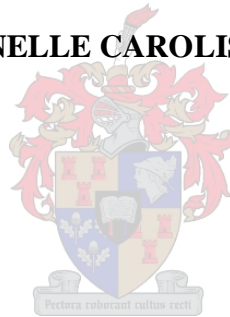


**IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY:  
A STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGISTS AND TRAINEES  
IN THE WESTERN CAPE**

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**Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of  
Psychology, University of Stellenbosch**

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**March 2008**

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature.....

Date.....29/02/08.....

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## ABSTRACT

The literature in psychology repeatedly hints at identity representation as important in transforming the discipline of psychology in contemporary South Africa. It simultaneously names curriculum, race and gender as areas of silence within the discipline. These literatures co-exist with the reality that few psychologists work in public health services, where approximately eighty six percent of South Africa's population who cannot afford private health care, receive their services. Community psychology is generally viewed as the area of study that prepares practitioners to work in public health service. Thus the intersections of identity, community, psychology and community psychology become important. Yet no contemporary studies that systematically and empirically examine community psychology and identity, exist in South Africa. The current study therefore aims to examine identity and community psychology from a multi-levelled perspective in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. This work draws on multiple theoretical strands, broadly united under a social constructionist framework, to examine community psychology in the organisation of the university, in terms of student and practitioner perceptions (and therefore constructions) of community psychology and in the everyday talk of psychologists about their professional identities. The four studies of which this project consists use complementary quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A survey of all psychology departments, combined with interviews with one community psychology teacher in each department, examines teaching, learning and research practices in community psychology. The second study constitutes a survey of all psychology Honours students in the Western Cape whereas the third study surveys the perceptions about community psychology among senior psychologists in the Western Cape. The fourth and final study in this series uses three focus groups where senior psychologists, based in the greater Cape Town area, talk about their professional identity. The quantitative data were analysed using the descriptive statistics of frequencies and cross-tabulations. The qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis and discourse analysis as analytical tools. While the quantitative data do not consistently suggest a link between community psychology, race and gender, there are some areas, such as community work, in which this link is apparent. The nature of such a link is not clear. However, in the qualitative work, the link between community, psychology and identity is centrally situated in the constructions and practices of universities, students and practitioners. Community psychology is constructed as psychology for black people in terms of both who delivers services and who

clients are. This represents parameters of inclusion and exclusion not only for community psychology but for psychology, as a whole. The implications of these findings are discussed, particularly in relation to organisational transformation in universities.

## OPSOMMING

Die verteenwoordiging van identiteit word as belangrik beskou in die ontwikkeling en herstrukturering van die sielkunde in Suid-Afrika. Die kurrikulum, ras en geslag word ook as areas van stilte voorgehou. Terselfdertyd, is dit waar dat min sielkundiges in die publieke gesondheidsdiens werk, waar die meeste Suid-Afrikaners hul gesondheidsdienste ontvang. Gemeenskapsielkunde word dikwels as die area van sielkunde beskou wat hierdie kwessies kan aanspreek. Dit is in die konteks waar interseksies tussen identiteit, gemeenskap, sielkunde en gemeenskapsielkunde belangrik geag word. Tog is daar geen huidige studies wat op 'n sistematiese en empiriese vlak die verwantskap tussen gemeenskapsielkunde en identiteit verken nie. Die huidige studie het beoog daarom om die verhouding tussen identiteit en gemeenskapsielkunde op multi-dimensionele vlakke te ondersoek. Die studie is in die Wes-Kaap gebaseer. Hierdie studie is teoreties in die sosiale konstruksionisme gegrond. Die gemeenskapsielkunde word ondersoek in die organisasie van die universiteit, in terme van studente en professionele sielkundiges se persepsies van gemeenskapsielkunde en professionele sielkundiges se daaglikse gesprekke oor hul professionele identiteit. Die projek bestaan uit vier verwante studies, waar daar van komplementêre metodologie gebruik gemaak word. 'n Opname van alle sielkunde departemente in die Wes-Kaap is gedoen. Die metodologie is ondersteun deur onderhoude met 'n gemeenskapsielkunde lektor in elke sielkunde department. Navorsing, leer en onderrig is op hierdie wyse ondersoek. Die tweede studie het 'n opname onder Honneurs sielkunde studente gedoen en die derde opname het konstruksies oor die gemeenskapsielkunde onder professionele senior sielkundiges, ondersoek. Die vierde en finale studie het gebruik gemaak van die fokusgroep metodologie om te ondersoek hoe sielkundiges oor hul professionele ervaring praat. Die kwantitatiewe data is ontleed deur beskrywende statistiek en frekwensies te gebruik. Die kwalitatiewe data is deur interpretiewe tematiese analise en diskoers analise gedoen. Die kwantitatiewe data dui klein verhoudings tussen gemeenskapswerk, ras en geslag aan. Tog is daar nie oorkoepelende verhoudings nie. In kontras, word daar in die kwalitatiewe data 'n verwantskap tussen gemeenskap, die sielkunde en identiteit aangedui. Daar word in konstruksies deur universiteite, studente en professionele sielkundiges beduidende verhoudings aangedui. Gemeenskapsielkunde word beskou as die sielkunde vir swart mense in terme van wie dienste lewer en wie dienste gebruik. Dus word gemeenskapsielkunde as 'n eksklusiewe en

inklusiewe praktyk beskou, nie net vir gemeenskapsielkunde nie, maar ook vir die sielkunde, as geheel. Die implikasies van die navorsing word bespreek, veral in verband met institusionele transformasie binne die universiteit.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction

This thesis has three interconnected backgrounds, the personal, political and academic backgrounds. It is on these backgrounds that I will now briefly elaborate.

#### 1.1.1. Personal and political background

This thesis interweaves two intimately connected stories. One is the story of my intensely personal journey as a psychologist in South Africa, the other a research chronicle about perceptions of community psychology in South Africa. In order to make meaning of my chosen profession as a psychologist, I have often wondered how others in this career experience and think about what they do. The contexts that have shaped my career choice have themselves shifted over the past 23 years since I started a relationship with psychology. The world, South Africa, psychology and I have changed. I have moved from late adolescence to middle adulthood. I have also expanded and changed my markers of identity. When I started in psychology, I was a black youthful woman, a daughter, a student, a sister, an aunt, an activist. I am now coloured, a mid-career professional woman, a mother, a wife, a psychologist, a student, a colleague, a daughter, a sister, an aunt, a stepmother, a daughter-in-law, a sister-in-law, an activist.

While some of these categories of identity seem similar they themselves have shifted over time. For example, in my earlier life I was a student learning about psychology and now I am a student of psychology teaching and researching psychology. In my academic relationship with psychology, the unthinkable happened. I started out as a student at historically white liberal institutions. I am now an academic at the University of Stellenbosch, the historical cradle and institutional embodiment of theories of separate development which led to Apartheid. When I started out in psychology, I was a daughter of a youthful mother and I am now a daughter of an elderly mother. When I started in psychology, South Africa was a political dictatorship. It is now a democracy. During my first psychology research project in 1987, research meetings themselves were clandestine activities. My liaison person in the community was on the run from police persecution. Now research is a more enjoyable activity, free from police persecution.

What has remained constant is my passion to pursue social justice. It is this that constantly fuels the fire in me to think about psychology and remain committed to psychology. Yet, during my 23 year relationship with psychology, I have been ambivalently involved with it. It was my activism that brought me to psychology in 1984. It was my activism that angered and left me despairing about psychology. It is also my activism that inspires me to do psychology today. I am aware of many individuals who started their professional psychology training, but left, by not completing their theses or by leaving the training course altogether. They could not marry psychology and their personal values. I am also aware of many of my colleagues who share my desire and appetite for action towards justice and fairness.

While much has changed in psychology, in South Africa, in the world and in me, much remains the same. This country, as it was in the 1980s, is still struggling to make mental health accessible to those who cannot afford it. It is with this thought that I begin the academic background to this study as it is the desire for justice that has kept me committed to psychology in South Africa.

### **1.1.2. Academic background to the study**

Like many other developing countries, South Africa has had, and continues to have, a shortage of mental health professionals working in the public sector (Desjarlais, Eisenberg, Good & Kleinman, 1995; WHO, 2001). In 2007, approximately 14% of the population of 47 million can afford health insurance, with very few affluent enough to afford expensive private medical care without this insurance. This means that approximately 80% of the population is dependent on public services. As far as psychologists are concerned, out of a total of 6310 psychologists registered with the Health professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), only 419 or 7% work in the public health service. This means that South African public services have a psychologist to population ratio of 1:100 000 (Health Systems Trust, 2007).

When focusing on psychologists, a number of factors, including structural barriers, perceived training inadequacies, perceived poor salaries in public service and negative perceptions of community psychological services by psychologists and students of psychology are considered to contribute to the scarcity of psychologists working in public mental health services (Gibson, Sandenbergh & Swartz, 2001; Kriegler, 1993; Pillay, 2003; Pillay & Petersen, 1996; Richter et al., 1998; Vogelmann, Perkel & Strebel, 1992; Wilson, Richter, Durrheim, Surendorff & Asafo-

Agyei, 1999). The vast majority of registered clinical and counselling psychologists, for example, work mainly in the private sector and provide mental health services to a predominantly middle class and white clientele in urban settings who can afford to pay for services (Ahmed & Pillay, 2004).

Like many other sectors in South African society such as sport, justice, health and education, much of the inequity in mental health was historically engineered and maintained with the result that the majority of people who cannot afford psychological services today are black and poor while the majority of psychologists and users of psychological services are white. The majority (89%) of psychologists in South Africa, themselves are white (Health Systems Trust, 2007).

This means that many divides, particularly those across race, class, culture and language have to be transcended when psychologists work with clients (Swartz, 1998). Thus psychologists can reasonably be expected to be self-reflexive in terms of their own privilege and oppression across various dimensions of difference. It is this very issue that Lazarus (1988) addressed almost 20 years ago when she did a landmark study on the role of the psychologist in South Africa. She wrote “psychologists’ socialisation begins long before s/he enters university. S/he, as a member of particular groups, (gender, class, race, etc) enters the profession with interests that are tied to that membership. The embedded nature of these interests needs to be recognised” (p.197).

Policy makers in a post-apartheid South Africa have responded to redressing these imbalances in a number of ways. They have implemented structural changes in health legislation and have invoked notions of identity (particularly race) as a change indicator. As an example of the impact of changed health legislation on psychologists, legislation in this country currently requires clinical psychologists, along with other health professionals such as medical practitioners, dentists and nurses, to serve one year of paid community service in the public sector on completion of their training. This is a necessary prerequisite for registration as a psychologist. Since 2004, under the new Mental Health Care Act, an average of approximately 130 newly qualified clinical psychologists per year have completed compulsory community service in the public sector (Health Systems Trust, 2007). In this post-apartheid context, much of the recent debate on restructuring and providing more equitable psychological services has implicitly invoked ideas around identity and by implication the profession of psychology. Some authors have argued that more black, indigenous language speakers must be trained as psychologists (Ahmed & Pillay, 2004; Mayekiso, Strydom, Jithoo & Katz, 2004), while others



have questioned the theoretical and practical validity of isolating one aspect of identity as central to good service provision (Long & Zietkiewics, 2006). Others discuss the unwitting entrenchment of racism by the manner in which blackness, for example, is invoked in these debates (Ngonyama ka Sigogo et al., 2003).

These debates have left gaps in our own understanding of how identity and professional practice interact in psychology. The political and moral implications of the focus on equity and redistribution of resources also raise questions of social justice and human diversity. More so than in “mainstream psychology”, in both the international (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005) and local context (Lazarus, 1988; 2007; Seedat, Duncan & Lazarus, 2001), the values of social justice and human diversity have been viewed as theoretically consistent with community psychology. Community psychology rhetoric and training have also been regarded as central to producing professionals equipped to work effectively in the public health sector. Though not researched, there is also in popular talk, an implicit assumption on the part of applicants to and selection panels for professional training programmes that work in communities reflects civic responsibility. This assumption shapes community psychology as the hoop through which applicants have to jump in order to enter professional training (Long, 1999). It is therefore appropriate that we interrogate “community psychology” as a category in South Africa, and develop, in particular, an understanding of both student and practitioner perceptions of community and community psychology. In post-Apartheid South Africa, furthermore, current ways in which the public, including many students, staff and practitioners think about universities, are shaped and mediated by their past. Yet few systematic studies in community psychology in South Africa have examined the relationship between community psychology and human diversity or identity, despite diversity being an area of concern in terms of race and gender equity (Seedat, McKenzie & Stevens, 2004). This is a research gap needing urgent attention.

There has also been a limited discussion on power relations within community psychology and how perceptions of community psychology impact on practitioners after they qualify. This gap in the literature has often helped to silence psychologists, students and teachers of psychology into thinking that they have individual/intra psychic deficits, leaving them feeling needlessly insecure and pathologised (Stevens, 2001). Therefore the area which the current study addresses is important for psychologists, teachers and students of psychology. If properly

executed and disseminated, this study may assist South African psychologists and trainees to negotiate and hopefully transcend the divide that often exists between the personal and structural in psychology.

## **1.2. Aims of the study**

The study aims to achieve four interlinked goals. It sets out to establish:

- 1) How teaching, learning and research in community psychology are reflected in academic departments;
- 2) How fourth year psychology students perceive community psychology;
- 3) How practising psychologists perceive community psychology; and
- 4) How senior psychologists talk about their experiences of professional identity and community psychology.

These goals imply that student and practitioner perceptions about community psychology and the structural contexts in which they are shaped will be explored. Senior psychologists (psychologists who have been registered for more than three years) who are currently working in the Western Cape will also discuss how socially constructed images of psychology have interacted with their own identities. In this context, the assumption that universities themselves are shaped by socio-historical forces is central.

## **1.3. Context of the study**

As suggested earlier, universities are central to the structure within which perceptions of psychology are formed. Therefore a brief background to universities in the Western Cape will be provided (see De la Rey, 2001 for a full overview of the history of university education in South Africa). In addition, racial categories attract specific meanings in South Africa, and these will also be described briefly to contextualize the discussion on universities that follows. The discussion on “race” will also situate the way in which racial terminology will be used in this thesis.

Most current South African debate about race carries an inherent paradox. Do we reject racial categories as a relic of the past or do we view them as abhorrent but necessary for monitoring transformation? Race debates are often viewed suspiciously, especially by those privileged by

racial divisions, as an attempt to “return to the past”. While this silences debate about race, it also contributes to a discourse where the historical importance of race in this country is negated. Apartheid induced categories of race and subsequent differential treatment on the basis of racial difference are abhorrent. Yet notions of White, Coloured, Indian and African, are still currently intimately connected with access to resources and, in a nutshell, the ability and desire to become a student of psychology and ultimately a psychologist. Hence, while acknowledging the fluidity, historical situatedness and multiplicity of identities that interact in current South African society, it still remains useful to employ historical racial categories in research as it remains an important indicator of transformation and intimately shapes identity in South Africa (Erasmus, 2001; Steyn, 2001). Racial terms remain highly contested in South Africa as they were coined by the Apartheid government’s Population Registration Act to afford privileges and by implication, dispossession, to groups, in a hierarchical fashion. Generally white people attracted most privileges, coloured and Indian people some privileges while Black Africans attracted virtually no privileges. Generally, the term ‘coloured’ in South Africa usually refers to descendants of inter-racial unions between the European settlers and black indigenous people of South Africa. It may also, in the Western Cape, include people with Malaysian ancestry. Black African generally refers to descendants of indigenous people of South Africa. Indian refers to those citizens who have an Indian background. The term black may also be used at times to include all historically disenfranchised groups of coloured, Indian and Black African. It was historically a popular term for self-identification inspired by Black Consciousness thinkers in South Africa as a term which symbolised resistance to the subdivisions of blackness.

To understand the context of the Western Cape region of South Africa and its universities, it is important to understand the race dynamics in this region. The particular constellation of race dynamics in the Western Cape is historically different from those in other South African provinces (De la Rey & Boonzaier, 2002). Apartheid race legislation was hierarchically organized. Whites were given preferential treatment over coloureds, who, in turn had preferential treatment over black Africans. The government identified the Western Cape as a “coloured preferential” area for labour (De La Rey & Boonzaier, 2002). This meant that coloureds were privileged over black Africans in relation to work, housing, education and health, and it was difficult for black Africans to gain a permit to live in the Western Cape. This socio-economic engineering contributed to complex relationships of discontent and prejudice

between blacks and coloureds, where coloureds regarded themselves as racially superior to black Africans (De la Rey & Boonzaier, 2002). These racial hierarchies between white, coloured and black African are currently still internalized among Western Cape inhabitants (Adhikari, 2005) and will therefore pervade university campuses in the Western Cape. The three local universities are historically and politically quite distinct, despite the fact that they have similar student numbers of approximately 20 000 students each.

The University of Stellenbosch (US) is in Stellenbosch, approximately 60 kilometres from Cape Town. The Stellenbosch region is one of the largest wine producing regions in South Africa. Historically the US was white and conservative. Ideas about “separate development” or the ideology of Apartheid, which led to the implementation of Apartheid policies, were formulated in the psychology department at the US during the mid 1900s, under intellectuals like Wilcocks and Verwoerd, who later became the prime minister. All Apartheid prime ministers were educated at the US. While many initiatives have been taken to transform the university post 1994, transformation is slow and the majority of staff and students are still white and of Afrikaner<sup>1</sup> background. The university remains a dual medium university, with instruction taking place in English and/or Afrikaans. Two popular, but unresearched, views suggest that language and race dynamics contribute to maintaining the predominant white racial student profile at the US which may retard transformation in this institution. Many argue that the insistence on Afrikaans will retard transformation at the university, as the majority of black people, especially black African people, are not able to converse adequately in Afrikaans as an academic language. It is a popular view, although not currently researched, that poor Afrikaans language skills hinder more black students from registering and successfully completing study at Stellenbosch, so that the university remains overwhelmingly white. A further popular view suggests that many white English speaking South Africans who would not traditionally have attended the US, are currently doing so in order to avoid the relatively large number of black students registering at liberal white universities such as the University of Cape Town (UCT). Dixon and Durrheim (2005) suggest that in the context of desegregation in the post-apartheid South Africa, many white people flee spaces previously reserved for whites only. This research

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<sup>1</sup> The descendants of white European settlers (predominantly Dutch and to a lesser extent French) in South Africa who adopted the Afrikaans language as a core component of their identity.

on desegregation, however, has not formally been applied to the question of how students choose the university at which they study.

The student profile in the psychology department reflects the broader student profile at the university. Approximately 70 to 80% of students are white, with the small number of black students consisting largely of coloured students and minimal numbers of black African students registering, especially at undergraduate level. While more coloured and black African students register at postgraduate level, the numbers of white students still predominate also at this level. Currently approximately 34% of permanently employed staff in the psychology department is black. Except for one black African staff member, all black staff is coloured.

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) is situated in Bellville, approximately 30 km outside Cape Town. Bellville forms part of the greater Cape Town area and has a number of industrial and residential areas. The history of UWC is also intricately linked with Apartheid history. It was designated initially as a university college for coloured people, as the Western Cape, as has been mentioned, was a coloured preferential area under Apartheid. UWC initially did not have full status as a university, and degrees were awarded under the auspices of the University of South Africa (UNISA), the largest distance learning university in South Africa. The staff at UWC was historically predominantly white. It was only during the 1960s that UWC became a fully fledged university. At this time it was viewed as a politically conservative university that merely acted as an instrument of Apartheid in its complicity in the oppression of coloured people. It was later in its history (during the 1970s) that the conservative image of UWC was transformed. It then became known as “the university of the people” as predominantly black universities in South Africa became sites of political struggle. As a result of political battles on campuses like UWC, these universities attracted a radical or revolutionary public image. UWC saw violent gun battles between Apartheid police and protesting students on its campus during the 1970s and 1980s. In post-Apartheid South Africa, university populations have become slightly more integrated. UWC enrolls large numbers of black students, both coloured and African, with few white students. Staff in the psychology department consists largely of coloured and Indian men and women (78% of the staff), with one black African and one white staff member. The medium of instruction at UWC is English, despite the fact that the first language of the majority of students is another indigenous language, which may also include Afrikaans.

The University of Cape Town (UCT) is the oldest English language and historically white university in the country. It is situated in the Southern Suburbs of Cape Town, and as such is located approximately 10 kilometres from the city centre. It has always had a liberal public image and was regarded as an “open university” since the 1950s, as limited admission of blacks was possible. The term “open” is, however, a misnomer, as blacks could not participate in social and recreational activities. As at the other two universities in the Western Cape, UCT staff was historically white. Currently UCT staff in the psychology department is predominantly white. Currently, 63% of staff is white and 37% of staff is black of whom 16% (3) is black African and 21% (4) is coloured staff. The language of instruction is English.

On the whole, university education in South Africa was historically divided along racial and language fault lines with few women entering higher education (De la Rey, 2001). Currently, historically white universities such as the US and UCT and historically black universities like UWC still carry the residue of Apartheid. The US and UCT are generally better resourced universities while UWC generally has fewer resources. Interaction amongst university students still appear to be racially divided. Despite some elements of racial difference existing on each of the three campuses, stereotypical thinking and practice is still perpetuated on campuses as white, coloured and black African students all hold stereotypical assumptions about the other (Dixon & Durrheim, 2003; 2005). Silences exist around talking about difference, especially race, which leave perceptions about “the other” fairly intact and unchallenged (McKinney, 2004).

While more staff movement has taken place across universities, senior positions in psychology departments (at least in the Western Cape) are generally occupied by white men and, more recently, black men and white women. Black women are generally very sparsely represented in senior academic posts. This trend is reflected more broadly in South African society, which has adopted affirmative action legislation (Department of Labour, 2007).

#### **1.4. The structure of the thesis**

The following chapter will provide an historical overview of community psychology in South Africa, focusing on both the local history and its connection with community psychology at an international level. Chapter 3 focuses specifically on the literature review, which shapes notions of community psychology and identity. Chapter 4 incorporates theoretical perspectives on

identity, community and community psychology with an emphasis on how power, oppression and privilege are central to providing a framework for this theoretical background. The epistemological assumptions inherent in a mixed methodology employed in this study are discussed in Chapter 5, the methodology chapter. The next four chapters present four substudies, each operationalising an aim of the study. Therefore the first study will provide an analysis of community psychology in the organization of the university and the second study will examine student perceptions of community psychology. The third study will gauge practitioner perceptions about community psychology and the final study in this series will consist of focus groups where practicing psychologists speak about their professional identities. Chapter 10 draws together and discusses the findings of the study and considers some implications of this work.

## CHAPTER 2

### A CONTEXTUALISED HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

#### 2.1. Introduction

The current chapter provides a brief contextualized history of community psychology in South Africa. As such, it is located within the context of multiple existing histories of psychology and community psychology in South Africa (Bhana, Petersen & Rochat, 2007; Louw, 2002; Painter & Terre Blanche, 2004; Painter, Terre Blanche & Henderson, 2006; Seedat, 1990; Seedat et al., 2001; Yen, 2007). The shape of this overview may therefore overlap with and differ from others. There is little debate about the chronological sequence of events that led to the development of community psychology in South Africa. Community psychology is also recognized historically as the first consistent approach to theory and praxis in local psychology to aspire to ideals of a liberation psychology. However, there may be some debate about the current position of community psychology in South Africa. It is these points of agreement and disagreement that will be highlighted in this overview of South African community psychology.

Definitions of community psychology in South Africa, as elsewhere, (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005) have always been reactive. They have always to some degree represented an attempt to define a disciplinary identity as anti-mainstream, anti-apartheid and anti-oppressive. Thus definitions of community psychology emphasise explicit values that contrast with those of mainstream psychology, such as ecological approaches to understanding individuals, prevention, empowerment, diversity and social justice. Understanding individuals in context, and serving the needs of the marginalized, are central. Community psychology is furthermore defined as both a sub-discipline and paradigm in psychology, a paradigm which shifts over time (Nelson & Prilleltensky 2005, Seedat et al., 2001).

#### 2.2. Historical origins and contexts of South African Community Psychology

Community psychology in South Africa has been shaped by historical, political and theoretical forces within and outside the discipline of psychology. It may therefore be helpful to trace the historical development of community psychology in South Africa chronologically.



### **2.2.1. The period 1980-1990**

#### **2.2.1.1. Socio-political context and the birth of South African community psychology**

Historically, the major turning point in sustained mass community resistance in South Africa was the 1976 uprisings. High school students, countrywide, protested against compulsory Afrikaans (which was seen as “the language of the oppressor”, at the time) in the school curriculum. Protests were met with violent state repression, resulting in many high school students being shot and killed in the process. This momentum of resistance, further fuelled by the police killing of the Black Consciousness leader, Steve Biko, in detention in 1977, led to the burgeoning of foreign funded anti-apartheid non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civic organizations across all sectors such as health, law, housing and education, for example. It was in this context that continuing dissatisfaction with inadequate mental health service provision and the theoretical and practical inadequacy of psychology to respond meaningfully to the consequences of political violence and state repression, culminated in catapulting community psychology to the fore during a politically volatile period in the 1980s (Swartz & Gibson, 2001; Painter & Terreblanche, 2004).

#### **2.2.1.2 Psychologists in communities**

Prior to 1984, many psychologists were activists in women’s, civic and political organisations, but their roles as “professionals” and activists were separate, as no conceptual model existed within South African psychology to incorporate political activism. They were therefore working in communities, alongside lay-persons, other professionals and folk-healers, but their work was not formally referred to as community psychology. The trend where community psychology practices exist without these being named as such, is a trend that is acknowledged internationally (Rappaport & Seidman, 2000) and in many contemporary African countries, such as Zambia (Chamvu, Jere-Folotiya & Kalima, 2006).

The increasing dissonance between non-synergistic civic and professional roles as psychologists, motivated progressive professionals to find ways in which to resist overt state brutality and work with community based organizations. These changes also needed to be accomplished in a parallel context of an increasing dissatisfaction with Euro-American individualistic theoretical models of psychology and psychological practice (Anonymous, 1986). Yet, communities perceived psychology as serving the needs of a white, middle class

minority (Berger & Lazarus, 1987). The closest conceptual framework in which to understand a psychologist for many residents in disadvantaged communities was the framework modelled by medical doctors or social workers. In popular, but not researched, conceptions of the human service professions, at the time, medical doctors were viewed as dispensing medication, and social workers were viewed as both helpful and unhelpful. In these popular conceptions, dual stereotypes of social workers existed in communities. They were viewed either as allies when authorizing “social welfare grants” or as enemies when people felt threatened by the perception that social workers would remove their children, if they were viewed to be unfit as parents. It is in the context of this fairly medicalised and welfarist perception of mental health professionals, that progressive professionals entered communities *as psychologists*. Psychologists initiated social service organizations like the Organisation for Appropriate Social Services (OASSSA) (Hayes, 2000), and the Black Consciousness psychologist grouping formed the organization, Psychologists against Apartheid (Nicholas & Cooper, 1990). While mainstream organizations were almost exclusively white and male, racial and gender divisions were clearly evident even in progressive organisations. For example, in psychology, OASSSA was predominantly white, yet with equivalent numbers of men and women, and Psychologists against Apartheid largely Black and male dominated.

### **2.2.1.3. Psychological work in communities**

In a political context of intense suspicion and betrayal, members of these organizations were trusted politically to work with individuals and organizations which bore the brunt of repressive state forces. Individual members’ offices were often raided or placed under surveillance by police as a result of perceived alignment with “the resistance”. In this context, psychological intervention consisted of both clinical work and research. Many, if not most, progressive psychologists involved with community psychology during this period were affiliated to white liberal English universities and Black universities. Psychologists typically engaged in curative work with victims (individuals and organisations) of state violence via community based organisations and NGOs. Much research focused on the effects of state repression and theoretical debates about the nature of psychology and community psychology proliferated.

These works included examining the psychological effects of detention and torture (Foster, Davis & Sandler, 1987), the psychological effects of violence on children (Swartz, Dowdall &

Swartz, 1986), the roles of mental health professionals (Lazarus, 1988) and research and intervention projects in communities (Hansson, Carolissen & Prinsloo, 1989). The question of the relevance of psychology or how psychology could be meaningful in the local context of South Africa formed the basis of much of the theoretical debate during this period (Anonymous, 1986; Dawes, 1986). The importance of highlighting the psychological effects of state violence and engaging in theoretical debate about the nature of psychology led to the founding of the non-mainstream, critical journal, *Psychology in Society (PINS)* in 1983, and to a series of conferences organized by OASSSA during the latter part of this period. Seedat (1990) highlights the popularity of community psychology in this period by showing that it was the second most frequent topic addressed in *PINS* between 1983 and 1988. The interdisciplinary women's journal, *Agenda*, was also established during 1987. It was originally framed as a sociology journal, a forum for students, practitioners, activists, and academics, to discuss issues affecting women across class, race and gender. With this agenda, women psychologists, such as Cheryl de la Rey and Gillian Finchilescu, have served on its editorial board. Cheryl de la Rey continues to serve on its management and editorial board. Many more women psychologists, and more recently male psychologists such as Kopano Ratele, have contributed articles to the journal. Hence, it warrants, by virtue of its formidable representation of psychologists and its emphasis on "community" issues, an acknowledgement in South African histories of psychology. Yet no history of psychology or community psychology has yet done so. This could perhaps be explored in future research. In terms of community psychology publications, the first South African doctoral thesis in community psychology which dealt with the role of the psychologist in the community and which was influenced by much Latin-American thinking, also emanated from this period (Lazarus, 1988).

#### **2.2.1.4. South African community psychology as liberation psychology in a global context**

In this period, debates proliferated on the question of the relevance of psychology to South Africa's majority, which placed community psychology firmly on the South African psychological map. The socio-historical conditions of political turbulence resulting from a history of colonialism and Apartheid in South Africa facilitated the development and entrenchment of community psychology. As in South Africa, community psychology in other countries also owed its origins to political struggles. The origin of community psychology in South Africa shares similarities and differences in its political origin with other locations such

as the United States of America (Heller & Monahan, 1977), Latin-America (Burton & Kagan, 2005; Quintal de Freitas, 1998) and Europe (Burton, Boyle, Harris & Kagan, 2007; Francescetto & Tomai, 2001). While community psychology was organized as part of the political resistance in South Africa and Latin-America, the development of community psychology in the USA was facilitated by the Kennedy initiatives to fund programmes for disenfranchised groupings (Mulvey, 1988). The development of community psychology locally, was therefore different from its social formations in Australia (Bishop, Sonn, Fisher & Drew, 2001) and many African countries such as Ghana, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Zambia (Lazarus et al., 2006). In these countries, community psychology was physically transferred from its American roots by American academics teaching or by students studying in America and returning to their countries of origin. Yet, what has united the mushrooming of community psychology internationally over the last 40 years is the reality of increasing social inequality and a need to find ways in which psychology could contribute to addressing social problems. During the 1980s, as has been mentioned above, the political nature of psychology and the role of the psychologist as activist were firmly entrenched through both research and the clinical work of many psychologists in NGOs and civic organizations. While the content of community psychology research and praxis were reflective of the historical period of violence and resistance and the search for a place for psychology, this meant that much of the praxis defined as community psychology was historically and contextually revolutionary. During this period, critical social psychology and community psychology, as the main proponents of the opposition to mainstream psychology, were virtually inseparable, with some critical voices about community psychology emerging towards the end of this period (Tomlinson & Swartz, 2002).

#### **2.2.1.5. Critiques of community psychology in historical context**

Critiques of community psychology during this period focused on understandings of community and community psychology in South Africa. These critiques argued that the notion of community is historically situated, and in South Africa has been associated with reproducing oppressive use of categories such as race, culture, ethnicity and class (Thornton & Ramphele, 1988). There were cautions that community psychology was about to become part of the reproductive machinery in maintaining oppressive categories (Butchart & Seedat, 1990). Isemonger (1990), argued that new notions of community should be developed as old conceptions of community were potentially divisive. Theoretical notions of social change

inherent in community psychology were not being realized in practice. Seedat, Cloete and Shochet (1988) suggested that the mental health model was merely reproducing mainstream clinical work in different settings, that is, in disadvantaged communities as opposed to in consulting rooms in middle class settings. In this way, the social action model which envisaged social and structural change was not being realized in practice. These critiques were echoed internationally in the work of Mulvey (1988), who examined the relationship between community psychology and feminism. She argued that community psychology theory was vague and gave little direction in terms of intervention. She further suggested that there should be an incorporation of critical perspectives, such as feminism, into community psychology, if community psychology were to avoid perpetuating practices of mainstream psychology. In South African community psychology, for example, little theory was incorporated into notions of social change and empowerment. There was little theoretical understanding of the impact of structural limitations, and of how power reproduces structural relations. So, in the context of these formidable critiques, South African community psychology proceeded into its next decade.

## **2.2.2. The period 1990-2000**

### **2.2.2.1. Reconciliation and reconstruction**

Consistent and increasing broad-based resistance during the 1980s ushered in a period of reconciliatory politics in South Africa. During 1990, the then State President, F.W. de Klerk, announced the unbanning of all banned political organizations. Nelson Mandela, the banned leader of the African National Congress (ANC), was released. The right to vote was restored for all citizens, and the ANC won the first democratic elections, in 1994. Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the first president of the post-apartheid South Africa. A multi-party democracy based on shared governance was ushered in. The period of reconstruction towards a more equitable dispensation in all sectors of society had begun. Reintegration into the international community was keenly negotiated during the early part of this period, as South Africa had been isolated as a result of boycotts at academic, social, cultural, economic and sporting levels. A number of legislative reforms, for example the Employment Equity Bill, which introduced affirmative action in employment for previously marginalized groups, were introduced. Health reforms that were introduced incorporated the Primary Health Care Approach as the model for

public health service provision within this country. These broad legislative reforms impacted on academia, and therefore the way in which mainstream psychology was taught and practised shifted slightly. A racially integrated professional body for psychologists was formed in 1994, and all racially divided professional bodies disintegrated (Louw, 2002). There was much movement of existing black and white staff across universities especially when, according to educational reform, many historically black and white universities merged. For example, the University of Natal (a historically white university) and the University of Durban Westville in Durban (a historically black university) merged to become the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Psychology departments at universities in the Western Cape were not directly affected by mergers, and the three departments continued separately. More new black and women academic staff was also employed. Academic discourse was reopened with international bodies and institutions. International donors who funded NGOs redirected most of their funding to government initiatives for economic reconstruction programmes such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was replaced by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR) in 1996, and GEAR continues to form part of the national economic policy.

#### **2.2.2.2. Reconstruction and NGOs**

Towards the end of the 1980s, many health NGOs united under the banner of the Progressive Primary Health Care Network (PPHCN), which, as its name suggests, subscribed to the concept of primary health care popularized in the declaration of Alma Ata (1976). OASSSA, for example, was one of the NGOs that disbanded to join the PPHCN and continued with ameliorative work. The redirection of foreign funding from non-state NGOs to state funded initiatives was based on the assumption that the new democracy would be fair to all its citizens. The removal of foreign funding essentially crippled many NGOs, which had been well-funded during the Apartheid years. NGOs increasingly had to rely on local funding sources such as the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund which themselves had limited resources. Other locally based funders such as the Open Society Foundation had fulfilled their commitment to South Africa and were moving to other countries such as those in Eastern Europe to make monetary contributions there. In many ways, waves of foreign funding historically determined and continue to determine, to a large extent the nature of the work that should be prioritized in South Africa. In this context, NGOs that worked in the areas of violence were relatively well funded during the

1980s. The wave of international funding shifted to the important issue of AIDS prevention, care and research, and therefore to AIDS NGOs in the 1990s. Thus, limited foreign funding was made available for other important projects.

### **2.2.2.3. Psychologists and reconstruction**

The funding crisis in some NGOs saw many psychologists leave “community psychology” behind for private practice or the corporate world. Some psychologists also found alternative settings in which to engage with community psychology such as academia, state services and other NGOs. State services included research institutions such as the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) or the Medical Research Council (MRC), and service delivery settings such as hospitals. Other psychologists moved to NGOs or institutes such as the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) that were attached to universities, and were more consistently funded. Many professionals from all sectors of society were enlisted to assist government during the transitional period. Progressive psychologists attached to academia were employed to rethink policy and planning in health (see for example Foster, Freeman & Pillay, 1997) education (Lazarus, 2001), and to serve on “nation-building” commissions, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in the new South Africa (see for example Magwaza, 2001; Stevens, 2006). Because of historical inequality in terms of race and gender in accessing higher education (De la Rey, 2001), the main proponents of the struggle for mental health (and community psychology) in academic settings were white men and women and to a lesser extent, black men. In terms of equity, black women were virtually absent in academia during the 1980s and 1990s, and these racial divides were then also reflected amongst psychologists who were enlisted into policy planning.

### **2.2.2.4. Community psychology and reconstruction**

Community psychology as a fairly well established area of psychology was by now introduced into all psychology departments in South Africa. Historically white Afrikaans universities also incorporated community psychology into their curricula during the latter part of the 90s in a post-apartheid South Africa. Since community psychology had by now been an established course in most Black and white liberal universities during the earlier period outlined previously, many critiques about community psychology emanated from these sectors. Most critiques of community psychology emanated from the rapidly growing theoretical movement of critical

social psychologists who had been ambassadors of community psychology or who had entered the debate on “liberation psychology” during the 1990s when many of the historically contextual and socio-political catalysts for the development of community psychology had receded into the background in the impending new South Africa. These critiques were important and justified and it is important to review them.

#### **2.2.2.5. Critiques of community psychology in historical context**

The 1990s was marked by a significant critique of the lack of theory within community psychology from both students (Gibson et al., 2001) and practitioners (Hamber et al., 2001). The “discursive turn” in social psychology, located in South Africa largely at liberal white English universities, began to interrogate power relations previously not given as much focus in community and social psychology. With the advent of more consistent academic exchange, the deconstructionist movement in critical psychology, especially the British constituency, developed a fruitful relationship with South African psychologists, which culminated in a volume on discourse analysis in South Africa (Levett, Kottler, Burman & Parker, 1997). This “discursive turn” was itself not left uncriticised (Painter & Theron, 2001). These theoretical developments impacted on extending the initial activism within community psychology to “intellectual activism” as the activity of some critical psychologists is described (Macleod, 2006). Initial systems and ecological approaches to community psychology were supplemented with additional theoretical orientations including Marxist analyses (Ahmed & Pretorius-Heuchert, 2001; Hamber, Masilela & Terre Blanche, 2001), social constructionist analyses (Kelly & Van der Riet, 2001) and critical psychoanalytic approaches (Gibson, 2002; Gibson & Swartz, 2004; Swartz, Gibson & Gelman, 2002) drawing on the organisational consulting model developed at the Tavistock Clinic in Britain (Burton et al., 2007).

This period is therefore significant as it marked the separation of community psychology (in its original form) from critical social psychological approaches to psychology in South Africa. Synergy was established between community psychology and psychoanalysis, community psychology and public health approaches (Butchart & Kruger, 2001) and community psychology and primary health care approaches (Pillay & Lockhat, 2001). Some of the challenges of incorporating mental health into the primary health care context have also been identified from within community psychology (Petersen, 1998; 2000; 2004).



During this period much of community psychology at historically white English universities disappeared from teaching at the undergraduate level. Community psychology was taught at postgraduate level and sometimes only in professional training programmes at Masters level. Community psychology was increasingly (unwittingly) being marginalized by the way in which it was being taught (Vogelman et al., 1992). Often, black staff, junior staff and women would be allocated to teaching community psychology. These images of marginalization represented by community psychology, and complemented by community psychology practice being located in black communities, increasingly alienated both some white and some black students from the discipline, an issue which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. In this context, courses in critical psychology slowly displaced community psychology at some universities. This is reflected in an increasing number of articles in the South African Journal of Psychology (SAJP) and Psychology in Society (PINS), the two major South African journals, having a discursive or postmodern orientation, accompanied by a decrease in community psychology articles (Long, 1999). As mentioned earlier, though, community psychology took hold at Afrikaans white universities, largely from within a service orientation or in a service learning context (Roos et al., 2005) and consistently remained at Black universities, but not without the persistent images of marginalisation (Johnson, 2006).

### **2.2.3. The period 2000-current**

#### **2.2.3.1. The current socio-political landscape**

South Africa as a fledgling democracy has undergone many changes. For example, there has been rapid urbanization, and migration continues to be a strong feature of current South African society. Much migration in South Africa is poverty related, as migration has occurred from impoverished areas within South Africa to wealthier areas, and from particularly war-torn and economically flailing African countries. The Health Systems Trust (2007) reports that 43% of the South African population is currently living in poverty, 26% is unemployed, life expectancy for men is 48 years and for women, 52 years. HIV prevalence among men is 10%, and among women 13%. HIV prevalence is slightly higher amongst young people in the 14-25 age group. Twenty one percent of adults have had no formal education. South Africa has also been afflicted by many factors that affect transitional democracies internationally, such as globalisation, exclusion and “a decadent post-liberation elite” (Manganyi, 2004, p. 7). These

conditions have, for example, contributed to multiple, extended strikes by public service employees during the course of 2007. These have been significant as they have represented the most prolonged public service strikes in the history of the new South Africa. Furthermore, South Africa faces a myriad of social problems apart from HIV/AIDS mentioned previously. These include violence against women and children, drug and alcohol abuse, and diseases of lifestyle such as diabetes and hypertension (Dept. of Health, 2001). In a context of increasing calls for the relaxation of equity legislation, the latest equity report (Dept. of Labour, 2007) shows that equity targets are not being met, and that white men, and increasingly, white women are still being privileged in employment practices.

Despite some of these statistical trends, much has been achieved in terms of improving the lives of the poor in the new South Africa. Basic service provision such as electricity, water, education and health service accessibility has improved in the post-Apartheid South Africa (Dept. of Health, 2001). South Africa has also been fully incorporated into the global economy or, as some would argue, the tentacles of modern forms of capitalism (Sloan, 2005) have enveloped South Africa.

### **2.2.3.2. Contemporary community psychology in South Africa**

#### **2.2.3.2.1. South African community psychology in international context**

In terms of community psychology internationally, some authors argue that positive interpersonal community practices such as dialogue, shared bonds and creativity, have been replaced by the consumerism symbolized by the ever-increasing number of shopping malls. An increasing engagement with consumerism has also led to the individualization of leisure time (for example, electronic gadgets like Ipods) (Francescato & Tomai, 2001; Sloan, 2005; Stevens & Lockhat, 2003). Stevens and Lockhat have commented on the culture of consumerism in South Africa among the youth and how the contradictory experiences of blackness have contributed to identity conflicts in young people. They argue that in the context of rapid social change the very norms of social activism that defined black adolescence historically have been displaced by global capitalist norms of consumerism, when particularly poor black youth and their families can seldom afford the prohibitive costs of branded goods. Similarly, at a global level, the culture of consumerism, among both the rich and the poor, has led to a decrease in civic and political interest and action over the last 20 years (hooks, 2000 Putnam, 2000). This

may, in part, explain the relative decline of and negativity towards community psychology in psychology over the last 15 years in South Africa (Carolissen, 2006; Gibson et al., 2001; Lesch, 1998), Britain (Burton et al., 2007) and especially the United States (Gregory, 2001; Toro, 2005).

