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**CHANGE FROM THE INSIDE OUT IN TANZANIA: INVESTIGATING
CHANGE IN A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION IN BAGAMOYO,
TANZANIA, THROUGH PARTICIPATORY
ACTION RESEARCH**

**A Research Project
Presented to the Faculty of
The George L. Graziadio
School of Business and Management
Pepperdine University**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Organization Development**

**by
Katherine N. Balk**

July 2013

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This research project, completed by

KATHERINE N. BALK

under the guidance of the Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the faculty of the The George L. Graziadio School of Business and Management in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Date: July 2013

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Abstract

All over the globe, nonprofit organizations aim to strengthen communities while struggling with the restraints of limited resources. This research study involved Participatory Action Research (PAR) to examine how to build internal capacity in one such organization in Bagamoyo, Tanzania. This study was a partnership between me (the academic researcher) and organizational members and stakeholders of the Baobab Home. Through interviews and meetings, the project focus involved creating written contracts. Over the course of five meetings, contracts were researched, policies and procedures were discussed, and formal contracts were created in Swahili. Findings include a discussion of the role of the outside researcher in the PAR process, as well as the value of partnering with a cultural guide. This study also provides a look at how to use PAR to build capacity within organizations. Finally, there is a review of the project itself, its successes, and its lessons learned.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

All over the globe, nonprofit organizations aim to strengthen communities and create vibrant, healthy places for people to live. To do so these organizations battle epidemics of disease, poverty and injustice. Often, these organizations are equipped with limited resources, yet still face a high-demand from clients in desperate need of help. In developing countries nonprofit organizations are frequently working cross-culturally, with staff, volunteers and/or donors coming from wealthier nations with the intention of helping address these issues and build stronger communities.

The Baobab Home, located in Bagamoyo, Tanzania, is just such an organization. This nonprofit was established in 2004 to serve abandoned children and currently works on educating and caring for local children and families affected by poverty and HIV/AIDs. Based on a small rural farm, the Baobab Home operates a school for primary school-age children and a small orphanage, as well as serving the HIV/AIDS positive community of Bagamoyo through a breakfast program and children's support psychosocial group. With a majority of the fifteen organizational members living on the farm, along with some of the clients, the organization can be characterized as familial. The organization also works cross-culturally, with a majority of the staff being native Tanzanians, but the Executive Director and various volunteers & donors coming from countries in North America, Europe and Australia.

As a former volunteer and current Board Member of the Baobab Home, I have watched the organization's growth over the past three years. In this time I have observed how lack of financial and organizational resources has impacted the organization's

capacity to meet the needs of their clients. According to a 2011 report from USAID this is not uncommon for Civil Service Organization's (CSO's) in Tanzania. They report: "A majority of district- and rural-level CSOs tend to have lower overall capacity than urban CSOs." (USAID Democracy and Governance, 2011, p. 140) The report goes on to paint a picture of rural CSOs being unable to hire qualified staff or fill vacant positions due to lack of resources.

Financial resources are an on-going issue for The Baobab Home and limit their capacity, especially in terms of hiring a qualified manager to support the Executive Director. This research project was designed to help The Baobab Home address some of these capacity issues from the inside out. To accomplish this, Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used as a means to engage the organizational members in identifying and collaboratively addressing change initiatives within the organization.

Purpose and Significance of Study

This research study uses Participatory Action Research (PAR) to investigate and implement organizational change in a nonprofit organization, The Baobab Home, which serves the community of Bagamoyo, Tanzania in East Africa. PAR necessitates that the researcher work in collaboration with the research subjects in investigating the topic of research, as well as creating an action plan and assessments for the study. As Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) write, "in participatory research the emphasis is on a 'bottoms-up' approach with a focus on locally defined priorities and perspectives" (p. 1667). In Chapter 2, I will present more on PAR history and theory.

The purpose of this study is to deepen the understanding of how PAR can be used to enable organizational change in small, cross-cultural nonprofit organizations. The

overall question we seek to answer through this study is, “How can PAR aid in strengthening organizational systems, processes and/or relationships within the context of a Tanzanian nonprofit organization?”

This study offers an inductive look at PAR at a very practical level to create change and build capacity. This is especially important when considering the role of an outside researcher such as myself working in a foreign culture and language. PAR was selected for this study because it honors the expertise within the organization, rather than assuming that a foreigner (both to the national culture and the organizational culture) is the expert.

The significance of this study will be to assess the use of PAR in the context of The Baobab Home. The study will add to the literature on PAR as both a research and an intervention tool in a nonprofit organizational setting, in particular in an East African nonprofit.

Research Setting and Key Project Elements

Smith, Rosenzweig & Schmidt (2010) found that PAR project reporting often lacked the basic key elements of the story – the who, what, when, where & why. Since each PAR project is unique to the participant-researchers and the context in which they are living and working, I will give a basic overview on who participated within this specific project.

The academic researcher. The project began with my obligation to complete an academic thesis paper for an Organizational Development Master’s Degree. As the initiator I first approached the Executive Director of the organization to gain her permission. We discussed multiple potential topics, including investigating the impacts

of Founder's Syndrome – a term that refers to management challenges that can arise in organizations that are run by the founder. We also discussed the possibilities of meditation practices at an organizational level. In the end, it was decided to make the project as participatory as possible by interviewing all of the staff and allowing them to select a research topic that would be most useful to the organization.

It is also important to note that I have done previous work with the organization, beginning in 2010, and have served on the Board of Directors since 2011. Although I had already created relationships with a number of the organizational members, I remained an outsider in the sense that I was not a part of the day-to-day organizational operations. I also was an outsider in the sense of national culture for the majority of the participants, although the Executive Director and I were both Anglo-Americans.

Timeframe. The timeframe of this project was approximately two months. The first month was spent collecting interview data, and then transcribing and translating. The second month included the selection and implementation of the desired change project identified by the organizational members. It should be noted that this is a relatively short time frame for which to conduct a PAR project.

Coresearchers: Organizational members. The organization is made-up of a two-person management team, an American Executive Director and her Tanzanian husband. Together the two founded The Baobab Home in 2004. Since then The Executive Director has become responsible for the majority of the management decisions, with her husband playing a part-time management role. The staff consists of twelve Tanzanians and a Kenyan primary school teacher. Very few of the Tanzanian staff have more than a high school education and some less than that. Their work includes manual

labor, animal care, cooking/cleaning and childcare. For the purpose of this paper, “staff” and “management” will be called such and the term “organizational members” will refer to the collective fifteen people that make up staff and management together.

Many PAR projects focus on a subset of a community system, since they often do not have the resources to engage the entire community or organization. In this project, the entire staff system was included in the project at some level.

Extent of participation. For the purpose of data collection, all fifteen organizational members and four stakeholders were interviewed. The stakeholders included four adult clients, three of whom had been supported in their secondary and college education by the organization, and all had lived on the farm where the organization is based. The stakeholders played a role in the data gathering process, but did not participate in the subsequent research meetings.

The organizational members all participated in the interviews. In the data feedback and subsequent meetings there was varying levels of attendance. The meetings averaged approximately nine organizational members (of fifteen) in attendance and all members were able to participate in at least one of the meetings. Absences were mostly due to holiday schedules or other scheduled work. The Executive Director was present at every meeting to represent management.

Thesis Overview

Chapter 1 introduced the issue of lack of resources for Tanzanian nonprofits and how PAR will be used in this study to examine whether participatory-based research is useful in organizational change within such a nonprofit. There was also a review of the key elements of the research setting, to give the reader a contextual picture of the

organization in which PAR would be implemented. Chapter 2 provides a review of existing literature on the organization specific issue of Founder's Syndrome, as well as looking at the concept of Capacity Building in nonprofit organizations and PAR as a research methodology. Chapter 3 provides an overview of PAR as applied to The Baobab Home. Chapter 4 presents a narrative overview of the research data. Chapter 5 presents an analysis of the research findings and what they may mean for future implementation of PAR research in nonprofits in Tanzania and around the world.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Since each PAR project is unique to the community in which it is created, I will begin this literature review by looking at few of the conditions affecting The Baobab Home as an organization. In Chapter 1, I discuss the fact that the Executive Director and I considered Founder's Syndrome as potential project angle in pre-research discussion. Although in the end, we left the project focus up to the community, I think it is valuable to understand a bit more about Founder's Syndrome and its potential affects on an organization. Since the focus of this project is to understand if PAR is a useful methodology for organizational change and capacity building, I will also investigate the notion of capacity building within nonprofits. Finally, I will turn to PAR as a methodology and review the literature on its guiding principles and the distinction between the two traditions that have emerged in PAR.

Founder's Syndrome

The term Founder's Syndrome, according to Block (2004), "consists of the array of influential powers and privileges that are either exercised or attributed to the founder of a nonprofit organization (Chapter 11, para. 3). In a study that defines a framework for assessing development and capacity of nonprofits, Schuh and Leviton (2006) note that Founder's Syndrome was preventing many of the organizations they studied from "developing beyond the vision of a strong leader-founder" (p. 176).

Block and Rosenberg (2002) point out that although there was much in the literature on executive leadership in non-profits, there is little distinction made between organizations led by founders and those led by non-founders. Their survey of 302

participants confirmed that there are differences in behavior and belief between organizations led by founders and those led by non-founders. They identified that founder-led organizations often reported lower preparation for Board Meetings, more informal conduct of Board Meetings and overall lower usage of traditional governance models. In a study on the impacts of Founder's Syndrome within feminist organizations, English and Peters (2011) interviewed founders and members from feminist, founder-led organizations and confirmed Block and Rosenberg's data that "the presence of founders can affect leadership, succession planning, interaction with members, and organization growth" (p. 160) in women's nonprofits. Their study goes on to show that the influence of founders can stymie the potential for organizational growth and renewal and create a culture where employees are hesitant to express opinions contrary to those of the founder. They also conclude that more formal governance and operational procedures are a means of mitigating Founder's Syndrome.

According to Block (2004), the issues of founders syndrome arise from the type of person that chooses to dream and manifest a nonprofit organization. He characterizes them as risk-taking entrepreneurs with a high need for achievement and a personal stake in the organization they have founded. He goes on to state that they are often independent and have a low need for affiliation, thereby making them less team oriented. He also offers a reminder that these characteristics are not necessarily negative and that they can also be seen as assets attributed to "founder leadership" behavior as well.

To-date there has been little research on Founder's Syndrome and what is out there focuses primarily on power-sharing issues between Boards of Directors and founders or on succession planning for non-founder replacement leaders. Within the

scope of non-founder successors, Block and Rosenberg (2002) posit that the fact that successors with strong management skills are often sought to replace founders indicates that “founders are not necessarily skilled managers; they are primarily entrepreneurs, people with ideas and visions” (p. 364). This implies that management within the organization would likely be affected by instances of Founder’s Syndrome, although there is little to no research on the impacts on staff serving below the founder.

Capacity Building in Nonprofits

As mentioned in Chapter 1 it is not uncommon for Tanzanian nonprofits to have lower capacity due to a lack of financial resources. In a review of the literature regarding capacity building in development projects, Merino and Carmenado (2012) write: “Capacity is defined by the existence of resources, networks, leadership and group process skills and capacity building is a cyclical concept related to the development of human, organizational, institutional, and social capital” (p. 966). Another definition, offered by Schuh and Leviton is “the ability to successfully implement and complete a new project or to expand an existing one successfully” (p. 172). Letts, Ryan & Grossman (1999) merge these two ideas by positing that for a nonprofit to make a sustained, long-term impact they must have both strong program design and strong organization performance. They write, “To understand how organizational performance can drive program outcomes, and how the nonprofit sector can support better performance, means looking anew at the issue of organizational capacity” (Letts, Ryan & Grossman, 1999, Chap 1, para. 1). They define three aspects of organizational capacity – program delivery capacity, program expansion capacity and organizational adaptive capacity. As this study

investigates the organizational change from within The Baobab Home, it is organizational adaptive capacity that is of interest.

