Facets of Human Resource Development on building female capacity in the
African context: the case of Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth.

By

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Declaration

I, Kristine Sydhagen, hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by any other person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of the university or any other institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Name:__________________     Date:_______________
Abstract

An empirical study of HRD, women, HIV and AIDS, and sustainable community development has been undertaken. Women make up approximately half of the population in the world. Taking this into account, there are many places where women do not have the same opportunities as their male counterparts. This is also true for most of Africa. Many people in Africa are deprived of basic education and often the majority of these are women. Even though the situation has improved for many girls and women in many areas, there is still a great deal that needs to be done in order to ensure equal opportunities for everyone within the labor market and society. In order to achieve this, it can be argued that sustainable development and sound human resource (HRD) policy implementation and strategies must be employed. HIV and AIDS damage society just as it does the human body: it begins by killing those parts responsible for building society: the women and breadwinners who sustain and look after the community as a whole. In this proposal, an outline of the structure of the dissertation will be given. The outline of four articles will be presented, as will the uniqueness and the similarities of the articles. For the purpose of this dissertation; different methodological research techniques will be employed according to the themes of the different articles in addition to the desired purpose of the research being conducted. Regarding the data collection, qualitative research will be used in the expectation of uncovering issues relating to women and HRD in Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

The need for skills development and training in Sub-Saharan Africa is increasing in an area where unstable economies and high unemployment create challenges on many levels. Sub-Saharan Africa is faced with great poverty, skills migration, and HIV and AIDS, which are depleting the region of skilled workers in their prime working years. The region is facing numerous challenges in the development of skills and the ability to make use of the available
human resources. It can be argued that the Sub-Saharan African region needs to increase the skilled labor pool and to develop communities. Perhaps most importantly, there is an urgent need for the region to face the impact of globalization on its own terms. This involves the fusion of African philosophy and management styles with the traditional Western theories with HRD strategies and policies that will be suitable for the developing economies in the region.

Women in Africa face many difficult and complex situations in society, including difficulties entering the labor market. HIV and AIDS is a major challenge for South Africa and it brings people in the region much grief, sorrow and confusion as the rate of prevalence continues to rise. This article explores the social aspects of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in the communities and in the labor market and the extent to which women are affected on an individual, community and labor market level. HRD in relations to HIV and AIDS is examined in order to get an understanding of the role that HRD should play in the deprived South African communities that struggle to find resources to battle the social consequences of HIV and AIDS.

An examination of feminist theory and HRD in Africa indicates the need to incorporate African feminism in the cause of advancing HRD theory. Because they are subject to multiple levels of discrimination, and because there are no country-specific policies to ensure their advancement, African women need to be protected from the patriarchal domination that prevails in the majority of African countries. Despite higher female involvement in African economies, they are denied opportunities and equal rights. If the development goals of Africa are to be achieved, HRD theory needs to incorporate both Western and African feminist theory, specifically related to gender inequalities that women experience in the realm of work.

The level women’s understanding of sustainable development in Gqebera Township, South Africa is explored. Further the challenges and opportunities for sustainable HRD in the Sub-
Saharan region is examined. Sub-Saharan African is facing numerous challenges including poverty, inequality, HIV and AIDS and high unemployment. All these factors are important to consider when planning HRD policies and strategies in the region. Sustainable development is a worldwide aim and on the agenda of many countries; especially the developing and least developed, the countries on the African continent. The conditions under and the degree to which women in Sub-Saharan Africa have been participating in the development process in the past have often not enabled them to fully develop their capacity in order to take part in the work towards sustainable development.

**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRD</td>
<td>Human resource development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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Section 1 Introduction

1. Delineation of research field

This dissertation deals with different aspects of the field of Human Resource Development (HRD). From this wide field of study, the emphasis chosen will be on women in Africa. The four main fields of research that fall within the scope of this dissertation are

(1) theory of HRD in developing countries, with specific reference to Africa
(2) Women, HRD and HIV and AIDS – the case of Gqebera Township
(3) HRD and women in the African aspect
(4) Sustainable community development and HRD in South Africa – lessons from practice.

Much of the literature and research with reference to HRD is concerned with organizations. However, this dissertation will for the most part focus on the individual level of HRD and specifically on women. Training and development are important elements in the field of HRD, and it can be argued that they are equally important on an individual level and on an organizational level. The term “HRD” has been subject to controversy. Many feel uncomfortable with the use of the term “resource” in terms of people. Oxtoby (1992, as cited in Walton, 1999, p. 4) states:

I hold the view that HRD should be eliminated from all official publications. The words “human resources” reduce people to the same level of importance as materials, machinery, and methods, which are also resources. People need to be distinguished as the world’s greatest asset. HRD is without feeling for people. Who can define what HRD is? Those outside our profession must be confused, when those inside it cannot describe it in a consistent way. HRD is a phrase of the
verbose. It takes three words to describe a process when one word is quite sufficient. The bleak prospect for the term “HRD” may be summarized as: A fashionable flavor of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, which was promoted by those whose motives for the profession may have been reasonable – but which attempted to gain professional recognition and growth without an everyday feeling for people and their community: a lack of understanding that real growth comes from within the heats and minds of ordinary people.

As the discussion about the term HRD continues, it is important that those involved in practicing HRD, on all levels, continue to work with developing and empowering people through skills development and training.

Women fill many roles in societies and in communities, often very different to those of men. Bierema (2002) suggests that everyone benefits by improving the status of women in society by increasing training and development opportunities. This argument is supported by Barker (2003), who suggests that increasingly including skilled women in the labor market will benefit the economy by extending the existing labor pool with more skilled workers. On the subject of women in the society, Coats (1994, p. 43) notes that

the devaluing of women and the subordination of their needs to those of the family may cause women to lose confidence – confidence in their ability to cope with anything other than being a good wife and mother, confidence to achieve in education or to cope with a dual career. Images of "superwomen" and articles on how to manage home and work do not help because any failure to live up to that ideal reinforces the feelings of inadequacy. The domestic role receives no reward
and no recognition. Most women do not realize that the skills of successfully running a home and family are many and diverse and that most of those skills are transferable to other settings.

It is important to evaluate and shed light on the status of women. Bierema and Cseh (2003) point out that the field of HRD has not in the past been overly concerned with issues such as diversity, equality, discrimination, or sexism. These issues, they indicate, are important to reconsider, as a feminist viewpoint is not only concerned with the gender issue; it aims to benefit all groups in society.

The problem formulation of this study is based on five interlinked concepts, namely HRD, HRD policy implementation, women, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and sustainable development. For the purpose of this study, the five concepts will be closely linked to training and skills development. The researcher aims to achieve an understanding of the opportunities as well as exposing some of the problems that women in Africa experience in the world of work.

1.1 Outline of the dissertation

The dissertation in divided into 3 sections: The first part of Section 1 presents the outline and structure of the dissertation, the aims and objectives of the study, and a short introduction of the concept of HRD. The second part of the section provides an introduction to the nature and importance of the formulation and implementation of sound HRD policies.

Section 2 is divided into four parts, with four articles dealing with different aspects of HRD pertinent to the Sub-Saharan African region. The first part of Section 2 focuses on the nature of HRD theory in Sub-Saharan Africa and argues that there is an increasing need to focus on
African management philosophy. The four individual articles are written in the format required by each journal; the written format may therefore differ.¹

Part two of Section 2 discusses women, HRD, and HIV and AIDS in South Africa, with specific reference to Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth.

The third part of Section 2 focuses on women in the Sub-Saharan African region in relation to HRD and their socio-economic role.

Part four of Section 2 discusses women, HRD, and sustainable community development in Sub-Saharan Africa, with specific reference to Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth.

Section 3 of this dissertation presents the conclusions and recommendations that have been derived from the research conducted. This Section further gives suggestions to further research in the field of HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa.

1.1.1 Formulation of objectives

The overall objective of the dissertation:

An investigation into the perceptions of women in Gqebera Township on the development of HRD strategies and policies, in order to increase female capacity and sustainable community development.

1.1.2 Research objectives

In order to reach the aim stated above, the objectives for this research project will be as follows:

¹ References are included in each of the individual articles (Section 2) and the references for the rest of the dissertation (Section 1 and Section 3) are at the end.
1. How, through informal/formal training or educational strategy, will HRD be able to develop women in the Gqebera Township?

2. What is the link between HRD and building female capacity?

3. How does one align the empowerment of women and HRD strategy?

4. What role do women play in community development?

5. What are some of the obstacles to advancement of women (in the community)?

6. What strategies can be employed in order to empower women in Gqebera Township?

7. To what extent has capacity building been employed in Gqebera Township?

8. Under what circumstances are women in charge of their own development?

9. How well adapted is the South African society to empowerment of women and communities?

10. How are community-based development strategies (if any) currently operating in Gqebera Township?

11. What has the role of women been in community development until the present?

1.1.3 Methodology

According to Babbie, Mouton, Prozesky and Vorster (2001, p. 75), research methodology focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used. In communicating or generating the data, the researcher must make the process of the study accessible and write descriptively so tacit knowledge may best be communicated through the use of rich, thick descriptions” (Myers, 2002). An applied qualitative approach is used to conduct research for this project. A qualitative approach has been chosen because it enables the researcher to conduct the study in the natural setting of the participants.

The target population is women between the ages of 18 and 49 years. The rationale for choosing this age group is that it is the most productive part of the population in terms of work.
There are approximately 10,720 women between the ages of 15 and 49 living in Gqebera Township\(^2\). These figures are probably not completely accurate seeing that they were collected five years ago. However, they are the only reliable source available.

### 1.1.4 Qualitative research methodology

Qualitative research is used when in-depth data is required, and where it is less critical to extract more general results than would be the case in large-scale surveys. Because qualitative data has a tendency to be complex and can be viewed at many levels, many techniques of data collection and analysis have been developed to deal with these complexities (Lincoln and Denzin, 2003).

Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that aims to understand certain events in a “real world setting and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2002, p. 39). According to Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.17) qualitative research, broadly defined, means “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.” Lincoln and Denzin (2003, p. 4) note that “qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world”.

Patton (2001) emphasizes the researcher's involvement and interest in the research by suggesting that the world is subject to change, and therefore it is important that the qualitative researcher is present during these changes in order to record the event. However, both qualitative and quantitative researchers need to test and demonstrate the credibility of their studies. The credibility in quantitative research depends on instrument construction, whereas in

\(^2\) Statistics South Africa, 2001
qualitative research, “the researcher is the instrument” (Patton, 2001, p.14). As noted by Bobbie et al (2001), qualitative research is especially appropriate in settings where the participants are best understood in their natural environment.

In the case of this research project, it was important for the researcher to understand the dynamics of women in the local community setting, in order to attempt to understand the actions and beliefs of the participants. It can further be argued that in this study, exploratory research was conducted, meaning that a problem had not been clearly defined at the start of the research project, or that its real scope was unclear at the beginning of the project (Joppe, 2000). This allowed the researcher to familiarize herself with the problem or concept that was being studied.

1.1.4.1 Ethics in qualitative research

It is important to consider ethics when conducting research. The principles of research ethics require the researcher to avoid harming participants involved in the study by respecting and bearing in mind their needs and interests. Considering the security and welfare of those who participate in the study as well as avoiding plagiarism and manipulation of data have made ethics a highly important aspect of conducting research in general (Flick, 2006).

Joppe (2000) states that ethics in research is all about responsibility to respect the rights of others. Ethical behavior when dealing with respondents is perhaps the most critical aspect of ethics in research. Respondents have the right to privacy and confidentiality. This includes the hours when they are actually participating in the study, and also requires that the use of research material, resulting from the utilization of tape recorders or cameras, which are often used in focus groups, be handled with great confidentiality and respect when analyzed (Joppe, 2000).
The researcher has been involved in a support group for women with HIV and AIDS at St. John the Baptist Church in Walmer, Port Elizabeth. The researcher intends to ask individuals from this support group to participate in the focus interviews. However, the support group does not consist of more than ten individuals. Hence, the non-probability sampling technique of snowball sampling is applied. This is considered to be a form of accidental sampling and is appropriate when it is difficult to locate sufficient numbers for a specific group (Babbie et al., 2001). To implement this sampling technique, the researcher will first collect data from individuals in the support group. The researcher then asks these individuals to provide information needed to locate other members of the target population whom they know.

Secondary research was conducted through investigating and analyzing existing literature about HRD, women, feminism, HIV and AIDS, policy making, and related topics. This gave the researcher valuable insight into the diversity of the research topic.

1.1.5 Focus groups

For the purpose of this research project, focus group interviews were used in order to collect data for the empirical studies in the individual articles.

Smith defined group interviewing as being “limited to those situations where the assembled group is small enough to permit genuine discussion among all its members” (Smith, 1954, p. 59, cited in Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990, p.10). Furthermore, Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p.365) state that “focus group” refers to a situation where the interviewer asks group members specific questions about a topic after substantial research has already been completed. Kreuger (1988, p.18) defines a focus group as a “carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment”. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) are of the opinion that focus groups can be used at any point
during a research project. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990, p.15) have summarized the more common uses of focus groups to include:

1. obtaining general background information about a topic of interest
2. generating research hypotheses that can be submitted to further research and testing using more quantitative approaches
3. stimulating new ideas and creative concepts
4. diagnosing the potential for problems with a new program, service or product
5. generating impressions of products, programs, services, institutions, or other objects of interest;
6. learning how respondents talk about the phenomenon of interest which may facilitate quantitative research tools
7. interpreting previously obtained qualitative results.

It was important for the researcher and for the success of the interviews to ensure that the participants felt comfortable and safe in the group-interview setting. Prior to the interview, the group members were asked to introduce themselves and say a little about themselves. This method was used in order to “break the ice”. Next, an overview of the topic was given, in addition to the ground rules of the interview before the first question was asked. A moderator was used to conduct the focus group interviews. Scott (1987), as cited in Stewart and Shamdasani (1990, p. 70), states that:

moderators have the difficult task of dealing with dynamics that constantly evolve... [they] must handle the problems by constantly checking behavior
against attitudes, challenging and drawing out respondents with opposite views and looking for the emotional component of the responses.

The moderator's mother-tongue is Xhosa, the local language in which the focus group interviews were conducted. It can be considered important for the effectiveness and the credibility of the outcome of the interviews that the participants were able to express themselves in their native language.

The focus groups were recorded with a video camera and subsequently transcribed verbatim. This provided the researcher with a complete record of the discussion. The next step was to analyze the content of the conversations. The goal of this analysis was to search for trends and patterns that re-emerged within one single focus group or among various focus groups. Kreuger (1988, p.109) suggests that content analysis begins with a comparison of the words used in the answer. Additionally, the researcher must consider the emphasis or intensity of the respondents' comments throughout the interviews. Focus group interviews can be used in a variety of settings. A review of the literature made it evident that for successful data collection, focus-group methodology must be used in such a manner as to promote validity in the findings.

1.2 An introduction to the field of human resource development (HRD)

HRD is a broad field of study. It incorporates elements such as development, training, knowledge, change, career development, and learning. It is important to recognize that HRD is not limited to a single level, such as an organization. With its aims and values, HRD is applicable to many aspects of human life. Strategies such as empowerment, trusting people to think for themselves and to make decisions rather than be told what to do, and career development plans provide motivation for people. HRD can be linked to performance.
development and knowledge management, and it includes both development and training. According to Stone (2002), "training" is the activity that an organization carries out in order for employees to increase their skills. "Development" incorporates the activities that are being carried out in order to prepare employees for future responsibilities.

It can be argued that HRD is essential in the role it plays to advance the growth of individuals. According to Walton (1999), career development is traditionally perceived as climbing the corporate ladder by achieving higher salaries, more responsibility, prestige, and status. However, looking at career development in this aspect alone excludes the majority or the total workforce. For the purpose of this study, career development can be closely linked to skills development and human development, in this way including those currently unemployed. According to Weinberger (1998), there is no general agreement concerning the definition of HRD. The field includes elements that reach out to individuals, organizations, and communities, as well as those on a global level (McLean and McLean, 2001; Metcalfe and Rees, 2005). A definition has been given by McLean and McLean (2001) that underlines the universality and diversity of HRD:

Human resource development is any process that, either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop adults’ work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of the organization, community, nation or, ultimately, the whole of humanity.

In terms of building female capacity, there are several issues that need to be considered and thoroughly researched. Furthermore, research undertaken in the field of HRD and building
female capacity may prove valuable to future scholars in the chosen field. A detailed discussion of the theory of HRD and its importance in the Sub-Saharan African region is presented in Chapter 2.

1.3 The formulation of an HRD policy – some critical considerations

In this section, a discussion of the policy implementation process is given. Focus will also be on HRD policies. This section will demonstrate the importance of sound HRD policies and discuss why it is important for organizations and institutions to make sure that the policies implemented are valid, and further to understand the obstacles in the implementation process. When there is a need for policy implementation, one can take for granted that there is a problem that needs to be solved. Lindblom and Woodhouse (1993) state that making a policy is not an easy task, and that those in charge of making the policy do not know all the effects of the policy until it is implemented. Regarding problem solving, of which policy making can be considered a part, Simon (1957, p. 198) made this statement.

The capacity of the human mind for formulating and solving complex problems is very small compared with the size of the problems whose solutions is required for objectively rational behaviour in the real world – or even for a reasonable approximation to such objective rationality.

The following discussion presents the problems that may occur during the formulation and implementation of a HRD policy.
1.4 What is a policy?

There are many definitions of a policy. There are also many reasons for implementing a policy. When one thinks of a policy, it is perhaps policy implementation on a national level, implemented by the government that comes to mind. However, policy is not only implemented on a national level, but also in small and large organizations, health institutions, educational institutions, and so forth. Keeping this in mind, one must acknowledge that regardless of the level on which the policy is implemented, the importance of the policy should never be underestimated (Nagel, 1994). A policy can be considered to be strategic guidelines for action, seeing that policies aim to provide specific directions and set specific limitations for what can and should be done (Mockler, 1972). A policy can be defined as a plan of action for tackling political issues. It is often initiated by a political party in government, which undergoes reforms and changes by interested actors (for example, opposition parties and lobby groups). Policy designates a process. This process includes the elaboration of programs by different, usually public and private collective actors and the way the programs are then applied as concrete programs and actions³

In accordance with Hill (1993), one can make a distinction between two sources of development in ideas in the study of the policy process. The first is related to the academic work and the exchange between intellectuals, representing data from research and notes of contributors to the policy process. The second source is the results of improvements of the policy process, which includes new techniques and new strategies in order to solve policy and implementation problems (Hill, 1993). A policy can be considered to be much like a decision or

rather a set of decisions, and they are made, implemented, or carried out in the same way as decisions in general.

Like a decision a policy is not itself a statement, nor is it only a set of actions, although, as with decisions, we can infer what a person's or organisation's policy is either from the statement he makes about it, or, if he makes no statement or we don't believe his statement from the way he acts. But, equally, we can claim that a statement or set of actions is misleading and does not faithfully reflect the "true" policy.\(^4\)

Taking this into consideration, it is possible to temporarily classify a policy as a set of decisions which are oriented in the direction of a long-term function or to a particular problem.

1.4.1 The policy-formulation process

A large number of actors take part in the formulation, authorization, and implementation of a policy. They include representatives from both the public and the private sector (Hill, 1993). Policy formulation is, according to Thomas and Grindle in De Beer and Swanepoel (2000, p. 89-90),

the process in which a policy reform initiative may be altered or reversed at any stage in its life cycle. It is an interactive and ongoing process of decision making by policy elites…and managers…in response to actual or anticipated reactions to reformist initiatives.

Policies are not completely designed once the formulation process is over. The formulation often continues throughout the entire process (Dinica, 2004). This will be discussed further in the next section, when the whole policy formulation and implementation process will be examined in detail.

1.4.2 Approaches and steps taken for policy formulation and implementation

There are many models created for the purpose of explaining policy processes. In this study, two models will be presented in order to illustrate the problem-solving issue involved in implementing a policy, and also the basic elements that need to be considered in a policy process.

Figure 1: The classical rational problem-solving process

Source: Patton and Sawicki (1993, p. 3).
Another model that clarifies the policy process is the Core Policy Process model, is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Core policy process

From both figures above, it becomes clear that the policy process is not linear, which means that it does not start at one end and finish at another. Rather, the policy process is circular (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2000).

According to Dinica (2004), it is widely accepted that it is difficult to make a distinction between policy formulation and policy implementation. This is owing to the fact that policy formulation essentially takes place throughout the entire policy process. Hill and Hupe (2003) are of the opinion that the use of the term "policy making" for the entire process, "policy
formation" for the initial part of policy making, and "policy implementation" for the latter part of the policy-making process would be more appropriate.

The first and primary step in the process of policy making or implementation of a policy is deciding whether a new policy is required in the first place. Consequently, this is a very important step in the process (Lindblom and Woodhouse, 1993). Once it has been decided that a new policy has to be promoted, or an existing one reformed, comprehensive research and analysis are carried out (Dinica, 2004). The step of formulation adds more detail to the earlier policy analysis. These details include a statement of the problem, the goals and objectives of the policy, a framework that drafts programs in support of those targets, and a statement of the resources needed for a particular policy (Lindblom and Woodhouse, 1993). All these elements need to be drafted and analyzed in detail so that effective action and implementation can be carried out (Starling, 1988). At this point, the policy makers have the option to make the process more participatory by engaging stakeholders, such as civil society, in the policy formulation. Their options could be anything from simple information sharing to complete collaboration (Hill and Hupe, 2003). Policy adoption is the next step, but this is a step which is often merged with the implementation stage (Dinica, 2004).

Finally, the policy is implemented. Dinica (2004) finds it useful to picture the implementation as "a mixture of activities" because implementation activities are often very complex in terms of their types, the aim and the effect on the actors involved. In addition, she points out; two distinct types of policy implementation activities are often taking place side by side, or one after the other. These are policy making and policy operationalization.
1.5 How does policy formulation relate to HRD?

According to Adams and Egger (1999), HRD policy makers and planners need to give more attention to the processes for policy formulation and planning. They argue that failure to implement HRD policies can be blamed on the lack of a favorable economic environment and real political commitment in many countries. In Figure 3 below, an example of a HRD (health) policy formulation is given.

**Figure 3: Human Resource Development (HRD) Policy Formulation – A Framework for Analysis.**

Source: Adams and Egger (1999)
The framework shown in Figure 3 attempts to consider various methods under different contexts. In addition, it aims to measure some of the key support systems for policy formulation and planning (information, human capacities, and finance). It also provides an analysis of the relationship between different levels of policy making (Adams and Egger, 1999). HRD policies are formulated and put into practice in order to help management of either organizations or countries achieve their overall objectives (Carrell, Elbert, Grobler, Hatfield and Wärnich, 2002). Political and economic environments are the key to policy implementation. It would seem logical that these two important factors, as well as others, be taken into account when formulating a new HRD policy and plans (Adams and Egger, 1999).

The concept of "traversing" is concerned with the movement of people into and out of employment all the way through their work life. This concept also refers to the mobility (or lack thereof) of personnel up the professional ladder as a result of training and promotion policies (Kraak, 2003). This author further states that several institutions and state policies impact on the process of traversing in the world of work. These include economic development, training, lifelong learning, HIV and AIDS, and the labor market (in relation to South Africa) (Kraak, 2003).

