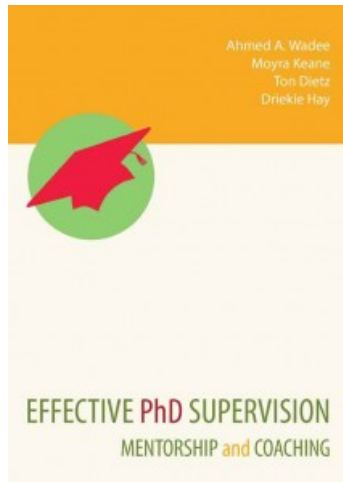# Effective PhD Supervision – Chapter Four – Coaching: Charting your own Path

4.1 Introduction

The PhD researcher is immersed in a *'writing-centred pedagogy'* that requires critique and encouragement from experienced researchers. While writing is central to the research process, so is thinking, imagining and relating. The learning and teaching strategies needed in supervision are varied and complex – even *'chaotic'*! These supervision interactions ideally stretch and support the PhD researcher, whilst enriching and expanding the world of the supervisor. Painted with such broad brush strokes the enterprise promises colour and boldness – but it also requires finesse, detailed attention and precision of focus.

An interesting parallel to the qualities needed in the research journey are those needed by accomplished scientists. Fensham, in interviews with leading scientists in China, distinguishes the characteristics needed to succeed in both independent research and in science. These include (in order of priority): creativity, personal interest in the topic, perseverance, desire to inquire, ability to communicate, social concern and team spirit. It is particularly these qualities, on the one hand, that mentoring and coaching focus on. Supervision, on the other hand, takes greater responsibility for the formal managing of the degree process, quality checking and teaching. Whilst workshops and programmes for PhD students usually provide formal training in the academic content towards thesis production, mentoring and coaching fosters qualities essential in a scientist,

researcher and intellectual. A holistic approach takes into account the complexity of a large research project.

The diagram below shows the contrasting features of supervision, coaching and mentoring. Note that the student is placed at the centre – appropriate to a student-centred pedagogy.

Note: Neither mentoring nor coaching (nor indeed supervision) touches on therapy; neither deals with pathology, psychological analysis, nor with trauma counselling. It is of course, essential to be able to refer students to appropriate professionals should serious problems arise.
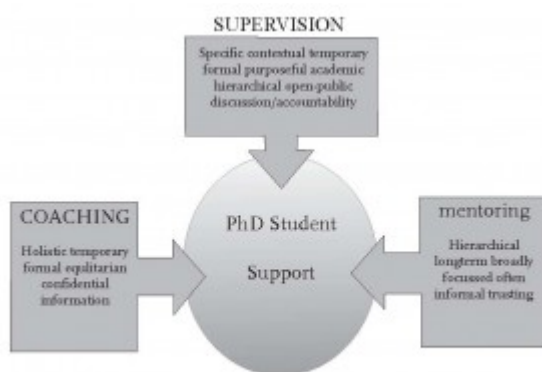

Figure 4.1 Linking and Comparing Supervision, Mentoring and Coaching

Figure 4.1 Linking and Comparing Supervision, Mentoring and Coaching

If I need a 'how-to' book – should I be doing a PhD?

By definition a PhD thesis is a unique and original piece of work. PhD students are guided, obviously, but must eventually chart their own path. After some time the emerging experts need to find their own voice, make their own decisions, be prepared to take risks, extend the conventions and eventually outgrow their supervisors. At this point of independence the map for a student becomes vague or the GPS that has been so trusty can only intone 'recalculating, recalculating'. There is a limit to the use of a road map in work that charts new landscapes. This is a developing paradox that students and supervisors face; and the same is true for 'Advice books'.

Furthermore, the implication of a *'how-to'* approach is that there is 'a step-by-step' way to advance; yet a thesis does not proceed in a linear path (Kamler and Thomson, 2008). It can be more like a labyrinth. The illusion in seeing a bound

and finished product is that there is somehow a neat and clear progression from the abstract, introduction, purpose, context, research questions, methodology, data, findings and conclusions. We know there are some (often frustrating) administration processes, ethics clearances, literature reviews, proposal revisions, data collection and *'write-up'*: but not neatly in that order. This is not usually, how it works. The research project exists within a context of equipment, finances, appointments, supervisors, weather, travel, politics, change and surprises. Just as research itself takes place within a context, the PhD researcher is in a particular context of life, work, family, colleagues, interests, distractions and constraints. There is also all the invisible processes of thinking, planning, assuming, rethinking, prewriting, journaling, mind-mapping, discussing, despairing, changing direction, learning and changing as a person.

It is probably axiomatic that a supervisor and a mentor play a vital role in the process of producing a thesis and a specialist academic. However, the process is often stressful and, in spite of the guidance from supervisors, many students do not make it. The higher education participation rate for South Africa is a low 15%. Although the rate for other sub-Saharan countries is 5%, Latin America has a substantially better rate at 31%. The average participation rate for North America and Western Europe is 70%. With our low numbers entering postgraduate studies, we need to do all we can to nurture our postgraduate students who have often struggled to reach their level of education and often represent the survivors of a tough system. In South Africa we have 27 PhDs per million of the population compared to 42 in Brazil, and 240 in Australia. Reports indicate that up to 50% of

PhD students in the UK and the USA drop out[4], and in South Africa that number is even higher. PhD students who take a long time to complete put a strain on a system that lacks supervision expertise.

There is some emerging evidence that coaching can be effective for supervisors, students and for both together (i.e., the relationship).[10]

Possible reasons for the effectiveness of coaching are that a coach addresses the whole situation and the whole person. As Kamler and Thomson[1] observe:

'... the simultaneous fears and reassurances experienced by doctoral researchers are constructed within wider cultural and institutional processes, not simply in advisory relationships'. (p.512)

In a co-active coaching relationship there is equality between the student researcher (in this case) and the coach. The thesis writing provides an opportunity for self-reflection and personal – not just academic – growth. The coach encourages this broader development. The student may open up to a *'neutral'* listener who can provide a new perspective on what may be happening. The coach champions the goals of the student, keeps these goals accountable to the goal's own norms along the way and keeps the goals moving.

In one PhD programme where coaching was included the following features of coaching emerged as critical:

– Providing a neutral environment and an unbiased listener

– Allowing the voicing of taboo subjects (e.g., work relationships/insecurities)

– Acknowledging the student's aims and ambitions – as well as vulnerability

– Goal setting (for motivation and tracking)

– Strengthening of desirable personal attributes

– Tracking progress and promoting accountability

– Refining self-awareness and reflection.

Outcomes of this PhD coaching programme included developing courage to confront, self-examination, awareness of personal goals, assertiveness and the resolution of boundary issues by taking increased personal responsibility.

The role of the coach is to provide a space conducive for reflection, connection, creativity and action. The dimensions a coach pays attention to are similar to those of a creative organisation (Prather and Gundry, 1995, in Palmer, 2002: 16.). These are:

– Challenge and involvement

– Freedom

– Idea time

– Idea support

– Conflict

– Debates

– Humour and playfulness

– Trust and openness

– Risk taking.

Some of these dimensions are present in coaching and mentoring; some of the outcomes of the PhD programme mentioned above may be achieved in a supervisor and mentor relationship. So what is coaching then?

4.1 What is Coaching?

It has been the task of science to discover that things are very different from what they seem.

Coaching is about discovering and walking different paths. It is a process, formally set up to help student researchers clarify their life purpose, values and goals, and to help them attain these goals in a creative and conscious way. Coaching is not about diagnosis or pathology. Coaching assumes the student researcher to be capable and creative. A coach asks: *'What's happening now?'* and *'What next?'* – rather than: *'Why?'* A coach works with pressing external issues and personal or team goals. A coaching session is forward-looking and promotes action, aims at helping the student researcher to reach his/her potential and overcome obstacles, looks at the student's life as a whole rather than the thesis process only, and seeks to deepen awareness of patterns and provides a reflective space. Coaching provides a meta-level of assistance at developing skills of organisation, innovation and reflection. An introductory coaching conversation may sound like this:

Conversation:

Coach: *Coaching is not like supervision or mentoring; you need to come up with your own answers.*

Student: (Looks perplexed!)

Coach: *I will guide you with direct questions and help you clarify your goals. I will*

also push you to action and hold you accountable.

Student: *I don't know…*

Coach: *Well, what will coming up with your own answers give you?*

4.1.2 Coaching in the context of PhD supervision

The coaching orientation here is directed towards a novice coach, supervisor or mentor wishing to coach a PhD student. Of course, a supervisor could also benefit greatly by having his or her own professional coach. Coaching first gained popularity in executive training and can be adapted for many situations.

Now, just as a supervisor needs specialist expertise, so does a coach; perhaps even more so than does a mentor. An ideal option is for a supervisor or PhD student to have a qualified coach. Such a model is being trialled to a limited extent at some universities. SANPAD is piloting the introduction of coaching for supervisors and students in parallel with mentoring (see Chapter 5).

Although a coach requires specialist training, and the coaching situation is usually a formal arrangement, there are principles of coaching that may be brought in to both supervision and mentoring, or which a student may use alone. This chapter contains an outline of some of these principles and includes exercises. The case studies of Su, Pieter and Thandi illustrate some coaching conversations with PhD students. Also included is a section, *Coaching Pathways*, to provide a sample overview of what a number of PhD Coaching sessions might look like.

4.2 Aspects of Coaching

4.2.1 Being a coach

Good research should contribute to your development as a mindful person, and your development as an aware and reflective individual should be embodied in your research.

A coach brings deliberate attitudes or meta-perspectives to coaching. Much of the time we show up in a situation, relationship or event in whatever state our internal climate has already dictated. Occasionally we mask these moods by 'putting on a brave face', or by playing a professional role, but we seldom

consciously think of the quality we would like to contribute or bring to a meeting or function. It can make a surprising impact to go into a presentation or coaching session intending to bring a particular quality such as clarity, joy, humour or calm. This is not an artificial or manufactured mask but an authentic expression of one's being. The suggestion here is *'Try it'*.

Of course, presenters and leaders often do this instinctively. In a late afternoon session of a long day a facilitator may intentionally try to brighten the atmosphere or create more energy.

The skills of coaching include: listening, intuition, awareness, reflecting back (rephrasing, rewording or mirroring a situation), staying focussed, discovering and reminding the PhD researcher of his values, acknowledging the PhD researcher's qualities, and linking the current direction to his life-purpose. **Unlike a supervisor or mentor, a coach's own experience or story is irrelevant**. A coach needs to restrain herself from telling stories from her own life, from offering advice, or from directing the action of the student researcher. This could be clearly quite a challenge and is not our usual way of interacting. However, in this lies the power of coaching and the empowerment of the student. Yet, coaching is not mechanistic. While the coach is not likely to offer advice, she may offer intuitive insights – or even guesses about the situation!

4.2.2   Designing the coaching relationship

'How should we do this?' 'What do you need from me?' 'What can I count on from you?' 'How will this relationship work best?' 'Let's discuss and negotiate our needs and wishes, given all the practical constraints here.'

More so than supervision or mentoring, a cornerstone of coaching is confidentiality of discussions. It is also a negotiated and designed relationship. A coach may ask for example: *'How do you want me to be when you procrastinate?'* or *'What do you need from this coaching relationship?'*

Su unequivocally told me: *'Nag me! Nag as much as possible: I need that.'* Pieter on the other hand said: *'I need you to be understanding – I have enough people yelling at me.'* It would probably be unusual for a supervisor to ask a student *'How would you like me to supervise you?'* Yet Thandi, in our second coaching session, said: *'Actually I need you to be straight with me: please point out my blind spots. I can take it.'* She also added: *'I need definite structure. I would like*

to set up all our meetings for six months, and have you keep me to strict timelines. I need help with organisation.' As a coach, I need the student researcher to keep appointments, to be real, and to give feedback about how the sessions are going. Coaching sessions address the meta-level of the process as well as the fine details of lining up the trucks. We spend time talking about how we want this relationship to work. We also set up logistics and timeframes.

4.2.3   Paying attention to the creation of a vision

'- ah, to imagine is to experience the world as it isn't and has never been, but as it might be.'

Being able to create a vision is a uniquely human capacity. According to Gilbert, however, there is confusion around this. People tend to believe that they have control over uncontrollable events and yet sometimes back away from intervening where they *do* have control over outcomes, or at least a reasonable chance of influencing events. Gilbert sites various studies that show how gamblers are more convinced of their chances of winning if they can chose their own lottery numbers. I do that too – even while I recognise my foolishness! Yet when I put in a funding grant application, I imagine the chances of success have little to do with me. In his chapter entitled 'The Joy of Next', Gilbert claims: *'The greatest achievement of the human brain is its ability to imagine objects and episodes that do not exist in the realm of the real...'* and *'...the human brain is an "anticipation machine"'.* Of course it is obvious how handy this skill is in designing research, but it is also to be exploited in encouraging research students' to see themselves as expert academics and devise steps to get there. However, coaching is not mechanistic; a coach looks out for opportunities to change direction, to transition, and looks for outcomes, but is not attached to particular destinations if circumstances change.

An important part of assisting a student researcher to create a vision is that the vision is unique and personal and ties in with the individual's values. For one student the research process may need to be conceived of as exciting and adventurous, and include making a difference to political transformation. For another, it might embody values of order, safety and thoroughness. By bringing in personal values and exploring what these might mean in the process, in supervision, in writing and in the establishing of an academic identity, the student's energy and motivation are enhanced. Tools for facilitating this are

included in the following sections.

4.2.4   Perspective: We can choose how we see things

You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself

Any direction you choose.

Of course, we would rather have a sea-view suite than a room in the basement. We would rather our studies were a walk in the park, a piece of cake, a blast! – rather than an up-hill struggle, a battle, a never-ending story or a wandering in the wilderness. By changing our metaphors and our cup half-full or half-empty tendencies we can change our degree of enthusiasm to keep on task. Well, if it was as easy as this, we would all always be energetic and motivated. We know that it is not. A coach can help to offer different ways of seeing a situation and help the student researcher to get in touch with what resonates with an inner agenda or personal life goal. Questions a coach might well ask are:

'What is the landscape of your life right now?' 'In what ways does your research feature on this landscape?'

This results in exploring in a focussed yet open-ended way so as to establish a clearer picture of what is going on.

