Summary of independent research on the Partners for Possibility Programme

A. Large-scale surveys by HR.com

Surveys conducted as part of the process for assessing nominees for the LEAD awards (2017 and 2018).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>METHODOLOGY</th>
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<td>To gain feedback from PfP about the effectiveness of the programme in developing leadership.</td>
<td>• HR.com asked 800 participants for feedback on their experience of the PfP programme. • 180 alumni took part in the 2017 survey, and 121 in the 2018 survey.</td>
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**KEY FINDINGS**

1. You have increased your leadership knowledge, skills and abilities as a result of programme participation.

   - **2017**: 87.8% (158 respondents), 12.2% (22 respondents)
   - **2018**: 92.6% (112 respondents), 7.4% (9 respondents)

2. The takeaways from this programme helped you to improve your personal performance and the performance of your team.

   - **2017**: 82.8% (149 respondents), 17.2% (31 respondents)
   - **2018**: 82.6% (100 respondents), 17.4% (21 respondents)

3. Your personal return on investment from programme participation was high.

   - **2017**: 86.7% (24 respondents), 13.3% (156 respondents)
   - **2018**: 85.1% (103 respondents), 14.9% (18 respondents)

4. You would recommend participation in this programme to your peers.

   - **2017**: 94.4% (170 respondents), 5.6% (10 respondents)
   - **2018**: 95.9% (116 respondents), 4.1% (5 respondents)

**KEY:** 😞 1 - 3.5  😊 4 - 5
SUMMARY

External programme evaluations

This section presents the results of evaluations completed by external evaluators.

The Sustainable Livelihood Foundation (SLF) Evaluation, led by Dr. Andrew Hartnack

Study commissioned by Symphonia for South Africa and funded by the DG Murray Trust (2016)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To assess the programme’s effectiveness and validate the PFP Theory of Change.

METHODOLOGY

20 in-depth case studies
- Schools reflecting a variety of socio-economic & geographic scenarios
- Older and newer partnerships
- 120 interviews and focus group discussions with:
  - School principals and business partners
  - Other members of school staff and School Governing Bodies (SGB)
  - Parents and learners

KEY FINDINGS

- ‘PFP contributed enormously to the leadership skills of all principals.’
- ‘In most schools teachers saw a change in how principals communicated and motivated them and it gave them energy to perform well.’
- ‘There was tremendous improvement in a number of schools where parents attended meetings, supported the children’s school work’.
- ‘More children started to love school.’

The Quest Evaluation

Commissioned by the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (MGSLG) 2016

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To assess the effectiveness of the “Gauteng 66” programme, where 66 schools participated in the PFP programme in 2014-15.

METHODOLOGY

20 in-depth case studies among the 66 Gauteng schools.
Interviews were conducted with principals, partners, school staff.

KEY FINDINGS

- ‘PFP contributed enormously to the leadership skills of all principals.’
- ‘In most schools teachers saw a change in how principals communicated and motivated them and it gave them energy to perform well.’
- ‘There was tremendous improvement in a number of schools where parents attended meetings, supported the children’s school work’.
- ‘More children started to love school.’
The Hout Bay Case Study Evaluation, led by Cara Hartley from PDG

An Outcome Evaluation of the Partnership for Possibility in Hout Bay High School (November 2017)

(NB: This study was submitted towards a postgraduate diploma. However, we have chosen to include it in the “Programme Evaluation” category rather than “Academic research” because the methodology used is informed by cutting-edge M&E thinking).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To shed light on how PfP can make a difference in schools in the medium to long-term, by tracing the programme’s contribution along each of its intended mechanisms of change, and assessing the role of external factors, all the way to learner-level changes.

METHODOLOGY

A theory-based outcome evaluation, drawing on concepts and methods from Contribution Analysis.

In-depth data was collected including:

- 14 interviews (principal, business partner, circuit manager, teachers, learners, and outside partners) and 2 group sessions (with SGB and SMT)
- 2 paper-based surveys of learners and teachers
- Secondary data such as: learner enrolment and progression, learner attendance, SGB minutes, Grade 8 baseline test results, NSC results, etc.

KEY FINDINGS

The principal has become ‘more confident and assertive’, and this change could be traced back to: 1) ‘the supportive relationship with the partner’, 2) ‘specific skills and concepts from the PfP workshops’ especially with regard to the communication with parents, and 3) improved listening skills which have ‘improved his ability to deal with difficult interactions’.

The SMT has become a stronger team over time, but ‘there is no conclusive evidence that PfP played a direct role’.

The teachers are not yet fully ‘engaged and motivated’ although PfP appears to have improved teacher punctuality.

Parent outcomes ‘have improved in a very obvious way’, and it is clear that the PfP programme and the business partner’s inputs have caused this improvement.

Hout Bay High has also benefited from a huge increase in contributions from individuals, companies and organisations in the broader ‘community’ of Hout Bay and beyond. Many of these contributions ‘were secured through the efforts and networks of the business partner’.