Although their study shows no consensus on definitions of organizational adaptive capacity, Merino and Carmenado (2012) study catalogues the major Organizational Capacity Characteristics identified within the literature. The table below highlights both individual & social competencies that are attributed to capacity and are tools with which to build organizational capacity (see Table 1).

Table 1

Organizational Capacity Characteristics (Merino & Carmenado, 2012)

Table 1. Organization capacity characteristics

Level	Competence & authors	Level	Competence & authors
Individual capacity	Leadership ^(2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17)	Social capacity	Participation and cooperation ^(2, 9, 10, 12, 15, 17)
	Entrepreneurship ^(2, 7, 11)		Commitment ^(6, 12, 17)
	Financial skills -Economic literacy ^(2, 3, 5, 12, 14, 16, 17)		Trust ^(2, 4, 7, 10, 12)
	Technology skills ^(2, 14)		Communication ^(5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 17)
	Political skills (Communication; Organizational; Electoral) ^(2, 5)		Network building ^(1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15)
	Planning skills ^(2, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17)		Entrepreneurship ^(2, 7)
	Management skills, changes management ^(9, 12, 14, 16, 17)		Norms ^(9, 12, 17)
			Team work ^(7, 9, 11, 17)
			Group process skills (Problem/ conflict-solving skills; consensus building, decision-making) ^(1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 14, 17)
			Sense of community, shared values ^(3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15)
			Vision and Strategy ^(8, 9, 13, 16, 17)

¹Armstrong et al. (2002); ²Aspen Institute (1996); ³Brown et al. (2001); ⁴Chaskin (2001); ⁵Cheers et al. (2005); ⁶Coleman (1988); ⁷Diallo (2005); ⁸Flora et al. (1999); ⁹Foster-Fishman et al (2001); ¹⁰Goodman et al. (1998); ¹¹Innes & Booher (2003); ¹²Kwan et al. (2003); ¹³Liou (2004); ¹⁴Lusthaus (1995); ¹⁵Maclellan-Wright et al. (2007); ¹⁶UNDP (1998); ¹⁷WRI (2008)

Note. Reprinted from “Capacity Building in Development Projects,” by F.S. Merino and I. Carmenado, 2012, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, p. 963. Copyright 2013 by Elsevier Ltd. Selection and/or peer review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Uzunboylu. Reprinted with permission.

Although there is not direct research on the correlation between capacity building and PAR, it is not difficult to see that the competencies illustrated in this table could be natural out-workings of a participative process. Within the PAR literature, Greenwood,

Whyte, Harkavy (1993) believe that participation “is an ongoing organizational learning process, a research approach that emphasizes co-learning, participation, and organizational transformation” (p. 3). When PAR is done well in an organization it should be a participative and cooperative process done with a team of individuals. Together as a group they communicate and work to solve organizational challenges. If they are successful they may establish group norms and create a sense of community, while building trust and a stronger network. This can lead to stronger commitment to the organizational change and the organization itself, as organizational members will have a stake in the organizational change they are creating. In fact, with the exception of “Entrepreneurship” and “Vision and Strategy” the social capacities identified by Merino and Carmenado (2012) are all inline with the values that are found at the heart of good PAR project. Depending on the particular project, PAR has the ability to be useful in advancing the individual level capacities identified by Merino and Carmenado (2012) as well. Leadership, political skills, planning skills and management skills may be strengthened within individuals during a PAR project. By being participative in nature, PAR lends itself to be a capacity building process within an organization.

In recent years this concept of building up nonprofit capacity has received much attention and a significant amount of both private and public funding (Merino & Carmenado, 2012; Sobeck and Agius, 2007). Yet, for small nonprofits in developing countries this type of funding and training is not typically available or affordable. For this reason PAR offers an opportunity for organization members to not only choose which organizational capacities they would like to build, but to build internal social and individual capacities through the process of organizational change.

Participatory Action Research

To date, there are a variety of research methodologies that are built on the concept of participation (Brydon-Miller, 1997). At a very basic level, they all agree that participatory research invites the community that is being researched to be a part of the research process. As Kidd & Kral (2005), write “Put colloquially, you get the people affected by a problem together, figure out what is going on as a group, and then do something about it” (p. 187). This means that each PAR project is unique to the researchers (both academic and community members) who are a part of it. Although at first glance this methodology appears quite simple and straightforward, within the literature there is much debate around what constitutes participation. This debate has led to the emergence of two distinct traditions of PAR.

Liberatory tradition of PAR. Within the liberatory tradition, PAR is seen as an outgrowth of the work of activists and researchers who were doing work during the 1960’s and 70’s in impoverished countries or communities around the world (Hall, 1992; Swantz, 2008; Rahman & Fals-Borda, 1991). This tradition emerged from the teachings of Gandhi, Marx and Gramsci (Rahman & Fals-Borda, 1991). The overarching goal was to use participation as a means for empowering the oppressed. Fals-Borda (1991) writes, “the general concept of authentic participation as defined here as rooted in cultural traditions of common people and in their real history (not the elitist version), which are resplendent with feelings and attitudes of an altruistic, cooperative and communal nature and which are genuinely democratic” (p. 5). In referencing seminal authors (Maguire, 1987; Rahman & Fals-Borda, 1991; Tandon, 1988; Gaventa, 1988; Colorado, 1988; Freire 1982, 2000; Park 1993), Hall (1992) posits that the liberatory tradition of PAR:

joins people together for radical social change; enables oppressed groups to acquire leverage for action; presents people as researchers in pursuit of answers to questions of daily struggle and survival; breaks down the distinction between the researchers and the researched; acts as a flow-through mechanism between indigenous and western science; and returns to the people the legitimacy of the knowledge they are capable of producing. (p. 17)

Within this liberatory context, the focus is almost exclusively on a community of oppressed people, as opposed to an organization or workplace. For this reason, there is a plethora of literature on nonprofits using PAR as a means to engage their community or their clients in a PAR study, but little to no research on PAR being used internally within a nonprofit organization.

Organization-focused tradition of PAR. There is another tradition within the PAR literature that is often attributed to Whyte (1991) and his colleagues. Within this tradition the research is often done in an organizational setting and the lead researcher often serves as a consultant to the organization. This form of PAR traces its roots back to social psychologist Kurt Lewin who defined the an Action Research model as proceeding “in a spiral of steps each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action and fact-finding about the result of the action” (Lewin & Lewin, 1948, section 5, para. 9). PAR distinguishes itself from Action Research through “the commitment that all participants actually do research for themselves” (McTaggart, 1997). Argyris and Schön (1991) explain that PAR “aims at creating an environment in which participants give and get valid information, make free and informed choices (including the choice to participate), and generate internal commitment to the results of their inquiry (p. 86). Essentially, PAR invites those that typically would be seen as “research subjects” within the Action Research framework to be “researchers” who are at the helm of the research process.

Key differences between liberatory and organization-focused PAR.

Liberatory PAR researchers (Brydon-Miller, 1997; Hall, 1992; Stoecker, 1999) make a very clear distinction from the work they are doing and that of people like Whyte (1991). Hall (1992) writes that Whyte's method of PAR "portrays a depoliticized process of collaborative labor-management reflection. Power and its relationship to knowledge in such a process is not central" (p. 17).

The concept of power and acknowledging power is one of the main distinctions made by liberatory PAR researchers. For the liberatory PAR thinkers, recognizing and addressing power is a necessary part of participation. Gaventa and Cornwall (2008) write, "countering power inequities involves using and producing knowledge in a way that affects popular awareness and consciousness of the issues and power relations which affect the lives of the powerless, a purpose that has often been put forward by advocates of participatory research" (p. 174). Nelson and Wright (1995) make a distinction between seeing participation as a "means" versus an "end," writing:

both types of participation imply the possibility of very different power relationships between members of a community as well as between them and the state and agency institutions. Simply put, the extent of empowerment and involvement of the local population is more limited in the first approach [as a means] than it is in the second [as an end]. (Nelson & Wright, 1995, p. 1)

Within the literature from the organization-focused tradition, one finds few references to power. This is likely because their context is narrower, looking at organizations, rather than broader economic or cultural groups. Clearly power is embedded in most organizations; one can see this simply by looking at an organizational chart, but it is unlikely that the workers are seen as oppressed people and the management seen as the tyrannical leaders. This, of course does happen, but then it is usually addressed outside

of the context of the organizing – strikes, unionizing, etc. – rather than within the confines of a participatory research study. In fact, Whyte’s (1991) seminal work focused on bridging divides between union and management at Xerox – but the approach used was one in which they sought compromise, rather than the liberation of a group of people.

This leads to the second main difference between the two lines of thinking – the importance of action. If, as the liberatory tradition proclaims, participation is believed to be an end and not a means, participation therefore surpasses the “action” part of PAR. Conversely, within the tradition of Whyte and colleagues, action is seen as the end and participation is found to be more loosely defined. Greenwood, Whyte, Harkavy (1993) write that “insofar as possible, research processes should be made more participatory because participation improves the quality of the research” (p. 3). The implication here is that participation is secondary to the research and to the project. In a review of Whyte’s (1991) book, *Participatory Action Research*, the majority of case studies defined have a particular goal of organizational change, which usually arises from management concerns. Within this tradition levels of participation can be modified to achieve the goal at hand, whatever that project may be. This includes such activities as selecting particular “key informants” or working closely with management to ensure the project proceeds. Within the liberatory tradition, this could be seen as succumbing to organizational or insider/outsider power structures. Although power is not completely ignored within the organization-focused tradition, it is not explored and researched with the same focus that liberatory tradition researchers would give it.

A final distinction between organization-focused and liberatory PAR is the role of the researcher. Within organization-focused PAR, “the researcher has a distinct role and responsibility, which cannot be shared by others, which, therefore, places limits on degrees of participation” (Karlsen, 1991). In this way the “expert” role is expected and embraced. “In PAR, the consultant/facilitator acts less as a disciplinary expert and more as a coach in team building and in seeing to it that as much of the relevant expertise as possible from all over the organization is mobilized. The consultant/facilitator can also help bring in expertise from outside the organization.” (Whyte, Greenwood, & Lazes, 1991, p. 40). Within the liberatory tradition, on the other hand, much more thought is given to role a researcher plays. Smith, Rosenzweig & Schmidt (2010) write: “In PAR, research is not conducted *on* community members, youth, or other parties usually excluded from knowledge making; rather, research is conducted *with* community members or youth, challenging conventional distinctions between researcher and the researched.” For a study to be truly collaborative, one must understand how to navigate the distinction between community member and academic researcher. Stoecker (1999) suggests that researchers can be successful “Initiators” of a PAR project if they, “are aware of the basic issues confronting any organizer, such as insider/outsider status, being sponsored/invited, understanding the pre-existing community members’ skills and leaders, an so on” (p. 848). Minkler (2004) addresses issues of insider/outsider tensions that can result from racial or ethnic differences, researcher time priorities and reward structures. He suggests researchers should “engage in dialogue with all partners concerning the many ethical challenges that arise in such work” (p. 694). Wallerstein

(1999) advocates for identifying and discussing power bases of an outside researcher, both as an individual and as a representative of an institution, with the community (p. 49).