Another perspective conversation might go like this:

Coach: *'If your PhD research were a landscape, what would it be?'*

Student: *'An airport: O.R. Thambo airport!'*

Coach: *'Tell me about that.'*

Student: *'It's a place I know well – but I still get lost there. As I approach, I am filled with anxiety. There are parts that I know and then all the activity, changes, overload of information.'*

Coach: *'It sounds like an overwhelming place. Does it also hold some excitement?'*

Student: *'Yes. It means I am going somewhere. It is a vibey place!'*

Coach: *'In what ways are you "going somewhere" in your research?'*

Student: *'Hmmm ...Well, no-one's done what I'm doing. I don't know where it will end up. That's exciting'*

... ...

The conversation might well follow this metaphor for a while, exploring characteristics and how this relates to research study. The end of the session almost always should lead either to a commitment to action on the part of the student researcher or, otherwise, to an inquiry.

4.2.5   Moving forward

– Action: Definite steps are set – often by the student. The coach will ask for feedback/ confirmation that the task is done (an email, SMS or report back at the next session).

– Homework reflections: these are inquiry questions designed by the coach to promote self-awareness in the student, for example,

Inquiries:

– What is keeping me going?

– What am I saying 'yes' to?

– What does it mean to excel?

– Where am I stuck?

– What kind of an academic am I?

Having considered these as a reflection exercise, the student would report on what came up and how this is significant for moving the work forward.

4.2.6   Centredness and focus

Admitting that we do not know and maintaining perpetually the attitude that we do not know the direction necessarily to go permit(s) a possibility of alteration, of

thinking, of new contributions and new discoveries, for the problem of developing a way to do what we want ultimately, even when we do not know what we want.

Growth, change, innovation and creativity are dependent on seeing clearly and getting out of a rut. The ability to do this is greatly enhanced by being able to amplify attention to the task in hand: to be in the moment. This a central practice for both coach and the student. By keeping focussed, we have a better chance of seeing what is really going on and what needs to happen next. It is obvious how powerful a practice this is for knowledge creation and research.

This practice in a coaching relationship is often uncomfortable: we seldom really listen to others or to ourselves. We more usually engage in habitual, even ritualised conversations. A coach may sit in silence for a while to allow space for what is difficult to say. Coaching is at its heart a mindfulness practice. A coach tries to be totally present with openness and non-judgement. The difficulty here is letting go of advice, projection and stories. This relates back to a core coaching premise that student researchers are capable of coming up with their own solutions.

4.2.7   Intuition

Sometimes we know without understanding the knowing. Sometimes this knowing is more reliable than that obtained from rigorously analysed data.

Malcolm Gladwell writes a fascinating account of the *'Statue that didn't look right'* in Blink. When, in 1983, the J. Paul Getty Museum in California was offered a *kouros* statue apparently dating from the 6th century BC, scientists spent 14 months verifying its authenticity through electron microscopy, X-ray diffraction, electron microprobe and X-ray fluorescence. One scientist even published a paper in *Scientific American* on the extraordinary find. The museum agreed to pay $10 M for the statue. In the meantime, various artists who viewed the work exclaimed within seconds that it did not look right; it looked *'fresh'*, and they certainly would not buy it. It turned out that their intuition was correct: the *kouros* was a fake! This helps to illustrate the power of different ways of knowing that we do not always use – especially in our professional work. A coach is encouraged to get in touch with intuition and use it to shed light on what is happening with the person being coached.

A coach may offer: 'It seems that there is something else happening here apart from the time constraints you mention.' Sometimes the 'hunch' may be quite specific. When designing a relationship with the student researcher, the coach explains the use of intuition – and asks permission to blurt out possible insights. These need to then be checked and, if they are off the mark, they are simply dropped. This exploratory openness is part of the coaching dynamic that allows for: tentative answers, making mistakes, taking risks, thinking out of the box, and for the student to also take over control and redirect discussions.

4.2.8   Reflective meta-perspective: 'telling it like it is'

'It looks to me like this thesis is not a priority for you.'

A coach needs to articulate what is happening, or at least offer a reflection of how things appear – without judging. Making such a statement as the one above might be difficult for a supervisor. There is the hierarchical relationship and quality judgement – but for a coach there is an agreement of being a friend who can be frank and help explore the un-named agendas, saboteurs, cover-ups and unconscious tendencies! As mentioned under 'intuition', this is done respectfully, with the student offering counter observations, declining to discuss, or expressing willingness to explore what is going on.

This may also be considered as giving feedback. In supervision, feedback is usually about the text or research process. In coaching, the feedback is holistic. It is often reflective: 'I noticed you started drooping in your chair when you mentioned the up-coming seminar. It seems there is a heaviness about that.' Such feedback opens up the opportunity to discuss something that might have been glossed over or that the student may not even have been aware of.

4.2.9   Relationships

'We all live our lives in a sea of connections.'

Individual coaching has the limitation of not directly including others in the PhD process, even though they are inextricably connected to the PhD researcher and thus to the process. It is therefore sometimes helpful to consider coaching a 'relationship' or team. Coaching can be useful for a research team, for a supervisor and student together, or for a research student and his or her partner. This relationship coaching is not therapy; it helps to find a way of co-creating a

path and a way of working that is constructive and fulfilling for the team. In the process we acknowledge that we create ourselves and our futures through interconnections. The same principles – of making actions conscious and choosing how we want to be – are core to relationship coaching.

A coach can explore questions with two or more people together:

'What is important here?'

'What's getting in the way?'

'How do we want to be with each other when things get tough?'

'What can we count on from each other?'

'What will make this partnership flourish?'

Seeing the situation from the other perspective: the concept here and the accompanying exercise are based on the assumption that the PhD thesis is an 'entity' in itself. We habitually view the world from our perspective only; we are encouraged here to see our research from both the point of view of the student, from the point of view of the supervisor *and* the 'view' of the thesis itself.
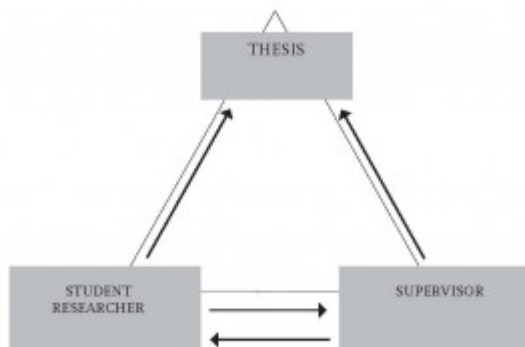

Figure 4.2.9   The Thesis Exercise: 'Third entity exercise'[12]

Figure 4.2.9   The Thesis Exercise: 'Third entity exercise'[12]

A coaching example of this is given in the section *'Coaching Pathways'.*

4.2.10 Giving Feedback

By receiving insightful assessment on our qualities, ways of interacting, values, or path of action, we understand how we are perceived by others. Such feedback

also helps us to reflect, adjust and grow. In coaching, feedback is expected from both coach and student researcher. Feedback needs to be specific and needs to provide suggestions as to how the coaching or action could be more effective. For example, a coach may ask: *'In what ways is the coaching helping you? How could it be more effective?'* A student being coached may ask: *'What do you see that I am not aware of?'* It is clear from this last question that the student needs to be aware of the *'rules-of-the-game'* of coaching. It is part of the coach's task to *train* the student in the goals and principles of coaching.

Positive feedback is part of the fabric of a coaching relationship. Acknowledging the qualities and achievements of the coachee helps build confidence, self-esteem, self awareness and motivation. Perhaps because 'critical thinking' is so valued in academia, we tend to become easily critical and can forget to acknowledge the positive. It is not unusual for a student or academic to go for years without anyone giving them confirmation that they are *'insightful, bright, dedicated, determined…'* and so forth. Considering how much criticism a PhD researcher is subjected to, there is often a gradual eroding of a student's confidence. A coach is encouraged to give the student acknowledgement *every* coaching session. If only **one aspect** of coaching for PhD supervision were to be taken up, **acknowledging** the student researcher would be the most constructive and effective!

4.3 Coaching Pathways

In this section a possible outline of a series of eight coaching sessions will be presented. Obviously, many of the coaching skills may be integrated subtly or explicitly into any supervisory meeting, they can also be used as appropriate in varying order in coaching sessions. The session layout is not quite a 'literal' guide to the process. It is clear that follow-up from previous sessions is necessary – and this may take the coaching in completely different directions. The 'menu'-type layout presented here is meant to give an overview of how coaching may work over time. The assumption here is that these processes are less familiar than supervisory sessions where PhD researcher and supervisor are discussing research progress. The outline is, however, condensed and is provided for supervisors who have participated in mentoring and coaching training. This chapter is premised on the assumption that the supervisor or student researcher has some familiarity with co-active coaching processes. In Session 8 of the Pathways, there are some suggestions for using creative writing for coaching.

This aspect has the advantage of also serving as a self-coaching tool.

4.3.1 Session 1: Building a relationship

– Introduction

Explain briefly the principles of coaching; how it differs from supervision, mentoring and therapy. Discuss the ethics of confidentiality. (See 'Introduction to Coaching Form' in Templates)

– Find out about the student

Note that 'story lines' are always kept to a minimum in coaching (unlike therapy).

– Design the coach-student partnership: set up agreements

Discuss (quite frankly) what kind of relationship this will be and what will make it work. Set up logistics for meeting times, accountability and number of sessions.

– Discuss the aims of coaching

A new student requires training on how to be coached. This is often a new way of relating. A coach seeks permission to challenge, push, inquire and make it clear that all this is negotiable in a relationship that seeks to be equal and democratic. Coaches keep their own experience out of the picture (This is hard to do!) and they expect a student researcher to come up with their own solutions. Like most rules, of course, this one is also broken: at times the coach may ask: 'Will you have the next two chapters completed by next week?'

4.3.2 Session 2: Values

– What are the student's values? Ask the PhD researcher about a *Critical Incident* when he or she felt in control or striding forwards, etc. Sharing such experiences amplifies the event and serves as a model to reveal qualities and values. Note down the values you, as a coach, see in the situation and ask the students what values they see. Spend time discussing and clarifying these values. Helpful questions to elicit values include:

– What is present when you are at your best?

– How would you like to be in the world?

– What is your unique contribution?

– What is the role of our own gremlins? Discuss how we sabotage ourselves.

– What are the negative inner commentaries regarding the PhD research?

– What gets in the way?

The Yogic sages say that all the pain of a human life is caused by words, as is all joy. We create words to define our experience and those words bring attendant emotions that jerk us around like dogs on a leash. We get seduced by our own mantras (I'm a failure … I'm lonely …) …

Saboteur myths

– Suffering is inevitable

– Worry is warranted

– It's not good enough

– Anxiety has value

– More is better

– Guilt is deserved

– I will do bad work and look like an idiot

– I can't

– It's all too much

– There's no time

– It's not fair

– Not again

– I'll start next week

– I've got too much to do

– *They* don't give me space/time/conducive conditions…

A homework inquiry for the student may be:

'What am I withholding?'

'What do I resent?'

'What do I regret?'

Ask the student to draw their gremlin(s) and give it/them a name.

– *Acknowledge the student*

4.3.3 Session 3: Where are you now?

–   Discover the level of achievement in aspects of study and life: Discovery Wheel.

The student researcher rates his/her perceived level of achievement/satisfaction with the aspects presented in the wheel.
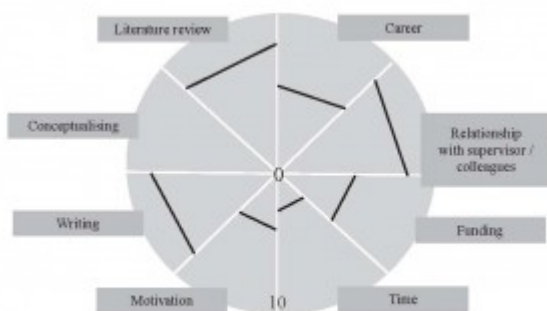
The coach probes what the scores (out of ten) mean for the student.

Choose an aspect of the wheel to work on.

Ask direct/powerful questions, such as, *'What would a 10/10 mean for you in your career?'*

Give an inquiry or task for homework, or ask the student to come up with a follow-up activity.

Figure 4.3.3   PhD Discovery Wheel (A completed wheel may look like this:)

Direct/powerful questions:

Figure 4.3.3   PhD Discovery Wheel

'What surprises you about this?'

'What would a ten look like for you as far as writing goes?'

'Who can help you?'

Ask the student to come up with suggestions for action to move forward in one of the aspects. Set tasks and accountability.

4.3.3 Session 4: Practicing Focus

– Clear anything that might be in the way of a session. Spend only two minutes on this. For example: 'What do we need to get out the way for you to arrive on time?' (Student grumbles about being stuck in traffic or marking, etc.)

– Check homework accountability.

– Choose a small current aspect to work on: *'What about this is important to you?'*

– Build intrinsic motivation: *'What thrills you?' 'What is compelling about this?'*

– Establish accountability: *'What will you do next?' 'When will you do it?'* and *'How will I know?'*

4.3.4 Session 5: Perspective

Keeping a balance in one's life is not easy most of the time – never mind amongst the pressures of PhD research.

– Start from where we are: where's here? How does it feel? Connect with the body. Settle and take time to be present. *'What's happening now?'*

What perspective does the student researcher have on a particular aspect of the PhD or the whole process? Name or use a metaphor for this attitude/perspective. An example would be: 'As far as the literature review is concerned I feel like I am lost in a maze.'

(It is helpful to move around for this exercise.)

Then, physically move to a different perspective: 'What is the *"seeing as far as the horizon"* perspective like?' – ask this while looking out the window, standing next to the student. Check out this perspective. *'What does this feel like?'*

Find another perspective: for example, move to staring at the book-case. *'What does the book-case perspective feel like?'* Ask the student researcher to choose the perspective that feels best. Physically move to that perspective. Get a feeling for it. Move on to designing a way forward and setting up tasks.

– Acknowledge the student

4.3.5 Session 6: Fulfilment

Discover the Dream

– What is compelling about the research?

– What is compelling about being an academic?

What would your future self say?

A vision exercise of picturing yourself as a PhD doctor. Take time to talk through this vision.

– *'Who have you become?'*

– *'Where are you in this situation?'*

– *'What advice does your future self give you?'*

– *'What is the next step?'*

Set tasks and accountability.

– Acknowledge the student

4.3.7   Session 7: Relationship/team coaching

Ask the student researcher to describe a relationship with the supervisor and with

the thesis.

