed by the number of claims submitted to the department for complete houses. The system confirms that there were 101 houses for the PHP project that were completed and claimed for, whereas the information initially provided when this research started was that there were 100 houses that were built for the project. However in the case of the RDP project, the consultants also explained that the number of claims may not necessarily reflect what is on the ground. There could be more completed houses which the contractor still has to claim for. After that process is completed, the information will be updated.

All this information could have been verified by the contractors. Despite numerous requests for information by the researcher to the contractor of the Lebone Support Organisation, the information was never received. Contractors appointed for the selected RDP project were changed frequently due to poor performance. Therefore the researcher did not explore that avenue as she could not verify which contractors built the houses of the beneficiaries that were included in the sample.

Then lastly, the project name for the RDP project was constantly changed as they appointed a new contractor. The name of this project changed from being Botshabelo 900 Koena, to Botshabelo 900 Suprim, then now most recently Mobility and Pamper. The two contractors, Pamper and Mobility, were allocated the remaining units which the previous contractors failed to build. This inconstancy regarding the project name made it difficult to verify information obtained from different sources. However, for the purposes of this research, the project name that will be used is Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction.

3.3. Study Areas

3.3.1. Background of Botshabelo

Botshabelo, which means “a place of refuge”, is notoriously known as one of the largest townships in the Free State Province (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013: 41) under the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality jurisdiction (see figure 1). It is situated 55 km east of Bloemfontein, between Bloemfontein and Thaba Nchu (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013: 41). It was established in 1978 during the apartheid times to accommodate the displaced people in the Free State (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013: 77). The initial intention was to place the people there who would provide labour for Bloemfontein (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013: 77). Then people started to reside there to be closer to work opportunities offered in both Thaba Nchu and Bloemfontein (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013: 41). Though the township was initially created to accommodate displaced families and to house labourers, it is growing with opportunities. There is currently an industrial park which is said to be an important node for economic development (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013:194). There are also chicken farms, a game reserve and the Rustfontein Dam which holds some tourism potential if explored (Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, 2013:194). Botshabelo is divided into a number of sections. Data for this specific study was collected specifically from the K-Section.

3.3.1.1. Locality of K-Section

The K-Section of Botshabelo is located in Botshabelo West in ward 28. The section is greatly dominated by subsidised houses of different projects that developed over different years. Some of these projects were a result of informal settlements that began to mushroom in various extensions of this ward. According to Statistics South Africa (Space Time Research. No Date) there were 589 informal dwellings during the time that the census of 2011 took place. These informal settlers invaded vacant stands that were intended for social amenities (i.e. schools). These stands

were then rezoned for residential purposes and that is when the formalisation process began and the various subsidised housing projects emerged. There were 4 055 households in this ward at time the census of 2011 took place, the gender for head of households was 2:1 for males, while 73,8% of the households in this ward earned less than R3 8201 annually. This amounts to a monthly household income of less than R3 183,33 (Space Time Research. No Date).

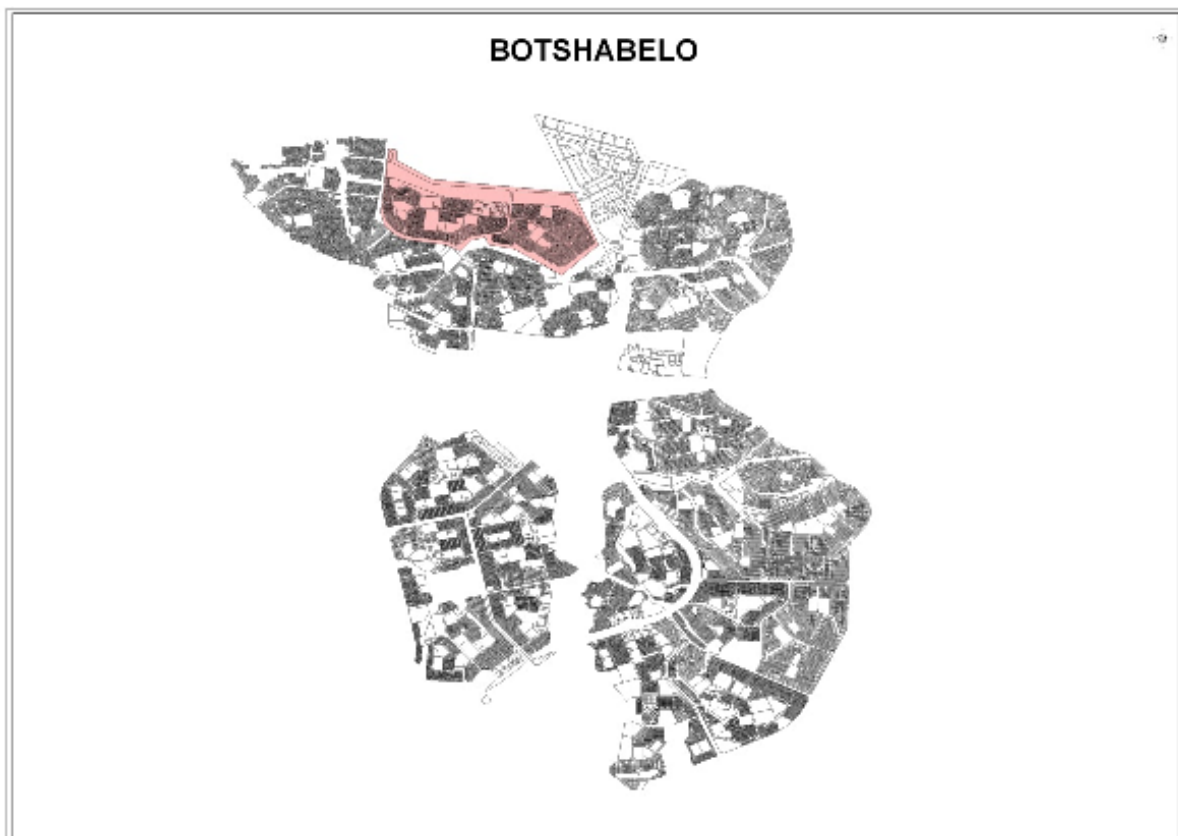


Figure 2: Botshabelo K-Section highlighted in red

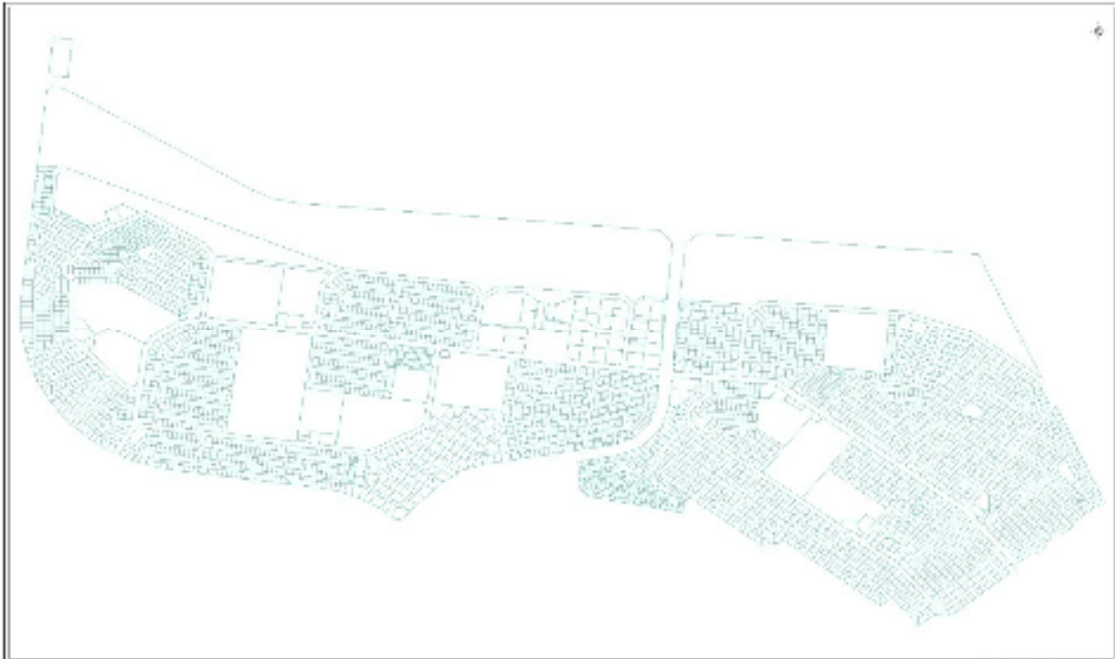


Figure 3: Botshabelo K-Section, where the sample of both projects was collected

3.3.2. Background of Lebone Development Trust People's Housing Process



Figure 4: Examples of houses of the Lebone Development Trust Project

The MEC of the province provided an allocation of how many PHP or RDP houses would be built for that year after being informed by the housing need as per the specifications of the Mangaung Integrated Development Plan. The application of both these projects was done by Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality to the Free State Provincial Department of Human Settlements.

In the year 2006, the Lebone Development Trust commenced and 101 houses were built covering three sections of Botshabelo (see figure 5 below). The duration of the construction period was a year, meaning that the project was completed in 2007. The majority (98) of the units were located in the K-Section, while 2 units were built in J-Section and 1 unit in T-Section. This project was an in-situ upgrade i.e. upgrading of informal settlements in their existing locations). The bulk infrastructure was already available. The beneficiaries of the project appointed a legal entity in terms of section 21 of the Non-Profit Organisation Act 71 of 1997. The name of the legal entity was the Lebone Development Trust, the entity was appointed for its technical expertise as well as to provide assistance with the administration of the project.

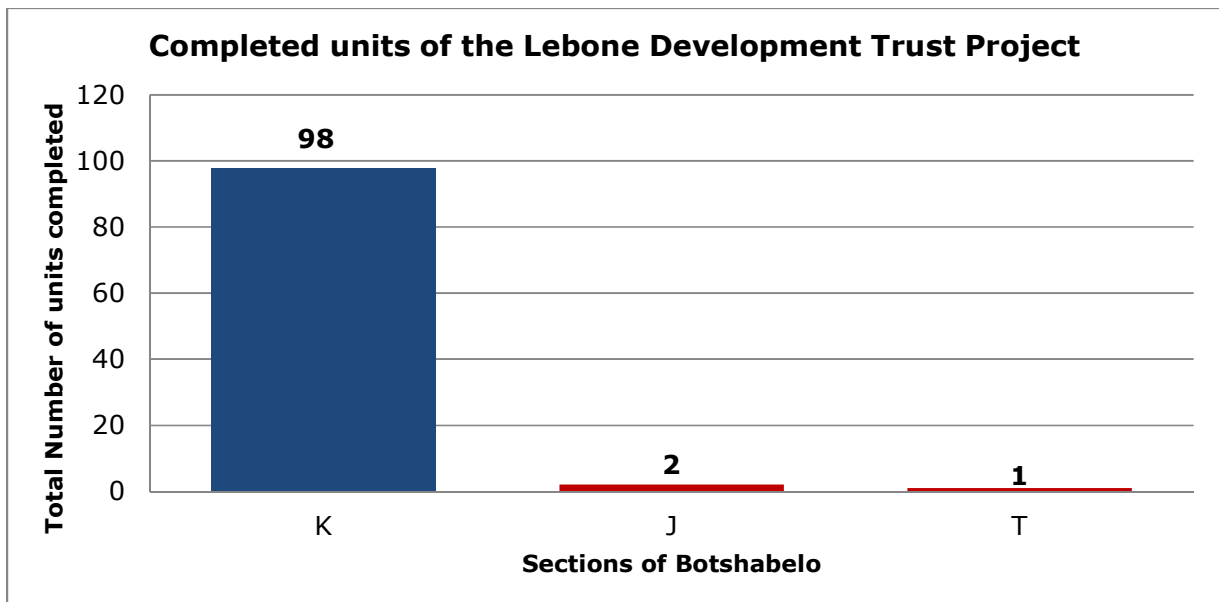


Figure 5: Number of completed units per sections for the Lebone Development Trust Project

3.3.3. Background of Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project



Figure 6: Houses from Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project

This project was also an in-situ upgrade. It commenced in the year 2010 and was still in progress at the time of the study. The total number of houses that were meant to be built was 900, however, only 313 houses were completed. The contractors that were appointed for the project were frequently changed (their contracts terminated) due to poor performance. This was what delayed the completion of the project. Even though this study was conducted with the beneficiaries of only K-Section of Botshabelo, this RDP project covered numerous sections of Botshabelo (see figure 7). The majority of the completed houses were located in M-Section with 68 units, followed by K-Section with a total number of 51 units.

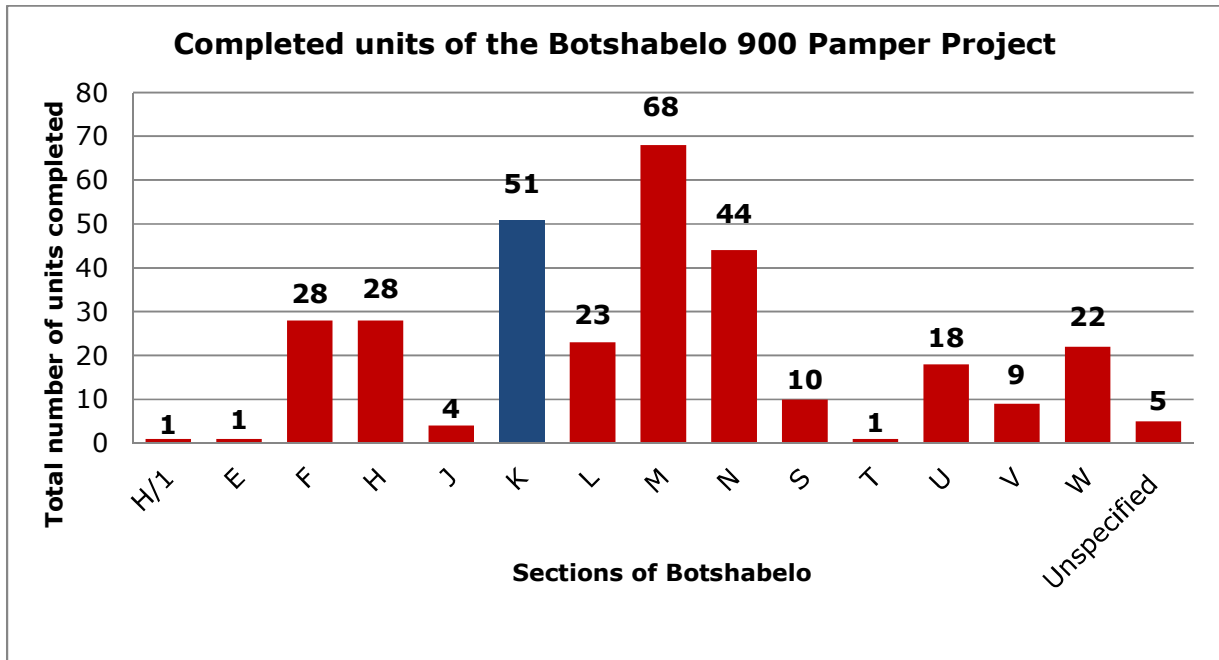


Figure 7: Number of completed units per sections for the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project



Figure 8: Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project House

3.4. Considerations for the Selection of Study Area

This section explains why projects located only in the Free State and Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality were considered.

3.4.1. Background Advantage

Familiarity puts the researcher at a better advantage as compared to an unfamiliar environment. It is a critical factor in selecting a study area to ensure that the researcher is comfortable and can verify the security of the area in which the study is to take place before the field work commences. The fact that the researcher is originally from the Free State and has spent 8 years living in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality was an added advantage with regards to familiarity of the study location.

3.4.2. Language Advantage

Language barriers or a lack of fluency of the common language in a study area can be a disadvantage and can pose major challenges when interviews have to be conducted. The majority of the residents in the study area are Sotho and Tswana speaking, which the researcher was fluent in. It was critical that the researcher was confident with the language most spoken in the study area as the interview schedules were formulated in English. Most people in the low income areas of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality did not choose English as a preferred language of communication. The researcher had to translate the questions into the interviewees' language of choice.

3.4.3. Existing Networks

Having existing working relationships with the local municipality can put the researcher at a better advantage in cases where official documents are needed or additional contacts concerning the study area is needed. The researcher was an employee of the Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in the Spatial Planning Directorate at the time of this research. The Directorate and the Department of COGTA work closely together with the Provincial Department of Human Settlements (DoHS) and the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality. The networks established by the researcher in the department of

COGTA, PDoHS and the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality were an advantage in carrying out the research.

3.4.4. Time and Cost Implications

When conducting research, one has to make use of one's resources in an efficient manner. Therefore, the study area chosen should not have an unfavourable impact on the time and cost aspect. The study area was in the same city that the researcher lived and worked in at the time. Therefore time and money was saved with regards to travelling.

3.5. Selection of RDP and PHP Projects for This Study

When deciding on the type of RDP or PHP projects that were used as a basis for executing this research, it was critical that the projects chosen possessed similar attributes to comply with the chosen research design. The actual projects obviously had some institutional differences (i.e. processes in terms of beneficiary involvement). However, those institutional differences are the main subject under scrutiny, to assess whether those differences in processes did actually impact on the beneficiaries' level of empowerment. Even then, the projects had to be carefully selected in order to ensure that the findings of the study are truly a result of the institutional differences and not necessarily a result of other external factors. The following subsections explain how the specific PHP and RDP projects for this study were chosen.

3.5.1. Selection of the PHP Project

Due to the fact that RDP developments are commonly found in most towns as compared to PHP developments, the researcher first identified a PHP development and then identified an RDP development comparable to it.

The researcher made contact with three officials from the Free State Provincial Department of Human Settlements. The first official the researcher contacted was

working in a different unit but was initially part of the unit responsible for PHP projects. This official provided the researcher with a list of successful and incomplete (unsuccessful) PHP projects in the Free State and also gave the researcher contact details of two other officials who work with PHP projects in the Department. These successful PHP projects were found in the following municipalities:

1. FezileDabi District Municipality
2. Lejweleputswa Local Municipality
3. Motheo Local Municipality (now called Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality),
and
4. Thabo Mofotsanyana District Municipality

The researcher made contact with the officials from the PHP unit in the Department of Human Settlements in order to verify whether the contents of the list received regarding the PHP projects was correct and reliable. The officials confirmed that the list was reliable and provided further information that the researcher needed regarding the location of the projects and the general process of PHP projects.

Though the researcher has worked with all the four listed municipalities, projects in the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality were most favourable due to familiarity, travelling distance and existing work relationships as explained in section 3.4.