A paper by Brown and Tandon (1983) illuminates many of these same differences arising between PAR and Action Research. Interestingly, at the time of this writing, they predicted that, “Action researchers will incorporate cooperative aspects of participatory research, but will resist recognizing the importance of power differences and conflicts of interest among actors. [And] Participatory researchers will reject action research, and will resist recognizing its relevance to cooperation with clients groups or the utility of sophisticated research tools for influencing decision making.” (p. 292) It is clear that to at least some level their prediction has come true and is influencing not just a divide between Action Research and PAR, but within PAR itself.

Common ground between the liberatory and organization-focused PAR.

Although there are significant differences between the two traditions of PAR, in the end, both have much in common. Both traditions agree that PAR is an applied science that emerged in an effort to provide a form of research divergent from the positivist knowledge production system (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2008; Whyte 1991; McTaggart; 1997). Whyte, Greenwood & Lazes (1991) write, “Increasing reliance on such a narrow theoretical and methodological base deprives the field of the scientific vitality of other research approaches that can be at once scientifically challenging and practically useful” (p. 19). Both traditions emphasize the value of *useful knowledge* and dismiss the abstractions and irrelevancies of more traditional social science (Brown & Tandon, 1983, p. 281). In fact, some PAR authors have chosen to recognize the alignment between these two traditions, as opposed to their differences. McIntyre (2008) wrote:

When explored, addressed, and critiqued, both the similarities and differences, as well as the gray areas in between, benefit the field of PAR, assisting practitioners in developing authentic and effective strategies for collaborating with people in improving their lives, effecting social change, and reconstituting the meaning and value of knowledge (Kindle Locations 222-223).

Reconciling the gray areas McIntyre (2008) gives this definition of PAR, which is inclusive of both the liberatory and organization-focused traditions:

There are underlying tenets that are specific to the field of PAR and that inform the majority of PAR projects: (a) a collective commitment to investigate an issue or problem, (b) a desire to engage in self- and collective reflection to gain clarity about the issue under investigation, (c) a joint decision to engage in individual and/or collective action that leads to a useful solution that benefits the people involved, and (d) the building of alliances between researchers and participants in the planning, implementation, and dissemination of the research process. (Chapter 1, para. 1)

Greenwood, Whyte, Harkavy (1993) also illustrate the similarities by making the case that key features of PAR are collaboration, incorporation of local knowledge, eclecticism and diversity, case orientation, emergent process & linking scientific understanding to social action. Despite this list being created by the organizational-focused PAR researchers, it clearly demonstrates the similarities between the two traditions. Those from the liberatory tradition would agree with this list, although would add that a cautiousness around true participation and power should be a more integral part of the conversation and the research.

Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed the concept of Founder's Syndrome and the impacts it can have on organizations. I have also examined the definitions and characteristics of organizational capacity building in nonprofits and the competencies associated with organizational capacity development and built a case for how PAR can be

a capacity building intervention. Finally, I have reviewed PAR in the organization-focused and liberatory focused traditions, examining both their similarities and their differences. In the next chapter I will review the PAR methodology used in this study. Chapter 4 provides a narrative overview of the PAR project and in Chapter 5 I will examine the themes drawn from the PAR experience.

Chapter 3

Methodology

As mentioned in Chapter 2, PAR methodology focuses on community participation in the creation and execution of the research project. In an effort to honor the concept of participation from the ground up, I refrained from creating any more than a basic outline in advance of the research project. This allowed the organization members to play a role in selecting what they would like to study and implement in their organization. As part of my IRB process draft potential questions were submitted, these included:

- How long have you worked at Baobab Home?
- What do you enjoy about your job?
- What do you enjoy about working for Baobab Home?
- How can the staff better fulfill their roles/responsibilities?
- Do you think there is good cooperation between the people of Baobab Home?
- How can the cooperation between the people of Baobab Home be improved?
- What is working well at Baobab Home?
- What is not working well at Baobab Home?
- How does this affect your life?
- And the life in the community?
- Why do these problems exist?
- This project is based around the community of Baobab working together, what do you think the people of Baobab could do together to improve the organization?

My role was to serve as a collaborator and informational researcher within this paradigm. In order to avoid commandeering the study, I aimed to play an “inquiry” role as much as possible (Schein, 1999). I also contracted with a local Tanzanian man to be my “cultural guide” (Minkler, 2004). Emmanuel, as he’ll be referred to in this study, served as translator and interpreter for both language and culture. He was a client of the organization and had 10 years experience living and working with members of the organization. His personal relationship and understanding of both the organizational and national culture made him an integral part to this research project. Nothing was done within the broader community without his input and feedback.

In advance of the study, I determined that Emmanuel and I would revise the proposed interview questions and conduct interviews with organizational members and stakeholders around what type of organizational change they would recommend for The Baobab Home. These interviews would be done in Swahili for Tanzanians and English for the Executive Director and all would be audio recorded. We would then analyze the data and report back to the community so that they might make a decision on what project would be most meaningful for them to pursue. Data from the follow-up meetings would be collected through field notes and documentation created in advance of and at the meetings. Chapter 4 contains a narrative discussion of this research project, beginning with contracting with Emmanuel and crafting the final interview questions.

Confidentiality and Consent Procedures

Institutional approval to conduct the proposed research study was obtained through The Baobab Home and Pepperdine University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). In addition, I successfully completed and passed the web-based training course

“Protecting Human Research Participants” and received a certificate from the National Institute of Health Office of Extramural Research. Participant Consent Forms were also created and translated into Swahili (these are available in Appendix A).

Summary

Due to desire to create a truly participatory process, the methodology for this project was based on collecting data from organizational members and then proceeding in the direction they found most useful. The findings of this process are told narratively in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

Narrative Overview of Findings

According to Smith, Rosenzweig, and Schmidt (2010), narrative telling of PAR projects can help effectively communicate the project process to the reader (p. 1128). For this reason, this chapter includes a chronological and narrative re-telling of the project process. In chapter 5 I will examine key themes and lessons learned from these results. The data reported here is from a collection of sources including: transcribed and translated audio files from the interviews, agendas produced for meetings, notes taken on flipcharts during the meetings, and my field notes.

In order to give the reader an overview of the project timeline, Table 2 was created to show each major project event, the objectives, the timeframe in which it occurred and the participants involved (see Table 2).

Planning With Cultural Guide – August 30 – September 4, 2012

The first cycle began with a series of meetings with my cultural guide to explain PAR theory, discuss cross-cultural work and to co-create culturally appropriate interview questions for the staff of Baobab.

The first meeting between myself and Emmanuel, my cultural guide, was a discussion of cultural differences. We used Hofstede's model (Hofstede, 2001) to discuss and identify national cultural differences. Referencing data from the Hofstede Centre website (Hofstede Centre, 2012), we were able to start a discussion regarding observed cultural differences between Tanzanians and Americans. Together we listed real life examples of cultural differences we had noticed between our culture and the other. This conversation paved the way for our work together and as a lens from which to understand

the cross-cultural nature of the organization. Throughout the PAR process we continued to reference cultural differences within our internal conversation, especially when it came to working with the staff.

Table 2
Project Timeline

Event	Objectives	Timeframe	Participants
Planning with Cultural Guide	Initial Data Gathering Planning	08.30.12 – 09.04.12	- Katherine & Emmanuel (Cultural Guide)
Data Collection	Interviews with Organizational Members and Stakeholders	09.04.12 – 09.26.12	- Katherine & Emmanuel - 15 Organizational Members (all staff and management) - 4 Stakeholders
Data Feedback to Management	Review of Summarized Interview Data	09.28.12	- Katherine and Emmanuel - Management Team of 2
Co-Research Meeting 1a	Review of Summarized Interview Data	09.30.12	- Katherine and Emmanuel - 12 Organizational Members (including both Management Team Members)
Co-Research Meeting 1b	Project Selection and Planning	10.01.12	- Katherine and Emmanuel - 10 Organizational Members (including both Management Team Members)
Co-Research Meeting 2	Discussion of Baobab Culture and Policies	10.09.12	- Katherine and Emmanuel - 8 Organizational Members (including one Management Team Member)
Co-Research Meeting 3	Discussion of Polices and Benefits	10.16.12	- Katherine and Emmanuel - 7 Organizational Members (including one Management Team Member)
Co-Research Meeting 4	Review of Draft Contract	10.23.12	- Katherine and Emmanuel - 9 Organizational Members (including two Management Team Members)
Co-Research Meeting 5	Final Meeting: Reflections on PAR Project and Next Steps	10.30.12	- Katherine and Emmanuel - 6 Organizational Members (including two Management Team Members)

The next step in our collaboration was to create interview questions for staff and stakeholders. Through this process Emmanuel and I continued to discuss our observations about cultural differences. Recognizing my outsider status, I relied heavily on Emmanuel to help edit the questions so that they would be appropriate for the community. As with most of our conversations the dialogue took place in both Swahili and English, although questions were drafted in English and translated into Swahili. After a number of meetings and discussions we crafted the following questions.

- How long have you worked at Baobab?
- Can you list the kind of tasks you do for work every day?
- Are there any new tasks you'd like to be doing?
- What do you enjoy about working for Baobab Home?
- What three things are working well at Baobab?
- What three things are not working well at Baobab?
- How do these things affect your life and the life of the community?
- The goal of this research is to help the community of Baobab work together, what do you think the people of Baobab could do together to improve the organization?
- Is there anything else you would like to add?
- Optional Question 1: How can the people fulfill their roles/responsibilities well?
- Optional Question 2: What should the people of Baobab do to improve cooperation in the organization?

**Data Collection: Interviews with Organizational Members and Stakeholders –
September 4 – September 26, 2012**

Together, with Emmanuel as the lead for the Swahili speakers and myself for the English speakers, we interviewed a total of 19 people. Those interviewed included the entire staff and management consisting of 15 people, as well as 4 stakeholders. The stakeholders were four adult clients, all of which had spent a significant time living on the farm that is home to the Baobab operations. The purpose of this cycle was to establish the strengths and growth areas of the organization. It was also to investigate what change the staff felt would be achievable through collaborative work.

Emmanuel and I then transcribed all the interviews in Swahili and translated them into English. Throughout this translation process, we continued to discuss cultural and language issues that arose. There were particular instances where workers would allude to issues in the organization, rather than state them directly. In my field notes I wrote, “The majority of interviews been pretty straight-forward, although there have been a few times when Emma’s culture knowledge lets him read through gaps or unclear words and find a deeper meaning” (K. Balk, field notes, September 31, 2012). In direct translation these comments would make little sense to me, for example referring to “one person” who had a lot of pressure and needed help in their work. It was only through conversation with Emmanuel that I was able to understand that they were referring to the Executive Director.

We then coded and analyzed all the data, looking for themes amongst the responses. A presentation was put together which summarized all the data while focusing on the positive and solutions-based framing. This presentation was to be given first to the

management team of two and then to the workers in a full staff meeting. The choice to present first to the management team was defined by the politics of the organization and the fact that the decision-making power lies with management. This power given to management is attributable to both national culture concepts of hierarchy and power distance (Hofstede, 2001) and in the actual decision making within the organizational culture. Financial constraints were also a consideration since some of the suggestions from staff would require additional funds, which were not necessarily available.

The following is a recap of the data presentation prepared for management and staff, it is organized as it was presented to the staff, the full PowerPoint is available in Appendix B. The purpose of this presentation was to show the organizational members their collective view of the organization, both the things that they appreciated and issues they believe need to be improved. We also reviewed data from 2010 interviews and looked towards possible collaborative solutions that could be implemented within the framework of this PAR project. Ultimately this data set the stage for making a decision on what our PAR project would focus on.