(Refer to the triad diagram, Figure 4.2.9)

Ask the student researcher to move to another chair and describe how things look from the supervisor's perspective. Then ask the student to move to a third position, that of the thesis, and describe how things look from the perspective of the thesis itself. (This sounds very strange but can be surprisingly effective!)

'What is trying to happen here?'

Find actions that support new insights that arise from this.

4.3.6 Session 8: Coaching through creative writing

We have already considered the role of creativity (which deserves considerable attention in research as a high level of cognitive skill). It is worth noting some of the obstacles to creativity before engaging in this *coaching through writing*. Gundry (1995) lists four stumbling blocks which are no doubt familiar to us:

– Judging ideas too quickly

– Stopping at the first good idea

– Failing to *'get the bandits off the train'*

– Obeying rules that don't exist.

One of the ways over these obstacles is to free-write. Set this as an exercise.

4.3.8.1 Self-reflection free-writing

Free-writing is a way to get over writer's block, to discover one's own voice, clarify thought and to simply keep the writing and thinking processes going. The only rule in free-writing is: *not to stop writing*! Invite a student to complete a sentence such as this: (set a time for writing, e.g., 4 minutes.)

The thing about being a PhD researcher is ……………………………………………………………

Or:

What uncommon questions cross your mind? Write a list of these.

………
……………………………………

………
……………………………………

………
……………………………………

In research we need not only to note what is there, but what is not there; what people are not saying; what questions are not being asked.

We note forms. We often miss the spaces between.

Write about the formless in your thinking:

………
…………………………………

String theory; particles; excited electrons: we can hardly talk in any discipline, including science without the use of metaphor.

Use a metaphor to free-write about your research project. (Do not think about this – simply free-write!)

–   My PhD is like a ……………………………………………………………………

4.4 Conclusions

This section was intended for those who have some coaching experience. It has attempted to show how coaching skills and principles may be integrated into supervision. If even some of these ideas are tried out, the supervision-student relationship is likely to be enriched and enlivened.

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Next Chapter – Chapter Five:

Effective PhD Supervision – Chapter Six – A Holistic Approach to PhD Support

SUPERVISION, COACHING and MENTORING

6.1 Mentoring and Coaching: Complementary Resources

'Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?'

'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the Cat.

'I don't much care where –' said Alice.

'Then it doesn't matter which way you go,' said the Cat.

6.2 Comparing Supervision, Coaching and Mentoring in Practice

6.2.1 Gaining competence

Supervision of a PhD candidate has been described in terms of models, personality, formal institutional structures and contract agreements. Supervision is often learnt through experience: one's own – from having been supervised, from external examination of theses, from serving on post-graduate committees,

from participating in PhD student-presentation sessions, from sitting in on a PhD student's advisory committee, from serving on post-graduate committees, from co-supervision with a more experienced academic and from supervising different students. Supervision skills are also developed from workshops on supervision and through reading 'how-to' books or research into PhD work. A supervisor also draws on a certain amount of pedagogic content knowledge as well as, of course, discipline content knowledge.

Coaching, we have tried to show, is a less common process as it involves specific training in skills that are not picked up through experience alone. Coaching is, however, consonant with current research into pedagogy in that it is strongly student-centred, holistic and trans-disciplinary. Coaching also promotes independence, reflection and self-directed action – all of which are essential for an emerging researcher. Coaching is usually short-term, formal and goal-oriented, and may involve two people from completely different fields or disciplines. Coaching skills need to be taught and then practiced.

Mentoring, we have claimed, is often long-term, informal and field- and personality-based. While a coaching relationship could be one of equal power, mentoring typically involves an older, more experienced mentor and a student. A good mentor has often himself been mentored well, and therefore understands both the value and process of passing on a lifetime of experience, sharing connections and possibly 'grooming a successor'.

6.3 Dialogues from Different Perspectives

In these dialogues we will show differences in the interactions between a student and a supervisor, and a mentor and a coach.

Supervisor	Student	NOTE
'I see your chapter is only 4 pages. You need to send me the complete chapter before we can discuss it. I'll see you two weeks after I receive the draft.'	'I just wanted to show you how far I'd gotten. OK. I'll send it by Friday.'	This is task focussed, formal, time efficient, agreement oriented. Interaction is formal & requires formalised commitment.

Mentor	Student	
'Now I see you only managed to send 4 pages. I suggest you block out one full day a week to write. I manage to keep writing by not answering emails for one day a week. Let me know if you need help in blocking out time.'	'OK. Thanks but I may need to talk about this. It's not really so much the time factor. Maybe you can give me some advice on how to overcome writer's block.'	The mentor in this example talks more, offers advice. Approach is more holistic and takes into account the mentor's own experience and desire to see the student succeed.
'Yes: don't worry. We all have this problem. I know someone at the writing centre who will help you. Come, I'll walk you over there and we can get some coffee.'	'Thanks so much.'	

Coach		
'How is the writing going?'	'I only managed to write 4 pages.'	The coach makes no assumptions. (Skills of intuition/listening & rephrasing the situation.)
'It sounds like you are discouraged.'	'I am so disappointed. I meant to finish the chapter!'	
'What got in the way?'	'I seem to just have writer's block. I had plenty of time.'	(Delving & not assuming.)
'What kind of a block is it?'	'I feel paralysed. I know what to say ... but I can't begin. It's like someone is looking over my shoulder.'	(Using metaphor)
'What does this overseer look like?'	'Like my PhD committee, plus my external examiner, plus my supervisor a whole grandstand!'	(Use of humour!)
'A whole grandstand! What could you do to get away from centre court while writing?'	'I guess I could write on a practice court where there is no audience!'	Solution comes from student.
'So: some quiet neglected side court where you are free to practice. Would this work to get you started? Before you present an exhibition match!'	'Yes: I like that. I'll see it as a warm-up chapter and spend 3 hours "on court" every morning?'	The interaction in this case is kept positive not moving into problematising any neurosis or difficulty.

6.4 Integration

While there are many advantages to having a supervisor, separate mentor and a professional coach (for a set period), these roles can be integrated. It may seem logical that supervision, mentoring and coaching relationships are mutually exclusive, and that the approaches, assumptions and skills in supervision, mentoring and coaching are contradictory. However, without being thoroughly schizophrenic, a PhD supervisor could manage to include the three roles interchangeably, drawing on skills from all roles. In this case it is wise to sometimes advise the student: 'Now I will leave the coaching approach and tell you what I would do in this situation.' This situation is illustrated through dialogues between supervisor/coach/mentor/student below.

| Supervisor	Student	NOTE
'Now that you have registered, we need to set up some structures and agreements. Did you manage to go through the contract – Supervisor-Student Agreement?'	'Yes. It looks OK to me. But it says that I have to send you a whole chapter and then wait 2 weeks for feedback.'	Supervision focus (Task oriented; following a procedure)
'Should we go through this together and I can help you ...'	'Yes, thanks.'	Mentoring: (Showing guidance)
'What about what is worrying you?'	'I'm struggling a bit with writing. Could you look at some smaller piece of work in the beginning, just so I know I am on the right track?'	Coaching approach (Finding out more)
'That's fine for now.' 'In our supervision relationship I'll be combining aspects of mentoring and coaching. So you need to say what will work for you.'	'OK. I appreciate that. But what is coaching?'	Integrating three roles
...... (some explanation)		
'So, for example, what kind of feedback do you want on your writing right now?'	'My English is fine, I think, but I'm not sure of the structure. I need to know that the approach and sequence is OK.'	Coaching approach
'There are some excellent workshops on constructing an argument. Here is the leaflet.'	'Oh, that will be helpful?'	Mentoring focus
'When can I have the first section of the proposal?'	'I'll send 6 pages by Friday.'	Supervision & coaching
'I see your enthusiasm. You have strong motivation.'	'Uhhh? Thank you! Yes,I do.'	Coaching

6.5 Epilogue

Writing a PhD thesis is not a linear process; there is no *'one size fits all'*. Pellucid pathways and preset templates may add to systemic efficiency but offer little in terms of intellectual exploration. Doctoral students should be questioning prevalent discourses, contributing controversial – or at least fresh ideas – and not simply complying with throughput requirements. So, of course, self-help/how-to books have their limitations. We have tried here to broaden the opportunities for finding one's own path creatively and reflectively, not for learning the *'rules of the game'* but for questioning the *'game'* and for becoming more of a person through the process and through connecting with others along the way.

We must also draw on our cultural resources, ensuring awareness of worldviews, and not be overly drawn in to dominant paradigms in the traditional supervision process. The more flexible model suggested here will provide a more nuanced relationship that will draw on the strengths of both individuals and the unique context in which this holistic approach is viewed.

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Effective PhD Supervision – Chapter Seven – Bibliography and Recommended Reading
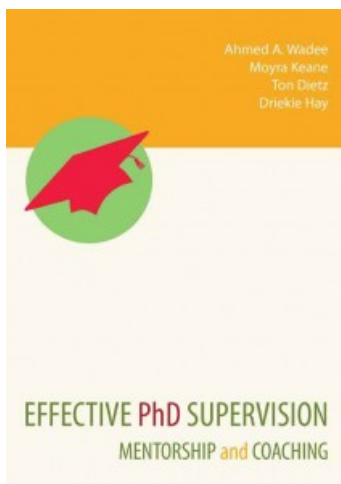
The books, journals and related resources listed below have played an important role in the compilation of this handbook and many have proven to be invaluable in our day-to-day interactions with postgraduate students.

Argyris, Chris; Schön, Donald A. (1974) Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. ISBN 0875892302, 9780875892306

'This book is a landmark in two fields. It is a practical guide to the reform of professional education. It is also a beacon to theoretical thinking about human organizations, about their interdependence with the social structure of the professions, and about theory in practice.' — Journal of Higher Education.

Badenhorst, Cecile. (2006) The Scribe's Journey. New Voices Publishing, Cape Town, South Africa. ISBN-13: 978-1-920094-30-0

The Scribe's Journey contains over 150 writing exercises. Each one is designed to take you away from the world of to-do lists, priorities and products, and into the realm of possibilities, exploration and colour. The writing activities will tap into your creative source and begin to free your mind from the restrictions and limitations which so often accompany writing tasks. Whether you write reports at

work, or poetry, or family histories, this book will help you write with a fresh eye.

Barnett, Ronald. (1997) Higher Education: A Critical Business. Buckingham. SHRE/Open University Press. ISBN-0-335-19703-5

Current concepts of critical thinking need to be reconstructed into the much broader concept of 'critical being' and applied to higher education. Under this construct, critical persons (students) become more than just critical thinkers; they engage critically with the world and with themselves; they not only reflect critically on knowledge, but also develop powers of critical self-reflection and critical action. Concurrent with the concept of critical being is a form of social and personal epistemology: the belief that through higher education students can be changed as persons by their experiences.

Biggs, John (2003). Teaching for Quality Learning at University. Buckingham: The Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press. ISBN 0-335-21168-2

In the days when university classes contained highly selected students, enrolled in their faculty of choice, the traditional lecture and tutorial seemed to work well enough... Through reflective practice, teachers can then create an improved teaching environment suited to their own context.

Brockbank, Anne; McGill, Ian. (2006). Facilitating Reflective Learning through Mentoring & Coaching. Kogan Page Ltd. London & Philadelphia. ISBN-13: 978-0749444488

This book is for those who practice mentoring or coaching as well as for those clients who are interested in the mentoring and coaching process.

Carson, Richard David. (2003). Taming your gremlin: a surprisingly simple method for getting out of your own way. HarperCollins, New York. ISBN 0060520221, 9780060520229

A completely updated edition of this classic, explaining the author's laid-back but stunningly powerful methods for taming self-defeating behaviour.

Cryer, Pat. (1997) Handling common dilemmas in supervision. SRHE/Times

Higher Education Supplement (London) ISBN 10: 0946376026

Delamont, Sara; Atkinson, Paul; Parry, Odette. (2000) The Doctoral Experience: Success and Failure in Graduate School. London. Falmer Press. ISBN 0750709278

Eley, Adrian; Jennings, Roy. (2005) Effective postgraduate supervision: improving the student/supervisor relationship. Maidenhead. Open University Press McGraw-Hill Education. ISBN: 9780335217083

This practical guide is based on a series of successful workshops on postgraduate supervision and presents the most frequently encountered difficulties in the student/supervisor relationship.

Foster, Peter. (1996) Observing Schools: a methodological guide. Sage (London, Chapman) ISBN 185396266X, 9781853962660

Observing Schools *discusses the nature and purposes of observational research in schools. It covers the different observational techniques which can be used, and their advantages and disadvantages, bridging the gap between qualitative and quantitative approaches.*

Costa, Arthur L. (Ed) (2001) Developing Minds: A Resource Book for Teaching Thinking. 3rd Edition. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. ISBN-13: 978-0871203793

Developing Minds *explores how the teaching of thinking is evolving as we strive to better understand how the brain learns, how to effectively use technology in the classroom and how to focus on assessment of student achievement.*

– Jackson, Thomas E. The Art and Craft of 'Gently Socratic' Inquiry

– Johnson, D.W.; Johnson, R.T. Co-operation and Conflict: Effects on Cognition and Metacognition.

Lave, Jean; Wenger, Etienne. (1991) Situated Learning: legitimate peripheral participation (Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive and Computational Perspectives). Cambridge UK, Cambridge University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0521423748

Laws, Sophie, Caroline Harper & Rachel Marcus. (2003) Research for Development: A Practical Guide. London: Sage Publications Ltd; 1 edition. ISBN-13: 978-0761973270

Leonard, Diana. (2001) A Woman's Guide to Doctoral Studies. Open University Press, Buckingham. ISBN-13: 978-0335202522

This guide is designed to help women undertake and enjoy working for a doctorate as they recognize the rules of the academic game.

Mouton, Johann. (2001) How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book. Van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria. ISBN: 9780627024849

A resource for students and supervisors alike, the topics covered are related to the management of postgraduate research studies: the development of a successful research proposal (with examples); research resource management; research ethics and more.

Murray, Margo. (1991) Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring: How to Facilitate and Effective Mentoring Program. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco. ISBN-13: 978-1555423339

Step-by-step guidelines for putting together cost effective mentoring programs that foster employee learning and growth

Lave, Jean; Wenger, Etienne. (1991) Situated Learning: legitimate peripheral participation (Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive and Computational Perspectives). Cambridge UK, Cambridge University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0521423748

Laws, Sophie, Caroline Harper & Rachel Marcus. (2003) Research for Development: A Practical Guide. London: Sage Publications Ltd; 1 edition. ISBN-13: 978-0761973270

Leonard, Diana. (2001) A Woman's Guide to Doctoral Studies. Open University Press, Buckingham. ISBN-13: 978-0335202522

This guide is designed to help women undertake and enjoy working for a

doctorate as they recognize the rules of the academic game.