#### **2.2.3.2.2. The reconstructed South African community psychology**

In South Africa community psychology is not a formal professional registration category. In other words, it is not possible to register as a community psychologist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa. Those who practise community psychology do so through various other registrations, most notably clinical and counselling psychology. Debates about the relevance of psychology to South Africa, so dominant in community psychology during the 1980s, have virtually disappeared (De la Rey & Ipser, 2004). The major issues within contemporary “community psychology” have revolved around representational equity in psychological training and practice, pertinent social issues to be included in practice and theoretical extensions to community psychology.

The emphasis on curative work during the 1980s has been replaced by a primary emphasis on prevention and promotion, with a small proportion of curative work. Intervention and prevention work have therefore reflected the current social concerns of HIV/AIDS (Visser, Mundell, De Villiers, Sikkema & Jeffery, 2005) violence, (Jones-Petersen & Carolissen, 2000; Stevens, Seedat, Swart & Van der Walt, 2003) poverty, and drug and alcohol abuse (Johnson & Lazarus, 2003). The encouragement of a shift from curative to preventative orientation has not been unproblematic. In communities, service providers working within medical models and consumers of service, socialized into the medical model, continue to be frustrated with the disjuncture between their expectations and actual psychological service provision. The perception by some client groups that psychologists in community psychology withhold (curative) skills is not uncommon and has been raised historically (Gibson & Swartz, 2001) and more recently (Pillay & Harvey, 2006). Psychologists have concurrently felt constrained by a disjuncture between training and service delivery. While trained in both preventative and curative skills, they are often structurally constrained to use only curative skills, both because of the enormous needs, and by people’s expectations of psychologists.

Theoretical and applied extensions of community psychology have continued with specific reference to indigenous knowledge systems (Lazarus, 2006). New major recent trends in South African community psychology have focused on interdisciplinarity, theoretical diversity and methodological pluralism in violence prevention initiatives (Stevens, Seedat, Swart & Van der Walt, 2003) and education in the human services professions such as social work, community psychology and occupational therapy (Rohleder, Swartz, Bozalek, Carolissen & Leibowitz, in press). These latest South African trends towards interdisciplinarity and theoretical pluralism have been echoed internationally (Campbell & Gillies, 2001; Maton, Perkins & Saegert, 2006). Yet, while theoretical pluralism as an approach is being encouraged in community psychology, community and critical social psychology remain largely separate in South Africa, with the exception of a few instances. Some examples of these exceptional instances are reflected in the special edition of the *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community* (2003) which focuses on prevention and intervention practice in post-apartheid South Africa. Some critical psychologists view community psychology as bordering on the conservative (Painter et al., 2006). On the other hand, we must beware of the “paralysis by analysis” syndrome (Davidson et al., 2006; Fox, 2003), especially in a country where the need for *any*, even seemingly miniscule, intervention, is great. I am not arguing that action is better than awareness (Fox, 2003) but rather that we should give equal prominence and credibility to both. In the spirit of upholding the relative value of theory and action, commentators have recently presented an interesting argument about the importance of theory as practice and practice as theory (Gergen & Zielke, 2006; Macleod, 2006). It is particularly important that the divisions between critical and community psychology in South Africa be bridged to ensure a more critical community psychology (Ahmed & Pillay, 2004). The mutually beneficial integration of community and critical psychology has been echoed in the historical development of community psychology in Latin-America, Britain, Australia and some parts of the USA and Canada (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005). Davidson et al. (2006) have focused specifically on eliciting the strengths of theory and praxis inherent in critical social theory and community psychology, respectively, to build a stronger critical community psychology.

The vision for equitable and accessible health care has been legislated in South Africa (Department of Health, 2000; 2007). In terms of the new Mental Health Care Act (2002), a marked departure from Apartheid era legislation, has secured major gains in terms of access to

mental health services by introducing clinical psychologists to compulsory public service since 2003. These services have, nevertheless, been criticised for their lack of infrastructure, poor supervisory structure, lack of indigenous language proficiency and unclear roles of psychologists (Pillay & Harvey, 2006). In addition, issues of personal safety for psychologists providing community service in the prison system, for example, have been highlighted (Rohleder, Miller & Smith, 2006). These poorly co-ordinated “community psychological” services have not enhanced the image of community psychology amongst students and practitioners. Furthermore, while community psychology promotes ideas of prevention and promotion, and counseling psychologists are well trained to perform these activities (Naidoo & Van Wyk, 2003; Van Wyk & Naidoo, 2006), they remain excluded from the community service year mandated by the Department of Health. In the dominant medical discourse prevalent even in primary health care settings there is clearly a strong and unjustified bias towards clinical psychology. In spite of difficulties, many experiences of community service are good - psychologists in community service seem to feel that they contribute positively to their placements (Pillay & Harvey, 2006).

Further attempts, separate from the Mental Health Care Act, have been attempted to reconstruct psychological services by delivering more psychological services into the primary health care system. In 1999, a four year Bachelor of Psychology (BPsych) degree programme was introduced at many universities across the country. Students taking this degree train to become registered counselors. The aim of training these students was to introduce a mid-level psychological counselor into the primary health care system, and thus to boost the availability of basic psychological skills for the benefit of the public at large. This intervention, however, has not been successful. Joseph (2007), in a survey of registered counselors in South Africa, found that many BPsych students understood the course to offer an accelerated path of access into professional training as a psychologist. Currently, only 8% of registered counselors are working in health services, while others are most frequently working in the education and corporate sectors. While some are working in schools, which could be considered to be a primary health care setting, they are primarily employed to teach school subjects and are not engaged in various counseling roles.

Authors have commented on the continuing race and gender inequity in selection for professional training in psychology (Mayekiso et al., 2006) and in psychological research

(Seedat et al., 2004). Black psychologists are still under-represented in psychology. In 2006, only 11% of all psychologists were black (HPCSA, 2006). The Health Professions Council of South Africa has encouraged university departments to attain 50% equity in selection policies. Mayekiso et al. (2006) have shown that since 1994 more Black African trainees have been selected into programmes. Yet selections are still dominated by white women intakes, with increasingly fewer Indians and coloureds represented in selection. Many argue that it has been difficult to consistently attract black and male psychologists into the profession, a sentiment also expressed by Naidoo (2000). The construction of the professional psychological worker as a white woman is also reflected in training patterns of registered counselors. In September, 2005, 95% of registered counselors were women and 66% were white (HPCSA, 2005).

#### **2.2.3.2.3. Critiques of community psychology**

Critiques of community psychology arising from previous periods were re-articulated during this period and supplemented by additional critiques. Community psychology is firmly entrenched as an American product in clinical and counseling programmes in South Africa. It reproduces notions of power and professions (Painter & Terre Blanche, 2004) and notions of community and community psychology have reinforced stereotypical views of community psychology as reserved for Black expertise and poor black consumers of service (Carolissen, 2006; Ngonyama ka Sigogo & Modipa, 2004).

Previous critiques about lack of gender and race equity in community psychology, referred to earlier, have been vague. Locally, race and gender have been viewed as unitary categories of identity in community and social psychology (see for example Duncan, Seedat & Lazarus, 2001; Duncan, Van Niekerk, De la Rey & Seedat, 2001; Stevens, Franchi & Swart, 2006).

Furthermore, it appears that much thinking among psychologists have been characterised by binaries of, for example, black and white, male and female, oppressed and privileged. While the adoption of monolithic identity categories was socio-historically appropriate as a form of resistance to oppression (for example Black consciousness), it has also had surprising ramifications in recent years.

The tendency to focus on one singular aspect of identity, such as race or gender, at any one time, has been common in South African psychology (see texts previously mentioned). This tendency, coupled with binaries of rich and poor, privileged and under privileged, have led to

the concealment of different and complex hierarchies of power and oppression inherent within the binary categories of black and white and male and female. Thus, white men, and more recently more white women as well, appear to have continued to occupy the space of mainstream psychology in South Africa. While community psychology has moved closer to mainstream psychology during the 1990s, it still exists on the margins of mainstream psychology and appears to have become the crucible within which marginalised identities congregate. It is within this crucible of community psychology that (unacknowledged) multiplicities of identities appear to have led to further identity struggles, based on power relations. The implicit separation of contemporary mainstream and community psychology along racial fault lines has meant that practices such as knowledge production in mainstream psychology have remained in the hands of Black men and white women. In community psychology, knowledge production appears to have shifted specifically to the hands of Coloured and Indian men, and white women. These complex sets of relationships are reflected in editorial collectives in recent South African community psychology texts (Duncan, Bowman, Naidoo, Pillay & Roos, 2007; Seedat et al., 2001; Visser, 2007). This has meant that both mainstream and community psychology have left Black women and African men, marginalised in terms of knowledge production. By the same token, Black women and, to a lesser extent, white women appear to be over-represented in community service delivery, a caring activity that could be deemed by society to be more appropriate for women. These racist *and* sexist forms of reproducing oppressive power relations are well documented by postcolonial writers such as Bell Hooks (1984; 1996). It is these forms of the reproduction of power in knowledge production and service delivery, based on a plurality of identities, and containing complex intersections between power and oppression, that have been under-explored in South African community psychology. The lack of pluralism in identity discussions in community psychology, especially as it presents in the post-Apartheid South Africa, may inadvertently have contributed to continued racist and sexist domination within community psychology. This is paradoxical as community psychology purports to be a subdiscipline and approach which values diversity and social justice. This means that the multiple calls for race and gender equity (Seedat et al., 2004) and social justice (Ahmed & Pillay, 2004) that have been echoed locally and internationally (Prilleltensky, 1997; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Watts, 2004) within psychology and community psychology, can be realised more effectively if the complexity of

identity, as a project of community psychology, is seriously considered. These kinds of critical discussions about notions of identity have increasingly been incorporated into both the under- and postgraduate curriculum in community psychology in South Africa (Leibowitz et al., in press). Locally produced social psychology textbooks (Ratele & Duncan, 2003) have been prescribed in social psychology modules but have also been used in community psychology modules. For example, the text “Self, Community and Identity”, consists of selected readings from Ratele and Duncan (2003), for the specific use as a course reader. It is, for example, prescribed as a text in undergraduate community psychology courses at the University of South Africa. The increasing recognition of the importance of pluralism in theory and action (Macleod, 2006) has also been reflected in community psychology at theoretical and methodological levels (Fisher, Sonn & Evans, 2007).

Furthermore, the impact of the term “community” on community psychology has been underestimated. While various critiques of the term community have been raised within community and social psychology, few have explored interdisciplinary critiques of community. Critiques have highlighted the unitary, exclusionary and inclusionary nature of the term “community” and the inability of the term to incorporate more complex, and multiple dimensions of difference. These kinds of critiques outside the field of psychology may assist in providing different ways of thinking and intervening in psychology (Smail, 2001). Some of these critiques will be explored in the next chapter as they go to the heart of notions of community and identity.

### **2.3. Summary and conclusion**

This overview of community psychology in South Africa has taken into account the numerous histories of psychology and community psychology that have already been presented. While the current overview corroborates many previous ideas, it also (briefly) expands on the roles of psychologists in NGOs during the 1980s and the relationship between critical and community psychology in South Africa. The fact that *Agenda*, a South African women’s journal, representing the work of many women psychologists, has been ignored in all histories of psychology and community psychology, is also highlighted. The current historical account, like those of Bhana et al. (2007) and Stevens (2007) also considers some work from the African continent in constructing a history of community psychology. The current chapter furthermore



offers an additional critique of community psychology. It critiques the unitary notions of identity and community inherent in historical and contemporary constructions of community psychology. The lack of incorporating more pluralistic (and more complex) approaches to understanding these concepts in community psychology is discussed.

Despite numerous calls for social justice in South African and international community psychology, South African community psychology has failed to examine the theoretical debates that are implied in the progression from community to identity to social justice as a liberatory tool. These omissions have significant implications for intervention in community psychology and will be reviewed in Chapter 4, while the next chapter will focus on a literature review that encapsulates community, identity and community psychology.

## CHAPTER 3

### COMMUNITY, IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY: A LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1. Introduction

The previous overview of community psychology in South Africa has incorporated numerous implicit and explicit references to identities. On the one hand, community psychology in South Africa, and internationally, has struggled with its own identities. These struggles have revolved around both the unifying and distinguishing factors of an international or region-specific, local community psychology. These tensions between regional and specific community psychologies have even resulted in a recent book that is dedicated to this issue (Reich, Riemer, Prilleltensky & Montero, 2007).

At another level, identity discussions in community psychology have incorporated various dimensions of diversity such as race, gender, sexual orientation, disability and class. Diversity and identity have also been repositioned under discussions on inclusion which refers to groups marginalized by social exclusion (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005). In community psychology, race and gender have predominated in representation discussions, a trend which has been redressed in recent community psychology publications (Bond & Harrell, 2006; Duncan et al., 2007; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Visser, 2007). In the latter publications other forms of identities of representation are also discussed. These include sexual orientation, disability, poverty and age, for example. The representation arguments have suggested that community psychology, because it is a field that recognises the importance of human diversity as one of its core values, should reflect this (and other values) in practice (Bond & Harrell, 2006; Bond, Hill, Mulvey & Terenzio, 2000; Gridley & Turner, 2005; Suarez-Balcazar, Durlak & Smith, 1994; Swift, Bond & Serrano-Garcia, 2000; Weinstein, 1994). South African community psychology has not been immune to these arguments, especially since notions of diversity have so significantly shaped the history and practice of psychology in South Africa. While repeated calls have been made for greater representation of historically oppressed groups, largely in terms of race and gender in psychology and community psychology (Seedat et al., 2004), the notion of identity in community psychology has been sparsely explored in the South African literature. The current literature review aims to draw together some of the local and international literature

on community psychology and identity. In view of the fact that the current research focuses on community psychology itself, the literature review will now focus inward in reviewing identity and community psychology. This review will therefore focus on numerous claims that community psychology, both locally and internationally does not reflect a commitment to human diversity.

### **3.2. Identity in community psychology**

A large body of literature exists in South Africa (Potgieter & De la Rey, 1997; Shefer, Shabalala & Townsend, 2004; Shefer, Boonzaier & Kiguwa, 2006; Stevens, 1998, 2001; and internationally (Mama, 1995; Sonn & Green, 2006; Trickett, Watts & Birman, 1993, 1994) on diversity and identities in psychology. This literature review will however focus specifically on how *community* psychology and identity interact.

A multi-leveled analysis of the literature will focus on images of community psychology as reflected in society, in universities, in student perceptions of community psychology and in perceptions of professional identity of psychologists. In this way, a triangulated image of community psychology and identity can be constructed by means of the literature review.

#### **3.2.1. Psychology and community psychology in society (macro-level)**

There are many historical and social factors in South Africa that militate against the development and maintenance of a community psychology. The stronghold of professional clinical psychology, and the medical model dominant in primary health care conceptions of mental health are but two broader disciplinary and social factors that impact on the development of community psychology.

Historically the rise of psychology in South Africa was associated with clinical psychology within a specific private practice model. The rush of psychologists into private practice has been strongly linked to the fact that psychologists are able to register as practitioners with the statutory body, the Professional Board for Psychology (Richter et al., 1998). Richter et al. suggest that registration limits psychologists' employment opportunities, and essentially forces them into private practice, as few significantly viable options for employment exist elsewhere. This situation has established a defined historical tendency for registered psychologists to work in private practice. To add to this complexity, current health legislation is still struggling to find ways to integrate psychology and mental health into the national health system in meaningful

ways. The importance of registration has also been reflected by registered counselors who were not allowed to practice privately until they took the minister of health to court in 2005 and changed this ruling. These kinds of patterns in psychology have led to some discussion that suggests that in order to create a more community based preventative psychology in South Africa, new ways of thinking about psychology and mental health that are *not* tied to professional registration, should be considered. It is perhaps this ambiguity around professional registration that has prevented community psychology from being recognized as a formal registration category in South Africa, a situation which in itself attracts divided opinion (Pillay, 2003).

In the context of all this ambiguity, positive efforts are being made to concretely contribute to community psychology and community mental health practice and training. For as long as community psychology resides under the auspices of professional psychology training with its associated power, little progress in terms of addressing social responsibility will be made from within the discipline of community psychology (Rappaport, 1994; 2000; Smail, 2001).

Different ways of thinking about the role of community, psychology and mental health have emerged locally in practice. The universities of Stellenbosch and Cape Town, for example, are planning a joint Centre for Public Mental Health. This centre aims to train professionals from multi-disciplinary backgrounds, who are already working in community health, to deliver mental health and psychological services in their work environments. The degree in public mental health will not attract professional registration. This new direction may mark a shift in how training for primary mental health care contexts may be conceptualised and delivered in South Africa and Africa, more generally. However, the work of Petersen (1998; 2000) should be considered in this shift into primary health care. She has cautioned about the challenges inherent in incorporating mental health into a primary health care model adopted by the national health department. The primary health care model is still largely dominated by medical models implying curative care above prevention. These assumptions are directly oppositional to those of community psychology.

It is at this point that the literature review will shift to focus on the university as an institution which contributes to shaping how community psychology is reflected.

### **3.2.2. Community psychology in universities (meso-level)**

When examining community psychology in universities, it is important to focus firstly, on how the various academic activities of teaching, research and applied community work are positioned in relation to one another and secondly, on how community psychology is positioned in relation to other forms of psychology.

The “publish or perish” demand in universities means that research and publication generally attracts more incentives than the other core components of academic endeavour (Duckett, 2002). With these relative statuses and implicit power attached to different activities within the university, it is important to examine who teaches, publishes or does community work in community psychology. Furthermore, it is also important to examine the images of community psychology in terms of who teaches, publishes and what constitutes applied community psychology, as these multiple images all contribute to shaping community and community psychology (as opposed to other forms of psychology) in the minds of students. The way in which community psychology is projected in universities is likely to shape how it is experienced at a micro-level, both interpersonally and in terms of individual subjective experience of psychology as a profession. The literature review will discuss the various levels and impacts, in turn.

#### **3.2.2.1. Who publishes in community psychology?**

When considering publications analyses in psychology, it is important to examine both the methodology and content of publications analyses.

The methodology employed in publications analyses suggests that sources of data for publications analyses will produce different kinds of data. Publications analyses in South Africa have used largely journals such as the *South African Journal of Psychology (SAJP)* and *Psychology in Society (PINS)* as sources of data (Seedat, 2001; Seedat et al., 2004; Shefer, Shabalala & Townsend, 2004). An analysis of feminist content in USA based community psychology journals such as the *American Journal of Community Psychology* and the *Journal of Community Psychology* has also used this approach (Angelique & Culley, 2000). However, library databases can also be used in publications analyses. Both methods, those involving journal searches and those involving database searches, have strengths and disadvantages. The historical review of community psychology (Chapter 2) has suggested that community

psychology is increasingly situated in interdisciplinary contexts. There is, in addition, increasing institutional pressure on academics to publish internationally. This means that an exclusive focus on local and psychology journals, may exclude important community psychology articles of local authors. This has, for example, occurred, as the journal, *Agenda*, has been excluded in all psychology publications analyses in South Africa. While database analyses potentially extend the boundaries of publications analyses beyond geographic and disciplinary borders, an analysis of databases also has limitations. Database searches, by definition, exclude journals which are not listed electronically in databases. In South Africa, this means that journals such as *Psychology in Society* and *Agenda* may be excluded from database analyses as they are not represented in electronic searches. To overcome the limitations inherent in each one of the approaches to publications analyses, publications analyses should ideally include both approaches to analysis. The combined approach to publications analyses may provide interesting possibilities for future research.

In terms of the content of publications analyses, it is apparent that race and gender representation in knowledge production has been an issue of great concern in South African psychology. Shefer et al. (2004); Seedat (2001), and De la Rey and Ipser (2004) have commented on the low publication rate of women in relation to men in psychology, with black women especially publishing little.

Most research on race, gender and publication in South Africa has focused on frequency of publication and has not focused on the equally important *nature* of publication in academia. It is firstly important to distinguish between different publication contexts and the academic and research merit attached to it. Secondly, place of authorship in journal articles, in terms of first, second and third authorship also needs to be examined.

A distinction should be made between journal articles in accredited journals, edited books and book chapters. Journal articles and book publications, as editors, distinguish researchers and build academic careers whereas, in the South African higher education system, book chapters do not have the same value in the organization of the university. Black women are therefore not entirely absent from publication. They do publish, but largely book chapters (see Duncan et al., 2007; Hook, 2004; Ratele & Duncan, 2003; Visser, 2007). It is largely white and Black men and white women who are book editors. One of the only exceptions is the recent publication on

women and gender (Shefer et al., 2006). Some black authorship initiatives in South Africa, for example, have centred on producing books (Duncan et al., 1997). The exclusive publication of book chapters is problematic for the academic careers of black women as this form of publication holds little value for their academic careers in South Africa. It may be important for future research to establish why, particularly black women, appear more likely to publish book chapters as opposed to journal articles.

At another level, first authorship and single authorship, especially, is particularly valuable in academia. It is in this context that previous research on authorship in psychology in South Africa has noted the paucity of black women researchers (Shefer et al., 2004). While comparative figures on *community psychology publications* do not currently exist for community psychology in South Africa, the pattern is not likely to be very different from that established in psychology.

### **3.2.2.2. Who teaches community psychology?**

Typically, a distinct image of a junior, often part-time staff member emerges as a teacher of community psychology (Gibson et al., 2001). She is furthermore often black (Carolissen, 2006; Vogelmann et al., 1992).

#### **3.2.2.2.1. Where is community psychology taught?**

Little research on teaching community psychology exists. The research that does exist, falls into two categories, and delineates the levels at which community psychology is taught in universities. Some research about teaching community psychology exists at undergraduate level, while the majority of research focuses on postgraduate and particularly professional training programmes. Some research exists on undergraduate courses in community psychology in the USA (Carmony et al., 2000; O'Sullivan, 1993). They focus on content and structure of courses and on merging teaching and service delivery, respectively. In South Africa, the larger bulk of articles on community psychology teaching have been produced over the last 15 years. Lesch (1998) reflects on student attitudes to community psychology while Visser and Cleaver (1999), and White and Potgieter (1996) provide examples of successful community psychology courses. These articles have focused largely on courses offered at an Honours or fourth year level of study. It is likely that few published articles of undergraduate community psychology teaching exist in South Africa for three reasons. Undergraduate psychology classes in South

Africa are, firstly, typically large. Student numbers range from approximately 1000 to 300 students in first to third years. This situation is compounded by a low staff to student ratio. The University of Stellenbosch, for example, is a well resourced university in the South African context. Yet it has a staff complement of 17 full time permanent staff who service approximately 2500 students. Class size is therefore likely to impact negatively on practical work that is viewed as essential in teaching community psychology (O'Sullivan, 1993). Community psychology courses, secondly, are furthermore often formally taught for the first time at a post-graduate honours level. These courses are then often also presented as an elective, leaving them less likely to be a subject worth considering for research on teaching as it is tangential to many mainstream foci of psychology. Finally, teaching is still viewed as an activity secondary to research in higher education. Less value and therefore time is generally attached to teaching as it is less likely to be as generously rewarded as research (Duckett, 2002). Teaching experiences in community psychology are thus more commonly described within the context of *professional training* at a postgraduate level, both locally (Gibson et al., 2001; Ngonyama ka Sigogo et. al, 2004; Pillay, 2003; 2007) and internationally (Alcade & Walsh-Bowers, 1996; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 1994).

#### **3.2.2.2.2. How is community psychology taught?**

While scholarly articles about teaching community psychology have been limited, the existing articles have focused on teaching method or didactics and to a lesser degree, have hinted at pedagogy or process. Terms like “group-based”, “problem solving” approaches to learning (Visser & Cleaver, 1999) and “experiential learning” (Pillay, 2003; 2007; White & Potgieter, 1996) have been used. Yet few articles on teaching in community psychology have made their pedagogical approaches explicit. Earlier authors have hinted at pedagogy by focusing on the importance of the process of teaching (Alcade & Walsh-Bowers, 1996; Kelly, 1979). The pedagogical approaches have been implicit and have tended to fall broadly under service-learning as an approach (Visser & Cleaver, 1999). While service learning is essential in teaching community psychology, we need to critically examine how helpful an uncritical view of service learning might be when students (both black and white) have had little opportunity to engage with difference across various dimensions. If we consider that one of the core challenges when teaching community psychology in South Africa is how to engage with difference, it may be important to create opportunities for students to reflect on their own identities in relation to



others and community (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006; Harrell & Bond, 2006; Watts, 1994). This process is equivalent to a process of socialization (Gregory, 2001; Kelly, 1977; Walsh & Alcade-Bowers, 1997) where students are required to think about difference, civic responsibility and social action. They argue that these areas, of difference, civic responsibility and social action, are questions that are (unwittingly) discouraged in mainstream psychology. Yet, incorporating difference, civic responsibility and social action into the curriculum and teaching, is likely to be a crucial preparatory step to allow students and staff to be critically reflexive about their own individual and professional identities. Implementing this reflective process may assist teachers of community psychology from unwittingly assisting students in reinforcing stereotypes which exist about community psychology and the communities they engage with. It may also acknowledge the fact that diversity in community psychology is important for two reasons. Watts (1994b) argues that the importance of diversity in training is widely regarded as important because students and professionals work with “the other” in diverse communities. Yet, he argues that diversity in the curriculum is also crucial to train students and professionals to develop the ability to reflect on their own identities in relation to difference. This means that the process of community psychology teaching is as much about the self as it is about the “other”. The process emphasis (Kelly, 1977; Gregory, 2001; Walsh & Alcade-Bowers, 1997) necessitates a discussion on content of community psychology teaching.

### **3.2.2.2.3. What is taught in community psychology?**

Where community psychology teaching does occur at undergraduate and honours (first year postgraduate) levels, the focus is usually on the difference in content and approach between community and mainstream psychology, with some theoretical application. Applied community psychology in South Africa is most commonly and consistently located within the context of clinical, counseling and educational professional psychology training programmes. This communicates distinct messages about the nature and practice of community psychology. Despite the theoretical idealism inherent in community psychology depicted in class, individual clinical practices such as testing and short-term individual therapy, located in poor, black communities, often constitutes the extent of community psychology exposure for trainees (Vogelman et al., 1992). While this could have changed somewhat since the time that these authors wrote the article, it is doubtful, since programme structures within which professional training takes place, have not changed significantly. Much of the (published) debate about

community psychology has emanated from students in professional training courses. One of these debates concerns theory in community psychology.

### **3.2.3. Theory and practice in community psychology**

Some ambivalence about theory and practice in community psychology exists among students and academics. In South Africa, some students think that community psychology emphasises theory at the expense of practice (Pillay, 2003; 2007) while others contend that community psychology emphasises application at the expense of theory (Gibson et al., 2001). The dissatisfaction with inadequate theory (applicable to specific contexts) is also reflected in Europe (Francescato & Tomai, 2001). It is this kind of dissatisfaction with theory that has served as an impetus for theory development in community psychology applicable in local contexts. While this is by no means an exhaustive list of theoretical development, some examples of theory development exist in South Africa, Britain and the USA. Psychoanalytic theory has usefully been incorporated into community psychology in South Africa (Gibson, 2002) and Campbell and Gillies (2001) have incorporated social capital as a theoretical concept into community psychology. Internationally, theoretical models of the role of power in conceptions of wellness in community psychology have also been offered (Christens & Perkins, 2006; Prilleltensky, 2003;) as well as understandings of social justice in psychology (Fox & Prilleltensky, 2007).

Up till now the discussion has focused on how community psychology is positioned in universities in terms of research, teaching and community service practice. The discussion will now shift focus to examine what impact the structural positioning of community psychology has had on the way in which community psychology is understood and experienced by students. These impacts have extended to implicit (and often uncomplimentary) understandings of community psychology. The discussion will now briefly review the literature focusing on student and practitioner perceptions of community psychology.

### **3.2.4. Student perceptions and experience of community psychology**

Research on student perceptions of community psychology in South Africa has focused on postgraduate students as study participants. This research sample has been almost exclusively white (Ahmed & Pillay, 2004) and has reflected, directly or indirectly, student perceptions of community psychology as overwhelmingly negative (Gibson et al., 2001; Lesch, 1998;

Ngonyama ka Sigogo et al., 2004; Pillay 2003; 2007; Stevens, 2001). Callaghan's (2006) work is the exception, as she focuses specifically on black women in professional training. She identifies similarly negative perceptions of community psychology. Thompson(2007) has also suggested an overwhelmingly negative reaction to community psychology among professional psychology students in Britain. Community psychology is commonly perceived to be about the "Other". The "other" is reflected in multiple identities such as blackness, poverty and the profession of social work. Much inter professional rivalry exists between social workers and psychologists, with psychology students often viewing social workers as doing less valid community work (Lesch, 1998) in the professional hierarchy of human service delivery. Community work is thus stigmatized as less attractive than individual work. Students are furthermore predominantly white and anxiety, guilt about their privilege and fears about safety are precipitated when entering black, poor communities, often for the first time during training (Gibson et al., 2001). Fears about safety are often real in community work, but also mythical. Suarez-Balcazar and Kinney (2006) show how myths about safety distinctly impacted on their own community work. Students' fears about community psychology are also transposed onto the financial viability of community work. Assumptions about earning potential in community psychology research (Ahmed & Pillay, 2004) have inadvertently confirmed students' perceptions that community psychology is poorly paid. These assumptions are unfounded as no systematic research in South Africa has yet been conducted to confirm or dispel this belief. The assumption about poor salaries is based on notions of community work as voluntary or nominally paid services. It also (correctly) assumes that black, poor service users may not be able to pay fees for services. While this may be a particular reality, it is not the total reality of remuneration in community psychology. The history of community psychology (in Chapter 2) suggests that psychologists doing community work have historically entered NGOs. As psychologists, many have occupied senior positions in NGOs with good salaries, derived from foreign NGO funding. Furthermore, many psychologists engage in community psychology praxis as researchers and command market related fees (or often more than market related fees) for research consultancy services. The assumption that community work is poorly paid appears to be based on limited notions of what it is that constitutes community work. This may be a useful area to pursue in further research.

Students also experience a range of “diversity” when entering poor communities and this is often overwhelming. These student experiences are likely to occur in a context where little reflexivity about their own interaction with diversity has been facilitated and they are therefore sometimes unexpectedly confronted by privilege, leaving them feeling impotent in their guilt. Gibson and Swartz (2004) have emphasized the impact of emotion in community work. This also applies to students when the professional training setting is conceptualized as a community setting. Students typically think that they are not the right people for the work. They have guilt feelings when working with the marginalized and therefore feel powerless in the face of client disadvantage as it has the ability to highlight their own privilege. They also express fears about going into communities, and particularly unfamiliar, black communities (Gibson, & Swartz, 2004). I would like to argue that particularly for many of the current generation of black student trainees, the issue of social class difference should also be acknowledged. Assumptions about black students therefore “knowing” poor black communities may be misplaced. Despite the literature that questions the paternalistic phenomenon of categorising “diversity issues” (and therefore community psychology) as the domain of expertise of *all* marginalized groupings in an organisation, both locally (Eagle, 2005; Ramphele, 1995) and internationally (Bernal, 1994; Bond, 1999; Watts, 1994), the practice still continues. This means that having to represent their group is often a burden that both black students and staff have to endure, an experience that white privilege mediates for white staff and students. The issue of class difference between black community psychologists and their clients has also been acknowledged in the USA (Jordan, Bogat & Smith, 2001). Yet, entering a poor black community may, in fact, also be an unfamiliar experience for some black students. When confronted with this dilemma, black students may however, be silent and acquiesce with perceptions that they “know” because the unfounded expectation that they must know, exists. The silences about their ignorance, lack of experience and resultant fears and feelings similar to those of white students might therefore unwittingly not be acknowledged. Reinharz (1994) and Bond (1999) discuss the pervasiveness and invisibility of similar dynamics. Bond argues that invisibility in organizations is one of the most concrete ways in which dominant organizational practices, involving difference, are perpetuated. Reinharz (1994) refers to these organizational practices as the “silencing” of “voice” since they serve to silence perspectives that are different from the mainstream. The above example also illustrates how paradoxes occur when binary opposites and singular notions

of identity are adhered to. The notion that black students know about “the community” and white students do not know about “the community”, is clearly flawed. It may therefore be important to examine power in community psychology as an attempt to work towards more clarity in resolving some of the conundrums of race and gender and other domains of difference in community psychology (Bond, 1999; Bostock & Smail, 1999; Fisher et al., 2007; Rappaport, 2000; Smail, 2001). The perceptions that students hold about community psychology are often not directly examined in teaching. Thus invisible codes about community and community psychology are formed and permeate everyday understandings of community psychology in organizations such as the university. These everyday understandings are often very different from how community psychology is reflected in textbooks, but become very powerfully represented in the minds of students and (subsequently) practitioners.

### **3.2.5. Practitioner perceptions of community psychology**

Little research that specifically focuses on practitioner perceptions and experiences of community psychology exists in South Africa. The commentary that does exist is indirect (Eagle, 2005; Seedat, 1997; Stevens, 2001). It emanates from the perspective of black practitioners as a marginalized grouping in South Africa (Seedat, 1997; Stevens, 2001) and from a white woman academic who appropriately raises the question of who can legitimately speak about culture in clinical psychology professional training (Eagle, 2005). Both these strands of thought are applicable to practitioner perceptions of community psychology as an area saturated with unacknowledged meanings about identity. Drawing on Bulhan’s (1985) work on identity, blackness and professional psychology, Seedat (1997) and Stevens (2001), comment on how black practitioners constantly experience ambiguity and double binds in their professional lives. A complex set of interactions between practices that oscillate between capitulation and consequent alienation and emancipatory practice and consequent constructive self-definition, are reflected in their analyses. Bulhan’s concept of capitulation, they argue, operates in three distinct ways for professionals. For example, they argue that practitioners can collude with the dominant system of private practice and ignore structural factors such as race, gender and class that determine the very access to business practices they conduct. This form of capitulation, they argue, may leave practitioners feeling alienated from themselves and those whom they wish to serve. Other practitioners capitulate by leaving the profession of psychology. There are

yet others who “resist and accommodate” (Stevens, 2001, p. 54) to negotiate these everyday challenges as professionals, oscillating between ambiguity and constructive self definition. Eagle’s (2005) argument reflects a similar implied ambiguity and has implications for community psychology. While Eagle focuses on culture, I examine her ideas in relation to community psychology. Her research suggests strong perceptions among black and white practitioners that culture falls into the domain of blackness. Because the same assumptions are inherent in community psychology, it therefore implies that white practitioners experience ambiguity about community psychology as they do not feel that they can legitimately comment on community psychology, perceived to be the preserve of blackness. Her study participants delineate markers for access to or inclusion in discussions on culture. These markers are equally applicable to community psychology. The markers included the ideas that experience and observation of various domains of difference were important. This needed to be coupled with a process of self-reflection and the effort to engage with those experienced as “the other”. In addition, the limits of professional knowledge base and exposure to ‘the other’ was deemed important. Eagle furthermore, comments on the identity politics of engaging in culture, which are similar to the identity politics of engaging in community discussions. I will focus on how the codes she outlines applies to community psychology. An unwritten code exists about when, where and in whose presence it is possible to speak about community. Confidence to speak about “community issues” is mediated by the context (local or foreign, for example) and who is present at these discussions (black or white people, for example).

While Eagle’s (2005) research suggests that this kind of “surveillance” of culture and community exists for white professionals only, I would disagree with these sentiments. In South African psychology, credibility, authority and therefore power to speak about community, is also questioned amongst black people. It is also mediated by who is present and where the speaking occurs. In this context, it is the psychologist’s contribution to the struggle for political liberation (often interpreted as having been a political detainee), that is questioned. Black psychologist’s place identity is also questioned in two ways. The first way in which place identity is questioned refers to being present in South Africa (usually during the 1980s) or on foreign soil during some of the worst periods of state oppression in South Africa. These could be encapsulated in popular questions like, “Where were you when the struggle was taking place?” or “Where were you in the 80s?” If a psychologist was perceived to be in the country

and working towards change, he/she would be perceived to have legitimacy to talk about community. If however, he/she was perceived to be outside the country when the “struggle” was taking place, they would not be perceived to have legitimacy to talk about community. This notion of place identity is even more complex. It also extends to *where* the (black psychologist) was working. Black psychologists who are located exclusively in academia and have seldom worked in applied settings, apart and separately from being in academia, are also questioned in terms of their authority to speak about community. They, like white psychologists, are also perceived (by black psychologists and in black politicised contexts) to “exploit” communities. These sentiments are reflected in popular talk (amongst black people) as “What does s/he know about community, they only read about it in books” or “Now they’re going to speak to white people who will believe their sob stories”.

These very dismissive and unhelpful binaries inherent in these forms of surveillance thus exist to control and shape who is allowed to talk about community and community psychology and in whose presence talk about community can be pursued.

It is my very (identity) “credentials” in the political struggle and the struggle for mental health in South Africa that now allow me to speak via my research. Yet, it is also the very credentials that may silence others in my presence. Others see me as a black or Coloured woman, depending on how my racial identity is viewed. They see me as a professional clinical psychologist, trained at UCT. They see me as having engaged in community work prior to and after qualifying as a psychologist. I am seen as someone who did this outside of academia for many years before now returning to academia. I have been involved in offering psychological services (in both community work and private practice contexts) to high profile political prisoners and combatants in the struggle for liberation in South Africa. For some of these clients, especially in the private practice setting, choosing me as a therapist, was often based on “struggle credentials”. I am also viewed as a person that “was here in SA during the 1980s”, “involved in the struggle” and “practically involved” in community psychology since its inception in South Africa. As a black woman professional and colleague once told me “You’ve paid your dues. You *can* now enter academia and talk from experience and not only from books”.

These unacknowledged identities impact not only on us as academics and professional psychologists, but also on our students. For example, how do black postgraduate research students feel when they have the choice to do community work or attend journal clubs for discussions of academic papers? Do these unspoken codes actually leave them with a choice? Similarly, what do white students feel when they would like to do community work but experience it as an area that will forever leave them feeling incompetent and guilty as a result of their identity locations? I do not claim to know the answers to these very complex questions but it is important that they are raised to begin a process of dialogue.

There is no doubt that I attract many marginalized identities and experiences of oppression due to these identities (see Chapter 5). Yet, the combination of identities summarized in the previous paragraph has placed me in an incredibly powerful position in terms of identity politics and space identities, that refer to the “I was there”, “where were you?” discourse in community psychology. This is a discourse which is often invisible in particularly white institutions such as universities. I have therefore decided to use these identities of professional privilege, power and oppression to hopefully contribute to unlocking some of these many silences (and unacknowledged voices) to speak out (and write) about that which may otherwise remain silent. Lazarus (2007) emphasises the importance of this process in “living” the values of community psychology.

This kind of reflection on practitioner experience of psychology advocated by Eagle (2005) and others (Bond, 1999; Harrell & Bond, 2006; Lazarus, 2007) is especially important in community psychology as it is community psychology itself that becomes the other. Professionals, whether black or white, male or female, who choose to work in community psychology are themselves marginalized and powerful, and could potentially experience these contradictions, inclusions and exclusions, that are described.

As suggested earlier, these politics of identity remain, for the most part, silent and invisible. The silences themselves are governed by politics of identity. I have to consider whether I will be viewed (in the black community) as betraying my black brothers and sisters by speaking out about these dynamics. Yet, these kinds of silences support unitary notions of race, community and community psychology that allow complex identity dynamics to contribute to maintaining



oppressive practices in psychology. It is my abhorrence of complicity with all kinds of oppression that compels me to highlight oppressive dynamics wherever I see them existing.

It is only some markers of the identity politics inherent in community psychology, that spills from beneath the lid, when we examine the contexts of community psychology, as suggested by authors in community psychology (Trickett, 1996; Trickett, Watts & Birman, 1994; Watts, 1992; 1994a;). It is important for community psychology that we (try to) understand the content of these images if we are to challenge them in practice. It is to these images that I will now turn.

### **3.3. Images of community psychology**

Powerful images of what community psychology is and who community psychologists are, are internalised by students during the course of their university education.

#### **3.3.1. What is community psychology?**

Despite the fact that community psychology training typically takes place within professional training programmes in South Africa, a clear binary distinction is made between clinical and community psychology (Callaghan, 2006). This needs to be understood in the context of professional psychological hierarchies where clinical psychology is viewed as being the dominant registration. Because community psychology is not a distinct registration category, the need for categorization and the need to disentangle community from especially clinical psychology, leads to the creation of community as “the other”, usually in binary terms. This suggests fixed and rigid views of psychology and community psychology, as suggested by Phelan (1996). Community psychology is commonly viewed as a less preferred area of practice when compared to individual clinical work. Callaghan (2006) and Stevens (2001) discuss the ambiguity that trainees experience during professional training in terms of gendered and racial identities. Their discussions have important implications for community psychology, too. Callaghan, like Thompson (2007) from a British perspective, suggests that there is a perception that community psychology becomes the space for containing political and activist tendencies in psychology. Because strong activist or religious values are strongly discouraged in mainstream psychology, a polarization of professional and non-professional psychology occurs, leaving community psychology in the activist and non-professional domain with “real” or professional psychology occupied by clinical psychology. Furthermore, the notion of professional psychologist itself comes to define identity. In this context social identities such as race, class

or gender necessarily have to be erased or they become a source of alienation or a marker of diversity and “otherness” (Callaghan, 2006; Kottler & Swartz, 2004; Stevens, 2001). When binary opposites are constructed as a matter of course, community psychology itself is conceptualized as the “other”. The conceptualization of community psychology as the “other”, holds practical ramifications for all those psychologists associated with community psychology. Because community psychology is seen as activist or a black psychology, black psychologists can only possibly be community psychologists. These commonly held perceptions often leave the clinical competence of black psychologists in question (Stevens, 2001). This questioning of competence extends to the historical racial character of the university where the psychologist was trained. Assumptions are often made about even greater incompetence when black psychologists are trained at a black university, but conflict or ambiguity arises when judgments have to be made about white psychologists training at a black university and vice versa.

