



**Empowerment Strategies of Participants and Volunteers in the City**  
**Mission**  
**(An example of a Diaconal Institution dealing with challenges**  
**Regarding drug addiction, SAFIR)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this thesis is to discuss and explore the strategies used by a diaconal institution in the empowerment of volunteers and participants in Oslo, Norway. This study examines, SAFIR, a diaconal project of the Church City Mission that provides assistance to persons that have decided to put an end to drug consumption. During the past decade, a lot of persons have stopped the consumption of drugs and we hardly know which strategies are used by the institutions to rehabilitate these former addicts.

Until recently, less attention has been devoted towards understanding the strategies used in the rehabilitation of former drug addicts. Therefore, the research gap is the point of departure for this study. This thesis develops on qualitative in-depth interviews with four former drug addicts who engage or have been engaged as volunteers or participants with the said institution. In addition to literature review, this thesis is influenced by my position as a student carrying out research under this field of study. The thesis has centered on empowerment as a tool of diaconal work.

Following the acknowledgement of a gap in the literature, this thesis seeks to shed light on the strategies used by a diaconal institution in the rehabilitation of former drug addicted persons, as well as the challenges faced by these institutions.

**Keywords: Diakonia, Church City Mission, SAFIR, Empowerment, Red Cross, Substance abuse.**

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Motivation

I was motivated by Diakonia works and services which is part of social service. Environmental issues and crisis have promoted social works and activities to go beyond national boundaries and has therefore boosted the economy socially, politically, and economically. This has led to development within the social arena since diaconal works is used to empower many within and across the diaspora. In Norway and other parts of the world, empowerment is one of the social factors that are used to build up the minds of people especially when it comes to issues concerning the vulnerable and the less privileged in the society. The anxiety to render services has motivated the creation of many *Faith based and Diakonia institutions* as well as non-governmental organizations to help promote diaconal praxis and other social activities in the society as a whole. Faith –based institutions as defined by Pallant is “a group or organization that claims to operate from a faith-based and beyond the worshipping communities” (pallant 2012:2) whereas a *Diakonia institution* is a Christian development organization working together with local partners for a sustainable change for the most vulnerable people of the world (Diakonia Strategic Plan 2012-2014:7). These institutions are similar in action and practice in that, they profess a Christian doctrine but implement diaconal service on the vulnerable persons in the society. Diakonia praxis is carried out in areas such as churches, faith-based and diaconal organizations, within the religious atmosphere or group of religious people as well as members in the society.

Secondly, my love and focus has always been to empower people through charitable works and services in respect to the less privileged and vulnerable people or those who think they have been isolated in the society, due to the conditions in which they find themselves in. Churches, faith based organizations and non-governmental organizations have seen the need to embark and engage themselves in charitable works which helps in empowering the poor and the less privileged in our society. My experience back home made me realized and enlightened my ideas on the importance of doing good work and services to those in need. It is very important to note that, *SAFIR is a center for volunteering in drug rehabilitation* ([www.bymisjon.no](http://www.bymisjon.no)) whose motto is “*be, do, and learn*”. On the other hand, this organization is open to everyone from different background that has quit taking drugs and needs help. SAFIR is a diaconal institution whose staffs are not employed based on a Christian background but ironically, they work in line with

Christian values to remain inclusive with participants and volunteers as they interact with each other.

Furthermore, to throw more highlight to the above mentioned, I will focus on the *empowerment strategies and challenges faced by SAFIR* in empowering participants and volunteers in Oslo Norway. This study will be relevant in our today's society and will therefore bring light to those willing to change and become better and useful people in the society in which Diakonia works helps to promote equality, justice and better life (Lutheran World Federation 2009:88) for the needy and vulnerable in our today's society.

## 1.2 Problem statement

As there is growing evidence that organizations have increasingly adopted strategies to empower participants and volunteers, the research on the concept of empowerment has caught the attention of scholars and academicians. Over time, many studies have been carried out on the empowerment of participants and volunteers. Most of these studies centered on gender issues and less privileged groups and only a few studies have explored the context of participants and volunteers. On the other hand, only a limited number of studies in this nature have been conducted in Oslo. Thus, academic literature on empowerment is limited. This makes my area of study imperative for further studies.

Furthermore, Scandinavia is noted for carrying out Diakonia works in the society, which does not limit Christians and non-governmental organization to carry out Diakonia works and activities in the society. On the other hand, it can be argued that, the prevalence of these works has promoted diaconal activities and social works within diaconal institutions (Lutheran World Federation 2009:18). From years back, the Norwegian society have become more open in carrying out diaconal works in their society and has supported many organization in promoting Diakonia activities. These organizations are open to all who needs them and they cater for the vulnerable people, from a diverse and social background irrespective of their ethnicity and culture. It should be noted that employees at Diakonia organizations are more diverse and do not hold on a particular religion, since they deal with people from a diverse background, from different religion and society as a whole. The Lutheran World Federation (2009:88) admits that a Diakonia institution should work with people from a diverse background so as to promote unity as a sign of love towards one another as the bible teaches us.



### 1.3 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this thesis is to increase my understanding of the strategies used by SAFIR to empower participants and volunteers in Oslo community. This leads us to the following research question “**How does SAFIR empower participants and volunteers in Oslo?**” As far as, to achieve the overall objective of this thesis, two questions are addressed in order to provide an answer to the research questions:

- 1) How have SAFIR empowered participants and volunteers in Oslo until now?
- 2) What challenges do SAFIR faced in the empowerment of these participants and volunteers in Oslo?