Mouton, Johann. (2001) How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book. Van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria. ISBN: 9780627024849

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Step-by-step guidelines for putting together cost effective mentoring programs that foster employee learning and growth

Journals and Academic Articles

Akerlind, Gerlese S. (2004) A new dimension to understanding university teaching. Teaching in Higher Education, 9(3): 363-376

*Abstract***:** This paper reports the outcomes of a study, undertaken from a phenomenographic perspective, of academics' ways of experiencing or understanding being a university teacher. A range of understandings was found, representing in particular a varying focus on the experience of teaching as a: teacher transmission focused experience; teacher-student relations focused experience; student engagement focused experience; and student learning focused experience. This work builds on previous studies of university teachers' conceptions of teaching. However, the focus taken in this study on the experience of being a teacher, rather than engaging in teaching, has highlighted new aspects of university teaching.

Akerlind, Gerlese S. (2007) Constraints on academics' potential for developing as a teacher, Studies in Higher Education, 32(1):21-37

Abstract: This study undertook a phenomenographic analysis of academics' ways

of approaching their growth and development as a university teacher. The focus of the study is on the meanings and intentions underlying different ways of going about developing as a teacher, and how this relates to the ways in which academics understand the nature of teaching development and being a university teacher. Five different approaches to developing as a university teacher emerged, varying from a focus on building up a better knowledge of one's content area, in order to become more familiar with what to teach, to continually increasing one's understanding of what works and does not work for students, in order to become more effective in facilitating student learning. The approaches experienced by academics, and the meanings and intentions associated with them, are seen as constituting constraints on their potential for developing as a teacher.

Brew, Angela. (2001) Conceptions of Research: a phenomenographic study. *Studies in Higher Education*, 26(3): 271-285

Abstract: This article reports on an investigation into the variation in how research is experienced by established senior researchers. It provides a new, discipline-neutral, non-technical framework for interpreting how academics are responding to the challenges of the changing context of higher education. The study identified four qualitatively different ways in which research is understood. These are differentiated according to whether they have an external product orientation or an internal process orientation and whether the researchers themselves are in the forefront of their awareness or whether they appear to be incidental to their awareness. In the context of concern about the nature and role of research in the economy and about how it should be funded, and at a time when knowledge is said to be in crisis, the article suggests that the framework can contribute to rational analysis and decision-making.

Browne, M. Neil; Freeman, Karl. (2000) Distinguishing features of critical thinking classrooms. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 5(3): 301-309.

Abstract: Proposes that classrooms that encourage critical thinking possess distinguishing features that can assess whether critical thinking is a regular occurrence. Suggests that a critical thinking classroom commonly reflects the following attributes: frequent questions, developmental tension, fascination with the contingency of conclusions and active learning. These attributes reinforce each other to provide developmental stimuli for enhanced critical thinking.

Cousin, Glynis; Deepwell, Francis. (2005) Designs for network learning: a communities of practice perspective. Studies in Higher Education 30(1):57-66

Abstract: This article explores the relevance for network learning of themes developed by Wenger, initially with Lave and subsequently alone. While Wenger's fieldwork is located in the workplace, he sees his theorisation on becoming a learner as applicable to any context, be it home, work or formal education. In unravelling the connectedness between learning identity and community, usefulness of Wenger's ideas for the context of networked learning is exposed. First, the specific features of Wenger's construct of community of practice are discussed; second, Wenger's notions of participation and reification are explored; and, finally, his design perspective with respect to 'facilities of engagement, imagination and alignment' is presented. The exposition of Wenger's (and Lave's) ideas is interwoven with a discussion of their implications for the field of network learning.

Darling, L.A. (1984) What do nurses want in a mentor? *Journal of Nursing Administration* 14(10):42-44

Entwistle, Noel. (1997) Introduction: Phenomenography in Higher Education. *Research and Development in Higher Education* 16(2):127-134

Entwistle, N. (2007) Research into student learning and university teaching, Student Learning and University Teaching. 1-18 *British Journal of Educational Psychology* Monograph Series II. 4

Ives, Glenice; Rowley, Glenn. (2005) Supervisor selection or allocation and continuity of supervision: PhD students' progress and outcomes. *Studies in Higher Education* 30(5):535-555

Abstract: This article reports part of an Australian longitudinal study which examined the patterns evident in the relationships PhD students and supervisors developed and the ways they worked together. The participants were 21 Ph.D. students and their main supervisors. Data were collected via interviews conducted between 1995 and 1998. Three interviews were conducted separately

for each student and supervisor. This report focuses on the allocation of supervisors to students and continuity of supervision in relation to students' progress and satisfaction with supervision. From this small sample it appears students who felt involved in supervisor selection, whose topics were matched with their supervisors' expertise and who developed good interpersonal working relationships with supervisors were more likely to make good progress and be satisfied. This was more likely when supervisors were experienced and senior academics or the student had two active supervisors. Disruptions caused by a temporary change of supervisor created problems and delays. Suggestions to overcome this are made.

Jacobi, Maryann. (1991) Mentoring and undergraduate academic success: A literature review. *Review of Educational Research* 61:505-532.

*Abstract***:** Despite a growing body of research about mentoring, definitional, theoretical, and methodological deficiencies reduce the usefulness of existing research. This article provides a critical review of the literature on mentoring, with an emphasis on the links between mentoring and undergraduate academic success. The first section describes a variety of ways in which mentoring has been defined within higher education, management and psychology. Issues related to developing a standard operational definition of mentoring within higher education are discussed. The second section provides a critical review of empirical research about mentoring and undergraduate education. The third section describes four different theoretical perspectives that could be used in future research about mentoring. Finally, future directions for research, including methodological issues and substantive concerns, are addressed.

Johnson, W. Brad. (2002) The intentional mentor: Strategies and guidelines for the practice of mentoring. *Professional psychology, research and practice* 33(1): 88-96.

Abstract: How can faculty in professional psychology programs become more intentional and effective mentors? Many psychology graduate students are never mentored, and very few psychologists have ever received training in the practice of mentoring. This article briefly summarizes the nature of mentoring, the prevalence of mentoring in psychology, primary obstacles to mentoring, and some ethical concerns unique to mentoring. The article provides several strategies to

enhance mentoring and guidelines for the profession, departments of psychology, and individual psychologists who serve as mentors. This article is designed to help readers take a more deliberate approach to the practice of mentoring.

Kamler, Barbara; Thomson, Pat. (2008) The failure of dissertation advice books: Towards alternative pedagogies for doctoral writing. *Educational Researcher* 37(8): 507-514.

Abstract: Anxious doctoral researchers can now call on a proliferation of advice books telling them how to produce their dissertations. This article analyzes some characteristics of this self-help genre, including the ways it produces an expert-novice relationship with readers, reduces dissertation writing to a series of linear steps, reveals hidden rules, and asserts a mix of certainty and fear to position readers 'correctly'. The authors argue for a more complex view of doctoral writing both as text work/identity work and as a discursive social practice. They reject transmission pedagogies that normalize the power-saturated relations of protégé and master, and point to alternate pedagogical approaches that position doctoral researchers as colleagues engaged in a shared, unequal and changing practice.

Khan, Gillian & Lakay, Denise. (2005) Role of Postgraduate supervisors: reflections by recent graduates. *Paradigms, Journal for research and debate into teaching and learning in higher education* (Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa), 12: 43-49.

Lee, Anne. (2007) Developing effective supervisors. *South African Journal of Higher Education* 21(4): 680-93

Pearson, Margot; Brew, Angela. (2002) Research Training and Supervision Development. *Studies in Higher Education* 27(2): 135-150.

Abstract: Research education, or training, as it is often termed, is attracting greater scrutiny as research itself is seen of greater importance in the global knowledge economy. In turn, concerns to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of research supervision are leading to the introduction and extension of programmes for supervisor development. This article presents a framework for an approach to supervisor development, based on the assumption that in order to discuss supervisor development it is important to understand what supervisors do and why. The article examines the nature of the educative process for research students in the current research environment. It articulates the generic processes

supervisors need to engage in for effective supervision, if students are to develop in differing institutional, disciplinary and professional contexts the appropriate expertise and attributes for employment, and it presents an outline of what might constitute a flexible professional development programme for supervisors in this context.

Pearson, Margot; Kayrooz, Carole. (2004) Enabling critical reflection on research supervisory practice. *International Journal for Academic Development* 9(1): 99-116

Abstract: This paper describes the development of an instrument – The Reflective Supervisor Questionnaire (RSQ). The RSQ maps the domain of research supervisory practice as a facilitative process involving educational tasks and activities. It is designed to assist research supervisors explore, by means of self-reflection and reflection on feedback from others, how they practise supervision. In developing the RSQ 58 items were generated describing 5 hypothesised constructs derived from prior research. The resulting instrument was tested on postgraduate research students in 2 institutions. The questionnaire correlated highly with an established questionnaire supervision scale and with an overall satisfaction measure. Four factors identified in an exploratory analysis closely approximated the hypothesised constructs and extended the theoretical framework being developed. These 4 factors identified 4 subsets of facilitative supervisory practice: Progressing the Candidature, Mentoring, Coaching the Research Project, and Sponsoring Student Participation in Academic/Professional Practice. Issues in the interpretation of the findings and the possible usage in academic development programs of an instrument bas

Stevenson, P., Brand, A. (2006) Exploring the developmental impacts of completing a postgraduate certificate in learning and teaching. *Educational Developments* 7(3) SEDA, UK

Tuck, R. (1993) The Nature of Mentoring. SEDA Publications. *The New Academic* 25-6.

Wisker, Gina; Robinson, Gillian; Trafford, Vernon; Creighton, Emma; Warnes, Mark. (2003). Recognising and overcoming dissonance in postgraduate student research. *Studies in Higher Education* 28(1):91-105

Abstract: Most research indicating dissonant forms of student learning

engagement, leading to problems in the achievement of learning outcomes, is with undergraduates. Action research at Anglia Polytechnic University involving questionnaires, focus groups and supervisory dialogues, conducted with Israeli and British postgraduate students between 1998 and 2001, indicates that dissonance in research seen as a form of learning produces potentially significant difficulties for students at different stages in their work.

Websites, Presentations and other Resources

Code of Practice for University Degrees. 2000 (Revised 2005). University of Surrey. Available at:

http://www.open.mis.surrey.ac.uk/ admin/registry/qaeo/codprd.htm

Hofstee, Erik (2006). Constructing a good dissertation. Pretoria (see: www.exactica.co.za)

Meyer, J. (2007). On the modelling of postgraduate students' conceptions of research. Presentation to the International Conference on Postgraduate Supervision 'State of the art and the artists' Stellenbosch 23-26 April 2007

Fullerton, Hazel (ed.) (1996). Facets of Mentoring in Higher Education. SEDA Paper 94, SEDA Publications, Birmingham

The Centre for Right Relationship (2005). Organisational and Relationship Systems Coaching Manual. California.

Lee A. (2006). Models of Facilitation Educational Developments: Staff and Educational Developers Association. London. Issue 7.3 July

Lategan, L.O.K. (2008). *An introduction to postgraduate supervision*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press.

Pearson, M. (2000). Flexible postgraduate research supervision in an open system. In Kiley, M. and Mullins, G. (Eds.) *Proceedings of the 2000 Quality in Postgraduate Research Conference.* Adelaide. Pp 165 -177.

Zuber-Skerritt, O. and Knight, N. (1992). Helping postgraduate students overcome barriers to dissertation writing. In Zuber-Skerritt, O. (Ed). *Starting Research: Supervision and Training.* University of Queensland: The Tertiary

Education Institute.

Zuber-Skerritt, O. and Knight, N. (1992). Problem definition and thesis writing: workshops for the postgraduate student. In Zuber-Skerritt, O. (Ed). *Starting Research: Supervision and Training.* University of Queensland: The Tertiary Education Institute.

Jansen, J.D. (2009). 20 Tips for effective supervision. Workshop presented at the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, 20 November 2009

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Effective PhD Supervision – Appendices and Acknowledgments

Appendices

Sanpad and its RCI programme

Anshu Padayachee

Having examined the statistical, demographic and institutional and equity

characteristics of the cohort the outputs the research findings were as follows:

-The total cohort number under investigation stands at 191.

– All in all there have been 127 Ph.D.'s confirmed.

– This means that more than 1 in 2 cohorts graduated with a Ph.D. during the period under investigation.

– This also means that in a period of seven years, 16 Ph.D.'s were produced per year.

In terms of social categories the percentages of Ph.D. graduates 21 % were African females, 20%, African males, 17% Coloured females 1% Coloured males, 8% Indian females, 2% Indian males, 19% White females and 11.5% White males.

41% of the graduates were African, 19 % were coloured, 12.5% were Indian and 30, 5 % were Whites. In terms of gender 65% were females and 35% males.

In terms of years taken to attain the degree 53% achieved it in 3 years, 41% in 4 years and 6% in 5 years. In addition it became evident in the interviews that there were several traits evident in the feelings of respondents towards the Programme.

It was felt that it provided to them:

– A psychological boost

– A "changing of mind" experience

– A "Process" –driven experience

-Building collegial bridges

– The opening of possibilities

– Intellectual stimulation

– Real empowerment

The report that follows pinpoints the considerable achievements of an innovative, even path-breaking programme that is collaborative, transparent and pioneering in its scholastic and research endeavour.

The present second follow up report has confirmed the initial conclusion emanating from the initial report that the RCI has been a highly successful SANPAD Project that has been decisive in the effort of establishing a new cohort of researchers who utilised the programme to achieve academic and research excellence.

It is a programme rooted on comprehensive selection criteria and rigorous processes, and the evidence provided in the two reports signifies the programme's importance nationally and regionally and as the new initiatives in a few SADC countries as well as Ethiopia show conclusively.

It is instrumental in the expansion of knowledge production and human capital.

It is very widely accepted that the present system does not produce Ph.D.'s in sufficient numbers and it has been known that only 0,01% of the country's population has a Ph.D. as opposed to 0,1% of Indians who have this qualification .