The PHP projects in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality where the following:

Town	Name of the Support Organisation	Total Number of Approved Subsidies
Botshabelo	Lebone	101
ThabaNchu	Barolong Boo Seleka	100
ThabaNchu	Lesedi	71

Table 2: PHP projects in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality

The “Barolong Boo Seleka” was disqualified from the selection due to the fact that it is located on tribal land and might have caused complications in terms of accessibility and acquiring the necessary permission to conduct interviews. Of the remaining two PHP projects, the Lebone Development Trust project was more favourable due to a shorter travelling distance from where the researcher resides.

3.5.2. Selection of the RDP Project

Once the PHP project was confirmed and the area in which it was located was confirmed, the next step was to identify an RDP project within close proximity. The researcher requested information from the Department of Human Settlements to assess which project was located in the same section as the PHP project. That is how the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project was selected. This project was favoured due to the high concentration of beneficiaries in K-Section compared to the other projects. This meant that there was a larger target group in which a sample could be drawn from.

3.5.3. Verification of the Comparability of the Two Projects

3.5.3.1. Similar Qualification Criteria for Beneficiaries

The first most distinct element that made these two projects comparable was their similarities in terms of the qualification criteria that are used to consider beneficiaries (i.e. total household income of less than R3 500, applicants should be over the age of 21). This, however, is an attribute that is evident in all RDP and PHP projects.

3.5.3.2. Similar Location

The researcher ensured that the projects are located in close proximity to each other due to the nature of the research design. Comparing two projects located in different provinces, districts or towns would have introduced more factors that would have been challenging to control and would have threatened the credibility of the research design. This issue is elaborated further on in section 3.6.2 and 3.6.3.

3.5.3.3. Similar Physical Characteristics

The physical features of the two projects were quite indistinguishable. The confirmation of these similarities was important as beneficiaries are asked in both the first and the follow-up interviews to express their feelings towards the outcome of the house. Even though the houses look similar, there was a difference in result when assessing the beneficiaries level of confidence towards the final product of the house.



Figure 9: Example of Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction project (left). Example of Lebone Development Trust Project (right).

3.6. Research Design: Non-equivalent Group Design

3.6.1. Non-equivalent Comparison Group Design

A non-equivalent comparison group design will be used for selecting the participants of this study. A non-equivalent comparison group design is the most commonly used of the quasi-experimental designs (Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger, 2005: 138). This method is used when an existing group appears to be similar to the experimental group and thus can be compared to it. Random sampling is not used to select participants of the study; the researcher rather attempts to select groups that are as similar as possible (Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger, 2005: 138). However, it is likely that the resulting groups will be non-equivalent (Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger, 2005). In this case the experimental group will be the beneficiaries from the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction project and the comparison group will be the beneficiaries from the Lebone Development Trust project.

3.6.2. How External Factors Were Controlled through the Sampling Process

There are numerous fundamental factors that have the power to influence people in a community and thus have the power to influence the outcome of this research either than the intuitional differences between these two projects. For example, socio-economic dynamics such as educational levels (affecting the ability to understand and respond to questions) and societal and cultural attitudes (i.e. males being regarded as the main providers and would thus feel less empowered in their inability to afford a house compared to a female beneficiary). These factors could have had an impact on the findings of the study. It was thus critical for the researcher to collect data in such a manner that would limit factors beyond the scope of the study that could influence the findings. What was also important was for the researcher to admit to factors that could not or were not controlled that could have influenced the study. This is acceptable and inevitable for a non-equivalent research design being conducted in real life situations. The external and

internal factors of the study cannot be controlled as effectively as when conducting laboratory experiments. The following subsections explain the efforts of the researcher in controlling some of the factors:

3.6.2.1. Sample Drawn from the Same Location

Although the total number of the houses in both these projects covered various sections of Botshabelo, the researcher limited the data collection to only one section. As elaborated in the background of the two projects, this was where the majority of the beneficiaries were largely concentrated especially the beneficiaries of the PHP project. The purpose of this decision was to ensure that data is collected from people that encounter similar experiences. These experiences include: community networks (being part of a specific network of people); similar influences in terms of the character of the area including the people that reside in the area; similar political background (being represented by similar ward councillors and engaging in similar ward meetings) similar history in terms of when the beneficiaries began to settle in that section (assuming that the informal settlers began to reside in K-Section around the same period of time, unlike having to compare beneficiaries from different sections in which their waiting period for a house would not be the same).

One of the questions from the follow-up interviews was for the beneficiaries to elaborate on the strength of their community relationships. The beneficiaries gave similar responses, which further supports that beneficiaries from the same area are most likely to encounter similar experiences. For the purpose of this research, it was better for a sample of 25 beneficiaries (from each project) to be drawn from the same section. Drawing the sample from different sections would have produced better representation (especially for the RDP project) in terms of covering the wider Botshabelo area but it would have compromised the credibility of the research design. It was more important in this study that a certain level of control be attained to ensure that the results of the study are due to the institutional differences in the projects and no other external factors.

3.6.2.2. Same Data Collection Periods

The data collection for the first interview was conducted on similar days of the week (Saturdays) and within the same month. Data collection for the follow-up interview was also conducted in a similar fashion except there was a variance with months as additional beneficiaries had to be included to build on the sample size. The purpose of this was to ensure that variances with timeframes did not impact on responses.

3.6.2.3. Main Beneficiaries Were Chosen

While in the first interview various adult representatives of each household were interviewed to get an understanding how they would define and identify an empowered person. In the second field investigation, which was the most critical one for assessing beneficiary empowerment, only the main beneficiaries were included as part of the sample. This was critical as these were the people that were involved from the application processes until completion and they were the main population of interest.

3.6.3. Factors Beyond the Control of the Researcher That Could Have Affected the Outcomes of the Study

3.6.3.1. Human Differences That Could Have Influenced the Findings

These differences include being male or female, young versus old, educated versus illiterate, religious or non-religious, etc. The sampling method that was used, purposeful sampling, limited the ability of ensuring a structured selection of the beneficiaries. However, this method was beneficial as it maintained a certain level of representation of the overall target group in the K-Section.

Gender differences could have also attributed to the findings of the study. When assessing empowerment, especially in relation to new skills being gained, one might find that men are more accustomed and familiar with construction processes

than the females. Therefore the extent of gaining a new skill was probably greater for females than it was for men. Some men in the study attributed to this fact by indicating that they already had knowledge of construction.

In the case of illiteracy where beneficiaries feared to sign consent forms and could not read the documents (consent form or interview schedule) to verify whether the researcher was indeed there for academic purposes. The researcher requested other representatives of the household to verify the contents of the consent form. The researcher also recorded instead of writing down the responses of beneficiaries. That way they were more comfortable and more likely to give honest answers.

The beneficiaries' levels of intellect or education could have also influenced their responses and thus the findings. The manner in which the interviewees interpreted the questions could not be controlled, unless the response provided was evidently off the radar, then it could be rectified. While some beneficiaries were able to understand questions with ease, other struggled. Further clarification was provided by the researcher, but due to human error the explanations that were provided could not have been the same (i.e. similar words) and those inconsistencies could have also affected the findings.

3.6.3.2. Economic Dynamics

In terms of their economic standing, although the beneficiaries fell within the same bracket that their total households was less than R3500 at the time of the housing application. There may have been variances of income that fell within that bracket, and some households may have been relying on only one salary with different numbers of dependences increasing the economic burden. Though this may seem as though it would not have an influence on the results, it could affect how people responded to identifying someone who they considered to be empowered. Their own background and difficulties could have attributed to the responses they gave. However what was found is that even though the people the beneficiaries identified as empowered varied, they all somehow possessed similar attributes.

3.6.3.3. Research Tool Used

Although semi-structured interviews have numerous benefits especially for a qualitative study to allow a two-way communication, flexibility in the manner in which the questions are asked or the order and most importantly giving the interviewees freedom of expression. This research method can also introduce inconsistencies in the manner in which the questions are interpreted and responded to and requires a great skill of analysis to tie up the findings to conclude a specific pattern of responses towards what is being assessed.

3.6.3.4. Having to Explain Empowerment

The researcher assisting the beneficiaries to have a basic understanding of empowerment by explaining it could have also impacted on the validity of the findings. The researcher explained the term by referring to the power that an individual has towards ensuring that they are self-sustainable and are able to achieve things that they desire for their lives. What was found is that even after the researcher assisted with the definition, once the beneficiaries grasped the concept, they made references to other attributes that have an influence on empowerment that the researcher did not mention. These included being intelligent, possessing a particular set of skills, having an education, having the means to generate an income, amongst others. The full detail of these attributes that influence empowerment that were identified by the beneficiaries are elaborated further on in section 4.3.2.

3.6.3.5. Fear of Being Implicated

Even though the purpose and objectives of the study were explained and confidentiality was guaranteed. The researcher could also sense that in some instances the beneficiaries tended to not give their honest impression or feeling about what was being asked. The reason could have been that they were afraid of being implicated in the study (as disclosed by the interviewees when their

permission to participate was requested). Also, it could be that they feared the implications of the study towards the future of the programme (i.e. the discontinuation of subsidised housing).

3.6.3.6. Variances of periods post occupancy of both projects

As previously indicated the Lebone Development Trust project commenced in the year 2006 and was completed in the year 2007. Whereas, the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project commenced in the year 2010 and was still in progress at the time of the study. It is therefore important to take note of the differences in the period from when interviewees occupied their homes to the time that the first and the second interviews took place. These periods varied for the different beneficiaries of the two projects. This is an even bigger challenge for beneficiaries of the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project i.e. those who moved into their homes earlier on in the project and those who moved in more recently towards the time the interviews took place.

Due to the fact that the beneficiaries were not asked when exactly they moved into their homes, the exact picture could not be established. However, the first interviews took place in the year 2014. This meant that the beneficiaries of the PHP project had been staying there for more or less 8 years while the beneficiaries of the RDP project had been there for plus or minus 4 years prior to the first interview. The follow up interviews took place in the year 2016. This meant that the PHP beneficiaries had been occupying their homes for approximately 10 years prior to the second interview while the beneficiaries of the RDP project had been there for plus or minus 6 years.

These variances of the period of time that lapsed between the first interview and the second interview could have possibly affected the interviewees' ability to remember some details. However in the first interview, the only section that could have been affected by this lapse of time was when the interviewees were requested to recall the process they underwent to acquire their RDP or PHP House. While the

second interview could have been the one that was mostly affected as it questioned beneficiaries to recall numerous details regarding their experiences within the project. The likelihood is that the results of this study could have been affected due to this.

3.7. Research Approach: Qualitative

The decision regarding an approach that should be used in a study is largely depended on the nature of the social phenomena to be explored (Noor, 2008: 1602). Although there are numerous studies on empowerment globally as seen in the literature review in chapter 2, there isn't a well-developed framework that assesses the different dimensions of empowerment especially towards low-cost housing in South Africa. Patton and Cochran (2002, as cited in Bricki and Green, 2007: 2) state that in an instance where "little is known" towards a topic that one intends to investigate, it is often more appropriate to begin with a qualitative approach. This approach is suggested to be used if a researcher's aim is to: 1) understand the views of participants, 2) to do an in depth observation of a process or lastly, 3) to discover the meaning that participants give to a phenomena (Patton and Cochran, 2002 as cited in Bricki and Green, 2007: 7). Three out of the five objectives of the study are to:

- To develop an understanding of what empowerment is;
- To identify determinants associated with empowerment definitions; and
- To develop indicators that can be used to evaluate empowerment;

In order to meet these objectives the views and experiences of the beneficiaries had to be explored. Qualitative research is used to get an understanding of how individuals perceive their world (Castellan, 2010: 4) and when a social phenomenon is studied from the participant's point of view (Williams, 2007: 67). Castellan (2010: 12) states that researchers that aim to contextualize, interpret, get an understanding or insight on a problem are most likely to opt for a qualitative approach. The role of the researcher in the instance of a qualitative study is to

rather observe the various descriptions and meanings that individuals use to portray their experiences instead of collecting facts and assessing how often patterns occur (Easterby-Smith and Lowe, 1991 as cited in Noor, 2008: 1602). Quantitative research deals with data collection that is numeric in nature and the researcher makes use of mathematical models as the methodology of data analysis (Creswell, 2003 as cited in Williams, 2007: 66) It is used to answer questions related to "how many" and "how much", whereas qualitative study is often used to understand the "what", "how" or "why" of a phenomenon (Patton and Cochran, 2002 as cited in Bricki and Green, 2007: 7). The qualitative approach has been criticized to be time consuming and that sorting and reducing its data can be challenging (Castellan, 2010: 12). Therefore studying a large population can be problematic (Castellan, 2010: 12). This leads to smaller sample sizes as compared to quantitative research.

In this study the researcher was more interested in gaining insight on the underlying opinions of the beneficiaries regarding how they felt they were empowered post their occupancy in the different housing projects using the established determinants to evaluate and compare. The researcher wanted to uncover the experiences of the RDP beneficiaries compared to PHP beneficiaries in relation to their extent of empowerment or disempowerment. To uncover this information it was important that the researcher understands the experiences of each individual who was part of the study in relation to the determinants. A quantitative research approach would have been limiting, it would forced the researcher to interpret the beneficiaries level of empowerment as static outcomes instead of dynamic experiences which Zimmerman,1995 (as cited in Laverack and Wallerstein, 2001: 181) recommended against. He said taking this approach may confuse the understanding of the concept. Therefore, the most suitable approach for this research was an qualitative one, which many other studies of evaluating empowerment made use of as they found it to be most favourable towards what they wanted to achieve.

3.8. Validity and Reliability

Validity was defined by Smith (1991 as cited in Kumar, 2011: 178) as the extent to which the researcher has evaluated what he or she had intended to evaluate. Then the concept of reliability refers to the extent to which a research tool is consistent, stable, predictable and accurate (Smith 1991 as cited in Kumar, 2011: 178). This means the extent to which the repetition of data collection (i.e. interview) through the use of a similar tool (i.e. interview schedule) would be able to yield similar results under similar conditions (Kumar, 2011: 181). The use of validity and reliability in qualitative research has been debatable. Validity and reliability cannot be applied as easily to qualitative research in comparison to a quantitative one, due to the flexibility in methods and procedures of a qualitative research study (Kumar, 2011: 181).

As an attempt to apply validity and reliability in quantitative research, a four criteria framework which includes the assessment of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability was suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1994 as cited in Kumar, 2011: 184 - 185). Credibility and Transferability evaluate internal validity and external validity respectively. Dependability and confirmability evaluate reliability and objectivity respectively (Kumar, 2011: 185).

3.8.1. Credibility

Credibility is an assessment of internal credibility and it requires the findings of the study to be presented to the beneficiaries in order for them to confirm whether their responses have been captured accurately. This step was not addressed as adequately as possible by the researcher except during the processes of the interview, where some of the responses that were given were reflected back to the beneficiaries to ensure that the interviewer understood what was being relayed by the beneficiaries. This process of reflecting back the responses can be regarded as a step taken to ensure the credibility of the findings; however, the beneficiary did not follow the process as prescribed by Trochim and Donnelly (2007 as cited in

Kumar, 2011: 181). The discussions under dependability and confirmability (see 3.7.3 and 3.7.4) can also be viewed as a confirmation of the credibility of this research.

3.8.2. Transferability

Transferability as an assessment of external validity refers to the degree to which the findings of this study can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings. To evaluate transferability in this study, the following findings will be evaluated to determine whether they can be applied to different contexts:

Findings regarding which factors have an influence on empowerment and have or can be used to evaluate empowerment. These are referred to as empowerment determinants. The second part of the evaluations investigates the overall findings of this study, whether the different housing programmes have affected the beneficiaries' level of empowerment, can be confidently generalised to be the case in all the other RDP and PHP projects.

For this study, the process that was used to evaluate empowerment was clearly described. A thorough explanation of how the empowerment determinants were identified and how they were used to evaluate the empowerment in the study context was given. The researcher believes that the determinants that were identified in the literature review can easily be applied to other contexts. The reason being that the determinants that were used in this study were drawn from studies conducted in multiple disciplines that aimed to assess empowerment. However, caution should be taken in applying the determinants that were confirmed by the beneficiaries of the two housing projects, these determinants would be safe to apply only to similar contexts of specifically subsidised low cost housing. The study showed that the majority of the determinants that were confirmed by the beneficiaries were similar to the ones drawn from the literature review. These findings are discussed in chapter 4. Only one determinant, financial security, could not be merged with the ones that were already identified. Although the researcher is confident that this determinant could be found as an important attribute by

people that are not necessarily impoverished, it is still advisable that it be applied with caution. In conclusion the findings of this study regarding the determinants that can be used to assess empowerment are transferable and can be generalised. With regards to the overall findings, the researcher believes that there are some fundamental findings with some determinants (i.e. power, control, choice) that can be generalised due to the fact that the project processes are similar nationally. All the RDP and PHP projects to a certain extent follow similar processes. However, the findings of determinants that evaluated the attitudes of the beneficiaries (i.e. improved self-confidence, meaningfulness and impact) may vary from project to projects depending on the beneficiaries. However, what was found was that some findings related to improved self-confidence collaborated with what other researchers found in their studies (this detail will be given in section 3.7.4 concerning the confirmability of the study)

3.8.3. Dependability

Dependability tests the internal reliability of a study. It is concerned with whether the same results could be obtained if the same matter could be observed twice using the same instrument. The advantage about the research tool that was used for this study was that it was semi-structured. So although the interviews are flexible in that they allow beneficiaries to go in depth about their views and experiences, a semi-structured interview schedule was able to provide a certain level of uniformity in that beneficiaries are asked similar questions related to a specific topic (i.e. views regarding the availability of choice in the different housing projects).

It can be challenging to prove reliability with interviews as they have open-ended questions and also the researcher can be flexible in how he or she asks questions just to ensure that the interviewees can relate and respond to the questions. Although the beneficiaries were not constrained in how they had to answer questions, a certain level of consistency in the manner in which the questions were asked was maintained by the researcher. Should another interviewer follow this

similar approach, they should more or less be able to obtain the similar results. However, because an interview is subject to the style of that specific interviewee, the likeliness is that the approach will not be similar.

Even though the purpose of dividing the data collection into two phases (the first and follow-up interview) was not to test the dependability of this research, this approach was helpful in assessing the dependability of the findings of this study. There are questions that were asked in the first interview that were similar to those that were in the follow-up interview. For example in both interviews beneficiaries were asked to indicate the process they went through to receive their houses. The responses provided in both instances were similar. The other example is concerning choice, in the first interview the beneficiaries were asked whether they had any knowledge of other subsidised housing projects, then the researcher enquired whether they were not provided with the option to choose which housing projects they wanted to be a part of, the beneficiaries indicated that they had no choice. These results were confirmed again in the second interview that both housing programmes do not offer beneficiaries any choice and that they do not have any decision-making power or control in relation to the projects. This shows correlation with findings from the first and the second interview. It can thus be concluded that the findings are dependable, that the likeliness of obtaining similar results when evaluating empowerment is reasonably high.