### 1.4 Delimitation

In order to delimit the empirical investigation, I have chosen to limit my research on two important aspects;

- To participants and volunteers at SAFIR. These are former drug addicted persons who have willingly put an end to drug consumption and have decided to engage themselves in activities that will take their minds off drugs. The reason for limiting this study to this group is due to the fact that, their action to put an end to drug is willful.
- To the Church City Mission which is a branch in the Church of Norway and as one of the founders of SAFIR, because it is a diaconal institution.

### 1.5 Basic key words used in research question

#### 1.5.1 What is SAFIR?

SAFIR (a center for volunteering in drug rehabilitation) is a be-do institution for and with people who want to establish themselves in a place of abstinence or a place free from drugs ([www.bymisjon.no](http://www.bymisjon.no)). Therefore, SAFIR is a voluntary center and a Be-Do educational institution where both participants and volunteers with and without rusbakgrunn together creates, organizes and conducts various activities (VÆRE GJØRE LÆRE 2012:11). On the other hand, SAFIR is a diaconal institution created by the Church City Mission (a part of the *Church of Norway*) and Red Cross in Oslo, Norway. It should be noted that, SAFIR is involved in activities that helps the participants and volunteers to become inclusive, hospitable and committed in activities that helps in transforming them mentally, physically and psychologically. These activities include;

- The green corner art
- Story telling
- Theatre act
- Residential school
- Common meal (tea, coffee and lunch) with neighbors
- Group tour

These empowerment strategies and more will be elaborated in the context chapter. Furthermore, it will be good for us to understand that, SAFIR is engaged in empowering Diakonia which involves diaconal activities which the institution uses to empower its people. I have been very eager to know the diaconal activities/strategies at SAFIR and how this has been one of my motivation towards the institution.

## 1.5.2 Who are participants and volunteers

### Participants

This is the name given to former drug addicted persons at SAFIR, who have willfully put an end to drug consumption and have decided to stay with the organization, and participate in activities that will help them and others to take their minds off drugs.

### Volunteers

There are two types of volunteers here that is; former drug addicted persons who have been helped by the organization to stay off drug and have decided to render their services to the organization in order to help those who have never tasted or consumed drugs but got the passion to work in the organization.

It should be noted that, there are basically non drug consumers who are also identified as participants and volunteers (staffs) who have voluntarily decided to work with the organization, due to their passion for diaconal works.

### Empowerment

Empowerment is a concept that encourages individuals and groups to gain personal, collective power and authority to engage with other institution in the society. This has led many scholars to find concrete definitions towards knowing what empowerment really is.

However, some came out with similar definition to describe their view on the ideology of empowerment and was defined “as prominent model in the quest to improve the health, political and economic status, social and emotional wellbeing of people who experience disadvantaged conditions in their lives” (Fisher, 2008; Parpart et al., 2003; Ratna & Rifkin, 2007; Tsey et al., 2007; Wallerstein, 2006; World Bank, 2008). This theory will be elaborated more in the theory chapter where it will be highly used. Furthermore, it will be good for us to understand that, SAFIR is engaged in empowering Diakonia praxis, which involves diaconal activities in which the institution uses to empower its people.

## Diakonia

As a diaconal institution, it will be inappropriate to talk about empowerment without throwing light on the diaconal activities of the institution which is binding it. This therefore throws light on institutional Diakonia which will be one of the sub topics in my theoretical work. Diakonia works can be seen in our day to day activities such as rendering services to one another. More light about Diakonia will be thrown in the theory chapter. For further understanding of what will be presented, I will like to introduce Diakonia as defined by *The Church of Norway Plan for Diakonia* (2007:5,6)

*The caring ministry of the church. It is the Gospel in action and is expressed through loving your neighbor, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggle for justice”*

This research has widen my knowledge and makes me eager to know more about how SAFIR expresses itself as an *Institutional Diakonia* to help empower its participants and volunteers.

In addition to the above mentioned, these key words put together made me become eager towards knowing important and useful information for my background history thereby providing an insight of SAFIR towards its participants and volunteers.

## 1.6 literature review

My focus has been to write something about Diakonia institutions or organizations but I did not have question at hand. From my findings and research to know exactly what to write about, I came across organizations such as the Church City Mission, Norwegian Church Aid, Salvation

Army and so forth, carrying out Diakonia activities. During this period, I came across many drug addicted persons in the streets of Oslo and later on discovered that, many of these Diakonia organizations works in collaboration with these drug addicted persons and those willing to put an end to it, using different strategies with the aim of empowering them in one way or the other. I was also impressed when I came across ‘Edelstenen Nyhetsbrev fra Safir’ also known as the Gem newsletter from SAFIR (Dec 2015:5) where some students in practice were expressing their sincere gratitude towards their achievements at SAFIR. They also made mention of their experience gotten from participating in various activities such as the *creativity at the green corner* which is one of the activities used by the institution to empower the participants and volunteers. I later on develop interest in this institution, knowing what it is and I became inquisitive knowing what the *green corner* is all about. From my investigations carried out, I realized that the so called *Green corner* is a building at SAFIR where these participants and volunteers show-cases their creativity and these creative ideas help to bring out the talent in them. It should be noted that this is one of the strategy the institution uses to empower these participants and volunteers.