– In term of social categories the percentages of Ph.D. graduates identified was as follows:

– African females   21% (22.5%)

– African males   20% (15.5%)

– Coloured females   17 % (17%)

– Coloured males   1% (1.4%)

– Indian females   8% (8.5%)

– Indian males   2% (4.2%)

– White females   19 %(19.7%)

– White males   11.5% (11.3%)

It can be deduced then that:

– 41 % (38% in the first report) of the graduates were African.

– 19 % (18.4% in the first report) were coloured.

– 12.5% were Indian.

– 30, 5 % were Whites.

It can be gauged that in terms of equity the outputs were very encouraging as overall 69% of the graduates were Black in accordance with the equity laws of the country, while 31% were Whites. It can be deduced that innovative, well structured, designed and implemented initiatives such as the RCI can be considered significant in an upward spiral in regard to Ph.D. outputs, especially when stakeholders and role players in the system and processes associated with such efforts have demonstrated over the years a commitment and dedication in their efforts in shaping both the skills , capacity and mental strength that make high level researchers that could be in the short, medium and long term indispensable in the sustainable growth and development of the economy through innovation.

In terms of **gender**:

– 65% (as opposed to 67.7% in the first report) were females.

– 35% (as opposed to 32.3% in the first report) were males.

In terms of years taken to attain the degree:

– 67 (53%) as opposed to 56 (52.8%) in the first report achieved it in 3 years.

– 52 (41%) as opposed to 42(39.6%) in 4 years.

– 8 (or 6% as opposed to 7.6% representing the same number) achieved it in 5 years.

The Committee for Higher Education estimated in 2007 that the average period for a completion of a Ph.D. in South Africa fluctuates between 7-8 years on average. This indicates that the figures produced above can be described as very good.

– *A psychological boost*

There was a feeling that the overall programme provided a psychological boost to

a number of cohorts in respect of their future scholastic endeavours.

As one of them said:

"Speaking to a lot of my colleagues at my university I had the feeling that doing a Ph.D. is a lonely exercise, it's you, your supervisor and your research. I felt very differently when I joined the programme. I was not alone with my supervisor, I had a good number of people to talk, exchange ideas, share concerns, facing similar problems as researchers and human beings, and break the isolation. This gave me immense strength and belief in myself. I was not alone".

– A "changing of mind" experience

Throughout the programme cohort with clear cut ideas about the topic, questions, methodologies and the like were convinced that changes in the process would be of value.

As one of the cohort elaborated:

"When you deal with a topic you are interested in and love in most cases you feel that your way to do is the best, sometimes the only way. The programme opened my eyes and mind to the real possibilities to the fact that on many occasions it is advisable to make changes, because your own ideas are rigid and will lead you to the wrong path. This means that I was given the opportunity by SANPAD to see my Ph.D. and my own beliefs in a very understanding and convincing way, by opening my eyes to realities that were outside me".

– A "Process"-driven experience

There was a general belief that the process followed from Workshop 1 to the last was an eye opener in terms of the process followed throughout with the help and participation of everyone in the group.

As one student said:

"SANPAD was manna from heaven for me. I had registered for a Ph.D. and it was a time of challenge for the proposal to be prepared and accepted. The process followed in the workshops opened my eyes because I realised that it is all in our minds, but the ideas need to follow a process of shaping, planning, knowledge and application. Every workshop was a milestone in the process, testing your ideas,

understanding, knowledge, innovation, application and all these things that relate to the proposal. Then there was the participation, the corrections, the debates, the comments This process made me believe in myself and two months later my proposal was accepted by my faculty higher degrees without any suggested changes".

– Building collegial bridges

The building of collegial bridges amongst cohort was mentioned by all of them with a feeling of nostalgia.

This is captured adequately in the following response:

"I loved the mixing of my colleagues, the interaction and engagement with students from all over the country. The facilitators were outstanding but what really impressed me at a personal level is how I was treated by my colleagues both inside and outside the workshops. We shared, we laughed and we really cared for each other, and this was a deep feeling I got and it grew on me when I left the place. Then I realised that bonding, sharing and friendship are so important, especially when they are maintained as in our case. Besides the intellectual contribution, the human bonding was very important for all of us.

– The opening of possibilities

It became evident that for a good number of the cohort interviewed the opening of possibilities for success became evident, thus replacing lack of belief. This was expressed by a cohort as follows:

"Before joining SANPAD, working towards my PhD degree was something I saw as impossible, or near impossible. I worked on it in a variety of ways, in different stages, using a number of notebooks. After the first and the second workshop the possibilities became more visible, tangible. The possibilities widened throughout, I was now surer where I was going, my supervisor saw the difference in my drafts. My proposal writing became more coherent, until my proposal was accepted".

– Intellectual stimulation

Besides the collegial feelings and togetherness, intellectual stimulation became a part of the process as one interviewee confessed:

"I have learned so much and really felt grateful and privileged that I have been given such an advantage in the process towards intellectual stimulation through important and insightful presentations, discussions and challenges. I learnt a and z of thinking, relating concepts with questions, relationships and even statistics. It helped me immensely as a student and a supervisor. This intellectual stimulation provided me with a great belief in myself. The experience was once in a life time".

– Real empowerment

There was a common thread amongst all cohorts that a programme empowered them as academics, researchers and human beings.

As one of the interviewees said:

"The RCI has helped me, been empowered at all levels by providing for me not only with a thorough understanding of methodologies and way of thinking, but also all these relationships underlying the research process such as the conceptual frameworks, the proper formulation of research questions, the objectives , the timing and other details inherent in this exercise and the contingencies embodied in all these steps. The interaction with top researchers and academics in the top of their field and their whole attitude empowered me as a person and a researcher".

Perhaps the most moving tribute to the programme is to be found in a Ph.D. thesis whose author graduated from a top South African University in 2009. The final part of his "Acknowledgements" reads as follows:

The research and financial support of SANPAD is acknowledged with gratitude. I gained enormous support in methodology through the dedicated South African and Dutch academics, especially Dr.A. Padayachee, the CEO.

I salute you all.

Anshu Padayachee

Acknowledgments

Governance and Development in Southern Africa – Development Policy Review Network

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On 13 November 2007, some thirty Dutch and South African practitioners, policy makers and academics, all working on the subject of governance and development in southern Africa, came together for a day of discussions. Although all grappling with similar subjects in their respective professional lives, these three groups of professionals seldom meet each other in forums that are explicitly designed to foster debates and cooperation across the professional boundary lines.

The Proceedings from the Third DPRN regional expert meeting on Southern Africa (2007 – published 2010) .

1. *[John Belt and Marja Spierenburg – Public-private partnerships in rural development. Downplaying the role of politics and power relations](#)*

2. *[Henk Molenaar and Marjoke Oosterom – Negotiating knowledges for development](#)*

3. *[Anshu Padayachee and Ashwin Desai – Post-apartheid South Africa and the crisis of expectation](#)*

4. *[David Sogge, Bob van der Winden and René Roemersma – Civil domains and arenas in Zimbabwean settings. Democracy and responsiveness revisited.](#)*

5. *[Paul Hebinck, Derick Fay and Kwandiwe Kondlo – Land and agrarian reform in South Africa: Caught by continuities](#)*

6. *[Jan Kees van Donge and Melle Leenstra – Donors and governance in Southern Africa. The case of Zambia, with Zimbabwe as a counterpoint.](#)*

Introduction:

Ton Dietz, the initiator of the Development Policy Review Network (DPRN), envisioned that bringing these professional groups together, with a focus on various regions in the world, would generate more lasting interaction and cooperation between them in the future. The DPRN therefore set out to coordinate a series of meetings, divided into 13 world regions, to bring together practitioners, policy makers and academics to discuss questions like: What kind of academic knowledge do practitioners need in the field? How can policy makers benefit from the practitioners' and academics' insights when it comes to formulating adequate policies? What policies facilitate the most appropriate conditions for academics to do relevant research, and how can policy makers stimulate and guide practitioners in the field? Highly relevant questions in a time when Dutch society increasingly seems to question the net results and relevance of money spent on development. Questions that are therefore of almost existential relevance for all three designated groups.

Harry Wels and his SAVUSA-team (South Africa – VU University Amsterdam – Strategic Alliances) were asked to organize the series of three meetings specifically geared towards southern Africa, together with the Dutch office of SANPAD (South Africa Netherlands research Programme for Alternatives in Development). The first DPRN southern Africa day was held on 23 September 2005 under the provocative slogan 'Hug or hit' (see appendix II for the programme of the day). The second meeting in 2006 focused on '(De)mediatizing southern Africa: HIV, Poverty and the State' (see appendix III for the programme of the day). Both meetings were characterized by interesting discussions and promising new acquaintances. However, the organisers regretted the fact that apart from the yearly DPRN-report, there would be no tangible output of the meetings to reflect the problems and insights resulting from them.

With support from the DPRN, SAVUSA and SANPAD therefore decided to work towards publishing a volume of proceedings from the third and final DPRN

meeting in 2007. The presenters of the day, combinations of people from the three designated groups, were asked to base their presentations on a pre-circulated written paper and then reconsider their work once more afterwards, in the light of the discussions and viewpoints that the presentations and papers would engender during the day. For an optimal result in terms of debates and input for the final papers, Adam Habib was willing to chair and facilitate the day.

We are happy to present you with the resulting proceedings in this book. We hope that they will provide the reader with an overview of the diversity in the southern African field, but that it will also offer best practices and ways in which professionals, whether they be academics, practitioners or policy makers, can work together and stimulate each other. All contributions cover themes that will appeal to academics, policy makers and practitioners alike.

The *first chapter* by Marja Spierenburg and John Belt provides a discussion of the power relations at play in private-public collaborations within the field of development cooperation.

Henk Molenaar and Marjoke Oosterom look at the debate about the potential of local knowledge (also referred to as 'indigenous' or 'traditional knowledge') for development in *chapter 2*. Their chapter analyses the role of various knowledges in development and reflects on the implications thereof for policy making.

In *chapter 3*, Anshu Padayachee and Ashwin Desai study the mechanisms underlying the 'crisis of expectation' that is arising in South Africa as critical questions are been asked about the country's transition and especially about the success of its own macro-economic programmes in terms of poverty and inequality.

In *chapter 4*, Paul Hebinck, Derek Fay and Kwandile Kondlo contest the general idea that land reform in South Africa represents a break with the past by exploring a counterclaim that contemporary land reform policy and practices in fact represent continuities embedded in the practices of state institutions.

The *next chapter* has Jan Kees van Donge and Melle Leenstra disputing the criticism on governance as a development concern, which is often considered illegitimate, irrelevant or ineffective. To do this they make use of four narratives on the relationship between the recipient country and the donor community: election observation, concern with corruption and constitutional reform in

Zambia, and a general overview of these relations in Zimbabwe.

In the *final chapter*, David Sogge, Bob van der Winden and René Roemersma employ a theoretical model based mainly on Habermas's idea of the public sphere, to portray civil society as a space, hence civil domain, rather than a set of organisations and actors, which is how donors and others conventionally see civil society. By means of this model the authors analyse some of the constraints and possibilities of political development, and the prospect for responsive governance, in Zimbabwe.

The publication of this book also gives us the opportunity to acknowledge the support and contributions of people in organizing the three DPRN meetings, and the final one in particular: Saskia Stehouwer and Henk Goede from SAVUSA and Nelke van der Lans and Colette Gerards from the Dutch office of SANPAD. Ultimate credits and thanks must naturally go to the DPRN, especially Mirjam Ros, for making these meetings possible and for their involvement and support, and to the various paper writers, presenters, discussants and participating audiences that made this series of three DPRN Meetings on southern Africa memorable. These proceedings are the tangible proof of that.

Amsterdam, February 2010

Public-Private Partnerships in Rural Development, Downplaying the Role of Politics and Power Relations – DPRN Two

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Introduction

Public Private Partnerships, or PPPs, are increasingly popular in the field of international development cooperation and sustainable development. Though PPPs are not a new phenomenon (see Linder 1999), their popularity in policy circles has steadily augmented since the late 1980s (Entwistle and Martin 2005) to a point where their promotion seems to have become a dominant 'development narrative' (cf. Roe 1991; 1995). PPPs are promoted as the most logical solution to a variety of service delivery and development problems, and are often presented as 'technical', politically neutral solutions (cf. Ferguson 1990). Nevertheless, the promotion and development of PPPs has a distinct ideological background and flavour (Linder 1999; Entwistle and Martin 2005). PPP's present popularity followed after their (re-)introduction in the wake of the wave of privatisation of government institutions by conservative governments in Europe and the US – notably the Reagan administration and Thatcher's government – in the 1980s. The idea of the need for the privatisation of government services was exported to developing countries through the many Structural Adjustment Programmes enforced by the IMF and supported by the World Bank. PPPs were considered 'softer' versions of the same process (Entwistle and Martin 2005) that would have less dramatic social consequences and therefore would be more palatable to the general public. Subsequently, New Labour stressed the partnership idea in PPPs, and the influence it is supposed to accord not only to the corporate sector, but also to civil society organisations (ibid.). However, there is an ongoing debate about whether the growing influence of civil society organisations is a counterpoint to the neo-liberal approach, as Escobar (1995) argues, or whether this is part and parcel of a neo-liberal approach (see e.g. Levine 2002).

In the growing body of literature on PPPs, two main streams are notable (Brinkerhoff 2002). The first stream concerns prescriptive literature, often written

from a public administration or management perspective, focusing on characteristics of PPPs and providing recommendations concerning how to establish PPPs. Rarely, however, does this kind of literature address the ideological underpinnings of the promotion of PPPs, nor does it question the concept of partnerships and the inherent power relations within PPPs. Furthermore, in much of this type of literature it is suggested that the public sector can learn more from the private sector in terms of efficiency, orientation towards results, and flexibility than the other way around (see e.g. Brunsson and Sahlin-Anderson 2000; Batley 2004). A second stream concerns more critical studies of PPPs, often more empirically based, documenting the failure of many PPPs (see e.g. Fowler 1998; Edwards and Hulme, Koppejan 2005; 1996). These studies are more likely to address the ideological background of PPP-initiatives, and to criticise the – often implicit – assumption that all partners within PPPs are equal. Nevertheless, in-depth case studies of how power relations are shaped and affect PPPs are still rare (see for exceptions Mosse 2004; Lauri 2005), and the critical scholars often hesitate to reflect on ways of addressing power relations in PPPs and provide recommendations to ensure PPPs have a positive impact on the poor .