Section 1 – Why we love Baobab. This section represented a collection of statements from all the respondents to the interview question, “What do you enjoy about working for Baobab Home?” The primary purpose of this slide was to give the staff a chance to hear direct quotes of positive comments made about the organization. Quotes included:

- “I am happy because I would have problems if it weren’t for Baobab.”
- “Because I am able to say I have a better future.”
- “I am happy to live with the children.”

- “Thanks to God for the work at Baobab. Nowadays, I start to understand myself, start to see the responsibilities that are in front of me.”
- “After I came to work at Baobab, truly it cheered me up because I was feeling very lonely.”
- “I really love the work of taking care of the children; it is what I love in my life.”
- “I am happy because we help the community.”
- “I have gotten good personal development.”
- “We help each other, so I am happy to be together and working with everybody... we live like a home.”
- “Working with people from different areas, different cultures.”

Section 2 – What’s working well. This section included themes and data from the responses collected from the interview question, “What three things are working well at Baobab?” This data is represented in the table below (see Table 3).

Section 3 – Things to improve. This section included themes and data from the responses collected from the interview question, “What three things are not working well at Baobab?” The responses are documented in the table below (see Table 4).

Section 4 – Overview of archival data. Data from a 2010 staff retreat and follow up interviews were used to illustrate that many of the issues were the same and that change did not happen from simply collecting data. Themes from the 2010 included:

- Establish system so staff knows roles/responsibilities and can perform them with confidence
- Staff does not understand their employment status
- Communication issues – fear on the part of staff to approach management

- Lack of good staff monitoring/evaluation system
- Lack of good record keeping
- Relationship building not strong enough... need meetings

Table 3

Strengths of the Baobab Home

Category	Theme	Sample Data
What's Working Well	Care for Children – 15 responses indicated that care for the children, inside and outside of Baobab, is successful – and 5 others said care for people in general is an achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's needs are met - Children get good care - Provide food and all are guardians for the children - Baobab pays a lot of attention to the children, especially in times of illness
	Organizational Aspects – 10 responses indicated organizational aspects were thriving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is love and cooperation between employees - Hard working staff - The work is enjoyable - Good treatment of staff – including food, leisure time & some payment for transportation
	Educational – 8 responses indicated pride in the educational programs, especially the new school, STA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steven Tito Academy (STA) has given more opportunities to children and helped the community understand what Baobab does - School & education support are helping children who are really in need - Educational support is working well
	Miscellaneous – These include responses which did not fit in the broader themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The growth and development on the farm - Sober treatment support - Comprehensive medical treatment - Breakfast program for HIV+ patients

Table 4

Growth Areas for the Baobab Home

Category	Theme	Sample Data
Things to Improve	Organizational Improvements – 10 responses identified issues around managements structures and strategies	Formal written contracts for employees (2 respondents) Clear organizational chart Create employee job descriptions Delegate work from management Create work schedule/plan Hire a manager Hire more staff
	Organizational Improvements – 15 responses identified areas of improvement in terms of human resources	Raise employee salaries (8 respondents) On-time salary payment (2 respondents) Expand employee benefits (6 respondents)
	Miscellaneous – These include responses which did not fit in the broader themes	Better record keeping and tracking of money (2 respondents) Regular follow-up with clients, including children who have been reunited with families or adopted Family visits for the Baobab Home kids to see their relatives Ensuring there is teacher support at STA Require uniforms and short hair for all STA students Change t-shirt color of STA uniform to something darker Add more classes to STA Building and maintenance repairs on farm

Section 5 – We can... This series of slides summarized all of the suggestions given in response to the question, “The goal of this research is to help the community of Baobab work together, what do you think the people of Baobab could do together to improve the organization?” It also includes any outlying organizational change suggestions made in the interviews and responses to the optional questions regarding roles and responsibilities and collaboration. The data was organized by themes and then sub-bullets, which included particular suggestions. This list included all responses given

by organizational members, in order to help activate conversation amongst them regarding what they could do collaboratively to bring about change. Table 5 illustrates suggestions for improvements made by The Baobab Home staff and management.

Table 5

Suggestions for Improvements at the Baobab Home

Category	Theme	Suggestions
We can...	Save Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use farmland to grow more food to reduce costs - Buy car to reduce cost of transport - Track finances closely and put into place a system of checks and balances that ensure all money is being spent well and accounted for
	Generate Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build a guest house for volunteers - Buy a car (or multiple cars) for use as transport and taxi for income generation - Buy a bus that runs from Dar to Bagamoyo - Use free time during work to hem kitenge (local cloth worn by women) - Sell chicken eggs - Have a workshop - Start a store
	Communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honesty was seen as a value that should be a part of the Baobab Home community, especially around areas of improvement - A couple respondents said there was a need to ensure all voices were heard by management (not just a few) - We should love one another and treat each other with respect - Learn from other organizations that have grown stronger - Know our own and other's roles/responsibilities at Baobab - Inform the outside community of Baobab's work and why we do what we do
	Meet – Over half of respondents said that meetings were a way to improve cooperation and advance the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Figure out how to be consistent and have everyone attend regular meetings - Use fundamental meeting components – chairperson, secretary, minutes reviewed at each meeting - Share ideas, problems & feelings - Focus on working together to resolve issues for individuals and the organization as whole – issues should be worked on until they are fully resolved - Give advice to management

Data Feedback to Management – September 28, 2012

General reactions were positive and the Executive Director stated she was “not surprised at all” by the results. Both the Executive Director and her husband felt that there were potential projects for the organization to work collaboratively on. It was decided that the project and subsequent staff meeting would include only the on-site workers, not the stakeholders who were interviewed. A meeting was planned for the next afternoon for both management and workers. A process agenda was created which is represented in the table below (see Table 6).

Table 6

Internal Process Agenda – September 28, 2012

Process Agenda Item	Lead
Update on Baobab Home from management	Executive Director
Explanation of Participatory Action Research and how the staff and management would be the creators of this research project	Emmanuel and Katie
Presentation of findings in Swahili	Emmanuel
Discussion on how the organization currently communicates and meets	All Organizational Members
Begin planning next steps of PAR project with the understanding that we had a month to complete our work together	All Organizational Members

Co-Research Meeting 1a: Review of Summarized Interview Data – September 31, 2012

The following day twelve of the staff members, including the Executive Director and her husband, came together for a meeting. Although the intention was to present data and select a project in a single meeting, due to time constraints the group was unable to make it through the entire agenda and the meeting was held over the course of two afternoons. During the first meeting, the Executive Director gave a brief update on the

status of the organization and Emmanuel presented the interview data to the staff in Swahili. After hearing the update on the Baobab Home from management and a review of the data collected in interviews, organizational members began to discuss how the organization communicates and meets. Quickly they began discussing when and how often to meet. This was the first meeting lead by Emmanuel entirely in Swahili. In my journal I noted how the language barrier affected my participation and the outcomes of this discussion. I was nowhere near as agile in following the discussion as I would have been in my native English, although I understood the big picture of what was being discussed. I wrote in my field notes:

Although frustrating, this also led to a more natural learning process. The key example was in voting on how often to hold meetings. On one hand I felt as if the group was getting too far down the road of just deciding when to meet. But it quickly spun in that direction and before I knew it everyone was ready to vote on whether they should meet once a week or every two weeks. We hadn't even discussed how to vote yet! But there they were, heads down on the tables and arms raised [in a secret vote]. It failed miserably. It was never clear whether this was because of people not understanding or not caring about the outcome. I used the opportunity to raise questions such as, 'what if Emmanuel and I were not here to count the votes, how does secret voting work then?' And 'if we only have 6 opposed and 3 for and there are 14 employees how does that work?' In the end, I could see that although the meeting may have gone faster if I had been able to easily intercede, there was still learning in the process of trying one thing and failing. In a way, the language barrier forces me to step back and let go of control. (K. Balk, field notes, September 31, 2012)

After the failed vote, the group discussed types of decision-making processes – consensus, general consensus, secret vote. In the end they chose consensus as a way to proceed. Discussing decision-making was all the further we made it within this meeting. The group then used consensus methods to decide to convene the next day in order to choose the research project focus.

Co-Research Meeting 1b: Project Selection and Planning – October 1, 2012

In preparation for the second meeting, Emmanuel and I met and discussed the first meeting and how to prepare for the following day. Together we reviewed the nature of PAR and discussed how the participants are ultimately in charge of decision-making. With this in mind, we co-created an internal process agenda to remind us what to look for and what questions might need to be addressed during the conversation. This agenda is included in the table below (see Table 7).

Table 7

Internal Process Agenda – October 1, 2012

Process Agenda Item	Lead
Review list from yesterday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Keep in mind what requires the participation of all members - Ask for suggestions on what may have been missed 	Emmanuel
Encourage people to “advocate” for something they are interested in	Emmanuel
Discuss as a group – Remember to Consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is this action possible in 4 weeks? - What would it look like if we accomplished it? - Does it require everyone’s participation? 	All Organization Members
Narrow down list and vote	All Organizational Members
Create action plan – Now that we know what we are trying to do, how can we plan for how? Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information - People - Processes - What questions need to be answered? - What resources do we need? - How often should we meet? - When is our next meeting? - Who is responsible for what (before, during and after meeting)? - What will this look like when it is done? (How do we know we have succeeded?) 	All Organizational Members

There were 10 organizational members present, including both management team members. Emmanuel opened the meeting as planned and reviewed the data from the day before. Quite quickly the employees decided by consensus that job descriptions and legal work contracts were to be the goal of this project. Until now, all employees were working under verbal agreement. In creating an action plan, the employees chose to plan as far as the following week. They each committed to writing a first draft of their individual job descriptions for review with management.

At one point during this meeting, I found myself intervening when one employee said the next meeting should take place in two weeks. I raised the question of whether we would be able to accomplish written contracts in a month if we waited two weeks until the next meeting. It was difficult to know when to intervene and when to let participants take the lead. I felt disappointed that they would want to wait two weeks to meet (I had visions of every other day). As a practitioner this made me contemplate the spectrum that lay between letting the process unfold and controlling the process. The meeting closed with the decision to meet again in one-week and roles were assigned. It was decided by the group that management would do research on the potential employee benefits that might be offered in a contract, workers would each draft their job descriptions and share with management and myself and Emmanuel were to research draft Tanzanian employment contracts to share with the group.

Co-Research Meeting 2: Discussion of Baobab Culture and Policies – October 9, 2012

In advance of the next meeting, Emmanuel and I met and discussed the previous meeting and the upcoming meeting. In these discussions, I created a Venn diagram (see

figure 1) to illustrate the fact that two different national cultures – American and Tanzanian – are a part of Baobab Home, and that well-defined and agreed upon organizational policies could aid in creating an organizational culture which could incorporate aspects of both national cultures.