From the above research carried out, I also came across words such as the Church City Mission, Red Cross, SAFIR, empowerment and diaconal works. My search resulted to articles, magazines and newsletters which stipulated the various areas in which the Church City Mission works with issues like human rights, drug abuse cases and homeless beggars, which are all part of diaconal activities. Due to the presence of these diversified groups from all over the world, there was the need to employ workers based on Diakonia and social service background, since the staffs will be dealing with people from a diverse background.

In the general perspective, empowerment is regarded as a process in which the less privileged are empowered to know their rights, have access to resources and take part in building up society and making decisions for future purposes. Empowerment as a concept has been widely defined and used by different organizations. Empowerment is a complex term and cannot be captured by a single definition (Rapport, 1984; Gibson, 1991). However, we see Empowerment “as prominent model in the quest to improve the health, political and economic status, social and emotional wellbeing of people who experience disadvantaged conditions in their lives” (Fisher, 2008; Parpart et al., 2003; Ratna & Rifkin, 2007; Tsey et al., 2007; Wallerstein, 2006; World

Bank, 2008). Scholars such as Parpart et al, Ratna and Rifkin ties to focus on the idea of empowerment as means to improve the well-being of the vulnerable and less privileged in the society as seen with the services of the Church City Mission and SAFIR. Looking at the Plan for Diakonia, Diakonia services are seen through work and action by providing the people with their basic needs, resources as well as the possibility to cooperate with one another (plan for Diakonia 2007:5). In this aspect, I can clearly see that, there is that similarity between the scholar's idea regarding empowerment and Diakonia as seen by the Church Of Norway plan for Diakonia. As earlier seen, both ideas were focused on catering for the well-being of the vulnerable ones, which is my greatest focus in my research work as it will be disclosed in the other chapters ahead.

From the above definition, we realized that one school of thought sees empowerment as a collective tussle against repressive social relations, while the concept to others is seen as an awareness of individuals and the authority to express and ability to take action on their needs. Both alternatives of the above definition have been summarized in the work of Paolo Freire and the Feminist movement during the last decade. According to Paolo Freire's concept of "popular education" became very popular and influential during the 1960's, 70's and 80's. However, during this period empowerment was only seen as a radical project of social transformation scheme to assist social groups express and assert their mutual rights. Still, during this époque empowerment was only used with respect to women's movement within a framework of feminism that attracted the attention of scholars and emphasized on the role of the individual in politics.

Empowerment has been at the focus of many studies during the last decade and has been widely used and applied by scholars and academicians in social services, public health and in the welfare of the community. Nowadays, the term has extensively been used in other domains ranging from politics to business. Gradually in the 1990s, the concept began to gain recognition in international gender and development processes. Recently, the concept witnessed a change in scope to incorporate other services such as diaconal works and its activities (Simon, 1994; Wong, 2003).

Empowerment as a concept encourages individuals and groups to gain personal, collective power, and authority to engage with others and institutions in the society.

In this thesis, I will be looking at *institutional Diakonia and empowering Diakonia*, because these perspectives will enable me to elaborate more on the theoretical part and for good research approach when writing and therefore, it is helpful to my research approach since it deals with empowerment. I will start by looking at institutional Diakonia since SAFIR is a part of the Church city Mission, I will briefly mention the definition of Diakonia by the Church of Norway and a brief background of the Lutheran perspective of Diakonia. Secondly, I will elaborate on empowering Diakonia. I will therefore start with institutional Diakonia and later on continue with the Empowering Diakonia.

Furthermore, my theory will be based on books and articles by professors and non-professors at Diakonhjemmet University College (VID) and other articles which I have come across during my master study. My literature will also be based on Empowerment and Diakonia concepts as well as other concepts such as transformation, inclusiveness and hospitality. This project will also be talking about the challenges faced by SAFIR in the process of empowering its participants and volunteers such as finance, communication, decision making, dieting and so forth.

Never the less, I also carried out my research using the library data base called Oria to help me improve on my research on the following words;

- The church city mission
- SAFIR
- Diakonia and its challenges
- Empowerment

I also conducted a search using EBSCO Host on the following words:

- Diakonia
- Diaconal challenges
- Empowerment
- Empowerment strategies and challenges

My search was gotten from articles, magazines and other books written by the Church City Mission and SAFIR with initiatives gotten from former drug addicted persons who are willing to put an end to drug addiction.

### 1.7 Chapter overview

The **First Chapter** will carry the research question as well as the problem, the reason why I choose to study this, some relevant definitions which could be helpful when reading my thesis, and literature review. **Chapter Two** will be background information focusing on who the Church City Mission, SAFIR, Diakonia and substance abuse and other activities regarding participants and volunteers. Who these participants and volunteers really are? Furthermore, I will be looking at the background history of Norway. **Chapter three** will focus on concepts and framework which is relevant to address the research question. This theoretical framework will be relevant to institutional organizations such as SAFIR, modern pluralism and Diakonia works. My **chapter four** will be the method chapter, which will be disclosing the methods used in the study, how the data was collected, what I need to know before completing my research and finally what a methodological approach is? On the other hand, my method chapter describes the research methodology used in carrying out my research and thus gives an outline of the research approach, research strategy, the data collection method, the reliability and validity gotten from my research.