In this paper we will focus explicitly on power relations at play in PPPs and the ways in which some development practitioners try to address these. In relation to this, we will also address the direction of the flow of ideas about 'appropriate' organisation models from the private sector to the public sector, as well as from the private for-profit sector to the private non-profit sector. We will focus mainly on PPPs in southern Africa, notably in the field of agriculture, drawing on cases related to the development and support of production and marketing chains, and the role of PPPs in land reforms.

We will start our paper with an analysis of the history and ideological background of the 'hype' in PPPs, addressing the economic models underlying the promotion of PPPs, and the ideal types of organisational models implicit in many of the policy recommendations concerning PPPs.

Background of 'PPP fashion' in rural development: The travelling of powerful ideas

Proponents of PPPs present them as a new generation of management and governance reforms, developed in the late 1980s, which are 'especially suited to

the contemporary economic and political imperatives for efficiency and quality' (Linder 1999: 35). Yet, PPPs are not all that new a phenomenon – think for instance of the role accorded by colonial governments to church organisations in educating the colonized (see e.g. Maxwell 1997). In the 1970s PPPs were popular in the United States to foster the development of inner cities (Linder 1999). The contributions of these partnerships to development were, however, mixed at best (Stephenson 1991; Linder 1999), so one can wonder why they resurged in the late 1980s.

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In the 1980s, the United Kingdom and the United States saw the advent of conservative administrations, bent on reducing state expenditure and increasing the role of market forces. A wave of privatisations of public services and corporations followed (Starr 1988; Linder 1999; Entwistle and Martin 2006). The fall of the Berlin Wall at the end of the decade strengthened beliefs in the appropriateness of this approach. Through the international monetary institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank (the Washington Consensus), it was exported to the developing countries who could no longer approach the Eastern bloc – and ultimately to the Eastern bloc too (Wedel 2003). Yet, the restructuring of the state, and the privatisations – in the developing countries introduced as Structural Adjustment Programmes – led to social unrest as jobs were lost and government subsidies cut – rendering education and health care less accessible to the poor. In the mid-1990s the conservative parties in the UK and US lost the elections, but the new governments did not abandon the market-driven approach, but rather opted for neo-liberal market-driven approach instead of a neo-conservative one. The focus, however, shifted from privatisations to the promotion of Public Private Partnerships – these were seen as 'softer' versions of privatisation, more palatable to the general public (Linder 1999). According to Entwistle and Martin

(2006), the new Labour government in the UK in addition stressed that the promotion of PPPs also offered possibilities for NGOs, supposedly representing 'the public', to participate in service delivery and policy-making. Again, this approach was exported to developing countries in the form of the New Policy Agenda (Fowler 1998).

The basic premises of neo-liberalism are rarely questioned by policy-makers, despite the uneven distribution of economic growth and the worldwide growing gap between the rich and the poor. In South Africa, for example, the neo-liberal development programmes GEAR and ASGISA adopted by the post-Apartheid government have led to considerable economic growth, but at the same time the middle and upper income groups in 2007 had three times more spending capacity than in 1994, while the lower income groups and the poor had four times less spending capacity.**1** Alternative views on economic development exist – see for example the New Economics Foundation which challenges the need for economic growth as a premise for development (Woodward and Simms, 2006) **2** – but these appear not to be taken seriously by governments in the North and the Washington monetary institutions, though perhaps the current economic crisis may change this.

The neo-liberal approach not only travelled across the globe, but also across sectors. Many public sector reforms were based on the idea that the public sector should perform in a more business-like manner, become more efficient in service delivery, respond to the market. These reforms, often referred to as New Public Management, took an abstracted private for-profit organisation model as its point of reference, according to Brunsson and Sahlin-Andersson (2000). Proponents of NPM portray the public sector as slow in responding to changes in society and inefficient. Hence, in many cases the focus is mainly on what the public sector can learn from the private for-profit sector, and little attention is paid to what the latter can learn from the public sector. Critics warn that as a result issues such as accountability and democratic control over the public sector are ignored (ibid.). They question the necessity of the directionality of the flow of ideas and principles and remark that the public's perceptions of and demands from the private for-profit sector are also changing, and that when it comes to for instance Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the private for-profit sector might learn from the public and non-profit sector as well. According to Elbers (2004) some transfer from the public and private non-profit sector to the private for-profit sector is

notable, but warns that in many cases CSR is used to boost the images of corporations and does not entail a veritable application of principles from the public and non-profit sector.

Yet, the idea of the need to learn from the private for-profit sector appears to be very powerful and is extended to the private non-profit sector, especially through the New Policy Agenda (NPA). The NPA stresses the need for more contract-like relationships between the private non-profit sector and donors. Donors of the private non-profit sector increasingly demand that the latter demonstrate their efficiency by measuring their performance and detailed accounting of their expenses. Edwards and Hulme (1996) warn that this could result in non-profit organisations becoming more accountable to the donors rather than to the people that are to benefit from their activities. As a result, non-profit organisations, which were supposed to be efficient because they allegedly were closer to those to whom they provide services, lose touch with their 'target groups'. They also warn that many of the lessons that the non-profit sector learned 'the hard way' are being ignored now that the sector is becoming more businesslike. These lessons include, for instance that participation, empowerment, and local ownership of socio-economic development processes is crucial but that participation and development are long-term processes, notoriously difficult to measure, monitor and predict. The same applies to institutional development. Monaci and Caselli (2005) are less pessimistic. They argue that what they term market isomorphism does not occur through a process of diffusing ideas from the profit-sector to the non-profit sector, but through a process of translation. Certain ideas and processes from the profit sector which actors from the non-profit sector deem valuable as well, are not simply copied, but translated in such a way that they apply and are useful to the non-profit sector. Thomas and Davies (2005) note a similar adaptability among managers in the public sector, who resist, adapt and transform certain NPM principles. Nevertheless, Monaci and Caselli (2005) do warn that in some cases, governments and/or donor may impose certain principles from the profit-sector to the non-profit sector.

Here we touch upon the issue of power relations. In much of the prescriptive literature on PPPs, a lot of emphasis is put on the need for good communication between the different parties involved (see Brinkerhoff 2002). This is assuming that 'miscommunication' is often inadvertently, and not part of a deliberate strategy to gain the upper hand. What is ignored in much of this type of literature

is that not all of the partners in a partnership may be equal. Differential access to information may play a role, but also, as mentioned above, dependency on funding may also influence power relations (see Edwards and Hulme 1996; Klijn and Teisman 2003). Additionally, some of the parties may be lacking administrative capacities and/or financial resources to access or fully participate in partnerships. Furthermore, as Derkzen and Bock (2007) mention, some parties may also lack social and symbolic capital to access and participate meaningfully in PPPs. In a study of rural development in the Netherlands, Derkzen and Bock (ibid.) noted how certain parties were labelled as professionals and seen as experts; their inputs were considered more valuable, whereas representatives of local farmers' organisations saw their knowledge devalued. We argue that this does not only apply to individuals; some organisations and institutions may also be considered more professional because they conform to dominant norms about how 'proper' organisations and institutions are organised, regulated and operate (Brunsson and Sahlin-Andersson 2000). As we will describe below, sometimes local actors will have certain organisational and institutional models enforced upon them in order to be able to participate in PPPs. This may sometimes lead to conflicts or problems with the constituencies of those actors, who no longer trust the newly created organisations or institutions. In other cases, the formalisation of organisations and institutions renders them accessible only to elites (see Mosse 2004). Nevertheless, as Derkzen and Bock (2007) show, power relations are dynamic, and local or civil society organisations may over time increase their social and symbolic capital. Furthermore, power relations depend on the institutional context; in some cases civil society organisations can seriously frustrate PPP's activities (Eberg et al. 1996; Ghere 1996), as has occurred in the case of a number infrastructural projects in The Netherlands.

Representation and accountability hence are issues that need to be taken into account in relation to PPPs. When public institutions enter into PPPs, what happens to the public control over their activities and goals? When it comes to the non-profit organisations, how accountable are they to their constituencies, do the latter have any control over the organisations' goals and activities (see Edwards and Hulme 1996), especially if these are subject to negotiations with the other partners? It is likely that the distribution of – beneficial – outcomes of PPPs reflect power relations; they are not neutral tools realising win-win situations for all partners involved.

A related issue is that it is not always clear which organisations and institutions are public, and which ones are private (Starr 1988; Entwistle and Martin 2005). The privatisations of the 1980s as well as the participation of public institutions in PPPs have resulted in the further blurring of the boundaries – sometimes on purpose by private actors gaining control over public institutions, as Wedel (2003) shows in her study of privatisation and PPPs in post-socialist Russia. Edwards and Hulme (1996) have shown how private non-profit organisations are often very closely linked to governments, another case of blurring the boundaries. Furthermore, the boundaries between private for-profit and private non-profit sectors are increasingly becoming blurred as well. For instance, large international conservation organisations are becoming dependent on business philanthropy, which influences their policies and programmes (Hutton et al. 2005), and a growing number of NGOs start their own businesses (see e.g. www.ICCO.nl). Starr (1988) argues that the way the public and private sectors and institutions are constituted varies from country to country, depending on a country's – institutional – history. The same applies to defining public goods and private goods – especially relevant in the case of agriculture and land reforms as will be described below. He therefore concludes that general statements about the effects of privatisation and PPPs are very hard to make. Yet other authors, such as Klijn and Teisman (2003) argue that because there is such a clear separation between the public and the private sector – especially in terms of what they refer to as organisation culture – it is very difficult to make PPPs work. Nevertheless what does emerge from a careful reading of the literature available on PPPs is that it is important not to take PPPs at face value. Not one PPP is similar to another and careful study of the power relations, goals, interests and mode of organisation and operation, and scale of operation is needed, as well as an analysis of the institutional context in which PPPs are operating in order to understand the distribution of benefits, costs and risks among the partners.

In this chapter we will take the above into account in the analysis of two examples of PPPs in the agricultural sector in southern Africa. Attention will be paid to power relations within these PPPs, looking at whether and how governments, NGOs and other partners involved cope with differences in interests and power.

PPPs in practice

One striking observation is that those involved in PPP programmes pursuing development goals developed by Northern countries such as Germany, the United

Kingdom, and the Netherlands are unwarrantedly positive about the approach – as one of the authors has noted several times during meetings with fellow policy-makers and development practitioners. This feeling is supported by a focus on *inputs* and not on *outputs* or results. There certainly is no lack of information on the number of millions of Euros invested in PPPs, the number of companies involved and the total size of these companies. Yet, the programme reports are worryingly silent about tangible results, such as employment generation, increase of profits for participating companies and other actors (such as farmers), benefits for consumers and the economy as a whole. The positive atmosphere around PPPs is generally not supported by a solid analysis of the results obtained. The design of the programmes tends to be extremely weak in the areas of monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment – areas that nowadays receive a lot of attention in the design of 'conventional' development projects, after heavy criticism in the past that it was unclear what the outcomes were of such projects (see Edwards and Hulme 1996). As a consequence, it is impossible to compare the effectiveness and efficiency of public investments in PPP with the established 'traditional' mechanisms of development cooperation. In this way, PPP advocates fail to surpass rhetoric.

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The 2008 World Bank world development report entitled 'Agriculture for Development' (World Bank 2007) stresses the key role of agriculture in development, but also the need to (further) develop the links between agriculture and other economic sectors. The report promotes PPPs as a key approach to unleash the potential of the agricultural sector, referring to examples in agricultural research and extension. The arguments to support the concept of PPPs do, however, not surpass the level of PPPs being 'the magical solution'. PPPs are described in such general and positive terms that nobody can be really

against them. No details are provided about how PPPs could actually contribute to agricultural development and what the conditions are for positive contributions to development and poverty alleviation. This influential report clearly underpins the 'value free' approach to PPPs; it's merely a 'technical trick'. Is this 'trick' so obvious that one does not need to pay much attention how to apply it in practice? Can't we all see the clear 'win-win' situations that emerge? Can't we all see how it can be applied under a wide variety of political, institutional, economic and social contexts? The cases provided below tend to generate rather uncomforting questions around all of these issues.

Dutch Government support to PPP under WSSD

The Dutch government has entered the PPP arena through its endorsement of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg. Its contribution to WSSD lies in its commitment to support the implementation of several PPPs in the South, involving projects in agriculture and fisheries.**3**   This commitment is shared between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality.

A quick reading of the WSSD-PPP documentation **4** triggers the conclusion that these firmly endorse the belief that PPPs are neutral constructions, generating win-win situations. A closer look at the projects does, however, lead one to pose key questions around who is participating (in planning, execution and/or supervision), who benefits most, who invests most, who shoulders most of the risks, how are 'social' and 'commercial' objectives balanced, and how do local interests relate to Dutch interests.

In most WSSD-PPPs sponsored by the Dutch government, a dominant role is being played by a Dutch company – be it in the Netherlands or abroad – in the design, operation and often in the ultimate benefits of the project as well. In Kenya for instance, it is striking that nearly all support is concentrated on one Dutch owned vegetable processing cum export company. **5** The donor money is almost exclusively being used for technological experiments, installing equipment and dealing with technical production issues. Herein, Dutch experts, technology providers, and technicians play an important role. The relation with local farmers seems to be based on the idea they are merely deliverers of produce to the company instead of actors who are an integral part of the entire initiative. The farmers were not consulted about the PPP, nor are they shareholders. The

certification required for exportation is in the hands of the export company, providing it with an important power position in the chain. It is no surprise that under these conditions farmers are hesitant to enter into a supply relationship with the company. A marginal amount of resources has been directed to establishing relations with farmers and other local stakeholders. Among company staff and agricultural technology advisors involved in the project there was a general uneasiness to deal with the social-economic issues at hand, in practice resulting in deviating resources that were, or potentially could be, earmarked for consultations with farmers in the field. Consultations concerning market relationships, existing farming systems, institutional arrangements, farmers' needs and perceptions as well as potential interesting outgrowers' schemes, were not realised. Local conditions, either social, political or economic, only played a marginal role in the project set-up. Under the pretext of PPPs, one could conclude that the donor money has merely been used to strengthen a Dutch export company establishing its business in Kenya. Furthermore, Dutch experts and providers of technology have both benefited from the PPP and played a key role in shaping it. The 'public P' in the PPP seems to be focused on the policy objective of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Safety to assist the establishment, functioning and expansion of Dutch agricultural firms abroad and the export of Dutch agricultural knowledge and technology. This objective partly overlaps with some of the objectives of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but far less with those objectives of the same Ministry concerning international cooperation. Note that there is no eminent role being played by the Kenyan public sector.