1.5.1 The validity of HRD policies

There is no doubt that HRD policies are important, in the sense that they have the possibility to improve conditions for a large number of workers and people in general. This will be discussed further in the next section of this research study. However, a policy is not necessarily for the betterment of the masses just because it is implemented (Dinica, 2004). The policy makers have to make sure before the policy is implemented, that in the earlier stages of the policy formulation process, it has been made clear who the policy aimed to reach, and on what level.
This has to be apparent before the policy is implemented, to ensure that the effects of the policy will have optimum results (Nagel, 1994).

In developing an appropriate policy for HRD, countries and institutions need to take into account the increasing worldwide trends towards closer integration of the world economy in the form of globalization and opening up of local economies. The investment in HRD policies is aimed at insuring a greater chance for the labor force in general in the process of development by enhancing its capacity for productive work. Consequently, if the HRD policies are for the betterment of the workforce, they have a better chance to contribute to greater growth and receive appropriate returns from the potential growth. In today’s increasingly global world, it can be argued that HRD policy makers need to make sure that the policies are adapted in such a way as to take into account an increasingly diverse workforce.

1.5.2 The importance of HRD policies

Rothblatt (in De Beer and Swanepoel, 2000, p. 88) states that “a development policy should be thoughtful attempt of a country to deal with the development of both urban and rural regions.” This can be argued to be especially true for the developing world, where both overall development policies and HRD policies are highly important.

As for HRD in the South African context, social institutions play a major part in the shaping of human resources. This is owing to the fact that HRD is, essentially, a collective good for the whole society, which requires large-scale investments in education and training infrastructure that go far beyond the means of just one single stakeholder. Kraak (2003) states that the participation of multiple stakeholders in HRD, including the state and employers, take on

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specific institutional forms, which forms critical components of the larger South African social system including the youth labor market, the world of work, and its associated enterprise training system. The HRD problems that arise from these three institutional systems are basically cross-sectoral, and the answer to the problems, he suggests, will be a joint policy and implementation across several governmental departments, to generate the synergy necessary for the achievement of important social effects (Kraak, 2003).

Public policy in a poor country should target those policies which help the country move out of the poverty trap. Ersson and Lane (2002) suggest that public policy can help a developing country reach a sustained level of economic development, which aims to reduce the poverty gap. Fleming and Sørborg (2002) argue that in the case of South East Asia, where industry has begun to catch up with the more developed economies in the west, cannot continue to learn from others. This is because the South East Asia region is facing different challenges than countries in previous industrialization periods. Fleming and Sørborg (2002) further suggest that the transition these countries are experiencing in terms of labor require better conditions for proactive state policies. Moreover, proactive institutional support must meet the challenge of being more creative, more flexible, and less centralized in HRD planning (Fleming and Sørborg, 2002).

1.5.3 HRD policies: why are they initiated?

Regional and international cooperation are essential for expanding and improving HRD and for keeping practices up to date. This is perhaps especially true for developing countries. Such cooperation, by communities, institutes, and businesses needs to be encouraged by
government policies.⁷ HRD has been neglected in many communities and organizations in the past. This situation has been forced to change because individual human performance is of vital and increasing significance for development. It is evident that the key to overcoming the barriers to HRD lies in appropriate policies, determination, and commitment. An HRD policy is initiated as a result of the need to develop and protect the workforce, and thus increase productivity and improve economic results (Adams and Egger, 1999). The International Labour Organisation (ILO) states that the development and implementation of HRD policies must be initiated owing to:

- the new context of HRD and training and the new demand for skills and competencies in an increasingly integrated world economy and the knowledge and skills society
- the rationale of HRD and training for improved competitiveness, employability and equity in employment, and the respective roles of basic education, initial training and continuous training in promoting and maintaining employability
- youth employment and training
- the HRD and training challenge in today's world: new policies and institutional frameworks and new roles for the partners in training.⁸

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When policies are initiated, there should be close cooperation between the different stakeholders in order to make sure that the final results have the desired effects on the target population.

1.6 Some critical considerations

In this section, the problems and obstacles that may occur during the formulation and implementation and stakeholders in an HRD policy are discussed. According to De Beer and Swanepoel (2000, p.89), “the greatest problem with policy-making is that it must reflect the needs and sentiments of the people for whom it is intended.” An HRD policy must aim to achieve the betterment of the entire society, in that the policy is related to development. The policy must be formulated and implemented in such a way that it leads to positive changes and opportunities, rather than hindering development.

1.6.1 Are obstacles to policy implementation considered?

Ersson and Lane (2002) suggest that governments in developing countries should employ a range of social policies which will lessen the often very poor conditions of many people in these countries. In a developing country, it is perhaps most important to engage in education and health-care policies. However, other policies such as law and order and infrastructure also benefit whole societies. It is important to consider that political instability, which is often present in developing countries, makes any policy consistency or coherence almost impossible.

The obstacles will differ according to what the policy aims to achieve. That being said, there are some obstacles that can be considered to be common in the policy process. Some of these obstacles are as follows:
• the belief of those at whom the policy is aimed that the current status is working well
• a lack of interest or motivation from stakeholders
• difficulties in the implementation process
• problems with funding
• making sure the policy benefits those at whom it is directed (Mayr, 2005).

When organizations or institutions are considering the implementation of new policies, or the restructuring of current policies, they should reflect on the saying: “If it’s not broken, don’t fix it!” before proceeding with the implementation of the policy.

1.6.2 Who are responsible and who are involved?

As mentioned earlier in this discussion, there are several stakeholders involved in the formulation and implementation of a policy. This is especially true for an HRD policy. The different stakeholders may include public and private actors such as companies, governments, and non-governmental organizations. These stakeholders can make their own decisions or involve public participation in the process. Hence, the policy formulation process might very well continue in the policy implementation stage if the earlier design of policy has not been completed in a way that implementing actors are able to work with it (Dinica, 2004). In Malaysia, the government has realized that by implementing sound HRD policies, they are attracting foreign investors who support the policies and bring capital into the local economy. However, the multinational companies investing in the country are only willing to invest in HRD policies if they receive attractive incentives, such as tax relief (Fleming and Sørborg, 2002).

Implementation is management. This involves managing policies that are new or modified, or those that are replacing already existing policies. Policies often present conflicting directives
and unclear directions to those in charge, as stated earlier, there are many actors and institutions that shape the formulation of a policy, and fund and regulate policies. These actors and institutions often have considerable ambition and an interest in shaping the implementation of policy.9

1.7 Conclusion

This discussion has dealt with issues concerning policy formulation and implementation. By examining the policy process, it has become evident that it is not a linear process, but rather a circular and continuous process. It has also become evident that the policy process involves several stakeholders, including communities, management, and governments. This has proven to be especially true for development and HRD policies. Throughout the policy formulation and implementation process, the policy makers must make sure that the policy targets those who will benefit from the policy both in the short run and in the long run. In this way, the validity of the policy will be increased, and thus hopefully the conditions of those it aims to target, will be improved.

When one considers policies for development, it is important to be aware of the fact that policies for development are likely to create winners and losers. For this reason, it is vital that policy makers aim to produce results that will benefit those whom the policy ultimately targets. There may be some parts of the target group that are more comfortable with the way things are, because they benefit from the current system and know how it works. To the extent that these groups or stakeholders are able to block change, they will need to be compensated in some way. Bearing this in mind, it is essential to inform both public and stakeholders about why

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a particular change can lead to better solutions (Hahn and Tetlock, 2005). It should be noted that while there is a widespread and growing attention being paid to the importance of HRD policy formulation and implementation, important gaps remain. This is especially true for countries in the developing world, as has been discussed in this discussion.

1.8 Summary of Section 1

This chapter has provided a brief introduction to the field of HRD and the importance of sound policy making. The aims and objectives of the study have been stated. The methodology used for this research paper has been briefly outlined, as well as an overview of the structure of the dissertation.
Section 2: The articles

Article 1: Human Resource Development in Sub-Saharan Africa

ABSTRACT The need for skills development and training in Sub-Saharan Africa is increasing in an area where unstable economies and high unemployment create challenges on many levels. Sub-Saharan Africa is faced with great poverty, skills migration, and HIV and AIDS, which are depleting the region of skilled workers in their prime working years. The region is facing numerous challenges in the development of skills and the ability to make use of the available human resources. It can be argued that the Sub-Saharan African region needs to increase the skilled labor pool and to develop communities. Perhaps most importantly, there is an urgent need for the region to face the impact of globalization on its own terms. This involves the fusion of African philosophy and management styles with the traditional Western theories with Human Resource Development (HRD) strategies and policies that will be suitable for the developing economies in the region.

KEYWORDS: Sub-Saharan Africa, human capital, training, skills development, managing diversity, African philosophy, human resource development

10 This article has been accepted for submission in the journal Human Resource Development International

2.1 Introduction

Greetings! I am pleased to see

that we are different.

May we together become greater

than the sum of both of us.

(Vulcan Greeting, Star Trek)

Human resource development (HRD) is linked to the development of skills and knowledge management. The purpose of skills development includes preparing individuals for increased responsibilities in the workplace as well as in the society at large (Horwitz, Bowmaker-Falconer and Searll, 1996). HRD can be seen as essential in the role it plays to increase overall performance and the growth of individuals.

The purpose of this paper is to give a perspective of HRD that has been explored hardly at all in previous literature, namely HRD in the Sub-Saharan African context. The concepts and the underlying principles of HRD may be similar throughout the world, but the way in which HRD is practiced may differ greatly in different parts of the world. In developing parts of the world especially, the aspect of national human resource development (NHRD) is being given increasing emphasis (Paprock, 2006).

The questions that will be addressed in this paper are: is there such a thing as an African (management) philosophy and what are the driving forces of HRD practices in the Sub-Saharan African region? In order to write this article, the authors have had to analyze literature outside the conventional HRD literature. Included are theories from fields such as anthropology, sociology, economics, and philosophy. This only proves what has been
concluded many times before, that the field of HRD is a complex one (Callahan and De Dávila, 2004; Cunningham, 2004; Swanson, 2001). To avoid the dangers of over-generalization, the authors wish to add as an advisory note that the Sub-Saharan African region has a high level of regional and local diversity. However, for the purpose of this paper, the Sub-Saharan African region will to a large extent be dealt with as a single entity.

The discussion relates to five sections that are used to illustrate HRD in the Sub-Saharan African context. The first section deals with HRD with specific reference to Sub-Saharan-Africa. This section will discuss the challenges and the opportunities faced by the Sub-Saharan African region. The second section focuses on training and skills development issues in Sub-Saharan Africa. This part of the article looks at why it is important to develop the skills of individuals in the region. The third section considers the political and economic realities in relation to development, and how the force of globalization influences the region. This will be contrasted with how the region can utilize its resources in terms of HRD. The fourth section focuses on the nature of African philosophy and its driving forces in relation to HRD theory as related to its definition. The final section deals with the future of HRD in a Sub-Saharan African context, and give suggestions as to what HRD can do in order to align what can be perceived as Western theory of HRD with what may be seen as an African adoption of HRD.

There is no one particular or preferred way to define HRD. The definitions that one comes across are more likely to be working definitions and will be shaped by the knowledge gained from working with HRD (Vince, 2005). In the following Table 1, an outline of selected HRD definition will give an indication of just how wide and dynamic the field of HRD is.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McLagan, P.</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>The integrated use of training and development, career development and organization development to improve individual and organizational effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton, J.</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Human resource development is an extension of training and development, with a specific orientation towards organisational learning interventions designed to improve skills, knowledge and understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLean, G.N. &amp; McLean, L</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Human resource development is any process or activity that, either initially or over the long term, has the potential to develop ... work based knowledge, expertise, productivity and satisfaction, whether on personal or group, team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
nation, or ultimately, the whole humanity.

| Swanson, R.A | 2001 | A process of developing and/or unleashing human expertise through organisation development (OD) and personal training and development (T and D) for the purpose of improving performance. |
| Lee, M. | 2003 | HRD is seen to help managers develop leadership and interpersonal skills, creativity, self reliance and the ability to work in different cultures. |
| Metcalfe, B.D. & Rees, C.J. | 2005 | International HRD is a broad term that concern processes that address the formulation and practice of HRD systems, practices and policies at the global societal and organizational level. |
According to Weinberger (1998), there is no general agreement concerning the definition of HRD. As seen from the Table presented above, the field is diverse and includes elements that reach out to individuals, organizations, and communities, as well as those on a global level (McLean and McLean, 2001; Metcalfe and Rees, 2005).

2.2 HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa: challenges and opportunities

The United Nations Development Program’s (UNPDs) ‘Human Development Index’ (HDI) measures a population’s ability to develop the three ‘most basic capabilities’: to be able to lead a long and healthy life, to be knowledgeable, and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living (Butler, 2004; UNDP, 2005). The UNDP argues that the HDI will assist policy makers to focus on the lives of ordinary people in general, not only economics, as the criteria for assessing the development of a country.

There are inequalities in all societies, and the Sub-Saharan African region is no exception. There are different ways to explain the inequalities, including urban-rural divides, gender or intergenerational inequality, and disability. From Table 2, it is evident that Sub-Saharan Africa has a long way to go in terms of social development (UNDP, 2005). As Johnson and Adams (2004, p. 39) point out, ‘labour market outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa have been influenced by environmental issues ranging from disease and wars to weak institutions.’ Hence, the region has faced challenges in the past, which continue to be an obstacle for further development.

There are enormous gaps between those living in rural Sub-Saharan Africa and those living in urban areas, and those who have access to the resources of the formal economy and those who do not. Likewise, gender plays an important role in terms of disadvantage, with women disproportionately bearing the burden of poverty, disease, physical labor, and unemployment (Butler, 2004). The increasing influence of the global economy in the region...
indicates that there will be a growing dependence on skilled low-cost labor in order to ensure development of people and economies (Kraak, 2005). There is no shortage of human resources in Sub-Saharan Africa, but in order for the people to meet challenges and seize opportunities, HRD must play a strategic role in ensuring fairer access to resources and sustainable development in the region. In order to achieve social reconciliation and political stability, to which people in the region aspire, economic advance is imperative. Perhaps the biggest challenge in the future is HIV and AIDS, which casts a shadow over the economy, the society, and the politics (Johansen and Adams, 2004). The pandemic will have a tremendous effect on both workers and managers. An increase in employee turnover, absenteeism, and a reduction in productivity are some of the consequences that managers have to take into consideration as a result of the pandemic (Barker, 2003; Butler, 2004; Hunter, 2003). The impact and challenges of HIV and AIDS on the labor market will be discussed later in the article.

In its broadest understanding, capacity building includes HRD as a vital part of development. It can be based on the concept that knowledge productivity is at the core of development efforts, and that without HRD; most development interventions will be ineffective (Kessels and Poell, 2004). These authors point out that HRD is not just an organizational concern; rather it has been increasingly acknowledged as considering the need of individuals to take charge of their own lives and their desire to contribute to the economy and to society at large (Kessels and Poell, 2004; Wang and Holton, 2005). As stated by several authors, including Callahan and Dávila (2005); Fenwick (2004) and Mabey (2003), a critical goal of HRD is that of maximizing people's potential to contribute to development, by participating fully in the labor market and in the economy. Through capacity-building activities, individuals and groups
are empowered to expand their abilities to fully participate in the development process (Madsen, 2003).

There are six billion people on this planet and the survival and endurance of each separate being is what HRD is all about. However, the formalization of HRD seems to be progressing only in more affluent and developed countries. In developing countries, where basic needs and formalized policy have not been provided there is a need for more HRD efforts (Paprock, 2006).

The next section explores some of the challenges that the Sub-Saharan African region is facing in terms of skills development and training. These include globalization, human capital needs, skills migration, and HIV and AIDS.

### 2.3 Skills development and training in Sub-Saharan Africa

Training and skills development are good investments for individuals, organizations, the labor market, and the economy (Johanson and Adams, 2004). In developing countries, this can be argued to be especially true. By investing in people’s skills, one is investing in their future. In addition, training and skills development is an important step towards poverty eradication in the Sub-Saharan African region. Training is viewed as a division of HRD, and it adds to the general learning and development effort (Walton, 1999). Training and skills development are important for individuals in order to keep up with the demand of the labor market (Barker, 2003). In addition, when individuals possess skills that are transferable in the labor market, their motivation tends to increase, and they become more productive. Skills development will also foster social well-being, intellectual growth, and stimulation for the individuals (Ehrenberg and Smith, 2003).

The process called human capital development, which is aimed at improving an individual’s knowledge and skills, does not improve only skills related to the labor market. It also increases
productivity on a more personal level, at home, and in the community (Johanson and Adams, 2004). Johanson and Adams (2004, pp. 16-17) recognize five major reasons why skills development in Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly important.

1. Globalization and competition require higher skills and productivity among workers.
2. Technological changes require richer cognitive context, higher skills levels in the labor force, and continued enhancement of workforce skills.
3. Many countries have undergone significant structural adjustment over the past decade.
4. Poverty reduction requires investing in the productivity and skills of economically and socially vulnerable groups.
5. Skills development becomes both more important and more difficult as a result of HIV/AIDS. AIDS depletes scarce human capital and magnifies the need to replace skills lost across a wide range of occupations.

As Johanson and Adams (2004) note, the essential concern regarding skills development is how best to balance access to skills with the demand for such skills in the labor market. If the available skills in the labor market are not employed, unemployment is perpetuated, and there is a waste of limited resources. Needless to say, this is not a favorable situation seen from an individual, organizational, or national economic aspect.

2.3.1 The political and economic realities of Sub-Saharan Africa

The Sub-Saharan region consists of 42 mainland and 6 island nations. The different African countries vary in the way they have been integrated into the world economy (Tsikata, 2001). In addition to an increase in inequality, a number of African countries have recorded an increase in poverty. Poverty in Africa is, for the most part, rural, but some countries, such as Nigeria,
Zimbabwe and Zambia, are also seeing an increase in urban poverty (Tsikata, 2001). Table 2 gives an indication of the economic and human development realities in the Sub-Saharan African region.
Table 2: The economic development realities of Sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Human Development Index (HDI)</th>
<th>Human Development Index (HDI) Rank (of 177 Countries)</th>
<th>Combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools (%)</th>
<th>Adult Literacy Rate (% ages 15 and above)</th>
<th>Life Expectancy at birth</th>
<th>Education Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0.658</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>0.508</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>0.281</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNDP, 2005
The table presented above makes it clear that the African continent is lagging behind in terms of human development, as well as in terms of life expectancy and education. Although not meant as a direct comparison, the country ranked number one on the list, Norway, gives an indication as to how severe the human development situation is in Sub-Saharan Africa. Two things are worth noting. First, South Africa is the country in the region ranked highest (120th). Although first in the region, it is still only 120th" is despite the fact that the country has abundant capital, a highly developed financial sector that is connected to the rest of the world (Tsikata, 2001). Second, of the 37 countries ranked last on the list, 36 are situated in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP, 2005).

The economic, social and political situation in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa is fragile and vulnerable to both internal and external shocks. Furthermore, the region has a long way to go before it will be able to make up for ground lost in the past. A number of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have just recently emerged from civil wars that have played a major role in their lack of development. New armed conflicts have erupted in other parts of the continent. The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was formed in 2001 and the African Union (AU) in 2002. Africa as a continent has prepared itself with a strategy and institutions that aim to guide the region towards political and economic integration with the rest of the world. At national level, many countries across the continent are making progress in terms of governance. In the past five years, for example, more than two thirds of the countries in the Sub-Saharan African region have held multi-party elections. Many countries, such as Ghana in West-Africa, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in East-Africa and South Africa, Namibia, Botswana
and Mozambique in Southern Africa, have realized that political stability and sustainable development are inseparable.\footnote{European Union Strategy for Africa: http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/05/370&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en}

Seeing that the countries in Sub-Saharan African region find themselves in different stages of development, it can be expected that the development of HRD will vary between the different countries. The political situation will also have a noticeable impact on the progress and expansion of HRD in the region.

2.4 The challenge of the globalization force in Sub-Saharan Africa

The force of globalization has existed for centuries, but has recently exploded in terms of the movement of labor and capital across national borders (Cunningham, 2004). Globalization has not had the same impact on Africa as it has in other parts of the world. However, most African countries have made significant advancements in terms of trade liberalization (Tsikata, 2001). In Table 3, an outline of the relationship between globalization and HRD is given. All economies have to face the force of globalization (Marquardt and Berger, 2003). However, it can be argued that the Sub-Saharan African region is especially vulnerable due to factors such as low skills development, skills migration, and HIV and AIDS (Bailey, 2003; Johanson and Adams, 2004). On the positive side, there are forces that give hope for the future in the Sub-Saharan region, such as the African Renaissance (Anstey, 2003) and an increasing focus on developing the African management identity (Jackson, 2004).
Table 3: Forces of globalization and the impact on HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Implications for HRD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td>Globalization is an unavoidable and irreversible force and has affected communities and the field of HRD. The challenge facing Sub-Saharan African countries is to design public policies so as to maximize the potential benefits from globalization, and to minimize the downside risks of destabilization and/or marginalization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human capital needs</td>
<td>Education and training make up the investments in people that make it possible to increased productivity or an improved economic yield. Increased human capital increases the knowledge of individuals, thus generating capital for economies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills Migration</td>
<td>Skilled workers are leaving the region in pursuit of better employment opportunities in other parts of the world. Workers are often offered higher salaries in North America, Europe or Australasia. One implication of skills migration is the reduction in the region’s ability to develop as knowledge societies and compete successfully on a global level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HIV and AIDS Pandemic

The HIV and AIDS pandemic in Sub-Saharan Africa is a mammoth challenge for the societies and the individuals in the region. AIDS reduces human capital which is already in short supply. Therefore, there will be a need to replace the skills lost across a variety of occupations in the labor market.

African Renaissance

Through an African Renaissance Africa shall develop sustainable economies leading to lesser extent of dependence and make the continent increasingly investor friendly and economic restoration. This will be a force that will be guided by African values and traditions.

Ubuntu

The concept of Ubuntu (the notion of interdependence rather than individuality and that a person is incomplete unless he or she depends on their community and culture) may be the single most important ‘export’ from Africa in a long time. It might just be the way many companies not only in Africa but also around the world approach their work in the future.

Sources: Anstey, 2003; Bailey, 2003; Barker, 2003; Brewster et al, 2003; Johanson and Adams, 2004; Hughes, 2005; Shuttle, 1993;
As globalization becomes part of people’s lives, HRD gives a chance to re-evaluate how HRD as a field can contribute to the shaping of development on a local, national, and global level (Marquardt and Berger, 2003; Metcalfe and Rees, 2005). According to Marquardt and Berger (2003, p. 285), there are seven areas in which HRD can positively affect globalization: (1) Political development, (2) economic development, (3) organizational and workplace learning, (4) education and vocational training, (5) global leadership development, (6) technology and knowledge, and (7) environment sustainability. If the countries in the Sub-Saharan African region could create changes in each of the areas mentioned above, this would lead to a major improvement in the lives of people, not only in the workplace, but also in the society as a whole (Marquardt and Berger, 2003).

African economies that are able and willing to open up to trade and capital flows on a free and fair basis and are able to attract international capital, will benefit the most from the force of globalization (UNDP, 2005). Open and integrated markets place a premium on good macroeconomic policies, and on the ability to respond quickly and appropriately to changes in the international environment (Barker, 2003).