3.8.4. Confirmability

Confirmability is said to be similar to reliability in quantitative research. It assesses the degree to which results could be corroborated by others. Although researchers such as Trochim and Donnelly (2007 as cited in Kumar, 2011: 185) are convinced that confirmability can only be achieved if both researchers follow an identical process in order to compare the results. With this research, the researcher first did a desk top analysis in section 2.8 where she made use of the determinants that were drawn from the literature review to confirm whether those determinants were evident in studies that had already been done for RDP and PHP housing

projects. Thereafter, this assessment was done by evaluating the presence of these determinants with the chosen projects for this research. The researcher compared the findings of this study to the findings of other studies that referred to a similar determinant.

There were areas in which the results collaborated and in other areas not so much. For example, even though the participation determinant was satisfactory when using the indicators of this study, what was discovered and confirmed by other studies was that it did not occur in practice the way that it was intended when the programme was initiated. The other example is that the study uncovered that more beneficiaries of the PHP project confirmed that they felt confident, fulfilled and motivated about their houses these findings confirm the findings of Ntema (2011: 109) and Landman and Napier (2010:300-301) who also agree that pride and fulfilment were found to be more evident amongst the beneficiaries of PHP projects. In conclusion, there was an attempt for the researcher to corroborate the findings of this research with other literature. On other aspects the researcher agrees with findings of other studies in cases she differs.

3.9. Sampling Selection and Method

3.9.1 Population of Interest

The population of interest was the beneficiaries of RDP and PHP housing. As defined in chapter one of this study, beneficiaries of RDP housing are individuals or households of people that earned less than R3500 per month and thus qualified to receive public housing which was one of the outputs of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (Landman and Napier, 2010: 302). The beneficiaries of PHP housings are also individuals or households of people that earned less than R3500 per month who qualified for a PHP house. PHP housing is one of the government's housing delivery programmes (People's Housing Process) in South Africa which provides funding to groups of beneficiaries to pool their resources and

contribute their labour so as to make the most of their housing subsidies (Ramasodiand van Bergen, 2005: 5 and National Treasury, 2009: 99).

The sampling population were the beneficiaries of the Lebone Development Trust PHP project and an RDP development located in the K-Section of Bostshabelo in Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality. The sample was selected from these two housing projects.

3.9.2 Sampling Method: Convenience Sampling (Purposeful Sampling)

The beneficiaries to be interviewed were selected by means of convenience sampling which falls under the purposeful sampling methods. This means that only people that were available during the time of data collection were included in the sample.

The researcher manoeuvred from one street to the next within K-Section, approached each household that portrayed the physical characteristics of the two housing projects and confirmed with the residents of that household upon arrival whether it was indeed an RDP house or a PHP house. Upon this confirmation, the researcher requested permission from the beneficiaries to be part of the study. Depending on whether they agreed to be participants, they would then be included into the sample.

When the initial interviews were conducted, any adult representative of the household was approached as the aim of the initial interviews was to get an understanding of what the people in the community considered empowerment to be and to determine the factors that influence empowerment from their view. Therefore, dependents and siblings of the main beneficiaries whose house has been left to their care where in some instances included into the sample.

The sample for the follow-up interview however was more specific, only the main beneficiaries (applicants of the RDP or PHP housing) where interviewed as the

information that was needed in the follow-up interview could only be answered by the person who was there when the process started until completion. Also the main aim of this study was to assess whether those beneficiaries were empowered or disempowered post their occupancy, therefore they were the main target group.

The challenges as expressed in section 3.1 of this chapter attributed to why this specific sampling method was used. As indicated, one of the challenges that were experienced while gathering data on the projects was that confidential information (i.e. detailed records of beneficiaries) could not be released by the Department of Human Settlements. This meant that the location of the PHP or RDP stands could not be placed on a map. Although this information could have also been captured by making that analysis in the field, not everyone was willing to participate in the study for reasons already mentioned in the previous sections. In addition, not everyone was available (i.e. still at work or had other engagements) on the day of data collection. In other instances the beneficiaries were working out of town, others were deceased which meant that their houses were left in the care of relatives or dependents. For these reasons, probability sampling methods were not considered. The application of those sampling methods for this type of study would be problematic. Further than that, research has confirmed that random sampling for a non-equivalent research design should not be applied, that the researcher should rather aim to select a sample that is as similar as possible. All these factors are what contributed to chosen sampling method, as it was found to be the most suitable for this study.

3.9.3 Sample Size

As previously expressed, the use of a qualitative research approach requires in-depth consultations with the population being studied in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding on the matter being investigated. This then makes it challenging to have a big sample size as compared to a quantitative research. The total sample size for this study was 50 household representatives. A total of 20 households (10 per project) were interviewed for the first round of interviews and then 30 beneficiaries (15 per project) were interviewed in the follow-up interviews. This enabled the researcher to interrogate issues being investigated in greater detail within the timeframe that was available. Though the RDP project was larger in numbers (313 houses built) compared to the 100 houses that were built for the PHP project, it was important that the number of people selected in each study area were equal due to the research design that was chosen and for the sake of comparability.

3.10. Research Method

Interviews were used as research methods for gathering data in this research. Interviews and focus groups are said to be one of the most common methods of data collection in a qualitative study (Minhat, 2015: 210). For this study, interviews were chosen as opposed to focus groups as the researcher wanted to explore each individual's perspective regarding empowerment and their experience in the housing project. Interviews as a research method in a qualitative study are believed to assist in providing a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon that cannot be achieved with the use of a questionnaire in a quantitative research (Minhat, 2015: 210). The flexibility they offer is useful for exploring the experiences and insights that cannot be revealed or portrayed by just responding to a questionnaire (Minhat, 2015: 211).

3.10.1. First Interviews

As a point of departure, one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted as the first phase of information gathering from participants. The intention of this first phase was to gain the beneficiaries' views concerning what empowerment means. The interviews were carried out with a sample of 10 beneficiaries selected from each study area, totalling 20 interviews. The interview schedule (see Annexure A) was formulated in English, however the language of communication between the interviewer and interviewee was Southern Sesotho. The researcher took on the full responsibility of conducting the interviews. The benefit to the researcher conducting her own interviews was that the manner in which the questions were asked was consistent throughout. This decreased the chances of participants having different explanations and interpretations of the questions especially because the questions were open-ended and the researcher had to probe for detailed responses. This was to ensure that none of the questions were misrepresented and that the answers received were contextually relevant. The researcher first began by providing background information about the study and continued to explain the purpose and objectives of the study to the participants to which consent to conduct the interview was requested. These were all mandatory steps to take in accordance to the agreement between the researcher and the ethics committee of the University of Pretoria. Due to the challenge that participants did not feel comfortable to provide their signature on paper as proof of consent to the interview, the interviewer resorted to recording the interviews. Consent was provided verbally on tape, thereafter the rest of the interview was recorded.

Open-ended questions were used throughout the interviews in order to accommodate more liberal responses from the people being interviewed (Kuma, 2011: 153). This became beneficial as it permitted participants to include more information concerning their feelings, attitudes and understanding of the subject under analysis. This ensured that the researcher obtained the participants' accurate perceptions towards the topic at hand.

The purpose of the interviews was to obtain the responses regarding the participants' views of what empowerment is and how it can be evaluated. By asking them how they would define empowerment and to identify people in their close circles who they felt were empowered, the researcher was able to retrieve the common language that was associated with empowerment by the participants. This common language was used to confirm the empowerment determinants from the beneficiaries point, which are attributes that were considered to have the most influence on empowerment according to the participants.

By allowing the beneficiaries to share their definition of empowerment ensures that the tools to be used (interview schedule) to assess empowerment are more context specific. This approach was incited by Ali and Jupp's study (2010: 38) where they emphasize the importance of allowing community members to evaluate their own level of empowerment to ensure that their empowerment is no longer defined by the views of external opinions. Brook and Holland (2009) made use of an already established tool to evaluate youth empowerment, however they added extra dimensions to ensure that their survey captures all the dimensions they deemed were critical for their study.

The determinants from the first round of interviews were combined with those that were captured from the literature review in chapter two of this study and the indicators for each determinant were concluded.

3.10.2. Follow-up interviews

After obtaining an understanding of what empowerment is and the indicators that can be used to evaluate it, the second phase of information gathering commenced. Another detailed interview schedule was developed using the identified indicators to assess the prevalence of empowerment amongst beneficiaries in the RDP project versus the PHP project. This follow-up interview enabled the researcher to formally compare the results and thus draw a conclusion regarding the relationship between

the type of housing delivery and the level of empowerment amongst its beneficiaries post the occupancy.

These follow-up interviews were carried out with a sample of 30 interviews (15 beneficiaries from each project). The decision to interview 15 people per project in the follow-up interview as compared to the 10 that were interviewed in the first interview was because in this instance a larger sample was needed to get a variety of answers to assess empowerment from the beneficiaries' point of view. This was critical because it was the data that was used to evaluate and draw conclusions on the presence or lack of empowerment determinants in the two projects. The sample size was large enough to get a variety of answers but still manageable enough in terms of time to allow the researcher to conduct in-depth interviews with the beneficiaries. The interview schedule (see Annexure B) was also formulated in English. However, during the interviews the interviewer translated the questions into Southern Sesotho. A similar approach to that of the first interview was taken, the researcher provided the background information, purpose and objectives of the study to the participants and requested that a consent form (see annexure c) be signed by the participants to indicate that they agreed to take part in the study willingly.

After conducting the first round of interviews, the researcher realised that the beneficiaries tended to be sceptical about answering the questions especially where they had to put their signature on a consent form. Some of the reasons they provided was that they could be signing away their home. The other limitation was that the questions contained in the second interview schedule were often too complex for the beneficiaries to understand and relate back to housing. It was beneficial that the researcher conducted the interviews herself, as she was able to explain the questions, clarify any misconceptions regarding the purpose of the study and guarantee that the beneficiaries' participation would remain anonymous in order to obliterate any doubts.

3.11. Research Tools

The research tools that were used to conduct the interviews in both instances where interview schedules. The first interview schedule had mainly open-ended questions as it aimed to get the background of the project and an understanding of how the participants of the study would define empowerment and which attributes they felt had the most influence on empowerment. The responses gained from the interview were used to establish determinants which were combined with those obtained from the literature review. The combined determinants were used to formulate the structure and questions for the second interview schedule. This second interview schedule was what was used to assess the prevalence or lack of empowerment in the two projects.

3.11.1. First Interview Schedule

The interview schedule contained the following sections:

- **Background knowledge and process behind the housing delivery methods from the beneficiaries' point of view :**

This was the first section of the interview schedule. The interviewees were asked to give a general background regarding the process they followed to receive their homes and their impression regarding the housing programme and lastly whether they have knowledge of other government housing subsidy programmes.

The purpose of this section was to give the researcher an understanding of the process taken in the two projects which was critical in order to determine whether the process from the beneficiaries' point of view coincides with what is reflected in the housing policies of South Africa. Finally, the question concerning their impression of the houses was to give the researcher an idea of the positive and negative views regarding the outcome of the housing

projects. This connected to their level of satisfaction which is an indicator for the improved self-confidence determinant.

- **The interviewees views of what empowerment is:**

The second section of the interview schedule requested the interviewees to give their understanding of the term empowerment and how they can identify it in a person. Most importantly, they are asked to indicate aspects which they feel have the most impact on empowerment. This section aimed to distinguish the language and determinants used to define empowerment from the participants' point of view. The participants were also asked to indicate whether they feel that a person's environment has the power to influence their level of empowerment. Responses to this question will relay whether the participants feel that people have a relationship with their environment and whether being in a specific area has the power to influence an individual or a community's level of empowerment.

A copy of the interview schedule is attached to this report as Annexure A.

3.11.2. Follow-up Interview Schedule

The interview schedule began by giving the interviewees a brief overview of what the research is about and what it aims to achieve. Then the questions were divided according to the empowerment determinants. A copy of this interview schedule is attached to this report as Annexure B.

The interview schedule covered the following sections:

- **Background:**

It began by asking a general background question similar to that of the interview schedule concerning the processes the participants followed to receive their homes.

- **Power and Control:**

This section asked questions concerning the decision-making power and control the beneficiaries had throughout the process. They were asked to indicate whether they could take any decisions or if they had any control over the location and form of the house.

- **Participation:**

This section of participation aimed to investigate the level of involvement of the residents in the process. It also aimed to distinguish whether any networks were formed in the process and to determine the strength of community relationships. To include the indicator that was identified by the beneficiaries from the first round of interviews, beneficiaries were also asked to indicate whether they would be able to assist anyone going through a similar process of acquiring a house.

- **Growth and Skills development:**

This section investigated whether beneficiaries learnt any new skills during the housing process and whether they found these skills to be useful to be carried forward into future endeavours.

- **Improved Self-confidence**

This section aimed to evaluate the beneficiaries' confidence when viewing the final product of their houses. The beneficiaries were asked to indicate whether they felt "confident/proud" versus "discouraged"; "fulfilled" versus "dissatisfied"; "motivated" versus "demotivated" and lastly "competent" versus "incompetent". These specific terms were referred to in the interview schedule as they are the indicators of this determinant.

- **Meaningfulness, Impact and Self Accountability:**

The purpose of this section was to determine whether the beneficiaries perceive their contribution to have a meaningful impact towards the final goal or product of the house. It also assesses whether the beneficiaries have a sense of accountability towards the project.

- **Choice:**

This section investigates the availability of choice in the housing process. The participants were asked to elaborate on the extent of choice offered to them in connection with the location, structure and design of their homes.

- **Change:**

This section addressed both the "desired change" and "initiative" determinant. The questions for these two determinants were included under one section as they were interrelated. In order to assess whether there was an initial need and a desire to change existing conditions, the beneficiaries were asked whether they had a vision or expectations of what they wanted to their houses to look like and to indicate how well this vision or expectation had been met. They were also asked which initiatives they took towards achieving this vision.

- **Financial Security:**

With this determinant, the researcher had to determine whether the beneficiaries progressed in anyway financially after receiving their homes. The question that was included in the interview schedule was whether the house was able to contribute to the financial advancement of the participant or any other member of the participant's household.

3.12. Data Processing and Analysis

It was recommended that the following four step approach be taken for data processing and analysis in qualitative research (Kumar, 2011: 278):

- i. Identification of the main themes;
- ii. Assigning of codes to the main themes;
- iii. Classifying responses under the main themes; and
- iv. Integrating themes and responses into the text for the study.

Kumar (2011: 278) states that the manner in which this process is applied is dependent on the researcher, especially the steps concerning the assigning of codes to the main themes (if your purpose is to count the number of times the theme occurs) or the manner in which these themes are integrated and reported. The approach that was taken for this research generally covered these recommendations.

3.12.1. Identification and Coding of Themes

The stage of identifying themes happened during the literature review phase and the first interviews. Descriptions of empowerment and how empowerment was evaluated (from literature) and the responses from beneficiaries stating the factors which they believed to have the most empowerment were grouped.

The coding process was not executed as accurately as prescribed by Kumar (2011: 287). Even though this was a qualitative research and it was not necessary to organise data into figures. The researcher did make use of Microsoft Excel to organise the data received into a format that would make it manageable to analyse. In order to conclude these themes the researcher counted how many times they were mentioned in order include the most commonly mentioned descriptions and exclude the least mentioned ones. These themes are referred to as determinants in this study.

3.12.2. Classification of Responses

The themes (i.e. determinants) mentioned by the beneficiaries and those identified in the literature review were related. There was an additional determinant which was uncovered from the interviewees which was not found from the exercise of the literature review in chapter two. This was added onto the empowerment determinants and the indicators relating to it were also included.

3.12.3. Integrating Themes and Responses into the Text for the Study

The benefit of the follow-up interview was that the interview schedule was already structured in accordance with the main themes (i.e. empowerment determinants). Therefore responses were focused around a specific determinant. This approach made the processing and the analysis of the responses manageable.

The questions were structured in such a manner that they asked the beneficiaries to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the questions. Thereafter the beneficiaries were asked to elaborate. The data obtained from these interviews was also organised (per determinant) by being captured onto an excel spreadsheet. Thereafter the collective responses were assessed according to how beneficiaries responded to each determinant. Even though it would have been fruitful to report each of the responses provided per question to tell the stories, this would not have been manageable. Therefore responses that made references to similar things

were incorporated while other responses were quoted. The findings were grouped and reported per determinant.

3.13. Summary

This chapter provided the detailed criteria that were used to select the two study areas. An overview of the two projects in terms of their location in the Mangauang Metropolitan Municipality was presented. The limitations and challenges experienced while collecting data were also conveyed which largely affected the sampling method that was decided on. Even though the research design was well suited for the study, it became evident that there were other external factors that could have affected the findings of the study. The chapter described how some of these external issues were managed. A motivation of why a qualitative research approach and a convenience sampling method were decided on was given.

The researcher used interviews as the choice of research method and a comprehensive detail of the content of the two interview schedules was given under the section discussing research tools. The chapter ended with a discussion of how the data that was collected was analysed. The following chapter gives the details about the findings from the first interviews.

4. CHAPTER 4: Understanding of Empowerment

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter was to communicate the results of the first phase of the interviews in detail. The structure of this chapter follows the same sequence that the interview schedule that was used followed. The chapter begins by relaying the information received from the interviewees regarding the processes they followed from the beginning until they received their houses. The intent of requesting that information was to compare what has been written in policies (in terms of the processes they say RDP and PHP housing follows) to what happens practically on site from the beneficiaries' point of view. Thereafter, still under the background section, the interviewees gave a general impression of their homes and the housing programme. This was to determine whether they felt confident about the final product of their houses, which is one of the empowerment indicators. The interviewees are asked to indicate whether they have any knowledge of other housing programmes, this was the last section under background.

The section thereafter deals specifically with determining how well the interviewees understand the term empowerment. The interviewees provided examples of people who they felt were empowered and also indicated aspects they would commonly use to identify an empowered person. The aim of this section was to capture the common language that the participants used in association with empowerment in order to develop determinants which can be used to evaluate empowerment amongst beneficiaries of these housing projects. In order to determine whether being part of a specific housing project can influence a community's level of empowerment, the interviewees were asked to indicate whether they thought a person's environment can influence their level of empowerment. The findings of this interview enabled the empowerment determinants to be concluded by merging the determinants that were captured in the literature review to those that were confirmed by the interviewees.

4.2. Background

4.2.1. RDP and PHP Processes from the Beneficiaries' Point of View

With regards to the RDP process, the beneficiaries first completed application forms and submitted them either to their ward councillors or directly to the municipality at the municipal offices. They waited for approval from the municipality and thereafter the construction process commenced.