The Kenya example would call for a closer look at the Dutch case to see whether PPPs are being used for narrowly defined company's interest and hence could be a new packaging of more traditional forms of export promotion involving subsidised knowledge and technology. Are PPPs a new brand name for the promotion of Dutch agribusiness in the developing world? Is the Dutch government assisting starting and established entrepreneurs in developing countries with grants that are earmarked as PPPs and is it masking this support for the Dutch private sector by using a development and poverty alleviation rhetoric? This would call for a deeper look into the decision making between the commercial agenda, as pursued by Ministry of Agriculture and the development agenda, as pursued by the Ministry of Development Cooperation.

In the Kenyan example it is clear that local farmers are not an active partner of the project but merely a passive one. It would be expected that most of the poverty alleviation aspects of the project should benefit this group; all the more reason to bring them to the forefront. The project design, however, has not provided conditions for a clear engagement with farmers. Farmers are expected to 'automatically' benefit from the establishment of the export firm which allegedly links them to overseas markets; no efforts were made to design the business in such a way as to take into account the needs, benefits and aspirations of the farmers. In other words, the project design exhibits an implicit belief in the power of the 'trickle down effect'. The example, however, also shows that the farmers are not entirely gullible or powerless. The exporter has not been able to convince the farmers to produce for and supply to the company. The farmers show their power by not delivering the produce demanded, and continue to focus on products that can (also) be sold at the local market, rather than risking a shift to products that are only suitable for export. By refusing to deliver to the company, the farmers seriously undermine the development of the business. An opportunity, at least a potential one, has been lost, not only to the Dutch company, but also to the farmers. It is clear that the farmers are not benefiting from the investment. With the underlying assumption that the private sector is best suited to develop the agricultural market and 'do business', it is surprising that a key element of any business proposition, procurement, is not properly tackled by the export company. As a result, there is a clear danger that the PPP will only cater for hardware delivery involving equipment which will not be used – or not to its full capacity. The comparison with the well-known 'white elephants' of 'old school' development projects comes to mind here. This points to a striking lack of abilities to learn within the sector of development cooperation, to capture lessons learnt, vigorously disseminate them and ensure they will be respected when starting up new initiatives.

The question is to what extent the drive to 'do something with PPPs' and an eagerness to honour commitments made in the international arena, the WSSD, has influenced Dutch civil servants to buy into a PPP project such as the one referred to above. Could it be the power of the PPP discourse, the drive to experiment with a new concept, the pursuit not to stay behind concerning the international PPP hype, the tempting benefits of dealing with economic issues through private sector actors, the lobby of Dutch knowledge and technology experts to fund the project?

PPPs in land reform in South Africa

Another case illustrating some of our arguments concerns the so-called Strategic Partnerships in land reform in South Africa.

In 1994, after the transition to democracy, the South African government adopted an ambitious and wide-ranging land reform policy which consisted of several sub-programmes:

1) land restitution, which allowed communities and individuals who had lost their land as a result of discriminatory legislation to reclaim their land;

2) land redistribution, which assisted historically disadvantaged groups and individuals in obtaining land to foster a more equitable distribution of land;

3) tenure reform aiming at securing land rights for those members of historically disadvantaged groups living on commercial farms, in the former homelands or those who hold land in communal tenure.

The land reform policy was underpinned by constitutionally guaranteed rights to land restitution and land tenure security. Over the years, however, the land reform programme stagnated, and a shift has taken place towards a greater dominance of the market and commercial farming. At first, this shift was especially visible in the redistribution component of land reform. Land needed for this component was always bought on a 'willing seller, willing buyer' basis for prices set by the market, but what changed was the assistance provided by the state to land reform beneficiaries (Hall 2004; Lahiff 2003). Initially, the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) provided grants to poor people to access to land for 'subsistence' purposes. However, land prices were and are high, and the grants were often insufficient to both obtain land *and* invest in agricultural production. With the adoption of the government's neo liberal macroeconomic strategy Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), the basic principles of which continue to be important in the new (introduced in 2006) programme Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative South Africa (ASGISA), subsidies, protection and other support to agriculture have been severely cut back (Mayson 2003; Tilley 2002). As a result land reform beneficiaries face substantial obstacles in engaging in agricultural production. The Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs, replaced SLAG by the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) policy which made larger grants available, but mainly to those able to contribute to the investment in land and agricultural production. Hall et al. (2003: 5) argue that though LRAD supposedly contributes to the development of a range of agricultural developments from 'subsistence' to

commercial farming, in practice the programme favours commercial farming of those with substantial assets. According to Mayson (2003), for those with less assets, the new approach renders partnerships with the private sector in the form of joint ventures attractive, and such partnerships are actively promoted by the South African government (Mayson 2003).

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Recently, the shift towards an emphasis on commercial farming is also notable in restitution cases. In the Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces, government was struggling with restitution claims on farms with high-value export crops, fearing that return of the land to claimant communities would result in a drop of production and export revenues. It is especially in this province that the new model of Strategic Partnerships between land reform beneficiaries and the private sector was embraced with great enthusiasm (Fraser 2007; Derman et al. 2007). This new model stipulates that successful claimants, organised in a Communal Property Association (CPA) or Trust, must form a joint venture with a private sector entrepreneur. This entrepreneur invests working capital, and will take control of all farm management for a period of ten years, with the option of renewal for another period (ibid.: 2-3). The idea behind the model is that it provides land reform beneficiaries not only with capital to invest in agricultural production, but also with the expertise of commercial farmers or private companies (ibid.; Mayson 2003). The entrepreneur is supposed to train the land reform beneficiaries in how to operate a successful commercial farm, and ensure that the beneficiaries receive a profitable and functioning farm at the termination of the contract. According to the Terms of Reference developed for accreditation of strategic partnerships (DLA 2008: 5) experience in capacity building is one of the criteria used for selecting private sector partners. Whether and how capacity building is integrated in the business plans developed by strategic partnerships still needs to be investigated.

Many government officials as well as organisations representing commercial farmers show a deep mistrust of small-holder farming, and consider the commercial farm model to be superior. In interviews **6** in Limpopo Province the issue of land reforms and restitution was responded to with fears about the 'vandalising' and 'destruction' of farms handed over for restitution or redistribution. A report recently published by Centre for Development and Enterprise in South Africa stating that land reforms arguing that land reforms lead to a deterioration of production received a lot of publicity (see e.g. *Mail and Guardian*, 6, 12, 13 May 2008). The report claims that 50% of all land reform projects have failed, and relates this to the priority that government allegedly till recently accorded to small-scale production in land reform projects. It cites the Director General of the Land Affairs Department who warns of 'assets dying in the hands of the poor' (*Mail and Guardian*, 6 May 2008). Critics of the report, however, argue that while indeed there are problems with the productivity of land reform schemes, the assumption that government has favoured small-scale production in land reform is incorrect, and that, on the contrary, small-scale producers on restituted/redistributed land are hampered by '… inappropriate large-scale models of agriculture foisted on to them by government officials and consultants. With the absence of post-settlement support, this is a key reason for the high failure rate in land reform' (*Mail and Guardian*, 13 May 2008; see also Lahiff et al. 2008; Fraser 2007). Detailed case studies in Limpopo Province that did involve small-scale farming revealed that despite these aforementioned obstacles, most beneficiaries have seen improvements in their livelihoods, though not as much as they expected when they joined the scheme. Before land is handed over, the CPAs or Trusts have to develop a business plan in cooperation with government agricultural extension officers or consultants. The business plans that were developed for each of the schemes studied were deemed unrealistic in terms of economic returns predicted and estimated costs (Lahiff et al. 2008). Although beneficiaries themselves were positive about livelihood improvements, the Department of Agriculture is anxious about allegations that land reform is leading to decreased production, and has started a process of de-registering members of CPAs and Trusts as beneficiaries if these are seen not to participate in production. Many active members fear that they may be judged as insufficiently productive, especially if their performance is evaluated against these highly unrealistic business plans, and that they may be deregistered against their will (ibid.: 62). Apart from the fact that there is little legal basis for government to de-register members of CPAs and Trusts, Lahiff et al. (2008) also argue that no drop in

production has taken place, since in the cases studied, the farms concerned had been left idle for an extensive period before they were handed over to the beneficiaries – this has been the case with many farms that were offered by their owners to government for restitution or redistribution. Nevertheless, the Director of the CDE calls for a change in land reform: 'We are proposing a public-private partnership to provide the leadership South Africa needs to show that we can resolve a difficult issue arising from our history and do it in such a way that everyone benefits from the process' (see www.cde.org.za). The new model of Strategic Partnerships adopted in Limpopo Province preceded this call. It fits with a long historical tradition in South Africa – as in many neighbouring countries too – of mistrust in small-scale producers (see Hughes 2006; Spierenburg 2004).

The model of Strategic Partnerships is presented as *the* solution that will provide justice to the landless and contribute to poverty alleviation while maintaining high production levels. The assumptions underlying the model, however, can be questioned. The high levels of productivity before transfer are assumed rather than ascertained. Though further study is needed, several staff members of organisations involved in assisting land reform beneficiaries have complained that quite a number of the citrus groves offered for partnerships in land reform were in need of replacement of trees.**7** This is consistent with earlier findings about the lack of quality and productivity of farms offered for land reform under the 'willing seller willing buyer principle'. (Hall 2004: 18). Another, more implicit, assumption is that Strategic Partnerships are 'real' partnerships in which all partners are equal (cf. Brinkerhoff 2002). No attention is being paid to power relations between the private sector or commercial farmers on the one hand and land reform beneficiaries on the other, or within these groups. The role of the government officials in mediating between the groups appears to be limited. Many appear to be biased towards the commercial farm model. Furthermore, one of the most consistent complaints about land reforms concerns the lack of government capacity and funding to assist land reform beneficiaries (Hall et al. 2003; Hall 2004; Lahiff 2003).

The potential benefits of Strategic Partnerships for beneficiaries, as cited by Derman et al. (2007) include rent for use of the land paid by the private sector partner, a share of the profits, preferential employment, training opportunities and the promise that they will receive profitable and functioning farms at the termination of the contracts and lease agreements (see also CDE 2005). However,

it is questionable whether the beneficiaries – or rather their CPAs or Trusts – will be able to ensure that training is part of the business plan, or that they have the capacity and means to put leverage on the private sector partner to honour promises of training. Beneficiaries may not only need training for the production side, but also in management and, and this is often neglected, in marketing products The partnerships may result in job opportunities, but the question is which kind of jobs for which people; it may very well be that old relations of production will be continued with only lowly paid jobs for a segment of the beneficiary community. Furthermore, as some have warned, if the labourers belong to the beneficiary community, they are shareholders, and private sector partners may therefore argue that labour legislation pertaining to working conditions and minimum wage does not apply.**8** There is also the issue of what happens to the farm labourers who were working at the farm before transfer, but who are not part of the beneficiary community. Derman et al. (2007) found at least one case in which all former labourers were fired when the farm was handed over to the claimant community. Further study is needed to obtain a better understanding of the labour issues in Strategic Partnerships.

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Commercial farmers and companies also have interests in developing joint ventures, given that the cutback on government support for agriculture affects commercial farmers as well. Mayson (2003) cites a number of reasons for entering into Strategic Partnerships: Firstly, there is a need to restructure farmers' and companies operations. It appears that in Limpopo Province, many commercial farmers are withdrawing from the production side, and are moving into marketing. By engaging in a partnership, the potentially most risky part of the chain, the production, is allocated to the beneficiaries; if training and participation in marketing is not granted to the beneficiaries, they will bear the

highest risk in the process (Derman et al. 2007), though the distribution of risks along the value chain may vary from crop to crop. The private sector partner often obtains a management fee (more or less guaranteed as long as turnover can be maintained), a share in the profits of the company, and exclusive control of upstream and downstream activities, with potential benefits exceeding that of the farming enterprise itself. Also, by entering into partnerships with multiple communities in a specific area, each owning numerous farms, the private sector partners have the possibility of consolidating and rationalising production in a way that was not generally open to the previous owner-occupiers (ibid.: 12). While the strategic partner is required to share profits from on-farm production with the communities, no such requirement applies to other parts of the value chain, over which the strategic partner has exclusive control (ibid.: 14). Critics of the partnership model therefore warn that joint ventures are mainly ways for white commercial farmers and companies to spread the risk of engaging in an increasingly complex and capital-intensive sector, while at the same time gaining political credibility (Mayson 2003). Another reason to enter into the partnerships, namely the improvement of the marketing profile of companies. Lastly, land reform offers opportunities for accessing capital for expansion of production and corporate social responsibility – including development funds, grants and other support provided to land reform beneficiaries. For example, beneficiaries receive per household a sum between 1500 and 3000 South African Rand (SAR)**9** for the development of the land and given the fact that the model of Strategic Partnerships applies to large-scale farms, the claimed areas pertain to hundreds, in some cases thousands of beneficiary households.

Especially this last reason may lead to imbalances in the partnership. In most joint ventures the private sector partner receives 48% of the shares, the Communal Property Association of Community Trust of the beneficiaries gets 50% and 2% is for the farm workers who are not part of the beneficiary community. However, CPAs or Trusts can apply for government grants to support the development of their enterprise. It may therefore very well be that their contribution to the assets in the form of the land as well as the grants exceeds 50%, and that the private sector partner is contributing far less than their percentage of the shares justifies. Yet, this partition of the shares has become standard practice and is applied without detailed reviews of what each of the partners contributes (see also Derman et al. 2007).

The fact that the whole process of transferring the land to the beneficiaries and the approval of the partnerships takes up long periods of time, sometimes up to three years, proves to be a major obstacle. Former owners who are unsure of the outcome of the process will not invest in the maintenance of the farm, which leads to immense requirements of investment once the farm is transferred. Grants to beneficiaries even take longer to be transferred, rendering these investments difficult. In some cases the partners are the former owners, who may be short of funding too to make the investments. Commercial banks appear not to know how to deal with restituted/redistributed farms and Strategic Partnerships, and are reluctant to offer loans when it is not clear whether the land can serve as collateral.**10** In some cases, beneficiaries run the risk of a debt-trap; private sector partner offers an advance payment to be reimbursed once the grant is paid, but against high interests. Beneficiaries may feel forced to accept because of the risk that the farming assets available on the farm will be neglected while the partners are waiting for the grants, making it more difficult to restart the farm once the grants arrive.