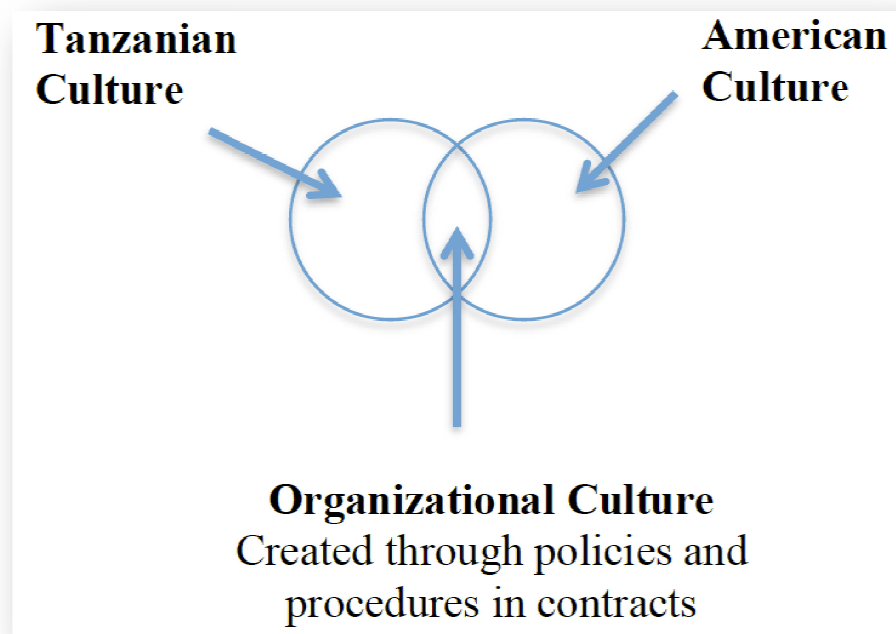


Figure 1

Venn Diagram Illustrating National Culture and Organizational Culture

Emmanuel and I also focused on creating an internal process agenda reflective of what decisions were made at the prior meeting. We again included potential questions to raise for group discussion. The agenda is shown in the table below (see Table 8).

The meeting began as planned with a brief check-in. There were eight staff members, including the Executive Director, present at the meeting. The staff members present reported that they all had completed their job descriptions and were still in the process of meeting with management. The previous week, the goal had been to have

management complete meetings with the staff, but many of those meetings had been skipped or rescheduled.

Table 8

Internal Process Agenda – October 9, 2012

Process Agenda Item	Lead
Greeting	Emmanuel
Group Check-In	Emmanuel
Workers report on the process of their job descriptions. Potential questions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who completed their job descriptions? - For those who completed it, how did it go? Was it difficult or easy? - For those who did not complete their job descriptions, why not? What do you need for support? - How can we as a community work together to make sure everyone's job description is complete? - What should be our final process for management approval of job descriptions? 	Baobab Home Staff
Review of pieces of contract – BRAINSTORM the list of questions we need to answer to complete this project. Questions to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what areas will we need further discussion? - Any policies/procedures that would make work smoother? - What commonly causes [organizational] problems or causes people to be fired? - What rules could we have that make work better? 	All Organization Members

Emmanuel and I then reported on research of contracts. Emmanuel led the report out which included identification of contract elements. Table 9 illustrates the data researched on components of contracts, as well as potential work needed to create comprehensive contracts (see Table 9). This data was used by Emmanuel and I to facilitate the conversation, rather than to direct organizational members.

Table 9

Basic Contract Elements

Elements of Contracts	Potential Work to Do
Type of Contract	Make sure everyone knows that we are working on contracts with unspecified period of time [as opposed to short-term time-based contracts]
Job Description	Workers and management need to finalize together
Date of Hire	Ask workers to identify their hire date (or estimate)
Hours of Work	Make sure all workers know their hours. If they don't we need to discuss
Probation Period	Should be discussed
Salary & Benefits	Salary will reflect current salary at this time. Benefits need to be discussed
Vacation/Leave/Holiday Policy	Discussion needed to finalize
Policies/Procedures	Discuss Baobab Culture – what rules and polices do we want for our organization
Terms of Termination	Discussion needed to finalize

In preparation for the meeting, Emmanuel and I brainstormed a list of possible policies that might be useful for the staff to discuss. After presenting the list of contract elements, Emmanuel leaned over to me and inquired if we should share the list. I responded that we should allow the staff to think through what is important to them. In the end, they came up with almost the same list we had. It included a need for policies on

- Laziness at work (Arriving late for work, giving late notice of absence, etc.)
- Stealing (Baobab resources, donations, money, property, etc.)
- Child Abuse
- To insult fellow workers
- To lie at the workplace
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- Speaking poorly about or fight with fellow workers
- Destruction of property

We also discussed how creating these policies/procedures are a critical step in defining the culture of The Baobab Home as an organization, especially as we have both US and TZ culture working closely together and often with very different cultural biases. I drew the Venn diagram illustrated in figure 1, for the group members as an illustration of creating an organizational culture.

The staff and management then discussed the first on their list of policies and procedures – the issue of laziness or negligence at work. They discussed the varying levels of offense and decided that for a “small mistake” there should be a warning and for a “big mistake” termination would be necessary.

The meeting concluded by setting up a schedule for the rest of the project, and with just three meetings left the pressure to create the contracts was heightened. The schedule included meetings between management and workers to finalize the job descriptions. It was also planned that management would present the following week on benefits, after talking with the Board Members on what the organization was able to offer. Further policy discussion was also slated for the following week’s meeting.

After the meeting, I spoke with Emmanuel about how organizational members had come up with almost the same list of possible policies and procedures that we had come up with. In my field notes I wrote, “He said it felt very good [that they did not need our help]. This is also learning on my part, to let go of control and trust the organizational members to identify what works best from them. It was nice to share learning with him as part of this process” (K. Balk, field notes, October 15, 2012).

In between meetings, the Executive Director asked me to be a part of the one-on-one meetings with staff to discuss job descriptions. Salaries were also part of the

discussion. During these discussions I mostly played the role of observer, while the Manager and worker discussed the details of the contract. I noted in my field notes: “It’s amazing how my role is really to bring people together, not necessarily to do the work. [The Executive Director] is gaining understanding of what everyone is doing, she feels supported because they [the staff] have made the first steps at writing it down. Even though none of them [job descriptions] are complete, they are a starting point, an olive branch, an effort on paper, and from here [she] is able to ask the right questions, dig into what she may be missing ... and look for solutions for all!” (K. Balk, field notes, October 15, 2012). The participation of both staff and management on the job descriptions opened up a dialogue regarding not just better defining their work, but discussing salaries and future work.

Co-Research Meeting 3: Discussion of Policies and Benefits – October 16, 2012

Again Emmanuel and I met between sessions and prepared an internal process agenda based on the previous meeting. This process agenda can be seen in the table below (see Table 10).

At the meeting there were seven organizational members, including the Executive Director, in attendance. I wrote in my field notes that the meeting “kicked off with a few changes on the agenda – Emmanuel dropped the check-in portion [of the agenda] and didn’t ask for a volunteer to write [notes]. I have to admit I felt disappointed, I so wanted to engage the people more in the action [of the meeting process]. That being said, by the end of the meeting [the Executive Director] was on the floor mapping out the next steps on a calendar... I am constantly reminded that I have little control and that really they don’t need me at all... except for asking the questions.” (K.Balk, field notes, October 16,

2012). In reflecting back, as with most meetings, I let the meeting unfold trusting

Emmanuel's and my co-researchers decisions in the moment.

Table 10

Internal Process Agenda – October 16, 2012

Process Agenda Item	Lead
Greetings & update on management and staff job descriptions discussion	Emmanuel
Group Check In	All Organization Members
Ask for Volunteer to Take Notes During Meeting	Emmanuel
Executive Team to Report on Benefits Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask for workers to discuss their thoughts on Benefits Report - We will then take this information to the Board of Directors 	Executive Team
Continuation of Discussion of Policies for Contract [Review list made a prior meeting and discuss further] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laziness or Negligence at the workplace: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To not do work with efficiency • To not arrive at work on time • To be late to give notice (if you are sick or have a problem) • Recommended policy: For a small mistake – a warning; For a big mistake – no warning • QUESTIONS: What about being late for work? We didn't discuss that one last week. What things are big mistakes? And which are small mistakes? Who issues the warning? (ex. Workers discuss in meeting? Or management must do it? Etc.). How many warnings can a person get? Does too many warnings result in firing? - To steal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baobab resources like crops [food] • Gifts/Donation Items • A person (or Baobab Home's) money • Something [that belongs to] someone else - To ignore/despise/insult (fellow workers) - To lie at the workplace - Drunkenness - Child Abuse - Quarrel (to speak bad [of another]) 	All Organizational Members
Scheduling for the Rest of the Project (last meeting October 30)	All Organizational Members

The Executive Director reported on potential benefits scenarios. One option suggested by management was creating a pool of money for workers to use to support one another at their discretion. A staff member suggested instead that individual “accounts” be set up with funds available for each worker when they needed it. The benefits discussion was not fully resolved in this conversation, but the Executive Director pledged to continue investigating the options the organization could financially offer.

Discussion of policies and procedures came next and again included discussion about distinguishing between large and small offenses. Workers decided that a “large offense” would be deserving of termination. Two large offenses discussed were stealing and child abuse. In my field notes, I reflected that I had felt disappointed that the staff had taken such a broad approach to policies and wondered whether they would be successful in implementing them. Again, I felt the pull of wanting to intervene and “fix” things, but my language barriers and my desire to let them control the process of their meetings held me back. In my notes I wrote, “I again struggled with not knowing the nuances of the language – if this were in English, would I ask better questions? Would I help challenge them more for more specific answers? And even if that were true, does the fact that I cannot do that negate this process at all... Aren’t we still accomplishing change and (perhaps most importantly) the value of communicating with each other? . . . I see the mistakes we might be making as opportunities for further discussion” (K. Balk, field notes, October 16, 2012).

The meeting concluded with the Executive Director creating a calendar for meetings during the last two weeks of the project. Individual meetings were set up between staff and management, as well as two more weekly meetings to complete

discussion of contract elements. Emmanuel and I were asked to do research on draft contracts in Swahili that might be used as a baseline for The Baobab Home contract.

Co-Research Meeting 4: Review of Draft Contract – October 23, 2012

Between meetings, Emmanuel and I solicited and received two draft contracts from Tanzanian organizations, one a locally based orphanage with a similar organization design to The Baobab Home and the other a more formal contract provided by a local lawyer. We reviewed both for content, but used the orphanage one as a starting point. Together we inserted language to reflect decisions made in Co-Research meetings thus far and leaving those areas yet unanswered blank to indicate that decisions had yet to be made. I also worked with the Executive Director on trying to find a solution on addressing holiday pay. Since many staff, such as those caring for the orphans, cannot simply take holidays off, the Executive Director and I worked together to devise a plan that would be both affordable to the organization and give the workers a yearly bonus to compensate for holiday pay they might not currently get. At the time of the meeting, we had still not reached a plan that was satisfactory and decided to leave the details off for this meeting. Emmanuel and I then prepared this draft contract for presentation at the following meeting. Finally Emmanuel and I also prepared another informal process agenda for our own personal use, which can be found in the table below (see Table 11).

Table 11***Internal Process Agenda – October 23, 2012***

Process Agenda Item	Lead
Greetings	Emmanuel
Group Check In	All Organization Members
Review of Sample Contracts – Potential Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss what changes need to be made? - How can we make this contract work best for everyone? What will make it easy to implement? - Is there anything that is missing? - Goal: By end of meeting, have a contract people feel good about signing. If we do not reach this goal – set up a follow-up meeting for this week. - How do we make sure other workers [not present] know about this information? 	Executive Team
Next Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Katherine and Emmanuel to revise to include comments from today’s meeting. - Management team to get copies of all of the contracts and work with each worker to finalize. WHAT is the schedule for this? - NEXT TUESDAY – Final meeting. We will discuss what we have learned, how we can use it going forward in our communication and meetings. 	All Organizational Members

There were 9 organizational members at the meeting, including the Executive Director and her husband. Together we reviewed the draft contract. The Executive Director’s husband took on the role of reading the contract aloud (since not all staff members are literate) and together they discussed and made edits along the way. The Executive Director initially had difficulties with the detail to which the staff wanted to discuss the contracts. The workers responded that a contract “locks you into place” and

therefore must be exact. The Executive Director's husband served as a mediator between the Executive Director and workers as they discussed the contract.