At learner level, outcomes are quite mixed. Learners’ motivation remains a challenge; absenteeism and dropout rates do not show clear improvement.

The interpretation of learner outcomes is compounded by three external factors: 1) social tension in Hangberg, 2) The poorer quality of intake from the feeder primary school and 3) The opening of a competing high school.
SUMMARY

Academic research

Maggie Holtzhausen & Jenny Venter (UNISA)

Business Leaders’ experience of the PfP programme (phase 1, August 2017)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To evaluate the perceived effect of the PfP programme on business leaders at a qualitative level.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative, self-report online survey. 293 business leaders were surveyed and 73 (25%) responded.

KEY FINDINGS

Business leaders experienced:

- A shift towards a more collaborative, inclusive and consultative leadership style
- An emphasis on the importance of quality relationships
- A deep appreciation for the diversity of people/contexts and the challenges associated with some contexts
- A mind set of curiosity and possibility versus judgement and problems
- A deep sense of personal meaning.

SELECTED SURVEY RESULTS

Business leaders feel that their participation in the PfP programme...

... enhanced their understanding of the context of our work in South Africa

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

... influence others in situations where they have no direct control

Business leaders feel that being part of PfP has improved their ability to...

... work across traditional boundaries

... engage people in a change process

Business leaders feel that, because of their PfP experience, they are...

... more aware of how privileged they are

... a better listener

... better equipped to lead a complex and difficult task

ACADEMIC PUBLICATION

Maureen Kirori  
MA Development Studies WITS University (2017)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE
To assess how PfP participants experience the PfP programme and the impact it has on them.
Also to assess how social differences affect the partnerships.

METHODOLOGY
Semi-structured interviews with 22 PfP participants from a mix of older and newer partnerships considered to be strong, moderate and weak.

KEY FINDINGS
• All principals experienced leadership growth. Their schools also benefited in a variety of other ways.
• The most significant and sustainable impacts occur in partnerships that are transformational, rather than transactional in character.
• In transformational partnerships the partners pursue a shared vision and combine their knowledge and resources in activities that lead to changes in thinking and practices.
• Partnerships that look for quick wins are likely to become transactional in nature and not generate lasting impacts.
• Social differences between partners appear to have little impact on them probably because their focus on common goals reduces potential bias.

Keresha Naidoo  
MBA project, UCT/GSB (2015)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE
Identify the drivers that motivate business leaders to join the PfP programme, and identify impacts from the programme.

METHODOLOGY
Semi-structured interviews with 12 PfP business partners, of whom 9 had experienced a successful partnership and 3 had terminated their partnership.

KEY FINDINGS
• A growing and enriching experience for the business partners;
• Multiple benefits for school principals (increased confidence; exposure to new ways of running an organisation; planning, HR and financial management skills);
• Multiple benefits for the schools (skills transfer to teachers; camaraderie between teachers; better presence of the school in the community; improved literacy levels, etc.)

Neil Jansen  
MPhil project, Stellenbosch University (2015)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE
Explore the influence of the PfP programme on primary school principals.

METHODOLOGY
Semi-structured interviews with 5 school principals, 5 deputy principals and 3 circuit managers.

KEY FINDINGS
• School principals’ experiences of the programme were extremely positive.
• Deputy school principals felt more valued.
• The programme’s effectiveness would be improved if PfP and the Department of Education (DoE) contracted formally.
Jakobus Conradie  
MBA project, Stellenbosch University (2016)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Establish if the PfP process is effectively building leadership capacity in schools, and if the effects are filtering through to staff, learners, communities etc.

METHODOLOGY

3 case studies of Western Cape Schools, involving interviews with the principal, two SMT members and two teachers at each school.

KEY FINDINGS

- Leadership capacity has increased in schools participating in the PfP leadership development and support process.
- Positive effects have filtered through to the rest of the school and school community, with action learning enabling sustainable change.
- Some hindrances may occasionally prevent the targeted growth in leadership, such as the personality traits of the principal.

More research is underway and has yet to be completed:

- Ass. Prof. Petro Botha & Alida Deas  
  Business Leaders’ experience of the PfP programme, Phase 2
- Catherine Campbell  
  MCom Project, UCT
- Phuti Moyaha  
  MA Project, University of Pretoria
- Dumisani Hompashe  
  PhD Project, ReSEP/Department of Economics, Stellenbosch University and University of Fort Hare
- Marius Alberts et al.  
  PGDip project, Gordon Institute of Business Science

Dr Caren Scheepers and Dr Kerrin Myres

Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria (2018)

Case Study of the Partnership for Possibility at George Khosa Secondary School.

CASE STUDY OBJECTIVE

The Case Study is intended for classroom discussion. It documents the partnership between Frank Terblanche, Director at Liberty Life, and Lindiwe Ginya, Principal in Dobsonville, Soweto.

Accreditations

Please ask us for details of our accreditations and ratings.