The beneficiaries of the PHP project indicated that they were informed of the possibility of a PHP project in the township. They then followed up by completing and submitting their application forms at the municipal offices. One of the interviewees explained:

“Before these houses were built, we use to stay in shacks. Initially we come from a farming area in Tweespruit. Then due to very hurtful living conditions at the farms we searched for accommodation. We searched until we found a stand. After we found a stand, time went by until a time when we least expected it, there was an announcement that people could go apply for housing. We were still in Tweespruit but my children were already staying here because they were older and the farmers did not want them staying there any longer, indicating that they are older now. The children stayed at the shack, while the building took place (referring to the building of other houses) and they would call to inform us and we would travel down to come complete and submit forms until the house was built.”

When the construction process of the individual houses began, the beneficiaries were required to assist the builders with duties including mixing the cement with water and also passing bricks to the builders during the construction process. Neighbours assisted one another with the construction of each other's houses. One of the interviewees indicated that as a beneficiary it was mandatory to remain on site throughout the process of the construction in order to monitor the process

including the usage of building material and also to give advice on how the house is to be designed. One of the elder interviewees indicated that due to her age she was unable to get involved in any physical labour and therefore her children assisted with the building process.

The beneficiaries were questioned about the process they went through to receive their house as it enabled the researcher to firstly compare the process from the beneficiaries' point of view versus what the housing policies say the process should be. Secondly, it allowed the researcher to compare the process of the RDP project versus that of the PHP from the beneficiary's point of view.

From what could be gathered, the initial steps of the processes have a few similarities. However, with regards to PHP housing, none of the interviewees mentioned being part of an organised community group which is something that Bathembu (2010) and NDoHS (2009: 19) made reference to as a critical criteria to qualify to be part of a PHP housing project. This inconsistency in information was further investigated in the follow-up interview, as those community groups are part of forming networks which is a critical determinant of one of the empowerment determinants called participation. The major difference between these two housing models still relates to the involvement of beneficiaries. According to the responses, the beneficiaries of PHP housing are more involved in the building process than RDP beneficiaries. None of the RDP beneficiaries mentioned anything about sweat equity or monitoring the building process and materials used. Evidence of networks also resurfaces when one of the PHP interviewees mentioned how they assisted one another to build each other's homes. That community partnership throughout the construction process is an element that is lacking, or rather, an opportunity that is not available in the RDP housing model.

4.2.2. Views concerning the Two Projects

4.2.2.1. Negative Views concerning Both the Housing Projects

The RDP beneficiaries complained that the walls had cracked; the sizes of houses were too small, the doors were not fitted properly, they experience roof leakages during rainy days and that the walls of the house do not have plaster.

The PHP project beneficiaries blamed the cracks and flaking of the walls on the poor quality of cement that was used. One of the interviewees said:

“To be honest to God, because we suffered staying in a shack we were happy (referring to the house), but not that much because the cement that was used, by the workers or the contractor, was cheap cement because anything that you touch (pointing to the walls) tends to flake.”

In some instances, beneficiaries improvised by using cow dung to cover up the cracks on the walls. They stated that the windows and doors were not fitted properly and also that the window handles break easily. There was also an interviewee that indicated that her house does not have a ceiling. With regards to the size of the house, a woman indicated that the house was not big enough to accommodate her entire family. This obligated her to erect a shack outside to ensure that everyone was accommodated comfortably. She mentioned that the arrangement displeased her because it divided the family and she could not ensure everyone’s safety, she explained:

“Should there be an intruder attacking the children that side (referring to the shack) or attacking me this side (referring to the house) even if I scream, but because the houses are divided, it is not pleasant...I am satisfied... but for me it is small, if I had the power I would extend it...then we would stay under one roof”.

The other interviewee was not happy that the contractors made space for a restroom but never installed the toilets as they had promised. This left the room bare, unused and taking up space which could have been used to expand the kitchen or other areas of the house.

4.2.2.2. Positive Views concerning Both the Housing Projects

Due to the fact that most of the interviewees were dwelling in shacks prior to receiving an RDP house, some of the interviewees expressed gratitude for receiving formal houses. They were grateful that their families had a roof over their heads which provided stability and security for all members of the household. The interviewees mentioned that they were just happy that they got a free house and that they cannot complain or expect more as they did not pay for it. These houses were said to be equipped with basics such as taps and sinks, amongst other things, which met their needs.

The situation of the beneficiaries of the PHP project was similar to that of the RDP housing beneficiaries as they had also previously stayed in shacks. Some interviewees explained that they were just grateful to have formal shelter with a title deed as they could not afford to purchase a house on their own. The beneficiary that explained that she use to stay in a farm in Tweespruit explained that her employer then was mistreating her and her family and threatened to evict them. She described:

“After my husband died, actually while he was still sick and frequently being admitted to Pelinomi (a hospital in Bloemfontein) and could not work anymore, *lekgowa leo* (which is a sesotho term that means white person, referring to the farmer) was already causing havoc to the elder workers or the ones who were sick, telling us that those houses are his and that they are to be used by his contract workers, people that could still work productively.”

At the end their house was approved and built, her husband passed on she moved into the house to join the children. She says:

“I am very satisfied because we did not have the power to build, the government build for us and therefore I am happy because of the act that the government did for us.”

Some interviewees were pleased about size of the PHP houses and exclaimed that they are even bigger than some of the bonded houses in the neighbourhood. The exterior of the PHP house was also praised for being aesthetically pleasing. Some interviewees indicated that the houses were still in a good condition and that they had more choice and could influence the final product of the houses.

Subsection 3.5.3.3 makes reference to the fact that the physical characteristics of the two housing projects are similar. The findings under this section also confirmed that the beneficiaries experienced similar problems in relation to the construction quality of the houses. The major factor about this section was to determine how the beneficiaries felt about their houses post their occupation. Whether they felt fulfilled or proud, which are some of the indicators that can be used in the follow-up interview to evaluate the “improved self-confidence” determinant. At the moment, there seems to be a balance of positive and negative attitudes, however this determinant was dealt with in full detail in the follow-up interview and its findings are discussed in chapter 5.

4.2.3. Knowledge regarding Other Housing Programmes

Participants were asked to indicate whether they had any knowledge of other subsidised housing programmes. The interviewees commonly indicated that they had limited or no knowledge regarding other housing programmes, more especially the RDP beneficiaries. The beneficiaries indicated that they could not choose which subsidised housing project they would like to be beneficiaries of, hence they do not

know about the other types of housing projects. They indicated that the decision was taken by the Department of Human Settlements.

These findings indicate that beneficiaries have no decision-making power to choose which project they wish to be beneficiaries of. This can be attributed to the fact that the allocation of these houses happens on a higher level by the Mayor of Executive Council (MEC) from the Province. Decision-making power is also an indicator of the power determinant. A detailed analysis regarding this determinant is also dealt with in chapter 5.

4.3. Interviewees' Views on Empowerment

4.3.1. Understanding of the Word Empowerment

The interviewees unfortunately could not define empowerment. They indicated that they do not have an understanding of the term, which meant that continuing with the rest of the section of the interview would be challenging if the interviewees did not have a basic understanding of the term. The closest translation of the term empowerment into Sothorn Sesotho is "Matlafatso" which means to have power. Power, as confirmed by the literature review, is only one of the many determinants of empowerment; therefore even this translation does not fully encapsulate the diversity of this concept. However, the researcher made an attempt to explain the term by referring to power that an individual has towards ensuring that they are self-sustainable and are able to achieve things that they desire for their lives. The use of various examples was also included until the interviewees had a basic idea of what the term meant. There was only one interviewee who actually understood the term. However, it was more of a political understanding of empowerment in terms of standing up for your rights and voicing your opinion.

The challenge experienced with regards to this question, coincides with the findings of the literature review in chapter 2. Definitions of empowerment varied, which

confirmed that there is no standard definition or understanding of the word. This finding confirms the abstract nature and vagueness of the term empowerment

4.3.2. Examples of Empowered People

The interviewees provided examples of people in their neighbourhood, family, colleagues and friends as examples of empowered individuals. These are some of the reasons they selected those individuals.

The people had financial security and were able to generate income and provide for themselves and their families. Others extended it to say it is people who are able to go beyond themselves and assist others where they are able to (financially, using their skills, resources, etc.). Having skills (i.e. business, hard labour) was also regarded highly as it was often a means to a financial income which interviewees felt was important. Evidence of improvement and progression in one's life was also linked to the evidence of empowerment. The attributes that were also mentioned by the participants were that an empowered person is one who takes initiatives, who is intelligent and is able to apply him or herself in order to make improvements in his or her life. The other attributes includes a person who is self-reliant and has perseverance to complete what he or she has started. Children in a household who are attending school were also mentioned as examples of people that are empowering themselves by getting an education. People with power, leadership skills and who can address and influence large crowds are also considered to be empowered. One of the interviewees mentioned a friend of his as an empowered person:

"I would say T.O (the name of the friend). He is empowered in numerous areas...He is able to address people, He is a natural born leader...He has a lot of power in everything, even when he stands in front of a crowd of people, those people listen to him and they understand everything that he is says."

Having a place of employment or being self-employed, whatever means in which an individual can generate income were frequently mentioned attributes in identifying a person who is empowered. The interviewees felt that people who have money are able to achieve things that they desire for their lives much easier than people who have financial constraints. There was a sense of powerlessness that was expressed by the interviewees when it came to the lack of means to generate income. Wives identified husbands who are working and have started businesses. Others identified neighbours who started trading informally (hawkers) when they were unable to get a job in the formal sector. This makes sense as these communities are poor communities that have been identified by the government to need assistance for basic human rights such as shelter.

4.3.3. Attributes Which Have the Most Influence on Empowerment

The responses provided for the previous section enabled the interviewees to conclude the attributes that they felt had the most influence on empowerment. In cases where the interviewees struggled to conclude the attributes, the researcher probed them by referring them to the responses they gave in the previous question. The following lists the attributes as shared by beneficiaries from both the projects:

- **Intelligence or ability to apply one's mind:** Being intelligent and being able to apply one's mind was commonly mentioned amongst the interviewees. The interviewees indicated that intelligence plays a major role in a person's ability to be empowered or they identify a person who is empowered by how intelligent they are and how they are able to apply their minds to practical life challenges and to provide "solutions and advice". One of the interviewees said: "When you meet an intelligent person and you talk to him it could be that that person can give you light" (light in this context refers to information or guidance that one may offer someone else. Though some linked intelligence to education, others denied it and said although some people are well educated, they tend to be "book smart but not street

smart” and are unable to deal with life challenges at times and that is not beneficial.

- **Skills:** Possessing a skill was mentioned frequently as an indicator of an empowered person. Some interviewees were even specific about the type of skills (business and leadership skills) which they deemed imperative for an empowered person. Being business minded can be linked to the initial attribute of having the ability to make money and provide for oneself. This is due to the fact that their reference to business skills related to people who started their own businesses (markets or local tuck shops) and were able to generate an income for themselves.

For this research, intelligence, ability to apply one’s mind and skills were all found to be interrelated and achieved the same purpose. More than that, they confirmed the “growth and skills development” determinant which was identified in chapter 2 of the literature review in this study.

- **Financial security:** The interviewees mentioned that having a source of income and the means to provide for oneself and family were the most important aspects they considered when identifying a person who is empowered. They indicated that a person who has money is one that can fulfil his or her own desires. This determinant is closely related to the “resource” dimension that was mentioned by Kabeer (1999: 437) and the Just Governance Group (2011: 2). Kabeer (1999: 437) states that resource is not limited to material resources and the Just Governance Group specifically defines resource (and opportunity) as the existence of social, economic, political, and cultural domains or structures that enables an actor to make a choice. It is evident that resource has a close relation to the determinant of financial security which was highly regarded by the beneficiaries as an empowerment determinant.

- **Education:** Education was also a favourable attribute amongst the interviewees. They mentioned that it can have a major influence on a person's level of empowerment and the lack of it can place limitations on the things that an individual may wish to achieve. Education coupled with experience was deemed as an added advantage for personal empowerment. The researcher did not go into detail to establish which level of education they were referring (i.e. basic or higher education) to.

Though considered important, its linkage with the process of housing development could not be determined unless one of the requirements of the housing projects was that beneficiaries undergo a training course. In conclusion for the purpose of this research the education determinant was excluded.

- **Initiative and determination:** The interviewees stated that people that are perseverant, have determination and are initiative takers would be identified as empowered. All these words are interrelated and represent an inner drive or motivation that an individual has in achieving his or her goals. An example was given that even people who previously did not have formal housing and stayed in shacks but took it upon themselves to apply for subsidised housing showed initiative and thus empowered themselves because they took a step to acquire an asset they desired but could not to attain by their own financial means.

This finding relates with the determinant identified in chapter 2 of this study called "Initiative" which was derived from Kasmel and Anderson's (2001: 801); Narayan-Parker's (2005: 125) and Harris's (1998 and 2003 as cited in Marais *et al*, 2008: 3) definitions of empowerment.

- **Providing assistance:** A person who is able to extend themselves and assist people around him or her was identified as an empowered person. Whether it is assisting through financial means; transferring skills; providing

solutions for people faced with challenges or motivating the next person, the basic idea is to assist other people.

This determinant is closely related to the determinant of participation as some of the indicators of that theme include “Strong working relationships amongst beneficiaries”. Good community relationships are an essential element that can motivate people in the community to assist one another. To evaluate this determinant, the interviewees can indicate the strength of existing community relationships and working relationships during the project process.

- The remaining attributes (leadership, believing in oneself and mission, success, progress, being respectable or respected and ownership of land, (specifically a farm) were the least mentioned attributes amongst the interviewees and were thus not included as the main determinants of empowerment in this study.

4.4. An environment’s influence on empowerment

The findings showed that participants agreed that a person’s environment has the power to influence their level of empowerment. One of the interviewees said:

“The way I understand it, is that your life or rather your empowerment can be influenced by where you live and the people you surround yourself with. For an example, if you surround yourself with people that do not care... it is going to simple for you to end up not caring.”

They stated that sometimes a person may feel isolated in a certain area due to a lack of a support system and that that may prevent them from moving forward to achieve things that they desire. When it comes to familiarity, they stated that it counts as an advantage to know where or who to go to in order to deal with and get assistance regarding challenges you may be facing. They stated that familiarity

itself can enable a person to be empowered. Referring to a neighbourhood that one resides in, they indicated that people who are constantly in your surroundings have a major influence on your life, both positive and negative influences. Those who identified empowerment with finances, business and skills pointed out that the location you operate from has a very strong bearing on how well your business does and how well you are able to apply your skills. They mentioned that some places offer better opportunities than others (implying that the availability of opportunities has an impact on the level of empowerment). One of the interviewees related surroundings to experience. He said that new environments can teach a person new skills that they did not possess. He provided an example of a person who is starting a new job: although the environment may be new for that person, they learn something new and gain something out of the experience. This leaves one in a better position than they were prior to the experience.

Those who disagreed with the statement indicated that personal empowerment depends on the person and how determined that person is and not necessarily on that person's surroundings. They added that obstacles can be found anywhere (indicating that obstacles have a bearing on empowerment) and that it all depends on you and how you overcome them. One of the interviewees said:

“When you want something or when you want to achieve something, as long as you have perseverance, patience and faith towards God regarding what you want but do not have, you will truly achieve it.”

There were a small number of people that were indifferent about the question and just added that it all depends on you as a person, indicating that some people's level of empowerment may get influenced by their environment while others not so much.

The relevance of asking the interviewees whether they felt a person's environment had an influence on the level of empowerment was to confirm whether a certain housing model, whether it be RDP or PHP housing, could have an effect on a

person's level of empowerment. According to their responses, evaluating a person's level of empowerment in an RDP development versus a PHP development is relevant. The angle in which the interviewees view the link was different from that of the researcher. The researcher aimed to look more into the process that took place from the commencement of the project to handover and how the interviewees felt about the final product and whether the difference in these two housing models had a bearing on the beneficiaries' level of empowerment. This is something that can be explored in further detail in the follow-up interview. In conclusion, judging from the literature review that was done on environmental psychology and the responses on this question it can be deduced that an environment can influence a person's level empowerment.

4.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the determinants that the beneficiaries identified with empowerment are similar to the ones that were already established during the literature review process of this study. "Financial security" was one of the determinants that came out strongly that was not identified during the literature review process. The manner in which it can be linked and evaluated is by determining how each housing model was able to contribute to the financial advancement of each household. There were other determinants that were excluded from the study. The major one being education as its relevance to housing could not be established. The other determinants that some beneficiaries identified were not commonly mentioned as the primary determinants of empowerment and were thus also excluded.

In conclusion the following determinants and indicators can be used to evaluate empowerment in this study:

Determinants	Indicator
Power	Evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making power amongst beneficiaries and • Beneficiaries possessing the power to control the project process and the final product (RDP or PHP house).

Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficiaries having control over the project process and final product of the house.
Participation	<p>Evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong working relationships amongst beneficiaries/community. • Expanded networks amongst beneficiaries and stakeholders of the project. • Effective communication and participation platforms between beneficiaries and other stakeholders of the project.
Growth and Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the beneficiary was equipped with new skills that he or she deems important. • Evidence of a conducive learning environment for the beneficiaries.
Improved Self Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of fulfilment, motivation, encouragement and confidence from the beneficiaries' point of view.
Meaningfulness and Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of beneficiaries understanding their individual tasks to the overall project outcome.
Self-Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that beneficiaries take ownership and responsibility over the project.
Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that beneficiaries took self-initiated steps prior and during the project.
Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of options regarding the location, design or structure of the house.
Desired Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of previously set vision and or objectives (or expectations) by beneficiaries. • Assessment of how well the vision or objectives (or expectations) were met.
Financial Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that the house was able to contribute to the financial advancement of the beneficiary or any other member of the beneficiary's household

Table 3: Empowerment Determinants and Indicators

After the determinants were identified and concluded they were added onto the interview schedule which was then finalised. The interview schedule was used in the follow up interviews to analyse the evidence or lack of these empowerment determinants in the two housing projects. The next chapter will discuss the findings of this follow up interview.

5. CHAPTER 5: The Impact of the Two Types of Housing Delivery Models On Empowerment

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to communicate the findings from the follow-up interviews. A total of 30 beneficiaries were interviewed (15 beneficiaries from each project). The aim of these follow-up interviews was to assess the evidence of the empowerment determinants in order to evaluate whether the different housing projects affected their beneficiaries' level of empowerment. The interview schedule for these interviews was divided into sections representing each determinant. The questions under each section were formed by using the identified indicators as concluded in table 3 (see the conclusion of chapter 4)

The first section of this chapter, the background, compares the processes of the different housing projects from the beneficiaries' point of view. The sections thereafter discuss the findings of each determinant and what the findings mean for this study, which is determine the extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or furthered disempower poor communities. The discussions to respond to this main aim are under section 5.12. Then finally the conclusion ends of the chapter.