It has been suggested by Johanson and Adams (2004) that, as with any structural change, some segments of a society will be disadvantaged in the short term, while other segments, and the economy as a whole, are benefiting. This does not mean that countries should seek to isolate themselves from globalization. Rather, governments must fully embrace globalization in an awareness of its potential risks, and seek to provide adequate protection for the vulnerable segments of society during the process of change (Marquardt and Berger, 2003; UNDP, 2005). Countries with a poor or inconsistent policy record will inevitably find themselves passed by, both from expanding trade and from private capital flows for development. These are the
countries that run the risk of marginalization (Barker, 2003). While one can argue that the Sub-Saharan African region is on the right track, there is still a long way to go.

2.4.1 Human capital needs

Human capital development is commonly attributed to education and training, and focuses on the accumulation of knowledge of individuals and how they are able to transfer their skills into increased productivity and economic outcome (Paprock, 2006; Hughes, 2005). According to Wang and Holton (2005), within the typical human capital model, HRD and training will firstly need to take place in the workplace. The fundamentals of the human capital theory are that everyone in the labor market has equal access and opportunities to training and other resources, such as information (Paprock, 2006). The African continent has made great efforts to invest in human capital. Still, the continent lags behind other parts of the world. Furthermore, there are huge differences between the different countries (Tsikata, 2001). According to Stone (2002), training is an activity which an organization carries out to increase the employee’s skills. This becomes a tremendous challenge in Sub-Saharan Africa where fundamental resources such as food, housing, and education, as well as training and access to the labor market are highly biased (Bailey, 2003; Johanson and Adams, 2004).

2.4.2 Skills migration

In order for a country to compete on the global market, it is imperative that the labor market is made up of well-educated and skilled workers (Finnemore, 2002). It has been identified that South Africa, which can be considered to be the leading economic country in Sub-Saharan African, is experiencing a migration of high-skilled workers (Lynham and Cunningham, 2006).
This has been acknowledged to be a problem also for the other countries in the region (Johanson and Adams, 2004).

Barker (2003) points out that skills emigration has been going on for decades, and that erosion of human capital is a tremendous loss for the individual economies. If this trend is not reversed, the consequences may prove devastating. With the world becoming increasingly competitive, it is increasingly important that countries take action to build up and keep their skilled workforce (Anstey, 2003). In order for this to happen, it is imperative that the labor market is attractive to workers, and that sound HRD policies and strategies are put into place (McLean, 2006; Kraak, 2005; Paprock, 2006).

2.4.3 The HIV and AIDS pandemic

HIV and AIDS is perhaps the most notable health and economic challenge to many Sub-Saharan African countries (Finnemore, 2002). The main challenge at the moment concerning the impact of HIV and AIDS in the labor market is that most of the people dying from the disease are in their most productive years (Barker, 2003; Johanson and Adams, 2004; Kauffman and Lindauer, 2004). The consequences of the pandemic are like an ulcer in a society because of its socioeconomic implications (Strand, Matlosa, Strode and Chirambo, 2005). The full effect of HIV and AIDS is yet to be felt in high-prevalence countries in the Sub-Saharan African region because of the length of time taken for a person acquiring the virus to reach full-blown AIDS (Hunter, 2003). Nevertheless, it is clear that productivity and growth in the labor market are likely to suffer in the future as a result of the number of people who will not be able to participate in the labor force (Johanson and Adams, 2004).
2.5 A reflection of philosophical theory in Sub-Saharan Africa

Philosophy in Africa is considered in a culture-specific way. This means that philosophy is linked to a very specific cultural framework (Van Staden, 1998). According to Shutte (1993, p. 6), philosophy is ‘the search for truths and values that are true and valuable for every place and time’. Menkiti, as cited by Shutte (1993, p. 46), argues that ‘in the African view it is the community which defines the person as person, not some isolated static quality of rationality, will or memory’. The essence of being is ‘participation’, in which human beings are always interlocked with one another (Shutte, 1993; Shutte 2001). However, it is important to remember that Sub-Saharan Africa is a vast geographical area on the African continent. Hence, there are many diverse varieties of philosophical thoughts.

As stated by Shutte (1993), work is the activity where a person transforms the environment for human use and development, to become a welcoming sphere for people to function in. Schumacher (1973) as cited by Shutte (1993, p. 125), notes three important functions regarding human work: ‘to give man a chance to utilize and develop his faculties, to enable him to overcome his egocentredness by joining with other people in a common task, and to bring forth the goods and services needed for a becoming existence’.

The activity of labor or work is essential to human beings because it contains the elements of our very existence; both physical and spiritual elements are expressed in a combining activity (Shutte, 1993). According to Owakah (2002), one of the challenges for African philosophy is that of the immense influence of Western philosophy. Another challenge he mentions is that of culture. Masolo, as cited by Owakah (2002, p. 122), has observed that the ‘birth of the debate on African philosophy is historically associated with two related happenings: Western discourse on Africa and the African response to it’. Western imperialism in Africa did not mean only physical occupation of the continent by Europeans; it also meant Europe...
exporting to Africa their so-called 'superior culture' in order to replace African culture (Beck, 2002; Owakah, 2002). Modern African philosophy has a social function to perform, in that it has high social value in Africa. In addition, it should serve to explain to Africans both the social and moral issues that a society faces today (Chukwu, 2002).
Table 4: Features of African and Western worldview – dealing with a cultural diverse work environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western</th>
<th>African</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History of colonizing (superior, the oppressor, imposed controls on workers allowing little worker initiative)</td>
<td>History of being colonized (subordinate, the oppressed, possessing limited labor skills)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualistically oriented (me, promotes self-realization)</td>
<td>Collectivistic oriented (the group is important, responsibility is shared and accountability is shared)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low context communication (tends to be direct, precise, and clear)</td>
<td>High context communication (tends to be indirect and ambiguous)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low power distance (individuals viewed as equals, superiors and subordinates are interdependent)</td>
<td>High power distance (individuals viewed as unequal, subordinates dependent on superiors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High need for economic achievement (long experience of economic growth)</td>
<td>Lesser (but increasing) need for economic achievement (emerging economies)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High “technical intelligence” generally in high regard (holding skills is preferable)

Delegation of authority (sharing of information, more participatory management style)

High “social intelligence” generally in high regard (conscious tradable of values and norms, proper language and customary practices)

Pushing decisions upwards in the organizational hierarchy

(encourages dependent behavior, reduces opportunities for subordinates to engage in more interesting work)

Sources: Ferraro, 2002; Gudykunst, 1998; Hofstede, 1980; Jackson, 2004; Thiemann, 2005
From the table above, it becomes evident that the Western and African mindsets differ greatly. There are also great differences in economic achievement, resulting in a need for different approaches to economic development. The next section will discuss the challenges and opportunities for HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa and the most important issues that the region is currently facing.

2.5.1 African Renaissance

Africa is culturally different from the West in many aspects. This is also true in the case of management. This leads Thiemann (2005, p. 32) to make the following statement: ‘The African approach to management differs widely on many crucial point with that of the West – yet, with cross-cultural trends on the increase, a model needs to be developed which blends the best of both worlds’. Lodge, as cited by Anstey (2003), notes that there are two themes that lead the discussion of African Renaissance, namely the force of modernity, which represents the introduction of modern technology, and a drive for market economies and liberal economies. On the other hand, there is the concern about the need for preservation of indigenous African traditions and values. Even though ‘renaissance’ means ‘re-birth’, it will not occur overnight. In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, a renaissance would have to take place within the context of complex economic, political, and socio-cultural conditions (Anstey, 2003).

2.5.2 Ubuntu

The difference between the developing and the developed world is apparent not only in economics and politics; it appears also in culture, the conflict of ideas of what is important in a person’s life, and what will make a person happy (Shutte, 2001). An example of the very different ways of thinking within a culture is the difference between the Western and African
perception of ‘self’. The common Western idea of self is that individuals have the power of free choice. The idea in African culture that a person is dependent on other persons to be whole, as noted by Jackson (2002), will be discussed by examining the African conception of Ubuntu.

The concept of Ubuntu is not an easy one to translate. It symbolizes an understanding of being human and what is required of humans to grow and achieve. At the centre of Ubuntu is the idea of umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu, a Zulu proverb, which can be translated as ‘Persons depend on persons to be persons’ or ‘I am because of others’ (Shutte, 2001). In the White Paper on social welfare policy in 1997, the South African government recognized the concept of Ubuntu by stating the following:

The principle of caring for each other’s well being…and a spirit of mutual support…Each individual’s humanity is ideally expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs in turn through a recognition of the individual’s humanity. Ubuntu means that people are people through other people. It also acknowledges both the rights and the responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being.12

Traditionally, in the West, an organization operates with a strict hierarchical structure: the workers will always be under the managers in terms of decision making. This implies that all important decisions made are ultimately executed by management. Operating within such a strict hierarchy might prove disempowering to many workers, seeing that it implies that some are more important than others (Prinsloo, 1998). However, in recent years, there has been a tendency to move away from autocratic management styles. This has been considered as improving the development of each individual, and the ‘lower ranks’ of the organization are

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allowed to take risks and participate in the decision-making processes that previously were reserved for top management (Jackson, 2002). The organizations may still operate within the hierarchical structure as in the past, but the chain of communication between all the employees in the organization has changed to include both top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top (Prinsloo, 1998).

The philosophy of *Ubuntu* might not be applicable for all organizations, but it is a bold step to take. Theoretically, organizations which are willing to take the chance and move towards a more inclusive structure, may realize that there are many rewards. The concept of *Ubuntu* may be the single most important HRD export from Africa. It may just be the way many companies, not only in Africa but also around the world, approach their work in the future (Shutte, 2001). In the table below, an indication is given of the advantages and the disadvantages of integrating diversity in the labor market. HRD practitioners in Sub-Saharan Africa must consider the issues presented below, because as discussed earlier, the force of globalization will increasingly make an impact on economies and put pressure on the labor markets and the individual workers in the region (Marquardt and Berger, 2003).
Table 5: The desired goal of an internationally integrated workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects for (+)</th>
<th>Aspects against (-)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better understanding of other cultures/cultural diversity</td>
<td>Increased possibility of misunderstandings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased integration of minorities</td>
<td>Possible under-representation of certain cultural groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility to achieve competitive advantage</td>
<td>Tendency to promote from within (can prevent cultural diversity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased flexibility in labour market</td>
<td>Potential wage increases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to a greater pool of skilled workforce</td>
<td>Recruiting the best person for the job or the most “politically correct” person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuing diversity – creating a richer work environment and a variety of viewpoints</td>
<td>Increased possibility of misunderstandings and conflicts within the work environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of different viewpoints in the workforce</td>
<td>People with the same understanding of reality and culture background may work more efficiently together</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Barker, 2003; Ferraro, 2002, Jackson, 2004
Table 5 deals with issues concerning cultural diversity within the labor market, and demonstrates the fact that Sub-Saharan Africa has great potential to create a highly competitive workforce. However, this can only be achieved if sound policies and strategies are put into place. It has been argued that a country should first focus on creating its own skilled workforce. On the other hand, as has been discussed earlier, the region is experiencing many challenges, including HIV and AIDS and skills migration (Johanson and Adams, 2004). Therefore, an increase in overseas investment and imported labor may be two of the solutions to the skills crisis.

2.6 The future of HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa

So what makes Sub-Saharan Africa HRD different from other parts of the world? As discussed earlier, historically the region has faced many challenges; many of them are still being faced today. Sub-Saharan Africa has the most unevenly distributed wealth in the world (UNDP, 2005). In terms of skills and the development of social and human resources, the region provides minimal equality. Other challenges that Sub-Saharan Africa needs to address include gender inequality in the labor force and closing the socioeconomic gap, which is increasing rather than declining (Cunningham, Lynham and Weatherly, 2006). However, regardless of the challenges that the region may be facing, it has an abundance of human resources and great potential for development. HRD is a field that has been dominated by Western theories. What Sub-Saharan Africa needs is to develop theories based on the cultures and needs of its countries, according to what stages of development the various countries find themselves. It is not sufficient to develop theories: they must also be put into practice. While this article has recognized that there are many challenges that face the region, it has also acknowledged the profusion of opportunities that could be realized by approaching HRD in the African way.
Investing in and developing skills is at the heart of HRD (Walton, 1999). In order to produce a productive workforce, Finnemore (2002) states that there is an urgent need for individuals to be able to access education and training as well as other basic commodities such as housing and health care. Recognizing and promoting the importance of sustainable HRD strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa can be considered to be a sound way in which to deal with the skills crisis in the region. An understanding of diversity and of the African way of dealing with different issues is essential in order to identify the equity and equality aspects of HRD. Sub-Saharan Africa must create strategies and policies in which African philosophy such as Ubuntu is integrated into the development processes at all levels of society. Implementing this will not only help the region become sustainable in terms of labor, but will also help preserve the cultures and beliefs of the region. The aim for Sub-Saharan Africa should be to create systems where people are invested in, with fair and equal access to education, health care, and the labor market within each country (Johanson and Adams, 2004). Only when this is realized can individuals, communities, and the region’s economies reach their full potential.

According to James (2004), it is important that indigenous cultural aspects and knowledge are used in the development of management in Africa. This includes moving beyond the idea that traditional Western management theories and practices are the only suitable option when managing people in Sub-Saharan Africa. The first part of the guiding question of this paper asked if there is such a thing as an African management philosophy. After investigating the appropriate literature, the answer to that question is yes. However, many of the organizations operating in the region have a western orientation. For that reason it is important that the integration of African philosophy such as Ubuntu is considered when managing the local workforce. As Jackson (2004) notes, developing appropriate management practices in Sub-Saharan Africa goes a long way towards improving people’s lives, as well as reducing poverty in the
region. The second part of the guiding question invites discussion of what the driving forces of HRD are in the Sub-Saharan African region. It can be concluded that even though the region is facing numerous challenges in terms of poverty, war, HIV and AIDS, skills shortage, brain drain, and development in general, there are also many opportunities. These include an abundance of human resources and increasing investment. On average, people that are born in developing countries today can expect to be better educated than the previous generations. Furthermore, there is a greater chance for people to live in democracies, and they are less likely to be affected by conflict than in the past. Human development is about freedom, and it is about building human capacities (UNDP, 2005). Consequently, the future of HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa will depend on different aspects, including those of managing diversity and generating a skilled labor pool. Seeing that the Sub-Saharan African region is a highly diverse region with many issues to tackle, it is clear that the advancement of HRD is extremely important.

In terms of research into HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is just beginning. The field of HRD can benefit greatly from further examination and research into the social dynamics and uniqueness of the region. Moreover, further investigation into the individual countries’ national HRD policies and strategies will give an indication of just how diverse the region is.
References


http://miranda.sourceoecd.org/vl=752709/cl=23=nw=l/rpsv/cgi-bin/wppdf?filr=5lgsjhuj7971.pdf


Article 2: Women, Human Resource Development and HIV and AIDS – The Case of Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth, South Africa

Women in Africa face many difficult and complex situations in society, including difficulties entering the labor market. HIV/AIDS is a major challenge for South Africa, and it brings people in the region much grief, sorrow and confusion as the rate of prevalence continues to rise. This article explores the social aspects of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in the communities and in the labor market, and the extent to which women are affected on an individual, community, and labor-market level. The role of Human Resource Development (HRD) in relation to HIV and AIDS is examined in order to get an understanding of the role that HRD should play in the deprived South African communities that struggle to find resources to battle the social consequences of HIV and AIDS.

Keywords: Human Resource Development (HRD); HIV and AIDS; women; developing countries; South Africa; South African labor market

2.7 Introduction

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a group of diseases that attack and destroy the body’s immune system, using the virus known as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) (Jennings in Joe, 2005). Many people become so sick from the symptoms of HIV and AIDS that they are not able to hold a job. Others may experience phases of intense life-threatening illness followed by periods of normal functioning (Isaksen, Songstad and Spissøy, 2002). Health can be considered to be a vital developmental concern, and HIV and AIDS are perhaps the greatest

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13 This article is to be submitted to the African Journal of AIDS Research
challenge South Africa is facing today. The loss of productivity and income go hand-in-hand with the speed at which a country, whether "developing" or "developed," can advance. The disease hits people in the prime of life. The disease is not discriminating; it affects rich and poor, white and black. However, its impact is greater on the poor and those without power and resources. Seeing that poor people by far outnumber the rich, their reduced health has a vast impact on development, at both national and international levels (Dossier, 2004).

The focus of the subsequent discussion will be on issues relevant to the understanding of women, HIV and AIDS, and HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa, and is presented in four sections. The first section looks at the current situation regarding HIV and AIDS in South Africa seen from an HRD point of view. Thereafter, an analysis is given of the importance of sound HRD policies and strategies in South Africa. Seeing that the South African labor market is severely hit by the HIV/AIDS pandemic (Barker, 2003; Finnemore, 2002), it important to consider the implications for the South African society as a whole. The socio-economic context as well as gender roles and the impact of education and knowledge are examined. In the third section, a brief discussion is given of the empirical methodology and data analysis used. Subsequently, the results of the research are presented. The final section draws together the research and the theory in a concluding discussion.

HIV/AIDS damages society just as it does the human body: it begins by killing those parts responsible for building society, the women and breadwinners, who sustain and look after the community as a whole. Eventually, HIV/AIDS undercuts economic growth but its impact is initially felt at the heart of the communities, among the households (Beresford, 2001). It can be argued that HIV and AIDS threaten everyone in Africa today. The high costs of drugs, high-interest loans from developed countries, and uncontrolled corruption deprive countries in Africa of their income and highly needed medical provisions (Joe, 2005).
The purpose of this study is to acquire an understanding of the resources that are present and available in Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in terms of dealing with HIV and AIDS, and of the extent to which women in the township make use of these resources.

2.8 The reality of HIV and AIDS in South Africa

HIV/AIDS differs from other terminal diseases in that it affects people mainly in their productive years (Isaksen et al., 2002). Johnson and Adams (2004) note that most of the deceased are people of prime working age on whom others depend for income and care. HIV and AIDS affect business profitability production costs and reduce output. The main costs relate to workdays lost because of HIV and AIDS absenteeism (Asmal, 2001).

The full effect of HIV and AIDS has not yet been felt in high-prevalence countries owing to the long lag between the acquisition of the virus and the onset of AIDS, but it is clear that productivity growth is bound to suffer. The pandemic will inevitably result in a much younger, less-experienced labor force, with significantly less opportunity for mentoring or training on the job, and reduced incentives for investment in training because of curtailed life horizons. The supply of skills training (as of other government services) is also likely to be disrupted. HIV/AIDS may have an impact on the quality of output of training institutions through instructor mortality (Asmal, 2001). Higher labor force attrition rates will strain already overburdened and inefficient systems of skills training. Also, the burden of dealing with the effects of HIV and AIDS is likely to depress family investment in education and training (Johnson and Adams, 2004).

2.8.1 HIV and AIDS and HRD

There is no one particular or preferred way to define HRD. The definitions are more likely to be working definitions and are shaped by the knowledge gained from working with HRD (Vince,
In the following table, an outline of selected HRD definitions gives an indication of just how wide and dynamic the field of HRD is.

Table 1: Definitions of HRD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McLagan, P.</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>The integrated use of training and development, career development and organization development to improve individual and organizational effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton, J.</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Human resource development is an extension of training and development, with a specific orientation towards organisational learning interventions designed to improve skills, knowledge and understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McLean, G.N. &amp;</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Human resource development is any process or activity that, either initially or over the long term, has the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
potential to develop ... work-based knowledge, expertise, productivity and satisfaction, whether on personal or group, team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation, or ultimately, the whole humanity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swanson, R.A</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>A process of developing and/or unleashing human expertise through organisation development (OD) and personal training and development (T and D) for the purpose of improving performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee, M.</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>HRD is seen to help managers develop leadership and interpersonal skills, creativity, self-reliance and the ability to work in different cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metcalfe, B.D. &amp; Rees, C.J.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>International HRD is a broad term that concerns processes that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
address the formulation and practice of HRD systems, practices and policies at the global, societal and organizational level.

According to Weinberger (1998), there is no general agreement concerning the definition of HRD. As seen from the table presented above, the field is diverse and includes elements that reach out to individuals, organizations, and communities, as well as those on a global level (McLean and McLean, 2001; Metcalfe and Rees, 2005).

An important component of HRD is that it recognizes that not only organizations have objectives and requirements. This is also true for the individuals working within the organizations. It can be argued that developing sound HRD policies and strategies is especially important in societies and communities that are severely hit by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. The spread of HIV and AIDS presents many negative consequences for the development of people (Asmal, 2001). It deprives countries of people in their prime, especially in the economically active age group of 20 to 45 years (Haycock, 2004). There is no doubt that development of employees is an important part of the HR strategy that management increasingly needs to focus on. This might prove to be even more important when managers have to deal with the issues concerning HIV and AIDS. Isaksen et al., (2002) identified that employee motivation and the ability to focus on the work tasks can be expected to drop if family members, friends, and colleagues fall sick and die. Grief periods reduce the ability of people to work effectively. The psychological stress the disease causes is hard to measure. Infected people may suffer from depression, and feel guilt and anger toward their family and the
workplace. Because of emotional shock, they may not be able to concentrate on the job and work with the speed they used to have (Isaksen et al., 2002).

The author of this paper argues that it is of the utmost importance that the HRD in an organization develop strategies in order to deal with these issues. Seeing that HIV and AIDS are global in their reach, the disease affects all levels of human understanding—individually, in the family, the community, the region, and the country. It is also affecting us internationally in our increasingly interdependent world. HIV and AIDS travel. What happens in developing countries and regions of the world, where HIV and AIDS are making theirs greatest impact, will ultimately affect the industrialized countries as well (Dossier, 2004).

There are roughly 40 million people living with HIV and AIDS worldwide, and approximately 95% of these people live in developing countries. Sub-Saharan Africa is home to some 25 million with HIV and AIDS, more or less 63% of the world total (UNAIDS, 2006). AIDS is also impacting other regions. In Asia, there are over 7 million people living with HIV/AIDS, and the number in that part of the world is increasing rapidly. It can be argued that HIV and AIDS threaten everyone in Africa today. The pandemic is a very serious social, labor, and humanitarian challenge and has to be taken with utmost seriousness. HIV and AIDS have taken a disastrous toll in Africa, tearing apart the social structure of societies and threatening the economies of many countries. Furthermore, the disease has weakened the quality of life and life expectancy (UNAIDS, 2006).

South Africa is different from the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. Even though the country is considered to be a developing country, it is technologically advanced and has an economy that depends greatly on skilled workers (Whiteside and Sunter, 2000). According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), HIV and AIDS are becoming the single most severe threat to social and economic growth in Africa today. It is difficult to estimate the exact cost of the disease. It is

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14 http://www.globalaidsalliance.org/cd_basic_info.cfm (2004) paragraph 1
also impacted by the overall economic, political, and social context of the continent. Weak economies, high unemployment, and poverty also weaken Africa’s ability to compete on the global market.\footnote{http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc88/aids.htm, paragraph 3} The consequences of HIV and AIDS are very obvious in the world of labor. These include: discrimination in employment, social exclusion of persons living with HIV and AIDS, increasing numbers of orphans, and increased frequency of child labor. Other issues are low productivity and minimal human capital. HIV and AIDS are not simply a health problem; they are a developmental disaster. To make matters worse, there is a culture of silence, fear, and denial of the seriousness of the situation, which retards the actions that need to be taken.\footnote{http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc88/aids.htm, paragraph 10}

Seeing that there is no cure available, one can argue that a social remedy is needed, which can include income and job security and social security. Joe (2005) makes the statement that in Africa, poverty and HIV and AIDS drive a vicious circle. The drive between poverty and HIV and AIDS can be related to the individuals’ financial resources. The vicious circle can also be viewed as low levels of education associated with high illiteracy rates, a shortage of saleable skills, and poor health, which in turn contribute to low labor productivity.