Benefits were eventually discussed and the Executive Director brought up that there were existing employee benefits that had not been accounted for in our discussions thus far. These included providing food for all workers while at the farm and housing to some of the staff. It was agreed that these would be taken into account in the final contracts.

The meeting concluded with the Executive Director committing to meet with each of the workers over the course of the following week to review their final job descriptions, their salaries and their holiday pay package. Emmanuel and I took the role of updating the draft contract that day and emailing it to the Executive Director in order that her meetings would result in final contracts for each of the staff members.

Co-Research Meeting 5: Final Meeting: Reflections on PAR Project and Next Steps – October 30, 2012

In preparation for the final meeting, Emmanuel and I created an internal process agenda that focused on assessing our experience. This agenda can be viewed in the table below (see Table 12).

At the final meeting, the contract language was in its final stage and draft contracts had been created for each of the workers. These contracts were being updated with final job descriptions and salary information. Table 13 illustrates the Contract Elements as well as the main points from each section (see Table 13).

Table 12***Internal Process Agenda – October 30, 2012***

Process Agenda Item	Lead
Assessments from Contracts and Job Descriptions – potential questions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is left to accomplish for us to reach our goals of signed contracts? - Does everyone now have a signed contract? If not, what else is needed to complete this work? 	All Organizational Members
Group Check In	All Organization Members
Review of Sample Contracts – Potential Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss what changes need to be made? - How can we make this contract work best for everyone? - How has this process changed how we work together? How can we continue to use what we have learned from this research? - Have we been successful? If yes, why? If no, why? 	All Organizational Members
Assessment of Meeting Process – Potential Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the interviews over half of the people said that regular meetings are necessary. We’ve now had weekly meetings for a month. Have we been successful in our meetings? How? - What could have been improved? - What is necessary to continue meeting regularly? 	All Organizational Members

Table 13***Contract Elements and Main Points***

Contract Element	Main Points
Job description; salary; date of hire	- Unique to each employee
Labor Rules of the Baobab Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adherence to work hours is required. - Abusive language at work can result in termination - Theft can result in termination - Cleaning around the workplace is the responsibility of everyone - Damaging workplace property can result in docked pay or termination - Meeting attendance is required, unless notice of absence is given. - Negligence at work is unacceptable - Drinking and drug use at work will result in termination - Child abuse of any kind will result in termination - Mutual respect and cooperation at work is important - Confidentiality should be respected - Workers are not to ask for money or donations from volunteers who visit The Baobab Home
Resolution of Disputes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disputes will be resolved through mediation within the organization - Any disputes that can not be resolved through mediation will be determined in accordance with the existing laws.
Probationary period for workers	- 3 month probationary period for all new hires
Workers Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Salary – unique to each employee - Proper tools to do the work required - Meals provided for all employees at work - Holiday/bonus pay – based on salaries - 4 weeks of paid vacation to be scheduled in advance - If a family emergency arises, one or two weeks of the 4 weeks can be applied to that emergency. - In the case of death or illness of immediate family members, 5 days paid leave will be given. - In the case of death or illness for those outside the immediate family, a half of a day will be given paid. If more time is needed, this will be deducted from the 4-week vacation policy. - The Baobab Home will cover all medical costs related to any on-the-job injuries. - Termination of the contract (by either party) requires 30-day notice, unless a major infraction has occurred. If management terminates a workers contract, they will receive 7 days pay for every year they worked for The Baobab Home, up to 10 years.

At the meeting there were 6 organizational members present, including the Executive Director and her husband. When asked to evaluate the contracts, all organizational members present said that they felt we had been successful in reaching our goals. When asked about what they had learned from the process, five of the members gave positive responses and one member declined to respond. The responses heard were:

- “We discovered the rights of the workers.”
- “[We learned] the importance of meeting together and knowing our rights.”
- “Thanks to Katie, you care. Time for meetings is important. The Baobab meetings will continue.”
- “Big congratulations to all.”
- “It’s good to have one voice. Meetings are good. When united we have power, being separated creates powerlessness. Thanks to Katie and all the meetings are good and the togetherness is good.”

When my turn came I reported that I had learned that there was value in just asking questions. I stated that it took everyone to accomplish this and that I played a small role. One of the staff members described my role as the midwife.

When asked about their assessment of their meeting process, consensus was that the meetings had been successful. When asked, “What could be improved?” one staff member answered: “Things should be accomplished!” This led the group into a discussion of what was required of workers and managers to have regular meetings. This list included: respecting the work and the workplace, reminding one another of meetings, caring about meetings, the importance of attendance at meetings and the need for

agendas. The discussion then moved into planning for future meetings post-PAR project. Everyone agreed that it was of the utmost importance to continue to have meetings and suggestions were made for how to improve meetings. The staff chose a day and time for weekly meetings and discussed who would serve as chairman. They also discussed the importance of being on time for the meetings. The idea of a suggestion box for workers to anonymously provide possible meeting topics/issues was also agreed upon.

Follow-up with Cultural Guide

After the conclusion of the final meeting, I met with Emmanuel to discuss his impressions of the project. As the cultural guide he had served not only as an interpreter, but as a major voice in the project leading meetings and co-creating agendas. His reflections were that the PAR project was ultimately “good, because the workers wanted it to happen.” He expressed belief that the workers were happy with the contracts they had created and he felt that the workers voices were heard. He hoped that they would continue meeting together as the project disbanded.

Emmanuel later reviewed this thesis for accuracy. His assessment was that my narrative re-telling of events gave a clear and factual presentation of what took place during The Baobab Home PAR process. He did not identify any irregularities in this narrative report. We also discussed what he personally had learned during the PAR process. He listed the following:

- Increased experience of handling meetings (it was atypical for someone so young to be leading meetings, in Tanzanian culture it would often be an elder who would serve as meeting chair)
- Greater understanding of cultural differences between Tanzanians and Americans

- Improved English skills and vocabulary from translation and bi-lingual dialogue
- Greater understanding of the people of the community.

In discussing his deeper understanding of the community he said, “for example, when the women [during the interviews] were speaking about how low salaries were and how their families depend on them for school, food, clothes – I learned more about their condition in life.”

Summary

This narrative describes the key events, processes and outcomes of the PAR research project at the Baobab Home. Chapter Five will illuminate some of the themes drawn from these experiences on a personal, organizational and scholarly level.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

“What is the purpose of social research? The answer I will declare is quite straightforward: the improvement of a social practice” (McTaggart, 1999).

As stated in Chapter 1 of this paper, the initial goal of this research project was to investigate how PAR can aid in strengthening organizational systems, processes and/or relationships within the context of a Tanzanian nonprofit organization. To examine the answer to this question, as well as the key insights extracted from this project, I will begin where the PAR project began, with me as the outsider researcher. I will then examine the key insights from working with a Cultural Guide and how PAR can be a capacity building tool within nonprofit organizations. Finally, I will investigate and evaluate the “success” of the project by looking at both the Participation and Action aspects of the process, as well as exploring how this project fit within the context of the two traditions of PAR.

Lessons for the Outsider Researcher – Learning How to Participate

Self-reflection in the PAR process is not only common; it’s encouraged. As a first-time PAR researcher, this process was as emergent for me as it was for my co-researchers. I shared in their learning about creating contracts and identifying policies and procedures that define organizational culture, but I also learned about being a practitioner of Organizational Development (in particular as an “outside” researcher in a foreign culture). As reflected in my field notes in Chapter 4, I often struggled with trying to figure out whether to insert *my* ideas in the process. I wanted to honor the knowledge

and expertise of those who worked and lived at The Baobab Home, but I also wanted to be helpful in achieving our goals.

For most of the project, my notes reflect a more “behind the scenes” approach. By working with a cultural guide between meetings, I attempted to ensure that we stayed on track from meeting to meeting. At the same time, in the meetings themselves, I tended to play the role of observer, letting Emmanuel and the organizational members guide the process. In my field notes in Chapter 4 there are numerous instances where I reflect on the process of what it meant to let the experts lead. Sometimes these moments came as a result of language barriers, other times out of a desire to let organizational members lead the process as much as possible. Time and again I was reminded that the staff knew best what they most needed in terms of a research project and our collaboration together. In an email to my thesis advisor I wrote: “I have to say that PAR is incredibly interesting because as much as I want to direct the group into deciding clear metrics, I have also seen the value in letting them lead in this process (or perhaps I should say the futility in trying to control the process).” My field notes also reflect my observations that, if I were to truly let those in the system lead, I also had to let “mistakes” happen. I came to see that mistakes, or decisions that lacked full clarity, created an entry point for revision and further discussion for the group. In our closing session for the project, I shared with the group how much I learned about the power of just asking questions and trusting in the community to find the answers. This remains a lesson I will carry forward as an Organizational Development practitioner.

Looking back, I am also able to see where I attempted to wrest control from the organizational members in order to ensure a timely project completion. A review of

agendas created by Emmanuel and I show that, for the most part, we raised questions to ask of the community rather than command. For my personal academic schedule, time constraints became an issue toward the end of the PAR process. This is observable in the October 23, 2012 agenda constructed by Emmanuel and myself. Unlike the previous agendas, which were more question based, this one is full of commands and even employs the use of capital letters to make sure we stayed on schedule. Looking back I realize that I was pushing the finalization of the contracts before our time was up (and I had to return to the States). Although all of the agendas were created only for the use of myself and Emmanuel, it is still clear that I was trying to direct the meeting through him. Within the meeting itself, my concern over completing the contracts on time proved unfounded and the staff demonstrated that they were as dedicated, if not more, as me to reaching this goal. But my more forceful agenda gives pause to reflect again on the academic researcher's role in PAR and how difficult it can be to negotiate as Stoecker (1999) so eloquently pointed out.

In the next section I will examine my work with a cultural guide and how that played a role in mitigating my outside researcher status, as well as creating co-learning as we worked together.

Participating with a cultural guide. This project would likely not have been possible without the participation of my cultural guide, Emmanuel. From the refining of the questions, to the interviews, to translating the data, to leading the meetings, he was a part of every step. His insight into the organization itself was invaluable as well and aided not only in clarifying allusions made in interviews but in building a the participatory bridge between me as an outside researcher and the organizational

members. At some point in writing this paper, I debated referring to him with the anthropological term “key informant,” which can often be found used in the organization-focused PAR literature. But this term is used for one who “gives” information and within the context of this project there was no giver or receiver, but a shared purpose and collaborative spirit of understanding.

Our discussions on cultural differences became a part of the way Emmanuel and I spoke to one another. Statements that began with, “maybe this is a cultural difference...” littered our conversation and gave us a framework with which to ask difficult questions of one another. When meetings began later than planned, we discussed cultural differences around time. We also spoke often about the concept of power-distance (Hofstede, 2001) and how it was difficult for the Tanzanian staff to go directly to the Executive Director with a problem, whereas I (as an American with a lower power-distance) felt comfortable stating directly what issue might be arising. We discussed values of community versus individualism and how family and community was such an important part of Tanzanian culture. Often these conversations strayed far beyond an analysis of the PAR project, instead allowing us to investigate and explore many specific differences between one another’s cultures and languages. The affect of this co-learning process can be seen in Emmanuel’s responses in Chapter 4 when he reflects that improved English and greater understanding about American and Tanzanian culture differences were major learnings he took away from the project. As the outsider researcher I too learned much from these discussions, about both Swahili language and culture. Discussion of cultural differences was not only valuable to the two of us personally, but also helped us in raising awareness of the cultural differences that exist in a cross-cultural organization such as The Baobab

Home. This can be seen in our discussion of the Venn diagram (see figure 1) found in Chapter 4.