5.2. Background

In the first round of interviews the interviewees were requested to explain the process they underwent from the beginning until they received their houses. This was done in an effort to compare the process as was explained in the literature review (Section 2.7) to the beneficiaries' experiences. The researcher found some inconsistencies between the process as explained by literature and the process as explained by the beneficiaries. Mainly that Bathembu (2010) and NDoHS (2009: 19) stated that being part of an organised community group is a requirement in

order to qualify to be a beneficiary of a PHP project. This requirement was not mentioned by the beneficiaries of the PHP project. When this gap was identified, the researcher enquired with the beneficiaries again in the follow-up interview to determine whether there was evidence of organised community groups in the project.

5.2.1. RDP Process

In the follow-up interviews the RDP beneficiaries indicated that they submitted application forms at the municipal offices. The community was informed by the ward councillors during community meetings and through the use of loud hailers that they should go to submit application forms. Applicants had to make an affidavit at a police station in order to confirm their employment status. The residents took all the required documentation to the municipal offices to make an application. Some of the interviewees indicated that the approval took time. They were first declined; thereafter they continued to reapply until they received an approval. Some beneficiaries indicated that there were problems regarding the project. One interviewee explained:

“After they built the foundation, it took a year where only the foundation was built, they only came after a year to build the rest of the house” said the one beneficiary “they (the municipality) did not explain why this was happening, we were all confused waiting for the houses to be built. They kept saying they were coming only after a year they came back to build the houses.”

Other beneficiaries were delayed even further due to a confusion that resulted in their houses being built on the wrong stands. In due course the matter was resolved and their houses were then built.

5.2.2. PHP Process

The process for the PHP project had some similarities to that of the RDP project. The beneficiaries had to submit their application forms at the municipal offices. This included submitting supporting documentation (i.e. affidavits) and thereafter they waited for approvals. After the approval was received, the contractor called a meeting with beneficiaries and explained the PHP processes to them and informed them on the dates he intended to start building. Material was delivered to their stands. The beneficiaries were clustered into groups of 5 household representatives per group (in some cases groups of 4 household representatives were formed). The group members were obligated to assist other members of the group with the construction of their houses. The only challenging thing was that while some beneficiaries were unemployed and could assist effectively with sweat equity as PHP requires, other beneficiaries were employed and had to hire someone to stand in their place and assist with the building. This means that some of the money from the subsidy was used to pay for that labour. Consequently, those that were employed during the construction could not get the full experience of a PHP project. Those who were available to provide their sweat equity mentioned that they assisted by collecting water, making the concrete mix, putting the cement properly between the bricks and transporting some material on wheel barrows. In one of the groups, two beneficiaries could not assist as the other one was too old and the other one was sick. As a result, there were only three members who were fit enough to carry out the process of building a total of five houses, which was reported to be very strenuous.

As previously explained, the investigation of the process of these two projects in the follow-up interview was to investigate the inconsistencies that were identified in the first round of interviews. The evidence of organised community groups in the PHP project had to be verified. The only organised group that the interviewees referred to was still that the beneficiaries were organised into groups of 5 households per group. The reason it was so important to verify whether there were organised community groups was because that group qualifies as a network that

was formed during the process and thus contributes to the participation determinant.

In the interview, interviewees made reference to words such as determination, perseverance and taking initiative as critical indicators of an empowered person. These indicators were all grouped under the desired change and initiative determinant. When observing the process of both housing projects, there was evidence from the responses that initiative was taken by them to apply for the houses. They also showed perseverance by continuously reapplying when they were declined until they received approval. When the individuals took the initiative to apply for a house, they showed that they had a desire to change the circumstances they were living in. This shows that “desired change” and “initiative” determinants were evident in both the housing processes. More detailed observations of these two determinants will be elaborated further on in this chapter under section 5.8.

Concerning the participation determinant, the following indicators had to be evident: strong working relationships amongst beneficiaries; expanded networks amongst beneficiaries and beneficiaries with project sponsors or other institutions that were part of the project and lastly, effective communication and participation platforms between the beneficiaries with the department of human settlements and other institutions. There was evidence of strong working relationships between the beneficiaries of the PHP project due to the organised groups that were formed. The RDP project was lacking evidence in that regard. However, the beneficiaries stated that there were meetings held between them and the councillors and the project managers therefore there was evidence of effective communication and participation platforms between the parties were involved. The only attribute that the PHP process had that the RDP process did not have was the evidence of people working together during the construction process. More detailed observations regarding the participation determinant will be elaborated further on under section 5.3.

5.3. Power, Control and Choice

Power, control and choice are three separate determinants, however their findings will be grouped together in this section as their questions and responses were closely related.

5.3.1. Decision, Control and Choice regarding Location

It could be viewed that the beneficiaries did exercise an element of choice and that they did take a decision to stay in that specific location for their personal reasons. However, the process of the project does not allow for a beneficiary to apply for an RDP or PHP house in a location that they are not based in. When the beneficiaries (both RDP and PHP) submit an application form, they submit it based on the location that they are currently situated. Some interviewees expressed their attachment to their current neighbourhood by indicating that they did not want to be located in a different area than the one they were based in prior to the construction of their houses. This can also be related to the responses that the beneficiaries gave in the previous chapter under section 4.5 when they were asked to indicate whether they thought a person's environment had the power to influence their level of empowerment. Beneficiaries felt very strongly that familiarity and having a support system in an area that one resides in can play a major role on an individual's level of empowerment.

5.3.2. Decision, Control and Choice regarding the Structure or Design of the House

In relation to the ability to take decisions regarding how the structure or design of the house should be and the choice made available to them. The interviewees frequently indicated that the contractors came with a specific plan that could not be altered.

One of the interviewees said:

“They did not ask me any questions, instead they told me what kind of a house they were going to build for me...They feel as though they have the power, in fact they do have the power to tell us the type of house they are going to build, we do not.”

The other interviewee also alludes to the power issue by saying:

“We did not have a say because we were invited by the word Government. Therefore when the government is the one that does something for us we do not have a voice.”

The interviewees also explained that only people that were based at the corner of the street could take a decision regarding the direction their houses could face. The other interviewees expressed that the only thing they could do was to criticise the defects of the house during the construction process. They mentioned that the contractors wanted to do a bag wash instead of putting plaster on the walls. Some of the interviewees requested that their houses should be left bare so that they could do the plastering themselves as they were not comfortable with the bag wash. The beneficiaries were requested to make affidavits as proof of their decision.

PHP beneficiaries also expressed the same sentiments as those of RDP beneficiaries. They also stated that they had no decision-making power regarding the structure of the house. They mentioned that they could only take a decision or make a choice regarding which side of the house the door could be placed.

5.3.3. People or Institutions That Had the Most Decision-making Power

The RDP beneficiaries tended to believe that councillors or the government had the most decision-making power.

One of the interviewees elaborated:

“The government has the power over our lives. Nothing can take place without it going via the government. When we speak of the government we are speaking about law...every place has its own law and therefore we have to live accordingly.”

There was also an indication that the person who was awarded the construction project had the decision-making power as that person gave the specifics of how the project should be conducted. Interestingly, the PHP beneficiaries were more of the view that the contractor had the most decision-making power as opposed to councillors or the government. They believed the contractor had the power because he executed the construction processes strictly in adherence to the building plan. There were some PHP interviewees that stated that the community had the most decision-making power due to the fact that the community's input were regarded as valuable and they were not forced into anything. None of the RDP beneficiaries mentioned the community as having the most decision-making power.

For the researcher to conclude that the power determinant was evident there had to be sufficient proof that beneficiaries could make decisions in the project and that they had the power to control the project process and the final product of the house. To conclude that the control determinant was evident there had to be sufficient evidence that beneficiaries took control over the project process and final product of the house. Lastly to conclude the choice determinant, evidence that there were options offered regarding the structure or design of the house will be evaluated.

Literature states that having decision-making power over matters concerning one's house such as making meaningful contributions regarding how it should be designed, constructed and managed stimulates individual and social wellbeing. However, Miraftab (2003: 226) said such authority and decision-making power

through community participation mechanisms had been limited in low-cost housing projects. The responses of beneficiaries confirmed that there was no decision-making power, control or choice afforded to the beneficiaries in both the housing models. Therefore the researcher agrees with Miraftab (2003: 226) that authority and decision-making power was limited in these project processes.

In theory, self-help housing beneficiaries appear to have more control over the development process compared to RDP beneficiaries (Bathembu, 2010). Mehlomakulu and Marais (1999: 92) emphasised that when people build their own houses, they have control over the decision-making of the building process compared to when the government builds the houses on behalf of the people. This statement was proven false by the beneficiaries in this study as both the RDP and PHP beneficiaries expressed the same sentiments that they did not have any control over the building process because the contractor came with a set building plan that could not be altered. The only thing the beneficiaries could do was to criticise noticeable defects during the construction process.

PHP housing is said to provide greater choice in terms of development options as it can be executed as a greenfield project, hostel revamping, informal settlement upgrade and in-situ upgrade (DoHS, 2009: 20). However, in this study, the researcher used specific indicators to evaluate the evidence of choice. There had to be evidence of options that were offered regarding the structure of the house in which the beneficiaries could choose from. The PHP model failed to provide such variety. Giving PHP beneficiaries a choice regarding which side of the house they want to place their doors or giving RDP beneficiaries a choice on whether they want a bag wash on their walls or not does not provide sufficient evidence that there was choice made available to the beneficiaries. In conclusion, both the housing project processes failed to give people decision-making power or control over the project and the final product of the house. The two projects failed to provide people with sufficient options which they could choose from, the options that were provided did not have a substantial impact towards the final product of the house.

5.4. Participation

The participation determinant was identified when analysing the processes of both the RDP and the PHP project in section 5.1 of this chapter. However, there was a specific section in the interview schedule which explicitly asked questions relating to the participation determinant. As previously noted the indicators that evaluate the participation determinant are: evidence of strong working relationships amongst beneficiaries; expanded networks with other people or other institutions that were part of the project and effective communication and participation platforms between beneficiaries, the department and other institutions. In the initial round of field investigations when the interviews were conducted, beneficiaries also mentioned that a person who is able to extend him or herself to assist the next person who is in need is an empowered person. Therefore that ability to assist was added under the participation determinant and included in the questions.

5.4.1. The Views of Beneficiaries regarding the Extent of Participation in Housing Projects

This list presents people or institutions that beneficiaries from both projects communicated with throughout the process. This proved that there was communication between beneficiaries and other stakeholders:

- Municipal officials
- Builders
- Ward Councillors
- Police officials
- Contractor
- Building inspector
- The community of K-Section
- Street/ward committees
- Other beneficiaries

Extending oneself to help others was identified as an important indicator to assess the participation determinant. The interviewees confirmed that they would be able to assist or have in the past assisted someone who wishes to go through a similar exercise of acquiring a house. Though the RDP beneficiaries indicated that they did have the desire to assist other people, they confirmed that they could only assist by guiding others regarding the process they should follow to apply for a house. This includes where to acquire and submit an application form and which supporting documents should be attached to the application form. Whereas the PHP model provides the opportunity and evidence that they have already put this indicator into practice. Beneficiaries of the project were assembled into groups of 5 household per group, were the members of the groups helped to build each other's houses.

The beneficiaries from both the housing projects were very optimistic about the strength of their community relationships. Should the data have been collected from a sample of people located in different sections of Bothsabelo, the results would have probably turned out to be different. This proves that the institutional differences between the two housing projects did not have an impact on this indicator. However, when coming to the networks formed as a result of these two projects, it was found that even though beneficiaries from both housing projects were able to form strong networks, there was an even greater prevalence of this indicator from the beneficiaries of the PHP project compared to those of the RDP project. The PHP beneficiaries indicated that they were able to form strong networks due to the groups that were formed for beneficiaries to assist one another with the construction. They also alluded that they shared equipment (i.e. buckets to collect water) when the other beneficiaries did not have enough. These acts strengthened networks and working relations between the beneficiaries. There were some beneficiaries from the RDP project who felt that they underwent the process alone and did not build any working relationships or networks with anyone.

Involving the community and offering them the platform to form effective partnerships in order to participate and have decision-making power over the project is an integral part of the PHP process (Carey, 2009: 1 and Bathembu,

2010). PHP aims to encourage communities to participate and have a sense of ownership over the project as opposed to being “passive recipients” (NDoHS, 2008 as cited in Carey, 2009: 13 and Himlin 2008). It encourages citizenship and that people get directly involved in the development process of their communities (Carey, 2009: 1). The aim of RDP was that it would be driven by the communities. This means that the affected communities would be involved with the planning and implementation of the development (Aigbavboa and Thwala, 2013: 1334). The National Housing act of 1997 further emphasises that all the spheres of government should consult with the communities affected to ensure that the projects are administered in a transparent and equitable manner (Aigbavboa and Thwala, 2013: 1334).

Hassen (2003 as cited in Davy, 2007:19) stated that participation had not occurred in that manner in practice as “participation is often interpreted to mean acquiescence and voluntary contributions of labour and resources by low income beneficiaries who have no real influence on a project’s goals and design or in establishing the rules within which it must operate”. This is where the participation determinant is linked to the control and power determinant. This study confirmed that Hassen was correct because even though PHP beneficiaries provide their sweat equity, they do not have an influence over the project. The beneficiaries do not have any decision-making power over the design or the operation of the project.

Observing the indicators in detail and how the beneficiaries answered to the questions, the results reveal that there were platforms for communication in both RDP and PHP processes whether it be through meetings (as indicated in section 5.1) with councillors, contractors or the community, on site with the builders, inspectors and the community or at the offices with the municipal officials and the police. Therefore, the efforts of achieving transparency in RDP projects as reflected by the statements made by Aigbavboa and Thwala (2013: 1334) were achieved.

What was observed from these results was that though both the processes confirm evidence of strong networks, the RDP process does not require beneficiaries to get

as involved in the project process as the PHP beneficiaries do. This could be the reason why some beneficiaries of the RDP project felt as though they did not receive support from their neighbours or build any meaningful relationships throughout the process.

While the RDP project achieved its aim of ensuring transparency, when observing the PHP project it became evident that the project failed in certain aspects to achieve the true intention of PHP in relation to participation. This was to give beneficiaries decision-making power over the project. However, when using unified indicators to analyse the determinant in both the housing projects there is evidence that the PHP project was more successful with this indicator compared to the RDP project. This was due to the fact that the PHP project provided a better opportunity for beneficiaries to help one another throughout the project. This in turn affected the strength of networks formed during the project.

5.5. Growth and Skills Development

This determinant is concerned with whether individuals learned new skills (Chamberlin, 1997: 44 and Nelson, Hall and Walsh-Bowers, 1998: 58), tools and techniques (Erstad, 1997: 332) and improved their performance and potential (Erstad, 1997: 325). This is so that individuals will eventually be able to function independently (Nelson, Hall and Walsh-Bowers, 1998: 58). To examine this determinant in the projects, evidence that beneficiaries were equipped with new skills that they deem to be important had to be verified.

What was found was that the interviewees from both the projects were confident that they had gained knowledge and skills from being beneficiaries of these two housing projects. However, this determinant was more prominent amongst PHP beneficiaries compared to RDP beneficiaries.

An RDP beneficiary said:

“How it would be built I did not care, I just wanted it to be built because I was grateful that it was from the government. I just understood that we were empowered...I do not want to lie I do not know how to build, I did not take the time to observe because I was just grateful to the government.”

The RDP beneficiaries learnt more about the material that was used when building a house and that using insufficient cement in the concrete mixture has detrimental effects on the product of the house. There was an interviewee who mentioned that he learnt the difference between putting up an informal dwelling unit and building a formal house. He said that a formal house is built according to an established building plan and has to follow specifications unlike an informal dwelling. The building time frames of a house were learnt by another interviewee. One of the interviewees compared the home she grew up in when she was younger to the RDP house that she is staying in. She indicated that with her previous home, the wall was made up of two rows of bricks, the inner and outer layer, however her RDP house was built with only one row of bricks, which she believed was not secure enough to withstand natural disasters.

The beneficiaries of the PHP project mentioned a combination of both tangible and intangible skills. In terms of the intangible skills, the beneficiaries learnt how to be patient and how to persevere throughout the challenges of project. They also learnt how to work together in a team (as the community and with the government) and that team work is vital for the successful implementation of the project.

Some of the tangible skills that the PHP beneficiaries gained were similar to those given by the RDP beneficiaries (i.e. they learnt which material is used when building a house). Additionally, beneficiaries learnt how to pass bricks from one person to the next, make a concrete mixture, paint window frames, cover walls with plaster and how many square meters a PHP house covers. The other interviewees were

not able to gain skills practically due to the fact that they were employed and had to work while their houses were being constructed. However, they mentioned that through observation they were also able to grasp some of the processes that occurred during the course of the project.

Not only is it important to gain a skill, but the application thereof is equally as important. If a person learns something he or she has no use for then the whole effort of gaining that skill was of no value. All the interviewees who learnt new skills in the project were confident that they would be able to apply these skills in other areas of their lives especially if they should have the means to build their own homes one day. One of the PHP interviewees was able to get employment in the construction business post the PHP project and she mentioned that she enjoys working with her hands.

One of the flaws of the RDP model was that the skills gained by beneficiaries were merely through observation and not by practical means, as compared to the PHP beneficiaries. Therefore, the certainty of whether they would be able to apply those skills post the project is questionable. The flaw uncovered in the PHP process was that the whole purpose of the project was for beneficiaries to assist with sweat equity to build their own houses. However, some of the beneficiaries were employed during that time and could not provide that sweat equity. This means that their level of experience and input were similar to the beneficiaries of the RDP project. The possibility was that the RDP beneficiaries who were not working at that time gained better exposure to the project compared to the employed beneficiaries of PHP. Literature showed that Thwala (2005) and Ntema (2011) had differing views regarding the effectiveness of low-cost housing in transferring usable skills to its beneficiaries. Thwala (2005: 6) said low-cost housing had great potential to address unemployment, poverty and skills shortages in disadvantaged communities if proper labour-intensive programmes could be established for housing projects. However, he was of the view that South Africa has not been successful in achieving this (Thwala, 2005: 6). He said that individual skills were not improved and that the training that was available fell short of being useful for

post project employment (Thwala, 2005: 6). While Ntema (2011: 109) believed that PHP projects created job opportunities for the local people and provided opportunities for women and people with disabilities to get involved in the construction process (groups that were previously disregarded in the construction industry). These housing projects do have the potential to address unemployment, poverty and skill shortages in disadvantaged communities as Thwala (2005: 6) rightfully said. However, the root cause of this not being achieved may also be because of the lack of employment opportunities in general. Ntema (2011: 109) was also correct that the PHP process offered women the opportunity to get involved in the construction industry. However, there was a woman that confirmed that she was strained by the process of being involved in that extent of physical labour. She referred to cases where some of the group members were elderly or sick and could not assist with the construction. This meant that the other members of the group were burdened with double the load of work.