HIV and AIDS have a tremendous impact on education and training systems and the labor force. Production and productivity concerns, employment and labor-market issues resulting from the impact of HIV and AIDS have to be examined in terms of their policy and program-development implications. This is particularly true for the role of the workplace in prevention of HIV and AIDS and the loss of skills and experience, and the substitutability. Losses in production and increasing payroll costs should also be examined in the context of HIV and AIDS.\footnote{http://www.fao.org/sd/WPdirect/WPRe0074.htm, paragraph 7} The pandemic has enormous effects on the local community, and high HIV frequency rates should be taken as indicators of severe impacts to come. It can be noted that on a micro level, the individual households experience increasing strain, as well as on a macro level,
where the financial and social infrastructure of the society are under growing pressure (Isaksen et al., 2002). These authors further note that Sub-Saharan African countries have an excess of unskilled labor and lack of skilled labor (Isaksen et al., 2002). This will have an increasing impact on the social structures in the countries and in the labor markets in the future.

Swanepoel et al (2003, p. 16) indicate that demographic differences such as gender, race, age, culture, and nationality (including religion and language) are not important so much in themselves, but rather because of the influence they may have on how people think and behave, on their needs, goals and beliefs, and also on stereotyping, or the way in which people are categorised by others.

The HIV and AIDS pandemic in Africa is a disaster of vast extent. It is changing the region's demographic future and consequently the labor market. It is reducing life expectancy, raising mortality, lowering fertility, and leaving millions of orphans with no one to care for them (Brown, 2000). On a personal level, the situation is especially harsh for children and youths. With adults falling ill and dying, children bear the load of having to care for families and others in the community living with HIV and AIDS. Additionally, a considerable number of children are infected with the virus (Moletsane, 2003). However, Isaksen et al., (2002) indicate that the projections for the Sub-Saharan countries show that HIV and AIDS will not cause a generally negative population growth.

Life expectancy, which can be linked to economic development, is declining sharply. In Zimbabwe, without HIV and AIDS, life expectancy in 2010 would be 70 years, but with HIV and AIDS, it is expected to fall to under 35 years. Botswana's life expectancy is projected to fall from 66 years to 33 years by 2010. For South Africa, it is likely to fall from 68 years to 48 years.
(Brown, 2000). This author further notes that the demography of the pandemic is not well understood because, with most infectious diseases, the elderly and the very young are hit the worst, whereas the HIV and AIDS virus takes its greatest toll among young adults (UNAIDS, 2006). This being said, adults are not the only ones dying from HIV/AIDS. In Africa; newborn babies of mothers who are HIV-positive have a 30 to 60 percent chance of being born with the virus. They cannot be expected to live more than 2 years. As a result of this, few of the children who have contracted the virus will reach school age (UNAIDS, 2006). There is a growing awareness that the effects of HIV and AIDS will be felt in all sectors of the South African economy over the next five to ten years (de Villiers, 2003). As HIV and AIDS are highly prevalent amongst young people, the effects of the disease hold direct consequences for the economy (de Villiers, 2003).

2.8.2 HIV and AIDS and women

In biological terms, women are anatomically and physiologically more exposed to the possibilities of contracting HIV and AIDS than men. Furthermore, women in Sub-Saharan Africa are particularly socio-economically vulnerable to contract HIV and AIDS (Goldstein, Pretorius and Stuart, 2003; Hope, 2002).

Africa is facing a gender disparity, a shortage of women. The HIV and AIDS pandemic is claiming far more females than males in Africa. Taking this into consideration, many males are either faced with a future of bachelorhood or forced to migrate to countries outside the region in search of a partner (Brown, 2000). However, there are many unknown factors regarding the outcome of the HIV and AIDS epidemic in regard to the demographic issues. A question that has been raised is: Will the health-care systems be able to meet the requirement of basic health care? One thing that is certain is that the demographic consequences of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in Africa will be noticeable for many generations to come (Brown, 2000;
Isaksen et al., 2002). Around 70 percent of the world’s poor are women, and often they rely on men to support them economically. Even though women are more likely to be infected with HIV than men, men’s illness is often regarded as more important to treat, because of the possibility of loss of the males as wage earners in the families. There is often little emphasis put on the importance of the contribution of women to the welfare of the communities (Goldstein et al., 2003; Hope, 2001).

2.9 The importance of sound HRD strategies and policies

An interesting initiative has been taken by the Irish company, Guinness, operating in Nigeria. The company emphasizes that education and making people aware of all aspects of the HIV and AIDS problem are vital. They have implemented an HIV and AIDS Task Force including representatives of all stakeholders within the organization, namely the board, management, labor unions, and employees. The Task Force has responsibility for the HIV and AIDS policy development, reviewing and administering supervision, and carrying out the different workplace programs in the organization. The HR Department at Guinness Nigeria will make sure that all aspects of the Guinness Nigeria HIV and AIDS workplace program are in line with the employment legislation. Furthermore, they will coordinate specialist contributions from medical, social, legal, and other community groups. They emphasize that treatment, therapy, and support are to be provided to employees and their dependants under the terms of this policy for their lifetime, and will not be terminated when their employment ceases.18

Some studies have recommended that organizations respond to the HIV and AIDS problem in the labor market by reducing the dependency on manual labor, through becoming more capital-intensive (Isaksen et al., 2002). Some argue that this strategy could be unsuccessful, depending on the degree of the cost increases required to equip new employees

18 http://www.weforum.org/pdf/initiatives/GHI_HIV_Diageo_AppendixA.pdf
with proper education and training. In their opinion, greater capital intensity would make each worker more valuable, and the loss of a skilled worker would be more expensive, and as a result, increase the organization’s exposure to employee absenteeism and mortality (Isaksen et al., 2002). Another strategy is outsourcing. By using this strategy, the organization becomes less reliant on labor, as skilled labor can be bought externally (Isaksen et al., 2002).

According to De Villiers (2003); Dossier (2004); Gould and Huber (2002) and Isaksen et al., (2002), the present HIV crisis in Africa will change to a full-blown AIDS crisis at some point in the near future. Consequently, it is increasingly important that HIV and AIDS policies and strategies are incorporated into national social and economic planning. According to Manning (2002), there is no single model for how HIV and AIDS policies should look in organizations. All organizations are different, and different approaches apply. Furthermore, there is no one single model for how an organization should plan for and respond to the pandemic. This is because each organization has different requirements, concerns, capital, and capabilities. Because of this, each organization must think innovatively about how it may be affected by the epidemic and how it can best respond (Manning, 2002).

2.9.1 The impact of HIV and AIDS on education and the labor market

The relationships between poverty and schooling have been widely explored over a longer period to show in general a clear differentiation of access to schooling by economic status at all scales, from the national scale to the individual person attending school. Researchers are beginning to discover the relationships between HIV and AIDS and schooling, both at the national level and the local level (Gould and Huber, 2002).

The issue of HIV and AIDS is of great importance to the education sector. The pandemic has an impact on the supply of educational staff. They will most likely experience the same levels of illness and death as the general population. The number of school entrants will also...
be lower than would be the case in the absence of HIV and AIDS. This change in numbers will, over time, work its way up the educational system and eventually into the labor market. In addition, children may be kept out of school because their labor is required at home, or there are no resources for sending them to school.\footnote{http://www.worldbank.org/aids-econ/tookit/educ.htm, paragraph 1}

Falling production in general means a decrease in personal income, including money to pay school fees. It is safe to assume that as the virus progresses; HIV and AIDS-affected households will become gradually poorer. One should therefore not underestimate the serious impacts of HIV and AIDS on the volume and expansion of the school-age populations in future, and place HIV and AIDS in a broader framework of educational development and policies (Gould and Huber, 2002). Isaksen et al., (2002) make the interesting remark that schools are often secure establishments in most communities. In areas that are heavily affected by HIV and AIDS, various structures in the society are prone to break up. In such instances, schools can have a significant role as a lasting institution for children who are affected by HIV and AIDS.

Isaksen et al., (2002) and Barker (2003) note that HIV and AIDS hit the most productive segment of the population, which in turn reduces human resources, which can be considered to be the most important basis for what Africa needs most of all, economic development. Seeing that the virus is spreading globally, the experience of Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of the labor market and employment impacts will be relevant to the HIV and AIDS situation in other parts of the world (Lisk, 2002).

Lower life expectancy will constrain developing economies in that there will be fewer skilled workers available. It has been repeatedly emphasized that HIV and AIDS affects the adult working population, creating a loss of people in their 30s and 40s, people who are supposed to
keep the economy going and supply the next generation of leaders. Lisk (2002) argues that HIV and AIDS have become one of the most important concerns to employment objectives and labor-market effectiveness. The loss of workers and working days as a result of HIV and AIDS-related diseases will most likely result in a noteworthy decline in productivity, the failure of earning money, and loss of skilled and experienced employees (Isaksen et al., 2002).

One cannot be concerned only with the decrease in the size of the labor force, but also with the quality. Many of those infected with HIV and AIDS are experienced and skilled workers in their productive prime, representing significant human capital losses (Whiteside and Sunter, 2000). At the same time, the loss of workers as a result of HIV and AIDS is creating a generation of orphans – which by 2010 is predicted to reach up to 10 per cent of the population in some sub-Saharan African countries. The result of this is that they may grow up without the support and control of adults and enter the labor force too early and with no or few skills (Lisk, 2002). The loss of workers, often skilled and experienced, combined with the increase in numbers of young unskilled workers entering the labor market, will most likely lower both the quantity and the quality of the workforce (Isaksen et al., 2002).

2.9.2 The implications of HIV and AIDS for the South African Society

HIV and AIDS present a major challenge to developing countries. The question is: What can be done about it? The obvious response is to reduce the number of infections. A critical issue is the impact of human capital. This is a highly complex matter, since the effects of HIV and AIDS on labor supply over time are influenced by a variety of economic, social, and cultural factors (Lisk, 2002). It is important that the western developed countries give support to developing countries in order to make every effort to explore the future demographic and societal effects of HIV and AIDS.  

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200001/cmselect/cmintdev/354/35409.htm#a9, paragraph 13
HIV and AIDS. The HIV and AIDS pandemic affects the poorest in the world in a different way from that in developed western countries. Since the population is already vulnerable, the epidemic will have a particularly strong effect on the poorest of the poor countries (Beresford, 2001). In developing countries, the majority of the population cannot afford the drugs necessary to combat the disease. Therefore efforts must be made to establish support systems for people living with or being exposed to HIV and AIDS.

It has been recognized that foreign direct investment is likely to decline because of the economic reservations created by the pandemic. The fact that investment in high-risk countries is declining will have immense consequences for Sub-Saharan Africa, where foreign capital is important for the economy (Isaksen et al., 2002). It has also been established that absenteeism due to HIV and AIDS leads to a decline in productivity. The pressure on remaining workers tends to cause tension and decrease efficiency (Barker, 2003). Some organizations respond to the crisis by attempting to become more capital-intensive and giving workers multi-skills. It is highly likely that the HIV and AIDS pandemic will spread into parts of Africa and other parts of the world where there are currently low prevalence rates.

2.9.3 The socio-economic impact of training and skills development

The economic and social impact of HIV and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa is severe, and will weaken development in affected countries. The achievements made in development, training, skills, and education efforts can be lost. The epidemic has a negative impact on countries’ capacity for development because of the effects it has on labor supplies and social structures. As a result, social and economic development will most likely be badly affected in Sub-Saharan Africa where the level of HIV/AIDS prevalence is very high. According to Killick 1992) (in Mlay, 1998, p. 43):
Modern development theory particularly stresses the importance of human skills as a key resource, not the least because of its influence on the rate at which technological improvements can be incorporated into the productive system. It has been shown that the initial stock of human capital has a substantial positive influence on economies’ ability to catch up with more prosperous countries.

Regarding the statement above, it can be argued that when considering the negative impact that HIV and AIDS have on development in the Sub-Saharan African region, it is important to increase efforts in skills development and training. In addition, the region must be able to create sustainable strategies and policies targeted towards the development of skills and ultimately targeting Africa’s in order to ensure growth and improvement of the quality of life (Rasheed, 1998).

One of the challenges of dealing with the virus is eliminating the stigma and the misperceptions that many people hold about the disease (Deacon, 2005). It is well accepted that HIV and AIDS are a challenge for the world community as they transcend boundaries of nation, class, ethnicity, and sexual preference. The pandemic has not been given the priority it ought to have, either in the countries most affected or in the international community.

2.9.4 Gqebera Township

Gqebera, also known as Walmer Township, in Port Elizabeth, is the oldest Black township in the area. The township is approximately four square kilometers in size, and about 60,000 people live there. Like many townships in South Africa, it was neglected and underdeveloped under the apartheid government. The area and the number of people are increasing, so it is
difficult to say exactly how many people live in the township. There have been signs of some improvement, but there is about an 80 per cent unemployment rate in Gqebera. Neglected over the troublesome years of its development, the harsh reality in the township today is the lack of many of the basic facilities and infrastructure where people live (Herholdt, 1998).

2.10 Methodology

Bierema (2002) argues that the understanding of women’s experiences has often been ignored in social sciences research. It is in the best interest of the HRD field to include knowledge and to commit to the education of all groups in society (Bierema, 2002).

In order to shed light on issues concerning women, HIV and AIDS and HRD in South Africa, this study had to take into account the importance of context as well as the subjective experiences of the respondents. A qualitative research design presented the best opportunity to focus on the respondents’ experiences and the social contexts and structures to which they belong. The sample for this study was derived through a strategy known as "purposeful sampling." This allows the investigator to "discover, understand, and gain insight," and he/she must therefore "select a sample from which the most can be learned" Merriam (1998, p. 61). After the first respondents from the Gqebera community had been found by means of purposeful sampling techniques, snowball sampling was used to select more respondents. In snowball sampling, each respondent is asked to suggest other people who meet the researcher’s selection criteria (Babbie, Mouton, Vorster and Prozesky, (2001). This was important because people in this position have a different and unique perspective of what is needed in the community in terms of development. It was expected that the experiences of these individuals would enable them to provide unique insights into the issues of HRD and the consequences of HIV and AIDS on a community level.
The first respondents consisted of women living in the Gqebera community and women working with skills development and community development. The data consisted of descriptions about specific issues concerning women and their experiences in the community and society in general. For the purpose of this study, female experiences reflected how women perceived themselves within the community and the society in terms of power and development. Furthermore, the study aimed to unlock some of the challenges faced by women in terms of dealing with HIV and AIDS. It was significant for the researcher to uncover the challenges and opportunities as they were experienced for women living in the community.

Respondents in the focus groups were given themes which they were asked to discuss in their groups. Focus groups are useful for gaining insight into people’s feelings and attitudes about a particular topic. Each focus group was video-taped and later transcribed verbatim. The transcripts from the videotapes formed the primary data for this study. The results derived from the use of qualitative data through focus groups made it possible for the researcher to identify and establish certain patterns, themes, and relationships.

The target population of this study was women between the ages of 18 and 49 years, because this was the most productive part of the female population in terms of work. There were approximately 10,720 women between the ages of 18 and 49 living in Gqebera Township. (These figures are probably inaccurate seeing that they were collected five years ago. They are, however, the only reliable source currently available.)

The study encountered a number of research-related problems, most common to doing empirical research in Africa. These problems include the following:

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21 Statistics South Africa, 2001
• The lack of adequate knowledge of the concept of HRD and community development among the participants in the focus groups. As a result of this, some of the participants might have found it difficult to discuss some of the issues that were dealt with.

• The actions and behaviors of the participants in the interviews were not evaluated directly, and the researcher relied exclusively on the focus groups as well as the existing literature to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

• The focus groups were conducted in the local language, isiXhosa. After the completion of the focus group interviews, the information was translated verbatim into English by a person whose first language is isiXhosa. Even though the answers were translated verbatim, there is a chance that something would have been lost in the translation.

• Talking about issues regarding HIV and AIDS is often regarded as taboo, and therefore there may have been some reluctance amongst the participants to discuss some issues in detail.

2.11 Results

This section deals with the findings about women, HRD and HIV and AIDS in the Gqebera Township community. Each theme is briefly introduced and then followed by a short presentation of specific findings associated with the specific concept. The participants were asked to discuss different themes on the subject of women and HIV and AIDS in the labor market and in their community.

Each of the participants in this study played different roles as a woman in the Gqebera community. They all had experience of HIV and AIDS. The community was severely affected by the virus, and if they had not contracted the HIV and AIDS themselves, their children, parents, friends or neighbors were living with the disease or had passed away. Regardless of the role they played in the community and regardless of how they were affected by HIV and
AIDS, the participants had one thing in common: the desire to sustainably develop Gqebera so that their children and grandchildren could grow up in a safe and healthy environment. In the next section, a presentation of the results is given in terms of three primary themes.

**Theme 1: Do you think people are being discriminated against in the labor market because of:**

a. Their gender?

The answers given to this question are represented jointly as follows: *Yes, there is discrimination against women. There is so much ignorance. And because of the ignorance there is discrimination. There used to more discrimination in South Africa before, and there still is a lot, but it is better than before; there have been many changes in the South African society in terms of gender. It is easier for women today to enter the labor market than it was in the past.*

Even though there is still a high level of disparity in the South African society and consequently the labor market, the opportunities despite race, gender, and disability, are increasingly getting better (Asmal, 2001; Barker, 2003). Because of this, people are more optimistic regarding their own and their children’s future in South Africa. Affirmative Action policies and practices that aim to tackle the inequities regarding social, educational and economic injustice have been established in South Africa in order to reduce discrimination. As a result of these policies, more people who were discriminated against in the past have been able to enter the labor market (Barker, 2003).

Further comments were: *Women are making a much bigger stand in the [South African] society today than in the past. Women are being more empowered, but there are still many obstacles; although it has been accepted by the parliament that men and women are equal in the labor market, most men have not accepted it yet. If a woman is a supervisor or boss, the men should respect that she is in charge.*

Today, women in South Africa are redefining their place in society and the labor market, which was previously been dominated by men (Manum, 2006). This will not be achieved overnight, but it is a long-term process where women must stand up for their rights and be
active in their own development (Stoparic, 2005). Coats (1994) notes that many women are not aware of the fact that the skills they have in productively and effectively running a household and a family are many, and that most of these skills are transferable to other settings in the society, such as the labor market. However, it does seem that the fundamental contributions of African women in their households, food production systems, and national economies are increasingly being acknowledged in African societies (Kanbur, 2004).

b. Their HIV and AIDS status?

The following answers were given to this question: Some firms require that you fill in an insurance policy when you apply for a job that goes with the employment conditions. So of course you have to have an HIV test for the policy for the policy, not for the employment. So if you are turned down for an insurance policy because of the HIV status you will probably not be employed; this is a hidden discrimination in the labor market. We know that the statistics say that most of the HIV infected people are women, so that means that discrimination is more towards women; people are afraid to reveal their status to the employer because they are afraid to lose their job as a result even though it is not legal to fire someone on the basis of their HIV status. There is not enough education about HIV/AIDS so people need to be educated both in the workplace and in the community.

The above comments reflect that there is still a long way to go before people can be open about having HIV and AIDS without being discriminated against in the South African labor market and society in general. Greater efforts need to be made to alleviate disparities and create a society where everyone has the same opportunities. Coming out as HIV-positive can in many cases have many negative effects on a person’s employment situation, and on social relationships in the communities. The impact of HIV and AIDS on women is severe. In many developing countries and societies, women are often economically, culturally, and socially disadvantaged, and lack equal access to treatment, financial support, and education. What is more, in many societies, women are mistakenly perceived as the main transmitters of HIV and AIDS.
In addition they stated: There is a lot of stigma concerning HIV/AIDS in South Africa. People with HIV/AIDS are afraid to come out because of the stigma and people will judge them; they are afraid to be laughed at and alienated because of all that goes with being infected by the virus. Yes, people are being discriminated against, and shunned because of the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. Most people are afraid to tell others that they are HIV-positive because they are scared to be outcasts in the community.

Stigmatization has a powerful impact on individuals, communities, and societies because it often results in the exclusion of people who are HIV-positive and their families (Deacon, 2005). Gender-based power relationships also play a more direct role in the blame women face. Even if the man brings infection to the couple, his power allows him to shift the blame and the stigma to his female partner. The structure of gender-based power means that women are more easily blamed and that their wrongdoings tend to be regarded more harshly than those of men (Manum, 2006). According to Isaksen et al., (2002) socio-economic status, age, and gender all influence the experience of stigmatization. The poor are blamed less for their infection than the rich, but they face greater stigmatization because they have fewer resources to hide their HIV and AIDS status. Young people are often held responsible for spreading the virus through highly risky sexual behavior. At the same time, the outcome of HIV/AIDS, stigmatization and the burden of caring for families and communities is much harder for women than for men.

Theme 2: What resources do you have in Gqebera regarding HIV and AIDS?

Responses to this question can be collectively represented in the following statements: There are support groups in and outside Gqebera, but there are more support groups outside the location than inside the location. St Johns Church in Walmer has a skills development and support group for people living with HIV/AIDS; it is about time we start our own group and network in Gqebera because some people are not able to travel to Walmer and other places to attend the groups because they have family duties or they are too sick to travel far; but if the support groups and network were closer to their home, more people would be able to attend. It is possible to use someone’s house as a centre for the support group. This can be a place where women with
HIV/AIDS can go every day to support each other and help each other. We can work on projects together and learn skills from each other. We can teach and learn skills such as knitting, sowing, cooking and bead work.

The Khanyisa support group in St John’s Church meets every Monday. By being given support, care, and assistance, many of those who attend this support group are able to take on full-time/half-day jobs again. Empowering of the members is a very important aspect of the support group, and through small projects, the members are able to learn new skills and also generate some money. It should be considered most essential that those who are sick get help and support close to their home. It is important to be able to reach out to as many as possible in the communities. Women can teach each other handwork skills in Gqebera in order to become empowered and eventually become self-sufficient. Such projects have great potential should aim to make the members well-skilled. Some of the outcomes can be to make their own clothes and articles for their families and neighbors. The ultimate goal of such community-based projects should be to assist more unemployed people and to alleviate the extreme poverty that people experience in the Gqebera Township.

Further elaboration was given: The best would be a group that works on empowering women in order for them to create a sustainable income. Others will join when they see that it is working in the community and it is sustainable. There also need to be a better support network that takes care of children that are affected by HIV/AIDS. People with HIV/AIDS can go to schools and teach children about the disease and the realities of living with it and how it is contracted; the other facilities can be hard to get to because they are located outside the township. Some people are too sick to be able to make it to the clinics and hospitals. There is a need for a place in the township where people with HIV/AIDS can go with medical problems. Then it would be easier for those who are too sick to get their own medication to go to the clinic.

A national life skills program for adolescents has been developed in South Africa by the Departments of Health and Education (Asmal, 2001). However, HIV/AIDS education should be started when the school children are younger seeing that there are many misconceptions
regarding how the disease is transmitted, and also to decrease the level of stigmatization of people living with HIV and AIDS (Gould and Huber, 2002; Hope, 2001). The public hospitals are all situated far away from the township, making it difficult for many of the sick to get treatment. However, there are a couple of smaller clinics outside Gqebera that serve most of the HIV and AIDS patients in the community.