There is valuable data to be found in the process that Emmanuel and I went through in this project. There was a cyclical process that can be seen in the findings presented in Chapter 4. Between each of the cycles, I met with Emmanuel to ensure that we were co-creating as we went, by bringing cultural differences in the conversation we were able to create agendas that were satisfactory to both of our cultural understandings. Another key element of this partnering was that knowledge of the PAR process was transferred to him. He also noted that he strengthened his ability to lead community meetings (as seen in his reflections in Chapter 4). This was an especially interesting result because his age (26) made him an unlikely candidate to lead meetings. Finally, as the outsider researcher, I was attempting to cautiously navigate within The Baobab Home system and Tanzanian culture. By partnering with Emmanuel I was able to better navigate the cultural divide and mitigate against potential power-dynamics that could have subverted the process due to my national culture and my role as an outsider researcher. This use of an “insider” cultural guide is one that should be considered for all PAR projects, whether you are crossing cultures in the national culture sense or just in the organizational culture sense.

Capacity building through participation in a founder-led nonprofit. In Chapter 2 I reviewed the concept of Founder’s Syndrome and the theory that the skills that help founders establish an organization, are not necessarily the same ones that lend themselves to good management. It was the Executive Director herself that initially suggested this topic, which shows that she as a leader was aware that management has

been an issue for the organization. Within Chapter 4 the impacts of having a founder-leader is apparent in the initial interview data – the majority of “growth areas” identified by the respondents were management-related issues. Suggestions including creating organizational charts and work plans, hiring a manager and delegating work, all of which point to a management system that could be enhanced. The project eventually selected by organizational members – creating job descriptions and contracts – served as a way for to discuss and create a more formal understanding between management and workers. Organizational members also displayed their willingness to self-manage in the PAR process, for example, meetings were never officially “called” by myself or by management, rather the schedule was created by the organizational members. Although attendance varied, those who were at the farm were present at the meetings (barring any major work demands). The PAR process for this founder-led organization gave the organizational members’ the opportunity to voice their desire for a more formal management system and enabled workers to self-manage the development of contracts through the participatory group process, which in turn led to organizational capacity building.

In investigating how organizational capacity was built in this process, I refer to Merino and Carmenado’s (2012) table of organizational capacity characteristics (see figure 1). Although it is difficult to speak to individual capacities, looking at the social capacities it is clear that a number of them were exercised in the course of this project. Prior to the PAR project, The Baobab Home did not have regular staff meetings, which was reflected in the initial interview data showing meetings as the number one priority for change identified by organizational members. The very act of meeting and

discussing served as a capacity building effort. Through these meetings the organizational members also displayed social capacities (Merino & Carmenado, 2012) such as communication, teamwork and participation & cooperation. In the discussions of policies and procedures the group also identified shared values that they found to be important at the workplace. Table 14 (below) highlights the social capacity competencies that were tapped into during the course of this PAR project.

Table 14

Social Capacity Building

Social Capacity Competence	Evidence of change from narrative data
Participation and cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five weekly meetings attended by an average of 9 out of 15 organizational members per week - Organizational members also participated in creating their own job descriptions to insert in their individual contract - Reflections at conclusion of project included observations from the organizational members that meetings were important and specific planning on how to continue meeting together
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weekly meetings created on-going communication, as well as one-on-one meetings between the Executive Director and her staff
Team work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In order to create policies and procedures for the contract, the group had to work together to define what they believed should be the rules of The Baobab Home
Group process skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When differences of opinion arose, organizational members used discussion to come to a clearer understanding, such with issues surrounding policies and procedure definition - In order to make decisions throughout the process, the organizational members used consensus decision-making
Sense of Community and shared values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through defining the first formal set of policies and procedures for The Baobab Home, organizational members

Although the long-term effects of this project are yet to be known, in the short-term timeframe it is clear that capacity-building characteristics were displayed in the social and participatory setting of this PAR project.

Participation. In examining the “success” of this project, I will look through the lens of both participation and action – the two major ingredients to a PAR study. To understand participation within this project we must first look at who initiated the research. At the most basic level, this research project was originally initiated by me as an academic researcher in order to fulfill a requirement for my Masters degree. The question I raised was “how can PAR aid in strengthening organizational systems, processes and/or relationships?” In this way, I served as what Stoecker (1999) would call an “Initiator” of the project. Although the initial project impetus came directly from me, and my needs as a student, the entire staff of The Baobab Home served as my co-researchers. Once the initial interview data was compiled and fed back to them, they were able to create their own question by selecting a participative project to help improve the organization. In this respect, it could be posited that when they selected to work on job descriptions and contracts they “re-wrote” the question for the project. In that vein their research focus and question was: “Can we implement regular meetings and create job descriptions and contracts in a month?” This narrower approach not only re-framed the research to a specific action, but it also created a shift in participation, putting them as the experts and me as a resource.

In general this project met many of the PAR criteria for participation. As the outsider researcher, I remained a source of technical information, researching aspects of the contracts as well as helping to edit the contract along the way. The organizational

members took responsibility for discussing and making major decisions over the content of the contracts – including job descriptions, benefits, and policies/procedures. At a high-level this process was quite collaborative and, as noted in my field notes, often even more than I would have initially been inclined to do, due to my slow language skills.

Action. As noted in Chapter 2, action and goals are often a higher priority for the more organization-focused tradition of PAR. Within the context of this study, community members identified fairly clear goals of developing job descriptions and contracts. As the academic researcher, I served in a role that attempted to allow them to control this process (although admittedly there were times where I intervened). In analyzing this question, we can take a look at the results of the project. At the end of our month of implementation, the contracts were in final draft and the participants at the final meeting reported general satisfaction with the project and their work. The organizational members also achieved their number one organization change priority by scheduling and attending meetings. With the goals met, it can be concluded that organizational change was in fact created during the action process of this research project.

PAR and power. Due to a strong focus on action, the work done at The Baobab Home was inline with the organization-focused tradition of PAR, although also managed to stay highly participative. That being said, those from the liberatory tradition would perhaps raise questions regarding the fact that power dynamics were not discussed in participatory way during the course of the project, especially as this project took place in a cross-cultural setting in a developing country.

It would be foolish to pretend as if there were no power dynamics at play within The Baobab Home as an organization. Management held the ability to punish or reward

organizational members, a power-dynamic found in every organization. They also hold a broader organizational knowledge, such as financial information and connection to Board Members, that the workers are not always privy too. This was evident throughout the study in the number of times we had to first present information to management in order to secure their approval before moving forward or when the Executive Director had to consult on benefits with Board Members. My position as an Anglo-American, researcher and Board Member of the organization were all “weights of authority” (Wallerstein, 1999) I carried with me. In the same way, the Executive Director represented power bases of Anglo-American and as a boss. Within the data there are multiple instances where I worked independently with the management team or with the Executive Director to move things forward or address issues that they had, such as the discussion regarding how to address holiday pay prior to the October 23 meeting. In terms of the organization-focused PAR, working separately with management is a completely appropriate choice, but for the liberatory tradition, this could be seen as succumbing to the political economy of the organization, rather than trying to change it.

Wallerstein (1999) recommends that these weights of authority and issues of power should be part of the discussion in PAR projects. Within this project, issues of power were never discussed within the organizational community of researchers. There are two potential reasons for this. The first is that it was not necessary to discuss power within the confines of this project. The second is that there were barriers to having this discussion – either cultural or organizational or both. As shown in Chapter 2, Block (2004) suggested that founders are often independent and less team-oriented, and research done by English & Peters (2011) demonstrated that founders can create a culture

where employees are hesitant to express opinions contrary to that of the founder. One also must consider that at a national cultural level, Tanzania's relatively high power-distance (Hofstede, 2001) could create barriers for discussion of power. The Tanzanian acceptance of hierarchies also means that they are more comfortable with people being of varying levels of status and power. This is not to say that they would accept mistreatment, but they would likely feel less perturbed than an American would in hierarchical systems.

This raises an interesting set of questions for me as I reflect back on the project: by creating a process that is participative and puts organizational members at the helm the decision-making process, what does it mean if they do not choose to discuss power? As a co-researcher, I must also reflect on my own choice not to introduce discussion around the issue of power dynamics within the organization and within the research project. As noted above in the discussion regarding the use of a Cultural Guide, I often used my work with Emmanuel to try to mitigate potential power issues that could arise from my being an outsider researcher and foreigner, and within the meetings themselves I tried (for the most part) to allow the organizational members to take the lead. Did I miss some opportunity to open the discussion up to power dynamics? And are discussions of power an absolute necessity to a good PAR project? A liberatory tradition supporter would answer, "yes."

In the end, I have no real answers to the questions raised above. As seen in the previous sections, both participation and organizational change were accomplished in this project, which suggests (contrary to the liberatory tradition) that discussions of power dynamics are not absolutely necessary in order for a PAR project to be worthwhile. By

having the buy-in and permission of management, as well as a staff dedicated to creating the change they wished to see, we were able to create contracts and build capacity within the organization. For the most part, the Baobab Home staff members were not the elites, but working-class Tanzanians and they chose a project that helped them gain more status and security in their employment through creating contracts. Would using our time to discuss power dynamics been as fruitful as creating contracts? As the academic researcher, the literature of the liberatory PAR tradition was essential to my research and played a role in both the PAR process and my understanding of how to be an outsider researcher working in a developing country. Although the liberatory tradition rejects the organizational-focused tradition based on their inattention to power dynamics, this project suggests that there is room for both to be a part of participatory research, especially when working inside nonprofit organizations.

Limitations

The major limitation to this study was the availability of all staff members to participate in all meetings. As participation is voluntary and schedules varied, we cannot say that all participants were included in every meeting, although there were various discussions about how to pass information on to those who could not attend.

Another limitation of this study was the time constraints. Two months is a very brief time in which to cultivate a truly participatory study. I believe this limited us from having the fuller conversations of power that may have emerged had more time been allowed. That being said there still seems to be value in even a short-term project for building organizational capacity and generating organizational action.

Recommendations

This study resulted in a number of new insights. For the Baobab Home, I would recommend a follow-up study to be conducted regarding the lasting impacts of PAR – especially in the area of capacity building. It would be particularly interesting to do this study using the PAR methodology, so that those involved in the initial research would be able to investigate what capacity building means for them and whether PAR is a sustainable way to achieve that.

For the advancement of the literature on PAR in nonprofit settings, I recommend that further PAR studies be conducted in a nonprofit organizational setting, especially for those nonprofits in developing countries. Although there seem to be many studies on nonprofits who are using PAR methodologies with their client-groups, it is much more difficult to find research done within nonprofit organizations. Through further studies within nonprofits, there may be the opportunity to gather more data on how to balance the organizational-focused tradition and the liberatory tradition within research focused on organizations that may employ citizens of developing countries. All over the globe there are nonprofits struggling to serve their communities, internally they may have issues such as lack of capacity and management issues that arise in the context of a founder-led organization. Through further research in a nonprofit-oriented PAR there is the potential for them to build capacity as organizations, to accomplish goals and to communicate in a more participatory manner.