**Chapter five** will be empirical findings (analyzing) the data collected in chapter four, on empowerment strategies and the challenges faced by SAFIR toward its participants and volunteers. **Chapter six** is discussion and comparison of empirical findings and theories mentioned in chapter three. The last but not the least will be conclusion and future research theories and empirical findings.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF SAFIR, DIAKONIA AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

In order for us to understand the empowerment strategies and the challenges faced by SAFIR in empowering its participants and volunteers, it is necessary for us to know the background information about the organizations concern as well as some data information.

SAFIR is a social meeting place for people who want to establish a drug-free life. It was created as a center for volunteering in drug rehabilitation. It was established as a free will center in 2002 and operated in cooperation by the Oslo Red Cross and the Church City Mission. The center was created with the intention of assisting former drug addicts break up with the old drug life. The purpose of the center is to create a drug-free, social network and avoid loneliness, relapse and isolation amongst former drug addicts. Many of the activities at the center are carried out by volunteers. The center consists of about 35 active volunteers, and about 70 participants, with about 4.5 positions. (Røde Kors, 2016).

## 2.1 Origin and background SAFIR?

SAFIR is an institution for drug rehabilitation created by the Church City Mission and Red Cross in Oslo Norway. This center was created as a drug free center for former drug addicted persons to meet, chat and talk with others from a different background whereby people can share similar ideas in a drug free environment.

## 2.2 What does SAFIR do?

One of the greatest tasks of SAFIR is to create a social network amongst former drug addicts. SAFIR realizes this goal by carrying out activities ranging from discussions, workshops, seminars, lectures and sporting activities. SAFIR has an open café at the Green Corner that opens every Monday (kl.11-12). Here, volunteers share a cup of coffee, read newspapers and meet in an informal manner. The SAFIR center has a forum theater that organizes workshops and exercises as part of their activities. The center has a school that offers courses, lectures, trips and tours. Volunteers and participants from time on are asked to deliver lectures on housing issues. Still, every Wednesday's volunteers are entitled to open lunch. After lunch they are expected to use the internet, socialize, read, write applications and learn how to use the phone. Moreover, the center carries out sporting activities like Yoga in order to provide physical and mental relaxation, better sleep and peace to volunteers. In addition, the center has a biweekly open Sunday where volunteers share light meal together. They equally, go on tours in islands, museums, and cultural events. Furthermore, the center carries out open activities during evenings. Their purpose is to create a network without intoxication. During this process, volunteers share thoughts and opinions about issues surrounding them. It is important to note that all activities in the center are carried out by volunteers/participants and they are usually done in drug-free environment.



## 2.3 What is Church City Mission?

Church city mission or Kirkens Bymisjon as called in Norwegian started operating in Oslo in 1855 under the name Foreningen for Indre Mission i Christiania. This name was later changed to Oslo Indremisjon. In 1985, it finally became Kirkens Bymisjon (Kullerud 2005:13). During this period, the church city mission adopted an open and inclusive organizational policy. The church city mission in Norway has different types of policies in all its 20 centers in Norway and its objective is to assist people with different kinds of needs (Kirkens Bymisjon Om oss).

The Church City Mission came into existence as a means to perform The Church of Norway's mandate of diakonia by helping people with diverse needs. The Church City Mission has its roots and development within The Lutheran Church. During the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Christians from different institutions met every night in Oslo to renew and strengthen their faith (Lundby, 1980: 112-116). It was during this come together that many people accepted to render their services to the mission. This event greatly shaped the evolution of the mission.

The Church City mission gradually became one of the renowned organizations in Norway and acted as a diaconal arm of the Church (Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss Historie). In the Church City Mission's working documents, they explained that their inspiration to carry out this work came as a result of their belief in God. Therefore, their recourse to help out persons with respect and care came out of their belief in God (Kirkens Bymisjon, 2015:3). Accordingly, the Church City Mission has as view point that man was created out of the image of God and they have this view as their foundation (Kirkens Bymisjon, 2015:12).

The Church City Mission has four symbols that make up its foundation. First, it uses cobblestone to represent realities in the streets. Candles to them are used for prayer, hope and belief. The rose is a sign or symbol for love from God and love from people, with thorns representing a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice. Lastly, the cross represents a Christian symbol of new life, hope and an expression of God in both suffering and day to day life (Kirkens Bymisjon, 2015:23)

## 2.4 Brief history of Red Cross

The idea of Red Cross was adopted by a Swiss gentleman called Henry Dunant in 1859 due to a bloody scene in Solferino (Italy), between the armed forces of imperial Austria and that of

Franco-Sardinian alliance, where 40,000 men were killed in the battle field and those wounded lacked medical attention (Røde Kors, 2015).

Dunant saw the need to call on local people within the community to aid the soldiers by binding their wounds and feeding and comforting them. This act prompted him to create a national relief society to help people who have been wounded in war (ibid).

On the other hand, the Norwegian Red Cross also known as Norges Røde Kors was founded by Prime Minister Frederik Stang on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1865 where nurses were educated in 1895 and in 1907, the Norwegian Minister of defense authorizes the Norwegian Red Cross for voluntary medical aid in issues concerning war (ibid).