### **3.3.2. Who is a community psychologist?**

Callaghan (2006) focuses specifically on the intersections between gender and race in psychology. Similarly to Stevens (2001) who argues that black people are perceived to have a specific place in psychology, Callaghan suggests that black women trainees also perceive women to have a special place in psychology. It is well established that more women have entered the psychology profession over the last two decades (Potgieter & De la Rey, 1997; Pillay & Kramers, 2003). Yet white men, and more recently black men in South Africa, have dominated positions of power in academia, knowledge production and professional boards (Shefer et al., 2004). This trend of male dominance is also reflected internationally (Mama, 1995). This leaves the question as to what happens to all the women who train as psychologists. Callaghan (2006) suggests that a strong image of a woman as a “natural carer” arises, one that prefers to work in individual private practice as a “cottage industry”. This leaves women (and often white women) as psychologists to pursue roles within “normal” middle class womanhood. In these ways gender (and race) is reproduced through psychology. These gendered and racialised roles are also reproduced in community psychology. I have argued in the previous chapter that in South Africa black males (particularly those categorized as coloured and Indian) and white women dominate in academia. Male dominance in positions of power in community psychology have repeatedly been noted (Bond & Mulvey, 2000; Bond, Mulvey & Terenzio, 2000; Fisher et al., 2007; Gridley & Turner, 2005; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 1994). This leaves

many black and white women in community psychology working in applied community settings, doing the “natural” and devalued caring of a population that is, in any case, marginalized.

The literature review on community, community psychology and identity has discussed how important notions of representation in community psychology are and how they impact on student (and practitioner) perceptions. This necessitates some further discussion on how staff and students are represented in psychology and community psychology.

### **3.3.3. Representation of staff and students in professional training**

The literature review has emphasized notions of representation, particularly in terms of race and gender, both implicitly and explicitly. The notion of representation is nevertheless plagued by contestation. Over and above affirmative action legislation that encourages increased selection of marginalized groups as staff and students in South Africa, an unfounded assumption by both black and white staff appears to exist in popular talk, that selecting black students may facilitate service delivery in black communities based on these students returning to work in “their” communities. This assumption may be problematic. The idea that many black students may not even sufficiently be interested in psychology as a career has not been sufficiently explored in South Africa. Potts, cited in Gridley and Turner (2005), argues that black students are initially drawn to the social action inherent in community psychology but are disillusioned by the conservatism reflected in the discipline of psychology. However, these kinds of arguments are based on the assumptions that blackness equals a desire to effect social transformation and that whiteness equals conservatism. Yet it may also be true that many black young people entering psychology training in contemporary South Africa, may do so for the promise of independence of employment in individual, private practice. The converse of potential white students who are genuinely interested in social justice practices should also not be undermined.

This kind of argument extends to black academics who are often, in popular talk, deemed more suitable for “community work”. This notion is also problematic as black psychologists both locally (Stevens, 2001), and in the USA (Jordan, Bogat & Smith, 2001) also experience identity challenges in “community work”. The suspicion with which communities view the psychology profession, the class differences between black psychologists and typical communities with which they work, the credibility of organizations who provide services to communities, are

often questioned (Jordan et al., 2001; Stevens, 2001). Berger and Lazarus (1987), writing twenty years ago, reflect similar sentiments about psychologists in communities. However, in their study psychologists are largely conceptualized as white by communities and there is an open question as to whether things would look different today. Despite all the complexities around race, let alone gender, disability and other forms of diversity, limited formal teaching on diversity exists in the psychology curriculum, a sentiment also reflected by Suarez-Balcazar et al. (1994).

Bond and Mulvey (2000) and Bond (1999) make two important distinctions that may assist in understanding approaches to organisational transformation. To assist with apparent dilemmas about representation, Bond and Mulvey's (2000) distinction between representation and perspective, where representation refers to statistical representation of marginalized groups and perspective refers to views critical of the status quo, is helpful. They argue that while representation is important in enhancing diversity, it needs to coexist with perspective in effecting institutional transformation. Bond (1999) further suggests that in the context of organizational transformation, a distinction must be made between transformation that views diversity as "similarity" or transformation that views diversity as "equity". In similarity perspectives, all focus is placed on similarity which, in effect, silences discourses that are supportive of difference. In equity perspectives, multiple realities are encouraged and difference is validated in organisations. Similarity perspectives, such as affirmative action, allow for individual advancement, only for those representatives of difference that "fit into" the dominant organisational culture. The culture, itself, that perpetuates domination of silenced voices, is never challenged. For this, Bond (1999) argues, approaches that value equity, are important. In these perspectives, collective change is encouraged which will facilitate change in the structure of organisations.

### **3.4. Summary**

This literature review has summarized, in an ecological framework, ranging from macro- and policy factors to interpersonal, micro factors, the societal factors that impact on the construction of community psychology as an area of practice. The literature has suggested that notions of identity and community are inextricably infused into professional training practices in South Africa. It is thus important to consider community psychology as part of the diversity that was

instituted within mainstream professional training in South Africa. If we do this, it is apparent that community psychology and all those who are associated with it, have unwittingly been cast within deficit models of diversity in the context. The interlinking of community and identity as knowledge that is commonly understood in terms of professional codes, is seldom explored, providing ample opportunity for racism and sexism to undermine the potentially valuable role of community psychology. It is thus in this context that it is important to consider social justice approaches to community psychology and to apply this to community psychology itself.

The link between community psychology and identity has been referred to in interpersonal interactions, reflections by students and small studies examining the professional identity of students. Furthermore, little is known about practitioner perceptions of community psychology. In addition, no systematic study has been undertaken to assess what the role of universities is in maintaining negative perceptions of community psychology among students. It is these gaps in the literature that the current research aims to address.

## CHAPTER 4

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 4.1. Introduction

As suggested in the previous literature review, the current research draws on a number of theoretical strands including feminist, post-structuralist and postcolonial approaches, and systems approaches. While much division exists amongst and within these approaches, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide a detailed overview of the tensions and contradictions [see Nicholson (1997) for an overview of the different approaches in feminism internationally and Hendricks and Lewis (1994) and Shefer and Ratele (2006) for an overview of the shaping of feminism in South Africa]. What will be provided is a selective overview of social constructionism, which can be viewed as an overarching broad framework (Burr, 1995) within which to locate the current theoretical discussion. Critiques of social constructionism will also be considered. This will be followed by a theoretical overview of community and identity in community psychology. Contemporary debates on notions of community, community identity and identity, are located within notions of diversity. Hence, theoretical conceptualizations of diversity will also subsequently be discussed. The overview will then consider the links between diversity and social justice approaches and their importance for reconstructive approaches in community psychology.

#### 4.2. Social constructionism

Social constructionism arose in a number of disciplines in the social sciences, as an intellectual movement that took root against the backdrop of postmodernism. There is currently much debate about the similarities and differences between social constructionism and social constructivism. The main consensually established difference between the two terms is that construction is viewed as a social process in social constructionism and an individual cognitive process in the constructivist position. However, a generic term “constructivism” is used to refer to the paradigm in general (Young & Collin, 2004) as is evident in the text by Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005). In this thesis, the term social constructionism will, however, be used as it draws mainly on the work of authors such as Burr (1995), Gergen (1997; 1999), Nightingale and Cromby (1999), who are associated with the social constructionist tradition.

There are different kinds of social constructionism (Danziger, 1997), and critiques of the area (Fisher, 1999) which have in turn, been challenged (Gergen, 1999). While the theoretical intricacies of social constructionism extend beyond the scope of the thesis, this review will briefly describe the values that unite social constructionism and highlight some of the critiques of social construction. Its importance for the current research will then be considered.

#### **4.2.1. Definitions of social constructionism**

There is no single coherent definition of social constructionism since many varieties of social constructionism exist. Yet there are a number of premises that unite the tradition. Burr (1995) notes that a critique of taken-for-granted knowledge, historical and cultural specificity, the notion of knowledge being sustained by social processes, and the interaction between knowledge and social process, are the four characteristics that bind diverse approaches within social constructionism. Social constructionism, therefore, presents a critique of the theory of knowledge which frames the individualism central to most of mainstream psychology. It thus strives to provide an alternative scientific theoretical stance. It provides a critique of the essentialism, empiricism and positivism encapsulated in mainstream psychology (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999), recognises the fluidity of knowledge which is socially and historically specific, and rejects notions of the objective nature of knowledge and ultimate truths (Durrheim, 1997).

Within this framework, views about knowledge are important. Knowledge is seen as residing not in the individual but in the intersubjective space between the individual and society. This means that knowledge is a cultural artifact and is constituted through language (Gergen, 1995). Importantly, the concretization of knowledge as a social construction in our everyday lives and interactions with each other, means that knowledge sustains forms of social interaction.

It is in relation to knowledge as a social construction, that discourse has been closely associated with social constructionism. It is common that multiple discourses may exist about what it means to be a community psychologist, for example. However, dominant discourses are the “taken-for-granted” knowledges about a social phenomenon that are often accepted uncritically as the truth. For example, if the dominant discourse about community psychology suggests that it is a professional space for black psychologists and black, poor consumers of service, what implications does this hold for community psychology when 89% of psychologists in South Africa are white?

#### 4.2.2. Critiques of social constructionism

Critiques of social constructionism generally express concerns about agency, power, the reification of language, notions of truth and social change (Burr, 1995). Fisher, (1999), one of the most staunch critics of social constructionism, suggests that the approach does not provide a space for human agency and self-determination. He argues that a lack of agency may lead to annihilation of responsibility and to the questioning of the value of collective living in citizens. Richardson and Fowers (1999) furthermore highlight the unresolved (and perhaps irresolvable) paradox inherent in social constructionism. They argue that the aims of social constructionism are to critically deconstruct knowledge and reconstruct more emancipatory approaches. This, they argue, takes place in a context where constructionists espouse the ideal of not privileging one truth above another which contradicts the idea that some approaches are more emancipatory than others. Richardson and Fowers (1999) also suggest that constructionists may not be able to offer a truly alternative theoretical agenda for psychology as they are tied to mainstream psychology in a reactive way. This is evident as social constructionism originated as a critique of mainstream psychology and therefore remains dependent on that against which it defines itself.

Finally, social constructionists have been accused of ignoring the importance of power and its function in the relational space between the individual and society (Burr, 1995; Hosking & Morley, 2004). Young and Collin (2004) furthermore argue that some social constructionists revere the role of language in interaction as if nothing exists outside it. They also find it difficult to conceptualise how intellectuals could remain outside the world in which they live, in order to provide a critique of it.

Despite these critiques, social constructionism remains important for the current research as the *purpose* of the current research is also to highlight the meaning of community psychology in the specific social and historical context of contemporary South Africa. It furthermore explores how actors (psychologists) negotiate the prescribed identities about psychology and community. Furthermore, social constructionism can be used as a theoretical tool to highlight both plurality of identities and strategic positionings that resist pre-definitions of the self, community and identity. While strategic positioning is a contested area of debate, focusing on strategic



positionings for collective change has become widely recognized in feminist literature and particularly African feminist literature (Lewis, 2001; Macleod, 2006).

#### **4.2.3. Importance of social constructionism for the current study**

The previous chapters have suggested that “community” and “community psychology” in South Africa have become associated with poor black communities and black practitioners. Similarly, the race and class bases to the term “community” have also been acknowledged in both the United States of America and Britain (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992). Thus, community (and community psychology) has been demarcated as a relatively fixed entity in South Africa in terms of who engages in it and who receives services. It has also meant that in the context of South Africa with its history of racial inequality, community psychology has the potential to be marginalized in the context of a predominantly white psychology. At the same time the limited resources (in professional practice and knowledge production, in particular) that are available to marginalized groups could lead to dominance and competition within marginalized groups for the scarce resources within community psychology. I have argued earlier that even in community psychology, exclusionary practices have concealed and maintained racial and gender privilege. The capacity for communities to have this exclusionary effect and act in a manner contrary to the unifying and emotive discourses traditionally suggested by the term “community”, is well documented (Harrell & Bond, 2006; Howarth, 2001; Pandey, 2005; Stephens, 2007; Wiesenfeld, 1996). Bond (1999) has furthermore argued that differential privilege supports social exclusion. It is thus important to focus on the multiple notions of community in a discussion on identity and community psychology. This is crucial since similarity is often overemphasized at the expense of notions of diversity, thus concealing the plurality of identities inherent in any community. Thus, social constructionism presents a useful theoretical framework to explore how psychology and community psychology are constructed for and by professional psychologists and if the boundaries of community psychology are in fact as circumscribed as dominant narratives suggest. Secondly, social constructionism is also common to many other disciplines and thus it provides an epistemological bridge valuable for interdisciplinary collaboration. Thirdly, it presents opportunities to re-evaluate community psychology and identify spaces for resistance within which to carve out new ways of seeing in community psychology. These perceived benefits of social constructionism in community

psychology imply a strong link between community psychology and identity. It is thus important to now focus on notions of identity.

### **4.3. Notions of identity**

Stryker and Burke (2000) and Howard (2000) suggest three categories of identity which will be summarized briefly as they assist in situating current literature on identity in community psychology. The three approaches to identity are individual and interpersonal, social and political and will be discussed in turn.

#### **4.3.1. Individual and interpersonal notions of identity**

The notion of identity, like that of community, has had varied uses in psychology. Stryker and Burke (2000) suggest three uses of the term. Firstly, identity is often used synonymously with race or culture. Secondly, it is used to delineate social identification as in social identity theory. Finally, it is also used to describe the meaning that people themselves ascribe to the multiple roles that they fulfill in contemporary society. Identity theory has described the self as shaped by social and structural factors, and thus the self reflects society through an internalization of cognitive schemas. These cognitive schemas are salient over time and relatively fixed. Yet, changes in salience may occur over time and between different individuals. This suggests that other, more individual mechanisms may be operative. Individual factors such as affect also impact on behaviours associated with identity. Thus Stryker and Burke argue that structural and individual strands in identity theory converge through behaviour or performative acts when meanings about identity are usually negotiated in a relational space. There is thus a shift from identity as a cognitive schema and process to an interactionist perspective. In this perspective, the behaviour that Stryker and Burke refer to is crystallised as language (Howard, 2000). This means that people actively construct and reconstruct identity through language, a view consistently reflected in postmodern thinking. The process of enacting identity through language reflects societal power and the shifting nature of identity.

#### **4.3.2. Social notions of identity**

The social bases of identity make identity as a concept extremely complex. Often ethnic, age, racial, classed, sexual, identities of disability and gendered identities are analysed as a singular concept, yet in reality people function in terms of a multiplicity of identities. It is the co-existence of multiple identities that allows for the paradoxical experience of being

simultaneously oppressed and privileged, an often underexplored dynamic in community psychology (Harrell & Bond, 2006; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1994).

Notions of space identity, both geographically *and* virtually, have become increasingly important in contemporary society. In South Africa, for example, the work of Dixon and Durrheim (2005) explicitly explores desegregation and racial identity in terms of geographical space. A further form of identity has been evident in identity struggles such as those reflected in social movements. Identity has thus not remained within only an individual, interactional or social space. It has also reflected a significantly politicised character.

#### **4.3.3. Political notions of identity**

A politicised notion of identity has developed to counteract the assumptions of the “natural” process that underlies notions of categorization in identity theory (Bernstein, 2005). Bhavnani and Phoenix (1994), for example, have suggested that the performance of identity integrally contributes to maintaining the status quo by reproducing societal inequity. In other words, the racialised identity of community psychology in South Africa, serves to reproduce the status quo of a white, masculinist mainstream psychology. The political and deconstructive task inherent in understanding identity has introduced what may be termed a new “identity vocabulary”. Identities are therefore relational, defined by difference, and characterized by fragmentation, hybridity and diasporas (Lewis, 2001). This means that identity is a process, always defined in relation to an “other”, that multiple identities can simultaneously exist and that they can exist across boundaries (Sonn, 2004). In short, postmodern thinking has encapsulated human agency and action within identity and the emphasis has shifted to the meaning of identities. Dunstan (2002) has highlighted the importance of notions of fluidity of identity to describe and understand her experience as a neophyte therapist. In the same way, the meaning of community, community psychology and what it means to be a community psychologist in South Africa in 2007 are pertinent areas for exploration within current identity debates.

#### **4.4. Identity and the notion of community**

The notion of community as a unitary (and sometimes fixed) concept, implying shared values, is a common one in community psychology. Community psychology texts have generally not been successful in providing comprehensive overviews of the term community which is central to notions of identity in community psychology. South African community psychology texts

use the notion of community as geographical or geographical and political and incorporating a psychological sense of community, (Seedat et al., 2001). Visser (2007) expands her notion of community to constructions of a way of life or organisations as communities. In international texts, such as that edited by Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005), the concepts of community capacity and social capital that refer to qualities of communities that promote individual well-being, have supplemented understandings of community. While Seedat et al. (2001) acknowledge the exclusionary and oppressive potential of the term community, a common assumption of goodness and strengths are generally associated with the notion of community, and no additional conceptualizations are offered. Also, from a perusal of texts, an assumption of a limited number of definitions of community can be deduced. Yet, multiple meanings of community exist (Stephens, 2007; Wiesenthal, 1996) and it is perhaps important at this point to review them and illustrate the plurality or multiple meanings, the historical and temporal fluidity of the concept, and the incorporation of individual and interpersonal components of community. It is also important to highlight these conceptions of community as they centrally shape the way in which diversity is viewed within community psychology.

#### **4.4.1. Understandings of community identity**

The functionalist and postmodern perspectives will each be dealt with in turn.

##### **4.4.1.1. Functionalist understandings of community identity**

Colombo and Senatore (2005) suggest that community identity has been constructed within either a functionalist or a discursive perspective. For the purposes of this thesis, the notion of the discursive will be expanded to postmodern perspectives on community as the postmodern approach is inclusive of discursive perspectives. Within the functionalist perspective, communities are objectively defined geographical entities or organizations. Thus, in functionalist assumptions, communities are fixed and constant over time. Much of the research in health psychology would, for example, exist within a community of place (Stephens, 2007). The notion of a psychological sense of community (PSOC) is also incorporated into the functionalist perspective even though it is more relational (Puddifoot, 1995). The reason for its incorporation in the functionalist perspective is that the bonds that are formed in terms of PSOC are usually dependent on a pre-existing community. Since McMillan and Chavis (1986) introduced the concept of PSOC it has been and remains a popular construction of community

within community psychology (Fisher & Sonn, 1999) even though it has been reworked from its exclusive individual focus to include place identities (Long & Perkins, 2007). The main concern about functionalist perspectives of community is the point of distinction between community identity and social identities such as gender identity, racial identity or sexual identity. Colombo and Senatore (2005) suggest that community identity exists within social identity. A further concern about community identity from a functionalist perspective is its realist basis (Stephens, 2007) and the implication of a fixed, objective and at times, ahistorical entity, that exists outside individual agency. These notions of community are dependent on similarity and therefore homogeneity, to the exclusion of diversity. The reality that communities therefore act as both inclusionary and exclusionary entities, remains the basis for one of the most vociferous critiques of the notion of community (Wiesenthal, 1996; Young, 1990).

#### **4.4.1.2. Postmodern understandings of community identity**

Postmodern perspectives have emphasized both subjectivity and intersubjectivity, the historical and temporal embeddedness of the individual in the construction of community identity, and the fluidity and shifting nature of community identity. Community is seen as socially constructed and dependent on a relational dynamic between the individual and society. Others have embellished this view from different postmodern traditions, such as social representations theory (Howarth, 2001; Stephens 2007), intersubjectivity (Cronick, 2002), discursive positions (Colombo & Senatore, 2005) and feminism (Mayo, 1994; Phelan, 1996).

#### **4.5. Community as a concept in understanding diversity and identity**

Postmodern theorists within community psychology (mentioned above) who deliberate about community, remain committed to the notion of community as an integral part of the self. Others, while typically outside the discipline of community psychology, often reject “community” as a helpful term in constructing community identity. While the outcome for both positions, inclusive or exclusive of community, is social justice, the routes to social justice are conceptually different and dependent on specific philosophical orientations (Fraser & Nicholson, 1990). Thus in an attempt to understand perspectives on community, self and identity more broadly, it is important to consider these arguments.

Phelan (1996), like Sen (2006), suggests that the notion of identity is, itself, an illusion. This argument assumes that when identities become fixed, such as that of “community psychologist”, for example, polarization between the identities, in this case “community psychologist” and “non-community psychologist” occurs. Once labelled a “community psychologist”, for example, one could simply reap the benefits of a label perceived to be politically correct. In reality, though, the *process* reflected in political commitment and action is more flexible. Thus a process of political action is desirable. Phelan therefore envisages a societal progression from communitarian to identitarian to social justice approaches, if notions of difference are to be engaged with meaningfully. Similarly, Young (1990) rejects the notion of community and argues for a more flexible politics of difference. In her conception of social justice, representation and affirmation of difference is important.

However, social justice and community are not mutually exclusive for Lugones (1998). She distinguishes between communities of place and communities of choice within a politics of resistance and liberation. Communities of place usually include the school, church or country of residence whereas communities of choice provide alternative spaces from within which reflection on identity and self can take place; the “breathing space” to which Phelan (1996), refers. For Lugones, no artificial distinction exists between these two notions of community. Community itself becomes an emancipatory space within which the self can practise resistance by envisioning and creating alternative meanings to oppressive ones. She draws on the work of Hooks (1984) who similarly argues that marginality as victimhood can be reframed from within an emancipatory framework as a position of power.

#### **4.6. Summary of community identity as a concept**

Postmodern understandings of community imply that a plurality of identities is possible within community psychology. Thus multiple notions of community can co-exist as opposed to singular definitions. The uni-dimensional definitions have perhaps been historically appropriate in South Africa, but have outlived their usefulness in contemporary attempts at incorporating diversity into community psychology.

#### **4.7. Identity and community psychology**

The conceptual framing of community provides a useful space within which to locate a parallel discussion of identity and community psychology. Identity discussions in community

psychology have typically been framed within the context of human diversity. It is thus important to discuss human diversity very briefly within the context of community psychology as identity is situated as a core component in human diversity.

## **4.8. Human diversity**

### **4.8.1. Introduction**

The arguments about human diversity that Trickett, Watts and Birman (1994) apply to psychology in general are as relevant to community psychology and to contemporary psychology as they were 13 years ago when their book, *Human diversity*, was published. These authors highlight the importance of context in examining diversity. This means that historical, social and cultural factors all impact on conceptions of diversity. They thus situate three major historical patterns in conceptualizing diversity within psychology. These are deficit models, identity models and models where identity theory and diversity converge. These will be summarized, in turn.

#### **4.8.1.1. Deficit models of diversity**

With the norm established as white, male, Christian, heterosexual and middle class, diversity referred to anybody that represented difference from the assumed norm. Difference was also viewed as deficit on the basis of genetics, initially. In the 1960s, diversity was still viewed as deficit but from a perspective of paternalistic compassion. In this context a view predominated that dominant identities (for example, whiteness and maleness) were good and desirable while marginalised identities (for example, blackness and femaleness) were viewed as less legitimate and at times, undesirable. This meant that now the context and living conditions of people were “blamed” for deficits. The deficit model of diversity was criticized as environmentally deterministic and for its dependence on dominant values to define diversity. These critiques made way for identity models of diversity.

#### **4.8.1.2. Identity models of diversity**

Identity models of diversity emphasized positive aspects of marginalised groups as reflected in the Black Consciousness movement and the rise of feminism. Culture and cultural identity were often invoked as concepts aimed to restore group pride. An emphasis was placed on self-definition and the rejection of dominant values in shaping the theoretical content of diversity.

Identity models can be divided into four categories, namely “population-specific” psychologies, cross-cultural psychology, intergroup theory and socio-political psychology. Black psychology and the psychology of women are examples of “population-specific psychology”, while culturally specific populations, are defined as people who share views united by ethnicity or religion, for example. Intergroup theory is based on membership of designated groups *and* groups of choice. Finally, socio-political theory focuses on power, oppression, empowerment and consequent social action. These models contributed to acknowledging the importance of oppression in concepts of diversity. Yet these models were criticized for reinforcing notions of inferiority in notions of diversity.

#### **4.8.1.3. Convergence of identity theory with views of diversity**

In models which attempt to integrate identity and diversity approaches, diversity as emphasizing distinctive and *positive* aspects of identity is highlighted. The general approach emphasizes strengths and resilience and points to the value of plurality. This view of diversity also departs significantly from previous notions in that it includes *all* groups, and not only marginalized groups, in notions of diversity. In this context, the continuing development of feminist theorizing must be accredited for contributing significantly to this field. Yet many divisions exist within feminist theorizing as to the purpose and outcome of feminist struggles. It is beyond the scope of this review to detail some of these divisions. It is however important to note that the use of the term “difference” instead of diversity has increasingly been used in diversity discussions. Maynard (2001), acknowledges the importance of the contributions of postmodern feminist thought in deconstructing categories that appear given, such as ‘black’ and ‘woman’, for example, and its resultant positive reconstruction of negative connotations of these categories. Yet she also argues for caution in the use of “difference” to describe diversity. Her core critique of the use of the term “difference” is the postmodern conceptual preoccupation with the equal status of diversity in analysis of subjectivities. This, she argues, is done at the expense of analyzing, and transforming, the structural impacts of power imbalances and oppression. While Trickett, Watts and Birman (1994) do not detail these kind of critiques, they do acknowledge the role of oppression and the crucial importance of acknowledging how diversity is shaped in context. While much theorizing on diversity exists in psychology, few guidelines and “community worker” reflections on and dilemmas in working with diversity, exist. In this context community workers include psychologists. The dilemmas in diversity



work are clearly illustrated in the special edition of the *American Journal of Community Psychology* that deals with diversity. In this special issue, Harrell and Bond, (2006), the guest editors, highlight three overarching principles in the context of diversity work, namely community culture, community context and self-in-community, in developing diversity guidelines for community work. While it is impossible to exclude the first two principles as the three principles are intimately connected, it is primarily the last mentioned principle with which the current research is concerned. Self-in-community refers to “a keen self-awareness and consciousness of one’s identity, values, and perceptions in relation to the community” (Harrell & Bond, p. 367) and the approach questions the way in which power and privilege impact on community work.

This view counteracts a common view of diversity as similarity, in contemporary South Africa. In this view, there is an emphasis on commonalities across groups, and this emphasis on similarity may even lead to a denial of difference. This denial may obscure power differentials and privilege. The similarity strategy is often invoked (more commonly) by white, but also black South African students who express reticence to discuss difference (Rohleder et al., in press; Walker, 2005). This notion of diversity as secondary to similarity is also a feature of community psychology in South Africa, as my critique in Chapter two shows. Power, privilege and oppression are notions central to a reconstructed notion of diversity. It is therefore critical to examine notions of power, an approach not generally central to the work of psychologists (Rappaport, 2000; Smail, 2001). This approach might perhaps assist in the shift towards a less individualistic psychology (Smail) in an attempt to work in more collectively emancipatory ways in psychology.

#### **4.9. Power, privilege and oppression**

Power and oppression have become core concepts in examining pathways to social justice in community psychology. It is important to consider social justice arguments in the context of diversity. What unites various forms of diversity is the common experience of oppression (Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1994; Sonn & Green, 2006; Watts, 1999; Watts & Serrano- Garcia, 2003; Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003). While oppression is usually a concept depicting deficit, it is important to transform the deficit based notion of diversity itself, to one that reflects an emancipatory position. This necessitates an analysis of diversity as potential “spaces of

resistance” in community psychology. Central to these analyses are notions of power (Fisher & Sonn, 2007; Prilleltensky, 2003; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1994; Sonn & Green, 2006; Watts & Serrano-Garcia, 2003).

It is at this point perhaps important to provide an overview of Foucauldian post-structuralist views of power as they centrally inform how Prilleltensky (2003) describes power in community psychology. Foucault’s analysis of power is also particularly useful to apply to community psychology as a “psy”-discipline as it helps us to understand which discourses and counter-discourses about psychology and community psychology exist. Foucault’s (2004) notion of subjugated knowledges is also helpful in understanding how discourses establish dominance. These analyses may provide perspectives on possible ways forward towards social justice within education and training in community psychology.

#### **4.9.1 Post-structuralism and power**

Foucault’s (1977) notion of panopticism suggests a link between power and professional disciplines, such as psychology, which are positioned as experts in human behaviour. He argues that power is invested in these disciplines in order to define and control (regulate) normative behaviour. Thus they replace crude penal systems of control such as torture. Normative behaviour is maintained because the professional gaze is internalized and the subject continuously engages in self-surveillance. Thus subjects monitor their own behaviour and the power of the professional (disciplinary power) is used as a mechanism to shape and maintain desired or normative behaviour without citizens necessarily being aware of the constant surveillance. Prilleltensky (2003) points out that no force is involved in this exercising of power. “What began as a social norm...ends as a personal desire” (p. 5). This, Foucault refers to as the normalizing of subjects. Disciplinary power, Foucault furthermore argues, is capillary in nature. It forms a net regulating all human interaction and exists everywhere. It is not situated in persons, but dominant regimes of truth are maintained through everyday practices in institutions and relations. Professions like psychology support one particular truth or ‘regime of truth’ about reality and thus singular discourses are maintained by defining all other truths as deviant. Psychologists and the profession of psychology itself, are not immune to these regimes of truth as they, themselves are constituted through social relations. This means that when students and practitioners with various marginalized identities engage with the profession, they

themselves, must deny their experiences of marginality in order to “be successful” in engaging with dominant regimes of truth. Foucault refers to this process as interiorisation when individuals submit to dominant regimes and become “docile subjects”. This kind of analysis would thus suggest that a regime of truth about community psychology is that it is a black psychology for poor black people. This means that when we, as practitioners and academics, reproduce this view in various ways, as suggested in the literature review, we in fact, limit opportunities for students, ourselves and others, to resist dominant regimes of truth. When considering social justice it is important to consider how dominant regimes of truth might be challenged or resisted. Foucault suggests that in this web of power, subjects themselves have agency or power which can be exercised. He argues that one of the primary sites of resistance to dominant regimes of truth is subjugated knowledges.

#### **4.9.2. Subjugated knowledges**

The Foucauldian notion of subjugated knowledges refers to knowledge that is constructed outside of formal higher education and is often regarded by society as inferior to knowledge gained in higher education (Foucault, 2004). Subjugated knowledges and students’ (and professionals’) experiences often remain unacknowledged in the formal teaching and learning context of higher education. This powerfully renders some kinds of knowledge legitimate while others are rendered illegitimate. Legitimate knowledge is usually based on the knowledge of the socially powerful in society. The individual pursuit of psychotherapy in psychology falls into this category. The exclusion of all forms of marginalized knowledges, like community psychology, therefore leads to a partial view being created and entrenched which consequently results in the stereotyping of knowledge itself. This appears to have happened in community psychology when community psychology is stereotyped as a black and working class psychology.

#### **4.9.3. Power and community psychology**

Drawing on some of these concepts, Prilleltensky (2003) has developed a hierarchical ecological model of power in wellness, oppression and liberation which has been endorsed by Fox (2003) and further developed by Christens and Perkins (2006). He suggests that power (and oppression) operates at personal (micro), relational (meso) and collective levels (society). This implies that individuals can have power at any number of levels. They can also have variable

levels of power across different identities as a result of structural factors such as class, gender and race, for example. This explains how individual positions from oppressor to oppressed can change temporally and spatially. Power is furthermore largely dependent on privilege which we draw from the dominant identities in what we may call our “identity repertoires”. For example, black men may be less powerful in mainstream psychology than white men but may in fact be more powerful than black women in psychology. Yet, black women can have more power than white students when in a position of authority in the classroom but the inverse of this situation may occur when they leave the confines of the classroom. It is thus not true that black women are always less powerful in all situations, as power changes over the dimensions of space and time. Prilleltensky thus defines power as the “ability and opportunity to influence a course of events” (2003, p.4). This suggests that both agency (ability) and structural (opportunity) factors and the continuous interaction between the two are central in maintaining power. In the same way that power exists at personal, relational and collective levels, liberation also exists at these levels. Prilleltensky argues that liberation needs to take place at all three levels for social justice to occur. This means that it is not simply enough to open universities to include more representative numbers of diverse populations (meso-level change). The concept of voice or consciousness raising (micro-levels) is important as well as structural change such as policy changes (macro-level). Social justice thus refers to the “fair and equitable allocation of bargaining power, resources and burdens in society.” (Prilleltensky & Fox, 1997; 177). Yet, Prilleltensky’s (2003) and Christens and Perkins’ (2006) model have not remained free from critique. Some attention will be paid to some of these critiques.

#### **4.9.4. Critiques of ecological hierarchical models**

A special issue of the *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* was recently (June, 2007) dedicated to analysing power in community interventions, by assessing the value of the above model in practice. There were differing responses. While some articles were critical of the model (Lawthom, Sixsmith & Kagan, 2007) others avoided directly providing an assessment of the model, per se, and used other theoretical tools (deconstructionism) to discuss power in interventions (Arciadiacono et al., 2007; Barnett et al., 2007; Nafstad et al., 2007). Lawthom, et al. (2007) suggested that it was difficult to incorporate process in a seemingly static model. The mutually influential impact of power across levels was difficult to incorporate. Thus the value of the hierarchical ecological model in an analysis of power has been difficult to assess.

However, Prilleltensky does not deny the importance of process in his model, but his contribution represents an attempt to simplify complex discussions on power from disciplines outside psychology.

#### **4.9.5. Summary**

Over the last 10 years much of the diversity debate in community psychology has been repositioned. It has been argued that the core components of diversity are grounded in oppression, power and privilege and that the overarching goal of community psychology interventions should be social justice. In this conception of community psychology, postmodern pluralist notions of difference are challenged. Like those of standpoint theorists (Hartsock, 1997; Hill Collins, 2001), Prilleltensky's notions of social justice as an outcome of action in community psychology, inherently reject postmodern assumptions of the equality of all positions of diversity. The emphasis on a political agenda for social justice to occur in community psychology is therefore clear (Prilleltensky, 2003) and the roles of psychologists are redefined as activist roles (Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2003). This argument has been echoed by theorists such as Phelan (1996) who trace an evolutionary process or continuum from community to identity to social justice. Hence the concepts of power, oppression and privilege should be viewed as central to identity discussions in community psychology (Prilleltensky, 2003; Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1994; Sonn, Fisher & Evans, 2007; Watts, 2004; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Jalil, 1999; Watts & Serrano-Garcia, 2003; Watts et al., 2003).

Postmodernists have been criticized as engaging in deconstruction as an intellectual pursuit without any consequent social action. Yet, social justice approaches do not inherently reject deconstruction as an activity. In fact, power analyses are important in the context of reconstruction. This means that the theoretical deconstruction of power, oppression and privilege should be a precursor to a reconstructive, social justice agenda. Deconstruction is thus used as a stepping stone in the journey to social justice. The current research represents a deconstructive project to explore how students, psychologists and institutions of universities view community psychology. This is a necessary precursor to a social justice project in community psychology training and education. It is therefore beyond the scope of this thesis to expand on social justice and community psychology. Yet, it will be crucial to provide a sequel

to this thesis, based on how social justice approaches can be used to shape a different and transformative agenda in community psychology interventions.

Theory and method are not mutually exclusive. Theory informs method and vice versa but an almost artificial separation is necessary when describing the research process. The discussion will now shift to focus on the methodology employed in the study.

## CHAPTER 5

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 5.1. Introduction

The current chapter describes and discusses the methodology employed in the study. I first review the aims of the study and then discuss the methodology located within the social constructionist approach. As in the theoretical overview in the previous chapter, multiple theoretical strands of feminism, post-structuralism and systems approaches inform the study but are broadly united under the social constructionist approach. The study employs a mixed methodology as both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed.

#### 5.2. Aims and structure of the study

The overall study aims to explore how community psychology is perceived (and thus constructed) within the psychology profession in South Africa with a focus on the Western Cape Province. This question necessitates an analysis of some of the multiple levels involved in projecting perceptions about community psychology. The foci of analysis which were selected in reflecting images of community psychology include academic departments and student and practitioner perceptions. Thus micro- and meso-levels are directly targeted in the current research while the literature review suggests ways in which community psychology is viewed, implicitly or explicitly at micro, meso- and macro-levels. These levels are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. This suggests that processes that occur at micro-level are reinforced at meso- and macro-levels to create and sustain dominant ways of seeing. An investigation into the perceptions projected at micro and meso levels will be undertaken by proposing 4 specific research questions as follows:

1. How are teaching, learning and research in community psychology reflected in academic departments?
2. How do fourth year psychology students perceive community psychology?
3. How do practising psychologists perceive community psychology?
4. How do senior psychologists talk about their experiences of identity, psychology and community psychology?

Each research question constitutes a small research study in itself and for coherence and clarity; each research question will therefore be discussed in separate chapters. Chapter 6 will deal with research question 1, Chapter 7 with research question 2, Chapter 8 with research question 3 and Chapter 9 with research question 4. While each of the following four chapters can be viewed as independent studies, they will be drawn together in Chapter 10. In this chapter the findings of all the studies combined, will be integrated and discussed.

### **5.2.1. Context of studies**

The study was located in the Western Cape region of South Africa for practical reasons and for the following benefits. This region has the second largest concentration of practising psychologists (22%) in South Africa (HPCSA, 2005). It also has three universities with a total annual registration of approximately 6000 psychology students. As discussed in Chapter 1, the political dynamics which exist in this region further make it an interesting region in which to locate a study based on psychology students, practitioners and psychology teaching and learning.

## **5.3. Research design**

### **5.3.1. Mixed methodology design**

The study is exploratory and uses a mixed methodology design (Creswell, 2004; Griffin & Phoenix, 1994) or methodological eclecticism (Bhana & Khanjee, 2001). This method integrates qualitative and quantitative data, rather than just incorporating both forms of data in parallel within the same study. It therefore circumvents restrictions imposed by using only qualitative or quantitative methods. The most important methodological restriction that is circumvented is that mixed methods allow for a diversity of voices that is not always accessible via the exclusive use of quantitative and qualitative methodologies in isolation of each other. This method, however, is labour-intensive, as multiple stages of data collection and analysis are involved (Creswell, 2004).

Whereas quantitative data are usually not included in social constructionist enquiry, it is acceptable to do so provided one methodology is not privileged over another (Jane Flax, 2004, personal communication, Gergen, 1997; Griffin & Phoenix, 1994). Within community psychology specifically, Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005) have also supported the inclusion of mixed methodologies in both constructivist and critical research. The value of holism, central to



community psychology, is commensurate with mixed methodologies as a more holistic picture is created when both quantitative and qualitative lenses are applied to a study area. While mixed method studies are not commonly used in community psychology, some examples of methodological pluralism exist in community psychology (Stevens et al., 2003; Goodman, Wandersmen, Chinman, Imm & Morissey (1996), in general, and community psychology and identity as areas of focus (Zea, Reisen & Diaz, 2003).

### **5.3.2. Methods employed in current research**

The current study will be divided into four components, with the first three quantitative survey based components contributing contextual information regarding psychology students' and registered psychologists' perceptions and attitudes towards community psychology. Surveys in social constructionist research are often valuable in identifying the extent of a phenomenon (Reinharz, 1992); hence the inclusion of surveys in this study. The fourth, qualitative, component of the study involves a focus group study with psychologists registered for at least three years. The focus groups aim to reflect the lived professional experience, and the meaning of that experience, for senior psychologists. The lived professional experience includes experiences of community psychology. Creswell (2004) argues that the point of integration, where qualitative and quantitative methodologies are mixed, can occur at data analysis or reporting of results phase of the study. However, Creswell's explanatory model appears to be based on the concept of triangulation. Whereas Creswell focuses on the timing of triangulation, other authors focus on the site of triangulation. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Neumann, 2003). This necessitates further discussion of the concept of triangulation.

### **5.4. Triangulation**

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) outline four different types of triangulation with Neuman (2003) adding a fifth type. Data triangulation employs more than one form of data, investigator triangulation assumes more than one research investigator, theoretical triangulation employs multiple theoretical perspectives to analyse data and methodological triangulation uses multiple methods - usually both qualitative and quantitative in the same study. Neuman's addition of measurement triangulation suggests that the same research sample provides different measures of the same phenomenon. The current study employs data triangulation, theoretical

triangulation and methodological triangulation and integrates findings during the discussion phase of the study.

As discussed earlier, social constructionism frames the study theoretically. Social constructionism incorporates a rigorous methodology, has an affinity with other theoretical positions such as community psychology and is able to facilitate a social analysis that enables reflexivity (Gergen, 1999). It is therefore important to discuss reflexivity in relation to the current study.

### **5.5. Reflexivity**

Most standpoint methodologies, and particularly feminist methodologies, assume that research is not value-free or neutral (Bhavnani, 2001; Harding, 1997; Hartsock, 1997; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002; Stanley, 1990). These methodologies therefore adopt the position that the researcher's relationship with the subject material and research participants needs to be declared explicitly. Furthermore, the researcher's subject position and privileged power relationships in the research context also need to be declared (Phoenix, 2001; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). It is not that standpoint methodologies are prescriptive but reflexivity appears to have developed as a research value in contrast to positivist claims of value-free, neutral research (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1994). Since my own subject position is in some ways closely connected to that of the research sample, questions of researcher bias and subjectivity will be discussed.

#### **5.5.1. Subjectivity and researcher bias**

It is important to reflect on my own position in this research process as it discloses some of the formative and maintaining factors that have shaped the lenses with which I view my world and therefore the psychology profession, which constitutes a large part of my world. My lenses themselves have been shaped not only through experience, but also by reading and an integration of reading with experience.

#### **5.5.2. Shaping my lenses**

I was the youngest of four children born in 1966 to parents, who were both primary school teachers, in the small semi-rural fishing village of Hawston, about 120 km outside Cape Town. It was during my early childhood that I became intimately aware of diversity and community. I was born to first generation middle class parents who were staunch supporters of the New Unity

Movement's Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA). The New Unity Movement (NUM) (and the TLSA) was a political movement, popular largely among coloured professionals such as teachers and lawyers. It espoused the motto: "Let us live for our children", and the focus of liberation in this movement was societal transformation through education. In our home this meant that my siblings and I had to speak English at home, despite living in a coloured Afrikaans community and later attending a coloured Afrikaans primary school. For me, like for many coloured families at the time, being able to speak English well, promised the possibility of social mobility. Social mobility meant the opportunity to become a professional teacher, doctor, lawyer, social worker or nurse as opposed to labouring as domestic workers, fishermen, shop assistants and road construction workers. I also had to speak English well as my siblings and I attended a coloured high school in Cape Town (Harold Cressy High School), where many of the leadership of the NUM and TLSA were teaching. The image of the school was that it excelled academically as a result of committed teachers. It was a school of the urban coloured middle class and aspiring middle class. It also attracted less complimentary stereotypes especially from learners in poorer areas. All learners from Harold Cressy were commonly viewed as snobs. In this apparently homogenous setting there were powerful inclusionary and exclusionary criteria in which I felt oppressed and privileged, powerless and powerful. I experienced oppression on a number of dimensions. I came from a rural background, my hair was coarser than many of the children who attended the school (see Erasmus (2000), who discusses the politics of hair), Muslim children had a code and unfamiliar vernacular in which they described particularly religious customs, my English had a prominent Afrikaans rural accent and I spoke what was perceived to be reasonably "suiwer" or pure Afrikaans. I was also privileged and powerful because I was in the Latin class for "clever" children, my parents knew the leadership of the TLSA and I excelled academically and at sport.