**Theme 3: What impact does health have on community development in Gqebera?**

The responses to this question included: *There are many sick people in Gqebera, so it has a big impact on the whole community. Women must take charge of their family’s health so that the community can benefit.*

The economic involvement of women consists of their reproductive and their productive work. Lisk (2002) argues that reproduction is not just a biological or social responsibility, it also has economic meaning. Women bear and care for the workforce, as well as taking part in it themselves. For this reason, the economic vulnerability of women to HIV and AIDS is much larger than that of men, and is therefore subject to urgent concern in addressing the economic impact of the disease (Lisk, 2002).

Respondent also stated that, *Women in the community would like to be trained to take care of very sick patients. Women play a big role in ensuring the development of a healthy community. HIV/AIDS is a big problem here in the community. We don’t know what to do, and to be honest, the future does not look bright. When there are so many sick people in Gqebera, it is difficult for everyone in the community to have a good life. We see friends and family die almost every day and there is always a funeral, it seems. If our community was healthier I believe it would be easier for our youth to make it and get out of poverty.*

It can be argued that HIV/AIDS is as much a social phenomenon as it is biological and medical. HIV and AIDS are often seen as being illnesses of the poor. In South Africa, there is a relationship between extreme poverty and high HIV prevalence, although the virus is prevalent
across all sectors of society. Improving the health and well-being of the disadvantaged communities is essential if South Africa is to meet its goal of fair and sustainable development (Asmal, 2001). It can be argued that prevention and education programs are most effective if they are designed and delivered by people in the communities. These people have the best information about risk behaviors and also have access to people at risk, because they know the language and cultural norms of their peers and are able to speak to them most effectively.

2.12 Conclusion

This part of the article re-examines the results and links them to the HRD literature examined. In addition, it makes recommendations for areas where further research is needed in terms of HIV and AIDS and HRD. The overall aim of this research was to uncover the realities surrounding women and HIV and AIDS and their position in society, access to the labor market, and how women can contribute to their own development and the development of their community. It can be argued that with the implementation of sound HRD and HIV and AIDS policies and strategies, women from underprivileged areas in Sub-Saharan Africa stand a better chance of being able to enter the labor market and make a sustainable living. It became clear that the participants in the focus groups welcomed the changes in the South African society concerning the empowerment of women in the labor market and in the society in general.

However, a great deal still needs to be done in terms of education and support networks for people living with or caring for people with HIV and AIDS. Furthermore, it became evident that there are still many challenges to be faced for women in a society where men are considered to be the stronger sex, and women still depend on men to a large extent. Regardless of their dependency on men, however, women in South Africa are strong and resourceful and fully capable of fronting the challenges they are facing (Johanson and Adams, 2004; Haycock,
2004; Manum, 2006). Women are often the breadwinners in the family and in the community, but often lack the recognition for the job they are doing in raising and caring for a family and working full-time as well as being a wife.

Many communities in South Africa are experiencing extreme poverty, corruption, the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and a skills shortage (Johanson and Adams, 2004). Consequently, women are suffering, perhaps more so than men, as they often are not given the same opportunities as men to access resources such as training and skills development (Grant, 2005; Mutume, 2001). In order for the country to be able to combat the consequences of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, greater emphasis needs to be put on education and knowledge of the realities of the disease. Arguably, this will be best achieved with the help of those who know the social structures and which problems need to be addressed, namely those who live in the communities.

Women are to a large extent both capable and willing to develop themselves and their community if they are given the appropriate resources to deal with the problems they are facing. Hence, the implementation of sound HRD strategies and policies closely tied to HIV and AIDS policies and strategies in all levels of society can be seen as vitally important in a situation where unlocking people’s potential and skills through training and development can be seen as imperative for the advancement of the economy and ultimately the well-being and health of people.
References


Article 3: Human Resource Development and Women in Sub-Saharan Africa

Abstract

An examination of feminist theory and human resource development (HRD) in Africa indicates the need to incorporate African feminism in the cause of advancing HRD theory. Because they are subject to multiple levels of discrimination, and because there are no country-specific policies to ensure their advancement, African women need to be protected from the patriarchal domination that prevails in the majority of African countries. Despite higher female involvement in African economies, they are denied opportunities and equal rights. If the development goals of Africa are to be achieved, HRD theory needs to incorporate both Western and African feminist theory, specifically related to gender inequalities that women experience in the realm of work.

In the last decades, women’s situation across the world has improved in many areas. More girls have been given the opportunity to start and finish school. In most countries, women have the right to vote, and they have increasingly been given access to politics (Manum, 2006; Saunders, 2002). Despite these positive aspects, however, there is evidence that women are getting poorer. Removing gender discrimination is going to take a great deal of work (Casale and Posel, 2005). It can be argued that the position of women will be strengthened by giving them knowledge and status in the local community. This will contribute to women’s liberation if knowledgeable women build their self-confidence and become role models for other women. In short, they will acquire greater power over their own lives.

22 This article has been resubmitted after revision to the journal Human Resource Development Review.
Feminism and women’s movements and the way they have influenced the empowerment of women is addressed in this article. According to Hughes (2000), investigation into feminism should aim to place women into spheres which are at present largely occupied by men. Ultimately, it is about creating a new sphere that is able to accommodate both women and men. This paper discusses the relationship between feminism and HRD. HRD and skills development are examined in relation to South African women. Globalization has brought new opportunities for many workers, especially those who are well educated, through the skills required in a high-tech global economy. But for many others, perhaps especially women, globalization has intensified uncertainty and poverty (Casale and Posel, 2005). Many women lack the skills to compete in the labor market and the means to obtain those skills. As a result of this, many women find themselves in unregulated and insecure jobs, and in conditions that are often unhealthy and unsafe (Bonner, Chen, Heintz, Jhabvala, Lund and Vanek, 2005).

In the past, women in Sub-Saharan Africa have faced many difficult and complex situations in society, including difficulty in finding employment. This is also the case today. The focus of the subsequent discussion will be to understand the relationship between HRD and women in the South African context. The discussion contains four sections. The first section focuses on HRD and Sub-Saharan women, and examines discrimination and the reality of African women in the world of work. Then feminism and its position on the African continent is discussed. An analysis of the relationship between HRD and feminism is also explored. Section two argues the importance of sound HRD strategies and policies in an increasingly global and competitive labor market and the consequences this is likely to have on women in the Sub-Saharan African region. This is contrasted with the socio-economic conditions of women in Sub-Saharan Africa today. Section three examines the methodology and data analysis of the research conducted on women and HRD in Gqebera Township, South Africa. Next, the findings and limitations of
the research are presented. The final section draws the threads together by considering a number of implications for women in the Gqebera community and Sub-Saharan Africa.

### 2.13 Problem statement

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the efforts made for women to become independent despite difficult social and economic circumstances. The position of many Western women has improved dramatically in the last 50 years, so that there are fewer and fewer limits on what women can do and how they can live. However, there are many other parts of the world where this is not the case. This article aims to shed light on the current situation of women and HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa. Africa is a vast continent, and it is not the intention to generalize, but rather to look at HRD in the context of African women and their realities.

The preferred outcome of the research is to uncover the realities of the life of women in Gqebera Township, South Africa, in relation to HRD and the labor market. Another desired outcome is to discover to what extent there are programs where women are taught skills in order for them to be able to generate a sustainable income and provide for themselves. A hypothesis that will be tested in the research is that by giving women skills and thus making them more attractive in the labor market, they become more independent and less likely to rely on relationships in which they are not treated with dignity and respect.

Gqebera, also known as Walmer Township, in Port Elizabeth, is the oldest Black township in the area. The township is approximately four square kilometers in size and about 60,000 people live there. However, the area and the number of people are increasing. There have been signs of some improvement, but there is about an 80 per cent unemployment rate in Gqebera. Neglected over the troublesome years of its development, today it lacks many of the
basic facilities and infrastructure associated with an environment where people live (Herholdt, 1998).

All feminist movements attempt to achieve the same thing -- liberation and equality for women. Undoubtedly there is a great deal of pressure and also constraints on women, especially in the developing parts of the world, in the labor market and with regard to their making a contribution to the economy. A large number of women try to earn a living from markets, agriculture, and domestic work. Incomes are insecure and working days long for these women, who often also have responsibility for children and all the housework. Women in Africa continue to face enormous obstacles. The growing acknowledgment that they make a big contribution has not resulted in greatly improved access to resources or increased decision-making powers. In the opinion of Kanbur (2004), economic and progress theories that are developed in Western countries often do not correspond with the needs of developing countries.

Women are frequently disregarded, for numerous reasons such as stereotypes and biases concerning women’s roles in society. Companies that are facing a competitive global marketplace are recognizing the value of diversity. However, Hite and McDonald (1998) state that many senior managers operate under the mistaken belief that their only responsibility is to hire women and wait for results. This assumes that the business culture provides equal opportunities to succeed, and ignores institutional biases that prevent the advancement of women. Encouraging a fairer culture of opportunity can be seen as the responsibility of (HRD) in offering training and development programs that strengthen the knowledge, skills, and abilities of women and of others who are disadvantaged in the labor market.
2.14 HRD and Sub-Saharan African women

HRD is in the process of developing as a discipline. As this happens, Bierema and Cseh (2003) note that it is vital to critically evaluate what is not researched and studied in the field. Bierema (2002, pp. 244-245) states that the main research topics in the HRD field include the following: integrity, globalization, teams, employee development, learning on the job, new technologies, transfer, evaluation, organizational change, training effectiveness, partnership research, and roles in HRD. This indicates that HRD is a wide field of study and research opportunities. Therefore, it can be argued that HRD as a discipline can play an important role in developing and empowering women in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In order to ensure empowerment, it is critical that people have options that are accessible. The aim of empowerment is to decrease helplessness and the inability resulting from negative experience of disadvantaged groups in society (Potgieter, 1998). Eade (1997) argues that in order to develop a society, both women and men need to be empowered by positively changing their lives and ensuring personal growth along with public action. Empowerment, they state, is first and foremost about the process of changing lives and transforming societies (Eade, 1997). Haycock, (2004, pp 152-153) describes five features in relation to human development that impact on the role and status of women in a society. These are:

- Empowerment
- Co-operation and integration
- Equity
- Sustainability
- Security.
Traditionally, Sub-Saharan African women have been under-represented in higher education and in the world of work. However, despite their lack of education and skills, they have been and still often are bread-winners in their households.

2.14.1 African women in the world of work

The world has become a global market-place. Globalization is having an enormous impact on all economies and on the workers in those economies. Regularly, much of the work that has been performed and is being performed by women, remains invisible. It takes place within the household and is not seen as productive in economic terms (Nisonoff, 1997). Stern (1999) argues that full employment is a long way from being the reality in most African countries, where the foreign debt is enormous and often paralyzing to the economy. Haycock (2004) notes that traditionally on the African continent, women are inferior to men, both within the family and in the society in general. This attitude results in gender inequalities regarding access to resources and development.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, retrenchment has meant high unemployment. Women lose their jobs before men do. In Tanzania, for example, women are laid off first, as they are considered less capable and efficient than men because they are absent from work for child-care and other household tasks (Stern, 1999). Stoparic (2005) points out that employment of women can help keep a family out of poverty. Women’s unpaid work in the home also often channels them into insecure and frequently unregulated occupations such as domestic work, child-care and manufacturing work, or even prostitution. As a result of this, women face a greater risk of poverty than men, despite the fact that they participate in the workforce. Taking this into consideration, it is clearly essential that the acquisition of life skills is a central part of development of a society. According to Potgieter (1998, p. 217) “life skills involve all those skills...
that enable systems to maximize their own choice, to enhance their personal well-being and to improve their quality of life. Life skills open doors and enable people to help themselves”.

Women in Africa are largely excluded from management positions, even though there has been an increase in the number of educated women. This is also true in cases where women have the same level of education and work experience as their male counterparts (Haycock, 2004).

2.14.2 Discrimination against women

Discrimination in the world of work is unfortunately commonplace. Discrimination is not a new phenomenon. In the words of Krug (1997, p. 54),

[in the beginning] discrimination was based on collective action by one sector of society which succeeded in opposing an institutional setting that made it possible to allocate income, life chances, and upward mobility according to criteria other than individual effort, skill or education. The question which needs to be dealt with today, however, is not how discriminating institutions emerged, but why they could – and can – persist.

Many countries struggle with high unemployment, and seeing that women are generally less well-educated than men, they will clearly be the losers in the labor market because of their lack of education. This is perhaps especially evident in a developing region such as Sub-Saharan Africa, where the social structures are very different from those in developed countries.
Stoparic (2005) states that many companies look for female workers because they see them as a source of cheap, unskilled labor, and as more submissive and less unionized than men.

Societies that discriminate on the basis of gender pay a considerable price in greater poverty, slower economic growth, fragile authorities, and a lower quality of life (Mutume 2001). As long as there are both non-discriminating groups operating within an economy and labor market, an economic analysis must always take account of the possibility of discrimination (Krug, 1997). Since the end of Apartheid in 1994 and the establishment of democracy in South Africa, issues concerning discrimination against women and women’s rights in the labor market have received considerable attention. The South African law provides a range of protection for women in the workplace, which can be seen in a broader context as protection against discrimination (Grant, 2005). On the issue of why discrimination survives, Krug (1997) notes that, as long as it is profitable for some institutions in society to discriminate against women, it will continue to exist. Sexual discrimination continues to be a major problem for many women in the labor force. Grant (2005) recognizes that employers often fail to take appropriate actions to help harassed employees and give them support. She further claims that more observation and focus on this matter will assist in dealing with sexual discrimination and other types of discrimination which are experienced by so many women in the workplace (Grant, 2005).

Coats (1994) argues that for women to look for education or training, or even to consider going back to work except in cases where it is needed for financial reasons, is often considered as abandoning the needs of the family in order to fulfill their own wishes. Moreover, if there are monetary costs involved in the training or education, this decision will most likely be even more undesirable. Women’s opportunity to gain education and marketable skills is often
restricted because of the idea that their social role and responsibility is to take care of family and children, and perform other activities that require little or no education (Opare, 2005).

Women often have the main responsibility for the family, but repeatedly they are not given the acknowledgement they deserve for this job. In many cases, women are discriminated against because of established cultural gender roles, and purely because they are women (Midgley, in Potgieter, 1998). Furthermore, many women in Sub-Saharan Africa do not have formal education, and this in turn limits their opportunities to gain access to the labor market. Potgieter (1998) argues that it is important for women to address their personal development, and emphasizes that the position of women will improve considerably if they gain access to knowledge and skills. Haycock (2004) states that it is not only women’s inadequate access to resources and often poor sustainable income that influences their power in the home, labor market and in society in general; it is equally their poor socioeconomic positions that prevent them from participating in the national structures (Opare, 2005).

### 2.14.3 Feminism in Africa

The term ‘feminist theory’ includes many approaches. There is no such thing as just ‘feminism’. Feminist theorists take approaches that include liberal, Marxist, radical, psychoanalytic, socialist, and post-modern (Tong, 1989). Bierema and Cseh (2003) suggest that looking at the world from a female point of view honors women on all levels of society. A feminist, they argue, is an individual who works towards equal economic, social and political opportunity for both females and males. Hence, being a feminist does not mean devaluing or rejecting men, but rather striving for the betterment of society in general (Bierema, 2002). Feminist theory has always had a political agenda, meaning that it aims to improve the situation of women in society. But the term ‘feminism’ also has philosophical import, asking basic questions about personal identity, about ethical obligations to others, and about knowledge (Cott, 1987).
Bierema and Cseh (2003) note that the field of HRD has not in the past been very concerned with issues such as diversity, equality, discrimination, or sexism. This indicates that a feminist viewpoint is not only concerned with the gender issue; it aims to benefit all groups in society.

When examining different feminist approaches, it is clear that the feminist way of thinking is diverse and often has very different agendas. However, it can be argued that feminists who are less concerned about the gains that could be made for women and more about the gains that could be made for human beings, have a greater possibility of achieving what they want (McAfee, 2002). This notion was also made apparent by Hooks (2000), who claims that feminism does not intend to benefit one group of women or even advantage women over men.

Feminist movements are not restricted to developed countries; they can also be found in developing countries where women have fewer rights than in many Western countries. Today feminism is a global phenomenon, and the continent of Africa is not unfamiliar with the concept. Feminism has different approaches according to the culture and part of the world in which it functions. Seeing that feminism is no longer a Western 'thing,' Mizuo (2001) states that the concept needs to be recognized in a global context, as well as taking into account the different formations and their interrelationships everywhere. Mangena (2003), however, recognizes that there is a problem with the adaptation of Western feminist theory to an African context. Mangena (2003, p. 98) is of the opinion that Western feminism cannot survive without African feminism:

As a science, western feminism insists that it must be adopted by all women in the world and be used to deal with their specific and concrete problems. This in itself is a denial of the possibility of universality with a difference, based on the differentiated material...
condition of the various peoples of the world. In reality, wherever people of cultures other than western cultures, challenge western universalism on the basis of their respective different material conditions, the west denies such difference by according it a non-scientific status.

Sheftall (2003) maintains that, despite the occurrence of Western feminism in academic dialogues, the creative, scholarly and political work achieved by African women can be argued to be part of the term 'African feminism'. Even if feminism in the African context is a relatively new concept, the resistance and struggle of African women has deep roots that go back to pre-colonial times (Sheftall, 2003). African feminism confirms its origin from Western feminism, but at the same time it questions the claim that it is objective and completely universal (Mangena, 2003). Daymond (1996) suggests that African women should get involved and be allowed to get involved. Thus, African women should take charge of their own experiences and their understanding of the world. She states that by doing so, African women will be assuming responsibility for their own liberation based on their own way of thinking and acting, rather than on what others think (Daymond, 1996).

Adkins (2004) argues that even though feminism has been passed on to different generations of women, its causes have become different. She suggests that feminism in the developed world has lost much of its former power and may even be dying out as an ideology (Adkins, 2004). From being a predominantly Western ideology, feminism has become a global way of thinking and of interest to many women all over the world. Women from different cultures and backgrounds will adopt different approaches to feminism (Sheftall, 2003). However, there are some underlying principles that have not changed throughout history, and
according to Amussen (1996, p. 155), they are relevant to all feminists, regardless of approach and culture:

the awareness of women that they belong to a subordinate group;
that they have suffered wrongs as a group; that their condition of subordination is not natural, but is socially determined; that they must join with other women to remedy these wrongs; and finally, that they must and can provide an alternate vision of societal organization in which women as well as men will enjoy autonomy and self-determination.

In Africa, where women’s movements are beginning to become visible, a new generation of women is eager to make sure that their voices are heard. Some feminists in developed countries repeatedly attempt to pass on their theories to feminists in other parts of the world, but they do not realize that females and feminists in other cultures are dealing with different issues and different circumstances. Consequently, they should develop their own theories (Sheftall, 2003). The knowledge of feminism continues to have a rather insignificant impact in many of the major academic fields. This is also the case with HRD. Hughes (2000) notes that the term 'HRD' implies gender-neutrality, and the resources implied in the term are seemingly treated similarly.

2.15 Socio-economic profile of women in Sub-Saharan Africa

With the deepening and widening of economic globalization, and the reorganization of economies around the world, the work that women face now is decidedly different from that of
previous generations. A distinctive feature of the Sub-Saharan African economies is that both men and women play substantial economic roles. A significant section of African economies is in the hands of women, in agriculture and the informal sector in particular. However, women in Africa have less access to material goods, including land. Female farmers on the continent receive only one percent of the total financial outcome of agriculture. Women are also less likely to control the product of their labor than men, which reduces their incentives to pursue productive, income-earning opportunities. There is growing evidence that income earned by women is more likely to be used for family needs such as food, clothing, health, and education.

A growing number of South African women have been included in the labor force and have become economically active. By 2003, half of those working or wanting to work in the paid economy were women (Casale and Posel, 2005). These writers further note that a growing involvement in the economy can be associated with a number of positive changes for women. More women are employed in managerial positions and professional occupations (Casale and Posel, 2005). However positive this may seem, there are still great imbalances in the labor market. Regardless of the progress made and the efforts of the government to increase women’s rights in the labor market and the economy, women continue to earn considerably less than men and are not equally represented in all economic sectors (Stoparic, 2005). Coats (1994) notes that many women are not aware of the fact that the skills they have in productively and effectively running a household and a family are numerous and varied, and that most of these skills are transferable to other settings in the society, such as the labor market. However, it does seem that the fundamental contributions of African women in their households, food

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production systems, and national economies are increasingly being acknowledged, within
Africa and also by the international community (Kanbur, 2004).

2.15.1 HRD and globalization – the implication for women

The force of globalization will continue to expand, and will increase the exchange in ideas,
products, and services over immense distances. Generally, globalization is considered from a
global and abstract perspective. However, it is important to consider the impacts that
globalization has on a local level (Nisonoff, 1997).

Increased competition and globalization create the need for higher skills and productivity
among workers in the economy (Johanson and Adams, 2004). Globalization is not an
impersonal process driven by laws and factors of development – such as technology –
operating outside human control and agency. Rather it is a conscious program of
reconstructing international economic and political relations in line with a particular set of
interests. The theory of globalization assumes that all people, men and women, rich and poor,
will be affected equally and in the same way (Nisonoff, 1997). It also assumes that international
trade provides the same opportunities to small firms, new industries, and giant transnational
corporations. However, as Muyale-Manenji (1998) points out, globalization in many instances
indicates otherwise, because international trade also affects the micro-economic level –
people's livelihoods and their most basic social and economic rights. HRD and skills
development are important factors in the development not only of women in Sub-Saharan
Africa but also of societies in general. Johanson and Adams (2004) point out that the force of
globalization and increased competition call for a labor pool with higher skills and increased
productivity amongst workers on all levels in the labor market.

Perhaps it is time to reconsider the idea of development in the globalization process.
Economic growth without social and cultural justice cannot be the inspiration for development.
It is imperative that development is measured in terms of the quality of human life, which can be reflected in, for example, better education, health, and life expectancy for every single member of a society. This is only possible if men and women are equally empowered, in theory and in practice (Pieterse, 2001).

2.15.2 HRD strategies

The historic and continuing function of HRD has been to maximize employee potential in order to add to the strength of an organization. This role clearly justifies involvement in women’s career progress and interest in the ramifications of inadequate support for women in organizations (Hanscome and Cervero, 2003; Hite and McDonald, 1998). While many efforts have been made to lessen poverty and promote the entry of more women into the workforce, it is possibly more important to focus on what sort of work women are finding, and to address the gender inequality that women experience in work (Stoparic, 2005). Coats (1994) emphasizes the fact that employed women are generally offered fewer training prospects than their male colleagues. Furthermore, the training opportunities that are accessible are generally at a lower level.

More men than women participate in training opportunities during work. At the beginning, women may be trained to perform specific tasks and may receive in-service training to perform new tasks or operate new equipment, but they are less likely to be selected for further training or for advancement. One of the significant reasons for this is that the employers are generally hesitant to spend resources on training of female employees because they are afraid the women may decide to stop working for family reasons, and the investment and resources put into training are considered as being wasted.
The International Labor Office (ILO) is encouraging employers and workers’ organizations to facilitate women’s equal access to training credit, support services, social safety nets, and so forth. Employers should appreciate that it makes good business sense to promote equal employment opportunities and treatment for women and men. The ILO points out that anti-discrimination legislation is needed where it currently does not exist. It explains that the legislation should be simple and capable of being put into practice in the particular situation of an individual country. It also says that care should be taken to make sure that protective legislation does not harmfully affect women’s access to employment and training. It can be argued that employers should be encouraged to endorse equal opportunity in organizations with the use of incentives, recognition, and awards. Men and women experience life differently, and this is partly due to the gender inequality factor that exists between the sexes. Often development interventions that do not pay attention to the gender power relations fail, or make the situation for women even worse (Eade, 1997). Education and training is not only investment in people, it is investment in building capacity in a society and therefore development of the economy. Basic education is a human right; Sub-Saharan Africa is evidence that this human right is not always practiced (Eade, 1997).