#### 2.4.1 What is Norwegian Red Cross?

This is a humanitarian organization that provide services to people such as caring for creation (old and the infirm, prisoners, outdoor rescue, as well as international work). Presently, the organization has 150,000 members rendering services.

Furthermore, the organization is aimed at the following;

- Caring for creation
- Develop social network
- Secure and provide for teenagers and children
- Promote resolution
- Accommodate those with acute care needs
- Organizes programs
- Organizes visitors programs

Due to limitation, I cannot elaborate on issues concerning Red Cross since I am targeting diaconal institutions such as the Church city mission and SAFIR in particular.

## 2.5 A brief overview of Diakonia in Norway

### 2.5.1 Background of the Lutheran perspective

Diakonia practices in Scandinavia nowadays have been promoted by several factors. The theology stated that it is the responsibility of the state to cater for its people (Angell 2009:33). During that period, the society was practicing Christianity and the state was merely acting on the

church behalf when it comes to taking care of the vulnerable in the society (Angell 2009:33). Things eventually changed with the formation of non-governmental organizations and other faith based as well as Diakonia institutions where the responsibility was shifted on to them and the state could no longer maintain its responsibility of taking care of persons when it comes to the Christian mandate (Angell 2009:33).

In addition to the above, a religious movement by name *Pietism* was introduced in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and the *pietists* realized that, the Christian Faith was aimed at helping the vulnerable in the society (Fanuelsen 2014:78,79). Furthermore, due to an increase with the vulnerable persons in the society, the pietists saw the need to transform their faith to action in order to help those in need and perhaps train social workers who will help fight against social problems in the society ( Fanuelsen 2014:79).

In the second half of the 1800, diaconal organizations were established in Norway. These organizations were created to foster or promote health and social services in Norway and was aimed at meeting the needs of the people which the state and others could not meet (skjørshammer 2009:99). This therefore became the starting point for Diakonia works in Norway which was as a result to provide a Christian doctrine as a base to leave a Christian life (Aadland 2009:93).

## 2.6 Background Information on Norway

### 2.6.1 History of Norway

Norway is a young country which was formerly in union with Denmark and Sweden. Norway gained its independence in 1905. During this period, the country could choose its own king and elect its own government. The first people settled in Norway around 10 000 years ago and they survived through fishing and hunting, gradually they transformed into livestock. During this period, metal was used to create weapons, tools and jewelry. This period has popularly been referred to as the Bronze Age (Norwegian Embassy in London, 2016). This period was later followed by the Iron Age. The Iron Age was characterized by the manufacture of tools and growth of trade which lasted for some 1000 AD. Later on came the Viking Age, which lasted between 800- 1030 AD and marked an important period in the Norwegian history. This period was characterized by the building of fast-ocean going ships, travelling of Norwegians across the globe raiding countries for treasures and resources. This pushed a lot of Norwegians to settle

abroad. After 1030 AD Norway became one kingdom and Christian was introduced (ibid). During the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Norway ruled over Iceland, Greenland, Shetland, the Faeroes, and Orkney Islands until 1350, this reign ended after the Black Death incident which killed more than half of its population. After this incident between 1380- 1814, Norway entered into a union with Denmark. When this union came to an end, Norway wrote its own constitution later that year. That same year Norway enters into a union with Sweden which lasted up to 1905. During this period, Norway was able to choose its own king. Prince Carl of Denmark, who became King Haakon VII, was the first ruler of an independent Norway and ruled the country for 525 years (Norwegian Embassy in London, 2016). Norway was under German occupation during WW2, while Britain was one of Norway's allies. King Haakon VII and his family lived in exile in the UK until when the war was over. Norway has been referred as a peace loving country and the country has membership with the UN and NATO. Norway's ideal method of negotiation as a way of settling dispute makes them the ideal country to award the Nobel Peace Prize each year.

In 1960s, huge fields of oil and gas were found around the Norwegian coastal line. This had a huge impact on the country's economy and for the past 8years the country has been voted best country in the World to live by the United Nations (Norwegian Embassy in London, 2016).

## 2.6.2 Geography of Norway

Norway is a small country with a population of about 5 million people (World Bank, 2015). The country has a population density of about 14 people per square kilometers which is second largest in Europe after Iceland. Norway is mostly surrounded with mountains with about 75 per cent of its total land made up of mountainous regions. About 3 percent of Norway's land is arable and 1 percent of urban land. The country has a stretch out distance from North to South of about 1750km. Oslo which is located in the east of Norway is the countries' most populated city, while other populated areas include; Stavanger and Bergen (West), and Trondheim (middle) (Bryson & Rusten, 2006).

## 2.7 Substance Use Disorders

### 2.7.1 What are Substance use disorders?

Substance use disorder is defined as the use of drugs by individuals without medical prescription (Doweiko, 2002:13). According to Minkoff (1997), persons who exhibit poor choices regarding substance abuse might not be addicted. Portenoy and Payne (1997:564) defined addiction as a

psychological and behavioral syndrome in which there is a drug desire, irrational use, and the ability to relapse after withdrawal.