The fact that my parents followed the teachings of the NUM and TLSA engaged them in teaching more broadly than focusing on just the school curriculum. When I was a child, Hawston was (and remains) a predominantly poor community. The adult population, then, seldom had high school education. I remember my father often being engaged in community work during and after school hours whether it was in the form of church activities or assisting people with administrative tasks such as filling in forms "for social welfare grants". I became aware through this process that it was not a given that everybody had jobs and food. As

children, my siblings and I were well fed and clothed. We even wore shoes to school in a context where most children did not wear shoes to school. My brother and I, who are close in age, envied other children who, we felt, had the opportunity to go to school barefoot. To my dismay, my brother was sometimes allowed to go to school barefooted. I later realized that while my brother had a choice about this, many other children did not. Of course, as a girl positioned as middle class, my choice with regards to this practice, were also limited.

In the community context, my father in his position as a community leader spent much time teaching about social confidence and assertiveness, and the importance of challenging white superiority. This was particularly important in the nearby Hermanus, the white seaside village with all its amenities of privilege, like white public libraries, white public swimming pools, safe beaches, and white public primary and high schools of which I could only dream. Working class people from Hawston went to Hermanus only to labour in the kitchens of white people, to raise their children and “on business”. Middle class people from Hawston, like my parents, went to Hermanus “on business”. It is only here that, once a week, I saw white people from Hermanus, black African people from Zwelihle (the African residential area between Hawston and Hermanus) and coloured people from Hawston in the same physical space. In this space, my father often appeared gently defiant. I remember him, for example, always refusing to use the back door when we were taken to the doctor. Perhaps we were just allowed to use the front door because we were wearing nice clothes (for coloured people) and my father was a teacher. On reflection, my having grown up in Hawston, embedded in me as an adult, the awareness of the relational nature of privilege and oppression. I was both privileged and oppressed in terms of class, race and gender in the physical spaces of my childhood.

### **5.5.3. Encountering psychology**

At the age of 18, I moved to Durban, a major city on the South African East Coast, approximately 1200km from Cape Town, to attend the University of Natal. It was here for the first time that I was expected to engage with white people as peers. While I had had one or two white teachers at high school, now all my teachers and most of my classmates were white. It felt as if there were a handful of coloured and Black students on campus with perhaps three to four hands full of Indian students. In contrast, lecture halls were filled with mostly white students. The situation was extremely unfamiliar and yet there was something that was familiar.

When I walked onto campus on my first orientation day, I distinctly remember the banner on the students' union displaying the messages, "Who killed Neil Aggett? Neil Aggett was a white activist who was murdered by security police during the 1980s while in detention. I felt that I could relate to that kind of questioning. When I was in third year, I became involved in OASSSA (Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa). It was this step that affirmed my desire to become a psychologist. While I was previously attracted to psychology, I could never see how I was going to make a contribution to my country by being a psychologist. It was also a career choice that was not initially supported by my family as psychology was a totally foreign concept in both my family and broader community. In my context, psychology was in fact viewed as undesirable and as potentially adding to the burdens of an already burdened social experience. When I returned to Cape Town after completing an Honours degree in psychology, I had to fulfill bursary obligations, trained as a teacher and taught for two years. During this time I continued my work in OASSSA. I stopped this work when I started the demanding training as a professional psychologist. The training felt somewhat removed from what it was that drew me to psychology. On completion of training I was offered a Mellon fellowship to teach community psychology at the University of Cape Town. I did this for 18 months but felt frustrated about not being able to apply my skills and vision for psychology "in service of the community".

#### **5.4.4. Encountering community as a psychologist**

For the next 7 years, I was involved in the area of community psychology, and was largely employed in the NGO sector in the Western Cape. This meant that before I joined the University of Stellenbosch in 2001 on a part-time basis, I had then been involved in community psychology in various roles, as a participant observer, for approximately 15 years, primarily in the Western Cape region of South Africa. I had been a psychology student, I had worked in service delivery as a clinically trained psychologist in both urban and peri-urban communities and had been involved in teaching psychology as a part-time academic at all three universities in the Western Cape. A number of contradictions about psychology and communities and how these are perceived, have struck me over this time and have also been reflected in the experiences of many colleagues. I have often experienced, through others' reaction to me, the existence of multiple binary opposites, reflected in the joining of community and psychology. Significant stereotypes appeared to exist that seemed to contribute to marginalise aspects of

community psychological practice and disabed post graduate psychology students as soon as they entered “the community”. The complexities of professional identity perplexed both me and the psychology students that I supervised in communities. I often felt that I could not fulfill more than one role at a time as a psychologist. I had to be either a community psychologist or a clinical psychologist, do individual work or community work. Was I paranoid or were there invisible and unspoken codes about how to be a psychologist? It seemed that there were prevalent assumptions of antithetical and mutually exclusive categories such as community or clinical psychology, service delivery or research, private practice or salaried employment, social work or psychology. I also realized that it seemed quite important whether the psychologist was trained at a historically white or black university. It appeared that beneath all these binary opposites ran themes of race, gender and class that were intermingled with professional identity in complex ways. I noticed that the most desirable way in which to practice psychology in South Africa was to be a clinical psychologist, in private practice, having trained at a historically white university, preferably within a psychodynamic framework. All other statuses appeared to be relegated to a somewhat inferior position. Assumptions were often made that black psychologists, like myself, trained at black universities. This led to the automatic assumption that the standard of their work was therefore deficient and characterized by incompetence. I also discovered that within the broad framework of community psychology, black women psychologists, like myself were often relegated to positions of service delivery in marginalized communities whereas white women, black men and white men who work in the area of community psychology tended to be involved in community psychology research, often in the context of full-time academia. So where did all this leave me in terms of stereotypes and privilege and oppression that is relational? I certainly was boxed in as a community psychologist and in that way I fulfilled the stereotype of the black woman psychologist engaged in service delivery working in “her community”. This meant that I seldom received referrals for individual clinical work from predominantly white colleagues, so that the referrals I did receive originated largely from medical doctors and non-psychological professionals. I was, however paid well in NGOs as a programme co-ordinator, a position that psychologists often occupy on entering the NGO sector. I was perceived to be a good psychologist by both black and white colleagues as I had trained at Natal University and UCT, both historically white universities. I also realised that being registered as a clinical psychologist held more professional power in the

hierarchy of registrations in South Africa. I was permitted to work more freely across various contexts.

What has my advantage and disadvantage been since entering academia first on a part-time basis since 2001 and then on a fulltime basis since 2005? I think that in trying to overcome the stereotype of the black woman who can deliver service (but not really do research and perhaps teach), I have had to work hard at dispelling that myth. Not only have I had to work hard but also use my positions of power to attempt a shift in institutional practices which reinforced these immensely frustrating myths about community psychology and professional practice in general. I entered academia as I had wide experience which I felt could enrich my teaching and research. I also hoped that students could benefit from my diverse skills and that I could discover what we did as teachers that left many stereotypes about psychology unchallenged. In short, it felt like I wanted to effect change from within the belly of the beast. Has this been an easy road? By no means, but I have had supportive colleagues and have again become aware of the relational nature of power and oppression. While I bear the burden of being a black woman psychologist in a historically white university, I also hold power in terms of this identity. In mainstream psychology, my experience of marginality, of being both an insider and outsider, has enabled me to think critically and often present perspectives on issues not immediately apparent to others in my academic context. It is this experience that resonates for me in some of hooks' work (1984; 1996).

#### **5.5.5. Deciding on an encounter with community, identity and research**

Before I joined the University of Stellenbosch, I focused on violence prevention interventions with children. It might have been easier to construct a neat positivist study on children and violence but I was personally and professionally intrigued by issues of identity and community and how they impacted on the lives of professional psychologists. In talking to psychologists, it was always apparent how difficult it seems to talk sincerely about issues of identity as a psychologist in South Africa. As a teacher of community psychology at Stellenbosch university, I was also struck by how students would be hesitant to provide an opinion on community and community psychology and would be inclined to frantically page through books and papers when I asked for opinions. Students also commonly talk about the importance of community experience in “getting into Masters”, meaning that community psychology is

perceived as the ticket to being selected for training as a clinical psychologist. About two years ago, I gave students an assignment where they had to reflect on processes in a community that they belong to. It worried me that many white students asked me about having access to black communities, as they did “not have a community” or “access to an interesting community”. It is precisely these kinds of perceptions that enforce silences about identity and community that convinced me that this is an area worthy of research and publication. The lenses that I wear have enabled me to ask different questions in this study and this will hopefully provide different answers. The psychological community in South Africa and particularly Cape Town is small. It is therefore important to reflect on the relationship between me and research participants and the potential impact that my (known) identities and power relationships might have had on the research.

#### **5.5.6. The research process and my identities**

Generally community psychology research engages a researcher with more social power in a relationship with participants who generally have less social power. This dynamic was different in this research process. At times I held more power in relation to aspects of participants’ identities but I also held less power in relation to some of their identities. For example, many of the students who participated in the study held more powerful societal positions than me in terms of their whiteness, maleness and class positions but, as a lecturer and psychologist, I held a more powerful professional position than they did. Thus quite complex power dynamics existed between me and my study participants. While I negotiated access for all the surveys, a coloured Masters student of mine administered the survey questionnaires to students at the three universities involved. The histories of the three universities (as described earlier) are very different and students from all universities hold stereotypes about the other. To administer the questionnaire my student had to transcend these institutional boundaries, in addition to her other marginalized identities. It is also important to remember that community psychology, in itself, constitutes a marginalized professional position which might have impacted on student response rate.

The marginality of community psychology is likely to be reflected in the response rate from practitioners as well. Yet there may have been other relationships of either personal or institutional power that might have favoured a positive response to the survey, especially from



practitioners. Most practitioners in the pilot survey graduated from the University of Stellenbosch. This might have elicited a positive response from participants as I am an academic attached to Stellenbosch University. At the time of the survey, it was 13 years since I had graduated from the University of Cape Town as a psychologist. I am fairly well known professionally and this might have had an impact on response rate. Many of the questionnaires contained notes to wish me well with my research on two levels. Both the content of the questionnaires and the recognition of my collecting data for doctoral research provoked some participants to include short letters revealing their identity. I knew some of the participants but others I had not met. The questionnaires were meant to be anonymous but it was beyond my control that some participants felt comfortable to reveal their names on the questionnaires. In recruiting psychologists for the focus groups, the lack of anonymity to me, as moderator, might have impacted on the initial hesitation when framing the focus group discussion as dealing with community psychology issues. I was more successful in recruiting participants when I framed the group as a reflection on professional identity as a psychologist. On the other hand, my position as group moderator might also have had a positive impact on the group dynamics. While I did not know all the participants in the focus groups, I knew most of them on a professional basis. This most likely facilitated the complex data obtained about difficult issues concerning professional identity.

### **5.6. Validity and reliability**

My own subjectivities and experience in relation to community, community psychology and identity, coupled with reading in this area, have clearly shaped the current research project. The question that might therefore be asked about the research is likely to revolve around reliability and validity of the study. Reliability and validity, are themselves thorny issues in social constructionist work. Some feminist theorists reject the notion of validity and reliability, arguing that these concepts assume a certain set of knowledges to be more scientifically correct than others. They argue that these notions are therefore problematic and little attention should be paid to them. All knowledge is socially constructed, and historical, epistemological and ontological positions will determine the importance of measures such as validity and reliability in research (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). The current research does not adopt a position that is dismissive of the concepts of reliability and validity. It is important though, to consider more complex understandings of validity and reliability. A more complex understanding of

these concerns the nature of the interpretation process (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002) and the validity of evaluating reliability and validity equivalently in the use of qualitative and quantitative methods (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994). These factors will be discussed, in turn.

### **5.6.1. Interpretation processes and power in research**

The way in which interpretation and thus the connections between various forms of data take place constitutes an act of power. This suggests that researchers, irrespective of their theoretical orientation and varying emphases on reliability and validity, exercise a power relationship reflecting aspects of their own identity. Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002) in fact, suggest that:

The researcher cannot set aside her own language, life and understandings when she produces her interpretations. What is feminist in the process of interpretation is the theoretical framework, and the political and ethical concern with deconstructing power relations, and making the researcher accountable for the knowledge that is produced. (p. 116)

Prilleltensky (2003) reinforces the complexity inherent in notions of validity and reliability by suggesting that in addition to traditional notions of validity and reliability, the concept of psychopolitical validity also needs consideration. Psychopolitical validity concerns both the ethical, moral and interdisciplinary dimensions of research and the ability of research to contribute to social transformation and liberation. Psychopolitical validity incorporates epistemic and transformational validity. Epistemic validity refers to the idea that knowledge of oppression and power should be incorporated into research and transformational validity refers to the ability of research to contribute to liberation at personal, interpersonal and structural domains. Prilleltensky's notion of psychopolitical validity is thus echoed in Ramazanoglu and Holland's (2002) understanding of power and interpretation in the research process. While these theorists do not deny the importance of reliability and validity, they do argue that it is a much more complex process than is usually suggested. According to Foucault (1977) everyone has power, and this power is also invoked in research. The way in which power is used, is therefore important (Prilleltensky, 2003) and depends on the assumptions that are held during the research process. Therefore assumptions about qualitative and quantitative research itself,

and its implications for reliability and validity need to be questioned when engaging in the research process.

### **5.6.2. Equivalent evaluations of validity and reliability in qualitative and quantitative research?**

Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall (1994) argue that different assumptions and goals are inherent in qualitative and quantitative research and therefore validity and reliability should be measured in different ways. Often the standards for reliability and validity, invoked for quantitative research are applied to qualitative research as well.

One of the important standards for reliability in quantitative research is replicability. This means that two researchers should obtain the same results if a similar procedure were followed at different times. Yet within qualitative research the aim is to achieve and understand meaning in the ecological context, an aspect which quantitative research often overlooks. Irrespective of the epistemological framework, experiences can never be reflected holistically. Experiences of the researcher and research participants are always based on recollection and are therefore always partially represented (Mishler, 1990; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002).

Mishler, (1990), like Ramazanoglu and Holland (2002) argues that the concept of processes of validation is more appropriate in qualitative research than the concept of validity. Rather than the research reflecting a truth or objective reality, it is important to assess qualitative research on the basis of credibility of the study. This means that the research process must be well documented, there must be theoretical consistency between data and findings, findings should relate to previous work, there should be evidence of reflexivity and triangulation should be discussed.

### **5.6.3. Reliability and validity in the current study**

While the quantitative aspects of this study may produce similar results between different researchers, there may be some variability between researchers in terms of the interpretation of qualitative data. Thus the current study uses data, theoretical and methodological triangulation to overcome this tension. The research firstly, uses different forms of data, such as survey data (Chapters 6, 7 and 8), publication analyses (Chapter 6) and focus group data (Chapter 9). This means that both quantitative data (Chapters 6-8) and qualitative data (Chapters 6 and 8) are employed in the study which secondly, suggests methodological triangulation. The current

research finally incorporates theoretical triangulation as it relies on multiple theoretical strands to situate participants' experience theoretically. It is this component that separates opinion from research the social constructionist tradition.

In terms of psychopolitical validity, the study incorporates epistemic validity. It has the potential to highlight how power and identities in professional relationships in psychology impact on psychologists in South Africa. While it does not meet the criteria for transformational validity, it has the potential to do so, if interventions based on this research are implemented.

The research can therefore be viewed as having both validity and reliability in the traditional sense and in some senses of the Prilleltensian notion of psychopolitical validity.

### **5.7. Analysis**

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed in this study. Thus both qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted. Quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and cross-tabulations were performed initially, followed by chi-square analyses to establish whether there were significant differences between groups (Chapters 7 and 8). The approach that can broadly be described as interpretive data analysis (Holstein & Gubrium, 2005; Kelly, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006) was used to analyse the quantitative data in the study (Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9). The qualitative data that were used in this study was obtained from different sources of text. These included qualitative written responses from participants (Chapters 6, 7, and 8) and transcriptions of focus group discussions. Within this framework, both themes were elicited and discourse analyses were performed. The steps that were taken in approaching data analysis were those recommended by Terre Blanche et al. (2006). These steps were familiarization with and immersion in the data, inducing themes from data, coding and elaboration of data, followed by interpretation and checking. This process was followed by a discourse analysis. In this process, an examination of recurrent metaphors, binary oppositions and recurrent terms were identified. A very brief discussion of discourse analysis is implied at this point. In discourse analysis not only are themes identified, but strategies are uncovered that assist the speakers in maintaining or resisting their discursive positioning. Discourse analysis is often associated with social constructionism but is not the only methodology employed in social constructionist analysis

(Nightingale & Cromby, 1999). As such, all the critiques and strengths of social constructionism as an approach (discussed in Chapter 4) also apply to discursive approaches to textual analysis. Yet, studies in identity have favoured this approach as it provides access to ways in which the “other” is constructed in everyday talk about difference (Buttny, 2003). The purpose of discourse analysis for this study was to reflect how the text was a product of specific discourses. This approach is particularly suitable in analyses of talk about community psychology as the literature suggests that it is consistently constructed as the “other”.

### **5.8. Summary**

This chapter has discussed the methodological issues pertinent to the current research. While both qualitative and quantitative research is employed in this study, it was important to situate myself as researcher in the study, particularly in respect of the qualitative components of the study. Hence validity and reliability, as well as triangulation were discussed in some detail. I now, however, turn to Chapter 6, to focus on how teaching and learning are constructed at universities in the Western Cape region of South Africa.

## CHAPTER 6

### IMAGES OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY IN UNIVERSITIES

#### 6.1. Introduction

Organisational analyses have been used in community psychology to examine the organization as a context of diversity (Bond, 1999). The current study focuses on the organization of the university, the context (at meso-level) in which community psychology training occurs. The study aims to establish how teaching, and learning and research in community psychology are reflected in academic departments. As suggested in Chapter 3, it is important to reflect on the image of community psychology, as created in university settings. The research process, findings and discussion of this study will be dealt with in this section.

#### 6.2. Aims of research survey

The research aims to establish:

- 1) the occurrence and nature of community psychology teaching at universities in the Western Cape
- 2) the occurrence and nature of demographic patterns that exist for staff who teach and publish in community psychology
- 3) how community psychology teachers talk about community psychology

The variables that are implied in the above questions will be defined below:

Community psychology teaching will be defined in terms of occurrence and nature of teaching. Occurrence will be defined as whether teaching takes place or not. The nature of teaching will be defined as whether community psychology modules are offered as compulsory or optional courses.

The occurrence of demographic patterns in teaching will focus mainly on race, gender and academic rank as variables of demographic difference. This will be measured in terms of who teaches community psychology and who publishes in community psychology. Publishing, as an academic activity, will be viewed as the number of times that the name of an academic at a psychology department in the Western Cape appears on a journal article in the position as first

author. Race will be viewed in terms of the categories white, coloured, Indian and Black African whereas gender will be defined as male or female.

The research questions are therefore operationalised as follows in terms of each one of the above aims. Thus the research questions about the occurrence and nature of community psychology teaching at universities in the Western Cape can be operationalised as follows:

- a) Does community psychology teaching occur at the universities in the Western Cape?
- b) During which years of study are community psychology modules taught?
- c) Are community psychology courses taught as optional or compulsory courses?

Each of the above research questions, in turn, can be divided into specific questions. These will be detailed below. The research questions about the occurrence and nature of demographic patterns that exist for community psychology teaching, can be operationalised as follows:

- d) Do universities offer modules on community psychology at undergraduate level?
- e) Do universities offer modules on community psychology at postgraduate level?
- f) Do racialised patterns exist in terms of who community psychology teachers are at the three universities?
- g) What are the racialised patterns that exist in terms of who community psychology teachers are?
- h) Do gendered patterns exist in terms of who community psychology teachers are at the three universities?
- i) What are the gendered patterns that exist in terms of who community psychology teachers are?
- j) Do patterns of academic rank exist in terms of who community psychology teachers are?
- k) What are the patterns of academic rank that exist in terms of who community psychology teachers are?

The research questions about the occurrence and nature of demographic patterns that exist for staff who publish in community psychology, can be operationalised as follows:

- l) Do racialised patterns exist in terms of who community psychology publishers at the three universities are?
- m) What are the racialised patterns that exist in terms of who community psychology publishers at the three universities are?
- n) Do gendered patterns exist in terms of who community psychology publishers are at the three universities?
- o) What are the gendered patterns that exist in terms of who community psychology publishers are at the three universities?
- p) Do patterns of academic rank exist in terms of who community psychology publishers at the three universities are?
- q) What are the patterns of academic rank that exist in terms of who community psychology publishers at the three universities are?

The qualitative research question is framed as follows:

How do teachers of community psychology talk about community psychology in their departments?

### **6.3. Methodology**

#### **6.3.1. Design**

A cross-sectional survey design was employed in the study, suggesting that the survey questionnaire was administered to the sample once only (Graziano & Raulin, 2004). The primary function of a survey is to collect information which can produce descriptive information. There are many advantages to the use of a survey. It can describe a population that is too large to observe directly (Tashakkori & Teddie, 1998) and it can measure attitudes in a large population (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In this study a survey was not employed to measure large amounts of information, as the quantitative descriptive data, such as number of staff and number of publications, are relatively small. Data were examined to establish trends that could allow me to comment on markers of identity such as race, gender and academic rank.



These variables were selected as they have been identified as important demographic variables in relation to community psychology teaching in universities (Gibson et al., 2001; Vogelman et al., 1992). There are, nevertheless, some disadvantages attached to surveys. They rarely deal with the context of social life and are generally unable to provide a snapshot of research participants' worldviews (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Thus, surveys are generally not able to provide access to participants' subjective experiences. This shortcoming has been addressed in the current study by complementing survey methods with interviews of key staff members in community psychology in the respective departments.

### **6.3.2. Sample**

The sampling frame consisted of the 3 psychology departments in the Western Cape. Two of the departments are located within historically white universities, while the other is located at a historically Black university. All psychology departments in the sampling frame were surveyed. Three staff members, one from each of the respective universities, who are involved in community psychology teaching, were interviewed. The staff members interviewed consisted of two senior Black male academics and one junior white woman. All the interviewees had been employed at the respective universities for at least 6 years. For the purposes of this study, senior academic refers to seniority in rank. All ranks above and including senior lectureships were viewed as determining academic seniority whereas all ranks below and including lectureships determined junior status as an academic.

Data were extracted from interviews with academics as well as from library search engines and journal searches, in the case of publications analyses. I had initially planned to obtain publications records from the respective psychology departments. These were however not up to date for all universities. The decision was therefore taken to search major library databases and specific publications such as the *South African Journal of Psychology*, for publications of academic staff in the three psychology departments. The Procedure section will describe the process involved in both interviews and library searches.

### **6.3.3. Procedure**

A semi-structured interview was designed (see Appendix 1). Interviews were conducted with staff members who were involved in community psychology teaching and who were recommended by the respective heads of department.

For the publications analyses, community psychology publications from widely used databases were extracted for the analysis. The Sabinet, Psycinfo, SAe publications, Ebcost, ScienceDirect and Web of Science databases were consulted. These were supplemented by a search for articles in the *South African Journal of Psychology* (SAJP) in some small attempt to overcome the methodological difficulties in publications analyses, as highlighted in chapter 3. The keywords that were used to extract articles were ‘community psychology’, ‘community’ and ‘South Africa’. Journal articles common to any two or all of the databases and the SAJP were counted only once. Articles which contain the names of academics currently employed in the three psychology departments in the Western Cape were selected for analysis. There were a number of decisions that informed choice of academic staff for inclusion in this research sample. It was important that the staff included, were those academics, who have a physical presence and teach in psychology departments in the Western Cape. These are the people who represent community psychology to students. They therefore come to represent important attributes about community psychology. Students do not generally see academics who work in institutes. Psychologists who are employed in administrative posts in higher education and institutes, along with research collaborators not teaching in local psychology departments were excluded from the analyses. Educational psychologists who are employed in the Western Cape were also excluded. While this may seem inappropriate, it is methodologically consistent to include research, clinical and counselling psychologists in this component of the study as the three psychology departments in the Western Cape offer training that leads to clinical, research and counseling pathways. Educational psychologists furthermore, are located in faculties of education. Including educational psychologists would have meant surveying educational psychology departments too. The current research project is already large and the inclusion of educational psychologists would have extended the scope of the study considerably. Including educational psychologists as well, was therefore beyond the scope of this study, but may well be considered in future research.

The database approach combined with a journal based search approach to publications analyses was thus followed in this study. The period 1997-2007 was considered in the analysis. As suggested in the literature review, this period coincides with the perceived split of community psychology, in its original form, from critical social psychologies. As mentioned, the publication of the Levett et al. text on discourse analysis in 1997, marked an historical shift

from community psychology to considering critical social psychological forms of liberatory psychology in South Africa.

#### **6.3.4. Analysis**

The interviews were analysed by performing frequency analyses of demographic data of academic staff teaching psychology and community psychology at the three universities. This was done manually as the numbers were small and did not need to be analysed by means of statistical packages. The open-ended questions in the interview were transcribed verbatim and subjected to discourse analysis (Burr, 1995). The transcribed interviews represented the text that was analysed for discourses that were reproduced in conversation. In discourse analysis not only are themes identified, but strategies are uncovered that assist the speakers in maintaining or resisting their discursive positioning. Discourse analysis is often associated with social constructionism but is not the only methodology employed in social constructionist analysis (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999). As such, all the critiques and strengths of social constructionism as an approach (discussed in Chapter 4) also apply to discursive approaches to textual analysis. Yet, studies in identity have favoured this approach as it provides access to ways in which the “other” is constructed in everyday talk about difference (Buttny, 2003). This approach is therefore particularly suitable in analyses of talk about community psychology as the literature suggests that it is consistently constructed as the “other”.

During the analysis of publications, a perusal of abstracts examined first, second and third authors in journals. Initially abstracts including all South African authors were reviewed. One hundred and thirty one articles in South Africa met the criteria for inclusion. This set of articles was then analysed to identify authors attached to psychology departments in the Western Cape. Nineteen articles were identified for analysis in this process.

#### **6.4. Results (quantitative)**

Each one of the four operationalised questions in research question 1 will be discussed in turn. The format for reporting of results will therefore mirror the format of the questionnaire in Appendix 2.

#### 6.4.1. At which levels of study is community psychology taught?

Table 1

*University 1: Description of Occurrence and Nature of Community Psychology Teaching*

Levels	Optional		Compulsory	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3			X	
Honours	X			
Masters			X	

At University 1, minimal community psychology modules were offered at undergraduate level. During year 1 and 2, no community psychology modules were offered. During year three, community psychology was offered as a compulsory module. At postgraduate level, university 1 offered an optional community psychology course at Honours level and a compulsory community psychology module at Masters level.

Table 2

*University 2: Description of Occurrence and Nature of Community Psychology Teaching*

Levels	Optional		Compulsory	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3			X	
Honours				
Masters			X	

At University 2, minimal community psychology modules were offered at undergraduate level. During year 1 and 2, no community psychology modules were offered. During year three, a compulsory community psychology was offered. At postgraduate level, university 2 offered no

community psychology modules. At Masters level a compulsory community psychology course was offered.

Table 3

*University 3: Description of Occurrence and Nature of Community Psychology Teaching*

Levels	Optional		Compulsory	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Year 1			X	
Year 2			X	
Year 3	X			
Honours	X			
Masters			X	

At University 3, community psychology modules were offered at undergraduate levels. In both year 1 and 2, community psychology modules were offered as compulsory courses. In year 3, it was offered as an optional course.. At postgraduate level, university 3 offered a community psychology module as an optional course at Honours level. It was also offered as a compulsory course at Masters level.

### **6.5. Summary of results for the three universities**

At undergraduate level, 2 of the three universities did not offer community psychology. At university 1 and 2, no community psychology modules were offered in year 1 and 2. At university 3, community psychology courses were offered in year 1 and 2. When community psychology courses were offered at university 3, they were compulsory during year 1 and 2, and optional at level 3.

During the Honours year, 2 of the three universities offered a module in community psychology. At postgraduate levels, university 1 and 3 offered optional modules in community psychology courses, whereas university 2 did not offer any community psychology modules.

At Masters level, all universities offered compulsory community psychology modules, in the context of clinical and counselling psychology professional training programmes.

## **6.6. Discussion of results for the three universities**

The results have both empirical and methodological implications. These will be discussed, in turn. The trends elicited in the results suggest that community psychology teaching occurs sparsely at undergraduate level when defined in terms of occurrence and nature of teaching. At postgraduate levels, community psychology teaching also occurs sparsely, except in professional Masters training programmes. Here teaching consistently occurs across all universities. This study suggests that community psychology teaching is marginalised in universities in the Western Cape, when teaching is defined as occurrence and nature of teaching. The teaching of psychology also has implications at a methodological level. While research on teaching community psychology does exist in South Africa (Gibson et al., 2001; Lesch, 1998; Ngonyama ka Sigogo et. al, 2004; Pillay, 2003; 2007; Visser & Cleaver, 1999) and internationally (Alcade & Walsh-Bowers, 1996; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 1994) no previous local research has examined community psychology teaching systematically in quantitative studies. The important consideration is that a number of variables are implicit when considering “community psychology teaching”. This study has focused on “occurrence” and “nature” of teaching as this may provide some idea about trends in community psychology teaching. However, if larger empirical studies are to be undertaken, additional variables that could be considered are the content of teaching (Carmony et al, 2000; White & Potgieter, 1996), the process of teaching (Carolissen Swartz, Leibowitz, Bozalek & Rohleder, under review; Visser & Cleaver, 1999), and the academic institution where training occurred. In this study, it appeared that community psychology teaching occurred more consistently, in terms of the above variables, at the historically Black institution. This may (incorrectly) be interpreted as supporting the literature (Ngonyama ka Sigogo & Modipa, 2004) that suggests that community psychology is reserved for Black people. The importance of isolating research variables is illustrated by this very example. It is important that we empirically separate the variable of race and academic institution, as counfounding results and interpretations may be made if this empirical distinction is not made.

While this study is based on a small sample, it importantly provides some methodological guidelines for empirical research that may validate or refute assumptions that community psychology is associated with demographic variables such as race and gender. While the

literature (Gibson et al., 2001; Vogelmann et al., 1992)) does suggest that race, gender and academic rank are linked to community psychology, this has not been validated quantitatively. It is thus important that other demographic variables also be included in these kinds of analyses. However, it is important for the current study to examine the assumptions on which the Gibson et al. (2001) study are based. This will assist in exploring if patterns of demographic variables such as race, gender and academic rank can be linked to community psychology teachers.

## 6.7. Presentation and discussion of quantitative results

### Who teaches psychology at the three universities (demographic data)?

Table 4

*Demographic Representation of Academic Staff According to Race, Gender and Academic Rank, who Teach Psychology in the Western Cape (n=43)*

Academic rank	Race	Gender				Total	
		Male		Female		n	f
Senior		n	f	n	f	n	f
	White	10	23%	4	9%	14	33%
	Indian	5	12%	1	2%	6	14%
	Coloured	1	2%	1	2%	2	4%
	African	2	5%	2	5%	4	10%
Black total		8	19%	4	19%	12	28%
White total		10	23%	4	9%	14	33%
Senior total		18	42%	8	19%	26	60%
<hr/>							
Junior							
	White	6	14%	3	7%	9	21%
	Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Coloured	2	5%	5	12%	7	16%
	African	0	0	1	2%	1	2%
Black total		2	5%	6	14%	8	19%
White total		6	14%	3	7%	9	21%
Junior total		8	19%	9	21%	17	40%
Total		26	60%	17	40%	43	100%

Table 4 above details the demographic profile of academic staff (in terms of academic rank, race and gender), who teach psychology in the Western Cape. In August 2007, 60% of psychology staff was male and 40% were female. The staff consisted of 60% senior staff and 40% junior staff. Forty seven percent of staff was Black while 53% was white. Forty two percent of the senior staff was male and 19% were women, whereas 19% of the junior staff was men and 21% were women.

Twenty eight percent of senior staff was Black and 33% were white, whereas 19% of the junior staff was Black and 21% was white. Black senior staff was constituted of the following classifications: Indian (14%), coloured (4%) and African (4%). Black junior staff was constituted of the following classifications: Indian (0%), coloured (16%) and African (2%).

Twenty three percent of the staff was senior white men, while 19% of the staff was senior Black men (Indian, 12%, Coloured, 2%, African, 5%). There were equal numbers of Black and white senior women (9%). Senior Black women staff could be divided into the following categories: Indian (2%), Coloured (2%), African (5%). Fourteen percent of the staff was junior white men, while 5% of the staff was junior Black (coloured) men. Seven percent of the staff was junior white women, while 14% of the staff was junior Black women, of which 12% were coloured women and 2% African women.



## Who teaches Community Psychology at the three universities?

Table 5

*Demographic Representation of Academic Staff According to Race, Gender and Academic Rank, who Teach Community Psychology in the Western Cape (n=8)*

Academic rank	Race	Gender			
		Male		Female	
		n	f	n	f
Senior	White	1	13%	0	0
	Indian	3	38%	0	0
	Black total	3	38%	0	0
	White total	1	13%	0	0
	Senior total	4	50%	0	0
<hr/>					
Junior					
	White	0	0	1	13%
	Coloured	0	0	3	8%
Black total		0	0	3	38%
White total		0	0	1	13%
Junior total		0	0	4	50%
Total		4	50%	4	50%

Table 5 above suggests that eight academics in the psychology departments teach community psychology, of whom three are senior men, classified Indian, and three are junior women, classified coloured. In addition to this profile of community psychology, one senior white male and one junior white female also teach community psychology. It furthermore suggests a pattern that senior Indian men and junior coloured women are involved in teaching community psychology. Community psychology therefore firstly presents as Black in terms of its demographic teaching profile in the Western Cape. It also suggests that Black (Indian) men who teach community psychology are more likely to occupy a senior rank in comparison with women (both coloured and white) community psychology teachers who tend to occupy junior ranks.

### **Who publishes in community psychology at the three universities?**

Nineteen community psychology publications, emanating from the three psychology departments in the Western Cape, were identified in the search. Nineteen community psychology articles were associated with academics attached to psychology departments in the Western Cape. The names of authors appeared 26 times in total. Four articles had single authorship with the rest having multiple authors. The articles were most frequently published (in order of frequency) in the South African Journal of Psychology (53%), Social Science and Medicine (21%), Journal of Psychology in Africa (11%), Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology (11%) and the Journal for Prevention and Intervention in the Community (5%).

Table 6

*Frequency of Occurrence of Academic Publications Among Western Cape Psychology Academics: First Three Authors (n=26)*

Academic rank	Race	Gender		Total			
		Male	Female	n	f		
Senior		n	f	n	f		
	White	7	27%	2	8%	9	35%
	Indian	7	27%	1	4%	8	31%
	African	0	0	2	8%	2	8%
	Black total	7	27%	3	12%	10	38%
	White total	7	27%	2	8%	9	35%
	Senior total	14	54%	5	19%	19	73%
Junior							
	White	1	4%	2	8%	3	12%
	Coloured	1	4%	3	12%	4	15%
	Black total	1	4%	3	12%	4	15%
	White total	1	4%	2	8%	3	12%
	Junior total	2	8%	5	19%	7	27%
	Total	16	62%	10	38%	26	100%

Table 6 above highlights the frequency with which academics in the Western Cape, appeared in community psychology journal articles. When focusing on the first three authors of the articles, names of women academics in the Western Cape appeared in community psychology articles 38% of the time during this period, whereas names of male academics appeared 62% of the time. White and Black men's names appeared equally often on community psychology publications (31%). White men and Black men's names (Indian, 27%; Coloured, 4%) were reflected equally (31% each). Black African men were not represented. Black women's names (coloured, 12%, Indian, 4%; African, 8%) were more often represented (23%) whereas white women's names were represented 15% of the time. When considering rank, senior Black (Indian) and white men published equivalently (27%). Senior white women appeared in publications 4% of the time, while Black women appeared 12% of the time (Indian, 4%,

African, 8%). Junior men (8%) published less often than junior women (19%) in community psychology. Junior white men and junior coloured men published equivalently (4% each) while junior coloured women (12%) published more often than junior white women (4%).

In summary, it appears that senior white (27%) and senior Indian (27%) men's names occur most frequently on community psychology publications, followed by junior coloured women (12%).

Table 7

*Frequency of Occurrence of Academic Publications Among Western Cape Psychology Academics: First Authors Only (n=13)*

Academic rank	Race	Gender		Total			
		Male	Female	n	f		
Senior		n	f	n	f		
	White	2	15%	0	0	2	15%
	Indian	4	31%	0	0	4	31%
	African	0	0	2	15%	2	15%
	Black total	4	31%	2	15%	6	46%
	White total	2	15%	0	0	2	15%
	Senior total	6	46%	2	15%	8	62%
Junior							
	White	1	8%	2	15%	3	23%
	Coloured	0	0	2	15%	2	15%
	Black total	0	0	2	15%	2	15%
	White total	1	0	2	15%	3	23%
	Junior total	1	8%	2	15%	5	38%
	Total	7	54%	6	46%	13	100%

When the data were examined based on first authors only (see Table 7 above), the number of community psychology articles for the Western Cape dropped to 19. In these 19 articles, the names of academics in Western Cape psychology departments appeared, as first authors, on 13 occasions. When focusing on the first authors of the articles, names of women academics in the Western Cape appeared in community psychology articles 46% of the time during this period, whereas names of male academics appeared 54% of the time. Black men's names appeared on community psychology articles more frequently (31%) than white men's names (23%). Amongst Black male publishers, 31% were Indian and 15% were coloured. Black African men were not represented. Black and white women's names were represented equivalently (15%). When considering rank, senior Black (Indian) men (31%) published more than white senior men (15%). Senior Black (African) women appeared in publications 15% of the time while white senior women did not feature in publications. Junior men (8%) published less often than junior

women (15%) in community psychology. Junior white men (8%) were the only category represented at this level. No other junior men published during this period. Junior Black (coloured) women and white women published equivalently (15%). The academics who published most frequently in community psychology, were Black (Indian) men (31%), followed by junior white academics (23%). These groups were followed by senior white women, senior Black (African) women, junior Black (Coloured) women and junior white women who published equivalently (15%).

### **6.8. Summary of results**

When the data were examined based on first three authors only (Table 6), there were 19 articles available for analysis. Senior white and Indian men were the most prolific publishers in community psychology, followed by coloured women. When racial subcategories are removed and rank only, is considered, when focusing on the first three authors, it appears that senior male and female academics publish most frequently in community psychology, followed by junior women academics. Junior men appear to publish least frequently in community psychology. When the data were examined based on first authors only (see Table 7), the number of community psychology articles for the Western Cape dropped to 13. Senior Indian men were the most prolific publishers with senior and junior white men least represented. Senior white women, senior Black (African) women, junior Black (Coloured) women and junior white women published equivalently in community psychology.

### **6.9. Discussion of results**

It appears that community psychology presents as Black (Indian), senior and male, from the perspective of publications analyses. Thus, publications analyses in community psychology appear to represent an inversion of previous publications analyses in psychology that suggest that the arena of publications is dominated by white males (Duncan, van Niekerk & Townsend, 2004; Shefer et al., 2004). While the results of the current study do not negate previous research, it does suggest that community psychology is similar to and different from mainstream psychology. It is similar to mainstream psychology in its gender bias and different from mainstream psychology in its racial bias. Publications in community psychology appear to be represented by Black men. The racial bias of community psychology publications, however,

creates a further impression, as did teaching in community psychology, that community psychology is represented by Black people.

These results also appear to lend credibility to the literature that suggests that rank, gender and race are important variables in community psychology teaching. Gibson et al. (2001) mentioned that community psychology is represented by junior academics and Vogelmann et al. (1992) suggested that these academics were Black. These results support and extend previous research. The results do suggest that senior Black (Indian) men and junior Black (coloured) women represent community psychology through teaching, whereas senior Black (Indian) men represent community psychology in publications. This implies that staff who attract marginalised identities is associated with community psychology. This, in turn, appears to entrench and perpetuate stereotypes that exist about community psychology.

The focus of the studies now turns to the qualitative component of the study and examines how teachers of community psychology talk about community psychology.

## **6.10. Presentation and discussion of qualitative results**

### **6.10.1. How do teachers of community psychology talk about community psychology in their respective departments?**

Four main themes arose during teachers' discussions of community psychology in their respective departments. The themes that were identified are: silences about gender in community psychology, stigma attached to community psychology, individual academics carry community psychology, diversity in psychology as potential solution for community psychology.

#### **6.10.1.1. Silences about gender in community psychology**

The participants seldom raised the issue of gender in community psychology but when they did, they felt that gender was incompatible with community psychology. Participant 1, in extract 1 and 2, speaks about her views as a feminist in this context.

Extract 1, participant 1

*For me many feminist texts replaced community psychology texts... And in the gender area the stuff is in any case very linked with community psychology. Some of the key texts were lost and now some of the texts are back..... I think there's a*

*different emphasis and I'm getting more into gender based violence which may draw me out (of community psychology) too. So I'm not sure what will become of this thing called community psychology, what will become of key texts, and getting students to read those key texts is a real challenge. And getting them to read community psychology via gender based violence for example is very different from reading texts about community psychology. And I'm not on top of that literature anymore because my interests have shifted*

Extract 2, participant 1

*With undergrad students, I teach it at an angle.....I don't want them to get the feeling that I'm just standing on a political soapbox thing and when I take it from a trauma and gender based view, I find them very receptive to thinking about issues. Students are quite engaged, if a little overwhelmed!*

This participant suggests that community psychology has become extinct and that feminist texts are more palatable to students. In saying this, participant 1, extract 1, supports the definition of community psychology as a subdiscipline and not also as an approach to psychology. Community psychology and feminism, in her view, are mutually exclusive, precisely because community psychology is perceived as a subdiscipline. This is a perception challenged by feminist writers themselves (Bond et al., 2000; Mulvey, 1988.). Extract 1 from participant 1 furthermore encapsulates the implications of the theoretical divisions between critical, critical feminist psychology and community psychology in South Africa. It also speaks to students' resistance to community psychology, widely reflected in the literature (Gibson et al., 2001; Lesch, 1998; Ngonyama ka Sigogo et al., 2004; Pillay 2003; 2007; Stevens, 2001; Thompson, 2007). In the context of student resistance to community psychology, participant 1 needs to find different ways of presenting and discussing teaching material. It is also interesting that this teacher of community psychology is "not interested in community psychology anymore", suggesting a possibly unwitting and implicit reinforcement of negative student attitudes to community psychology. Care is also taken not to present teaching material as too political (extract 2, participant 1). Callaghan (2006) discusses the importance of avoiding politics in professional psychology training as a way in which the status quo is maintained by clinical



psychology training. The implied stigma attached to community psychology is again picked up in the next participant's response.