Sound HRD strategies that involve education and training are good investments for individuals, organizations and the economy. In Sub-Saharan Africa such strategies should focus on technological change and increased competition, investing in skills that will increase the productivity and income of economically vulnerable groups in society, such as women. Furthermore, it is important the HRD strategies should consider issues such as HIV/AIDS seeing that the disease is reducing the already reduced pool of skilled labor (Johanson and Adams, 2004).

25 Globalization, Employment, Women, and the Girl Child
2.15.3 Policies

Affirmative Action programs attempt to alleviate past discrimination against women, minorities, and others, by increasing the recruitment, promotion, retention, and on-the-job training opportunities in employment. Because of the long history of discrimination based on sex and race, most Affirmative Action programs have been directed towards improving employment opportunities for women and minorities (Barker, 2003). Affirmative Action strategies further include increasing the pool of job or admission applicants by using recruitment strategies which reach outside of traditional channels, such as the posting of job notices in places where women and minorities are more likely to see them. In some cases, Affirmative Action programs have been instituted by law. In other cases, it is the employers who have established such programs in order to increase the pool of qualified applicants, and to expand the workplace and make it more diverse. 26

Staudt (1995) argues that in Africa, areas where policies are essential are agriculture, land and trade. Women farmers need a protected right to use property as their means of production. Nevertheless, policies are implemented in a bureaucratic environment often dominated by men, repeatedly making it difficult for women to raise their voices (Staudt, 1995). Even though this statement was made a decade ago, it seems that in most African states, male domination is still the reality. Now, new legislative and policy structures are being created, which aim to give real meaning to equal opportunity. Significant steps have been taken in many cases to decrease the dramatic gap that existed. 27

Stoparic (2005) points out that workforce statistics in many cases fail to measure the kind of work women do, what they are being paid, and what benefits they receive. Policies that

focus on economic growth do not automatically create jobs that will help people out of poverty. What workers need, and in particular low-wage female workers, are policies to help people in the informal economy, which has been growing in both the developed and developing worlds. Public policy has a key role to play in encouraging gender-inclusive development and a decrease in poverty. Key policy measures to ensure economic growth in Africa should include the following:

- Promoting the increased participation of poor men and women in economic decision-making
- Investment in gender-inclusive growth
- Investment in the household economy and in raising labor productivity
- Reducing the time spent collecting water and fuel wood
- Improving marketing opportunities
- Expanding access to social services and non-agricultural income-generating activities
- Making gender issues visible in data and analysis

Some African countries have made significant progress in the struggle against discrimination, as the structures that once supported racially segregated societies have been dismantled. Now, new legislative and policy structures are being created. The aim is to give valid meaning to equality of opportunity for everyone. It should be considered important to implement policies that enhance the knowledge and skills of workers in the labor market in order to be able to improve the outputs and development in the economy. Seeing that education and training is a form of investment, sound policies will benefit individuals,

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companies, and the economy (Johanson and Adams, 2004). Regarding women, policies should therefore aim to ensure resources that will help fulfill their economic roles in society (Haycock, 2004). Moreover, it is important that women are consulted and take part in the policy-making process, hence giving them greater influence on the outcomes of the policies that will have an effect on their lives (Opare, 2005).

2.16 Methodology

Bierema (2002) argues that the understanding of women’s experiences has often been ignored in social sciences research. It is in the best interest of the HRD field to include knowledge and to commit to the education of all groups in society (Bierema, 2002).

In order to shed light on issues concerning women and HRD in South Africa, this study needed to take into account the importance of context as well as the subjective experiences of the respondents. A qualitative research design presented the best opportunity to focus on the respondents' experiences and the social contexts and structures in which they belong. The sample for this study was derived through a strategy known as 'purposeful sampling'. This allows the investigator to ‘discover, understand, and gain insight' and he/she must therefore ‘select a sample from which the most can be learned’, Merriam (1998, p. 61). Gqebera community in Port Elizabeth, South Africa has been used as a case study. After finding the first respondents from the by means of purposeful sampling techniques, snowball sampling was used to select more respondents. In snowball sampling, each respondent is asked to suggest other people who meet the researcher’s selection criteria (Babbie, Mouton, Vorster and Prozesky, 2001). This was important because people in this position have a different and unique perspective of what is needed in the community in terms of development. The community of Gqebera Township has been used as a case study. The intention is to avoid
generalization as women’s experiences differ from community to community and country to country.

It was expected that the experiences of these individuals would enable them to provide unique insights into the issues of HRD on a community level. The first respondents consisted of women living in the Gqebera community and women working with skills development and community development. The data consisted of descriptions about specific issues concerning women and their experiences in the community and society in general. For the purpose of this study, female experiences reflected how women perceived themselves within the community and the society in terms of power and development. It was significant for the researcher to uncover the challenges and opportunities as they were experienced for women living in the community. Respondents in the focus groups were given themes which they were asked to discuss in their groups. Each focus group was video-taped and later transcribed verbatim. The transcripts from the videotapes formed the primary data for this study. The results derived from the use of qualitative data through focus groups made it possible for the researcher to identify and establish certain patterns, themes and relationships.

The target population of this study was women between the ages of 18 and 49 years, because this was the most productive part of the female population in terms of work. There were approximately 10 720 women between the ages of 18 and 49 living in Gqebera Township. (These figures are probably inaccurate seeing that they were collected five years ago. They are, however, the only reliable source currently available.)

The study experienced specific problems most of which are common to doing empirical research in Africa. These include the following:

30 Statistics South Africa, 2001
• The lack of adequate knowledge of the concept of HRD and community development among the participants in the focus groups.

• The actions and behaviors of the participants were not evaluated directly as the researcher relied exclusively on the focus groups as well as the existing literature to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

• The focus groups were conducted in the local language, isiXhosa. After the completion of the focus groups the information was translated verbatim into English by a person whose first language is isiXhosa. Even though the answers were translated verbatim, there is a chance that something has been lost in the translation.

2.17 Findings

This section states the findings about women and HRD in the Gqebera community. Each theme is briefly introduced and then followed by a short presentation of specific findings associated with the specific concept. The participants were asked to discuss different themes on the subject of women and their role in society.

Each of the participants in this study plays different roles as women in the Gqebera community. They are mothers, wives, daughters, grandmothers, neighbors, friends, workers and job seekers. Regardless of the role they play in the community they have one thing in common: the desires to sustainable develop Gqebera so that their children and grandchildren can grow up in a safe and healthy environment. In the next section a presentation of the findings is given in terms of three primary themes.
Theme 1: The role of women in the South African society today.

Responses to this question can be collectively represented in the following statements:

*Women have become more assertive and more aware of their rights in the South African society; Even though women have are increasingly being empowered in South Africa, there are still many obstacles; we have women in high positions in all spheres of society and this is inspiring.*

This indicates that the women are aware that they have the power to change their position in society if they have access to resources that will give them the means to advance. They unanimously agreed that it is up to women to empower themselves. Women are aware of the difficulties that they are facing trying to enter a sphere that is largely occupied by men. Two such obstacles that were specifically mentioned were the lack of respect for women and an underestimation of their capability to perform on par with men in the labor market. Women look for inspiration in the achievements of other women. As they are pushed and motivated by the actions and success of others, they strive towards change in their own life as well as that of the family and ultimately the community.

*Women are not advancing in society to impress men or even prove something to men, but women do it for themselves; Women must take care of their family so that the entire community can benefit; we do not belong barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen! – Women have to cook and clean and bring money into the household. And in the evening she has to be a good wife for her husband.*

This comment can be seen as a sign of eagerness amongst the women to pursue their dreams and develop on their own terms. However they commented on the fact that in order for women to be able to advance and develop, there have to be a change of thought as well as attitude change amongst men regarding gender roles. Most Sub-Saharan African cultures are collectivistic in their orientation. Hence the development and the benefit of the community as a whole is more often than not more important than the individual benefit (Hofstede, 1980; Shutte, 1993). Many women in South Africa are still to a large extent bound by traditional gender roles where females are consider inferior to men.
Theme 2: The advancement of women in the labor market and in society.

The answers given to this question is represented jointly as follows: We women must not be afraid to work that have traditionally been done by me; we must not wait for men to do something for us, but we must do it ourselves; women must take control of and responsibility for their own destiny; Women can develop themselves and make contribution in society by doing projects and opening small businesses to generate an income that can develop so that they don’t have to depend on small salaries.

An increasing number of women are entering professions that have been male dominated in the past, such as construction and governmental positions (Barker, 2004; UNDP, 2005). There was a clear indication that the women have a desire to shape their own future. With the increasing need for skilled workers in the Sub-Saharan African region, the initiatives of women become progressively more important (Johanson and Adams, 2004). This point is emphasized further in the next statement made. In all the focus group the participants discussed the possibility to start projects for unemployed women. The project would involve teaching each other skills such as knitting, beading and other form of handicraft. They stated that the skills learned in the various project could be transferred to the labor market. Furthermore, it was noted that the projects, in addition to creating a sustainable income for unemployed women, would create a social network for the women, an important factor in African community life.

Theme 3: What could be done differently in terms of developing women in the labor market?

The responses to this question are jointly represented next: Women must stop believing that they depend on men to have a good life or even survive; there is still a lot of discrimination in the labor market, and the discrimination has to be made more visible; it is hard, because men in South Africa have generally been brought up to believe that they are superior to women; not many talk about the gender issues, as it is often considered taboo, so it is about time that we start talking about it!
Although discrimination in the labor market and access to educational resources is unlawful, unfair discrimination against women and race continues to subsist (Barker, 2004). Today, women in South Africa are redefining their place in society and the labor market, which has previously been dominated by men (Manum, 2006). This will not be achieved overnight, but it is a long-term process where women must stand up for their rights and be active in their own development (Stoparic, 2005).

It is important that men understand the new position of women in the society and in the labor market; men's attitude towards women needs to change; women must become aware of their rights in the labor market so that they are not being exploited; they must make sure that they are paid a fair wage so that they can sustain themselves and their family.

It is not only women that need to develop a new mentality in terms of their position and opportunities. Men have to come to terms with the importance of women entering the labor market and the contribution they make to the micro and macro economy. The Sub-Saharan African region has high levels of unemployment. This is particularly a problem amongst women. As a result of this women are often forced to settle for poor working conditions and low wages (Barker, 2004; Stoparic, 2005).

2.18 Conclusion

In this concluding part of the article, the findings are linked to the HRD literature examined. Recommendations for areas where further research is needed are also provided. The overall aim of this research was to uncover the perceptions of women in relation to their position in society, access to the labor market and how women can contribute to their own development. It can be argued with the implementation of sound HRD policies and strategies, women from underprivileged areas in Sub-Saharan Africa stand a better chance of being able to enter the
labor market and make a sustainable living. As stated earlier, in order to avoid over-
generalization, it is important to recognize that women’s perceptions and the level of
development may vary in different parts of the Sub-Saharan African region. For the purpose of
this research, Gqebera Township in Port Elizabeth, South Africa has been used as a case
study. The participant in the focus groups made it clear that they are welcoming the changes in
the South African society concerning the empowerment of women in the labor market and in
the society in general. It was made evident that there are still many challenges to be faced for
women in a society where men are considered to be the stronger sex, and women still depend
on men to a large extent. Regardless of their dependency on men, however, women in the
Sub-Saharan African region are strong and resourceful and are fully capable of facing the
challenges they are facing (Johanson and Adams, 2004; Haycock, 2004; Manum, 2006).
Women are often the breadwinners in the family, but often lack the recognition for the job they
are doing raising and caring for a family, working full time as well as being a wife.

The literature examined for this study, indicate that there is a need for extensive research
regarding women in Sub-Saharan Africa and HRD. This was also made evident through the
empirical research. Women are often neglected regarding opportunities in training and
development in the Sub-Saharan African region (Barker, 2003). There is a need to increasingly
include women in decision making processes concerning development of women in the
communities. The goal of feminism is not to suppress men and advance women. Feminism is
about striving toward a society where all citizens regardless of gender and color have the same
opportunities (Hooks, 2000; Manzano, 1999). Most countries in the region are experiencing
extreme poverty, corruption, HIV and AIDS pandemic and skills shortage (Johanson and
Adams, 2004). Consequently, women are suffering, perhaps more so than men, as they often
not given the same opportunities to access resources such as training and skills development.
as men (Grant, 2005; Mutume, 2001). It can be argued that by unlocking the potential in women by giving them the opportunity to develop skills that is transferable to the labor market will increase the possibility of sustainable economic development in countries where this is desperately needed.

Research done for this study indicates that women are fully capable and willing to develop themselves and their community given the appropriate resources. Hence, the implementation of sound HRD strategies and policies in all levels of society can be seen as highly important where unlocking people’s potential and skills through training and development, can be seen as imperative for the advancement of the economy and ultimately the well-being people.
References


Abstract

This article explores the level of women’s understanding of sustainable development in Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. It further examines the challenges and opportunities for sustainable human resource development (HRD) in the Sub-Saharan region. Sub-Saharan Africa is facing numerous challenges, including poverty, inequality, HIV and AIDS, and high unemployment. All these factors are important to consider when planning HRD policies and strategies in the region. Sustainable development is a worldwide aim and on the agenda of many countries, especially the developing and least developed – the countries on the African continent. The conditions under which women in Sub-Saharan Africa have been trying to participate in the development process in the past have often prevented them from fully developing their capacity to take part in the work towards sustainable development.

Keywords: women; sustainable development; capacity building; Sub-Saharan Africa; human resource development

The World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) stated in 1987 that “sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UNDP, 2003). Sustainable development goes further than just development of the environment. It is also concerned with the social and economic structures of a society – sustainable human development. There is no doubt that there is a large proportion of the South

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African population that is disadvantaged in the labor market. This is reflected in the high unemployment rate and the excessive number of unskilled workers (Johanson and Adams, 2004). The high unemployment rate in South Africa does not affect only the unemployed workers, but also their families and society in general. Consequently, the ultimate goal for sustainable human development in South Africa should be to improve the standard of living for the population where it is needed (Barker, 2003).

The purpose of this article is to explore the level of sustainable community development in Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth. A case-study approach has been applied in order to find patterns in the community where strategies are needed to ensure sustainable development. Case studies are multi-perspective analyses. This implies that the researcher considers the voice and perspective not only of those being researched, but also of the relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them. This one aspect is a salient characteristic of case studies. They give a voice to the powerless and voiceless in society (Feagin, Orum, and Sjoberg, 1991).

The focus of the subsequent discussion is on issues pertinent to the understanding of Human Resource Development (HRD) and sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The following discussion relates to six sections that are used to illustrate HRD and sustainable development in the region. The first section focuses on the importance of sustainable development in the Sub-Saharan African region and human capital. The second section is concerned with women and sustainable development. This part of the article also looks at the role women have in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of development in the community. The third section considers the role of HRD in regard to sustainable development. In this section, various training and skills development strategies are examined. The fourth section looks at future opportunities and challenges regarding HRD and sustainable development.
development in South Africa. In the fifth section, a brief discussion is given of the methodology and data analysis used. Subsequently, the results of an empirical study are presented. The sixth and final section draws together the research and the theory in a concluding discussion.

It can be argued that the long-term answer to sustainable development in economic terms is expanded career and educational opportunities for women, seeing that this will ultimately be an advantage to the society in general. Group solidarity, which is a significant characteristic of the African continent’s social dynamics, represents a vital pillar on which future development can be built. In many African societies, collective decisions are appreciated and valued in view of the fact that they promote popular contribution, consensus, and social camaraderie (Jackson, 2002). This facilitates self-empowerment that recognizes the need to tap local resources, generate initiatives, and engage local people as the primary drivers of development and its primary recipients (UNDP, 2003). According to Potgieter (1998, p. 216), empowerment is “a process of increasing personal, interpersonal and collective power which allows individuals, families, groups and communities to maximize their quality of life.” Ultimately, the goal of social development is to produce sustained improvement for individuals, families, communities, and the society, which can be seen in relation to empowerment (Potgieter, 1998).

2.19 The importance of sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa

In order for the change in a society to be sustainable, there must be equality between women and men, as well as an opportunity to increase their opportunities to provide for themselves both in the present and in the future (Eade, 1997). Furthermore, sustainability is not concerned only with being able to provide for oneself financially; it is also concerned with individuals’ ability to endure the social and economic pressures experienced (Eade, 1997) and making sure that sustainable development is ensured at both national and local levels. This is because a country’s level of sustainable development can only be as effective as its people...
would like it to be (UNDP, 2003). Therefore, it can be seen as imperative that governments in Africa come up with sustainable strategies and policies in order to be able to eradicate extreme poverty, unemployment, and inequality, and ensure economic balances and social sustainability in the region.

**Figure 4: Goals of sustainable development**

![Diagram showing goals of sustainable development]

- Biological System Goals: Genetic diversity, Resilience, Biological productivity
- Economic Systems Goals: Efficiency, Equity, Social welfare
- Social Systems Goals: Citizen participation, Social justice

Source: Adapted from Bartle and Leuenberger, 2006

According to Haycock (2004), in the Sub-Saharan African region, women are more often than not subject to economic pressures and inequalities that leave them very vulnerable to poverty and marginalization, and often with little control of their future. Figure 4 above presents a model of the goals of sustainable development incorporating biological, economic, and social systems.
In order for sustainable development to be successful and contribute to growth and stability in Africa, the goals of sustainable development should not be seen as separate objectives, but rather as integrated parts of an overall sustainable development aim. Even though economic growth is often considered to be a basic goal, it is important to take into consideration where the growth transpires, to what degree it is sustainable, and how economic growth is being distributed. It also needs to be considered how economic growth adds to building a productive and active labor force and human resource development. In addition, it is important to measure the impact that economic growth will have on the environment (UNDP, 2003).

2.19.1 Human capital

Human capital plays an important role in the process of economic growth, and individuals’ labor market outcomes are linked to their educational attainment. According to Haycock (2004, p. 141), human capital can be defined as “the part of the web of life cutting across various capital, i.e. social, institutional, economic and technological capital,” Human capital can be seen as an integral part of social capital; together they form an important contribution to sustainable development (Haycock, 2004). The importance of education and training connects human capital and HRD. According to Barker (2003, pp. 246-547), “the basic premise of the human capital theory is that education and training enhance a person’s stock of human capital and therefore increase that person’s productive potential.” On a community level, HRD is about education and training, and about the development of human capital in order to improve the lives of citizens and to improve the economic competitiveness of a nation (Garavan, McGuire and O’Donnell, 2004). Furthermore, the investments made and the skills and knowledge acquired to increase productivity and earnings will benefit both the individual and the collective community in the long run (Paprock, 2006).
2.20 The role of women in Sub-Saharan Africa

Most of the countries in Africa struggle with high unemployment, and because women are generally less educated than men, they are the losers in the labor market owing to the lack of education and opportunities. Stoparic (2005), however, maintains that many companies look for female workers because they perceive them to be a source of cheap, unskilled workers, who are more submissive and less organized than men.

When there is discrimination on the grounds of gender, there will be a considerable price to pay in terms of increased poverty, slower economic growth, and ultimately lower quality of life for the general population (Mutume 2001). Since the end of Apartheid in 1994 and the establishment of democracy in South Africa, issues concerning discrimination against women and women’s rights in the labor market have received attention. The South African law provides a range of protection for women in the workplace, which can be seen in a broader context as protection against discrimination (Grant, 2005). Krug (1997) notes that one of the reasons discrimination continues to exist is that, as long as there are institutions that profit from discrimination, it will continue to exist. There is a widening of economic globalization around the world, and this is also the reality in Africa. A distinctive feature of the African economies is that both men and women play substantial economic roles. Much of African economy is in the hands of women, agriculture, and the informal sector in particular. However, women in Africa have less access than males to material goods, including land. For example, on average, farmers receive only one percent of the total outcome of agriculture. Furthermore, women are less likely to control the product of their labor than men, which reduces their incentives to pursue productive, income-earning opportunities. In addition there is growing evidence that
income earned by women is more likely to be used for family needs such as food, clothing, health, and education.32

A growing number of South African women have been included in the labor force and become economically active. By 2003, half of those working or wanting to work in the paid economy were women (Casale and Posel, 2005). These authors further note that the growing involvement of women in the economy can be associated with a number of positive changes for women. More women are employed in managerial positions and professional occupations (Casale and Posel, 2005). However positive this may seem, there are still great imbalances in the labor market. Regardless of progress made and the efforts of the government to increase women’s rights in the labor market and the economy, the imbalance is still very evident. Women continue to earn considerably less than males and are not equally represented in all economic sectors (Stoparic, 2005). It is important to recognize that the fundamental contributions of African women in their households, food production systems and national economies should be increasingly acknowledged, within Africa and also by the international community (Kanbur, 2004).

2.20.1 Women and sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa

It can be argued that in order for people to be empowered, they must have skills. Life skills are the skills that allow individuals to take full advantage of their own destiny as well as to develop their welfare and security. This will help individuals advance on many levels. Moreover, acquiring life skills may help people help themselves (Johanson and Adams, 2004; Potgieter, 1998). Eade (1997) links empowerment to capacity building by stating that "helping people to help themselves" occurs on a personal level, a local level, and a national level. It can be argued that people within a community are in the best position to work towards the

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improvement sought in their environment and the desired improvement of their personal conditions. Individuals within the communities have a unique understanding of interpersonal relationships and power relations that is difficult for an outsider to recognize (Potgieter, 1998). In addition, they are in the best position to decide where specific needs are and how to prioritize them, as well as to play key roles to ensure that the changes that are made are manageable and sustainable.

In many circumstances, there will be a need for external facilitation in form of expertise and resources. However, it can only be successful and effective if it is carried out in as a joint venture involving both the outside agent and people in the community (Haycock, 2004; Potgieter, 1998). It is important that women, who are to a large extent marginalized in African societies, be involved in sustainable development planning. If they are not involved, rather than being central actors in their own development, they can become disempowered and turned into passive recipients of services (UNDP, 2003).

2.21 HRD and sustainable development

Sustainable development can clearly be connected to Human Resource Development (HRD). Unfortunately, the term "HRD" has been applied to such a wide array of activities that its meaning is often ambiguous. To be meaningful, HRD needs to be defined. HRD is both a process and a goal. It involves a planned approach to learning aimed at changes in knowledge, skills, understandings, attitudes and values, and in the behavior of a learner or group of learners. It aims to provide a trained workforce and to promote the knowledge and skills required by a society to acquire economic gains; in short, to provide or build productive capabilities (Callahan & De Dávila, 2004; Fenwick, 2004; Garavan et al., 2004; Mabey, 2003). The field is diverse and includes elements that reach out to individuals, organizations, and communities, as well as those on a global level (McLean and McLean, 2001; Metcalfe and
According to Weinberger (1998), there is no general agreement concerning the definition of HRD.