When observing at the indicators that were used to analyse the growth and skills determinant it became evident that although the beneficiaries of both the projects gained skills from the project, there tended to be more PHP beneficiaries who were confident that they gained skills from the project compared to the RDP beneficiaries. Also, the PHP beneficiaries appeared to have had a more well-rounded experience in the project as they gained both tangible (i.e. mixing of concrete) and intangible skills (i.e. patience, perseverance). The RDP beneficiaries mentioned only the tangible skills, although this could have been attributed to how the beneficiaries understood and interpreted the question. The PHP beneficiaries were able to put their skills into practice as they assisted to build the other beneficiaries' houses. In conclusion, the growth and skills determinant was more dominant amongst the beneficiaries of the PHP project than the beneficiaries of the RDP project.

5.6. Improved Self-confidence

The four dimensions (confidence, self-esteem, fulfilment, pleasant moods and emotions) that formed this determinant were used in the interview schedule to determine whether there was an improvement or decline of confidence amongst the beneficiaries post the project. These indicators were built into the interview schedule by asking the interviewees to indicate whether they felt “confident/proud” vs. “discouraged”; “fulfilled” vs. “dissatisfied”; “motivated” vs. “demotivated” and lastly “competent” vs. “incompetent”. However, in the end “competent” vs. “incompetent” was excluded from the interview as the interviewees found it difficult to understand and to relate back to their feelings about the house.

5.6.1. Assessing self-confidence in the Projects

The interviewees were generally very grateful, positive and happy about having a house. One of the interviewees said:

“It has encouraged me because right now I can sleep in my own bedroom and so can my mother, I can take a bath in privacy, guests can also have place to sit. Had the government not built for us, we would be in trouble because that shack was leaking, we slept in water. We could not even eat when it rained.”

There were beneficiaries from the RDP project who expressed dissatisfaction regarding their houses. Beneficiaries elaborated that their dissatisfaction was due to the deficiencies of the house (the cracking of the walls, wrongly fitted doors and windows, bad quality of doors and windows used). One interviewee expressed:

“I am not satisfied about my house because it has a number of faults. I am ashamed and I am not proud of it because it did not satisfy me. It has discouraged me to the point where I feel if I had the power I would build myself another house.”

These deficiencies were also confirmed in the findings of the first interview. There was a feeling, especially with the RDP interviewees that they could not complain or criticise the final product of the house as it was a house given to them for free, implying that they should just be grateful that they have shelter. The interviewees who indicated discontent stated that even though they were not satisfied, having a house had motivated them, as they can make improvements to the house they already have as opposed to building a house from scratch. It became evident that being beneficiaries of these projects definitely improved their self-confidence from when they were shacks dwellers. The tendency for improved self-confidence was more prominent amongst beneficiaries of the PHP project.

Section 3.4.3 makes reference to the fact that the physical characteristics of the two housing projects were similar. The findings from the first interview (refer to section 4.2.2) also confirmed that the beneficiaries experienced similar problems in relation to the construction quality of the houses. However, the findings of this determinant show that self-esteem was more prevalent amongst beneficiaries of the PHP project. The main concern is, despite the similarities in the findings regarding the attitudes of beneficiaries towards the construction quality of their houses and the physical characteristics of the two housing projects. How was it that this determinant was more prominent amongst the PHP beneficiaries compared to the RDP beneficiaries? This result could be due to the institutional differences in the two housing models. The PHP beneficiaries' involvement in the building processes evidently affected their levels of self-esteem. The studies done by Landman and Napier (2010: 300-301) and Ntema (2011: 109) confirmed that pride and fulfilment were more evident amongst the beneficiaries of the PHP project as compared to RDP project.

In conclusion, the determinant of improved self-confidence was evident in both housing models, however, it was found to be more prominent amongst the beneficiaries of the PHP project more than the RDP beneficiaries.

5.7. Meaningfulness and Impact

“Meaningfulness” and “impact” are empowerment indicators that were identified in a study done by Thomas and Velthouse, 1990 (as cited in Frymier, Shulman and Houser, 1996: 183-184). These two indicators explain the importance of an individual or a group of people understanding the weight of their individual effort on the project as a whole. Impact is specifically explained as how an individual views the contribution of his or her task towards the goals that were set.

5.7.1. Assessment of Meaningfulness and Impact in the RDP Project

The interviewees from both the projects indicated that they had a major influence on the success of the project. Some of the reasons given by the RDP beneficiaries were that they assisted by lending a hand while the house was being built. Others mentioned that they observed and criticised when they were not happy about something that the builders did while constructing. Some beneficiaries placed high esteem on themselves for applying for the housing and following up on the approval of their houses. One beneficiary stated that he initially joined a political party which he thought would be able to assist him to get a house. One beneficiary said that he sacrificed his time when he had to go to work to ensure that when the builders arrive he was able to provide them with what they would need for the day, which made him late for work at times. The same beneficiary encountered a problem when his house had to be built, as it was built on the wrong stand. He took it upon himself to follow it up until the mistake was rectified and his house was built in the end. The other beneficiary said he played a big role by safe-guarding the material allocated to his house. There were beneficiaries of the RDP project that admitted that they did not feel they had played a major role towards the success of the project.

5.7.2. Assessment of Meaningfulness and Impact in the PHP Project

The PHP beneficiaries felt they played a major role by assisting with the construction, correcting some of the defects of the house and by taking responsibility of the upkeep. However this response relates more to what the interviewees did post the construction of the house. The other interviewee stated that the role she played was to deliver cement to the house when the builders placed plaster on the walls. The other interviewees mentioned that they provided criticism where they saw a fault in order for that to be corrected.

The PHP interviewees who said they did not feel they played a major role in the project mentioned the following reasons. They stated that the whole project was the plan of the government and that even if something dissatisfied them they would still need to approach the government in order for the change to be effected. The other beneficiary mentioned that the contractor was the one in charge of the project and not the beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries saw the value of their individual efforts towards the successful implementation of the projects whether it was through assisting with sweat equity or making criticisms in order for the builders to correct the defects. The beneficiaries felt that their presence made a difference towards the output of the house. Ntema (2001, 107) mentioned in his study that the PHP beneficiaries were able to improve previously strained relationships by identifying that it was more important that they work together in order to meet their goals. This showed that the community could identify the importance of their individual roles in the overall project and that working together was critical for the success of the project. This spirit of teamwork was also mentioned by beneficiaries of the Lebone Development Trust in the growth and skills determinant. Even though Ntema's (2001) study specifically focused on PHP projects, the findings of this research showed that the beneficiaries of both housing projects could identify the impact of the roles they played towards implementing the project.

5.8. Self-Accountably

To evaluate self-accountability there had to be evidence that beneficiaries took ownership and responsibility over the project. An interviewee from the PHP development stated that she would hold herself accountable should there be any negative unexpected outcomes regarding the structure of her house. She also reiterated that some things are just natural causes and she would not blame the government as she feels that the government has done enough to assist them by providing them with a house. The second interviewee also from the PHP development said she would hold everyone who played a role in the project liable including herself. An RDP beneficiary stated she would have to investigate the root cause of the fault before she points any fingers. The remainder of the interviewees said that they would blame the builders and contractors, their reasons were that the contractors were in charge of the project and that they have the building expertise not the beneficiaries. One of the interviewees explained:

“I think it would be their (the builders) fault, because the methods they use to build these houses, in my opinion, are wrong... From the start you find that sometimes the foundation is not built properly and is not aligned. They build in a hurry. The roof is sometimes not tightened. One would have to find another person to overdo some of the work they did. They buy second hand windows...The doors have holes in them, even though they come from a shop you can see that they are actually second hand products.”

The NDoHS (as cited in Carey, 2009:13) stated that the benchmark of PHP housing is to allow the communities to contribute and participate in the development process to ensure that the beneficiaries have a sense of ownership over the process. The responses regarding this determinant are closely linked to the meaningfulness and impact determinant. The results showed that although the beneficiaries claimed to have had a huge role to play towards the success of the project, when asked if they would take any accountability should there be negative unexpected outcomes with regards to their houses, they said they would not. This

proved that the beneficiaries from both the projects did not have a sense of ownership over the projects. These results could be due to the fact that the beneficiaries felt they had no control or decision-making power towards the project and thus cannot take any responsibilities for any shortcomings. Just as they indicated in the determinant of power and control that other stakeholders had the decision-making power, they reiterated in this section that the builders or contractors are the ones that have the building expertise and should thus be held accountable should there be any negative outcomes regarding their houses. Even though the benchmark of PHP projects is to increase the beneficiaries' sense of accountability as indicated by the NDoHS (as cited in Carey, 2009:13) the results show that this was not achieved, and the prevalence of accountability was also lacking in the RDP model. In conclusion this determinant was lacking in both the housing projects.

5.9. Desired Change

This determinant was derived from Erstad (1997); Kasmel and Anderson (2001). It refers to a desired change in people's quality of life and these people setting up objectives or a vision in order to achieve what they desire.

In the RDP project, some beneficiaries stated that they did have a vision or expectations of how their houses would look like while other beneficiaries did not have that vision. Those who indicated that they did not have a vision stated that they just had an idea of what other RDP houses looked like. The other beneficiary said "if I had to speak the truth, I just wanted to see myself in a house" implying that she had no expectations of what the house would look like. Others also felt the same way that they were just happy that the government was assisting them. These beneficiaries explained that because they did not have the financial means to get a house, they had no vision or expectations about the kind of houses that they would get and that they just needed a house.

The beneficiaries that did have a vision mentioned that they thought the house would look like other RDP houses, but they realised that the houses are built differently (by different contractors or through different projects). Amongst the beneficiaries who had a vision or expectations of how their houses would look like explained that the final product did not meet their initial expectations. There was an expectation that the kitchen and the living room would be separate instead of an open plan. There was an expectation that the houses would have three bedrooms but instead there were only two bedrooms. Another beneficiary said that the walls of other RDP houses were covered with plaster and had a ceiling, but to her disappointment her house did not have those features.

The results showed compared to the RDP beneficiaries more beneficiaries from the PHP project had a vision of what their houses would look like. There was an expectation that the houses would be bigger than the RDP houses due to the nature of the project. However, the difference was found to be indistinguishable. Others thought the houses would look like any other subsidy house. Another beneficiary said she knew what to expect from a PHP house, that it would be a four roomed house with an indoor toilet, but she felt that the space provided for the toilets and the kitchen was very small; however, she was still very satisfied with the final product of the house. The beneficiaries of the PHP project, despite some of their criticisms, were generally very satisfied with how well their vision or expectations had been met.

The Just Governance Group (2011: 2) was of the opinion that in an instance when a “desired result” was not achieved, researchers should further analyse the cause that lead to that outcome. The beneficiaries of the RDP project appear to have had misinformed expectations. Some of the expectations that they had about their houses were higher than the standards of an RDP house i.e. the expectation of a three bedrooled RDP house. Others may have viewed other RDP houses were beneficiaries made improvements to the house i.e. walls covered with plaster and assumed that that is what the houses would to look like. Even so, these matters were meant to have been clarified during ward meetings and if they were, there

may have been beneficiaries who did not understand. However, the most intricate matter that was observed about these projects was that they did not offer the beneficiaries choices and this may have been the main reason why the final product of the house did not meet their expectations. The Just Governance Group (2011: 2) argued that the processes of exercising choice may lead to different outcomes than those that were expected, however, this was not the case in this project. Kabeer (1999: 438) stated that if the main reason why individuals failed to meet their goals was due to being constrained when one had to exercise choice, that is only when the matter could be considered to be a manifestation of disempowerment.

What should also be considered is that these results appear to be contradictory to the results of the improved self-confidence determinant. The beneficiaries expressed that they felt confident, motivated and fulfilled about their houses. This determinant of desired change proves that even though the beneficiaries were happy with the final result, the result did not quite meet what they had envisioned. It was stated in the improved self-confidence determinant that the beneficiaries were grateful that they did have a house and that they felt that they could not criticise it as it was a house that was given to them by the government for free.

The beneficiaries of the PHP project were positive about how well their expectations had been met. They seem to have had a better idea of what the outcome of the houses would be like as they stated that the final product of the house met their expectations. The reason behind this could be attributed to the fact that the participation determinant was much stronger in this project than the RDP project. The beneficiaries perhaps had a better understanding of what the houses would look like because they were part of the building processes. Their expectations seem to have been more informed compared to the beneficiaries of the RDP project. RDP housing was criticised for its inability to structurally meet the quantitative housing needs of its beneficiaries (Harms, 1992 as cited in Mehlomakulu and Marais, 1999: 93). International donors and NGOs were of the opinion that this challenge can be addressed through the promotion of self-help

housing as this option maximises participation, enables beneficiaries to design houses that meet their specifications and needs consequently creating higher levels of beneficiary satisfaction (Landman and Napier, 2010: 300-301). Though in this case, it was observed that beneficiaries of the PHP were also restricted from making any choice or taking any decisions, it is evident that their participation did affect levels of satisfaction which agrees with the observations made by Landman and Napier (2010: 300-301).

To conclude the findings of this determinant it can be said that even though beneficiaries of both housing projects had a desire to change their circumstances by getting a house, the results showed that the PHP project was able to better meet the expectations of its beneficiaries while the RDP project failed to do so.

5.10. Initiative

In order to conclude this determinant, there had to be evidence that the beneficiaries took initiative prior or during the process of the project. This determinant was derived from Kasmel and Anderson (2001: 801) who highlighted the importance of a community being able to take initiative and sustain activities that lead to long term change while Narayan-Parker (2005: 125) referred to it as the desire to act.

RDP beneficiaries mostly make reference to the fact that they took the initiative to apply for their houses. They indicate that they were persistent with the application processes to ensure that they finally get approval. Other beneficiaries recall how much they would pester their ward councillors during meetings to determine when they would receive houses. Beneficiaries also took the initiative to criticise the building when they noticed something wrong that the builders were doing. They also cleared up the stand prior to the commencement of the building to ensure that nothing was in the way of the builders. There were some beneficiaries that indicated that they did not take any initiatives for the project.

The beneficiaries of the PHP project also placed high esteem on the fact that they took initiative to go and apply for a subsidised house. Other initiatives that the beneficiaries made was to enquire at the municipal offices or with ward councillors regarding the processes they need to follow to get a house and the progress post submitting their applications. The beneficiaries also frequently attended ward meetings and provided input and criticism throughout the process. Beneficiaries assisted with the building of the houses and some bought the cement themselves in order to plaster the house. The other beneficiary took the responsibility (together with her children) to collect the bricks and take them to her stand after the building material was delivered.

The results show that beneficiaries from both the housing projects took initiative and were persistent in order to ensure that their dream of having a house was realised. When viewing the literature by authors such as Landman and Napier (2010: 300) and Harris (1998 and 2003 as cited in Marais *et al*, 2008: 3) it can be concluded that policy and literature show more evidence that the beneficiaries of self-help housing show greater initiative to be part of the housing project as compared to beneficiaries of RDP. However, this study shows beneficiaries of both projects showed initiative. It can be concluded that this determinant was evident in both housing processes in a satisfactory manner.

5.11. Financial Security

Financial security is one of the determinants of empowerment that was identified solely by the beneficiaries. From the responses of the beneficiaries it was later defined as “the ability for one to provide for oneself and or family financially” under section 4.5 in chapter 4 of this study. In terms of linking it to empowerment in housing, the researcher had to determine whether the beneficiaries progressed financially in any way after receiving their homes.

PHP interviewees agreed that receiving their houses advanced them financially. Some of the reasons provided were that if it had not been for the assistance of the

government, they would still have had to struggle to put money together to buy the material and pay for labour to build a house and now they are able to focus on other matters such as educating their children and purchasing furniture. The interviewees mentioned that their assets used to get damaged from the rain when they stayed in a shack and now living in a house has meant they do not constantly have to work “backwards” to replace things that kept getting damaged. One of the interviewees explained that she was not working and that her son took care of her. Her son had intended to build a house for her but now that she has one already the son would just focus on extending and maintaining the existing house, which was a huge financial relief for him.

An interviewee from the PHP project explained that she experienced both financial setbacks and progress. She felt that receiving the house set her back as she used to sell some products before she was a beneficiary and she had a job of doing laundry for people. Due to the nature of PHP which requires people to be there while the construction takes place and having to help the other members in her group to build, she stopped selling and doing laundry whilst the construction was taking place. When the project was completed she had lost the place where she used to sell to someone else. She also mentions that her health deteriorated greatly due to the physical labour she endured during the project. After the project, she did not want to work anymore. On the other hand she felt that she had progressed because she now had a house. She was able to furnish her home as the house was more spacious than the shack she stayed in and could accommodate more assets (i.e. furniture).

From the RDP beneficiaries, one of the interviewees indicated that he was still in the same place as he did not have money then and he still does not have money now. Therefore receiving a house did not make a difference for him financially. The remainder of the interviewees felt that receiving their houses advanced them financially. They mentioned similar reasons to those that the PHP beneficiaries mentioned. They indicated that they did not have the means to buy or build a

house from scratch and now they can use their money to address other needs. One interviewee said:

“It did make things easier, because I did not have the power (referring to money) to see myself buying bricks. It was challenging for me as I am a single mother. It was hard for me to be able to build a house while taking my kids through school at the same time.”

As previously mentioned when this determinant of financial security was identified, was that it related to the method that Kabeer (1999: 437) used in his study of evaluating women empowerment and the study that was done by the Just Governance Group (2011: 2) when they aimed to evaluate empowerment in international development projects. They indicated that resource was a critical dimension that affects choice which consequently has an influence on empowerment. Though resource was not included as an indicator of choice in this study, it resurfaced as having a relationship with the financial security determinant when beneficiaries felt that having financial resources influenced empowerment. It was proven in this study that having a house did better the financial situation of the beneficiaries proving that resources do affect empowerment.

One of the concerns that were raised in the introductory chapter of this study was that a household with an income of less than R3 500 is challenged when it comes to meeting basic human needs such as shelter, education and health. Even though the government tries to assist these households by providing shelter for them, how much of a role does this assistance play in empowering poor communities? The response to this concern was answered by findings of this determinant. Both beneficiaries of RDP and PHP confirm that receiving their homes advanced them financially. There was a sense of relief and gratefulness from the beneficiaries of how much the government assisted them by providing them with a free house as they did not imagine how they would have attained that if they had to do it by themselves. It can be deduced that this determinant was evident in both housing projects.