#### **6.10.1.2. Stigma attached to community psychology**

The following 5 extracts presented below will be discussed in the context of stigma.

Extract 3, participant 1:

*It is not as dirty a word as it was. When I was a student it got quite poor press. It felt like a poor second cousin to clinical (psychology). Always..... I don't think students see it like that anymore. Now it's in a better position. Students see it as something that they need. That has taken a long time (participant1)*

Extract 4, participant 2:

*It is almost like a cynical thing. There was a time when workshop stuff came in and everybody wanted to do it. Some saw it as a way of shifting responsibility to participants. They did not know about experiential learning. Once people started to get feedback from students how community psychology impacted on their own development and how it changed their lives we started to realize that this should not be kept separate.....And that is the enjoyment that I have seen in this department.....that psychology students have seen different ways of using their skills. And that influence has permeated the department. That it is no-longer the stepchild in the department*

Extract 5, participant 2

*The theory part was not emphasised strongly enough. It was just an applied model. Once the shift was made to theory that it was scientific in terms of research and with funding of research, many psychosocial problems could be researched effectively with the aim of intervening*

Extract 6, participant 1

*Anecdotally, at masters level, there was initially resistance to it. It felt for students, especially white students how useless, clueless and inappropriate they are but as students have been forced into community service, there we hear more students*

*saying we need community psychology input big time. I think in post-apartheid SA..... teaching it post 1994, it feels different. Before it felt like, this is to show you how awful you are, now it's more, let's see what we can do to work in complicated contexts. Last year the experience was fantastic. The year before students asked for more.*

Extract 7, participant 2

*And that is the enjoyment that I have seen in this dept.....that psychology students have seen different ways of using their skills. And that influence has permeated the department. That it is no-longer the stepchild in the department. Community psychology was a catalyst in opening up processes for the staff and students.*

Participants referred to community psychology as having been stigmatized and marginalised historically for various reasons. Community psychology was seen as ‘the other’ and undesirable in a number of ways. It was questioned theoretically in the context of mainstream psychology (extract 4, participant 2) and in terms of its value in relation to clinical psychology (extract 3, participant 1). It was also questioned on its scientific basis (extract 4, participant 2). In these contexts the words used by the speakers in the context of community psychology suggest distrust, suspicion, revulsion, and something that is unpalatable and distasteful. These words, referring to community psychology are “dirty”, “poor second cousin”, “unpalatable”, “stepchild”. The phrase “just an applied model” (extract 5, participant 2) also reflects the condescension with which community psychology was viewed. The notion of community psychology as punitive is also communicated in “this is to show you how awful you are” (extract 6, participant 1). This perception of community psychology as having the ability to highlight privilege and raise uncomfortable feelings is also highlighted in the literature (Gibson et al., 2001).

Teachers also suggest that in contemporary South Africa, views of community psychology have changed. They suggest that both teachers and students are viewing it differently. It is valued because of a different skills application (extract 7, participant 2), students view it as important (extract 3, participant 1), it has been validated theoretically (extract 5, participant 2) and the nature of teaching is now different (extract 6, participant 2). In the latter extract, participant 2 suggests that teaching now focuses on process in finding ways to work in complex contexts as

opposed to exclusively content based approaches to teaching. This focus on teaching process is valued as important in community psychology (Gregory, 2001; Kelly, 1977; Walsh & Alcade-Bowers, 1997). The above extracts also hint at what it is that has changed the perception of community psychology.

The above extracts also point to a possible dynamic that has resulted in the apparent shift in thinking about community psychology as valuable. Students demanded more community psychology in the context of compulsory community service for clinical psychologists (extract 6, participant 1). In addition, academics in psychology changed their perceptions of community psychology in response to positive student feedback. On examining the language that is used to describe these interactions, some doubt can arise as to the authenticity of this apparent shift in thinking. Students are described as “forced into community service” (extract 6, participant 1), suggesting that they are unwilling contributors to community service. In their anxiety about community service, they “need” community psychology. The literature concurs that the newly qualified professionals do have challenging experiences during the community service year (Pillay & Harvey, 2006; Rohleder et al., 2006). Rather than the recent attraction to community psychology representing a shift in thinking, it appears that it may be viewed as a coping strategy to successfully navigate the stormy waters of community service.

### **6.10.1.3. Individual academics carry community psychology**

A common theme that arose was the idea that individual academics carry the flag for community psychology and that if those people leave their respective departments, community psychology is likely to lose its visibility. This sentiment is reflected in the following quotes:

Extract 8, participant 1

*I'm sure you know more....the big movers... S and G...much of that work happened in the clinical programme, also G's doctorate. Much of community psychology here grew out of apartheid SA , like (the work of S, T, A).....this changed dramatically with G's departure – she was the community psychology person... and S, of course who left earlier.*

Extract 9, participant 2

*I hope that there is someone that has the same passion, I'm getting old now. If I go to the community, I do extra work. If you are not committed, it becomes another theoretical model. Hopefully we can breed some new people that can take over.*

In Chapters 3 and 4, it was suggested that diversity in the curriculum is usually viewed as the domain of a particular individual who is usually constructed as “different” along one or more dimensions (Bernal, 1994; Watts, 1994). The literature review has also argued that in South Africa, community psychology is located within a diversity discourse. The idea of “she was the community psychology person” (extract 8, participant 1) and “I hope that there is someone that has the same passion” (extract 9, participant 2) confirms the dominant discourse that community psychology is located in individuals. This has difficult implications as it means that if people leave, as they do, community psychology is not taught or it is taught by academics who may perceive it as tangential to their core interests. This has the potential to marginalise community psychology even more significantly.

#### **6.10.1.4. Diversity in community psychology as potential solution for its perceived marginality**

Participants expressed the view that community psychology is invisible but will gain more popularity if more Black people are enlisted into psychology as a profession. The following quote reflects the complexity of ideas about who engages in community psychology in South Africa:

Extract 10, participant 3

*It is difficult to engage with disadvantaged communities.*

##### **Why?**

*All the staff were white at that stage and communities were Black. The philosophy and methodology was not in the department .....we have more Black students (and staff) coming into the department interested in this vision. I've seen lots of exciting shifts take place. We need more Black students. They come with a different set of experiences- different points of view in class discussions that provide the tensions. Diversity is an important part of process. Otherwise you get to have a*

*hegemonic perception, the majority view. People then just do it to look expedient.....cognitively expedient, without integrating it into their being. Now most of our courses have a community aspect to it, it is less easy for them (students) to contest it.*

The notion of Blackness and racial identity as a prerequisite for the development and maintenance of community psychological work is reflected in extract 10. The participant suggests that Black people brought the philosophy inherent in community psychology to that particular department and are likely to continue to do so. Inherent in this view is the assumption that Black students bring different points of view. While this may be partially correct (Watts, 2004), it is also important to recognize that other realities may exist for Black students. The literature review has discussed the complexity of identities and the difficulty of invoking unitary notions of representation with regard to community psychology.. This is especially important as the extract above suggests that we may make assumptions about students and staff based on representation alone and not the combination of representation and perspective (Bond, 1999).

### **6.11. Summary**

The discussion on teachers' descriptions of community psychology has highlighted dominant discourses that operate to maintain relatively fixed notions of community psychology. The dominant and overarching dominant discourse about community psychology can be described as 'community psychology is about "the other"'. The enactment of this discourse consists of multiple discourses that become justificatory of the dominant discourse (Burr, 1995). These "supporting" discourses can be viewed as follows:

- a) there is no place for gender issues in community psychology
- b) community psychology is undesirable
- c) individuals with commitment are responsible for community psychology
- d) Black people do community psychology

The analysis of this conversation with teachers of community psychology has illustrated the performative function of language in maintaining dominant discourses about community psychology. It is of concern that no counter discourses to those that offer resistance to dominant discourses and disrupt power relations, have been offered. These discourses are both

exclusionary and inclusionary (Phelan, 1996; Sen, 2006). They include those who are not interested in gender issues, who are interested in practicing an undesirable psychology, those who are committed to civic responsibility and Black people. However, by the same token they exclude those who are interested in gender, desirable psychology, individuals with lower levels of political commitment and white people.

## **6.12. Chapter summary**

The main results that arise in this study are as follows:

- a) Community psychology teaching, in terms of occurrence and nature, is marginalised in the university. Compulsory community psychology modules are only consistently offered at Masters level during professional training. Students are seldom exposed to community psychology at undergraduate level and if they have this exposure, it is an optional choice.
- b) Community psychology teaching, in terms of the demographic profile of its staff suggests that community psychology teaching is represented by senior Black, men and women. Black (Indian) men and junior coloured women teach community psychology.
- c) Community psychology publishing is also characterized as Black and male. Senior Black (Indian) men were the most prolific publishers with senior and junior white men least represented.
- d) Teachers of community psychology may be (unwittingly) complicit in reproducing dominant discourse about community psychology. The discourses that may exist in their talk are:
  - there is no place for gender issues in community psychology
  - community psychology is undesirable
  - individuals with commitment are responsible for community psychology
  - Black people do community psychology

This study has set out to analyse the organization of the university in terms of the way in which it reflects images of community psychology at various levels in the university.

The results suggest that black senior (Indian) men consistently represent community psychology teaching and publications whereas junior black women represent community psychology teaching. The results of the study can therefore be interpreted as universities actively contributing to maintaining the marginalised position of community psychology in terms of teaching and learning and research. Community psychology appears to have become a site for the performance of identity (Bhavnani & Phoenix, 1994) within the university. The next chapter will focus on how students, as actors in the university, perceive community psychology.

## CHAPTER 7

### STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

#### 7.1. Introduction

This component of the study, also located at the meso-level of the organization of the university, focuses on student perceptions of community psychology.

#### 7.2. Aims

The aims of the study are threefold. They are:

1. to establish if perceptions of community psychology are linked to perceptions of race and gender.
2. to establish what the perceptions of community psychology among psychology Honours and BPsych students are..

#### 7.3. Research questions

The operationalised research questions are outlined below and are organised in terms of the methodology employed, that is, whether quantitative or qualitative methodologies are used.

##### 7.3.1. Quantitative questions

1. Are there significant differences between the engagement in community psychology study between white and black psychology students?
2. Are there significant differences between the engagement in community psychology study between male and female psychology students?

The variables that are implied in the questions above can be defined as follows:

Engagement in community psychology refers to whether students take compulsory modules in community psychology. It is also defined in terms of the levels at which students take modules in community psychology.

##### 7.3.2. Qualitative Questions

3. What are the reasons for studying community psychology?
4. What are the reasons for **not** studying community psychology?
5. What are the challenges that students face in doing community psychology?



6. What are the challenges that students face in **not** doing community psychology?
7. Do students have any preconceived perceptions about client populations that community psychologists work with?
8. Do students have any preconceived perceptions about community psychologists themselves?
9. What discourages students from working in community psychology?
10. What will encourage students to engage in community psychology?

## **7.4. Methodology**

### **7.4.1. Research Design**

A survey design was used in this study. The advantages and shortcomings of the survey were discussed in the previous chapter and will not be repeated here. (see p. 83 ) Below is an exposition of the reasons for employing survey research: 1) previous research has only indirectly hinted at student perceptions of community psychology (Gibson et al, 2001; Pillay, 2003) and a formal survey is indicated. 2) A more representative and larger sample is needed. One local study has focused on one small university sample of predominantly white students (Lesch, 1998). Yet no local research exists where student perceptions about community psychology are elicited across both historically white and historically black universities. This study does this on a small scale in the Western Cape region of South Africa. A survey methodology is thus appropriate.

### **7.4.2. Target Population**

The sampling frame in this study included all psychology Honours and BPsych 4th year students (n =140) from the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Western Cape. When seeking permission from university authorities to conduct this study (see Appendix 4), I agreed, as requested by one institution, not to disclose the identity of the university when reporting the results. In order to meet this requirement, I have merged all the data and can therefore provide a general, as opposed to a university specific account, of student perceptions at the universities. This is adequate for the purpose of this study.

### 7.4.3. Sample

A convenience sample, a common approach to sampling in the social sciences, was employed in the study (Punch, 2003). This means that participants from the sampling frame who are available at a mutually pre-arranged time, are enlisted as research participants. The participants consisted of all Honours and BPsych students at the three universities who were present in class on the day of data collection (N=128). A total of 43 students completed the questionnaires, yielding a response rate of 34% which is moderate, but acceptable (Berg, 1998). Table 8 below represents a visual depiction of the demographic data of the sample.

Table 8

*Demographic Representation of Psychology Honours/BPsych Student Sample (n=43)*

Demographic variables	Category	Frequency	
		n	%
Age	Range	19-33yrs	
	Mean	23yrs	
Race	White	23	53%
	Coloured	15	35%
	Black	1	2%
	Other	4	9%
Gender	Male	8	19%
	Female	35	81%
Language	English	27	63%
	Afrikaans	15	35%
	Xhosa	1	2%

The mean age of participants was 23 (range =19-33 years). Twenty three (53%) of the students were white, 15 (35%) were coloured and 1 (2%) was black. Four participants (9%) described themselves as belonging to the category demarcated as ‘other’. Eight students (19%) were male and 35 (81%) were female. The majority 27 (63%) of the students were English speaking, 15 (35%) were Afrikaans speaking and 1 (2%) was Xhosa speaking.

#### **7.4.4. Procedure**

Permission to recruit students for this study was obtained from the registrars or other senior administration personnel at the three universities (see appendix 4). After this process, the Honours and BPsych degree coordinators in the psychology departments were contacted to arrange suitable times for the researcher to address the students. A research Masters student of mine, at the time, collected these data as she also used it in her own research. She provided a short information session at the beginning of a seminar (10 minutes) and questionnaires were handed out for participants to complete in their own time. This was one of the conditions under which the research could be conducted. The completion time for the questionnaire was approximately 30 minutes. Questionnaires were returned to the secretaries of the respective psychology departments and were collected by my student.

##### **7.4.4.1. Survey questionnaire**

A self-constructed questionnaire consisting of a demographic section and open-ended questions was used for obtaining data in this study. The demographic component of the questionnaire consisted of closed questions such as age, race, gender and language. The open-ended questions allowed respondents to communicate their experiences and opinions about community psychology in their own words by placing no limitation on the respondent (Mouton, 2001). The questionnaire was made available in English (Appendix 2) and Afrikaans (Appendix 3). To enhance the face and content validity of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was given to two subject specialists (two senior psychology lecturers, of whom one is a research methodologist) in the psychology department for review. They were asked to reflect on various aspects of the instrument, including but not limited to, clarity of instructions, ease of use, layout and face validity.

##### **7.4.4.2. Data Analysis**

The guidelines for data analyses were discussed in Chapter 5 (p.79) and will not be repeated here. These guidelines are consistently applied to all four studies, where appropriate. In this study, both frequency analysis, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and interpretive content analysis were used.

## 7.5. Ethics

Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed to all participants. Informed consent was obtained from them before administration of the questionnaire and they were given the right to withdraw participation at any point during the study. Participants furthermore had to take the questionnaire and complete it in their own time before returning it. This suggests that those who completed the questionnaires were motivated to participate in the study. As suggested earlier, one of the universities requested anonymity in terms of specific reporting and the linking of results to the specific university. I agreed to honour this request and thus have collapsed results obtained from the three universities so that it may be difficult for the respective universities to be identified.

## 7.6. Results

### 7.6.1. Quantitative results

The results from quantitative analyses are tabulated and presented below. The results are presented per year of study. For each year the respective gender and race differences hypothesized are empirically tested and reported upon. Table 9 summarizes differences in engagement with community psychology between black and white students during their first year of study.

Table 9

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology between Black and White Students During Year 1 (n=41)*

Race	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total				Grand Total	
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No		(Yes+No)	
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
White	0		3	7%	3	7%	20	49%	23	56%
Coloured	3	7%	5	12%	8	20%	6	15%	14	34%
African	0		1	2%		2%			1	2%
Other						0	3	7%	3	7%
Total	3	7%	9	22%	12	29%	29	71%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 9 above, suggests that in the first year of study, 29% of students studied community psychology, whereas 71% of students did not study community psychology. Seven percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 22% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. Fifty six percent of students who did community psychology was white and 36% of students who did community psychology was Black (Coloured, 34%, African, 2%). Seven percent of Coloured students did community psychology as an optional course, whereas the rest of the students who did community psychology, did it as an optional course.  $\chi^2(df=6, n=41)=14,72, p=0.23$ . This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly different, on the basis of race, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology at the first year.

Table 10

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology Between Black and White Students During Year 2 (n=41)*

Race	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total				Grand Total	
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No		(Yes+No)	
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
White	1	2%	2	5%	3	7%	20	49%	23	56%
Coloured	2	5%	4	10%	6	15%	8	20%	14	34%
Black	0		1	2%	1	2%	0		1	2%
Other							3	7%	3	7%
Total	3	7%	7	17%	10	24%	31	76%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 10 above, suggests that in the second year of study, 24% of students studied community psychology, whereas 76% of students did not study community psychology. Among these students who studied community psychology, 7% was White and 17% was Black (Coloured, 15%). Seven percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 17% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. Fifty six percent of students who did community psychology were White and 36% of students who did community psychology was

Black (Coloured, 34%). Among the students who did community psychology as an optional course, two percent was White and 5% was Coloured. Among the students who did community psychology as a compulsory course, 5% was White and 12% was Black (Coloured, 10%). Among those students who did not do community psychology, 49% was White and 20% was Black (Coloured, 20%).  $\chi^2$  (df=6, n=41)=10.084, p=0.121. This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly different, on the basis of race, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology at the second year.

Table 11

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology Between Black and White Students During Year 3 (n=41)*

Race	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total				Grand Total	
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No		(Yes+No)	
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
White	2	5%	11	26%	13	32%	10	24%	23	56%
Coloured	5	12%	4	10%	9	22%	5	12%	14	34%
Black	1	2%			1	2%			1	2%
Other							3	7%	3	7%
Total	8	20%	15	37%	23	56%	18	44%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 11 above, suggests that in the third year of study, 56% of students studied community psychology, whereas 44% of students did not study community psychology. Among these students who studied community psychology, 32% was White and 24% was Black (Coloured, 22%). Twenty percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 37% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. Thirty two percent of students who did community psychology were White and 24% of students who did community psychology were Black (Coloured, 22%). Among the students who did community psychology as an optional course, five percent was White and 12% was Coloured. Among the students who did community psychology as a compulsory course, 26% was White and 10% was Black (Coloured, 10%). Among those students who did not do community psychology, 24% was White and 12% was

Black (Coloured, 12%).  $\chi^2$  (df=6, n=41)=12.476, p=0.052. This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly different, on the basis of race, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology at the third year.

Table 12

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology Between Black and White Students During Honours (n=41)*

Race	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total					
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No			
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
White	5	12%	4	10%	9	22%	14	34%	23	56%
Coloured	6	15%	0		6	15%	8	20%	14	34%
Black							1	2%	1	2%
Other	1	2%	0				2	5%	3	7%
Total	12	29%	4	10%	16	39%	25	61%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 12 above, suggests that in the Honours year of study, 39% of students studied community psychology, whereas 61% of students did not study community psychology. Among these students who studied community psychology, 22% was White and 15% was Black (Coloured, 15%). Twenty nine percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 10% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. Among the students who did community psychology as an optional course, 12% percent was White and 15% was Black (Coloured 15%). Among the students who did community psychology as a compulsory course, 10% was White and no black students did it as a compulsory course. Among those students who did not do community psychology, 34% was White and 22% was Black (Coloured, 20%).  $\chi^2$  (df=6, n=41)=5.068, p=0.535. This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly different, on the basis of race, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology in the Honours year.

## 7.7. Summary of results

### 7.7.1. Race as variable

The above results suggest that at both undergraduate levels (year 1, 2, 3) and Honours levels, there is no association, on the basis of race, between the groups of students who elect to study community psychology and those who do not elect to study community psychology.

While the previous section focused on race as a variable in engagement in community psychology study, the following section focuses on gender as a variable in engagement in community psychology studies.

Table 13

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology Study Between Male and Female Students: Year 1 (n=41)*

Gender	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total				Grand Total	
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No		(Yes+No)	
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
Male			2	5%	2	5%	6	15%	8	20%
Female	3	7%	7	17%	10	24%	23	56%	33	81%
Total	3	7%	9	22%	12	29%	29	71%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 13 above, suggests that in the first year of study, 29% of students studied community psychology, whereas 71% of students did not study community psychology. Among these students who studied community psychology, 5% were men and 17% were women. Seven percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 10% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. Among the students who did community psychology as an optional course, 7% were women. No men studied community psychology as an optional course at this level. Among the students who did community psychology as a compulsory course, 5% were men and 17% were women. Among those students who did not do community psychology, 15% were men and 56% were women  $\chi^2$  (df=2, n=41)=0.795, p=0.672. This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly



different, on the basis of gender, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology in the first year.

Table 14

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology Study Between Male and Female Students: Year 2 (n=41)*

Gender	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total				Grand Total	
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No		(Yes+No)	
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
Male	0		1	2%	1	2%	7	17%	8	20%
Female	3	7%	6	15%	9	22%	24	59%	33	81%
Total	3	7%	7	17%	10	24%	31	76%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 14 above, suggests that in the second year of study, 24% of students studied community psychology, whereas 76% of students did not study community psychology. Among these students who studied community psychology, 2% were men and 22% were women. Seven percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 17% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. Among the students who did community psychology as an optional course, 7% were women. No men studied community psychology as an optional course at this level. Among the students who did community psychology as a compulsory course, 2% were men and 15% were women. Among those students who did not do community psychology, 17% were men and 59% were women  $\chi^2$  (df=6, n=41)=10.084, p=0.121. This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly different, on the basis of gender, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology in the second year.

Table 15

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology Study Between Male and Female Students: Year 3 (n=41)*

Gender	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total				Grand Total	
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No		(Yes+No)	
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
Male	3	7%	2	5%	5	12%	3	7%	8	20%
Female	5	12%	13	32%	18	44%	15	37%	33	81%
Total	8	20%	15	37%	23	56%	18	44%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 15 above, suggests that in the third year of study, 56% of students studied community psychology, whereas 44% of students did not study community psychology. Among these students who studied community psychology, 12% were men and 44% were women. Twenty percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 37% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. Among the students who did community psychology as an optional course, 7% were men and 12% were women. Among the students who did community psychology as a compulsory course, 5% were men and 32% were women. Among those students who did not do community psychology, 7% were men and 37% were women  $\chi^2$  (df=2, n=41)=2.106, p=0.349. This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly different, on the basis of gender, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology in the third year.

Table 16

*Difference in Engagement with Community Psychology Study Between Male and Female Students: Honours (n=41)*

Gender	Engagement with community psychology									
	Yes				Total				Grand Total	
	Optional		Compulsory		Yes		No		(Yes+No)	
	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
Male	0		1	2%	1	2%	7	17%	8	20%
Female	12	29%	3	7%	15	37%	18	44%	33	81%
Total	12	29%	4	10%	16	39%	25	61%	41	100%

p<0.05

The data in Table 16 above, suggests that in the Honours year of study, 39% of students studied community psychology, whereas 61% of students did not study community psychology. Among these students who studied community psychology, 2% were men and 37% were women. Twenty nine percent of the students who studied community psychology, chose to study community psychology (optional category), whereas 37% of students who studied community psychology did it as a compulsory course. All the students who chose to do community psychology as an optional course, were women (29%) Among the students who did community psychology as a compulsory course, 2% were men and 7% were women. Among those students who did not do community psychology, 17% were men and 44% were women  $\chi^2$  (df=2, n=41)=4.133, p=0.127. This suggests that the group of students electing to study community psychology is not significantly different, on the basis of gender, from the group of students who elect not to study community psychology in the Honours year.

### **7.7.2. Summary of results on gender as variable**

The results of the study suggest that there is no association, on the basis of gender, between the group of students electing to study community psychology and the group of students who elect not to study community psychology in the Honours year.

### **7.8. Summary of results from quantitative studies**

The results of the study suggest that there is no association, on the basis of race and gender, in student engagement in community psychology. These results apply to all levels of

undergraduate and Honours study. This means that as variables, race and gender do not appear to be associated with engagement in community psychology studies. As mentioned earlier, other variables such as student involvement in community work and university where students studied could possibly be investigated as variables that may impact on choice of community psychology as a module.

While this section of the study has focused on quantitative data, the study now shifts to the results and discussion of the qualitative data.

## **7.9. Presentation of qualitative data**

The qualitative data will be presented below.

### **7.9.1. Results and discussion of qualitative data**

The themes that emanate from the analysis of student responses to questions about community psychology will be organised according to the structure in which questions were organised in the questionnaire. This means that the themes will be organized under the following headings: understanding of community psychology, reasons for and against the study of community psychology, challenges of doing community psychology, perceptions of service providers in community psychology, perceptions of community psychology clients, factors that deter students from community psychology and factors that will encourage students to do community psychology. These themes will be discussed, in turn. Following the analysis of thematic content, the data will be discussed in terms of prevailing discourses that are generated and maintained in the interpersonal space that exists among students.

#### **7.9.1.1. Understanding of community psychology**

Many students did not formally study community psychology by the time they were in their fourth year of psychology studies. Yet they displayed fair knowledge about community psychology. The following quotes reflect their knowledge:

*It involves community based interventions, institutionalized community based programmes at grassroots levels i.e. accessible to local people (participant 9)*

*I associate it with things like group psychology, social work, generally forms of counseling that are aimed at reaching more people at a lower cost in areas less developed and privileged than the typical upper class white areas (participant 15)*

*Working with the community in their social issues and providing intervention. This involves workshops, group therapy and individual therapy (participant 1)*

*I have never come across it, but I would understand it as using skills and psychology in the community (townships) making them aware (participant 19)*

It is also evident from these quotes that community psychology is never positioned as a study module only, but as an applied and service component of the curriculum. According to students, it uses the methods of traditional psychology and aims to meet the mental health needs of the working class in communities other from those that they are used to.

#### **7.9.1.2. Reasons for studying community psychology**

Students suggested that they studied community psychology because they wanted access to what they perceived to be “communities”, but others studied community psychology owing to their moral or civic obligation. Reasons that were given for not studying community psychology were different academic preference and lack of exposure. These will be discussed, in turn.

##### **Access to communities**

The following quote suggests an interest in studying community psychology as the student is excited by being able to ‘view’ people’s living conditions.

*It was very interesting because it meant more involvement with people. You get to see the conditions people live in and interact with them. You get to have workshops with them and empower them (participant 24)*

##### **Moral and civic responsibility**

The following quotes suggest that some students are interested in contributing to improving poor mental health. Emphases are placed on making a difference and the social inequalities inherent in access to health:

*I am interested in community as I am really interested in making a difference (participant 40)*

*I have not studied it yet, but I have chosen it for next semester because I think for too long psychology has only been available to those who can afford it, while people at grassroots level have been made to feel abnormal in their societies for experiencing certain things (participant 16)*

By the same token, students also had reasons why they chose not to study community psychology. These reasons related to preference and lack of exposure to community psychology.

### **7.9.1.3. Reasons for not studying community psychology**

#### **Preference of study modules**

While it is fair to assume that students are entitled to choosing subdisciplines of their choice in psychology, these quotes also bring into focus how students view community psychology unidimensionally. These quotes suggest that they do not see community psychology as an approach to psychology, but rather as a subdiscipline only.

*I prefer health psychology as I would like to work in this area one day (participant 25)*

*My interest has always been with children and so I am doing developmental psychology (participant 31)*

#### **Lack of exposure**

Some students suggested that the lack of exposure to and consequent ignorance of community psychology was the main reason why they did not study it.

*I don't even think that I've ever read or even remember coming across a course outline of a community psychology course.....it probably would have interested me (participant 10)*

### **7.9.1.4. The challenges of community psychology**

Students thought that engaging in community psychology work would leave them with many challenges. These included difficult client perceptions of psychology, the magnitude of problems in communities, the dilemmas of community work when compared to therapeutic work and shame about privilege. Students also perceived not doing community psychology as

having negative consequences which included lack of exposure to diversity. These will be discussed in turn.

### **Client perceptions of psychology**

The quotes below suggest that community work may engender conflict between students and community, and students may be left feeling unwelcome in communities. Participant 15 and 8 both suggest that communities may experience psychology as untrustworthy, based on prior experience. Psychology is also viewed as the premise of whiteness and therefore undesirable. Therefore the student, as an agent of psychology, is then placed in a compromising position in relation to the client.

*People's resistance and negative attitude. Not everybody will like what you care for. It is not easy to work in communities and sometimes you might not be accepted (participant 22).*

*Peoples' resistance to psychology due to their previous experience. To change people is easier than changing peoples beliefs and attitudes. Challenges are also government, politics and other organizations that play a role in peoples lives (participant 15)*

*In doing it, I expect to come across situations that I expect to come across that have not been explained in text books and cannot be explained by textbooks, especially since South African psychology is different to the rest of the world. Also, it will be interesting working in communities that believe that psychology is "for the white man" (participant 8)*

### **The dilemmas of community work when compared to individual therapeutic work**

Participant 7, in the quote below, is caught between the perceived opposites of clinical and community work. In a contradictory manner, he starts out by criticizing their department for not offering community psychology at undergraduate level but then immediately rebuts his own critique:

*There is not enough emphasis on doing community psychology in the (name of university) undergraduate programme. On the other hand, community psychology means you do not get in depth training to be able to interact with people on a personal level. You land up lacking skills to be able to communicate messages to people and fail to help people developing (participant 7)*

### **Shame about privilege**

Participant 12 reflects on his privilege and feels that it would be difficult for him to engage in community work as his position is very different from that of his potential clients. While this quote reflects shame, it also reflects how students may experience the community as “the other”.

*I feel that I will be imposing my views on others as I am in a privileged position and therefore don't truly understand the dynamics of living in a community and experiencing trauma, HIV and other psychological issues in that context. There's a lot I need to learn and discover and open myself to before I can truly be empathetic counselor in the community (participant 12)*

Some students also suggested that they could be disadvantaged by not doing community psychology. The main disadvantage, they felt, was the lack of exposure to diversity. This will now be discussed.

### **Lack of exposure to diversity**

Participant 32 suggests that doing community psychology may have exposed him to other ways of seeing. He bemoans the fact that he forfeited the opportunity to engage in diversity. In this quote community psychology is again constructed as “the other”.

*I might have had a better insight if I took the module, especially in the multi cultural country of ours (participant 32)*

Until now, some student perceptions have suggested that community psychology is viewed as ‘the other’. An analysis of how students view service providers and client populations that community psychologists work with, may provide further insights on student notions of “the other” in community psychology.

### **Student perceptions of community psychology service providers**

While some students view only personal qualities as important in being a good “community psychologist”, others view the combination of personal qualities, racial and gender identities as important in community service delivery. These will be discussed, in turn.

### **Personal qualities necessary for community work**



Participants 35, 10 and 8 below all concur that it requires personality characteristics such as patience and understanding and skills such as speaking ability and facilitation skills to make a good community psychologist. Both participants 35 and 10 also allude to the fact that remuneration is poor in community work. These participants suggest that community psychologists should not be interested in money and that they should be “unmaterialistic”. The image of a community psychologist as an altruist and voluntary worker is implied in these characteristics.

*Someone who is willing to sacrifice time, energy and services. Someone who is patient, understanding, aware of where people are coming from, their contexts, someone who is interested in people, not money (participant 35)*

*Empathetic but able to detach from work, unmaterialistic, will learn about experiences of others (participant 10)*

*Would be community oriented and directed at systems for mass interventions. Thus the individual will have to be passionate, persuasive, good speaker and communicative, good leader and facilitation skills (participant 28)*

#### **7.9.1.5. Preferred identities for community work**

There is considerable support for the idea that black and coloured women are preferred service providers in community psychology. The quotes (participants 39, 12, 13, 41, 17 and 28) all reflect this idea. The assumptions inherent in these quotes suggest that

- a) blackness facilitates trusting relationships with the community (participants 39 and 29)
- b) black people have an interest in building “their” communities (participant 12)
- c) black women are ideally suited for community work (participant 13)
- d) women do not need to make money and can do community work as it is poorly paid (participant 41)
- e) women have husbands who can support them financially. Hence women are available for community work (participant 17)

All these quotes, when combined, provide strong messages that black women do community work and that they do not need to be paid well for it. Another assumption inherent in these perceptions is that black women should not be encouraged to be ambitious about their careers. Community work is portrayed as adequate for black women, but insufficient as career options for white men and women and black men.

*Must be compassionate, empathetic, preferably non-white (for the sake of establishing trust in the community) (participant 39)*

*I suppose in the Western Cape I would imagine mostly coloureds and other ethnic minorities who have a vested interest in improving /building their own communities (participant 12)*

*A middle class black lady about 30 years in age, person who can easily talk to others and empathise with them. She needs to be caring, understand the languages of the people that she's helping (participant 13)*

*More women, not out to make money (participant 41)*

*An empathetic, unselfish person, probably female who has a husband that can bring in an income. Those who are not married, the same quality as the first one (participant 17).*

*A person who is socially adaptable and has the interest of the community at heart. In black communities race and gender play an important role. So, when doing community work, it is important that (the helper) is someone with whom the community can associate. A woman, middle class, black or coloured.” (participant 28)*

#### **7.9.1.6. Student views of community psychologists' clients**

Student views of clients with whom community psychologists may work, were almost concensual. The quotes below illustrate that clients were perceived to be generally poor (quotes 40, 60, 7, 8,) and some perceived them to be black (34). Students also had different ways in which they named poverty. These names for poverty included 'previously and currently disadvantaged' (5, 8), 'underprivileged' (40), 'grass roots communities' (7), 'deprived communities, so-called lower classes' (34).

*The previously and currently disadvantaged. From my understanding, community psychologists deal mostly with impoverished communities because these communities are*

*faced with more problems and unfortunately these communities don't have financial backing for these services (participant 5)*

*Underprivileged clients(participant 40)*

*Populations where the need is greater and resources are minimal (participant 16)*

*Youth at risk, school goers, any population that is at risk (participant 42)*

*Grass roots communities (participant 7)*

*disadvantaged communities (participant 8)*

*Any communities. In South Africa it would be the more underprivileged/deprived community in an attempt to help create structure (participant 7)*

*I always assumed they worked with the so-called lower class populations which in South Africa generally tends to be non-whites (participant 34)*

#### **7.9.1.7. Factors deterring students from community psychology**

When students were asked what would discourage them from community psychology, it was clear that students interpreted community psychology as applied community work. Some students were clear that nothing would discourage them. The quotes below suggest this:

*Nothing (participant 12)*

*I am interested, nothing would stop me (participant 26)*

However, the majority of students could think of factors that may discourage them from community work. These included their personal safety, the perception that the work was difficult, that it was poorly paid and that they, as individuals, were not suited to community work. These themes will be discussed below.

#### **Personal unsuitability for community work**

The notion that community work is not what they wanted to do, is clearly expressed in the quote below. The idea of being in a community setting was experienced as unthinkable.

*I am not community oriented and don't wish to be in a community setting (participant 5)*

#### **Personal safety**

The quotes below suggest that students are fearful of their personal safety when thinking of community work. Communities are perceived to be dangerous and unfamiliar places (participant 23). They are the sites of gangsterism and robbery (participant 18) and other criminal activity (participant 37). To work in these settings forms of protection are needed. Older or younger black people represent protective barriers (participant 19) to dangerous communities. Again these quotes suggest a powerful “othering” process that occurs when students think of community. It is evident that a community is not a place in which they themselves live but something unfamiliar and beyond their own experience.

*High risk areas- high death rates because of robbery or gangsterism (participant 18)*

*The safety aspect, especially with me a white young female. I would probably work alongside older or younger black people (participant 19)*

*I'm very worried about my safety because the crime rate is very high (participant 37)*

*The danger of working in an unfamiliar setting. Also my security and safety would be a worry (participant 23)*

### **Community work is difficult**

Community work was perceived to be difficult in different ways. Difficulties included the need for “multiple skills” (participant 14), “emotional strain” (participant 35), “it was under resourced” (participant 15), and had “too many problems” (participant 29). Strong feelings were also expressed about the apparent apprehension about community work. These included a sense of revulsion in community work, and that it was “dirty” (participant 15). Other expressed feelings appeared less harsh. Students experienced helplessness in witnessing the “aftermath of Apartheid” and were focused on how they would present to “the community” (participant 10) and possibly misinterpreted as arrogance.

*Having to be multi-skilled (participant 14)*

*Nothing, it would be hard work though (participant 35)*

*The emotional strain involved (participant 29)*

*The difficulties. It is probably under resourced, a lot of suffering, fear of getting my hands dirty with the suffering of others (participant 15)*

*I am too sensitive, whilst a degree of empathy is critically important to effective community work, I feel helpless and I feel like my insides melt when I come too close to the aftermath of apartheid and the destruction of security and efficacy it has enabled. I fear people would label me as arrogant for assuming I could understand their life problems. (participant 10)*

*Too many problems(participant 29)*

### **Community work is poorly paid**

There was a consistent perception that community work is voluntary or poorly paid. These were accompanied by different fears. Fears about payment for community work included the anxiety that they would not be able to provide for their families (participant 25). A further perception exists that community service prior to registration as a clinical psychologist, was unpaid (participant 37). Strategies used to overcome poor pay during community work could include doing it on a part-time basis (participant 28).

*At first I thought that there was less money but that is not the case. Community psychologists can be quite successful (participant 12)*

*The fact that I would probably have to do volunteer work in the township areas after studying community psychology (participant 37)*

*I would imagine that it must be difficult, frustrating and with little financial reward (participant 18)*

*I would be involved part-time as the pay would be relatively low (participant 28)*

*The financial side of it. Would I be able to provide for my family on a community psychology salary? (participant 25)*

The reasons and the underlying assumptions that therefore guide community work appear to be powerfully negative. Following such negativity, it was also important to ask students what would encourage them to engage in community work.

#### **7.9.1.8. Factors which will encourage students to engage in community psychology**

While some students said that nothing would encourage them to work in community psychology (participant 17), there were many more students who gave multiple reasons for being motivated

to work in community psychology. These included the activities and skills in community psychology, intrinsic rewards, contributing to transformation at various levels, expanding their own experiences of diversity and practical structural support. These will be discussed, in turn.

### **Activities and skills in community psychology**

These included setting up projects and doing workshops, as suggested in the quotes below

*Setting up projects (participant 2)*

*Do workshops (participant 43)*

### **Contributing to transformation at various levels**

The quotes below reflect the fact that students were motivated by the desire to assist in effecting transformation at applied and theoretical levels in psychology. The desire to effect transformation was motivated by privilege, intrinsic reward and the opportunity to develop in terms of exposure to diversity.

### **Transformation at applied levels related to intervention in communities.**

*An obvious need that seems to be maladaptive in my community is something that will encourage me (participant 15)*

*Genuine interest in helping underprivileged communities and wanting to help to transform society and communities (participant 26)*

*I suppose a small hope of making a tiny difference in a few lives. But that is also somewhat romanticized because too often the problems dealt with in community and social psychology are social and political problems (participant 39)*

*Transformation of psychology in terms of alternatives to traditional practice, were also attractive to students. The quote below illustrates this point:*

*The fact that community psychology allows you to do more than just seeing individuals in therapy (participant 31)*

The desire to contribute to transformation as a consequence of privilege is reflected in the quote below:

*The fact that I really do want to help and the realization that you cant isolate yourself from the problems of SA communities. My conscience (guilt) the fact that my life has really been lot easier than the lives of most South Africans and that it is therefore my duty to give some of my benefits (education) back to others (participant 36)*

*This student feels that s/he is morally obliged to give back to those that have not benefited in the same way that he has. The notion of intrinsic benefit is further expanded in other comments by students.*

### **Intrinsic rewards**

Students suggested that being involved in community work provides intrinsic reward. The unstated assumption however, is that it does not simultaneously provide extrinsic rewards, such as adequate remuneration, a sentiment that is repeatedly expressed. It might therefore be difficult to maintain commitment if intrinsic rewards are the only rewards that community psychology offers.

The following quotes reflect these sentiments:

*It would help me feel that I am at least doing something worthwhile for a disadvantaged community (participant 22)*

*A sense of intrinsic satisfaction that one is giving back to the community, creating a better, safer environment, contributing towards more productive individuals and working together to build mutually satisfying relationships. I see it as an area for immense potential for intrinsic rewards (participant 33)*

### **Expanding their own experiences of diversity**

Students are motivated to work in community psychology as they feel that they can benefit from a range of diversity experiences. This suggests that students are prepared to struggle with their own discomfort with difference. The quotes below illustrate these sentiments:

*More knowledge of people and issues in a particular community will bring familiarity. The unknown is always daunting and positioned as “the other” so I’d like to get over that initial boundary and once familiar with people, issues and resources would be encouraged to continue (participant 38)*

*Working with people with such diverse cultural experiences differing from my own, ---it is also always interesting to see how people from differing backgrounds and cultures bring valuable input and knowledge to resolve issues and problems (participant 24)*

### **Practical structural support**

Students also suggested that they would be motivated to work in community psychology if more work opportunities were available. The quotes below reflect these concerns:

*More work opportunities (participant 6)*

*Not always aware of the work opportunities, more information (participant 30)*

### **7.10. Discussion**

The themes about student perceptions uncovered in this research are not very different from those reported previously (Callaghan, 2006; Gibson et al., 2001, Lesch, 1998, Ngonyama ka Sigogo et al., 2004, Pillay, 2003; 2007, Stevens, 2001). Students thought that community psychology was poorly paid, that it was not for them, that it created feelings of anxiety and helplessness and that it was for poor black service users, usually delivered by black professionals. The only theme that did not occur as frequently as in previous research was the notion that community work is similar to social work. While one participant did mention this, it did not warrant inclusion as it was not a recurring theme.

This study departs from previous ones in that it attempts to understand why students hold these perceptions. Previous research has also suggested that perceptions of community psychology among students are overwhelmingly negative and that they are not encouraged to engage in community work as central to psychology (Lesch, 1998; Gibson et al., 2001). This study, however, has also attempted to understand what would assist students in engaging in community work. It furthermore attempts a more in-depth understanding of discourses that intimately shape and maintain student discourse and practices with regard to community psychology. It is to these discourses that I will now briefly turn.