Eade (1997) argues that it is not possible to look at capacity building in isolation. The concept is deeply rooted in the social, economic, and political environment in a society. Hence, it is crucial to recognize the different environments, so as to be able to uncover and understand who lacks what capacities. In any given society, men and women, however poor or marginalized, possess numerous capacities (UNAIDS, 2002). They may not be apparent to outsiders, and the people themselves may not know that they possess the capacities. Ultimately the goal is to uncover the capacities and potentials. However, it is important to unlock them by building on existing capacities and potentials in order to avoid undermining them and subsequently leaving people worse off than they were before (Eade, 1997). In order for capacity building to be sustainable, it is essential that it be flexible and strategic. Eade (1997) argues that sustainability does not happen overnight, nor is it an easy solution to development. It is vital to invest time in making sure that the entire community is aware of the interventions and changes taking place, in order to gain broad support. This will in turn improve the chances of a successful intervention and long term pay-off (Eade, 1997).

Haycock (2004, p. 141) states that sustainable development can only succeed if proper and effective development and utilisation of resources are incorporated into policies and processes. This includes determining areas of both over- and underutilisation of resources in terms of the underlying principles of sustainability, i.e. intra- and intergenerational sustainability and the incorporation of precautionary measures to ensure implementation of risk-aversion strategies and social protection.
Consequently, social sustainability requires interventions that take women’s social and economic needs into consideration in order to ensure sustainable development through social empowerment (Haycock, 2004). In its broadest understanding, capacity building includes HRD as a vital part of development. It can be based on the concept that knowledge productivity is at the core of development efforts, and that without HRD; most development interventions will be ineffective (Kessels and Poell, 2004). Furthermore, it aims to help participants in the development process to increase their knowledge, skills, and understandings, and to develop the attitudes needed to bring about the desired developmental change.

2.21.1 Skills development and training strategies

According to Johanson and Adams (2004), training and skills development are good investments for individuals, organizations, the labor market, and the economy. In developing countries, this is especially true. By investing in people’s skills, one is investing in their future. In addition, training and skills development are important steps towards poverty eradication in Africa. Training is viewed as a division of HRD, and it adds to the general learning and development effort (Walton, 1999). Barker (2003) makes the statement that training and skills development are important factors for individuals to keep up with the demand of the economy and the labor market. In addition, when individuals possess skills that are transferable in the labor market, their motivation is more likely to increase, and therefore more likely to increase their productivity. Skills development will also foster social well-being, intellectual growth, and stimulation for the individuals (Ehrenberg and Smith, 2003).

Johanson and Adams (2004, pp. 16-17) note five major reasons why skills development in Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly important.
1. Globalization and competition require higher skills and productivity among workers.

2. Technological changes require richer cognitive context, higher skills levels in the labor force, and continued enhancement of workforce skills.

3. Many countries have undergone significant structural adjustment over the past decade.

4. Poverty reduction requires investing in the productivity and skills of economically and socially vulnerable groups.

5. Skills development becomes both more important and more difficult as a result of HIV and AIDS. AIDS depletes scarce human capital and magnifies the need to replace skills lost across a wide range of occupations.

Barker (2003) states that it is important that there is a balance in the labor market between the demand for skill and skill availability. Hence, it is very important that HRD strategies plan for training of skills that are in demand in the labor market.

2.22 Future opportunities and challenges

After dark eras of slavery and colonialism, Africa is on the road to recovery, with a dream for a future of peace and prosperity – the African Renaissance. It is a philosophy of hope and optimism for the people in Africa, initiated by the people of Africa. The African Renaissance recognizes the constraints, such as debt crises, underdevelopment, and untenable political relations (Anstey, 2003). It proposes principles such as good governance, eradication of poverty, economic recovery, accountability, transparency, and adequate attention to social services, with education the highest on the agenda, followed by health services, shelter, water, and the provision of electricity. One of the main aims of the African Renaissance is to mobilize the people of Africa. Over the years, Africa has received foreign assistance, but the Renaissance inspires all Africans to take their destiny into their own hands (Anstey, 2003).
The United Nations Development Program's (UNDPs) "Human Development Index" (HDI) measures a population’s ability to develop the three "most basic capabilities": to be able to lead a long and healthy life, to be knowledgeable, and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living (Butler, 2004; UNDP, 2005). The UNDP argues that the HDI will assist policymakers to focus on the lives of ordinary people in general, not only economics, as the criteria for assessing the development of a country.

There are inequalities in all societies, and this is especially true in Africa. There are different ways to explain the inequalities, including urban-rural divides, gender or intergenerational inequality, and disability. It is no secret that Sub-Saharan Africa has a long way to go in terms of social and economic development (UNDP, 2005). As Johnson and Adams (2004, p. 39) point out, "labour market outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa have been influenced by environmental issues ranging from disease and wars to weak institutions." Hence, the region has faced challenges in the past, which continue to be an obstacle for further development.

There are enormous gaps between those living in rural Africa and those living in urban areas on the continent, as well as between those who have access to the resources of the formal economy and those who do not. In the region, gender disparities are just as important in terms of disadvantage, with women disproportionately bearing the burden of poverty, disease, physical labor, and unemployment (Butler, 2004). Kraak (2005) notes that skills development and training are very important in the region in order to create economies that can be competitive and contribute to increased development. This is important because of the increasing influence of the global economy in the region. There is no shortage of human resources in Africa, but in order for the people to meet challenges and seize opportunities, HRD must play a strategic role in ensuring fairer access to resources and sustainable
development in the region. Johanson and Adams (2004) argue that the biggest challenge in terms of future development in Sub-Saharan Africa is HIV and AIDS. The pandemic casts a shadow over societies, including the economy and the politics (Johansen and Adams, 2004). Some of the consequences that need to be dealt with as a result of HIV and AIDS in the labor market include an increase in employee turnover, absenteeism, and a reduction in productivity (Barker, 2003; Butler, 2004; Hunter, 2003). The impact and challenges of HIV and AIDS on the labor market will be briefly discussed later in the article.

Kessels and Poell (2004) are of the opinion that in its broadest understanding, the concept of capacity building includes HRD as a vital part of development. It can be based on the concept that knowledge productivity is at the core of development efforts, and that without HRD; most development interventions will be ineffective. HRD does not only involve organizations; rather it increasingly acknowledges the need of individuals to take charge of their own lives and their desire to contribute to the economy and to society at large (Kessels and Poell, 2004; Wang and Holton, 2005). Furthermore, capacity building can be linked to economic development and community stability in the sense that it gives the possibilities to create long-term investments and success (Turner, 1999). A number of authors, including Callahan and Dávila (2005); Fenwick (2004) and Mabey (2003), have noted that a critical goal of HRD is that of maximizing people’s potential to contribute to development, by participating fully in the labor market and in the economy. Through capacity-building activities, individuals and groups are empowered to expand their abilities to fully participate in the development process (Madsen, 2003).

The formalization of HRD seems to be progressing only in more affluent and developed countries. In developing countries, where basic needs and formalized policy have not been provided, there is a need for more HRD efforts (Paprock, 2006).
The next section explores some of the challenges and opportunities that the Sub-Saharan African region is facing in terms of skills development and training. These include HRD, HIV and AIDS, and skills migration (brain drain).

2.23 Skills, training opportunities, and challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa

Africa is facing a number of development challenges. However, there are also opportunities in terms of human resources and sustainable development. Some of the factors that will have an impact on development and training in the region are discussed below.

2.23.1 Human Resource Development

Walton (1999) makes the statement that investing in and developing skills is at the heart of HRD. To facilitate economic growth and improved living conditions for people on the Sub-Saharan African region, the development and utilization of human resources is of vital importance (Kraak, 2005). What is more, in order to create a productive workforce, Finnemore (2002) states that there is an urgent need for individuals to be able to access education and training, as well as other basic commodities such as housing and health care. Recognizing and emphasizing the importance of sustainable HRD strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa can be considered a sound way in which to deal with the skills crisis that the region is facing (Kraak, 2005). In order for HRD strategies and policies to be effective, however, those operating in the region need to be aware of the diversity there, as well as the way of dealing with different issues (Jackson, 2004). This is important in order to identify the equity and equality aspects of HRD. The Sub-Saharan African region must create strategies and policies in which African management philosophy is integrated into the development processes at all levels of society. Implementing this will not only help the region become sustainable in terms of labor, but will
also help preserve its cultures and beliefs. The aim for Africa should be to create systems in which people are invested, with fair and equal access to education, health care, and the labor market in each country (Johanson and Adams, 2004). James (2004) places emphasis on the importance of maintaining unique indigenous cultural aspects and knowledge, and using those elements in the development of Africa. HRD theories mainly come from the West, and it can be argued that combining Western HRD theories and African development and management theories is the best option when working towards sustainable development in Africa. Developing appropriate management practices taking local beliefs into consideration is the best way forward in order to be able to improve and intensify development in the region, as well as reducing poverty (Jackson, 2004). The future of HRD in Africa will depend on a number of aspects, including those of being able to manage a diverse workforce as well as generating a highly skilled labor pool. It is clear that the advancement of HRD is extremely important for the development of the region.

2.23.2 HIV and AIDS

HIV and AIDS have had an unbalanced impact on poor communities and further, have permanently trapped its victims in poverty (UNDP, 2003). HIV and AIDS are perhaps the most notable health and economic challenge to many Sub-Saharan African countries (Finnemore, 2002). Most of the people dying of HIV and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa are in their most productive years in terms of labor. This must be considered to be the main challenge facing the region today (Barker, 2003; Johanson and Adams, 2004; Kauffman and Lindauer, 2004). The consequences of the pandemic are like an ulcer in a society because of its socioeconomic implications (Strand, Matlosa, Strode and Chirambo, 2005). Studies have shown that in South and southern Africa, HIV/AIDS is a major contributor to the increase of poverty in the region. Also, the disease creates a vicious circle in that it interrelates with other dimensions of poverty.
However, the full effect of the HIV and AIDS pandemic is yet to be felt in high-prevalence countries in the Sub-Saharan African region. This is because of the length of time taken for a person acquiring the HIV virus to reach full-blown AIDS (Hunter, 2003). Ultimately, it is clear that productivity and growth in the labor market are likely to suffer in the future as a result of the number of people who will not be able to participate in the labor force as a result of HIV and AIDS (Johanson and Adams, 2004).

### 2.23.3 Brain Drain

The phenomenon known as the "brain drain" – the flight of potentially economically active people in an economy – is a critical issue that needs to be addressed by governments in the Sub-Saharan African region. Finnemore (2002) points out that in order for a country to compete in the world economy over a longer period of time, it is imperative that the active economy consist of skilled workers and an educational system that delivers a skilled workforce. It has been identified that South Africa, which can be considered to be the leading economic country in Africa, is experiencing an emigration of high-skilled workers (Lynham and Cunningham, 2006). This has been acknowledged to be a problem not only for South Africa but also for the other countries in the region (Johanson and Adams, 2004).

Barker (2003) appropriately points out that skills emigration has been going on for decades, and that erosion of human capital is a tremendous loss for the individual economies. If this trend is not reversed, the consequences may prove devastating. In order for this reversal to take place, it is imperative that the labor market be attractive to workers and that sound HRD policies and strategies be put into place (McLean, 2006; Kraak, 2005; Paprock, 2006). With the world becoming more and more competitive, it is increasingly important that countries take action to build up and keep their skilled workforce (Anstey, 2003).
2.24 Methodology

In attempting to gain an understanding concerning women, sustainable development, and HRD in South Africa, this study needed to take into account the importance of context as well as the subjective experiences of the respondents. A qualitative research design presented the best opportunity to focus on the respondents’ experiences and the social contexts and structures in which they belong. The sample for this study was derived through a strategy known as "purposeful sampling." This allowed for the investigator to "discover, understand, and gain insight" and therefore he/she must "select a sample from which the most can be learned' Merriam (1998, p. 61). After finding the first respondents from the Gqebera community using purposeful sampling techniques, "snowball sampling" was utilized in order to select the subsequent respondents. In snowball sampling, each respondent is asked to suggest other individuals who meet the researcher’s selection criteria (Babbie, Mouton, Vorster and Prozesky, 2001). Purposeful sampling techniques were used to select the initial respondents, and later respondents were identified by making use of snowball methods. The initial respondents were women living in the Gqebera community and women working with skills development and community development in Gqebera. The latter selection criterion was important because people in this position have a different and unique perspective of what is needed in the community in terms of development. It was expected that the experiences of these individuals would enable them to provide unique insights into the issues of HRD on a community level that were important to this study.

The data consisted of descriptions about specific issues concerning women and their experiences of sustainable development in the community. For the purpose of this study, female experiences referred to how women perceived themselves within the community and the society in terms of power and development. It was significant for the researcher to uncover the challenges and opportunities as they were experienced for women living in the community.
Respondents in the focus groups were given themes which they discussed within the group. Each focus group was video-taped and later transcribed. The transcripts from the videotapes from the focus groups formed the primary data for this study.

The target population of this study was women between the ages of 18 and 49 years. The rationale was that this was the most productive part of the female population in terms of work. There were approximately 10 720 women between the ages of 18 and 49 living in Gqebera Township\textsuperscript{33}. (These figures are probably inaccurate seeing that they were collected five years ago. They were, however, the only reliable source currently available.)

The study experienced specific research-related problems, most of which are common to doing empirical research in Africa. These problems included the following:

- The lack of adequate knowledge of the Western concepts of HRD and sustainable community development among the participants in the focus groups had the result that some of the participants found it difficult to discuss a few of the issues that were dealt with.

- The actions and behaviors of the participants were not evaluated directly as the researcher relied exclusively on the focus groups as well as the existing literature to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

- The focus groups were conducted in the local language, isiXhosa. After the completion of the focus groups, the information was translated verbatim into English by a person whose first language was isiXhosa. Even though the answers were translated verbatim, there is a chance that something may have been lost in the translation.

\textsuperscript{33} Statistics South Africa, 2001
The issues discussed above point to the need for greater clarity of definitions in order for everyone to have the same understanding of concepts such as HRD and sustainable development.

2.25 Findings

This section states the findings about women, sustainable development, and HRD in the Gqebera community. Each theme is briefly introduced and then followed by a short presentation of specific findings associated with the particular concept.

Theme 1: What is important in order to ensure sustainable community development in Gqebera?

The answers given to this question are represented jointly as follows: Neighbors in the community get together to discuss issues that are bothering them. The healthy and strong people in the community must get together and talk; we must learn from those who are older than us so that the knowledge they have doesn't get lost when they one day die. We must also take the opportunities that we get and work together to ensure that our children can have a better future.

In order for a community to be sustainable, there is a need for strong leadership that promotes health and growth as important factors in developing the community and its people (UNDP, 2003). It became evident from the focus group interviews that the people were eager to see changes in the community. Most African communities have gender-specific roles, and for women to be able to participate fully in the development process, they should be able to determine the most crucial areas where development is needed. This includes determining which knowledge needs to be preserved and carried on to the future generations.
Further exploration elicited the following comments: We must get more youth centers and sports activities and clubs to get the children off the streets and out of crime. We must make sure that the children and youth stay away from crime by giving the alternatives such as sports; young people often have nothing to do, that’s why they are up to no good, turning to crime often out of boredom; but it is difficult to organize the youth and children because there are little resources; so we must find activities for the young that will be fun and entertaining but also educational about the problems we have in the community; this will also prevent many from getting HIV/AIDS and getting pregnant when they are young.

In order to empower people, it is necessary to provide them with the appropriate resources (Potgieter, 1998). In this way, they stand a better chance of create a sustainable environment in their community. HIV and AIDS are no longer only a health problem in Sub-Saharan Africa. The consequences of the pandemic are far-reaching and present challenges for all sectors in society. The social and economic impacts on micro levels, including children and education, are so extensive that they have to be considered on a macro level (UNDP, 2003). Simple answers to this problem do not exist, but at least recognition of its existence is a step towards its solution.

They continued that: It would be great to start drama groups where every one in the community can be involved, both the young and the old; in these drama groups, we can deal with issues that concern us in our daily lives such as HIV and AIDS, crime and poverty; it can be a great way to bond the families and it is both fun and educational at the same time; it will help to develop the community; the community will benefit in the short term and in the long term because we will be dealing with taboo issues in a safe environment. Talking about HIV and AIDS is often considered taboo, and many people do not want to reveal their status. It is therefore important to find alternative methods to reach out to the communities with education about the disease (Hope, 2001).

The HIV and AIDS pandemic have enormous effects on the local community, so finding alternative methods to reach vulnerable segments in the population may prove to be
successful. One of the reasons people are reluctant to talk about HIV and AIDS and their status in particular, is the fear of alienation and of being stigmatized (UNAIDS, 2006).

**Theme 2: What do you understand by sustainable community development?**

Responses to this question can be collectively represented in the following statements:

Getting people involved in taking care of people who are old and sick and those who cannot take care of themselves. Involve the newcomers to the community; this way we will know our neighbors and hopefully take care of one another. It is easier to develop a community where people care about each other and know each other, than to develop a community where people are strangers and don’t really care about each other; in our community it is important to take care of all the people that are affected by HIV/AIDS, and they are many.

There is a very high prevalence of HIV and AIDS in Gqebera, but the resources for those who are sick are limited. Most of the clinics and all of the hospitals are situated outside the township. This makes it hard for many of the very sick to travel for treatment. Group solidarity is an important characteristic in African societies’ social dynamics. It is important to build on that pillar. In many African communities, collective decision-making processes are appreciated and cherished. This is because collective decision-making encourages participation from all the members, agreement, and camaraderie (Jackson, 2004).

Additionally, the respondents stated that: Coming up with ideas that will not cost a lot of money but that will generate knowledge to push through change in attitudes and behavior; it is important that we get the children and young to understand that education is important if they want to have a good future; we must make sure that our children get a better future than what we have now, so it is up to us to make it better.

It is important that the locals within the community play a major role in coming up with ideas because they know what would work. However, there should be a partnership between the local community and external agencies that will play a supplementary role in developing the community (UNDP, 2003). Formal education is very important, but unfortunately there are many children who are not attending even basic education in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP,
2005). Creating an environment where children and adults understand the importance of attending school may prove to be an important step towards sustainable community development. This will further benefit the advancement of HRD, as the population will be better prepared for the labor market.

**Theme 3: In your opinion, what role should women play in developing the community?**

The following answers were given in regard to this question and are presented collectively:

_We are approaching 2010 [Soccer World Cup in South Africa] and it is a big opportunity for people in this country to show the world what we can do; there is no guesthouse or place for visitors to stay in the township so it would be nice to establish a place where we can show tourist and other people how we live and they can stay with us in our community._

Sub-Saharan Africa has an abundance of human resources, and the challenge is to develop those resources (Kraak, 2005). However, there are many individuals who take the initiative to start small projects in order to be able to sustain themselves and their families. Problems occur when these projects fail as a result of lack of resources or bad planning. With the right HRD strategies involving skills development and training, the projects would stand a better chance of being successful and sustainable. In the focus group interviews, it became evident that the participants had ideas for projects they would like to start. However, they were obviously frustrated as they did not know where to find the resources to actually get started. If development is to be successful and if the economy is to benefit, there is a need for support across all sectors in society (UNDP, 2003).

They continued that: _Older women today have skills that younger women do not have; it is important that the younger girls and women learn the skills so that they are not forgotten; women can organize other women into groups as women know what women need; women can get together and open businesses to create a sustainable income for their family; that will benefit the community in the long run._
Learning skills involve more than technical skills and obvious skills like mathematics and science. It is more important that such skills should be tradable. These skills will vary in different communities and societies (Barker, 2003). Many women in the Gqebera community were part of small sewing and beading projects. In such projects women teach each other different skills such as knitting, sewing, cooking traditional African food, beading, and growing a vegetable garden.

A further remark was: It is important to exchange experiences and knowledge to make the community a better place for everyone that live there. It is important that there is communication between people living in a community. It can be considered equally important that there is communication between external agencies and the community. Those in the community have unique experiences and knowledge, and the external resources can contribute different expertise. Joint effort between the stakeholders makes sustainable community development more likely to succeed (Haycock, 2004).

2.26 Conclusion

This part of the article re-examines the results and links them to the HRD and sustainable development literature examined. In addition, it makes recommendations for areas where further research is needed. The overall aim of this research was to uncover the perceptions of women in relation to sustainable development, their access to the labor market, and how women can contribute to their own development and the development of their community. It can be argued that, with the implementation of sound policies and strategies including HRD, women from underprivileged areas in Sub-Saharan Africa stand a better chance of being able to enter the labor market and make a sustainable living. It is also important that women take charge of sustainable community development. They often have valuable and unique information and knowledge of where resources are needed in the community (Haycock, 2004;
Manum, 2006; Meena, n.d). It became evident in the research, however, that there are many challenges in the community. These include poverty, HIV and AIDS, and the existence of street children. Women are often the breadwinners in the family, but often lack recognition for the job they are doing, raising and caring for a family, working full-time, and providing for their families. Women are suffering, perhaps more so than men, because they are seldom given the same opportunities as men to access resources such as training and skills development (Grant, 2005; Mutume, 2001). Unlocking the potential in women by giving them the opportunity to develop skills that are transferable to the labor market will increase the possibility of sustainable economic development in countries where this is desperately needed.

The literature examined for this study indicates that there is a need for extensive research regarding women and sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa and HRD. Most countries in the region are experiencing extreme poverty, corruption, the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and a skills shortage (Johanson and Adams, 2004). In Sub-Saharan Africa, HIV and AIDS have their origin in poverty, and unless and until poverty is reduced, there will be little progress either with reducing transmission of the virus or with coping with the socio-economic consequences. It follows that sustained human development is essential for any effective response to the epidemic in the Sub-Saharan Africa. While HIV and AIDS make sustained human development more and more difficult, and actually add to poverty, they also destroy the human resource capacities essential for an effective response to sustainable development.

The findings from the empirical research provided evidence that there is a need to increase the development of programs that focus on the children in a community. The respondents recommended that emphasizing the development of the young will increase the chances of an improved future. They also voiced their concern about HIV and AIDS in the community. In order to achieve sustainable community development, they pointed out; there was a need for more
resources in Gqebera in terms of taking care of the sick and vulnerable in the community. Findings confirmed that even though people were willing to help, the lack of resources prevented them from being fully able to care for the sick in the community.

Women in the community were to a large extent aware of the importance of skills development and transferring skills to the next generation. This became apparent in the comments such as: *Older women today have skills that younger women do not have and it is important that the younger girls and women learn the skills so that they are not forgotten.* It is important that people are taught skills that are tradable in the labor market, so that they have a chance to ensure a sustainable income.

The empirical research completed for this study stresses the fact that women are fully capable and willing to develop their community in order to achieve sustainable development and a better future. Hence, the implementation of sound HRD strategies and policies in all levels of society can be seen as highly important. Unlocking people’s potential and skills, through training and development, is imperative for the advancement of the economy and ultimately the well-being of the people. The importance of sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa cannot be overestimated.
References


**2.27 Summary of Section 2**

This section has presented four articles on HRD and its importance in the Sub-Saharan African region. The articles have discussed issues such as the nature and importance of HRD in the Sub-Saharan African region; HIV and AIDS; women and sustainable development.
3. Section 3: Conclusion and Recommendations

This research project has focused on human resource development (HRD) and women in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the title of the dissertation is *Facets of Human Resource Development on Building Female Capacity in the African Context: The case of Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth*. The rationale behind the study is based on the need to develop a broader understanding of and a sharper focus on the difficult and complex situations women are facing in society, including difficulty in finding employment, the challenges concerning HIV and AIDS, and the role women play in sustainable development in Africa. The study further focuses on developing an understanding of the efforts made for women to become independent despite difficult social and economic circumstances. The position of many Western women has improved dramatically in the last 50 years, so that there are fewer and fewer limits on what women can do and how they can live. However, there are many other parts of the world where this is not the case, perhaps especially Africa.