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Negotiating contracts is difficult, and it is likely that many CPAs and Trusts do not have the capacity to do so, while many private sector partners have extensive legal and financial experience and may solicit the assistance of well-trained lawyers. Nkuzi, a land rights NGO in Limpopo Province has engaged the services of a well reputed private law firm to assist beneficiaries on a pro bono base, but the firm is based in Johannesburg; time available is limited, and the problems that beneficiaries are experiencing are many. Furthermore, beneficiaries are not always used to the fact that they actively have to approach the lawyers, and that they – as clients – have to instruct them.**11** A case in involving the Makuleke claim illustrates the difficulties. The Makuleke have successfully claimed an area in Kruger National Park (in the Limpopo Province part of the park) from which

the community was evicted in 1969. The Makuleke CPA manages its part of Kruger park through a Joint Management Board on which representatives of South African National Parks (SANParks) and Kruger National Park management are also sitting. The CPA has been granted the right to commercially exploit their part of Kruger, though their activities are subject to environmental impact assessments (see Spierenburg et al. 2006). Among the first steps taken by the Makuleke was to establish a highly profitable hunting camp on their land, which they used for a limited number of high profile hunts per year. As a second step an agreement was made with a private sector partner to develop a game lodge, called The Outpost, on the western section of their land. Recently, however, the Makuleke signed a surprisingly unfavourable agreement with another safari operator, Wilderness Safaris. The duration of this concession is forty-five years; a very long period, especially considering that the contract does little to hold the private sector partner to a certain level of performance and does not contain clear exit clauses that would allow the Makuleke to extract themselves from an unprofitable relationship. It also effectively prevents the Makuleke from hunting on the land. The community did have access to competent legal advisors. From 1997 onwards, an NGO-like structure called 'The Friends of Makuleke' provided the community with technical expertise in the land claims process, supporting the community's Legal Resources Centre attorney and as such played an important role in the success of the claim. The FoM had been disbanded shortly before the signing of the contract, but some of its former members continued to advise the Makuleke. Responses from former members were mixed. One felt that this was the best deal that the Makuleke were likely to get; another advised the Makuleke not to sign the agreement as it stood. However, this advice came one day before the signing ceremony and was not followed. The game lodge currently generates less than what was generated by the hunting operation and it remains to be seen whether Wilderness Safari's much higher projected income figures will eventually be achieved (Spierenburg et al. 2006).

A last potential problem with the Strategic Partnership model is that of power relations within the beneficiary community, and differences in visions about the use of the land resulting from socio-economic differentiation. Research by Derman et al. 2007 shows that the CPAs or Trusts, though these should be democratically elected, are not always representative of the beneficiary communities (see also Lahiff et al. 2008). Elites may capture the negotiations about the partnerships, and these have different interests than the poorer

members of the communities. For instance, when the chairman of the CPA involved in the Hoedspruit Claim, who has a salaried job, was asked whether all members of the community were in favour of the partnership, or whether perhaps some members would prefer to move onto the land themselves to farm, he replied: 'Yes, unfortunately we have many people who want to farm. In the home land we had irrigation schemes, I think that is why, but these schemes were abandoned by government years ago'. One of the partners, who owned part of the claimed land, added: 'People have large tracts they do not use. We should not move people here, but we should get the infrastructure back in so they can develop where they are now, use the funds generated by the company to do that. The irrigation schemes were left in ruins, but they can be rebuilt. We sometimes forget the potential in those areas'.

This problem with representation also points to another problem with PPPs as signalled by Starr (1988) and Wedel (2003), namely, the difficulties arising sometimes about what is public and what is private. In theory, CPAs and Trusts are democratically elected local government bodies. Hence, a partnership between a CPA or Trust and a private sector company can be rightfully termed a public-private partnership. In some cases, however, the CPA or Trust appears dominated by a few individuals who have a personal interest in the partnership, and this partnership may then very much resemble a private-private partnership – though government is still involved in approving the land transfer and the partnership. This may lead to new forms of exploitation, especially given the danger that labour legislation is considered by the partners not to apply to 'shareholders'.

Dealing with power relations within the Strategic Partnerships is by no means easy – especially since in some cases there are also internal power relations at play amongst the group of land claim beneficiaries. The Strategic Partnership model is one in which complex legal and business matters are at stake. The private sector partners, mostly experienced corporate players with extensive legal and financial experience are in a stronger position to influence the terms of the contracts than the Land Claims Commission or the land reform beneficiaries (Derman et al. 2007: 10; see also Spierenburg et al. 2006). Above, we have already discussed how certain land rights NGOs assist claimant communities by engaging the services of lawyers and para legal assistants. Derman et al. (2007: 10) describe how in one partnership lawyers have proposed numerous changes in

the contract that did not change the model but are attempts to ensure that communities have greater control over the joint operations as well as access to unused portions of the farm. To date, however, the contract has not yet been signed. Access to lawyers, however, remains difficult, and for many beneficiaries it is not easy to direct lawyers or to check the quality of their work (see Spierenburg et al. 2006).

Derman et al. (2007) however, do not only attribute threats to the better skills and more extensive experiences of the private sector, but also to the great haste with which the model is being implemented, especially in Limpopo Province. The Regional Land Claims Commission and the Provincial Department of Agriculture have developed the model without consultation with the claimant communities. No attention seems to be paid to power relations within the partnership. The private sector partners are supposed to engage in capacity building (DLA 2008), but it is not clear what will be done to ensure that capacity building will take place. Furthermore, it is likely that capacity building will not extend beyond the more technical aspects of farm operations; and hence, it is doubtful that real 'empowerment' is take place.**12** One form of protection that is provided by the state is the clause in the restitution contract that beneficiaries may not sell their land for a period of 10 years, but the question is whether this clause can protect communities from building up debts with their strategic partners that may force them to sell the land after the clause expires.

The realisation that Strategic Partnerships are fraught with power imbalances and contradictions of interests, has led another land rights NGO, the Rural Action Committee (TRAC) – operating mainly in Mpumalanga – to suggest an entirely different model. Instead of recruiting a private sector operator as a partner, TRAC proposes that land reform beneficiaries engage the services of a mentor. This mentor has experience in commercial agriculture, but since he or she is not a partner in a partnership, has no private interests that may oppose those of the beneficiaries. The mentor may at the start assume some of the management tasks to keep the farm up and running while the beneficiaries are prepared for assuming responsibilities for the management of the farm. A pilot mentorship programme was funded by a German donor, but mentors also received contributions from the beneficiaries. According to the director of TRAC **13** the pilot was promising enough for TRAC to explore ways of continuing the programme. One of the main problems experienced was the difficulty of ensuring

the continuation of production while at the same time engaging in time consuming capacity building *and* empowerment; in some cases the mentor took over management completely which then caused some frictions with beneficiaries. If the mentorship programme continues, it would be interesting to study it in more details to investigate whether it can truly offer an alternative to the Strategic Partnerships. One of the problems that remains unsolved though – and this is related to the requirement of developing a business plan for the entire land claim – which is how to deal with the differences within beneficiary communities in expectations and plans about how to use the land as well as with problems concerning control over the decision-making processes within CPAs and Trusts.

Conclusions

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In this chapter we have described the emergence of the concept of PPPs as a panacea for service delivery and economic development. The World Bank (2008) has proved an enthusiastic supporter of PPPs in agricultural development in developing countries. However, the Bank fails to elucidate exactly how PPPs are to contribute to agricultural development is not clearly spelled out, and lessons learnt from PPPs in other domains are ignored. Through the presentation and analysis of two cases concerning PPPs in agricultural development, we have questioned some of the assumptions underlying the high hopes for PPPs, and pinpointed some crucial issues that need to be addressed if PPPs are going to be used as vehicles for agricultural development.

 What is striking in both cases is the confidence that governments appear to have in the efficiency and effectiveness of the private sector. In the Kenyan case there is the implicit assumption that investment in an export company will automatically lead to a 'trickle down' effect, no need was felt to spell out how the export

company would contribute to economic development for local farmers, nor for their participation in the project design. In the South African case more attention is paid to this, strategic partners are to provide training to land reform beneficiaries to prepare them to take over the farms – though it is unclear if and how the strategic partners will be held accountable for the accomplishment of the training. Yet, in this case there appears to be no question about the commercial farming model as the only viable land use option. This model is, as Fraser (2007) also remarks, enforced upon land reform beneficiaries in the Limpopo Province. This belief in the private sector appears to be so strong, that one of the lessons learnt from more 'conventional' development programmes, namely the need for feasibility studies, monitoring and evaluation, appears to be forgotten. This is all the more remarkable as the private sector is believed to be much more 'outcome driven' than the public sector (see Brunson and Sahlin-Anderson 2000). In the Kenyan case procurement was not considered as a critical issue, and investments in technology continued as if the sourcing of produce was no problem at all. In the South African case it appears that very little monitoring takes place to check whether the obligatory training programmes are indeed implemented and whether land reform beneficiaries are prepared for taking over the farms.

Another lesson learnt from 'conventional' development programmes concerns community participation. Many studies have shown that community participation in development projects is no easy feat, but a very necessary and integral part of development projects, not just in the implementation phase, but more importantly, also in the project design phase (see e.g. Agrawal and Gibson 1999; Ribot 1999). In the Kenyan case local farmers did not play an active role in the project. As a result, farmers did not produce the crops the export firm needed, jeopardising the whole project. In the South African case, the commercial farm model is enforced upon land reform beneficiaries in Limpopo Province. The needs of beneficiaries are not taken into account. The Strategic Partnership model was a reaction to earlier failures of some of the land restitution projects, these failures were attributed to the lack of support to land reform beneficiaries (Hall and Lahiff 2003). However, the Strategic Partnership may not be the only – or for that matter the best – solution to deal with land reform failure. No attempts are made to investigate possibilities for supporting small-scale farming. In theory, land reform beneficiaries are involved in the development of the business plans for the farms. The beneficiaries, however, are not a homogeneous group, and there are indications that the partnerships are 'captured' by elite members of the

beneficiary groups, which is not an uncommon problem in development projects (see e.g. Platteau 2004). If participation is to be meaningful, local farmers and land reform beneficiaries need to be empowered in terms of capacities and skills in negotiating with private sector partners and in developing business plans. As the example of the Makuleke claimants and their negotiations with tour operators shows, negotiations and entering into contracts can be extremely complex, and many private sector companies have a huge advantage in comparison to local farmers and beneficiaries in terms of capacities, but also access to legal services. Furthermore, benefits for local farmers and land reform beneficiaries also depend upon their position in the value change, and the distribution of risks and profits along that chain. Providing local farmers and beneficiaries with insights into their relative position in the value chain is crucial.

Lastly, both cases show that in PPPs it is not always clear what the public and the private interests are, or what the roles of the different parties involved are. In the South African case the CPAs entering into partnerships with the private sector are, in theory, democratically elected local governance institutions, hence, public institutions. Yet, a risk exists that the members of the CPAs, who often belong to the elite and are advantaged vis-à-vis other community members in terms of education, will defend the interests of the elite rather than other members of the community of land reform beneficiaries and will start acting like they are forming a private company. The Kenyan case shows another complication, that of conflicting roles within governments. The interests supporting Dutch agribusiness seemed to override the interests of supporting local economic development in Kenya. The question remains whether and how public money should be used to support a private sector organisation. The participation of a public institution in a PPP may also shift the interests of that institution, shifting it towards the success of the PPP rather than in carefully taking into consideration the public interest. As Klijn and Teisman (2003) conclude from their analysis of PPPs in The Netherlands, before embarking upon a PPP, it should be clear what the interests are of the different parties involved, and what their roles are; not only within the PPP, but also considering their mandate. We would like to add that it is also crucial that this mapping of interests and roles continues at regular intervals, since these often change over time. PPPs are too easily considered as win-win strategies, and differences in approach, mandates and interests as a result are not always transparently communicated between and to all parties involved.

In sum, when reviewing the potential development impact of PPPs, a thorough review of the dynamics in power positions between and within partner(organisations) is essential. This is by no means an easy task, even if the partners involved are willing to be transparent about their interests, approaches and mandates. Lately, a number of development institutes have started to experiment with approaches to power. An example is the Power Cube approach developed in cooperation with the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex (Gaventa 2005). However, reviewing power dynamics is often not enough; if PPPs are to have a positive impact on the poorer partners, these need to be provided with capacities and skills that will enable them to better defend their interests in negotiations about and participation in PPPs. Lastly, it is important that the private (for profit) sector model is not adopted without critically reviewing its applicability to specific projects and within specific socio-economic contexts. It is crucial that learning is not unidirectional, and that the lessons learnt from past development practices should also be taken into account.

Notes

1 South African Institute of Race Relations, 'South African Survey Online – Business and Employment', accessible through: http://www.sairr.org.za/research-and-publications/the-south-africa-survey-online. See for a discussion of this trend Seekings and Nattrass (2005).

2 See also the platform for sustainable and solidarity economy organised by the famous economist Bob Goudzwaard.

3 See the website of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs: http://www.minbuza.nl/nl/ themas.milieu/milieu/internationaal_milieubeleid.html.

4 See the website of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs: http://www.minbuza.nl/nl/ themas.milieu/ milieu/internationaal_milieubeleid.html, see also the website of the Commission on Sustainable Development: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/about_partnerships.htm.

5 One of the authors has been involved in this project as an advisor.

6 These interviews were conducted in relation to a joint research project of the Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies in South Africa and the VU University of Amsterdam in which one of the authors is involved. This project is funded by

the South African Partnership for Alternative Development (SANPAD) and the VCAS Vereniging of the VU University in cooperation with the VU Centre for International Cooperation.

7 Interviews staff members of The Rural Action Committee, Nelspruit November 2007 and of MABEDI, Bushbucksridge, November 2007.

8 Interviews staff members of The Rural Action Committee, Nelspruit November 2007.

9 See the website of the Department of Land Affairs, Government of South Africa: www.pwv.gov.za. One Euro is between 11 to 12 South African Rand.

10 Interviews with members of the CPA and partners involved in the Hoedspruit claim, November 2007; interviews staff members of The Rural Action Committee, Nelspruit November 2007.

11 Interviews with staff members of Nkuzi, Makhado, February 2008.

12 See also an interview with a representative of a Fair Trade import organisation that sources citrus from Strategic Partnerships in South Africa, June 2008.

13 Interview November 2007.

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