Summary

The PAR process is neither a neat nor easy one to accomplish, especially in a short amount of time. McIntyre (2008) writes: “Given the diversity of perspectives, the

variety of methods, the different research approaches, the wide range of objectives, and the underlying principles that underscore PAR, it appears unreasonable to think that there will ever be a fully realized PAR project” (Kindle Locations 154-155). Within the context of The Baobab Home, it is fair to posit that some organizational change was achieved and that organizational social capacities (Merino & Carmenado, 2012), were strengthened, but there is still much work to be done both within The Baobab Home as an organization and within the scope of PAR methodology within nonprofit organizations. This study offers the challenge to future researchers to further study PAR within the framework of nonprofits and to discover more about how both the liberatory and organization-focused can meld together to serve in nonprofit organizational PAR. This study also offers new insights into the use of a cultural guide when working as an outsider researcher across cultures, as well as insights about the experiences of a Masters student’s personal learning as a PAR practitioner.

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Appendix A: Participant Consent Form in English and Swahili

Participant Consent Form

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

TITLE OF THE STUDY: Changing from the Inside Out in Tanzania: Investigating Change with an NGO in Bagamoyo, Tanzania Through Participatory Action Research

RESEARCHER'S NAME AND SCHOOL AFFILIATION: [Katherine Balk], Principle Researcher, current graduate student at the Graziadio School of Business, Pepperdine University, Culver City, CA.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this research is to understand the impacts of Participatory Action Research in a Tanzanian nonprofit setting. All research conducted is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Science in Organization Development.

PROCEDURES: If you decide to volunteer, you will participate in a series of interviews and group meetings with the researcher and members of the Baobab Home. You will be asked questions about your experiences relating to your work at the Baobab Home and you will serve as a co-collaborator in creating, implementing and assessing an action plan for the organization. The researcher will be taking notes and recording all interviews and group meetings. All data (audio and written) will be stored in a secure place during the research and then destroyed. No actual names will be used to identify anyone who takes part in this research.

PARTICIPATION: Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty.

CONFIDENTIALITY: The results of information the researcher learns from the interview may be published in the form of articles, a book, or a research report; however, the research will not use your name. Only the researcher will have direct access to the data. The records will be kept confidential during and after the study.

CONTACT INFORMATION: You can contact me at +255(0)769094281 or katiebalk@gmail.com. For questions about the study, you can also contact my advisor, Terri Egan at +1-949-542-7875 or tegan@pepperdine.edu. For questions about participant's rights contact Yuying Tsong, Interim Chairperson for the International Review Board, at +1-310-568-5768 or yuying.tsong@pepperdine.edu.

Signature of Participation

Date

Fomu ya Ridhaa ya Kushiriki Katika Utafiti

Ridhaa ya Kushiriki Katika Somo la Utafiti

KICHWA CHA HABARI: Mabadiliko ya Ndani na Kati kutoka Tanzania: Utafiti wa mabadiliko katika Taasisi isiyo ya Kiserekali iliyopo Bagamoyo, Tanzania Participatory Action Research (Kupitia Utafiti Shirikishi wa matendo).

JINA LA MTAFITI MKUU [Katherine Balk] ambaye ni mwanafunzi wa masters kwa ushirikiano wa Graziadio School of Business, Pepperdine University, Culver City, CA.

DHUMUNI: Dhumuni la utafiti ni kuweza kufahamu matokeo ya Participatory Action Research ndani ya Tanzania kupitia taasisi isiyo ya kiserekali. Utafiti huu unahitajika ili kuweza kutosheleza mahitaji ya stashaada ya Masters of Science in Organizational Development.

UTARATIBU: Kama umeamua kujitolea, utatakiwa kushiriki katika mfululizo wa mahojiano na mikutano ya vikundi pamoja na mtafiti na watu wa Baobab. Utaulizwa maswali juu ya uzoefu wako unaohusiana na kazi yako ndani ya Baobab Home. Utatakiwa kushiriki utafiti huu, utafanya kazi pamoja na watu wa Baobab na mtafiti katika kupanga, kutekeleza na kukadiria mpango wa utekelezaji wa Baobab Home. Mtafiti atatakiwa kuchukua maelezo na kurekodi mahojiano ya mikutano na vikundi. Maelezo yote yaliyoandikwa na kurekodiwa yatahifadhiwa katika mahali pa amani wakati wa utafiti na baadaye kuharibiwa. Hakuna majina halisi ya washirika yatakuwa yanatumika katika kubaini mtu yeyote ambaye anashiriki katika utafiti huu.

USHIRIKI: Kushiriki katika utafiti huu ni hiari na unaweza kujitoa wakati wowote bila adhabu.

USIRI: Matokeo ya habari ambayo mtafiti amepata kutoka katika mahojiano yanaweza kuchapishwa katika mfumo wa makala, kitabu, au ripoti ya utafiti, lakini mtafiti hatotakiwa kutumia majina sahihi ya washirika. Mtafiti pekee ndiye atakuwa na fursa ya kufahamu maelezo ya washirika. Maelezo ya washirika yatakuwa ni siri wakati na baada ya utafiti.

HABARI ZA KUWASILIANA: Tunaweza kuwasiliana kupitia +255(0)769094281 au katiebalk@gmail.com. Kuuliza maswali kuhusu utafiti huu, unaweza kuwasiliana mshauri wangu kupitia +1-949-542-7875 au tegan@pepperdine.edu. Kwa maswali kuhusu haki za washiriki tunaweza kuwasiliana kupitia Yuying Tsong, Interim Chairperson kwa International Review Board +1-310-568-5768 or yuying.tsong@pepperdine.edu.

Sahihi ya Ushiriki

Tarahe

Appendix B: PowerPoint Presentation on Interview Data



Baobab Interviews

September 2012



Who are we...

- 19 interviews were conducted which included staff, managers, stakeholders and farm residents
- On average Baobab staff have been employed 2 years, 5 months
- Together we've worked a total of 38 years at the Baobab Home
- We are caregivers, cleaners, cooks, biogas workers, animal herders, teachers, students, supporters, health care givers, managers, drivers, volunteers and Baobab family members



Why we love Baobab...

- "I am happy because I would have problems if it weren't for Baobab."
- "Because I am able to say I have a better future."
- "I am happy to live with the children."
- "Thanks to God for the work at Baobab. Nowadays, I start to understand myself, start to see the responsibilities that are in front of me."
- "After I came to work at Baobab, truly it cheered me up because I was feeling very lonely."

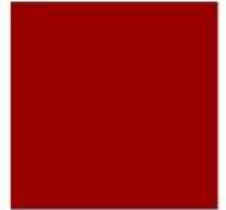


Why we love Baobab...

- "I really love the work of taking care of the children; it is what I love in my life."
- "I am happy because we help the community."
- "I have gotten good personal development."
- "We help each other, so I am happy to be together and working with everybody... we live like a home."
- "Working with people from different areas, different cultures."

What's working well...

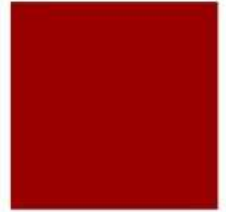
- 15 respondents said care for the children, inside and outside of Baobab, is successful – and 5 others said care for people in general is an achievement
- 10 said that organizational aspects are thriving, such as:
 - Love and cooperation between employees
 - Hard working staff
 - Enjoyable work
 - Good treatment of staff – including food, leisure time & some payment for transportation





What's working well...

- 8 said that they are proud of the educational programs, especially the new school, STA
- Other items that people felt are successful at Baobab included:
 - The growth and development on the farm – biogas, cow shed, everyone living together
 - Sober treatment support
 - Comprehensive medical treatment
 - Breakfast program



Things to improve...

- Organizational improvement suggestions include:
 - Formal contracts for employees which include terms of employment (firing/quitting procedures; policies on payment for national holidays; etc.)
 - Clear organizational chart
 - Create job descriptions for all employees and shared understanding between employees about roles and responsibilities
 - Delegate work – Terri has too much on her plate
 - Work schedule/plan for staff and management
 - Hire a manager to oversee workers and give out salaries – someone to be a mid-level coordinator between management and staff
 - Hire enough staff to ensure that jobs are covered when someone is gone or sick



Things to improve...

- Employee salaries and benefits
 - 6 respondents said that salaries were low, given rising cost of living
 - 2 said it was important to be paid on time
 - A number of respondents suggested increasing employee benefits/incentives, suggestions included:
 - NSSF/Retirement Accounts
 - Health Care fund
 - Transportation costs
 - Children of workers invited to attend STA
 - On-going education opportunities for staff (salary set aside for tuition fees)

Other things to improve...



- Better record keeping and tracking of money
- Regular follow-up with clients, including children who have been reunited with families or adopted
- Family visits for the Baobab Home kids to see their relatives
- Ensuring there is teacher support at STA
- Require uniforms and short hair for all STA students
- Change t-shirt color of STA uniform to something darker to hide dirt
- Add more classes to STA school

Other things to improve...

- Building suggestions:
 - Well in case of water issues
 - Fence around the children's home for safety
 - Visitor's house for volunteers
 - Cement block construction for bathroom near road
- Replacing sand in driveway with gravel for safety
- Clean orange grove for better growth
- All employees should work to keep the farm area clean





From 2010...

- Establish system so staff knows roles/responsibilities and can perform them with confidence
- Staff does not understand their employment status
- Communication issues – fear on the part of staff to approach management
- Lack of good staff monitoring/evaluation system
- Lack of good record keeping
- Relationship building not strong enough... need meetings



We can... save money

- Use farmland to grow more food to reduce costs
- Buy car to reduce cost of transport
- Track finances closely and put into a place a system of checks and balances that ensure all money is being spent well and accounted for

We can... generate income



- 6 respondents said income generation projects would be a good idea to help support Baobab. Suggested projects included:
 - Guest house for volunteers
 - Buy a car (or multiple cars) for use as transport and taxi for income generation
 - Buy a bus that runs from Dar to Bagamoyo
 - Use free time during work days to hem kitenge
 - Selling chicken eggs
 - Workshop
 - Store



We can communicate...

- Honesty was seen as a value that should be a part of the Baobab Home community, especially around areas of improvement
- A couple respondents said there was a need to ensure all voices were heard by management (not just a few)
- We should love one another and treat each other with respect
- Learn from other organizations that have grown stronger
- Know our own and other's roles/responsibilities at Baobab
- Inform the outside community of Baobab's work and why we do what we do



We can... meet

- Over half of respondents said that meetings were a way to improve cooperation and advance the organization, suggestions included:
 - Figure out how to be consistent and have everyone attend regular meetings
 - Use fundamental meeting components – chairperson, secretary, minutes reviewed at each meeting
 - Share ideas, problems & feelings
 - Focus on working together to resolve issues for individuals and the organization as whole – issues should be worked on until they are fully resolved
 - Give advice to management



Questions...

- Reactions?
- Do you feel like there are some potential projects within these responses?
- What is helpful for management to prepare for large group meeting?
- Who should attend large group meeting (only workers, only those living/working on the farm everyday, students, accountant)? Terri & Caito to decide
- How long do we need for the first meeting?
 - Consider:
 - Mamas rotating schedule – how do we ensure participation?
 - Weekly meetings v monthly meetings (or both)
 - What are our responsibilities
 - If you are off and need to come to a meeting – what do you get...
 - Time? That works?
 - Can we have meetings without full group? If so, how does that look... If not, what can do to get everyone there...
 - How do we track schedules to know who is on and who is off...
- How soon can schedule it? Monday...
- Is there any role for management other than participants in large group meeting? Maybe "State of Baobab"