Historically, Africa has faced many challenges, and many are still being faced today. The African continent has the most unevenly distributed wealth in the world (UNDP, 2005). In terms of skills and the development of social and human resources, the region provides minimal equality. Other challenges that Sub-Saharan Africa needs to address include gender inequality in the labor force, and closing the existing enormous socio-economic gap, which is increasing rather than declining (Cunningham *et al.*, 2006). However, regardless of the challenges that the region may be facing, it has an abundance of human resources and great potential for development.
Investing in and developing skills is at the heart of HRD (Walton, 1999). Marquardt and Berger (2003, pp. 283-284) note that HRD can play an important role in the following areas globally:

(a) political development;
(b) economic development;
(c) organizational and workplace learning;
(d) education and vocational training;
(e) global leadership development;
(f) technology and knowledge;
(g) environment sustainability.

The emphasis on HRD on a community level and on an individual level can be regarded as being as important as developing people on an organizational level. HRD is a field that has been dominated by Western theories. What Sub-Saharan Africa needs is to develop theories based on the cultures and needs of its countries, according to what stages of development the various countries find themselves in. It is not sufficient to develop theories: they must also be put into practice. Both empirical and secondary research has been conducted for this dissertation, and the researcher has recognized that there are many challenges that face the region. She also acknowledges the profusion of opportunities that could be realized by approaching HRD in the African way.

Ideally, social development is aimed at the improvement of human conditions in totality. Human development is about putting people first, by bringing their needs, aspirations,
choices to the center of development efforts. Human development can be expressed as a process of enlarging people's choices.

3.1 The need to Africanize HRD theory

As discussed in this dissertation, historically, Africa has faced many challenges, and many of these challenges are still being faced today. Today, Africa has the most unevenly distributed wealth in the world (UNDP, 2005). Other challenges that the African continent needs to address include gender inequality in the labor force and closing the socioeconomic gap, which is increasing rather than declining (Cunningham et al., 2006). Additionally, the continent can expect an AIDS epidemic in the near future, with severe consequences if this is not addressed and dealt with promptly and efficiently on governmental levels in the different countries.

However, regardless of the challenges that the region may be facing, there are many opportunities in Africa. HRD is a field that is dominated by Western theories. What Sub-Saharan Africa needs is to develop theories based on the cultures and needs of its countries, according to what stages of development the various countries find themselves. It is not sufficient to develop theories: they must also be put into practice. While this dissertation has recognized that there are many challenges that face the region, it has also acknowledged the profusion of opportunities that could be realized by approaching HRD in the African way.

Investing in and developing skills is at the heart of HRD (Walton, 1999). In order to create a productive workforce, Finnemore (2002) states that there is an urgent need for individuals to be able to access education and training as well as other basic commodities such as health care. This is important, seeing that Africa is experiencing an HIV and AIDS pandemic, and without a healthy population to educate and train, development in general becomes a daunting task. The African continent is experiencing a shortage of skilled workers but has an abundance of human resources (Johanson and Adams, 2004). Recognizing and promoting the importance of
sustainable HRD strategies in Africa can be considered to be a sound way in which to deal with the skills crisis in the region.

An understanding of diversity and the African way of dealing with different issues is essential in order to identify the equity and equality aspects of HRD. Africa must create strategies and policies in which African philosophy such as *Ubuntu* is integrated into the development processes at all levels of society. Implementing this will not only help the region become sustainable in terms of labor, but will also help preserve the cultures and beliefs of the region. The aim for Africa should be to create systems in which people are invested, with fair and equal access to education, health care, and the labor market within each country (Johanson and Adams, 2004).

When compared to previous generations, people who are born and grow up in developing countries today can expect to be better educated and stand a better chance of being part of the formal economy. Furthermore, there is a greater chance for people to live in democracies, and they are less likely to be affected by conflict than in the past. Human development is about freedom, and it is about building human capacities (UNDP, 2005). That being said, there is a long way to go for Africa to achieve total equality in terms of labor, resources, and opportunities. Consequently, the future of HRD in Sub-Saharan Africa will depend on different aspects, including those of being able to manage diversity and generate a skilled labor pool. Seeing that the African continent is a highly diverse region with many issues to tackle, it is clear that the advancement of HRD is extremely important.

HRD in Africa is in the starting phase. As discussed, it is important that HRD in this part of the world is allowed to develop in terms of where areas where development is needed. This includes addressing issues raised in this dissertation, namely skills shortage, HIV and AIDS,
women, sustainable development. The field of HRD can benefit greatly from further examination and research into the social dynamics and uniqueness of the region. Moreover, further investigation into the individual countries’ national HRD policies and strategies will give an indication of just how diverse the region is.

3.1.1 Findings

The research conducted for article 1: Human Resource Development in Sub-Saharan Africa did not include any empirical investigations. For the purpose of this article, a wide variety of literature was researched. Literature consulted included key texts on HRD, African management theories, sociology, African philosophy, and anthropology.

Findings made it evident that even though there are such things as African management theories and they are being practiced to some extent, they differ from country to country and even from community to community. It is important to remember that Africa is a vast continent and that the continent consists of many different cultures and countries. It became apparent from the secondary research that in order for development to be sustainable and HRD to work effectively, it is essential not to generalize when deciding on which approaches to take.

3.2 HIV and AIDS

HIV and AIDS can be argued to be one of the greatest challenges to HRD Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa. Now more than ever, there is an increasing need to manage the devastating effects that the pandemic has on individuals, society, the labor market, and ultimately the economy. The consequences of the pandemic are far-reaching and present challenges for all sectors in society. The social and economic impacts on micro levels, including children and education, are so extensive that they have to be considered on a macro
level (UNDP, 2003). There are no easy solutions or answers on how to approach the HIV and AIDS pandemic in a social economic aspect, but recognizing that there are challenges to overcome is a step in the right direction.

HIV and AIDS are very different from other diseases that mainly affect elderly people and the weak in society. HIV and AIDS hit people in the prime of their life, when they are supposed to be active in the labor market and take care of children. The disease leaves millions too sick and weak to work and sustain their children and families. The disease is not discriminating; it affects rich and poor, white and black. It does not only affect those who are physically living with the disease; it also affects families, communities, and entire economies. However, its impact is greater on the poor and those without power and resources. Women in particular are hard hit by HIV and AIDS. Biologically, women are at higher risk than men to contract the HIV virus (UNAIDS, 2006). In Africa, women are often considered inferior to men, leaving them vulnerable, and increasing the probability of not getting tested and getting treatment. What is more, women are often left to care for sick relatives and community members, which will eventually have an impact on their ability to hold a job with their increasing responsibility as caretakers (Manum, 2006). Dossier (2004) notes that in Sub-Saharan Africa, HIV and AIDS have greater initial impact on the poor and their reduced health has a vast impact on development at both national and international levels.

Many communities and societies in Africa are experiencing extreme poverty, HIV and AIDS, and a skills shortage. Consequently, women are suffering, perhaps more so than men, as they are often not given the same opportunities as men to access resources such as training and skills development (Johanson and Adams, 2004; Grant, 2005; Mutume, 2001). The researcher argues that in order for Africa to be able to combat the consequences of the HIV
and AIDS pandemic, more emphasis needs to put on education and knowledge of the realities of the disease. Further, this will be best achieved with the help from those who best know the social structures and what problems need to be addressed, namely those who live in the communities.

Women are capable and willing to develop themselves and their community if they are given the appropriate resources to deal with the problems they are facing. Hence, the implementation of sound HRD strategies and policies closely tied to HIV and AIDS policies and strategies in all levels of society can be seen as highly important in a situation where unlocking people’s potential and skills through training and development is imperative for the advancement of the economy and ultimately the well-being and health of people.

3.2.1 Findings

The empirical investigation for this part of the research project was concerned with HIV and AIDS, and women and HRD in Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth. The participants in the focus groups were asked to discuss different themes concerning HIV/AIDS in the labor market and in their community, and how HIV and AIDS affect them as women. All of the women participating in the study were affected by HIV and AIDS, either directly or indirectly. The participants were asked the following questions:

(1) **Do you think people are being discriminated against in the labor market because of**

   (a) their gender?

   (b) their HIV and AIDS status?

(2) **What resources do you have in Gqebera regarding HIV and AIDS?**

(3) **What impact does health have on community development in Gqebera?**
The respondents stated that there was still discrimination in the labor market and in society at large both towards women and towards people who were open about their HIV status. One respondent acknowledged: *because of the ignorance there is discrimination.* However, they were optimistic about the future, saying that there had been more discrimination in the past, and that women were increasingly becoming more involved in the formal economy and labor market. Manum (2006) supports this point by stating that women are in the process of redefining their place in society and in the labor market, a sphere that was previously been largely dominated by men.

People are being discriminated against because of their HIV and AIDS status. One of the participants made the statement: *people are afraid to reveal their status to the employer because they are afraid to lose their job.* This sentiment was shared by most of the participants. This is an indication of how much work needs to be done to reduce the stigma surrounding the realities of living with HIV and AIDS. Any work dealing with the HIV and AIDS stigma needs to come from the community. Findings indicate that there is a need for community outreach and educating people in a community about HIV and AIDS, the stigma linked to it, and the effects the stigma has on the people who are affected by it. Stigmatization often results in the exclusion of people who are HIV-positive and their families (Deacon, 2005).

Regarding the resources in Gqebera concerning HIV and AIDS, it became evident that there were too few resources available or easily accessible to the people in the community. They often had to travel long distances, and as one respondent put it, *some people are too sick to be able to make it to the clinics and hospitals.* There is an urgent need for better facilities for people living with HIV and AIDS and those affected by it in the Township community. The respondents were also eager to start support groups in the Township where women affected by HIV and AIDS could support and help each other close to home. Many of the respondents also
expressed a desire to start skills development groups where basic skills would be taught to women and young girls. One of the participants stated that the best would be a group that works on empowering women in order for them to create a sustainable income. Poverty and poor health dominate in Gqebera Township, and the participants agreed that women have the capacity to care for people in the community as well as being active in the labor market. HIV and AIDS are linked to poverty in Africa, and it is highly important to improve the health and well-being of disadvantaged communities such as Gqebera Township.

3.3 Women

It was made evident from the empirical study and from the literature consulted that even though women have come a long way and are increasingly entering the formal economy, there are still many challenges to be faced. Women very often find themselves in a society where men are considered to be the stronger sex, and women still depend on men to a large extent. Regardless of their dependency on men, however, women in Africa are strong and resourceful and are fully capable of facing the challenges that confront them (Johanson and Adams, 2004; Haycock, 2004; Manum, 2006). Women are typically the breadwinners in the family in Africa, but they very often lack recognition for the job they are doing, caring for their family and working full-time.

The literature consulted for this particular study indicates that there is a need for extensive research regarding women in Africa and HRD. Women are often being overlooked, and if HRD is to be successful, the development of women needs to be paid careful attention. This was also made evident through the empirical research. Women are often neglected regarding opportunities in training and development in the Sub-Saharan African region (Barker, 2003).
Women have to be included in decision-making processes concerning development of women in the communities more than they have been in the past.

The goal of feminism is not to advance women in order to suppress men. Feminism is striving towards a society where all citizens, regardless of gender and color, have the same opportunities (Hooks, 2000; Manzano, 1999). The African continent experiences extreme poverty, corruption, an HIV and AIDS pandemic, and a skills shortage (Johanson and Adams, 2004). As a result of this, women are suffering, often more so than men, as women are often not given the same opportunities as men to access resources such as training and skills development (Grant, 2005; Mutume, 2001). Unlocking the potential in women and giving them the opportunity to develop skills that are transferable to the labor market will increase the possibility of sustainable economic development in countries where this is so desperately needed.

Research conducted for this study indicates that women are fully capable and willing to develop themselves and their community, given the appropriate resources. Implementation of sound HRD strategies and policies in all levels of society is a way of unlocking people's potential and skills through training and development, and hence can be seen as imperative for the advancement of the economy and ultimately the well-being of people in the communities.

3.3.1 Findings

The empirical investigation for this part of the research project dealt with women and HRD in Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth. The participants in the focus groups were asked to discuss different themes concerning women in the labor market and in their community. The participants were asked to discuss the following themes:
(1) **The role of women in the South African society today**

(2) **The advancement of women in the labor market and in society**

(3) **What could be done differently in terms of developing women in the labor market?**

It became evident that the participants welcomed the changes in the South African society concerning the empowerment of women in the labor market and in the society in general. However, both the empirical studies and the literature review made it clear that there are still many challenges to be faced for women in many societies.

Each of the women who participated in the focus groups had different roles as woman in the Gqebera Township community. They were mothers, wives, daughters, grandmothers, neighbors, friends, and workers as well as job seekers. Regardless of the role they played in the community, they had one thing in common: the desire to develop Gqebera in a sustainable manner, so that their children and grandchildren could grow up in a safe and healthy environment. One participant stated that **women must take care of their family so that the entire community can benefit** which is an indication of what role the women wished to play in the development of their community. Women in the community were inspired by those who advanced in the labor market and got good jobs. They are also aware that they have the power to change their position in society. However, the lack of access to resources such as access to education and skills and training programs often prevent women from advancing in the labor market and consequently in society.

The social dynamics in most African societies have as a feature that they are collectivistic in their orientation and they have very specific gender roles, hence the development and the benefit of the community as a whole is, more often than not, more important than the individual benefit (Hofstede, 1980; Shutte, 1993). Many women in South Africa are still to a large extent bound by traditional gender roles where females are considered inferior to men.
Regarding the advancement of women in the labor market and in society in general, the respondents remarked that women are as capable as men to enter any profession they desire. One of the respondents stated that *we must not wait for men to do something for us, but we must do it ourselves.* This indicates that women are willing to take charge of and responsibility for their own destiny. The participants in the study had a strong desire to increase their contribution to their families and to the community by opening up small businesses and starting projects in order to be able to generate an income.

In all the focus groups, the participants discussed the possibility of starting projects for unemployed women. The project would involve teaching each other skills such as knitting, beading, and other forms of handicraft. They were of the opinion that the skills learned in the various projects could be transferred to the labor market. It was noted that the projects, in addition to possibly being a source of sustainable income for unemployed women, would create a social network for women, an important factor in African community life.

### 3.4 Sustainable community development

The overall aim of this part of the research was to uncover the perceptions of women in relation to sustainable development, and how women could contribute to their own development and the development of their community. The impact of HRD as a tool for advancing sustainable development was also investigated. Although improved health and education are ends in themselves, healthy and educated human beings are also the principal means of achieving development in any society.

The implementation of sound policies and strategies including HRD would increase the chances of women from underprivileged areas in Africa to stand a better chance of being able to enter the labor market and make a sustainable living. It is also important that women be able
to participate in sustainable community development. They often have valuable and unique information and knowledge of where resources are needed in the community (Haycock, 2004; Manum, 2006; Meena, n.d.). By unlocking the potential in women and by giving them the opportunity to develop skills that are transferable to the labor market, the possibility of sustainable economic development in countries where this is desperately needed will be increased. A way to ensure development is to take more young people through learnerships so they can gain skills and work experience in order for them to access jobs.

The literature examined for this study indicates that there is a need for extensive research regarding women and sustainable development in Africa and HRD in the region. Most countries in Africa are experiencing extreme poverty, corruption, the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and a skills shortage (Johanson and Adams, 2004). If HIV and AIDS in Africa are not addressed properly, and unless poverty is reduced, there will be little progress in reducing the high rates of transmission of the virus or coping with the socio-economic consequences that are unfolding. It follows that sustained human development is essential for any effective response to the epidemic in Africa. It is not only HIV and AIDS that makes sustained human development on the continent increasingly difficult. The challenges Africa is facing in terms of sustainable development also include extreme poverty, hunger, unstable political regimes, and corruption. All these issues must be addressed and dealt with in order for the continent to develop and to avoid destroying the human resource capacities essential for an effective response to sustainable development.

3.4.1 Findings

The empirical investigation for this part of the research project dealt with women's participation in sustainable community development and HRD in Gqebera Township, Port Elizabeth.
participants in the focus groups were asked to discuss different themes concerning women in the labor market and in their community. The participants were asked to discuss the following themes:

(1) What is important in order to ensure sustainable community development in Gqebera? (2) What do you understand by sustainable community development? (3) In your opinion, what role should women play in developing the community?

Women in the community were to a large extent aware of the importance of skills development and transferring skills to the next generation. This became apparent in the comments such as older women today have skills that younger women do not have and it is important that the younger girls and women learn the skills so that they are not forgotten. It is important that people are taught skills that are tradable in the labor market so that they have a chance to ensure a sustainable income.

The participants put much emphasis on the importance of children when discussing issues of sustainable community development. It was emphasized that the development of young people in the community would increase the chances of an improved future. The respondents also voiced their concern about HIV and AIDS in the community. As an increasing number of people became aware of the nature and consequences of HIV and AIDS, the participants indicated that in order to achieve sustainable community development, people in the community must be willing to get together and help, because the lack of resources often prevented them from being fully able to care for the sick alone.

The women stated that in order for the community to have sustainable development, strong leadership was needed. One participant expressed this as follows: the healthy and strong people in the community must get together and talk. It became evident that even though communities in Africa
tend to have very strict and specific gender roles, women want to help advance and develop their communities, and they should be considered as very important stakeholders because they are good sources of knowledge about where development is crucial.

As mentioned, the participants considered children and young people to be crucial in the development of a sustainable future in the community. One of the comments on this subject was *we must make sure that the children and youth stay away from crime by giving them alternatives.* Making sure that children have access to activities in the community such as sports and youth centers is a step towards getting children off the street and away from crime. Education can also be considered to be one of the most important steps toward a sustainable future. Ensuring a proper education would be the foundation for development, not only for the individual, but also for the community, and eventually for the economy.

There was clearly a desire to involve the young people in the community in educational programs dealing with issues such as HIV and AIDS and crime prevention, because *there are little resources.* With an increase in resources allocated to educational programs directed towards the youth, sustainable community development stands a better chance of being successful in African communities. The participants also raised their concern concerning the increase in HIV and AIDS transmission. There are no easy solutions, but acknowledging that there is a problem in the community is a step in the right direction.

In relation to what the participants understood by the concept of sustainable development, the answers included taking care of the sick in the community and involving everyone in the community in the decision-making processes. As stated by one participant, it *is easier to develop a community where people care about each other and know each other, than to develop a community where people are strangers.* As collectivism is prominent in most African societies, taking care of people in the community is considered a way to sustainable development.
Again the issue of dealing with HIV and AIDS was discussed, and many raised their concern about contracting the virus and falling ill. This is a worry for people in the Gqebera Township seeing that there are limited resources in the community to accommodate and care for those who fall ill.

In response to the third theme discussed in the focus groups about what role women should play in community development, the women stated that they would like to play a major role in the development of their community. As South Africa has been chosen to host the 2010 soccer World Cup, the women saw this as a big chance to create job opportunities that could provide them with a sustainable income. One participant expressed her enthusiasm by stating that it would be nice to establish a place where we can show tourists and other people how we live and they can stay with us in our community. This could be a great opportunity for job creation in the region, and this could be seen as an opportunity to develop skills not only for 2010, but sustainable skills that would increase the chance of developing the community.

The participants agreed that skills development and training are important, but that it is equally important that the skills are tradable in the labor market. Learning skills that they can sell, such as knitting, sewing, cooking traditional African food, beading, and growing a vegetable garden can be seen as important in an African community. The participants were all concerned about the future, but at the same they showed great optimism, and they hoped that they could be able to contribute to make the community a better place for everyone that lives there. It is important that there is communication between people living in the community. It is equally important that there is communication between the external agencies and the community. Those in the community have unique experiences and knowledge, and the external resources can contribute with different expertise. Joint effort between the stakeholders would make sustainable community development more likely to succeed (Haycock, 2004).
3.5 Recommendations

Africa as a continent is facing numerous developmental challenges. These challenges include poverty, corruption, unstable political systems, and HIV and AIDS. It is the researcher’s opinion that in order to be able to deal with these challenges and create sustainable development in Africa, an increased focus on the effectiveness of and participation in the educational system is needed. In order to avoid skills migration, or brain drain, where skilled workers leave the region in search for better employment opportunities, there is a need to create a skilled labor pool and a stable labor market. This is important in order to reduce skills migration and create economic stability.

Africa’s history of being colonized has in many ways left the continent in a vacuum in terms of development. The perception has been and still is that Africa must be saved. In fact, as has been argued in Article 1 of this dissertation, it can be argued that Africa itself to a large extent has the keys to unlocking the human development challenges that the continent is currently facing. There is an abundance of human resources in Africa, and in order to be able to play an active part in the world economy and ensure sustainable human development, it is recommended that sound HRD strategies be put into place.

The researcher is of the opinion that it is important that the strategies and policies honor the African cultures and beliefs. At the same time, it is necessary to allow for assistance from outside. This might prove to be a difficult balancing act for strategy and policy makers; however, the way forward for Africa is finding a way out of the dependence on help from the rest of the world and onto a path where development is accomplished by increasing the participation of local people in decision-making processes at all levels of society.
3.6 Further research

The following suggestions are made for further research based on insightful findings derived from empirical data collected and literature examined.

- In the past, the field of HRD has not been overly concerned with issues relating to diversity, equality, discrimination, or sexism, as noted by Bierema and Cseh (2003). They suggest that seeing the world from a female point of view honors women on all levels of society. They note that a feminist is an individual who works towards equal economic, social, and political opportunity for both females and males. (Bierema and Cseh, 2003). Hence, being a feminist does not mean devaluing or rejecting men, but rather striving for the betterment of society in general (Bierema, 2002).

- HRD in Africa has scarcely been explored in HRD literature. The socio-economic realities of the continent that have been discussed in this dissertation make Africa different from the rest of the world. Extended research into the possibility of improving the lives of people and reversing the negative trends including that of HIV and AIDS, women’s participation in the formal economy, and sustainable development, should be central issues dealt with in future research on African HRD.

- It is recommended that further research be carried out in the area of African philosophy as an integrated process into development in society. Most of the HRD theory and strategies originate in the West, and in particular North-America. However, it is imperative as a part of achieving sustainable development in Africa that more research is conducted into the systems in which people are invested, as well as being able to preserve the unique cultures and beliefs of the continent.
Through conducting empirical research and investigating existing literature across various academic fields and in particular that of HRD, for the purpose of writing this dissertation, the author has gained an understanding of how important the implementation of sound HRD policies and strategies on the African continent is. There is no easy fix for all the problems and challenges that the African continent is facing, but with time and determination, Africa has the chance to prosper and to unlock its greatest resource, its people.
References


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34 References are included in each of the individual articles (Section 2) and the references for the rest of the dissertation (Section 1 and Section 3) are at the end.


Appendix 1 Themes for Focus Groups

Themes for focus groups

Theme 1: HIV and AIDS

1. Do you think people are being discriminated against in the labor market because:
   c. their gender?
   d. their HIV and AIDS status?

2. What resources do you have in Gqebera regarding HIV and AIDS?

3. What impact does health have on community development in Gqebera?

Theme 2: Women

1. What is the role of women in South Africa today?

2. How can women advance in the South African society?

3. What, in your opinion could be done differently in terms of women in the labor market?

Theme 3: Sustainable development
1. What is important in order to achieve sustainable community development in your community?

2. What do you understand by community development?

3. In your opinion, what role should women play in developing the community?