The prevailing discourse that pervades student constructions of community psychology is that community psychology is about “the other”. This manifests in various ways. It is constructed as black in terms of both service providers and service users. It is also constructed as “community work” which is not perceived to be the core business of psychology. It is dangerous, unsafe and



emotionally demanding. One example can perhaps illustrate how social context impacts on how discourses are shaped. For example, some of the anxiety about community work revolves around safety. It is both a myth and reality, as reflected in the work of Suarez-Balcazar and Kinney (2006). I have, in Chapter 2, discussed how South Africa as a transitional democracy faces all the problems attached to this identity. Thus the reality does exist that *all* communities are unsafe and vigilance about safety is important. Yet, pervasive South African discourses align lack of safety and crime with black perpetrators. If communities are therefore constructed as black spaces, it is understandable why students are especially fearful of “communities”. In contrast, white spaces (often also middle class spaces of privilege) are by implication constructed as safe and desirable places in which to work. Lack of safety also therefore becomes a justificatory discourse for engaging exclusively in private practice, usually located in both black and white middle class communities. While a full discourse analysis of all aspects of student perceptions is perhaps unwarranted in the total context of the study, it was perhaps important to give an example of how discourses shape and maintain practices. A full discourse analysis of this data can perhaps be reserved for future research projects.

Importantly, alternative discourses to prevailing discourses are present in student texts. These discourses are important because they provide (in Foucauldian terms), spaces for resistance to pervading discourses that have become “interiorised” and accepted as normality (Rabinow, 1984). This allows the exercise of power (Prilleltensky, 2003, Rabinow, 1984). In this study, alternative discourses revolve around the idea that doing community psychology can enrich life, both individually and collectively. These are also reflected in multiple justificatory discourses that emphasise contribution to social transformation in South Africa and intrinsic rewards.

### **7.11. Chapter summary**

This chapter has consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data investigating student perceptions of community psychology. The quantitative data suggest that race and gender as variables are not related to students studying community psychology. This means that many other factors, apart from race and gender, can be associated with engagement in community psychology. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine what these additional variables are. It may however be explored in future research. Yet prevailing discourses in student perceptions shaped and maintain race and gender as core components of community psychology. These

discourses have therefore contributed to normalising assumptions that race and gender are intricately linked to community psychology. The chapter also suggests, however, that alternative discourses about community psychology also exist. The next study will follow a similar format, but will focus on practitioner perceptions of community psychology.

## CHAPTER 8

### PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY AMONG PRACTITIONERS

#### 8.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on practitioner perceptions of community psychology and will follow a similar format to the previous chapter.

#### 8.2. Aims

The aims of this study are :

1. To establish whether there are differences, on the basis of race and gender, between psychologists practising community psychology and those who do not.
2. To explore practitioner perceptions of community psychology.

#### 8.3. Research questions

The aims have been operationalised into both quantitative and qualitative research questions.

##### 8.3.1. Quantitative research questions

1. Is there a significant difference, on the basis of race, between psychologists practising community psychology and those who do not.
2. Is there a significant difference, on the basis of gender, between psychologists practising community psychology and those who do not.
3. What are the perceptions of registered psychologists about different aspects of community psychology

Community psychology was defined as practitioner self-definition of their work as falling into this category.

##### 8.3.2. Qualitative research questions

How do psychologists understand community psychology?

Do psychologists have perceptions about client populations that community psychologists work with?

Do psychologists have perceptions about other psychologists who work in community psychology?

What discourages psychologists from engaging in community psychology?

What encourages psychologists to engage in community psychology?

What do psychologists think should be done to ensure that psychological work happens in communities?

## 8.4. Methodology

### 8.4.1. Design

The study, as in the previous chapter, uses a cross-sectional survey design to establish psychology practitioners' perceptions about community psychology. A concise overview of survey research has been provided in the previous chapter. It will thus not be repeated here. A particularly important advantage of the survey for this study is the fact that large numbers of psychologists could be included in the sampling frame as potential study participants. The survey was thus administered to the sample on a once off basis.

### 8.4.2. Sampling frame

Table 17

*Comparison of Distribution of Psychologists in Pilot and Main Study Samples with W.Cape and South African Samples (per Registration Category).*

Registration category	SA	W.Cape	Pilot study		% of W.Cape sample		Main study		% of W.Cape sample		Total	
	distribution	distribution	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f	n	f
Clinical	2088	551	26%	6	1%	51	59%	57	10%			
Counselling	1305	301	23%	20	7%	22	25%	42	14%			
Research	214	36	7%	1	3%	9	2%	10	28%			
Educational	1181	196	17%	3	2%	2	10%	5	3%			
>1category				1		3		4				
Total	4788	1084	23%	31	3%	87	8%	11%				

Table 17 above describes the distribution of psychologists in South Africa, the Western Cape, and the pilot and main studies of this research. The criteria for inclusion in this sample were that participants should be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) as clinical, counselling, research or educational psychologists for a minimum of three years. At the time of the survey (2006) they were required to be practicing in the Western Cape. There were a total number of 1084 psychologists in the Western Cape of whom 1041 were senior<sup>2</sup> psychologists when the survey was done. This distinction is important as this figure (1041) will be used to calculate response rate for the total study. The table below illustrates the stratification according to registration category at national (South Africa) and regional level (Western Cape). It also shows the registration stratification of the current sample. The aim of this research project was not to achieve a stratified sample. A purposive sampling method was employed to ensure that people who meet certain criteria were included in this study (Berg, 1998).

#### **8.4.3. Sample**

The study commenced with a pilot study which included the total sampling frame in the Cape Winelands region (n=103) of the Western Cape.<sup>3</sup> The Cape Winelands was chosen for the pilot survey as it is the region in which the University of Stellenbosch is situated. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000) suggest that a pilot study is “a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments, and analysis are adequate” (p. 155). Pilot studies have also been used to assess the feasibility of surveys (Huysamen, 1994). A pilot study was employed in the current study for all the above reasons. Thirty one psychologists in the Cape Winelands region participated in the pilot study and 87 participants from the rest of the Western Cape responded to the survey in the main study. These participants thus constituted the actual sample employed in the survey and will be described demographically in the section entitled “participants”. The sampling frame in the main study

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<sup>2</sup> Senior psychologists are those psychologists who have been registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa for at least 3 years.

<sup>3</sup> The Western Cape is divided into 5 municipal health districts through which all services including health services are delivered. The 5 regions are the Cape Metropolitan area which includes the greater Cape Town urban area, the West coast region which includes towns of Saldanha and Vredenburg, the Cape Winelands region which includes Stellenbosch, Paarl, Wellington, the Overberg region includes Hermanus and Caledon and the Eden region includes Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn. The Western Cape is a large geographical area and all tertiary hospitals are situated in the Cape Metropolitan region which makes access to, availability and affordability of tertiary services difficult, especially to clients who live in the Eden region, situated approximately 400km from Cape Town.

consisted of 50% of clinical, research, counselling and educational psychologists (n=414) in the other 4 health districts in the Western Cape. Table 18 below describes the pilot and main study samples demographically.

Table 18

*Demographic Characteristics of Practitioners in the Western Cape*

		Pilot study (n=31)		Main study (n=87)	
		f	%	f	%
Age	Mean	47		45.5	
	SD				
Race	White		90		87
	Coloured		6		8
	African		0		1
	Indian		0		0
	Not specified		3		3
Gender	Male		55		33
	Female		45		67
Language proficiency	English		100		99
	Afrikaans		100		91
	Xhosa		0		24
	Other (most commonly German, French, Dutch)				
Average monthly income	Less than R5000				2
	R5000 – R10000		10		9
	R10000 – R15000		26		20
	R15000 – R20000		23		32
	R20000 – R25000		16		15
	Above R25000		26		22
Area of practice	Private sector		65		80
	Public sector (hospitals)		10		16
	NGO's				
	Education		13		16
	Corporate sector		29		14
	Communities		13		11
			13		15
Registration category	Clinical		20		59
	Counselling		65		25
	Educational		10		10
	Research		3		2
	More than 1 category		3		3
Highest level of registration	Masters		65		87
	Doctorate		36		13
Institution of registration	US		68		29
	UCT				22
	UWC				14
	Other		32		36
Average registration period	Mean	15		13	
	SD				

**8.4.4. Participants**

The final sample for the pilot and main study samples will be described in more detail below.

Table 18 summarises the demographic profile of the pilot and main study samples.

#### **8.4.4.1. Pilot study**

The final sample for the pilot study consisted of 31 participants. Ninety percent of the pilot study participants were white, 6% coloured and 3% did not indicate racial identification. Fifty five percent were male and 45% were female, and all participants indicated language proficiency in English and Afrikaans, but no other languages. The age of the sample ranged from 27-74 with the average age being 47. Fifty eight percent of the sample earned less than R20 000 per month while 42% of the sample earned more than R20 000 per month. They were registered in the following categories; counselling (65%), clinical (19%) and educational (10%). Three percent of the sample was registered as research psychologists and another 3% carried a double registration. The sample was registered for an average of 15 years, with the range of registration period varying from 4 to 33 years. Most of the participants (68%) trained at Stellenbosch University or predominantly at other Afrikaans universities in the country (32%). Sixty five percent of the sample worked privately, while 29% worked in education, followed by NGOs, communities and the corporate sector (13%). Few participants worked in the public sector (hospitals) (10%).

#### **8.4.4.2. Main study**

The final sample for the main study consisted of 87 participants. The main study consisted of 87% whites, 8% coloureds, 1% Africans and 3% did not indicate racial identification. Thirty three percent were male and 67% were female. Ninety nine percent indicated language proficiency in English, 91% language proficiency in Afrikaans, 1% in Xhosa and 24% in other foreign languages such as Dutch, German and French. The age of the sample ranged from 32-75 with the average age being 46. Sixty three percent of the sample earned less than R20 000 per month while 37% of the sample earned more than R20 000 per month. They were registered in the following categories; counselling (25%), clinical (59%), educational (10%) and research (2.3%). The sample was registered for an average of 13 years, with the range of registration period varying from 4 to 35 years. Most of the participants (65%) trained at universities in the Western Cape; University of Stellenbosch (29%), University of Cape Town (22%) and University of the Western Cape (14%). Seventy nine percent of the sample worked privately, while 14% worked in education, followed by the public sector and NGOs (each 17%), communities (15%) and the corporate sector (10%).



#### **8.4.5. Survey Questionnaire**

A critical literature review usually suggests guidelines in making decisions about questions to include in a survey. In this study few guidelines existed as little research currently exists in South Africa on practitioner perceptions of community psychology. Research that does exist, comments on the dynamics that permeate perception and practice in psychology. Therefore in constructing a questionnaire to access practitioner perceptions about community psychology, I opted to ask general questions about community psychology. Thus, a self-administered questionnaire was used as research tool. This approach is considered to be appropriate as the participants are sufficiently literate to understand and complete the questionnaires (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). A self-constructed questionnaire was formulated in both English (Appendix 5) and Afrikaans (Appendix 6). Participants could choose either English or Afrikaans as a preferred language within which to complete the questionnaire. Pillay and Petersen (1996) recommended that in South Africa the inclusion of both an Afrikaans and English questionnaire may increase the response rate. The questionnaires were reviewed by two senior ranking academic psychologists, of whom one is a research methodologist, to ensure that the items were appropriate for the sample being studied and that the questions are appropriate for this particular study (assessing content and face validity). The questions in the survey are divided into demographic and content items. The demographic items provide descriptive information about the sample that includes data such as gender and race. A number of areas were explored in the qualitative results. They were the major foci of psychologists' work, challenges that face psychologists, psychologists' understanding of the term community psychology, their knowledge about community psychology, their views about a separate registration category for community psychology, psychologists' perceptions about both clients who seek community psychology services and practitioners who work in community psychology. They were also asked about factors that will encourage or discourage them from working in community psychology and about ways in which to encourage psychological work in communities.

#### **8.4.6. Procedure**

The research proposal for this study initially suggested that a web-based survey would be employed to gather data from registered psychologists. This plan was not possible, however, as the HPCSA does not provide e-mail addresses of registered psychologists. They provide only

postal addresses. Therefore a postal survey was undertaken in this research study. The major advantage of using mailed questionnaires is that it is a relatively cheap and quick way to reach many people. It also ensures anonymity as participant names are not usually included in the questionnaires (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995; Kane & O'Reilly-de Brún, 2001). The greatest disadvantage of mailed questionnaires however is the tendency for this procedure to generate a very low response rate, which many authors argue may compromise the quality and generalisability of the results. Yet various levels of response rate have been reported in the literature and there appears to be conflict in the literature as to what constitutes an acceptable response rate in social research (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995; Kane & O'Reilly-de Brún, 2001). Researchers nevertheless agree that low response rates are often obtained in postal surveys and response rates of lower than 50% are commonly reported (Babbie, 1995; Fife-Schaw, 2000; Huysamen, 1994; Kane & O'Reilly-de Brún, 2001; Mangione, 1995; Punch, 2003; Schofield, 2006). They further argue that a low response rate does not necessarily imply that the obtained data are of no value (Fife-Schaw, 2000).

A list of the names and addresses of psychologists in the Western Cape who had been registered for three years or more at the beginning of 2006, was obtained from the HPCSA. The pilot study sample consisted of all practitioners in the Cape Winelands district. While the list from the HPCSA was the only source from which the sample could be selected, it is also true that the list was imperfect (Schofield, 2006). Some practitioners were no longer living in the Western Cape for various reasons such as relocation to other parts of South Africa, death or emigration. A number of steps were taken to maximise the response rate in this postal survey. Both an Afrikaans and English questionnaire were mailed to the prospective participants, as suggested by Pillay and Petersen (1996). In addition, an incentive of four R350 book vouchers (one for the pilot study and 3 for the main study) was offered. Participants were encouraged to include their telephone numbers on completed questionnaires. These were detached and placed into a draw for the vouchers. Incentives were deemed to be important as the questionnaire was long, and professional psychologists are generally busy people. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was also included in the research package in an effort to increase the response rate.

#### **8.4.6.1. Pilot study**

A masters research student, collected the data for this study under my supervision as it constituted her research for her Masters thesis. For the pilot study, a mailing was done to the total sample (n=108). This mailing yielded a response rate of 21 % (23 responses). A response rate of between 20 and 30% is acceptable and normal for a first mailing in a postal survey (Dooley, 1995). Dooley suggests that a follow-up mailing is likely to increase the response rate up to 60%. Thus a follow-up mailing was done one month after the first mailing of questionnaires as another attempt to further increase the response rate (Babbie, 1995; Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995; Dooley, 1995). A further 8 completed questionnaires were returned with the second mailing, which increased the response rate to 29%. Apart from the 31 questionnaires, seven additional questionnaires that were received, could not be included in the study. The current occupants of the address provided by the HPCSA, indicated that the psychologist had relocated to another province in South Africa. Five prospective participants in the initial sample were excluded as they were no longer living in the Western Cape. This meant that the sampling frame itself, was reduced to 103 participants instead of the initial 108 participants. Therefore the data analysis was done with 31 responses from 103 mailed research packages, which constituted a response rate of 30%.

#### **8.4.6.2. Main study**

The main study was conducted in the remaining 4 health districts in the Western Cape as the pilot study was located in the other health district. A questionnaire package was mailed to 50% of the sampling frame (n=414) after the list provided by the HPCSA was cleaned. As a psychologist myself, I was aware of the fact that at least two psychologists who were still on the list had died, and one had relocated to Johannesburg. I cleaned the list by removing these names from the original list. Ninety two questionnaires were returned, of which 87 could be used. The remaining five questionnaires were unusable as the psychologists had emigrated or relocated to other parts of the country. Thus a response rate of 21% was obtained in the main study. In terms of the literature this response rate is moderate and acceptable (Dooley, 1995). The notion of response rate, itself, should be interpreted, especially when all methodological procedures in planning and executing a postal survey were followed, and all possible ways in which to maximise the response rate were adhered to. The imperfect data base of postal addresses issued

by the HPCSA creates an imperfect sampling frame and hence complicates the accurate calculation of response rate. Schofield (2006) has accurately noted that all these factors, and especially the issue of an imperfect sampling frame, need to be considered when commenting on the response rate of a postal survey.

#### **8.4.7. Data analysis**

The quantitative aspects of the questionnaire were analysed by utilising the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The quantitative analysis included two types of analyses in an attempt to answer the research questions above:

Firstly, descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, were employed to reflect patterns in demographic data of the sample. Secondly, chi square analyses were performed to establish if significant differences existed between variables such as race and community psychology and gender and community psychology. The qualitative components of the study were analysed using a combination of thematic interpretive content analysis, which included discourse analysis. These approaches to qualitative data analysis have been discussed in Chapter 6 and will not be repeated here.

#### **8.5. Ethical considerations**

The aims of the study were clearly communicated to potential participants in a cover letter and participants could choose to participate by returning the questionnaire. Thus both voluntary participation and informed consent were ensured. Furthermore, anonymity was protected by ensuring that the data provided could not be traced to a particular participant as no identifying labels or codes were recorded on the questionnaires and return envelopes. Yet, I reflect (in Chapter 5) on the fact that many participants know me and voluntarily disclosed their identities on the questionnaire. This was an unintended process and I have made all attempts to conceal their identities in the actual thesis.

## 8.6. Results

### 8.6.1. Pilot study

Table 19

*Difference between Black and White Practitioners in Terms of Community Psychology Practice: Pilot Study (n=31)*

Race	Community Psychology					
	Yes		No		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
White	4	13%	24	77%	28	90%
Coloured	0	0	2	6%	2	6%
Other	0		1	3%	1	3%
Total	4	13%	27	87%	31	100%

Table 19 above suggests that 13% percent of white psychologists worked in community psychology while 77% did not. It becomes evident that the numbers for Black senior psychologists (including Coloured) are very low in this region. The implication of this low frequency count is that statistically one would not calculate significant differences using Chi-Square (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2002). However, Pretorius (1995) suggests that all that failure to meet expected threshold cell frequencies means is that the sample size is small. This study, however, is a precursor to the main study and thus more emphasis will be placed on the outcome of the statistical analysis in the main study.

Table 20

*Difference Between Men and Women Practitioners in Community Psychology Practice: Pilot Study (n=31)*

Gender	Community Psychology				Total	
	Yes		No		N	%
	n	%	n	%		
Male	4	13%	13	42%	17	55%
Female	0	0	14	45%	14	45%
Total	4	13%	27	87%	31	100%

\*p<0.05

Table 20 above suggests that 13 % of practitioners work in community psychology and 87% of practitioners do not. Amongst the practitioners who work in community psychology, 13% are men and no women work in community psychology. Among the psychologists that do not work in community psychology, 42% are men and 45% are women. The results of the chi-square were as follows:  $\chi^2 = (df=1, n=31) = 3.782, p=0.076$ . The results suggest that there is not a significant difference between men and women in terms of their involvement in community psychology. In other words these groups defined here on the basis of gender do not constitute two distinct groups. This means that there is not a significant relationship between gender and community psychology.

### 8.6.1.1. Summary of results of pilot study

The results suggest that the difference between race and practitioners who work in community psychology, is inconclusive. The difference between gender and practitioners who work in community psychology, is not significant.

### 8.6.1.2. Summary of results of main study

Table 21

*Difference Between Black and White Practitioners in Terms of Community Psychology Practice: Main Study (n=84)*

Race	Community psychology				Total	
	Yes		No		f	%
	f	%	f	%	f	%
White	11	13%	65	77%	76	90%
Coloured	1	1%	6	7%	7	8%
Black	0	0	1	1%	1	1%
Total	12	14%	72	86%	84	100%

p<0.05

Table 21 suggests that 14% percent of psychologists worked in community psychology while 86% did not. Among the psychologists who worked in community psychology, 13% were white and 1% were coloured. Among those psychologists who did not work in community psychology, 77% were white and 8% were Black (Coloured, 7% ). The results of the chi-square were as

follows:  $\chi^2 = (df=2, n=84) = 0.169, p=0.45$ . The results indicate that there is significant difference in involvement in community psychology on the basis of race.

Table 22

*Difference Between Men and Women Practitioners in Community Psychology Practice: Main Study (n=87)*

Race	Community psychology				Total	
	yes f	%	no f	%	f	%
Male	4	5%	25	29%	29	33%
Female	9	10%	49	56%	58	67%
Total	13	15%	74	85%	87	100%

$p < 0.05$

Table 22 suggests that 15% of practitioners worked in community psychology, while 85% did not. Among those practitioners who worked in community psychology, 5 % were men and 10% were women. Among those practitioners who did not work in community psychology, 29% were men and 56% were women. The results of the chi-square were as follows:  $\chi^2(df=1, n=87) = 0.045, p=0.023$ . The results suggest that there is a significant difference between men and women in terms of their involvement in community psychology. In other words these groups defined here on the basis of gender constitute two distinct groups. This means that there is a significant relationship between gender and practitioners who engage in community psychology.

**8.7. Summary of results of main study**

The results suggest that the difference between race and practitioners who work in community psychology, is significant. The difference between gender and practitioners who work in community psychology, is significant. This means that there is a systematic way in which either black or white practitioners make choices to become engaged in community psychology. There are furthermore also systematic ways in which practitioners on the basis of gender, make choices to engage in community psychology.

### **8.7.1. Discussion of quantitative results**

#### **8.7.1.1. Summary and discussion of results of pilot and main studies**

In the pilot study, the results suggest that the difference between race and practitioners who work in community psychology, is inconclusive. The difference between gender and practitioners who work in community psychology, is not significant. However, in the main study, the results for both gender and race as contributors to decisions to work in community psychology are significant. While a link has been established between race, gender and community work, all that is clear is that a link exists. The nature of the link is not explained and can be explored in further research.

The presentation of results will now focus on the qualitative components of the study to examine how psychology practitioners view community psychology.

### **8.8. Qualitative Study**

The approach to analysis followed in this section, follows the interpretive approach (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Quotations from the text were numbered. They were reread and checked for themes and then placed under thematic heading categories and subsequently analysed discursively. It is for this reason that extracts appear to follow in logical sequence some of the time and not at other times.

#### **8.8.1. Results and discussion**

The format of the qualitative discussion will mirror the presentation and discussion of results in the previous chapter. Common themes and prevailing discourses will be presented. The themes that arose in the analysis of practitioner perceptions of community psychology will be discussed under the following headings:

- a) Definitions of community psychology
- b) Factors that encourage community psychology
- c) Factors that discourage community psychology
- d) Perception of clients
- e) Solutions for sparse community psychology work



Each theme will be discussed, in turn.

#### **8.8.1.1. Definitions of community psychology**

The thematic analysis of definitions of community psychology is based on the 12 extracts highlighted below.

Extract 1

*it is a catchall term that is becoming increasingly meaningless (participant 27, main study)*

Extract 2

*the distinction is meaningless. A psychology should be able to reach people where they live and be offered in a form acceptable to them (participant 18, pilot study)*

Extract 3

*Community psychology is an approach, rather than a field and I understand community psychology to be a mode of practice rather than a specialist field (participant 31, pilot study)*

Extract 4

*It is NOT therapy in townships, not the place of intervention but the approach (participant 15, pilot study)*

Extract 5

*Community psychology is really the public health arm of psychology-it is interested in prevention of mental health problems and the promotion of mental health. However, the term in this country is really used to mean primary care psychology that is available to the poor. While that may be one of the values of community psychology, this “psychology in the community” is NOT the same as community psychology. (participant 80, main study)*

Extract 6

*The current problem is that community psychology is seen as the stepchild of clinical psychology and therefore not as important. It is also seen as the psychology of the poor/marginalised and therefore not “real” psychology. I think that community psychology should be the basis of all training (participant 84, main study)*

Extract 7

*I feel really confused about this issue... whilst I can see how cosy it is to construct an entire training specific to community psychology work and how much more comprehensive such a training would be, the issue of perceived value and power attributed to the professional identity of clinical psychologist versus community psychologist feels very skewed in favour of clinical psychology. I am really concerned that community psychology is seen as the poorer second cousin and until this is acknowledged I would be reluctant to create an independent category for CP (participant 83, main study)*

Extract 8

*Community is always seen as a less professional entity... community psychology should cut across the various psychologies as each group should not be isolated from the other (participant 60, main study)*

Extract 9

*There may be the perception that community psychologists should get paid less and that community psychologists deliver poorer quality services than private services, for example. (participant 7, pilot study)*

Extract 10

*I think it is a false distinction and by making it separate, it allows many psychologists off the hook as they can rationalise that it is not their field/responsibility. We are all community psychologists. (participant 27, main study)*

Extract 11

*There should be community psychologists in so far as they should be working in critical contextual ways even when working with individuals. My concern would be the ghettoisation of this category (participant 11, pilot study)*

Extract 12

*there needs to be a greater and more tangible shift from a clinical to a more systemic and community development focus (participant 8, main study)*

In speaking about community psychology, consistent patterns reflecting the lack of clarity about the field, distinctions between community psychology and other forms of psychology, and stigmatisation of community psychology emerge. Community psychology was experienced as vague and meaningless (extracts 1 and 2). Practitioners were not sure whether it was an approach to or a subdiscipline of psychology (extracts 3-5). They compared community psychology to public health (extract 5) and to clinical psychology (extract 6-7). They also compared community psychology to other forms of professional practice (extract 8) and private service delivery (extract 9). In each instance of comparison, community psychology was perceived to be associated with the marginalised and therefore perceived to be lacking in some way. When conceptualized as public health practice it was viewed as a psychology for the poor (extract 5 and 6). The notion of community psychology not being of equal status to clinical psychology was frequently repeated. It was viewed as the “stepchild” of psychology (extract 6), not “real” psychology because it concerned itself with the issues of poor people (extract 6). It was also viewed as the “poorer second cousin” of community psychology (extract 6). With community psychology being viewed in this marginalised way, it was therefore perceived to be offering poorer quality services (extract 9) and that psychologists who work in this area should be paid less well than other who work in more “real” applications of psychology (extract 9).

Again, as in teacher perceptions (Chapter 6) and students perceptions (Chapter 7), practitioner perceptions also reflect community psychology as “the other”. This discourse of community psychology is again (as in previous chapters) reinforced as “the other”. However, there are alternative discourses to prevailing discourses that are reflected in the first 9 extracts and more specifically in extracts 10-12. The idea that community psychology is a curative intervention located in poor spaces, is challenged (extract 4). The perception that practices can be defined as community psychology when they exist in poor communities, is also challenged (extracts 4-5). Furthermore, community psychology is repositioned as an approach, and not as a subdiscipline (extract 3). Participants also argue that all psychologists should be exposed to community psychology as an approach (extracts 6, 10, 11) and that an individualistic approach should be challenged. (extract 12).

While many of the above comments hint at the identity of community psychology as a sub-discipline or approach, many other comments refer directly to the perceived identity of psychologists who engage in this field. The identity of psychologists is one of the factors that

are implied as being conducive to community psychology work. This theme, along with other factors supporting community psychology work, will be discussed.

### **8.8.1.2. Factors which encourage community psychological practice**

Practitioners thought that a number of factors predicted the likelihood to work in community psychology. These included gender, race, political awareness, awareness of diversity. They also suggested that there may be certain factors that predict who the clients of community psychological services are. These factors included raced, gendered and classed identities. The following quotes below illustrate these themes and will be discussed.

Extract 13

*generally tends to be female, not really race specific, can be any: tends to be less white due to poor pay and lack of understanding of social community issues e.g. rape in townships, violence, PTSD of families (participant 54, main study)*

Extract 14

*Black and coloured female psychologists with dependent personality traits or whites that are displaced as a result of guilt (participant 66, main study)*

Extract 15

*because of both issues of status and valuing or devaluing of community psychology work....predominantly female psychologists... either liberal "white guilt types"(I hope I don't fall in that category!) But maybe I do or people with a history of working as political activists- I guess in all black and white female psychologists with a strong sense of social justice (participant 83, main study)*

### **Gender and race**

Practitioners have clear views about who engages in community psychology, both as clients, and as service providers. They think that community psychologists consist predominantly of women, (extracts 13, 14, 15), both black (extracts 13, 14, 15) and marginalised whites (extracts 14, 15). Women psychologists are perceived to exhibit (unexplored) individual identity dynamics, ranging from guilt (extracts 14, 15) to dependent personality traits (extracts 15). There are implications that black women are more likely to work in this area as remuneration is poor

(extract 13). Black women are also likely to understand social problems more effectively (extract 13).

In order to work in community psychology, it is not only gender that counts. In addition, a number of inclusionary and exclusionary conditions co-exist with raced and gendered conditions, for community psychology practice. Practitioners suggest that they are included and excluded from community psychology. These inclusionary and exclusionary conditions for working in community psychology are reflected in the specific values and qualities that community psychologists are expected to have. Psychologists working in communities were typified as being politically aware (extracts 17, 43, 44). Additional qualities such as a frustration with theoretical limitations in psychology (extract 42) and public health values (41) were also deemed important. Practitioners also needed to have an awareness of diversity issues such as race, class and gender (extracts 18, 19) and needed to be able to speak an indigenous language (extract 21), apart from Afrikaans. These qualities were associated with blackness (17). The idea also existed that psychologists who came from poor black communities would be likely to work in black communities (extract 16). These themes require more discussion as they consist of multiple ideas.

### **Political awareness**

The extracts below suggest that community psychologists should be interested in social transformation, social justice and equality, (extracts 17, 43) and practice from within systemic frameworks. They should also be familiar with the struggles in communities (extract 44). It is also suggested that “white liberals” can be included in this category but that people who are politically aware are predominantly black.

Extract 17

*someone with an activist background i.e. an agitator for social change, commitment to social issues. Can include white liberals but mostly black psychologists who are cognisant of social inequities (participant 84, main study)*

Extract 43

*such a professional would tend to have a particular ideological orientation in terms of issues related to social transformation and the need for it. Values of justice and equality and a more systemic and holistic thinking and practice (participant 87, main study)*

Extract 44

*Psychologists working in communities will need to have familiarity with community struggle (participant 82, main study)*

### **Adherence to values**

This includes theoretical assumptions about psychology, public health values, diversity and intrinsic rewards. These will be discussed, in turn.

### **Frustration with theoretical limitations**

The quote below suggests that the theoretical limitations of a Western individualistic psychology is frustrating, in practice. The notion of the medical, curative model prevents creative ways of working.

Extract 42

*probably a person like myself who is frustrated with the limiting one dimensional position of Western psychology. We as psychologists, like doctors, are also trained to treat the “issue” rather than to respond creatively to a suffering but perhaps resilient person.(participant 18, pilot study)*

### **Public health values**

The extract below suggests that values that emanate from public health, such as prevention and promotion are deemed important. While reaching the underserved is not an explicit value of public health interventions, it is also mentioned here as a value important to community psychology.

Extract 41

*psychologists with public health values: prevention, reaching the under-served, promotion (participant 10, pilot study)*

## **Diversity**

The extracts below suggest that diversity, both in terms of representation (extracts 20, 28) and in terms of awareness (extracts 18, 19), were implied in this category. Race, gender, class, culture, age and language is viewed as important in facilitating work in community psychology.

Extract 18

*sensitivity to issues of race, gender, class, should they arise (participant 12, pilot study)*

Extract 19

*all psychologists by my definition should. But I think it is appropriate for a community psychologist to be accepted by the community where they negotiate entry which means that they must be sensitive to issues of language, gender, class, race, culture, age (participant 11, main study)*

Extract 20

*they must be able to speak Xhosa or a black language (participant 10, pilot study)*

Extract 28

*the cultural and language barriers and perhaps the shortage of registered therapists in black population groups. The strict selection process might influence this shortage” (participant 74, main study)*

## **Intrinsic rewards**

Some of the benefits that participants drew from working in community psychology were the intrinsic rewards in knowing that they were helping people who could not typically afford services.

Extract 39

*I know that I provide services to people who really need it (participant 12, pilot study).*

Extract 40

*There is a need for intervention (in the country). You could make a huge difference (participant 19, pilot study).*

The corollary to the above assumptions of inclusion, were assumptions about conditions that excluded psychologists from engaging in community psychology. These were perceived to be

racial identity, poor remuneration, individual qualities and feelings. These will be discussed, in turn.

### **8.8.1.3. Factors discouraging community psychology practice**

Factors that were perceived to discourage community psychological work are racial identity, poor remuneration, individual qualities and fears and the perception that they are not the right people for the job. These will be discussed in turn.

#### **Racial identity**

Extract 16 implies that whiteness, combined with a skills base inappropriate for community psychology practice excludes community work. The participant also does not have the required skills, and cannot work in communities.

Extract 16

*I'm too old to start something new. I can't think that I would get a job if one was available. I am too white and have the wrong experience and skills base at this stage (private practice). Practically, I think the time commitments would also be difficult to manage with family commitments (participant 17; main study)*

#### **Poor remuneration**

Community psychological work was perceived to be poorly paid (extract 30, 32) or voluntary work (extract 31). Participant 56 (extract 31) gives reasons as to why she cannot engage in community work. She suggests that she works part time and cannot afford to do community work.

Extract 30

*As the bread winner I do not perceive it to be financially viable" (participant 12, pilot study).*

Extract 31

*I work part-time so need to get maximum income in that time and I assume that community work to be poorly (if at all) paid" (participant 56, main study)*



*Extract 32*

*One would want to be adequately rewarded financially for work in the broader community (participant 7, pilot study).*

### **Individual qualities and feelings**

The quotes below suggest that negative feelings of despondency and anxiety were attributed to safety concerns and feelings of impotence about the magnitude of problems in communities. Practitioners felt unsafe in community work (extract 33) and felt that they would not be able to make a difference in the magnitude of social problems (extracts 34, 35). Problems were viewed as “unsolvable” and interventions were viewed as likely to be ineffectual (extract 35).

*Extract 33*

*I have a transport dilemma and don't know poor areas. I would feel unsafe (participant 71, main study).*

*Extract 34*

*The hopelessness of the situation, lack of support and the poor prognosis to make a noticeable difference (participant 22, pilot study).*

*Extract 35*

*I feel unskilled and ineffectual in addressing the weight of unsolvable social problems which I perceive to be integral to community psychology. At heart, I am a pessimist and an individualist. I find the thought of community intervention daunting and unlikely to be very successful (participant 24, main study).*

Other participants were not sure if they were appropriate for the job for various reasons. They felt that they lacked skills and awareness and that they would not be welcomed (extract 36), that there was a lack of opportunity for community work for them, personally (extract 37) and that they did not have opportunity (extract 37) and awareness for community work (extract 38)

*Extract 36*

*I don't know how to go about doing it – am not sure I would be welcomed (participant 10, pilot study)*

Extract 37

*There is a lack of opportunity for me to work in community settings (participant 12, main study)*

Extract 38

*I lack awareness as to how to offer services (participant 80, main study)*

In keeping with views of improved service provision expressed above, psychologists also made suggestions for improving inadequate mental health service provision. Most of these views revolved around the idea of training and curriculum.

#### **8.8.1.4. Solutions to providing adequate mental health services for all**

##### **Training and curriculum**

Practitioners suggested a community focus and exposure to communities during their training, as suggested in the extracts below:

Extract 45

*Psychologists should receive a definite strong community focus during their training period (participant 10, pilot study)*

Extract 46

*Adequate exposure to communities especially during training is necessary (participant 15, pilot study).*

Others offered more specific ideas about the curriculum for psychology both in terms of content and process. They suggested that practical skills, teachers of community psychology and levels of community psychology training be considered to engage future psychologists in community work. A shift from individualistic approaches was also suggested. These will be discussed, in turn.

##### **Practical skills**

Suggestions about practical skills are succinctly suggested in the following extract below:

Extract 47

*Practical skills, tools, –training in short term therapies such as CBT, for example, rather than long term therapy. More training in group dynamics, networking skills, training in*

*cultural diversity, training in how the legacy of apartheid impacted on psychological development. (We also need training in) public health values and skills such as intervention design, programme evaluation (participant 50, pilot study).*

### **Teachers of community psychology**

Practitioners also suggested that teachers who are interested in the area contribute to the training process. Training models should be introduced at undergraduate level and not only at Masters levels. The focus of training should also not only be problem based (extract 48). The length of training (extract 49) in community psychology should be extended at Masters level.

Extract 48

*training should be done by staff who are interested in area, content should not only be about social problems. (There should be an) extensive emphasis on community, not only a little module introduced alongside other aspects of psychology. It should be introduced at undergraduate level as professional ideas for practice are shaped way before Masters level (participant 82, main study)*

Extract 49

*Training should be at least a full semester, but preferably a full year course at professional training level (Masters) which is theoretical and practical. We need community psychology at Honours level too (participant 68, main study).*

### **Shift from individualistic approaches**

A strong emphasis was also placed on shifting from individualistic approaches as reflected in the quotes below:

Extract 50

*we must stop subscribing (at curriculum and university level) to the ideology of the individual (participant 18, pilot study)*

Extract 51

*we should move away from the strict dyadic focus in clinical training (participant 84, main study)*

Extract 52

*there should be more encouragement of self-reflexivity in trainees (participant 46, main study)*

## **8.9. Discussion**

The discussion section will focus on discourses in practitioner perceptions of community psychology. It will also compare and contrast both the themes and discourses reflected in student and practitioner perceptions of community psychology.

### **8.9.1 Discourses in practitioner perceptions of community psychology**

An analysis of the themes suggests prevailing discourses about community psychology. Community psychology is constructed as the “other” and therefore undesirable. Binaries about community psychology are created in order to construct community psychology as “the other”. Community psychology is positioned as a subdiscipline, rather than an approach. It is viewed as less professional than or the “poorer second cousin” of clinical psychology. It is also not “real” psychology when compared to other forms of psychology. It is furthermore viewed as providing poorer quality services to clients than other forms of praxis. Perceptions also marginalise service providers and clients in community psychology. While it is taken for granted that black women may want to work in community psychology reasons need to be found as to why white women engage in this work. White women in particular are pathologised as guilt ridden. Further assumptions about the relationship between professional representation and community psychology exist in practitioner perceptions about community psychology. It is suggested (extract 28) that community psychology services are poor because there are few black psychologists. Strict selection processes are blamed for this deficit. The assumption that frames this perception is that black people are incompetent and not competitive enough to be selected into professional training programmes.

As in the previous study, alternative discourses to the prevailing ones, are present in both practitioner perceptions. These discourses are important because they provide spaces for resistance to prevailing and less frequently reproduced discourses. Prevailing discourses are ones that have become “interiorised” and accepted as normality (Rabinow, 1984). This allows the exercise of power (Prilleltensky, 2003, Rabinow, 1984). In this study,

these alternative or counter-discourses revolve around definitions of community psychology and the intrinsic rewards gained by doing community psychology.

I have attempted to provide brief examples of how discourse operates in everyday language, through text in practitioner responses. A full discourse analysis, as in the previous chapter, will be impossible in the context of this whole study. This can be the subject of subsequent research.

### **8.9.2. Student and practitioner perceptions: Comparing and contrasting themes**

The discussion will focus on similarities and differences between student perceptions (reported in Chapter 8) and practitioner perceptions in terms of both the themes and discourses.

The themes about practitioner perceptions of community psychology explored in this research, suggest that there are similarities and differences between student and practitioner perceptions. These will be discussed, in turn.

Racial and gender identity of community psychologists was deemed important to both groups. However, practitioners were also perceived to include white women with specific qualities as potential service providers. Practitioners do not emphasise the class position of community psychologists, as students do. Racial, gender and class position of clients in community psychology were also elicited as themes common to both groups. The perceptions between students and practitioners are similar, with both groups viewing clients as black and poor. However, practitioners also emphasise the fact that clients are people who would not normally have access to adequate healthcare. Remuneration in community psychology services is viewed similarly among students and practitioners. Both groups feel that community services are poorly paid. Like students, some practitioners also tend to have negative views about community psychology and cite numerous reasons why they, too, should not engage in community psychological work.

There are also commonalities between students and practitioners as to why they are interested in community psychology. Both share the view of community psychology as intrinsically rewarding. They are motivated by political commitment (for practitioners) and values of social transformation (students). Students also value community psychology as giving them access to work in communities never exposed to before. The latter sentiment is not expressed by practitioners. The literature review on student perceptions about community psychology is

supported in the study of student perceptions (Callaghan, 2006; Gibson et al., 2001, Lesch, 1998, Ngonyama ka Sigogo et al., 2004, Pillay, 2003; 2007, Stevens, 2001). This literature also therefore appears to extend to practitioners. However, the sparse literature review that exists (indirectly) on practitioner perceptions of community psychology is not supported in the current study (Callaghan, 2006, Seedat, 1997, Stevens, 2001). This may be due to the fact that the nature of the existing literature is based on reflections of racial and gender dynamics. The literature does suggest that these dynamics are experienced as difficult to discuss among practitioners in contemporary South Africa (Swartz, 2007). Practitioners may therefore remain silent about such dynamics. The dynamics of interactions, however, may usefully be explored in Chapter 9, the study on psychologists' everyday talk about their profession.

### **8.9.3. Student and practitioner perceptions: Comparing and contrasting discourses**

A number of discourses about community psychology are shared by students and practitioners. The dominant discourse that community psychology is about "the other" is shared by both students and practitioners.

Students view community psychology as black and poor in terms of service provision and service delivery. In addition, practitioners include white women as service providers but these women are themselves stigmatized as "the other" in various ways. Both groups view community psychology as black and poor, dangerous, unsafe and demanding, in terms of emotions.

Practitioners furthermore view community work as disorganised, and a waste of time

This manifests in various ways. Community psychology is constructed as black in terms of both service providers and service users. It is also constructed as "community work" which is not perceived to be the core business of psychology. Lack of safety also therefore becomes a justificatory discourse for engaging exclusively in private practice, usually located in both black and white middle class communities. While a full discourse analysis of all aspects of students' perceptions is perhaps unwarranted in the total context of the study, it was perhaps important to give an example of how discourses shape and maintain practices. A full discourse analysis of this data can perhaps be reserved for future research projects.

Positive and counter hegemonic discourses to the dominant discourses are present in both practitioner and student perceptions. These discourses are important because they provide (in Foucauldian terms), spaces for resistance to dominant discourses that have become "interiorised"

and accepted as normality (Rabinow, 1984). In this study, these counter discourses revolve around the idea that doing community psychology can enrich life, both individually and collectively. These are also reflected in multiple justificatory discourses that emphasise contribution to social transformation in South Africa and intrinsic rewards.

### **8.10. Chapter summary**

This chapter has consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data investigating student perceptions of community psychology. As in the study on student perceptions of community psychology, the quantitative data suggest no empirical link between race and community psychology studies and gender and community psychology studies. Despite the lack of an empirical link, powerful discourses in practitioner perceptions appear to have shaped and maintained race and gender as core components of community psychology. These discourses have therefore contributed to normalising assumptions that race and gender are intricately linked to community psychology. The chapter also suggests, however, that counter-hegemonic discourses about community psychology also exist. The next, and final study in this series will focus on study will follow a similar format, but will focus on practitioner perceptions of community psychology.