The number of people involved in substance abuse is very high in Norway. According to statistics from the Norwegian institute for Alcohol and Drug Research after alcohol, psychoactive substances are some of the commonly used drugs in Norway. Psychoactive substances include; medicines with abuse potentials and illicit drugs like cannabis, amphetamine and cocaine. The use of narcotic substances is more common in bigger cities than rural areas in Norway (Gjerde, 2011). This study also confirmed that the use of cannabis and other narcotic substances is very high amongst youths in Oslo. In addition, the number of substance use disorder is highest amongst people with low socioeconomic conditions. Individuals with problematic behaviours have high levels of substance abuse (Rodje, 2004).

Substance use disorder comes as a result of excitement, curiosity, broaden consciousness, reinforce religious experiences or as a means to belong to certain groups ( Bardo et al., 2007; Kashdan et al., 2004; Graham et al., 1991). However, most people who use substances do not develop a substance addiction (O'Brien & McLellan, 1996).

According to the (World Health Organization, 2011), substance addiction occurs when a person continuously uses substances despite its harsh psychological and social consequences. Also, the individual might face problems in attempting to control the amount of substance consumption and its durability. Still, tolerance and abstinence symptoms develop along with addiction. Since most individuals involved in this process neglect other activities and necessities in order to become intoxicated. Substance addiction often leads to disorder with severe effects on the individuals and society. In most cases, treatment of this disorders require a broad approach. In spite of these approaches, it has been considered that patients most often relapse and return to substance abuse after abstaining in treatment for some time (Hunt et al., 1971). Nevertheless, psychosocial factors like mental health, social functioning and significant life events most at times influences relapse rates and substance use in patients. Moreover, contextual factors like occupational activities are also important when considering relapse risk and substance use among individuals with substance use disorders (Hammerbacher & Lyvers, 2006; Reece, 2007).

Furthermore, it is important to distinguish between substance abuse/misuse and addiction. In most studies, researchers and clinicians use both terms interchangeably (Caplehorn & Deeks,

2006). However, it is important to point out their differences. Substance abuse is considered as the maladaptive use of substances, but not as severe as addiction. It is considered that, substance abuse is accompanied by adverse biological, psychological and social consequences. Although an individual have not attain addiction in line with diagnostic criteria (DiClemente, 2003), Substance abuse, can be stopped or controlled by mere will since it is considered a voluntary act. Addiction on the other hand, is considered as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is uncontrollable and considered to be compulsive seeking. It changes the brain and affects the way it works. The main difference lies on the fact that substance misuse can be controlled while addiction is difficult to be controlled (Kelly & Westerhoff, 2010).

### 2.7.2 Consequences of Substance Abuse

Substance abuse can lead to social and health effects in terms of injuries, diseases, mental health problems and disorders. However, the effects most at times depends on the type of drug, level of dosage and the length of time consumed. Substance abuse often leads to increase in crime, violence and aggressive behaviors. Other related consequences involved fatal accidents in traffics and personal injuries as a result of narcotics or psychoactive medication (Christophersen & Gjerde, 2014). In addition to these consequences, there has been a new drug available on the Norwegian black market whose consequences are difficult to predict, some are synthetic cannabinoids, cathinone, amphetamine and ecstasy. The Norwegian public health authorities are yet to predict the consequences of these new drugs but recent studies show that these new drugs lead to; high blood pressure and acute myocardial infarction amongst teenagers, loss of consciousness, seizures, anxiety, agitation, and deterioration of earlier mental illness.

## 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will be focused on the theoretical framework and perspective which is very important to this study. Due to the nature of my research, I will consider different types of theories and perspectives from other disciplines. First and foremost, I will be looking at the concepts of Diakonia which includes; empowerment, transformation, inclusiveness and hospitality, as related to the empowerment strategies on how SAFIR is empowering its participants and volunteers regarding issues of drug. Furthermore, I will also look at some causes of drug addiction in order to further the readers understanding on SAFIR and its works on empowering people. Regarding my research question and its content, I will be focusing on

different types of theories and contexts from other disciplines. This scope of work shows how, the organization together with volunteers and participants collaborate to portray a good welfare system and service as a diaconal concept at SAFIR.

### 3.1 Diakonia theory and concepts

These Diakonia theories and concepts are commonly used interchangeably when it comes to issues of social works and empowerment and will be differentiated when defining below;

#### 3.1.1 The concept of Diakonia

The concept of Diakonia is seen in different perspectives by writers and authors depending on how one looks at it. In one of the prominent forum held in South Africa, aimed at discussing prophetic Diakonia which was centered on *Healing of the world*, it was taken in to consideration that “Diakonia reaches out to all persons, who are created in God’s image. While Diakonia begins as unconditional service to the neighbor in need, it leads inevitably to social change that restores reforms and transforms” (LWF 2003b:6). This message stipulate that, the essence of Diakonia is to reach out to everyone be it poor, needy, vulnerable, the sick, and even the abandoned ones in the society just to name a few, because Jesus the savior came to redeem the whole world and to give hope to all despite the circumstance. SAFIR is one of the institutions practicing Diakonia, on those who were addicted to drugs. This center for rehabilitation provides services to those who have been addicted to drug and have stopped consuming or taking drugs by transforming and making them responsible and useful persons in the society. Diaconal works per se can be witness in our everyday activities through our behaviors, actions and doings and it should be understood that, the term *Diakonia* came to represent the Christian ideology, *to serve* which has become more practical than theory in our today\’s society. Diakonia on the other hand, can be termed as empowerment as it “action always implies concretely responding to situations of suffering, need and injustice” (Nordstokke, 2011:15). This simply highlight our understanding on the fact that, diaconal activities stand as a bridge to empowerment as it deals with issues of care, love and services towards one another. This therefore has provoked our inquisitiveness towards knowing what Diakonia is? Scholars have carried out debates on the meaning of Diakonia and one of the catholic scholar collins, stated that the word refers to “being commissioned by God” (Church of England 2007:12).