5.12. Conclusion

Both housing projects presented strengths and weakness when comparing the presence of various empowerment determinants. While some of the PHP beneficiaries presented greater levels of empowerment in some determinants, there were instances where the determinants lacked in both processes and some were apparent in both processes and it was not easy to distinguish which project presented greater evidence of those determinants than the other.

5.12.1. The Determinants That Were Absent in Both Project Processes

Both projects failed to give beneficiaries choice, control and decision-making power which consequently affected their accountability over the project. The indicators used to evaluate these determinants showed that these determinants were related. The fact that the beneficiaries perceived the power of the project to be with other stakeholders of the project other than themselves meant that they could not control the process. Not being given options meant there was no opportunity presented for decision-making. It was deemed that the PHP model, through its sweat equity initiative would give beneficiaries more power and control through the participation process, however what was seen in practice was that this was not achieved in this particular project. Though beneficiaries assisted with the building they could not make a decision regarding how it should be built. This was an aspect that was still lacking in the RDP project process as well and it is debatably one of the most important determinants as it has a trickledown effect on some of the other determinants such as self-accountability.

5.12.2. The Determinants That Were Present in Both Projects

The determinants that were evident and were addressed equally in both projects where these three determinants: financial security; initiative and meaningfulness and impact.

Beneficiaries showed that they valued the roles in which they played in the housing projects. Even though the RDP project did not require beneficiaries to assist with the construction of the house, there were other challenges within the project (houses being built on the wrong stand, defects with the building) that made the beneficiaries take a stand and speak up about matters that displeased them which added value to the success of the project at the end of the day. The beneficiaries of the PHP project also refer to similar challenges especially regarding the building process and also emphasise that they used their hands to build the house which added value to the project. Therefore this determinant was satisfactory in both housing models.

Financial security was also evident in both the housing projects as beneficiaries from both projects indicated that government assisting them with a house did advance them financially. Beneficiaries are now able to focus on other household matters (furnishing the house, education for children, basics such as food and clothing) due to the fact that they no longer have to channel money towards building a house with their own resources. The assistance that the government provided successfully met the determinant of financial security.

The initiative determinant was also satisfactory in both housing models as beneficiaries showed that they took steps towards achieving their vision. This is also interrelated with the meaningfulness and impact determinant. Beneficiaries placed emphasis on their persistence during the application process and made reference to specifics that they did to ensure the successful implementation of the project.

5.12.3. The Determinants Which Were Dominant in the One Project Over the Other

Participation; growth and skills and improved self-confidence are the three determinants that, though they were evident in both housing projects, they were more prevalent in the PHP housing model.

Regarding the participation determinant, the fact that the beneficiaries actually assisted each other placed the beneficiaries of this PHP project at a favourable position regarding one of the indicators where participants had to show that they had assisted or would assist someone going through a similar process. This consequently affected the strength of networks that were built during the project. Beneficiaries of the PHP project that were around during the construction of the project (not employed) learned practically through assisting with the building of the house, more than that, other intangible attributes were gained (team work, perseverance) which beneficiaries say were valuable for future purposes. This was why this determinant was more evident in the PHP project. The RDP beneficiaries also gained valuable skills during the project. However, they got the skills they learnt through observation and not through practice like the PHP beneficiaries.

The determinant of improved self-confidence was evident in both housing models as the beneficiaries of both projects indicated that they felt confident, motivated and fulfilled when they look at their houses. However, it was found to be more eminent amongst the beneficiaries of the PHP project more than the RDP beneficiaries.

The exception to the results of this section was the determinant of desired change. It was found to be lacking as per the results of the RDP project but was evident in the PHP housing model. Though some beneficiaries of the RDP project had expectations regarding the outcome of the project, it was found that those expectations were not met. While in the PHP project, beneficiary satisfaction over expectations that they had was much greater. The lack of this determinant in the RDP project could be due to the fact that the beneficiaries were not well informed about what the final product of their house would look like and it was evident that the lack of decision-making power and choice had an influence over this determinant. In the case of the PHP project, although beneficiaries also did not have a choice or decision-making power, it was evident that their participation in the project was favourable as their expectations were more aligned with the final output of their houses.

5.12.4. Deductions for the Findings

What was seen from this research is that these projects did deliver more than just a house. They were able to provide a home, a sense of belonging, security, and financial relief amongst other things. One could draw out the fact that beneficiaries' confidence and sense of dignity was restored as they conveyed their past distresses of when they use to stay in shacks which offered no privacy, permanency, surety nor security. However, for some beneficiaries those previous concerns are still a factor due to the poor construction quality of their houses. However, there is a sense of appreciation towards the transition when the beneficiaries trace back where they came from. Though it can be said that their desires were not completely met regarding the kind and quality of house that they had hoped for they still emphasise that it is far better than when they stayed in a shack. The beneficiaries' major emphasis is that they now finally have a home.

Weighing the scales between these two housing models was not a straightforward task as one had to carefully evaluate the depth of the content received from the responses of these different groups of beneficiaries. However, the results show that beneficiary involvement definitely was the driving force that gave the PHP beneficiaries an advantage over RDP beneficiaries especially with the participation together with the growth and skill determinant. It is evident that these two determinants were more dominant in the PHP project compared to the RDP project because the whole PHP programme was designed around beneficiary participation, sweat equity and skills development. As a result, the beneficiaries of the PHP project felt more confident about their homes compared to RDP beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries of both the projects built strong working networks amongst each other by undergoing the processes together. They recalled stories of how they would walk together to the municipal offices and attend meetings together. However, these relations went beyond just the application processes for PHP beneficiaries. They extended through to the building process when beneficiaries make reference to how they would lend each other water buckets, assist the

dependents of the elderly or sickly to build their houses. As a result, networks within that project were stronger than networks formed in the RDP project. The beneficiaries judged their strength of community relations by their ability to work together as community members, this was not only directed towards the housing project but their ability to work together in other areas affecting their community (i.e. helping one another as neighbours with challenges and assisting estranged youth in their community). Beneficiaries were quite positive about their ability to work together thus meeting Laverack's (2006: 113) definition of empowerment where he says it is were people who were previously powerless work together to attain control over issues that affect their lives.

However, where they really powerless? With regards to their financial ability to build a house then one would agree, however, not necessarily in other areas as previously reiterated (power to control the building process of their shacks versus their houses). One could deduce that some determinants that the beneficiaries might have had previously were lost in the process when receiving this house. For instance, these beneficiaries had the power to choose where to locate themselves, how they wanted to design their shacks, etc. Power, control, flexibility and freedom were lost when the beneficiaries become part of the project. This was confirmed by a beneficiary who openly said that he learned that when a formal house is being built, one has to follow very specific building guidelines unlike when one is erecting a shack. That power and control remained in the hands of the government, councillors or contractors as the beneficiaries confirmed.

Even though participation platforms (meetings, construction) were available in both projects, a point of criticism would be the level of this involvement. The findings show that involvement did not provide an opportunity for beneficiaries change the outcome of the project. However, it was beneficial for exposing it's beneficiaries to various skills that they did not have prior to the project, which is an indication of growth or progress. The fact that the PHP beneficiaries learned valuable lessons about teamwork amongst other intangible skills placed them at an added advantage over the RDP beneficiaries.

The beneficiaries showed courage by pursuing the approval of their houses persistently until they got it. They showed that they had a desire to change their quality of life and that they were willing to do what was within their means to ensure that their dream was realised. These projects were successful in relieving the financially distressed individuals. The beneficiaries' financial burdens were reduced due to this project as they indicated that the aid they received from government enabled them to channel their money into other necessities that needed to be met.

The conclusions of this study will be dealt with in more detail in the final concluding chapter of this study. The researcher will deliberate on how the study objectives were met. Linkages with the previous chapters especially chapter one that dealt with the rationale and the aim of this study will be dealt with but mostly what the implications of these findings are for existing debates on low-cost housing in South Africa and its policies.

6. CHAPTER 6: Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to integrate the findings of the previous chapters in an effort to assess how well the study addressed the aim of this research. The chapter will integrate the discussion of chapter one regarding the main aim and rationale of this study. It will show how the objectives of this study were addressed and discuss how the findings of this research implicate South African housing policies, practices and debates in literature.

6.2. Point of Departure

Housing Policy in South Africa tends to focus on the spatial and economic implications of the policy while neglecting the social. In any analysis of a policy it is important to consider the output, outcome and impact of such a policy. In this instance of low-cost housing policy, there is a need to evaluate people's perceptions towards the settlements they reside in and whether these settlements uplift them and contribute to their sense of pride, if these policies are to achieve their intent of empowering the poor communities.

The main aim of the research was to determine the extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or further disempowered poor communities. In doing so the following objectives had to be met:

- 1) To develop an understanding of what empowerment is;
- 2) To identify determinants associated with empowerment definitions;
- 3) To develop indicators to be used to evaluate empowerment;

- 4) To use the indicators to evaluate the presence, decrease or absence of self-empowerment in relation to the two selected study areas in the field investigation; and
- 5) To make a comparison from the results yielded from the field investigation in order to draw a conclusion and respond to the main aim of the study.

6.3. Achievement of the Research Objectives

The following sub-sections demonstrate how the research objectives of this study were met:

6.3.1. Objective 1: Understanding of Empowerment

The first objective of this research was to develop an understanding of what empowerment is. The research achieved this by looking at generic definitions of empowerment and thereafter looked at different disciplines to get their views of what empowerment means in their specific environments. The disciplines that were observed were the following:

- Mental Health
- Housing
- Education
- The Workplace
- Psychological

It soon became evident that empowerment is often explained and moulded to fit into the context of differing environments, consequently researchers came to a different understanding of the term. The researcher investigated the views of the beneficiaries from the two housing projects to determine how they would define empowerment. What was found was that the beneficiaries did not have a clear understanding of the term. This further collaborated with the findings of the literature review that the term itself is quite abstract and thus not easy to

understand or to have a universal definition for it. This is due to how inconsistently it has been defined by various people and disciplines. However, in order to meet this first objective, it was important for a definition of empowerment in a low-cost housing context to be established. The various determinants that were uncovered and used to evaluate empowerment were used to form a definition for this research.

The definition of empowerment for this study can be concluded as: a process in which beneficiaries or occupants of a specific community through their process of acquiring a house were provided with choices and the opportunity to take major decisions and control over the project. There should also be beneficiary participation, which should involve consultation where beneficiaries are able to change the project outcomes and are equipped with both tangible and intangible skills. At the end of the process the beneficiaries should be able to understand and value the importance of their contribution to the project and have a sense of accountability and pride towards the outcome of the project. There should be evidence that the beneficiaries were advanced financially from receiving their houses.

6.3.2. Objective 2: Determinants to Evaluate Empowerment

Numerous techniques for evaluating empowerment were uncovered and analysed. The techniques ranged from identifying or forming empowerment indicators (as suggested in the third objective of this study), then using them in various research tools, i.e. surveys. Other methods required that the community that was being studied define what empowerment meant for them and they were allowed to evaluate it themselves. Other researchers expanded already established surveys by incorporating additional determinants that would suit their study context. This study combined the benefits of the different approaches by firstly forming empowerment determinants and their indicators. This was achieved by evaluating different definitions of empowerment from different disciplines in literature and the beneficiaries themselves. A “common language” associated with empowerment

was identified and that was used to form determinants and indicators which were used to analyse empowerment in the two projects.

From the literature review the following determinants for empowerment were derived:

- Power
- Control
- Participation
- Growth and Skills Development
- Improved Self-confidence
- Meaningfulness and Impact
- Self-Accountability
- Initiative
- Choice
- Desired Change

The determinants that were concluded from the interviews with the beneficiaries were the following:

- Financial security
- Intelligence or an ability to apply one's mind
- Initiative and determination
- Providing assistance
- Education
- Skills

By observing the meaning of the determinants from the beneficiaries, it was easy to determine which ones can be grouped with the already identified determinants from the literature review. Intelligence or an ability to apply one's mind and skills were merged into the "growth and skills" determinant. Initiative and determination were merged into the "initiative" determinant. Providing assistance was merged into the

“participation” determinant. The only determinants that came out strongly that were not identified during the literature review process and could not be merged into other determinants were financial security and education. However, in the end education was not included as a determinant in the study as its relation to housing could not be established.

In conclusion the following determinants were used to evaluate empowerment in the study areas:

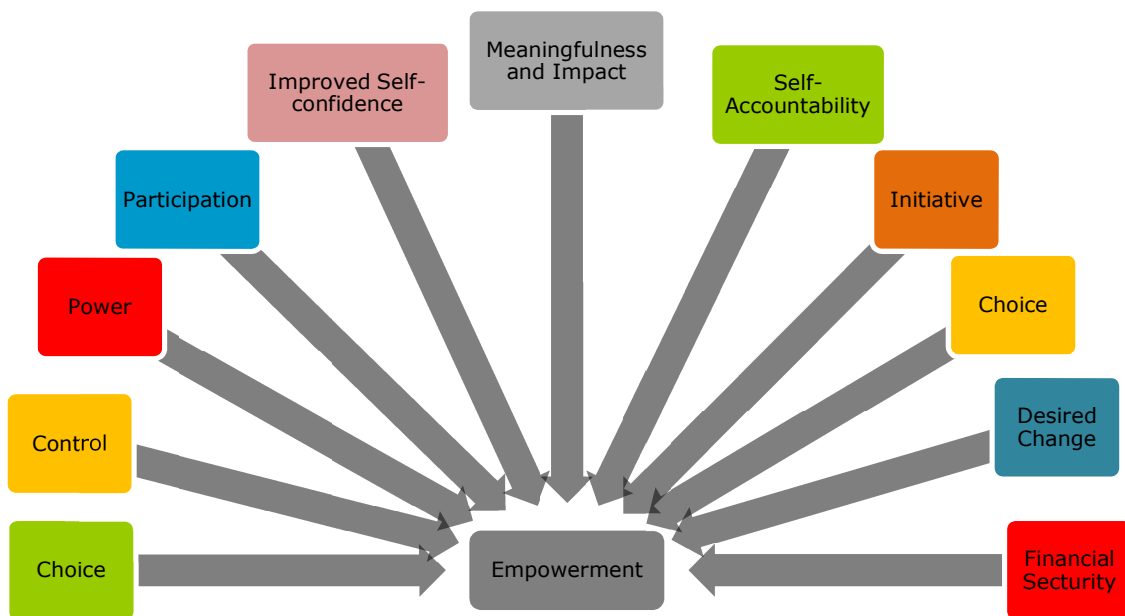


Figure 10: Empowerment Determinants

6.3.3. Objective 3: Indicators to Evaluate Empowerment

The third objective of this research was to develop indicators to be used to evaluate empowerment. The researcher used the definitions associated with the determinants to develop the indicators as illustrated on this table:

Determinants	Indicator
Power	Evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-making power amongst beneficiaries and Beneficiaries possessing the power to control the

	project process and the final product (RDP or PHP house).
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiaries having control over the project process and final product of the house.
Participation	<p>Evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong working relationships amongst beneficiaries/community. Expanded networks amongst beneficiaries and stakeholders of the project. Effective communication and participation platforms between beneficiaries and other stakeholders of the project.
Growth and Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that the beneficiary was equipped with new skills that he or she deems important. Evidence of a conducive to learning environment for the beneficiaries.
Improved Self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of fulfilment, motivation, encouragement and confidence from the beneficiaries' point of view.
Meaningfulness and Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of beneficiaries understanding their individual tasks to the overall project outcome.
Self-Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that beneficiaries take ownership and responsibility over the project.
Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that beneficiaries took self-initiated steps prior and during the project.
Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of options regarding the location, design or structure of the house.
Desired Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of previously set vision and or objectives (or expectations) by beneficiaries. Assessment of how well the vision or objectives (or expectations) were met.
Financial Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that the house was able to contribute to the financial advancement of the beneficiary or any other member of the beneficiary's household

Table 4: Empowerment Determinants and Indicators

These indicators were used to form questions for the interview schedule (see Annexure B) for the follow-up interviews. These indicators were used to assess the presence, decrease or absence of empowerment in the two study areas.

6.3.4. Objective 4: Evaluating Empowerment in the Two Study Areas

The evidence of the empowerment determinants was evaluated in the two housing processes by assessing what had been written in literature before the field investigation commenced. What was evident was that the determinants were not discussed to the same extent in studies done on the different housing models. For example, the determinant of “participation” could be picked up from a study done specifically on PHP but that same extent of detail would not be found in a study done on RDP housing. What was lacking as well was that the studies did not explain how they evaluated the evidence of these determinants in the housing project. Therefore, there were no indicators that informed the findings. This further confirmed that a detailed investigation was needed to address the purpose of this study, by going into the chosen projects to request the beneficiaries to provide further information that could not be retrieved from the literature review.

When investigating empowerment amongst the beneficiaries in the two projects, the results revealed that there were weaknesses and strengths in both the projects when comparing them against each other. There were determinants that lacked in both the housing projects, there were determinants that were equally evident in both projects and lastly there were determinants that even though present in both project, were more dominant in one of the projects over the other. The following subsections present the key findings of this analysis:

6.3.4.1. The Determinants That Were Absent in Both Project Processes

Power, Choice, Control and Self-Accountability were the four determinants that were found to be lacking in both the RDP and PHP projects.

Power:

The study showed that the only decision that was taken by the beneficiaries was where to locate themselves as informal settlers; however the project process did

not allow them to choose another location either than were they were staying for the house to be constructed. The beneficiaries of both the projects could not take any decisions regarding the structure of the house as they stated that the contractors used a specific plan that was pre-established. Only the beneficiaries located at the corner of a house could indicate their preference of where their house should face. The RDP beneficiaries believed that councillors or the government had the most decision-making power while the PHP beneficiaries said the contractor had the most decision-making. It was evident that the beneficiaries believed that other stakeholders other than themselves had the decision-making power.

Control:

The results of the control determinant where similar to those of the power determinant, as their indicators and questions where similar. The findings show that beneficiaries of both the housing projects did not have any control over the project processes.

Choice:

Although officials from the Free State Department of Human Settlements indicated that with the Lebone Development Trust project beneficiaries were presented with three plans which they could choose from, the beneficiaries disagreed with this claim. The beneficiaries of the PHP and RDP project state that they were not provided with any choice other than choosing to not have a bag wash on their walls as was intended for the RDP project and to plaster the walls themselves. The choice that was offered in the PHP project was to choose which side the doors of the house could be placed. Judging from that, these choices did not have a significant impact on the overall design or outcome of the house and that is what the choice determinant was all about. Therefore it was concluded that the projects did not present sufficient evidence of choice.