The dominant discourse that pervades practitioner perceptions of community psychology is that community psychology is about “the other”. The quantitative data suggest no empirical link between race and community psychology and gender and community psychology. Yet significantly powerful discourses in practitioner perceptions shape and maintain race and gender as core components of community psychology. These discourses have therefore contributed to normalising assumptions that race and gender are intricately linked to community psychology. The chapter, like Chapter 7 on student perceptions of community psychology, also suggests, however, that counter-hegemonic discourses about community psychology exist. While the first three studies were based on survey research methodologies, the next and final study in this series, is based on focus group methodology. As such the next chapter will focus on practitioner perceptions of professional identity in the “everyday talk” of psychologists about their profession.

## CHAPTER 9

### PSYCHOLOGISTS TALK ABOUT THEIR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

#### 9.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on how senior psychologists talk about their everyday experiences in their professional lives. It is important to hear how psychologists experience what is perceived to be “real psychology” and “community psychology” in order to make sense of community psychology in a broader context. It is also important to do this as it appears that much of the debate thus far suggests that community psychology is experienced as “the other”. This leaves assumptions about other forms of practice intact, suggesting that a homogenous experience exists for all psychologists who engage in other forms of practice.

#### 9.2. Aims

The aims of the study are:

1. to explore how psychologists talk about their professional identities
2. to explore how community psychology is positioned in their professional identities.

#### 9.3. Methodology

##### 9.3.1. Design

This study was initially conceptualized as using 30 individual interviews as data. However, the methodology was substituted by 3 focus groups as the complexity of information and contestation of ideas arising from focus groups is well documented (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999; Crossley, 2002; Cunningham-Burley, Kerr & Pavis, 1999; Fern, 2001; Lehoux, Poland & Daudelin, 2006). According to Crossley (2002) focus groups are essentially social spaces. The focus group becomes a microcosm of broader societal processes that become evident during group interactions. Debates, conflicts and ambiguities occurring in the group often mimic social processes that impact on the identity of group participants. A particular reality is co-constructed in the context of the focus group and perceived individual attitudes are often mediated in the group context. Thus this methodology was deemed more suitable than individual interviews as the purpose of the research was to



explore how psychologists think about and engage with their professional identities. The methodology is also consistent with social constructionist approaches to research. As mentioned before the application of discourse analysis in this study is limited, as this study cannot undertake an in-depth discourse analysis as a result of the size of the study. This can, however, be done in future research.

### 9.3.2. Participants

Three focus groups were conducted with senior psychologists from across the greater Cape Town area. Psychologist in the sample converged at two university settings in Cape Town to participate in the focus groups. Table 23 below provides a description of demographic characteristics of participants.

Table 23

*Demographic Characteristics of Focus Group Participants*

Race	First Language	Gender	Group 1 (n=5)	Group 2 (n=6)	Group 3 (n=6)	Total
		Male	1	0	2	3
		Female	4	6	4	14
White			4	2	3	9
Black			1	3	4	8
		Age (average)	50yrs	43yrs	40yrs	
		Age (range)	34-57 yrs	35-44 yrs	33-49 yrs	
	Afrikaans		4	1	0	5
	English		1	5	6	12
		Years registered (average)	12	12	12	
		years registered (range)	6-28yrs	7-17	5-19	
		Employment				
		Academic	4	2	1	7
		Private practice	1	2	2	5
		Public health and community	0	2	3	5

Table 23 illustrates that there were 17 participants across the 3 groups, of whom 3 were men and 14 were women. There were 9 white participants and 8 Black (coloured) participants. They had been professional psychologists for an average of 12 years. In group 1, there was 1 man and 4 women, of whom 1 woman was Black. In group 2, there were only women, of whom 4 were Black. Group 3 consisted of 2 men and 4 women. There were 2 white women, 2 Black women, 1 white man and 1 black man. Their average age was 50 and ranged from 34-57 years. Participants had been registered on average for 12 years and 7 members of the group worked in academia, while 5 each worked in public health and private practice settings. Five group members were Afrikaans speaking and 12 were English speaking. The average age of the group was 43 (range 35-44 years). The questions of whether focus groups need to be representative of the populations from which they have been drawn, and that of whether the composition of the focus group should be homogeneous have been widely discussed as methodological considerations in the literature (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999; Crossley, 2002). Fern (2001) is critical of the literature that suggests that group homogeneity is desirable in focus groups and argues that the value of homogeneity is debatable, as heterogeneity may contribute to the variety of ideas generated in the group. While the groups were homogenous in terms of professional training and to a large extent, gender, they were heterogeneous on many other counts such as race, age and class background. In addition, other dimensions of heterogeneity existed in the group. There were complex balances of power and oppression evident in the microcosm of psychologists and moderator in each group. Professional and social power imbalances existed in each group. Some participants held higher job status than others or were more experienced. Other positions of social power such as whiteness, maleness or class background were evident. The moderator's position of power and oppression has been discussed previously (Chapter 5) and was also likely to have an impact on group dynamics. With all the different points of diversity in the group, it was virtually impossible to achieve homogeneity and in these groups heterogeneity could potentially contribute to the variety of ideas generated during discussion.

### **9.3.3. Procedure**

A list of telephone numbers of senior psychologists who were working in the greater Cape Town area was compiled from various sources. The sources included administrative staff

at the three psychology departments, senior psychologists in the Western Cape hospital system and websites of academic departments. Venues and time slots were booked at two universities in the Western Cape. The groups were intended to consist of 6-8 participants each as this number constitutes the optimal group size (Fern, 2001). A larger pool of psychologists had to be telephoned as there were many refusals to participate in the focus groups. The refusal was understandable from various points of view. Psychologists are busy professionals and could not necessarily fit into the time schedules of planned groups. For those who are self-employed in individual private practice, client appointments are often secured in advance and it would disrupt the therapeutic frame to shift client appointments unless it was crucial. The way in which I framed the focus group to participants was also important. I had ten out of ten refusals when framing the group as a discussion about community psychology in South Africa. Many psychologists said they do not work in communities or do not know much about community psychology. When framing the focus group discussion in terms of professional identity, a slightly more positive response was obtained. Approximately 50 psychologists were telephoned and 17 agreed to participate. They chose the focus group that was most convenient to them in terms of the most suitable time and venue. I conducted all the groups during February 2007. I started each group by asking psychologists to reflect on their training and how it has impacted on their professional identity. At a later stage in the group, participants were also asked to reflect on the impact of community and difference on their professional identity (see Appendix 7). While most focus groups usually last approximately 1.5 hours, the current groups were approximately one hour long. They were all conducted during lunch hour as all participating psychologists took time from work to participate in the groups. A digital voice recorder was used to document the discussion after gaining permission to do so from each group. The groups were transcribed for analysis by an independent transcriber. I checked the transcription for errors and omissions by listening to the recording while reading the text.

### **9.3.3. Data Analysis**

The unit of analysis was the content and the process of the groups. As in the previous studies, a combined thematic and discourse analysis was used to analyse focus group transcripts. This method is appropriate as it allows an analysis of dominant discourse and

counter discourses as psychologists' speak about their professional identities and the implied power relations inherent in these.

#### **9.4. Results and Discussion**

The main themes that arose across the three focus groups are feelings of incompetence among psychologists, feelings of disillusionment with psychology, impacts of perceived narrow training on psychologists professional experience, legitimacy as a psychologist, difference encountered in professional practice, conflicts that community psychology engenders in training and professional practice and financial concerns about professional practice. These themes will be discussed, in turn. The format of data presentation that follows will be slightly different from that used in the previous chapters. In this chapter, the ensuing discussion will be supported by quotes from speech extracts and some comment will also be made on the group dynamic.

##### **9.4.1. Feelings of incompetence among psychologists**

Despite many years of experience as psychologists, participants held strong feelings of incompetence, at times. This is reflected in the extract 1, focus group 2, below. Linda suggests that she feels incompetent she feels and the sense of competition she experiences in having to think about colleagues' practices. She also hints at the anxiety involved in running a private practice and in so doing exposes her doubt. Linda receives support from Susan and Norma who use humour to support Linda in her doubt. At another level this also suggests that psychologists, particularly those in private practice, compete for resources. This may lead to feelings of incompetence. This is expressed by Linda, Norma and Susan as not "feeling like seniors"

Extract1, focus group 2

*Linda: I don't know how other people do it and I wonder am I running things in the correct way, or the best way.*

*Susan: The business end, the business end of psychologists, is absent.*

*Linda: I remember when you said we are senior, I still don't feel like I'm a senior, I still feel like everyone else. You know, I think you guys, are working in different fields, but if you are private, you know, you are always thinking about, how are other people doing,*

*and are their private practices fuller, and what are they charging? One thinks all that and to really feel confident..... and I didn't really feel that confident in my work.*

*Susan: I was also in a bit of a spot*

*(everyone speaking at same time)*

*Linda: What constitutes senior?*

*Facilitator: Three years and more.*

*Norma: No excuses for us! We're like triple seniors, we're like super seniors!*

#### **9.4.2. Feelings of disillusionment with psychology**

Factors that contributed to disillusionment with psychology were the perceived narrow focus of professional training and conflicts between institutional systems and job satisfaction. Susan suggests that she would have liked broader exposure in her own training so that possibilities of a range of forms of professional practice, like community psychology and research, for example, could have been modeled to her. She suggests that support can be collective even after completion of training as feelings of isolation often ensue when entering new jobs. Her view is supported by other group participants in that they share their experiences of the narrow focus of training and how they would have liked multiple inputs on ways in which to be a psychologist. Their supporting statements implicitly validate Susan's view as a group view.

Extract 2, group 2

*Susan: I was thinking what would have made the training more useful is to have what we had, but perhaps consolidated as one piece of the training. With other options offered...the training staff that I was exposed to..... its like replicating the same, it's like a very insular thing where, the trainers are themselves, only exposed to their training environment. So they train within those lines. So if you try to get outside of it, in the instance of looking at the community psychology thing..... there's no focus on your development as a psychologist in the course. All you're expected to do is to go to therapy and work on your issues. But you're not expected to work on your professional development in your training, or to actually get a hold on how you're going to be in terms of your professional development. There's no mentoring, there's no networking of you to*

*others, kind of elders in your field, you're out there alone in your private practice , or in your first job, with your brand new job description thinking "How do I put my clinical skills into this job that I have?". It's a massive amount of under utilised opportunities for making that training experience more valuable. And its almost impossible to talk about how my training, influenced my professional development because of the trampoline effect. Because actually for the last number of years I've been a psychologist , every year is a new training. I mean I used to do five year cycles. You know I was in this for five years, and I was in that for five years, I'm now .....for five years, a baby again, starting now, in research. So, that's another severely lacking component of our training, you don't get. As far as social scientists, we should get a good grounding in research training, and you don't.*

The discussion in focus group 2 continues below (extract 3, group 2) and focuses on how a disjuncture often exists between job satisfaction and institutional systems, leaving participants feeling disillusioned with psychology. Mary is left having to use aspects of her skills in the public service setting. This leads to frustration with work in (hospital) public service settings which ultimately results in psychologists searching for employment in different contexts. The inability of a specific context to meet all the skills that psychologists have, is often mentioned. This leads to frustration and psychologists leave, seeking employment in which they may use and develop other skills. This seems to happen in 5 year cycles (extract 2, focus group 2, extract 3, focus group 2). Thus psychologists are left feeling that "psychology does not fit them".

Extract 3, group 2

*Mary: I think the interface between working in private, and now suddenly working in the public service....and to try in some ways to make the right choice and find what's, valuable in that system (of public health), its almost impossible. I sometimes don't know what to do .....I feel quite happy with myself, as a therapist, given my age and then I'm suddenly completely at a loss as to how do people make use of that, which I find valuable.*

*Norma: Are you at a psychiatric hospital?*

*Mary: Ya, I work at the old (name of hospital)*

*Norma: Some of us have taken similar courses in that direction then have eventually moved out of that system. Uhm, I can't even remember how and why I became a psychologist. (everyone laughing) it was a very reluctant affair, from the start. I think because of my politics, in a way it was some means of knowing that we need black psychologists.*

*Norma: I was always interested in more than one thing, That was a problem, .....educational development, and health. Not necessarily mental health. The mental health then became, you know, the focus. So I don't think I'm the ideal person to comment on that, because psychology is never going to be a perfect fit with me, unlike the everyday therapists, in that sense. And my whole career is basically. I've changed sort of every five years, you know. I've taken a slight sort of backseat, but not completely, because that would be a bit foolish.*

#### **9.4.3. Impacts of narrow focus of training**

Extract 4, focus group 2 highlights how the perceived narrow focus of training has impacted on psychologists in a number of ways. Norma feels that she has acquired a set of skills that are transferable across settings while Amy feels stigmatized as incompetent when doing psychological work other than psychotherapy. When Susan also accentuates Norma's opinion that professional training provides a specific set of skills that can be applied broadly, Amy agrees that she thinks like a psychologist despite the fact that she distances herself from the label. (Stevens, 2001) also describes this double bind in professional experience. According to Lehoux et al. (2006), the group dynamics suggest some contestation from Norma which is supported by Susan, when Amy distances herself from the psychologist label. The contestation of Amy's opinion allows her to rethink and shift her opinion. The group voice, including that of Susan and Norma, does not ignore the notion of psychologists feeling stigmatized when doing work other than psychotherapy. It suggests that psychologists have a set of skills that they are able to apply broadly when they can consolidate their feelings about working beyond the internalised boundaries of psychotherapy as professional practice. This step is experienced as liberating and allows psychologists to experience multiple work settings, while consistently remaining a psychologist. This is eloquently expressed by Susan in extract 4, focus group 2, as follows:

Following Susan's statement, Amy, who had been resistant to the label, "psychologist", reaches new insight and agrees with Susan.

Extract 4, focus group 2

*So in every job that I'd been, I'll always find that my core identity is that I'm a psychologist, whether I was training manager for mental health, for the province, or I was a research manager. In wherever, in my job as a researcher officer, you know those skills that you're talking about, that basic skills, you draw on your theoretical backgrounds, and you look at the psychological processes. I mean, that's what happened to me, and that's what I think I really got from the training, that I was to un-entangle myself as a professional, .....psychologically, and use those psychological processes whether I'm working with an individual, a company, a couple, a family, a group, an organization, a health department, etc. I think when I'm looking at how psychology and my broadening within the last few years happened I feel, psychology is limiting itself, by staying only in that one section. In fact it does a lot. You know you've got therapists, you've got academics, you've got policy makers, you've got practitioners, you've got district developers. All of them, with their base line training as psychologists, and psychologists are exceptionally good, at that kind of thing. You adapt, you flow with the setting, and you actually make it happen, for the same purpose, to help people.*

Extract 5, focus group 2

*Norma: I'm happy that there's some kind of training, that on some level has given me skills that, I think other people didn't get, because they didn't do the course. I think social workers need to do it, by making an extra effort by doing their clinical masters. I think there's this sort of identity crises, `professional identity crises, around, that if I do that, then maybe I'm a social worker. Uhm so, I think that I've kinda let go of those crises, because maybe its appropriate for you as psychological worker, to be doing things, that looks like its social work.*

*Facilitator: Do you hear a lot of that? Like, if I do that, I'm a social worker.*

*Amy: I think that if you don't practice as a psychotherapist, then there's, for me, a stronger internal voice around, ya, you're not doing psycho therapy, so how can you be a*



*psychologist, cause you can't do that well enough, so then you go, tinker with community development, or policy development, or social work, or whatever.*

*Susan: Now I have a slightly different experience, I kind of listened to you ....I'm sort of on the edge of that, and then I veer away. And I think what is the differences here, and I come back to your question of professional identity. You know I came from a community development perspective. I chose the clinical course, cause I felt that, if I'm more psychologically minded, I will have a theoretical and practical tool. I would be a better community worker. So I came in here, I got my slice of .....as you said earlier, but it (the training) didn't connect practically with the community work I was doing. I went into quite a few clinical settings, in psychiatric hospitals..... built up my clinical skills there. I went to a long bout at court, and then I catapulted out of that, and went into provincial policy development, but I was still a psychologist. So in every job that I'd been, I'll always find that my core identity is that I'm a psychologist, whether I was training manager for mental health, for the province, or I was a research manager. In wherever, in my job as a researcher officer, you know those skills that you're talking about, that basic skills, you draw on your theoretical backgrounds, and you look at the psychological processes. I mean, that's what happened to me, and that's what I think I really got from the training, that I was to un-entangle myself as a professional, .....psychologically, and use those psychological processes whether I'm working with an individual, a company, a couple, a family , a group, an organization, a health department, etc. I think when I'm looking at how psychology and my broadening within the last few years happened I feel, psychology is limiting itself, by staying only in that one section. In fact it does a lot. You know you've got therapists, you've got academics, you've got policy makers, you've got practitioners, you've got district developers. All of them, with their base line training as psychologists, and psychologists are exceptionally good, at that kind of thing. You adapt, you flow with the setting, and you actually make it happen, for the same purpose, to help people. Whether its to develop a policy, to set up or organize a group, a program for helping kids, in whatever the setting. It's the same set of skills, and we know automatically how to adapt, and we do it so well, that you actually don't even notice, you're doing it.*

*Amy        You know I find it quite interesting. I find it quite ironic.....its going against the idea of defining myself as a therapist, perhaps .....stop counseling, my work is an academic because, students come and you have to listen to their life stories, and I haven't gotten to a point, like some of my colleagues do. To say, tough, I'm not interested, you know, just hand in your essay. So, you end up doing exactly that. You actually use those skills, and you kind of have the sense of how my mind's working and there's definitely some kind of anxiety issues around, or this person's a candidate for depression. It just happens. So its quite interesting that, even though you kinda fight with that label, it's a personal struggle for me. I still use those skills, I sit down, I maybe talk and I listen, make referrals if necessary. I think this person should be in hospital, or would you like the name of a therapist, you do actually use it! You know, even though professionally, my job title is a lecturer. You know, that's what I do, but as I say, I'm still a psychologist, inside.(others agreeing)*

#### **9.4.3.1. Legitimacy as a psychologist**

While the activities that define legitimacy as a psychologist have been dealt with briefly in the previous extract, this issue is more extensively discussed in a temporally subsequent extract from focus group 2. Susan implicitly agrees with other group members that long term therapy appears to be more legitimate than other psychological activities. She offers a solution (of writing about other psychological practice experiences) to contest this stereotypical notion of legitimate practice. Up until this point in the discussion, most participants have implicitly or explicitly agreed that psychologists all feel that long term psychotherapy is legitimate as a practice area while other psychological activities are not. Mary, however, takes a risk in the group and offers a completely different opinion. She suggests that in her experience a psychologist does legitimate work only if it entails community work and that long term psychotherapy is viewed with suspicion. It is interesting that no-one contests Mary's view and it therefore remains an implicit group view.

Extract 6, focus group 2

*Susan:     There's the whole thing about doing long term therapy and being legitimate. I've listened to everybody speak here (in the group), everybody 's doing valuable work,*

*but we're not writing it up, we're not actually saying, from ten years of experience, that I've had, I want to contribute this. This is what I find. In my practice I'm focusing on brief term therapy, and have asked about people that come to me....what actually works? What makes people go away, and say they've been satisfied with psychological services. So that's the things we should be writing up. If you have people that can afford long term therapy that's fine, we should do that, but there are other applications, as well, which we shouldn't feel guilty about, out there. We should be saying "this is okay, this is real work". This is what we need, this is our psychological service. This is the brief experience that we have or this is what we think works, or doesn't work, for us. . I don't think we're doing enough of that.*

Extract 7, focus group 2

*Mary: I'm not just saying it as a psychologist. It's a political question., and I think that's the problem, its that every,..... you know you guys talk about psycho-therapy(too fast) and about legitimate, and why we try to do certain things as a psychologists. But from where I come from, its about if you're doing something for the community. Then you're legitimate. If you're like a psycho- therapist, you need to find a practice , but in the long term you know, you're not legitimate, you know what I'm saying? So I think it's a political issue, and I think the struggle, if you want to say , what have your experiences been, it's a typical struggle with anything'. The first is that its political ....where do you sell the individual within the political context?*

#### **9.4.4. Difference across various dimensions in psychology**

Extract 8, focus group 2 follows immediately after the discussion on legitimacy which appears to have evoked other feelings about other dimensions of difference. Amy describes the dynamics of how she experiences racism, on both an individual and institutional level. These dynamics are also reflected in the studies by Callaghan (2006) and Stevens (2001). These forms of racism are connected to questions around her legitimacy as a black psychologist. She also describes how her students match blackness with training institution to determine a hierarchy of legitimacy as a psychologist. In this hierarchy, a black psychologist that trained at a historically white university occupies a higher status of legitimacy than a black psychologist trained at a historically black university. Norma

supports Amy's assertion by suggesting that she is often asked where she, as a black psychologist, trained. Amy, clearly feeling safe in the group, shares experiences of institutional racism where she as a black psychologist teaches community psychology. She feels that she colludes with a perception that black academics are better suited to teach community psychology which describes the experiences of poor, black people. The notion that a subdivision of subject areas which are thought to be appropriate for black psychologists exists, is supported by Norma who relates similar experiences in a different context. To some extent, Norma also challenges Amy's collusion in perpetuating stereotypes about herself as a black psychologist. Norma provides a fairly aggressive response as a rebuttal to her being asked to do anti-racist work. This implicitly is intended as a response to be emulated by Amy.

Extract 8, focus group 2

*Amy: You know I'm just thinking in terms of my own experiences here, both as a student, and now working here as well. You know often, for me, kind of promoting being a psychologist, is important, particularly from a race perspective, because for students to see a black psychologist teach them, in this day and age at (name of university) is quite a big thing, you know. Because "uhm you know, I'm not too sure if you're a real psychologist" I'm often asked.*

*Norma: They ask you "Where did you train?"*

*Amy Oh yes, that's the big thing. And then I turn back and say "I trained at (name of historically white university (HWU))."*

*Norma: People think it's the same at (name of historically black university (HBU)).*

*Amy They say, "you, didn't tell me that you didn't train at (name of HBU)*

*Norma: Still at a Bush College.....(derogatory name given to historically black universities by black people as part of resistance politics in South Africa during the 1960s and subsequently)*

*Amy: It's interesting, cause, I've had a lot of students coming to ask me that question*

**Facilitator:** *There's a lot of stereotyping amongst students?*

*Amy: There's a lot of stereotyping. There's a lot of students that ask "does (name of HWU) offer the best training?" and of course if you're a black student at (name of HWU), that's now another little tick next to your name, if you manage to become part of the programme.*

*Norma: I've gotten that a lot*

*Amy You become legitimised immediately, because of the training institution that you come from. And particularly the fact that I'm black, a black woman, that trained at a predominantly, at that time, a predominantly white institution, is a big thing. So, you know what we've tried to do, is to promote more black people to start teaching. And I mean it was quite interesting, because from the past, this clinical community course, the community stuff was taught by myself, the clinical stuff, was taught by my white colleagues. And I mean, what were we doing? It took me a while to realize.....*

*Norma: You know, that black people are the ones who are the big experts here, about the community, the poor community*

*Amy: Precisely, precisely.*

Extract 9, focus group 2

*Norma: Its just sort of forming our own stereotypes in a way. When someone asked me to do an anti-racist workshop or something with them, I said "what do I know about racism?" "I may have been the victim of it,. You shouldn't be asking me, you should be asking some white person" .So, you know, just to rephrase things, on the head a little bit. Just because you're black, and you've been oppressed, you must always have experience about oppression. But maybe, in terms of looking forward on a professional level, I'm not gonna want to do continuous professional development courses, when its about therapy, and if there are no alternatives for me, then basically I'm being streamed out by my professional organization, out of being a psychologist. So, I have to, I have to grasp at straws and convince them the*

*conference about district development has some benefit for me ...to develop as a psychologist.*

The participants in group 2 further reflect on instances of racism where Amy feels that black students devalue the legitimacy of western theories about individual psychological processes and therefore feel uncomfortable in their roles as therapists. Amy suggests that black students are set up by training staff to work in the community. Mary initially disagrees with her and suggests that all trainee psychologists are significantly encouraged to engage in community work. Yet, despite the disagreement, Mary still supports Amy when she momentarily blames herself for accepting her role as being destined for the community. At this point Mary supports her view that it was perhaps institutionally orchestrated for her to engage with community work. Norma seeks solutions to the apparent oscillation between community work and individual therapy among students and suggests that training institutions should provide clearer guidelines for the purpose of training psychologists. She shares her own prejudice when students talk about training for individual therapy and also her skepticism when they talk about their interest in community work. By suggesting clear selection guidelines from academic institutions, she also covertly suggests that it will provide her with better guidelines as a member of selection panels for professional training. The extract where race is discussed is interesting, as black psychologists, especially Amy and Norma, claim much of the group space with little opportunity being claimed in this space by white psychologists. When Mary and Linda (white psychologists) do speak, they do so briefly. It appears that the group may be enacting exactly that which black psychologists would like to avoid; the notion of black people being uniquely qualified to talk about race. By the same token it appears as if the white psychologists do not feel that it is a space that they can legitimately claim and hence remain almost silent. This dynamic is similar to that reported by Eagle (2005) when she discusses racial identity in relation to “voice” and “silence” about culture.

Extract 10,: focus group 2

*Norma: I could be wrong here, but I have this feeling that a lot of black people who trained, ...they've got this perspective that "I've got this discomfort with being a therapist, per se, we're doing something else, something that is more useful, or something*

*that is not so conventional in a sort of European type of practice” So clearly that for me that is an indication of a political background. That coloured and black people, come in already with a particular agenda, which does not fit with the sort of conventional western-based training, framework, right. So we can’t challenge it ideologically, because we need to learn what people wrote about the internal world from a western philosophical perspective. So we need to learn that, but then, we challenge it, in different ways. By finding different ways of working, and by not wanting to acknowledge ourselves as therapists, and by de-professionalising as well, you know.... saying, “no, psychology, is just, is just nothing”.*

*Facilitator: Is it things that black people do?*

*Amy: Not necessarily. There are problems, that are beyond the individual rule of intervention which they feel appeal to us, more, because we want to make more of a difference, on a bigger level. And I feel we cannot change the society, that’s where the problem lies with one person at a time. There’s the psychological sort of training that conventionally assumes that that’s okay, and you can be comfortable with that. But we’re saying, I think, we feel that politically in this country, that’s a luxury. So, that’s always been a debate, and I remember at that psychiatric conference, the first time we had an international psychiatric conference, I think there was a massive fight, virtually, almost a stand up fight, between black psychologists, and white South African psychologists. On this issue.*

*Facilitator: And have those tensions remained?.....*

*Norma I think they remain, because the training or the perspectives haven’t changed.*

*Linda I was just gonna say, I was at a group of (not clear) somebody from South Africa who came here, from England, who said, race isn’t an issue. And I was presenting something about racial issues. He actually said there’s no such issue, its just differences, and difference is the same.*

*Amy I also one time wondered whether black and coloured students, aren’t set up in some way, when they come into a program. Because I’ve sat in selections where people (selection panel staff) often say, “oh, I think they’ll go back, and work in the community”, with reference to black and coloured students, who get accepted into a program. And you*

*know, that's an assumption. That's what they (staff) want, and I'm wondering if it doesn't filter through in some way,..... unconsciously. That we kind of buy into this stuff, I don't know.*

*Mary: I believe that if you don't vote for the community, you're almost out.*

*Amy: Its almost as if, "she's gonna go back you know, and she's gonna work in the community", He's gonna go out and work in (poor coloured Cape Flats community) and he's gonna work in (poor, black community). You know I'm wondering about that, because it never gets said to the candidate, but I've heard people say, and I'm wondering, how does that filter through in the training. I don't know, in my own training, whether, maybe, subliminally, I got those messages, but I always felt that I was at a disadvantage, cause I came in with a very weak theoretical background, compared to some of my classmates, who come out here, and have read everything. And I thought "oh my god... how am I maybe gonna learn all of this stuff"*

*Facilitator: Did they say any of those things?*

*Amy: Ya, and they said their own too,.....but I bought into that thoughts.*

*Mary: But I wonder if that doesn't have something to do, that you do get set up.*

*Amy: Not set-up. I use that term very loosely. In some way, because I always hear this thing about, "Oh, she's gonna go back to her community, or to her country."*

*Norma I think it's the same for whites too. I mean I've been sitting on selection committees, and the white students say "I'm here to train as a therapist", but some of them get clever, and they say "well I'm going to do community work" and when I hear they say "I'm here to train as an individual therapist, my back gets up. Then I say are we gonna be training just another person, whose gonna make a difference, or someone whose just gonna sit and moan. That's the difference, one person at a time, but then that's acceptable The thing for me is, psychology, and academia and training institutions, can do a bit more reflecting on what are they basically training for? Why and how are they set up for that?*

Extract 11 below is taken from focus group 3 and reflects language and social class as dimensions of difference that presented challenges to psychological work. All the



participants who reflected on this issue in some way, feel inadequate, guilty or ashamed of a perceived shortfall. In some way they all experience dichotomies of existence around difference whether those differences be race, class or language. Leonie and Owen were concerned about their lack of language skill in Xhosa and Afrikaans, respectively. Owen reflects on how his stereotypes of intersecting identities of race and language were challenged when he started to work in another part of Cape Town. His assumption was that white Afrikaners speak standard Afrikaans and coloured people spoke colloquial Afrikaans. Yet he encounters coloured people who speak standard Afrikaans on a daily basis.

Rowan was particularly challenged by his recognition of his own class privilege and how that was perpetuated in his private practice work. Both Owen and Rowan reflect on their class identities in relation to space. They acknowledge how occupying different spaces have shifted their own notions of language and class identity. Whereas Eva also reflected on her class position, she focused on what her identity as a professional psychologist meant for both her and her family. She describes an experience of occupying two different worlds; one that contains her professional self and the other that contains her private self. She engages support for this notion by drawing on an example of Carmelita's who described her own dissonant experience as a black psychologist entering a white world. Many black feminist writers echo these sentiments of simultaneously having to occupy many worlds (Hill Collins, 2001; Hooks, 1984).

Extract 11, focus group 3

*Leonie: I constantly feel like a failure in terms of language. I feel so limited and Afrikaans has been bad but my Xhosa is even worse. I am constantly aware that this remains a huge area of limitation within me.*

*Rowan: I am thinking about different sort of worlds. I mean I remember when I had a part time practice. I used to get referrals from the clinic and it felt like a more diverse population group, and having gone into full time private practice now, the referral base is different. It feels like it's become a much more limited range of people that come.*

*Facilitator: In which way now?*

*Rowan: Higher income. Basically, all sort of middle class people, or upper income brackets. And you don't get Afrikaans speaking people, Sort of a City Bowl, sort of*

*Atlantic, you know, a bit of Southern Suburbs. (These are all middle to upper middle class income areas of Cape Town) It feels like it kind of reflects on how divided the city is. Nothing from the Northern Suburbs. It feels like you get caught into a very particular, kind of niche.*

*Carmen: But do you find it in some ways inside of you? Is it easier?*

*Rowan: Yes and no, I mean yes because it's sort of it feels like you know lots of English and middle class so that is sort of there. But it also is harder because you know living in the society with all the sort of issues. I mean being aware of the fact that it's actually only 20 minutes drive from the Flats (poorer parts of Cape Town).*

*Owen: For me it's been about just adapting to the environment that I am practicing in. I am predominantly English speaking, Cape Malay from the Southern Suburbs, born and bred in Lansdowne (historically middle class coloured suburb) but I am practicing out in Kuils River (the coloured part of Kuils River) and Northpine in the Northern Suburbs; (historically middle class coloured suburbs) and there the coloured people speak Afrikaans. And it's suiwer Afrikaans ("pure Afrikaans") and for me it was almost a bit of a culture shock in having to learn to speak a suiwer Afrikaans different to the typical kombuis Afrikaans (colloquial Afrikaans) that I grew up with. So I mean I can agree in terms of language that it also has its challenges. Sometimes as a therapist I wonder does it impact on my efficacy as a therapist because I still think in English. I also have to translate in Afrikaans so I have to think in English and Afrikaans and suiwer Afrikaans and that in itself is sometimes a challenge that I wonder am I helping these clients.*

*Eva: (Difference) has impacted completely and continuously. My race, my gender, my class, my religion; all of those and that there is a constant engagement between those parts of me and the work that I do and at times it changes over time as well. I mean just thinking about it now some of the kinds of experiences that have been slightly more enduring than others has been some of those experiences of feeling sometimes like I'm part of a different world. It's like there would be this world..... I mean you (Carmelita) spoke about black psychologists feeling like entering a white world. Sometimes it almost feels like that and then at other times it feels like this is just who I am. But then there are times when I kind of sit with my family and you know then I feel different from (even)*

*these people and you know it feels like there is a constant kind of engagement in that sometimes it feels whole and ok and clear and wonderful and at other times it feels like you know, not so ok.*

*Rowan: For me the community work often evokes this kind of guilt feelings about....I was privileged. Then I can feel like we're going to work in (predominantly poor black area in Cape Town) or something like that (and feel) that actually I am doing something to make amends in some sort of way. But then can I also feel "is it enough" and yes I feel "why should I be doing more than just going to consult with somebody who is maybe discussing in an hour five cases or something like that". There is something there about difference in shame and guilt and reparation and all this sort of stuff. I end up mulling over the stuff when I am driving and sort of getting through a busy day and sort of forget about it when I'm dealing with the demands of my day.*

#### **9.4.3.2. Conflicts that community psychology engenders in training and professional practice**

The main conflicts that are engendered within community psychology in both training and professional practice are the antithetical views about a) theory and practice and b) community psychology work and clinical work. Susan in focus group 2 talks about her frustration during training of staff and students that staff and students are not able to integrate theory and practice about community. In the context of vague definition and purpose, she suggests, everybody engaged in practical experiences that were not very different from traditional clinical training experiences. She implies that the teaching was still overwhelmingly situated in a western individualistic conceptual framework and that the placements where students therefore felt comfortable had to coincide with what they were being taught.

Extract 12, focus group 2

*Susan: I had already worked in the community, as a community development worker in substance abuse, so I came into the course, because I had identified a need for an integration of psychological services into community work that I was doing. So that connotation on coming into training, trying to find a home for that kind of thinking. It was quite a big thing for me, and I think at that time, people were just beginning to talk about*

*this thing called community in psychology so I was allowed to talk. But it wasn't actually happening, a lot of people say it was necessary, but you would find them going out to the clinics. And where they wanted to go, was relative to what was actually being taught.*

In focus group 3, the issue of the vagueness of definition in community psychology also arises and Carmen highlights the overwhelming similarities that she experiences in community and clinical work. Carmen also comments on the “othering” process central to the distance that students feel in relation to community psychology. She comments on how she deals with the othering and stereotyping of community psychology. She also expresses her conflict when she engages with teaching. On the one hand she feels insecure about the legitimacy of her psychological activity in communities but on the other hand she feels angry about students stereotyping service to predominantly poor black people. Carmen draws support from Eva who supports the commonalities between community and clinical work.

Extract 13, focus group 3

*Carmen: Well I mean I think it highlights for me a very central question or issue, again which is you know, “what is community work? What is community Psychology?” What is Clinical? And I mean I've stayed in the same post for quite a long time, but I feel that now I am at a point where I'd see my work as largely clinical. It's in the public service but it was called Community Mental Health. But it feels very clinical to me and it's not that different, from what I do in private practice.*

*Facilitator: Why do people call it community?*

*Carmen: I don't know ....people call it community, because it's not in a private room, and its not in a hospital. That always been something interesting, as soon as you're out of a hospital, and as soon as you're out of a private practice office, then it becomes community. I mean it's very interesting, I mean I've supervised the interns, who do their work in a clinic, and to hear how they talk about it at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year. And certainly at the beginning of the year they also say, “okay we're going to do our do our Community Psychology thing.” And what they do is not so different from what they do in the hospital and not very different from what they do in private practice. And the supervision, that I offer, is not any different from the supervision*

*that I do offer as a private practitioner who came to me for supervision. And so, yes, it's also a little bit of a, something stirs up inside of you when people say oh, you're in a Community, you doing Community things.*

*Facilitator: Did you always have something stirring up inside of you?*

*Carmen: Well, it's a little bit of a uncomfortable feeling, because I feel like, well partly I feel like, I'm doing something that I am not supposed to be doing now, and actually you know, it's also this thing that people who are poor and disadvantaged; in some way there is maybe, there's an assumption that they seek a different kind of service, or should seek a different service, and that's not, you know, the case. Or that's not necessarily the case, when one engages in a therapeutic relationship, it doesn't matter where the person lives, and how they earn, and whether they're employed or unemployed, one has to apply the same clinical principles. And so I say to the interns, you know, once you start a relationship with someone at a clinic, I want you to think about the relationship as you would, say, you were working with someone in private practice. If they don't pitch up, you know, don't forget about them, it's not someone else's problem to sort out. Once you can engage a relationship, you know the rules and the principles that apply to working with someone therapeutically, apply at that clinic, despite the fact that, that clinic has a waiting period of three hours.*

*Eva: I can relate to what you're talking about, because I have had that experience in long term therapy, ...my longest experience of therapy that I have, was in Community in that team, where I saw someone for seven years, and I've never done it in private practice. I've never been able to do it, anywhere else it happened there*

### **Financial concerns about professional practice**

Financial concerns about professional practice were most eloquently expressed in extract 13, focus group 1 below. The theme of limited opportunities for a wider scope of professional practice arises again in Shirley's comments. The idea that psychologists who work in any area, other than private practice, are underpaid, surfaces strongly. Shirley suggests that because psychology, as a profession, is marginalized in the context of the Western medical model of health, practitioners are poorly paid in the public health system. She also feels that she is denied the opportunity to find work that is meaningful for her as

few posts exist, for example in healthcare. The fact that Shirley mentions poor salaries in the public service, encourages Paul to support her view and defend his position as a private practitioner by saying that salaries in private practice can offer a reasonable quality of life. He also highlights the dilemmas that he experiences in terms of his awareness of the paucity of public services and his conflict about providing free services and yet maintaining sound financial practice controls. For him, the conflict revolves around maintaining a private practice means that you can often not afford to provide service to poor people.

Extract 13, focus group 1

*Shirley: I think the psychology profession gets treated like the poor stepchild.....by the authorities in that they haven't understood yet the value that psychology can offer the society. I think they would rather employ a social worker than a psychologist and for me that I find very disappointing because you all know that I say that if there were posts at Primary Healthcare level I would be the first one to go and work there but it's not.*

*Shirley: And if you look at the posts when they advertise it.... what a senior psychologist earns, I mean it's ridiculous if you look at the salary scale.... so it won't be sustainable.*

*Facilitator So that's in public service?*

*Shirley: In public service yes.*

*Paul: I think (private practice) is more sustaining in terms of living. The fact of the matter is, that if you want to earn kind of a market related income, as a professional in private practice, then you have to run a practice with a particular focus. In other words, a very disciplined time schedule, a very disciplined financial management system. The best part of a good financial management system is not to take any in patients that will give you problems when it comes to payment and you screen according to medical fund availability and easy payment to certain funds. You could do that when there are sufficient services, There aren't sufficient services so then one feels the tension if you work personally with empathy in your professional work then there is a potential that you might have to do pro bono work and not stick too rigidly to disciplined financial management.*

## **9.5. Discussion of themes and discourses**

The themes expressed in the previous studies are also evident when psychologists talk about their professional identities. However, talk about professional identity as opposed to identity in community psychology only, has been valuable, for two reasons. Other forms of practice are by implication, always constructed as problem-free when community psychology is constructed as “the other” Yet, it is apparent, from this discussion that employment in private practice also creates anxiety as a result of competition for increasingly scarce resources, that is, clients. Psychologists often feel that they are not adequately trained for community psychology, yet those practitioners in private practice feel similarly. Secondly, the value of focus groups and discussion of professional identity, is that the interactions in the groups, provide access to and discussion of dynamics that were invisible in the previous studies.

A number of themes arise from the discussion of professional practice in focus groups. All psychologists express frustration at unitary understandings of psychology. In practice, multiple psychologies and skills exist. Yet psychologists often feel that they should disavow many important aspects of their training such as research and community work to conform to dominant notions of an individualistic psychology that encourages individual therapy. Psychologists suggest that different contexts focus on different aspects of psychological skills and argue that all skills in psychology should be given equal emphasis. These professional distinctions extend to different modes of therapy in specific settings. By placing unequal emphasis on skills, hierarchies about the value of those skills are inadvertently created (Callaghan, 2006). This has the impact of reducing psychologists’ agency to choose and dominant notions of individualistic psychology thus become mechanisms of control. The surveillance of normative behaviour that is served by psychology in the rest of society, is also turned inward on itself. Psychologists themselves become the subjects of surveillance (Foucault, 1977). Community psychology is viewed as less valuable by some practitioners but this view is challenged. Others view community psychology as providing currency. While this may be true that much talk occurs in relation to community psychology (Seedat, 1997), everyday practices and by implication, modeling, suggests differently. It is not only that racial identity themes exist prominently in discussions. Psychologists also reflect on its impact on them in their everyday experiences

of their professions. Black psychologists are viewed as the flame bearers for community issues and black students are viewed as suitable for community practice. By implication this constitutes racial stereotyping by the very institutions in which we train. In a context where individual therapy is viewed as the primary work of psychologists, any other work leaves psychologists, both black and white, male and female, feeling incompetent about the application of their other skills.

Psychologists' discussions thus highlight how they are constrained by dominant discourses of individualistic psychology. They also highlight how they exercise power to resist these discourses. The following chapter will draw together and integrate the main findings of the study.



## CHAPTER 10

### A BIRD'S EYE VIEW: INTEGRATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 10.1. Introduction

This chapter will summarise and integrate the findings of the study and locate the discussion in terms of the literature and theoretical reviews in chapters three and four. The nature of thematic and discourse analyses are such that a summary of all themes will not be restated in this chapter. The chapter will however, provide the proverbial “bird’s eye view” of the study.

#### 10.2. Aims

The overarching aim of the study was to examine perceptions of community psychology among students and practitioners of community psychology in the Western Cape region of South Africa. This was done from a number of complementary perspectives and concretised by executing four separate but linked studies. The first study aimed to examine how the organisation of the university positions community psychology. This was executed by examining at which levels community psychology is taught, who teaches and publishes in community psychology and how teachers of community psychology talk about their subject. The second component of the study aimed to examine student views of community psychology. Thus the study focused on Honours (first year post-graduate) students in psychology to examine if an empirical link exists between race, gender and community psychology studies. This study also examined qualitative perceptions of community psychology among students. The third study was similar to the second one and had similar aims. However, it focused on senior psychologists. The fourth and final study in this series, aimed to explore how practising senior psychologists talk about their professional identities.