It should be understood that, the theme of Diakonia is centered on “humble service” following the example of Jesus (Nordstokke, 2011:4 9). This is to say that we all need to follow the humble ways of Jesus Christ in rendering services to mankind through his teachings and practice. On the other hand, the most important definition is that which stated that “Diakonia is service commissioned by the lord. It is empowered by God’s spirit, with the aim of lifting up the downtrodden, of dignifying the expendable, and of empowering the excluded” (Nordstokke, 2011:50). Moreover, Diakonia services are God’s inspiration to mankind in that, God empowers man in spirit and makes man engage in to diaconal works and action by showing love and care towards one another as Jesus showed love and care to mankind without any form of discrimination. Furthermore, “Diakonia contains deed and words, formed as “responsible service” which means action for which one is accountable” (LWF, 2009:40). This means that, Diakonia is deed and action. There are basically different types of Diakonia and I will limit myself to institutional Diakonia since SAFIR is an institution and it practices more of institutional Diakonia. These different types include;

- Prophetic Diakonia
- Political Diakonia
- Migrant Diakonia
- International Diakonia
- Liberating Diakonia
- Empowering Diakonia
- Institutional Diakonia

### 3.2 Institutional Diakonia

Institutional Diakonia per se is often carried out by people of different background and motivation together with the state, though it has a different identity. Diakonia in Scandinavia together with the Christian mandate of the church have given rise to *Institutional Diakonia* and Aadland (2009:13) refers to it as “double identity” of better still Institutional Diakonia. Normally, these institutions usually have a Christian background for their activities but ironically, they carry out social services in a specialized manner within the society. Institutional Diakonia reflect on the diaconal praxis instilled by an institution in order to empower change and self-esteem on its participants and volunteers as the case of SAFIR. These institutions have



different disciplines and professions such as; social work and health as seen in SAFIR (fanuelsen2014:76). Within this sphere, workers in such an organization profess Christian entity and how applicable it is when it comes to work (Eurodiaconia 2010:19), but as earlier seen, they are not obliged to profess the Christian doctrine. The diaconal institutions therefore, plays a big role in the life of these persons, helping them to be self-confident in all their action, irrespective of their social situation and as well, are focused on providing quality welfare services to those in need of their services (Aadland 2009:93) . On the contrary, while the state focuses on providing social services to the people, the leaders of these institutions engage themselves in advocating for the vulnerable in the society ( Aadland 2012:11) as seen in SAFIR where the participant and volunteers have equal rights irrespective of their status. Furthermore, in order for an institution to perform its duty, the following should be put in to consideration;

*“Ability to be*

*Ability to relate*

*Ability to do and*

*Ability to organize”* (Dietrich et Al, 2014:91)

In addition to the above, Knud Jørgensen’s (Dietrich et Al, 2014:91) in his article highlighted that, leadership entails some vital principles as seen above, which helps in governing the institution, that is why SAFIR has implanted these strategies to enable them deal with their participants and volunteers. As an organization, the principle used will be that of the “ability to do” since it entails the development skills to make an organization sustainable and applicable for others. SAFFIR rules and regulations have been very applicable and sustainable on its participants and volunteers, thus making them comfortable amongst each other. It should be noted that, SAFFIR is working with the principle of physical sustainability which is very vital in the life of human beings as mentioned by Myers L. Bryant in one of his book as I quote “dimension of sustainability includes all the basics that people need to live: food, water, health, livelihood, and a sustainable environment” (Myers L. Bryant, 2011:193). This is to say, for human beings to be sustainable; the organization must be ready to provide the above mentioned basics which SAFFIR as a whole has provided to its volunteers and participants. The Norwegian government in collaboration with the organization has provided these basic necessities to these

former drug addicted persons in order to make them comfortable and makes them feel wanted in the society, not isolated as most of them think.

### 3.3 What is Diakonia as defined by the Church of Norway

As earlier mentioned, *SAFIR* is a diaconal institution of the Church City Mission and Red Cross, which express love, care and inclusiveness towards one another, as seen in the bible where Jesus showered love, care and concerned to all, “*for I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you*” (*john 13:15*). Therefore, since *SAFIR* is a branch in the Church City Mission and the Church City Mission is connected to the Norwegian Church which is diaconal, it will be important to look at Diakonia in light with the Church of Norway. *The Church of Norway Plan for Diakonia* (2007:5,6) as defined in the introductory chapter.