Self-Accountability:

The results show minimal evidence of beneficiaries taking accountability over the results of the project. Even though the beneficiaries were confident that they played a major role towards the project, they indicated that they would not hold themselves accountable for it. This could be as a result that beneficiaries felt they had no power and control over the project process and would therefore blame the people which they viewed to have had the most decision-making power over the project. However, they definitely confirmed that they would blame the builders as they were the ones with the building expertise.

6.3.4.2. The Determinants that were Present in Both Projects:

Financial Security, Initiative, and Meaningfulness and Impact were the three determinants which were found to have been present equally in both housing projects.

Financial Security

The beneficiaries from both the projects showed immense gratitude towards the government for providing them with houses and agreed that having a house did advance them financially. Beneficiaries indicate that they are in a better position financially as they no longer have to focus on putting money aside towards building their houses but can now use the money they have to meet financial obligations.

Initiative

The results showed that beneficiaries from both housing models took great initiative and persistence in the application process in order for their applications to eventually be approved. Beneficiaries made mention of specifics that they took throughout the project (i.e. collecting material, clearing up their stands prior to the building process) which showed admirable willingness that lead to the researcher

concluding that beneficiaries of both projects presented the required evidence that this determinant was evident in both projects.

Meaningfulness and Impact:

The beneficiaries showed that they valued the roles they played and that those roles were critical towards the successful implementation of the project. The roles they referred to were similar to those mentioned under the initiative determinant. The beneficiaries that stated that they did not play a major role towards the project still referred to the power and control determinant that the government and the contractor controlled the project and thus even if they wanted to make any changes or give input it was still up to the government to take the decision or the contractor to implement it.

6.3.4.3. The Determinants Which Were Dominant in the One Project Over the Other:

Participation:

Although both projects showed evidence of the participation determinant, the PHP model showed stronger evidence of effective networks, which was concluded to have been as a result of the building groups that these beneficiaries were placed in as they provided better opportunities for interaction. The findings showed that even though beneficiaries of both projects stated that they would be able to assist other people going through a similar exercise, the RDP beneficiaries could only provide assistance by guiding the another applicant on where to go and which supporting documents to take with when submitting an application. The strength that was found in the PHP project was that beneficiaries had evidence that they had already assisted other beneficiaries who were in their building groups with the construction of their houses.

Growth and Skills Development:

Again, in this instance, although beneficiaries from both projects learned new skills which they deemed to be important, what was found was that the beneficiaries of the RDP project learnt these skills through observation while the PHP beneficiaries were given the opportunity to practice that skill during the project, not only by constructing their own houses but also through building other beneficiaries houses who were in their building groups. The PHP beneficiaries also made mention of both tangible (i.e. layering of bricks and putting on window frames) and intangible skills (importance of working in a team). The beneficiaries confirmed that the skills they learnt were of value as they indicated that they would be able to make use of them for future purposes. Ultimately, all these aspects were what informed the researcher to conclude that the growth and skills determinant was much prominent in the PHP project than it was in the RDP project.

Improved Self-Confidence:

Even though the beneficiaries from both the projects had issues with the construction quality of their houses, the tendency of improved self-confidence was found to be higher amongst beneficiaries of the PHP project in comparison to the RDP project. Studies by Landman and Napier (2010:300-301) and Ntema (2011: 109) also confirmed that pride and fulfilment were found to be more evident amongst the beneficiaries of PHP projects. However, when assessing the determinant of meaningfulness and impact, the beneficiaries of both projects seemed to have valued their contribution towards the project equally. Should there have been a variance between the results of the meaningfulness and impact determinant (i.e. the PHP project showing stronger evidence of the meaningfulness and impact determinant); a direct relationship between these two determinants would have been concluded to say that the role the beneficiaries played towards the project had an influence on this determinant of improved self-confidence. Therefore the reason for this determinant (improved self-confidence) being more

evident in the PHP project could be due to other factors and not necessarily the beneficiaries' contribution towards the project.

Desired Change

The biggest challenge in concluding this determinant was that the Just Governance Group (2011: 2) was of the opinion that failure to achieve a desired result does not necessarily imply that a person was not empowered. They state that exercising choice may lead to a different outcome than the one that was initially anticipated. What led to the conclusion that this determinant was infected lacking in the RDP development was that only some of the beneficiaries stated that they had certain expectations (i.e. vision) about the project, even then, those expectations were not met. Whereas the PHP project did have expectations about the outcome of the house and were quite positive with regard to how well their expectations had been met by the project. What further attributed to the conclusion that this determinant lacked in the RDP project was that, if the opinion of the Just Governance Group (2011:2) had to be followed, what was found was that the beneficiaries of both projects were not offered any choice, therefore the exercise of choice could not have led to a different outcome than the one that was expected. It could be that the lack of choice in this housing model was the determining factor that led to unmet expectations in the RDP project.

6.3.5. Objective 5: Response to the Main Aim of the Study

The main aim of this research was to establish the extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or further disempowered poor communities. The table below summarises the findings of the determinants in each housing project

Determinant	RDP	PHP
Power	Lacking	Lacking
Control	Lacking	Lacking
Choice	Lacking	Lacking

Self-accountability	Lacking	Lacking
Desired Change	Lacking	Well Addressed
Participation	Evident but not greater than PHP	Dominant
Growth and Skills	Evident but not greater than PHP	Dominant
Improved self-confidence	Evident but not greater than PHP	Dominant
Meaningfulness and Impact	Well Addressed	Well Addressed
Financial Security	Well Addressed	Well Addressed
Initiative	Well Addressed	Well Addressed

Table 5: Summary of determinant findings in each project

What was observed from the results of the study was that the Botshabelo 900 pamper construction project lacked to give beneficiaries power, control and choice in the project which inevitably meant the beneficiaries did not have accountability over the project. This challenge was similar in the case of the Lebone Development Trust project. Both the projects met the requirements that were needed to conclude that the initiative, financial security and meaningfulness and impact determinants were met adequately.

However, what really formed the basis to conclude that the beneficiaries of the PHP project were more empowered than those of the RDP beneficiaries were these remaining determinants: Participation; Desired Change; Growth and Skills and Improved self-confidence. Although three of these determinants (Participation; Growth and Skills and Improved Self-Confidence) were evident in both the housing projects, the PHP model presented greater evidence in some of the indicators to conclude that the determinants were much stronger in the PHP project than the RDP Project together. Whereas the desired change determinant was found to be completely lacking in the RDP project.

It was therefore concluded that the Lebone Development Trust which was the PHP project presented greater evidence of the beneficiaries being empowered according to the findings of the evaluated determinants in comparison to the Bothsabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project. It can thus be deduced that the difference in

procedures in these two housing models definitely had an impact on how beneficiaries were empowered. This has certain implications on policies and if certain aspects were to be improved in both housing models these gaps in the empowerment determinants could be reduced and make a positive impact upon the beneficiaries.

6.4. Implication of Findings

6.4.1. Literature Debates of Housing

The results of this study pose certain implications on housing literature and policies of South Africa. As noted in chapter one, studies done on the RDP housing model have not been very favourable as studies have concerns regarding the policy's sustainability, its economic and environmental consequences. The other issue being that the consumer satisfaction appears to be low. This matter made researchers question what the next step for housing should be and which sustainable model to pursue. This has provoked an interest to compare the RDP and the PHP model.

6.4.1.1. Participation as an Indication of Empowerment

Studies by Gounden and Merrifield (1995: 95); Ntema (2011: 106); and Sowman and Urquhart (1998 as cited in Davy, 2007: 3) all agree that increasing community participation in housing projects is likely to promote community empowerment. However, after the detailed analysis of what empowerment means especially to the community, it was evident that participation is only a small portion of what has to be improved in order to empower communities. This study revealed that the RDP and PHP models need to pay attention towards improving the availability of choice that is presented to its beneficiaries, beneficiaries also need to be given control and decision-making power and by achieving these aspects, the determinant of self-accountability will also improve. These were the four determinants that were lacking in both the housing models. Even though this study agrees with Gounden

and Merrifield (1995: 95); Ntema(2011: 106); and Sowman and Urquhart (1998 as cited in Davy, 2007: 3) that participation is an important attribute of empowerment, the study revealed that participation was evident in both the housing projects. However the beneficiaries of the PHP project showed more evidence of this determinant than the beneficiaries of the RDP project.

6.4.1.2. RDP versus PHP Debate

The RDP housing model received extensive criticism since its inception with the democratic government of 1994. Mitlin and Mogaladi (2005: 8); Huchzermeyer (2009 in Newton and Schuermans 2013: 581) and Ramasodi and van Bergen (2005: 2) amongst others criticised the RDP model regarding the location of these settlements as they seem to be reinforcing the segregation that was seen in apartheid planning, the construction quality of the houses, user participation and sustainability. Thereafter the debate of RDP versus PHP housing emerged which sparked an interest for others including Landman and Napier (2010) and Newton and Schuermans (2013).

The implications of this study on the existing debate is that the study showed that the beneficiaries of the Lebone Development Trust displayed more dominant tendencies of being empowered as compared to the beneficiaries of the Botshabelo 900 Pamper Construction Project. However, what is important to note with this finding is that six of the ten determinants were evident in both the housing projects however, the PHP model showed greater evidence of the “participation”, “growth and skills” and “improved self-confidence”. Improvements are needed in both the housing models to ensure that the determinants that lacked in the models are improved.

6.4.2. Housing Policies and Practices

The transformation that took place when housing was referred to human settlements meant that the government identified that housing was an integral part

of the spatial, economic and social fabric and that the focus of meeting the constitutional mandate of everyone having the right to adequate housing could no longer just be viewed as a roof over people's heads. The government made an effort to transform this notion.

When policies are evaluated the inputs, process, output, outcome and impacts of the policies are assessed. This is important to determine whether the policy produced the desired output, outcome or impact that was anticipated when the policy was drafted. What was seen in this study was that even though the intent of the PHP model was to empower communities through ensuring that they take control and make decisions concerning the project, the results of this study showed that beneficiaries could not take decisions and that they could not take control over the project, this problem was also evident in the RDP housing project. However, the other key principles of the PHP model i.e. the formation of partnership and skills transfer were evident in both the projects but more dominant in the PHP project. The RDP model's intent was also that the communities would be the main drivers of the planning and implementation of the projects (Aigbavboa and Thwala, 2013: 1334); which this research proved was not the case in this RDP project. By not meeting these intentions, critical determinants that affect the empowerment of beneficiaries were not met. This implies that the policies need a number of improvements. The processes need to be re-evaluated to ensure that the policies yield anticipated outcomes and impacts.

Even though the results showed that the beneficiaries of the PHP presented better evidence on some of the determinants as compared to RDP housing, the research does not imply that the RDP model should be done away with. Although there are other issues in RDP housing that should also be reconsidered, this programme could be improved by adapting some of the processes of the PHP model' especially to address skills transfer and improvement of beneficiary participation. By improving these aspects there may also be an increase in the beneficiaries' self-confidence towards their homes. Weaknesses that were seen in the PHP model were that some beneficiaries could not assist physically with the building exercise (old people,

youth in school, the sickly) which placed strain onto the other beneficiaries that were in similar building groups to these vulnerable groups. Should these vulnerable groups have employed someone in their place to assist with the building, it would mean that some of the subsidy funds would have to be directed towards labour. In this case the beneficiaries may as well have been beneficiaries of the RDP project. Perhaps such individuals who are unable to assist with the building processes should rather be beneficiaries of the RDP model while those who are able to physically assist through sweat equity can be beneficiaries of PHP model.

6.4.3. Unpacking Empowerment in Policies

This research showed how abstract the concept of empowerment is. Therefore it would be fruitful for future purposes that when a policy has an objective to empower its recipients that it specifies which aspects of empowerment it aims to address. This study shows that the implications of including such an abstract concept as a deliverable, which does not even have a standard definition, makes it very challenging to assess whether the deliverable was reached.

6.5. Future Research

6.5.1. Quantitative Approach

While this study added value in terms of taking a qualitative approach to make an in-depth analysis of the attitudes and feelings of the beneficiaries when evaluating empowerment, there are many other studies that took the quantitative approach to evaluate empowerment in their fields of study. They made use of already established surveys and amended them to make them more context-specific. For future research, it would be valuable to assess empowerment in housing policies by making use of a quantitative research approach in order to compare the different policies and empowerment determinants by making use of statistics. However, even if a quantitative approach is taken, it is still advisable that the researchers

allow the beneficiaries to set their own measurements of empowerment instead of using standard international surveys that measure empowerment.

6.5.2. Micro versus Macro Analysis

Empowerment in housing policies for low income households can also be assessed by comparing the micro (i.e. South Africa) context to the macro (international) context to determine whether the policies adopted in other countries empower the community more or less than the polies in South Africa.

6.5.3. Research to Improve the Empowerment Determinants and Indicators

As indicated earlier on in this section, there were many determinants that were used to evaluate empowerment in this research. Each determinant alone possesses potential for further research. For research concerning housing there is definitely a need to investigate how the policies of low-cost housing can be amended to improve the determinants that were found to be lacking in this study.

As these determinants were not only derived from a housing context but from multiple disciplines, future research can develop the indicators for each determinant further to suit the study context and apply it for future research when evaluating empowerment in other fields of study.

6.6. Concluding Remarks

An introductory quote by Mnyandu (2013) was included before the start of this study because it made reference to critical elements about the interpretation of empowerment in South Africa. It stated that some may interpret empowerment as a notion that one stands in need of something that can only be given by someone else and that the challenge with that notion is that empowerment can just as well be withheld. What was seen from this study is that the determinants of power, control and choice were withheld from beneficiaries by other stakeholders. Self-

accountability cannot necessarily be withheld. However, because the beneficiaries did not feel that they were given power, control or choice in the processes of the project this subsequently affected or took away their sense of ownership over the project. Another profound statement about empowerment was made by Laverack (2006:113), as he also emphasizes that empowerment cannot be given, but should rather be pursued by those who seek it. This concept integrates with determinants such as desired change, initiative, meaningfulness and impact and participation as they present the beneficiary's willingness to be empowered. The studies show that determinants were evident amongst beneficiaries of both housing projects (with the exception of desired change as it was not evident in the RDP project). This proved that the beneficiaries did have a desire or drive to want to change their circumstances. Financial security is a critical resource not only for the poor and its lack thereof imposes certain limitations upon poverty stricken communities. Both the housing models provided an improvement to these low income households by providing them with assets that they would not have been able to attain with their own financial resources. Financial security, growth and skills and improved self-confidence can be viewed as some of the outcomes that emanated from these housing projects. All three of these determinants were evident in both housing projects.

The findings of this research concurred with the opinion of Spreitzer (1995: 1 444) that "people can be viewed as more or less empowered, rather than empowered or not empowered". This research showed that there were no beneficiaries that were not empowered but the beneficiaries of the PHP project appeared to have been more empowered in some empowerment determinants more than the beneficiaries of the RDP project.

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ANNEXURE A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Name and surname: Lerato Sekoboto

Title of thesis: The extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or further disempowered poor communities.

1. Background

- 1.1 Which process did you follow from the beginning until you received your house?
- 1.2 What is your general impression of your new home and this housing programme?
- 1.3 Are you aware of the other housing programmes and how they operate?

2. Empowerment

- 2.1 What do you understand about the word empowerment?
 - 2.2 Can you provide examples of people in your close circle who you feel are empowered?
 - 2.3 State the reason why you feel they are empowered?
 - 2.4 State things you would commonly use to identify an empowerment person?
 - 2.5 Indicate aspects which you think have the most influence on self-empowerment (i.e. education, good health and career, community one lives in).
 - 2.6 Do you think a person's environment can influence their level of empowerment, for example do you feel that the area and the type of house you reside in currently has affected your level of empowerment?
-

ANNEXURE B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Name and surname: Lerato Sekoboto

Title of thesis: The extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or furthered disempower poor communities.

This study falls within the arena of human settlements (housing). The aim of this study is to The extent to which government provided housing compared to self-help housing empowered or further disempowered poor communities. The purpose of this interview is to get the beneficiaries perceptions on this subject and the responses will enable the researcher to evaluate and compare the level of empowerment in the two housing projects.

1. Background

Which process did you follow from the beginning until you received your house?

2. Power and Control

- 2.1 Did you have any decision-making power or control with regards to the location of your home?
- 2.2 Did you have any decision-making power or control with regards to the structural design of your home?
- 2.3 Which people or institutions (i.e. government department, municipality, non-governmental organisation, community based organisation) in your opinion had the most decision-making power in this project?

3. Participation

- 3.1 Which people or institutions (i.e. government department, municipality, non-governmental organisation and community based organisation) did you communicate with in order for this process to be completed?
- 3.2 Did you (or would you be able to) assist anyone going through a similar exercise of acquiring a house.
- 3.3 In your opinion how strong are the existing community relationships in your neighbourhood?
- 3.4 Where you able to form strong networks during the process of this housing project?

4. Growth and Skills Development

- 4.1 Did you learn any new skills or acquire new knowledge during the project?
 - 4.1.1 If you did, are your able to apply those skills and or knowledge in other areas of your life?

5. Confidence

When you see your house, do you feel?

- 5.1 Confident/ Proud of yourself or Discouraged?
- 5.2 Fulfilled or Dissatisfied?
- 5.3 Motivated or Demotivated?
- 5.4 Competent or Incompetent?

6. Meaningfulness, Impact and Accountability

- 6.1 Do you feel you had a big role or impact towards the successful implementation of this housing project?

- 6.2 Should there be any negative unexpected outcomes with regards to the actual structure of your home would you hold yourself accountable?

7. Choice

- 7.1 Could you choose where you preferred your new home to be located (i.e. in a different section of the township)?
- 7.2 Was there a variety of choice made available to you regarding the structural design of your home?

8. Desired change and Initiative

- 8.1 Concerning your desire to have a home, did you have a vision or an expectation of how you wanted your home to look like?
- 8.2 Elaborate on how this vision or expectation has been met?
- 8.3 Which self-initiated role did you take towards achieving this goal?

9. Financial Security

Has this house in anyway contributed to you or your family members' financial advancement?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study.

ANNEXURE C: CONSENT FORM

Informed consent form

(Form for research subject's permission)

(Must be signed by each research subject, and must be kept on record by the researcher)

- 1 Title of research project:
- 2 I hereby voluntarily grant my permission for participation in the project as explained to me by
.....
- 3 The nature, objective, possible safety and health implications have been explained to me and I understand them.
- 4 I understand my right to choose whether to participate in the project and that the information furnished will be handled confidentially. I am aware that the results of the investigation may be used for the purposes of publication.
- 5 Upon signature of this form, you will be provided with a copy.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Researcher: _____ Date: _____