#### 10.3. Summary of results of four studies

The quantitative findings are not always consistent with the qualitative perceptions among students and practitioners. While some quantitative findings suggest a link between race, gender and community psychology, it does not specify the link. Yet, in the context of everyday talk it is evident that prevailing discourse about community psychology is clear and impacts on how psychologists behave in relation to each other. The following discourses, about community psychology, are common across studies:

1. community psychology is marginalised by the university as an organisation, by students and practitioners, and in practitioners' talk about their professional identities.
2. community psychology is racialised by consistently being portrayed (across all studies) as a space for black psychologists, students and practitioners
3. community psychology is racialised and gendered by consistently being portrayed (across all studies) as the space of black or white women and black men. Constructions of Black men in community psychology situate them in academia as contributors to teaching, learning and research. Black and white women are constructed (in studies 2 and 3) as contributors to community psychology in applied settings, including communities, while black men are absent from applied spaces, other than academia. Community psychology is racialised but not gendered in study 4. In the focus groups, participants discuss the racial dynamics involved in how black professionals are positioned in psychology. The clients of community psychology are also portrayed (in study 2 and 3) in raced, gendered and classed terms. They are viewed consistently as black, poor women.

The discussion will now provide a brief consideration of the literature in relation to the study, as a whole, as the results of the individual studies (as independent entities) have been discussed in Chapters 6 to 9. When discussing constructions of community psychology by practitioners, I refer to both studies in Chapters 8 and 9.

#### **10.4. Comparing and contrasting findings**

No previous studies in South Africa have examined identity and community psychology from a multi-levelled perspective, as this study does. The current study examines community psychology in the organisation of the university, in terms of student and practitioner perceptions and in the everyday talk of psychologists about their professional identities.

There are no contemporary systematic research studies in South Africa that detail practitioner perceptions of community psychology. There are some indirect comments in some studies that can be applied to practitioner perceptions of community psychology in South Africa (Eagle, 2005; Seedat, 1997; Stevens, 2001). The research that does exist on student

perceptions focuses on postgraduate students and constitutes descriptive studies of the content of students' perceptions (Gibson et al., 2001; Vogelmann et al., 1992). This study continues in this tradition but also departs from this genre of studies in a number of ways. It focuses on the reasons for negative student perceptions of community psychology. It also elicits some positive responses to community psychology among students, which challenges the pervasive negative content of student perceptions elicited in previous research (Gibson et al., 2001; Lesch, 1998; Pillay, 2003; 2007). The themes about practitioner perceptions of community psychology explored in this research, suggest that there are similarities and differences between student and practitioner perceptions. This study also examines the meanings of professional identity that practitioners attach to psychology and community psychology. These will be discussed, in turn.

Racial and gender identity of community psychologists were deemed important to students and practitioners, whereas teachers of community psychology viewed racial identity as important. However, practitioners were also perceived to include white women with specific qualities as potential service providers. Practitioners do not emphasise the class position of community psychologists, as students do. Racial, gender and class position of clients in community psychology were also elicited as themes common to both groups. The perceptions of clients held by students and practitioners are similar, with both groups viewing clients as black and poor. However, practitioners also emphasise the fact that clients are people who would not normally have access to adequate healthcare. Remuneration in community psychology services is viewed similarly among students and practitioners. Both groups feel that community services are poorly paid. The literature also reflects this perception (Ahmed & Pillay, 2004). Like students, some practitioners also tend to have negative views about community psychology and cite numerous reasons why they, too, should not engage in community psychological work.

There are also commonalities between students and practitioners as to why they are interested in community psychology. Both share the view of community psychology as intrinsically rewarding. They are motivated by political commitment (for practitioners) and values of social transformation (students). Students also value community psychology as giving them access to work in communities never exposed to before. The latter sentiment is not expressed by practitioners. The literature reviewed on student perceptions about community psychology is supported in the current study of student perceptions (Callaghan, 2006; et al., 2001, Lesch, 1998,

Ngonyama ka Sigogo et al., 2004, Pillay, 2003; 2007, Stevens, 2001). There are many similarities between student and practitioner perceptions of community psychology. Thus the literature that describes student perceptions also therefore appears to extend to practitioners. However, the sparse literature that exists (indirectly) on practitioner perceptions of community psychology is not supported in the current study (Callaghan, 2006; Seedat, 1997; Stevens, 2001). The identity dynamics that are described in the literature, are not evident in the study on practitioner perceptions. This may be so for two reasons. Firstly, the survey methodology employed in the studies on perceptions of practitioners, may typically not reveal racial and gender dynamics in interactions. It is in this context that a social constructionist framework has been particularly valuable. In the second instance, the literature does suggest that race dynamics, in particular, are experienced as difficult to discuss among practitioners in contemporary South Africa (Swartz, 2007). Practitioners may therefore remain silent about such dynamics. The dynamics of interactions, however, are reflected in chapter 9, when psychologists talk about their everyday experiences about their profession. Participants describe experiences of inclusion and exclusion based on various domains of difference such as race, institution of professional training, and professional registration as suggested in the literature (Callaghan, 2006; Seedat, 1997; Stevens, 2001). The implications of the research findings at a level of discourses, will now be discussed.

### **10.5. Student and practitioner perceptions: Comparing and contrasting discourses**

A number of discourses about community psychology are practiced in university departments as organizations and shared by students and practitioners. The dominant discourse that community psychology is about “the other” is reflected in psychology departments and shared by both students and practitioners.

Students view community psychology as belonging to the realm of black and poor people in terms of service provision and service delivery. In addition, practitioners include white women as service providers but these women are themselves stigmatized as “the other” in various ways. Students and practitioners view community psychology as dangerous, unsafe and demanding, in terms of emotions. Some practitioners furthermore view community work as disorganized. This manifests in various ways. Community psychology is constructed as “black” in terms of both service providers and service users. It is also constructed as “community work” which is not

perceived to be the core business of psychology. Lack of safety also therefore becomes a justificatory discourse for engaging exclusively in private practice, usually located in both black and white middle class communities. This view of community psychology is echoed in institutions. Community psychology is consistently presented at Masters level professional training, often for the first time in a student's psychology studies. It is seldom taught at undergraduate level. If taught, it is offered as an optional module. This practice marginalises community psychology and may entrench it in the minds of students as peripheral to the core business of psychology.

Alternative discourses to prevailing ones, are present in both practitioner and student perceptions. These discourses are important because they provide (in Foucauldian terms), spaces for resistance to dominant discourses that have become "interiorised" and accepted as normality (Rabinow, 1984). In this study, these alternative discourses revolve around the idea that doing community psychology can enrich life, both individually and collectively. These are also reflected in multiple justificatory discourses that emphasise contribution to social transformation in South Africa, in addition to intrinsic rewards.

These discourses have therefore contributed to normalising assumptions that race and gender are intricately linked to community psychology. The chapter also suggests, however, that counter-hegemonic discourses about community psychology also exist.

### **10.6. Notions of identity in community psychology**

The research findings suggest that experiences of oppression are common in community psychology. As professionals it is women and particularly black women, who, according to perception and representation in institutions, are marginalised in community psychology. Black (Indian) men, while also situated in community psychology, are constructed as occupying more privilege in the marginalised space of community psychology. The findings are thus supportive of theoretical discussions that suggest that notions of community are linked to race, gender and class (Anthias & Yuval Davis, 1992; Thornton & Ramphela, 1988). There are further markers across all the studies that community psychology has the power to include and exclude (Young, 1990; Wiesenfeld, 1996). This is especially reflected in identity dynamics of race, gender and spatial location as to who can speak about community psychology and who needs to remain silent. Thus, in the Western Cape region of South Africa, the term community and community

psychology does not reflect the unifying emotive experience usually associated with community (Howarth, 2001, Pandey, 2005, Stephens, 2007, Wiesenfeld, 1996). Community and community psychology in South Africa has also emphasised inclusion while masking the differential privilege that exists within community psychology. This study has drawn on feminist theory (Lugones, 1998; Mayo, 1994; Nicholson, 1990; Phelan, 1996) to adopt a stance of multiplicities of identity. Unitary notions of identity based on race and gender are popular in psychology and community psychology in particular. This study has supported the critique that I offer of community psychology in Chapter 2. In this critique, similarity in identity is often overemphasised in terms of race when considering who engages in community psychology. This emphasis on unitary and singular concepts of identity has concealed the importance of gendered power relations in community psychology and how these are reproduced in our practices within psychology and community psychology. The findings support the notion that the identity of community psychology is constructed spatially on the margins of community psychology and as the home of black people in psychology. However, within the crucible of community psychology that thus exists on the margins of mainstream psychology, dominant gender relations appear to be reproduced. Black (Indian) men are constructed as privileged in relation to black (coloured and African) women, white women and black African men within the organisation of the university. Middle class women (white and predominantly black) are also positioned as service providers and black poor women are positioned as clients of community psychology. These findings thus suggest that multiplicities of identity are important to consider as they allow us simultaneous access to the paradoxical experiences of oppression and power, that co-exist in reality (Harrell & Bond, 2006; Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1994). If we continue to focus only on racism in organisations at the exclusion of other domains of difference, we may very well reinforce sexism, ableism, heterosexism and exclude the voices of the silenced. These findings suggest that the discipline of community psychology is far from realising social justice, which is defined as including access to resources, opportunities and power (Prilleltensky, in press). It furthermore suggests that discourses about community psychology are reproduced within the context of the university as an organisation. It is thus important to realise that the study of community psychology and identity is the study of how power operates in organisations. If any interventions are to be implemented to shift these dominant discourses that inculcate raced and gendered power relations, truly transformative interventions will need to occur at the level of the

university, as an organisation. Intervention would imply that many, as opposed to one solution, should be considered. The implementation of multiple and multi-levelled solutions will resist and challenge the very foundations on which psychology as a professional enterprise is situated, both locally and internationally. Western individualistic constructions of psychology are built on precisely the premise of community psychology as “the other”. The inherent delegitimising process maintains the intact self of western mainstream psychology in an individualistic manner. This prevents an engagement with other knowledges about human behaviour. It is important to recognize that community psychology is built on an understanding of human behaviour from systemic perspectives. It is thus crucial that other sub-disciplines within psychology and disciplines outside psychology who share these values of systemic change unite with community psychology in resisting the “othering” process perpetuated by an individualistic psychology. Community psychology is not the only torchbearer of an emancipatory agenda in psychology, neither are critical psychology and indigenous psychology alone, torchbearers of emancipatory agendas. Thus one subdiscipline in psychology should not replace the other, (as it has to some extent done in South Africa) but joint solutions based on shared conceptual, methodological and theoretical tools should be drawn on to forward an emancipatory agenda, not only in community psychology but in psychology and the social sciences as well. Thus, a process of legitimizing subject positions (for example black women as academics), sub-disciplines (usually marginalised ones which include community psychology) and social sciences, as a whole, should be considered. In this legitimising process, new identities about *psychology* as a community should be co-created collectively to resist perpetuating psychology as a knowledge system that deligitimises forms of knowledge other than western mainstream psychology. These ideas have a number of practical implications for psychology.

### 10.7. Implications

Intervention may mean that multiple levels of interventions at micro, meso- and macro levels need to be undertaken. Meso- and macro-level interventions are likely to have impacts at micro levels as well. If organizational and policy shifts occur, conditions for personal empowerment are simultaneously created. At meso-level, most contemporary notions of organizational transformation revolve around representation. While transformation is important, Bond (1996)

argues that representation is not enough. It is based on notions of difference as similarity, as opposed to notions of equity. This means that black people and women are introduced into the university as long as they reinforce stereotypical and dominant assumptions of race and gender. This assists in maintaining the dominant culture of the organisation and dominant notions of professional psychology. If notions of difference as equity were subscribed to, the culture of the organisation itself has to change. This means that taken for granted dominant practices themselves need to be challenged in order to encourage collective, social justice strategies for change rather than only those that emphasise individual advancement. According to Bond (1996) a culture of connected disruption is important. This means that it is important for those in power to collectively take accountability for their privilege and the impact that it has on others, by examining *and* naming their own dynamics of privilege. This needs to co-exist with legitimizing multiple realities in the organisation. While Bond's approach is valuable, it could be extended to incorporate the creation of in-between spaces from which to effect collective transformation. In this regard, Bond's ideas are expanded by Dudgeon & Fielder (2006) who, like Bhavnani & Phoenix(1994), argue that new identities need to be produced in the in-between spaces between the dominant and the oppressed. They argue that new organizations with new identities can be formed by allowing alternative and shared histories to be constructed in organizations.

In practice, this means that training solutions as suggested in curriculum change are not sufficient. Lazarus (1988) provided detailed outlines of a curriculum for psychology. Yet a decade later, authors still refer to the silences in curriculum (Seedat, 1997) and almost two decades later, the silences about race and gender (Seedat et al, 2004). We need to make permeable the very boundaries that define community itself and that perpetuate multiple stereotypes about professional practice in community psychology and psychology. We thus need to include the multiple realities of students and staff who are represented in the organisation of the university. This means that process learning where students are meaningfully engaged with each other across dimensions of difference needs to be incorporated into the curriculum. While this process will be discomfoting for both sides of groups in binary opposition to each other , the process will enable students to re-tell their past and create new spaces for identity through their learning process. This approach to teaching is exemplified in teaching projects in South Africa (see Rohleder et.al, in press) and Australia (Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006). This same



process holds true for women, and particularly black women, in academia. If organizational spaces are not created in universities which are conducive to black women's stories being told, little change will occur at organizational levels. This may for example mean that we need to find ways of creating spaces where black women can publish journal articles as opposed to the organizationally undervalued textbook chapters which the majority of black academic women in psychology are predominantly producing. At another level, we also need to question whether notions of "community psychology" have a specific historical usefulness in South Africa, which has been outlived. It is noticeable that community psychology, in the United States, is often presented to students as human and organizational psychology (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005). Perhaps naming new identities for community and emancipatory psychology becomes important when we think about constructing new identities that are meaningful for *all* who want to change psychology and work in the social sciences. In line with the thinking of postcolonial identity theorists, it is important, to hold onto old terms such as community psychology, *but*, to work towards reallocating new and positive meanings to previously negatively articulated meanings. Finding alternatives to the ways in which we project psychology, may also project alternative images about what is possible in psychology. This study has represented a small attempt to do just that- to open up the multiple spaces and windows of opportunity and possibilities for change in *psychology* by examining how identity and community psychology interact. Over and above changes within psychology, it is increasingly important to resist the dominant and insular individualistic perspectives in psychology (and the social sciences) by encouraging interdisciplinary approaches to studying and intervening in communities. This study has therefore integrated literature from philosophy, social work, sociology, education and political science in its search to begin to find new ways of seeing beyond the unsystemic boundaries of psychology.

The study will now focus briefly on potential limitations of this study before concluding.

### **10.8. Limitations of the study**

The aim of discussing limitations of a study usually implies that there may be factors that may contribute to possible alternative interpretations of the study.

A fundamental source of limitation is methodological weakness. It is important for example, to consider the limits to generalisability in the quantitative components of the study, and threats to a depth of analysis in the quantitative component of the study. These will briefly be discussed.

While the current sample sizes in the study are viewed as moderate and respectable (Dooley, 1995; Schofield, 2006), it is usually more valuable to have a larger sample size as this generally lends more statistical power to statistical analyses (Field, 2005). Many attempts were made to maximize sample size. These are discussed fully in the methodology sections of each chapter. However, the question of sample size rarely takes the social context in which studies are done, into account, when authors comment on sample sizes. It is important to do this, and sample size will be discussed briefly in the context of this study, first in relation to the survey with students and then in relation to the postal survey with practitioners.

This study has suggested that community psychology is marginalised to the extent that it is only consistently taught at Masters level. It therefore constituted a methodological risk to survey the opinions of students at Honours levels of study, some of whom had not yet been exposed to community psychology teaching. Despite this risk taking, a respectable 34% of students responded to the study. In the postal survey, the pilot study drew a response rate of 30% and the main study drew a response rate of 21%. This response rate needs to be viewed in the context of other surveys conducted amongst psychological practitioners and the nature of the study conducted. The only other study to survey psychologists' perceptions, using a postal survey, in South Africa was that done by Pillay and Petersen (1996). This survey attracted a response rate of 30%. In addition, a postal survey was employed by the Psychological Association of South Africa (PSYSSA) last year to gauge opinions on tariffs. This is one of the issues that concern psychologists most, given that the majority of practitioners are self-employed in private practices. Yet, in an announcement at the 2006 PSYSSA conference, the then PSYSSA president, Cheryl Foxcroft, lamented the fact that even this favourable topic drew a response rate of only 2%! It thus appears that psychologists, for many reasons, are notoriously difficult to engage in surveys. Yet, despite this fact, the response rate for practitioners in this study, was also respectable, given the methodological decisions that were taken to maximise the survey response rates. In the context of the foregoing discussion, the response rate in the current study can furthermore be

viewed as favourable, given the marginality of the area of study under exploration. The response rate can therefore be viewed as sufficient to generalise findings to the Western Cape.

Another factor that may be considered in this study is regional politics. They play a significant role in contributing to everyday interactions and social constructions reflected in social research. As this study was already large, it may be helpful to replicate it in other parts of the country to assess if similar perceptions about community psychology exist elsewhere. However, some of the literature that speaks to the racialised (Ngonyama ka Sigogo et al, 2003; Ngonyama ka Sigogo & Modipa, 2004) and gendered (Callaghan, 2006) nature of community psychology emanate from Gauteng. This is the largest province in South Africa and is generally viewed, in popular talk, as more racially inclusive than the Western Cape region. The fact that this literature emanates from this region, makes it debatable whether significantly different findings will be established in other regions. Regional differences may however, inform the content of the themes differently.

Professional registration may also be explored as a variable in organisational analyses of community psychology. The current organisational analysis of community psychology is limited to psychology departments in the Western Cape. It may therefore be useful to replicate this study in educational and industrial psychology departments.

A further potential limitation exists in the use of discourse analysis as an analytical tool. The data obtained in the qualitative components of the study is very rich and complex, especially in study 4. Given the limitations of time and space (parameters of the thesis), the analysis is necessarily limited. This is an area that might be usefully extended in further research but that is sufficient for the purposes of the current research.

A core issue that could possibly change the outcome of study 4, is the perceived identities of the focus group moderator. This could be viewed as both a limitation and an advantage. I conducted all the focus group interviews. In view of my ascribed identities (discussed in Chapters 3 and 5), this may have limited and encouraged psychologists to focus on particular aspects of their professional experience. In group three all participants, except one, were black (coloured), like me, and the rest of the participants in this group, were white. Given the arguments that Eagle (2005) suggests about the dynamic of the perceived legitimacy to speak about difference, the conversation focused largely on professional identities in terms of

registration category, tariffs and public health services. Yet, the nature of the other two groups was very different. There were more black and white psychologists who felt safe to discuss issues of difference that generally remain invisible and difficult to uncover, and therefore silent, in organisations (Bond, 1996; Reinharz, 1992). Bond (1996) argues that it implies risk-taking to share such information as the individual that does this is generally marginalised by dominant discourses as “difficult”, “abrasive” or “not being able to take a joke”. This kind of dismissal ensures silence about oppressive practices. In these groups, however, my perceived identities assisted in unlocking a discussion of some of these issues. The issue of who the moderator is and what kind of discussion is elicited in groups, has been discussed in the literature (Barbour & Kitzinger, 1999; Fern, 2001) and remains a tension. It may however, not necessarily have been a limitation of this particular study for invisible dynamics (and power) to be exposed, as Foucault (2004) argues that “subjugated knowledges” are important to offer resistance to dominant discourses.

### **10.9 Considerations for further research**

Considerations for further research fall into theoretical, methodological and empirical categories. These areas of research can usefully extend the current research and will be summarised here.

At a theoretical level, all histories of psychology in South Africa have excluded a publications analysis of the feminist journal, *Agenda*. Yet, I argue in Chapter 2, that it emerged at the same time as the journal, *Psychology in Society*, and it is important to include in providing additional content to theoretical and historical perspectives in psychology. Content analyses of this journal in historical context may therefore be appropriate for further research.

Methodological concerns that may warrant further research related to publications analyses. A combined approach to publications analyses may be evaluated empirically to assess whether, in fact, a result that is more representative of actual publications in an area will be elicited via a combined approach, as opposed to the database or journal based approach, in isolation from each other. This methodological tension has been discussed in Chapter 6. Empirical studies could conduct more in-depth qualitative analyses of the qualitative data, possibly using different theoretical perspectives. Specific aspects about the teaching of community psychology that could further be explored have been highlighted in Chapter 6. In considering

publications analyses, it may also be important to consider why black women appear to be more likely to publish book chapters, rather than accredited journal articles as well, in community psychology. In this study organisational analyses (in Chapter 6) were limited to psychology departments in the Western Cape. This analysis could be extended to include educational psychology departments. The study may also be replicated regionally.

### **10.10 Conclusion**

This study has, from various perspectives, suggested that community psychology is constructed as the physical place for black people and some white women in psychology. Black men are perceived to have slightly more status in this marginalised space. They are constructed as academics who are absent from community work, whereas black women and some white women are constructed as vehicles for service delivery to marginalised populations who are defined as black, poor women and children.

The most important implication of this study is that it has, in a small way contributed to making the invisible dynamics in the organisation of the university and psychology, a little more visible. Perhaps this may provide new lenses with which to view “naturally” occurring processes in psychology.

The issues raised in this study, furthermore, if we are to be true to the methods used, call into question the very boundaries between ‘community psychology’ and psychology as a whole. It may be the case that questions about community psychology are tainted by particular local and international histories of the term “psychology”. This thesis has begun to open up a space for understanding the politics of psychological identities within an overall social justice framework. These concerns are core to community psychology, but some data from this thesis suggest that use of the term “community psychology” may conjure up associations that may defocus from the central emancipatory agenda of social justice work in psychology. The extent to which it is time to look more closely at post-community psychology identities in the discipline of psychology may be worth considering.

At the end of this thesis I return to where I began. I am now a mid-career professional but a young academic. I have left and returned to academia because of activism. It is the past 23 years in psychology that has shaped my relationship with community psychology. It is also my next 23 years in psychology (I will then retire), that will shape my relationship with

psychology and community psychology. It is the nature of that relationship that will change. This research has confirmed professional experiences that a study on community psychology and identity in South Africa is the study of how race and gender relationships are maintained in psychology. The research has also challenged my own stereotypes of “community”, “community psychology”, “oppression” and “privilege”. Multiplicities of identities enable the co-existence of oppression and privilege within the same person. I have experienced the pain and (personal) liberation of acknowledging my own privilege when thoughts of my own experience have been dominated by how I have been oppressed. This does not take away the reality of my oppression. I am not white, nor black African. I am not a man. I do not live in Khayelitsha (site B), (a poor informal settlement on the outskirts of Cape Town) nor do I live in Newlands, (an upper middle class, previously white suburb). I am not a white male with a doctorate, a white woman with a doctorate, a black male with a doctorate, nor an African female with a doctorate. I am a Black (or coloured) woman, living in a previously white working class area. If I am successful in completing this thesis, I will also take on the identity of a “black woman with a doctorate”.

Some of these insights have charted my path in psychology to resist and (hopefully) contribute to changing the imprisonment of all psychologists in places that they do not choose. While this may seem like a “professional” focus, it is also an inherently political one. Removing and crossing boundaries for all in psychology creates permission for all to engage in social justice work, *as psychologists*. It is this that for me, becomes the task for my next 23 years in psychology. I have to explore in more depth what social justice in South Africa and in South African psychology means. While it importantly comprises facing the issue of identity representation in organisations, and naming difference, it cannot remain only at this level. The very cultures of organisations need to be challenged to create spaces (especially in universities) that may position psychology as a welcoming home for all.

This research thus represents a first step in a project that will indeed explore these issues over time. My identity, as a psychologist, will remain one of my many identities. It will also continue to change but will inherently and consistently be shaped by my activism.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX ONE

#### QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDING ORGANISATIONAL EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY TEACHING, LEARNING AND PUBLICATION

#### *Community psychology teaching and research*

This questionnaire forms a component of my doctoral research that is examining community psychology teaching in the Western Cape. I appreciate the time taken for this interview. **Please answer all questions.**

1. Does your department offer community psychology modules? Please indicate with a tick.

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please answer **all** the following questions if your department **does** teach community psychology. Answer only questions 5 and 6 if your department **does not** teach community psychology.

2. At which levels does community psychology teaching exist in your department? (Please indicate with a tick)

Graduate level: Year 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post-graduate level: Honours	<input type="checkbox"/>
Masters	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Are the modules in **community psychology** optional or compulsory? Please indicate with a tick at which levels courses are compulsory or optional.

	Optional	Compulsory
Graduate level: Year 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Post-graduate level: Honours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Masters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What is the total academic staff component in your department? Please fill in the number of academic staff. Please insert the number in the block below.

No of staff	<input type="text"/>
-------------	----------------------

5. Demographic information about **all** academic staff in the department. Please complete the following table, using the key as indicated in the column headings.

<b>Staff no</b>	<b>Race</b> White (W) Indian (I) African (A) Coloured (C)	<b>Gender</b> Male (M) Female (F)	<b>Staff Rank</b> Lecturer (L) Senior Lecturer (SL) Professor (P)	Academic qualification <b>Masters (M)</b> <b>Doctorate (D)</b>	Time commitment Full-time (F) Part-time (P)	<b>Funding of post</b> Externally Funded Post (E) University funded post (U)
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						

6. What is the staff component that teaches formal community psychology courses in your department? Please insert the number in the block below

No. of staff	
--------------	--

7. Demographic information about academic staff teaching community psychology. Please complete the following table, using the key as indicated in the column headings.

<b>Staff no</b>	<b>Race</b> White (W) Indian (I) African (A) Coloured (C)	<b>Gender</b> Male (M) Female (F)	<b>Staff Rank</b> Lecturer (L) Senior Lecturer (SL) Professor (P)	<b>Academic qualification</b> <b>Masters (M)</b> <b>Doctorate (D)</b>	<b>Time commitment</b> Full-time (F) Part-time (P)	<b>Funding of post</b> Externally Funded Post (E) University funded post (U)
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

8. Attach a detailed list of publications in psychology from your department over the last ten years.

## **APPENDIX TWO**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN SURVEY OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY (ENGLISH QUESTIONNAIRE)**

#### ***Dear Participant***

I am a Masters student in psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. I am interested in determining the perceptions of community psychology among fourth year psychology students. It will therefore be appreciated if you will participate in my study. You need not identify yourself and in this way your anonymity will be safeguarded. The information you provide is treated with confidentiality. Should you wish to participate please complete the enclosed forms. If you are interested in obtaining the research results of this study, please enclose your e-mail address only at the end of this questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

\* While I in no way ascribe to historically imposed racialised labels, race has been and to a large extent still seems to be central to South African discourses. For the purposes of this study racial terms will be used as originally described in the Population Registration Act. Current research in South Africa often includes racial labels as it constitutes an important way of monitoring social changes.

#### **Please complete the following questions**

1. Age



**\*2. Race**

White

Coloured

Black

Indian

Other

---

**3. Gender**

Male

Female

**4. Language**

**English**

Afrikaans

Xhosa

Other Indigenous African Language

Other Foreign Language

5. Which university are you currently attending?

.....

6. What do you understand by the term “Community Psychology?”

.....

.....

.....

.....

**7. Level at which Community Psychology was studied during training**

<i>Level</i>	Yes	No	Optional	Compulsory
Year 1				
Year 2				
Year 3				
Hons/ BPsych				

**8. If Community Psychology was optional:**

a. Why did you choose to study Community Psychology?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

b. Why did you choose not to study Community Psychology?

.....

.....

.....

**9.** What are the challenges you face in doing/ not doing community psychology?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**10.** What kind of populations do Community Psychologists work with?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**11.** Describe the typical person who would engage in Community Psychology. You can be as specific as you wish to be (individual qualities, social categories such as race, gender, class)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**12.**What would deter you from engaging in practising Community Psychology?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**13.** What would encourage you to engage in Community Psychology?

.....

.....

.....

## APPENDIX THREE

### QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN SURVEY OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY (AFRIKAANS QUESTIONNAIRE)

#### Beste deelnemer

Ek is tans besig om my Meesters tesis in sielkunde te voltooi aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch. Ek bestudeer die persepsies van vierde jaar sielkunde studente teenoor gemeenskapsielkunde en sou dit waardeer as u asseblief die vraelys voltooi. Alle inligting bekom deur hierdie vraelys word as streng vertroulik beskou. Daar word nie van u vereis om u naam op die vraelys te plaas nie, derhalwe bly u anoniem. Dankie vir u deelname. As jy belang stel daarin om die resultate van die studie te bekom, sluit asseblief jou e-pos adres in aan die einde van die vraelys.

Dankie vir jou tyd en belangstelling.

\* Terwyl ek rasse klassifikasie ten strengste afkeer, vorm ras identiteit nog steeds 'n belangrike deel van die Suid-Afrikaanse diskoers. Die aanduiding van ras is tans ook belangrik in navorsing om sosiale verandering te monitor.

#### Voltooi asseblief die volgende vrae

1. Ouderdom

\*2. Ras

Wit

Kleurling

Swart

Indiër

Ander

---



8. Indien Gemeenskapsielkunde opsioneel was:

a. Hoekom het jy besluit om Gemeenskapsielkunde te bestudeer?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

b. Hoekom het jy besluit om nie Gemeenskapsielkunde te bestudeer nie?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

9. Wat is die uitdagings om gemeenskapsielkunde te neem / nie te neem?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

10. Met watter tipe gemeenskappe werk gemeenskapsielkundiges?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

11. Beskryf die tipe persoon wat by gemeenskapsielkunde betrokke sou raak. Indien jy so verkies, mag jy spesifieke besonderhede gee soos: individuele kwaliteite; sosiale kategoriee soos ras, geslag, klas.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

12. Wat sou jou ontmoedig om in gemeenskapsielkunde te praktiseer?

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.....

13. Wat sou jou aanmoedig om by gemeenskapsielkunde betrokke te raak?

.....

.....

.....

.....



**APPENDIX FOUR**

**LETTERS OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDIES WITH STUDENTS AT THE  
RESPECTIVE UNIVERSITIES IN THE WESTERN CAPE**



# UNIVERSITY *of the* WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X17 BeUville 7535 SOUTH AFRICA  
Telephone: 27 021 95-1-2111/2102 Fax: 27 021 959-31-11 Telex: 52 1111  
E-mail:

Director:

14:11:11

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

20 June 2005

Ms Ronelle Carolissen Clinical  
Psychologist/ Lecturer University  
of Stellenbosch Private Bag X1  
Matieland  
7602

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT UWC

Thank you for complying with our requirements for obtaining permission to do research at the University of the Western Cape.

I have received verification of the ethics clearance of your research by the relevant committee of the University of Stellenbosch and it therefore gives me great pleasure to grant you and your students (Kim Johnson & Lynn Kotze) permission to proceed with your research.

Your research should clearly state that participation is entirely voluntary and that respondents may withdraw at any stage.

I wish you every success with the completion of your studies.

Yours sincerely  
R I MILLER REGISTRAR



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12 April 2005

Ms K Johnson  
C/o Mrs R Carolissen  
Department of Psychology  
University of Stellenbosch  
Private Bag X1  
**MATIELAND**  
7602

Dear Ms Johnson

### REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AMONGST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

I refer to your letter (undated) received on 7 April 2005.

I am pleased to inform you that permission is being granted for the research to be conducted at this University. The questionnaire may be distributed amongst fourth year Psychology students at the University of Stellenbosch under the following conditions:

1. Participants must be *voluntary*.
2. Students must not participate in the project *during lectures*.
3. Information gathered by means of the questionnaire must be treated with the *utmost confidentiality*, and participants must remain *anonymous*. No names or any other information by which the respondent may be recognized may be requested.
4. Information gathered by means of the questionnaire must be used only for the purposes of this project.
5. Information must not be used in such a way that it could damage the name of the University of Stellenbosch.

I wish you success with the project.

Yours faithfully

Ms MC Loxton  
n **REGISTRAR**

/pk

Navrae/Enquiries:

**Ms MC Loxton**

Tel: **021 - 8084840**

Verw./Ref. **120/44**

Rig asseblief alle korrespondensie aan die Registrateur/Please address all correspondence to the Registrar  
Universiteitskantoor/University Offices

Privaat Sak/Private Bag X1 • 7602 Matieland • Suid-Afrika/South Africa • Faks/Fax: +27 (0)21 808 3822



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Private Bag  
7701 Rondebosch  
South Africa

15 April 2005

Ms Kim Johnson  
c/o Stellenbosch University  
e-mail: 13212176@sun.ac.za

Dear Ms Johnson

**APPLICATION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY AT UCT**

Thank you for your letter addressed to the Registrar, received on 8 April 2005.

Your request was referred to our Department of Psychology where you plan your research. Their Ethics Committee has agreed to your request on condition:

1. that suitable arrangements can be made, via the Head of the Psychology Department;
2. that the analysis not be done by university, and only by gender, race and language, as you indicate. Thus the data from the universities is also anonymous.

Please confirm your acceptance of these conditions in writing to me.

Thereafter, you should contact Associate Professor S Swartz, the Head of the Psychology Department (Tel: [021] 650-3435) to make suitable arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Dr Karen van Heerden  
Faculty Manager: Academic Administration

KvH/cln

cc Associate Professor S Swartz  
Professor J Louw

## APPENDIX FIVE

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO ASSESS PRACTITIONER PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY (ENGLISH VERSION) –PILOT STUDY

**NB: The same questionnaire applies to pilot and main studies. It is only the introduction to the questionnaire that changes**

Dear Participant

This survey forms part of a research study towards a MA (Psychology) degree at Stellenbosch University. This study aims to survey the practice patterns of psychologists in the Cape Winelands district, who have been registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) for at least three years. A further aim is to explore perceptions of community psychology. Please note that the information provided will be treated with confidentiality and your anonymity will be protected. On completion of the questionnaire, you will be requested to enclose all your telephone numbers which will be detached from the main page. All telephone numbers will be included in a draw for a R500 Exclusive Books gift voucher. You will be contacted telephonically if you have won the prize. I appreciate the time set aside to participate in this study.

\*Race has been and still is to a large extent part of South African discourses. In this study race is included as a means of monitoring social change.

**Please answer ALL the questions or mark with an X in the appropriate box:**

#### 1. Demographic information

##### (a) Gender

Male	Female

##### \*(b) Race

White	Coloured	Black	Indian	Other (Please specify)

##### (c) Age

--

(d) Language

	Speak	Read	Write
Afrikaans			
English			
Xhosa			
Other languages: Please specify			

(e) Qualifications

--

(f) At which university did you complete your professional training?

--

(g) How long have you been registered as a psychologist? (In years, including 2006)

--

(h) In what professional category or categories are you registered with the HPCSA?

Clinical psychology	
Counselling psychology	
Educational psychology	
Research psychology	
Other (please specify)	

(i) Please indicate in which category your monthly income falls.

R5 000 – R10 000	>R10 000 – R15 000	>R15 000 – R20 000	>R20 000 – R25 000	>R25 000

2. Which area of psychology best describes your employment? (You may tick more than one box).

Private practice	
Public sector (hospitals)	
Non-governmental organisations	
Academia	
Research	

Education (schools)	
Corporate sector (businesses)	
Community psychology	
Other (Please specify)	

**Please answer ALL of the following questions. Your answers may be as detailed as you wish.**

3. What are the major foci of your employment? (What do you do during the course of your work?)

--

4. What are your reasons for choosing to work in your preferred area of psychology?

--

5. If you had another chance, would you have worked in any other area of psychology?

No	
Yes	

5 (a). If you answered “no” in question 5, elaborate on why you would remain in your current field of practice.

--

5 (b). If you answered “yes” in question 5, indicate the area/s of psychology you would have preferred to work in.

--

5 (c). What prevented you from choosing to work in that area/s indicated in question 5 (b)?

--

6. What do you think may be barriers to efficient mental health service provision in the Cape Winelands district and South Africa as a whole?

--

7. What do you understand by the term community psychology?

--

8. Do you think that there should be a separate registration category for community psychologists with the HPCSA?

Yes	
No	

8 (a). Please elaborate on your answer to question 8. (Whether you answered “yes” or “no”)

--

9. Describe your view of what community psychologists do in the course of their work?

--

10. Please describe the typical person that would use the services of community psychologists. You may be as specific as you wish to be. (For example – individual qualities, social categories such as race, gender and class)

--

11. What would discourage you or what currently discourages you from working in community psychology?

--

12. What would encourage you or what currently encourages you to practice community psychology?

--

13. What are your suggestions for equipping psychologists to work effectively with communities? (Your answer may be as detailed as you wish.)

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**Thank you for participating in this research study. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated.**

**If you wish to be entered into the draw for the gift voucher please enclose your telephone numbers in the appropriate box below.**

**Lorenza Williams  
MA (Psychology)  
Stellenbosch University  
My e-mail address: [13833502@sun.ac.za](mailto:13833502@sun.ac.za)**

.....  
.....

**Participant's telephone numbers**

.....

## APPENDIX SIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO ASSESS PRACTITIONER PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY (AFRIKAANS VERSION) –PILOT STUDY

**NB: The same questionnaire applies to pilot and main studies. It is only the introduction to the questionnaire that changes**

Geagte deelnemer

Hierdie vraelys is 'n komponent van my navorsing om my Meesters graad te verwerf aan Stellenbosch Universiteit. Die doel van my navorsingstudie is om die praktyk en werkspatrone van alle kliniese-, voorligting-, navorsing-, en opvoedkundige sielkundiges in die Kaapse Wynland distrik te ondersoek, wat vir drie jaar of meer geregistreer is by die Gesondheids Professies Raad van Suid-Afrika (GPRSA). 'n Verdere doel is om hierdie sielkundiges se siening rakende gemeenskap sielkunde te eksploreer. Let daarop dat alle informasie as streng vertroulik hanteer sal word en dat u anonimiteit beskerm sal word. 'n Geskenkbewys van “Exclusive books” ter waarde van R350 word aangebied aan een deelnemer vir die voltooiing van hierdie vraelys. Indien u in aanmerking wil kom vir die trekking van die geskenkbewys, vul gerus u telefoon nommer(s) aan die einde van hierdie vraelys in. Die telefoon nommers sal van die vraelys geskei word en 'n looitjie getrek word. U tyd en moeite om hierdie vraelys te voltooi word grootliks waardeer.

\*Ras speel steeds 'n belangrike rol in Suid-Afrikaanse diskoerse. In hierdie studie word ras aangedui as 'n manier om sosiale verandering te monitor.

**Beantwoord asseblief al die vrae, of merk die toepaslike blokkie met 'n X.**

#### 1. Demografiese inligting

##### (a) Geslag

Manlik	Vroulik

##### \*(b) Ras

Wit	Kleurling	Swart	Indiër	Ander (Spesifiseer)

##### (c) Ouderdom

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(d) Taalvaardigheid

	Praat	Lees	Skryf
Afrikaans			
English			
Xhosa			
Ander (Spesifiseer)			

(e) Kwalifikasies

--

(f) By watter universiteit het u u professionele opleiding ontvang?

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(g) Vir hoe lank is u al as sielkundige geregistreer by die HPCSA? (in jare, sluit ook 2006 in)

--

(h) In watter registrasie kategorie/ kategorieë is u geregistreer by die HPCSA?

Kliniese sielkunde	
Voorligting sielkunde	
Opvoedkundige sielkunde	
Navorsing sielkunde	
Ander (Spesifiseer asseblief)	

(i) In watter kategorie val u maandelikse inkomste?

R5 000 – R10 000	>R10 000 – R15 000	>R15 000 – R20 000	>R20 000 – R25 000	>R25 000

2. In watter area van sielkunde is u werk gesetel? (U mag meer as een area aandui).

Privaat praktyk	
Openbare sektor (hospitale)	
Nie-regerings organisasies	
Akademia	
Navorsing	
Opvoedkunde (skole)	
Korporatiewe sektor (besighede)	
Gemeenskap sielkunde	
Ander (Spesifiseer)	

**Beantwoord asseblief AL die volgende vrae. U mag soveel uitbrei op u antwoorde soos wat u verkies.**

3. Wat is die hoof fokusse van u werk? (Wat doen u gedurende die verloop van u werk?)

--

4. Wat is u redes vir u spesifieke hoof fokusse van sielkundige werk?

--

5. Indien u weer sou kon kies, sou u verkies om in enige ander veld van sielkunde te werk?

Nee	
Ja	

5 (a). Indien u “nee” geantwoord het op vraag 5, hoekom sou u verkies om in u huidige veld van praktyk te bly?

--

5 (b). Indien u “ja” geantwoord het op vraag 5, watter area/s van sielkunde sou u verkies het om in te werk?

--

5 (c). Wat het u verhoed om te werk in daardie area/s wat aangedui is in vraag 5 (b)?

--

6. Wat sou u sê kan beskou word as struikelblokke vir die effektiewe geestesgesondheids diens voorsiening in die Kaapse Wynland distrik en in Suid-Afrika as geheel?

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7. Wat verstaan u onder die term gemeenskap sielkunde?

--

8. Dink u dat daar 'n aparte registrasie kategorie moet wees vir gemeenskap sielkundiges by die HPCSA?

Ja	
Nee	

8 (a). Motiveer asseblief u antwoord op vraag 8. (Indien u “ja” of “nee” geantwoord het.)

9. Beskryf u siening van wat gemeenskap sielkundiges doen gedurende die verloop van hul werk.

10. Beskryf die tipiese persoon wat die dienste van gemeenskap sielkundiges gebruik. U kan so spesifiek wees as wat u verkies. (Byvoorbeeld – individuele eienskappe, sosiale kategorieë soos ras, geslag en klas)

11. Wat sou u ontmoedig of wat ontmoedig u huidiglik om in die area van gemeenskap sielkunde te praktiseer?

12. Wat sou u motiveer of wat motiveer u huidiglik om in die area van gemeenskap sielkunde te praktiseer?

13. Wat sou u aanbeveel moet gedoen word ten einde sielkundiges toe te rus om effektief met gemeenskappe te werk?

**Baie dankie vir u deelname in hierdie navorsing studie. U tyd en moeite om die vraelys te voltooi word hartlik waardeer. Indien u die resultate van hierdie studie sou wil bekom of indien u in aanmerking wil kom om die geskenkbewys te wen, vul asseblief u e-pos adres in die toepaslike blokkie hieronder in.**

**Lorenza Williams  
MA (Psychology)  
Stellenbosch University  
My e-mail address: [13833502@sun.ac.za](mailto:13833502@sun.ac.za)**

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**Deelnemer se telefoon nommer(s)**

## **APPENDIX SEVEN**

### **QUESTION GUIDELINES FOR FOCUS GROUP STUDY WITH SENIOR PSYCHOLOGISTS**

#### **CORE QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss how your identity as a psychologist has been shaped/not shaped by your training?

PROBE QUESTIONS (if it is not raised in discussion)?

2. How has community psychology impacted on your professional identity?
3. How has diversity impacted on your professional identity?