In addition to the above, the Church of Norway and Collins definition of Diakonia are similar to the values of the Church City Mission which is focus on social works within the vulnerable in the society. The Church of Norway Plan For Diakonia further stipulated (2007:5) that; there is a special responsibility in carrying out Diakonia work which centers on care in which Christians and believers are supposed to hold on to and express through their actions within local Church, organizations as well as institutions which holds on Christian doctrine such as the Church city Mission. This is indeed to show that Diakonia works builds a foundation of a good Christian life as we can see from the above definition and in the Christian doctrine as Jesus teaches us in the bible

### 3.4 Empowering Diakonia

Empowering Diakonia is a concept used by Kjell Nordstokke in his book *Liberating Diakonia* (2011:49) to elaborate on prophetic Diakonia. He later on traced the history of prophetic Diakonia which started in Germany in the 1830's and was influenced by pietism that saw Diakonia as humble service through the teachings of Jesus. *SAFIR* offers humble services to its participants and volunteers as rightly said by those who were interviewed. They confirmed to the fact that, the workers have been very humble and loyal towards them which is a great aspect of diaconal activities. The organization empowers its participants and volunteers through its various activities and programs as will be seen in the other chapters ahead. Empowering Diakonia simply means, building up ones self-esteem in a diaconal way. On the other hand, the diaconal workers in Latin America sees the concept of empowerment as “ ‘dignification’, which means

establishing diaconal practices that lift up the dignity of people and give them their ability of being “subjects” both in church and society”(Diakonia in Context 2009:46). Here, empowerment is like having dignity in one self through his or her action. SAFIR tries to build up this dignity in all its participants and volunteers by not reminding them of the past but rather builds them up towards self-confidence by making them responsible.

### 3.5 Empowerment

The theory of empowerment came about during the 1960s by a philosophical study by Brazilian scholar, Paulo Freire (Freire, 1973; Heaney, 1999). Freire primary study was focused on class struggle but since then it has been extended to other social fields such as; women’s rights, gay rights and the consumer movement (Wallerstein & Bernstein, 1988; Falk, 1995). Empowerment is a complex term and cannot be captured by a single definition (Rapport, 1984; Gibson, 1991). However, a definition has been proposed to cover the experiences of this study. Empowerment is defined “as prominent model in the quest to improve the health, political and economic status, social and emotional wellbeing of people who experience disadvantaged conditions in their lives” (Fisher, 2008; Parpart et al., 2003; Ratna & Rifkin, 2007; Tsey et al., 2007; Wallerstein, 2006; World Bank, 2008). For the purpose of this study, empowerment has been limited to the survival mechanism of drug addicts. In an empowerment model, addiction on the contrary is seen as a survival mechanism and not as an enemy. Hence, empowerment as a survival mechanism encourages individuals to improve their internal belief system established on their observations and experiences (Kasl, 1990). Empowerment is not a pathway of quick fixes, fluently statements, and easy solutions, but a process that involves change and constant re-evaluation of one’s beliefs as we experience new situations and hear others narrate their story (ibid).

Empowerment has been described as a transition from a passive situation to a more active situation of control. The purpose of empowerment is to ensure the realization of one’s own humanity. It aims at encouraging the oppressed human agency and social structures within the limitations and possibilities in which they exists and reacts.

On the other hand, during the mid-1980s, the empowerment of women became a public topic on gender and development. This was partly motivated by the writings on empowerment and gender issues that began from the south. The debate on empowerment was pushed forward by feminist critiques in their Women in Development (WID) approach, where they questioned the need for

female subordination and made attempts to include women in development for efficiency reasons. Furthermore, the concept of empowerment developed from the gender issues to other less privileged groups, including other social aspects like social class, disability and ethnic groups. Some good examples empowered groups include; the minority Roma groups in Serbia and Montenegro and Inca Atahualpa in Ecuador.

During the 1990's in Latin America, increased democratization, social movements and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), reformulated the concept of empowerment and it became a dominant aspect in the mainstream development agenda. The concept was later adopted by international agencies and school of thoughts.

Today, the concept of empowerment has drawn much attention even though some critiques considered that the emphasis has not brought any important changes in development practice. Some opponents explain that organizations claim to be fighting unfairness without providing any political change or relocation of resources. To an extent, they think that the central aspect on personal and collective struggle has been weakened.

In theory, organizations have used different strategies to empower participants and volunteers. Some of the most commonly used strategies are individual, organized, institutionalized and international Diakonia (LWF, 2009:47-50). This thesis addresses various strategies used by organizations in the empowerment of participants and volunteers in general and Oslo in particular as well as their challenges faced by these organizations.

According to Elisheva (1997), empowerment could be conceptualized as three interwoven processes that supplement and contribute to one another. Three types of empowerment are explained in the following sections namely; Individual empowerment, Community empowerment, and Empowerment as a social transformation but my focus will be more on *empowerment of social transformation*.

### 3.5.1 Types of Empowerment

There are three main types of empowerment such as, Individual, Community and social transformation empowerment. My focus will be based on *Individual Empowerment* since the institution focuses on the welfare services and empowering strategies of individuals.

### 3.5.2 Individual empowerment

The prospect for empowerment, like one's very humanity exists in everyone and the capability to make a difference is an element of human existence. A human agency stops acting as such if it fails to impact the World in the same way (Giddens, 1984). To be a complete human being, means to perform intentional actions in order to accomplished defined goals, which entails, influencing the environment to be able to bring about change. Situations exist in which people's humanity are not realized due to limitations placed on them to exercise power that makes them unable to act at all. However, there is a difference between the ability to act for reasons that one has no choice, and the lack of ability to act. Hence, not all case of inactivity are seen as lack of ability to act (Mann, 1986). The relative theory of empowerment reaffirms the link between the private and the political. It examines individual issues in social life in a political manner. The individual interprets the politics of her life on the basis of available information about political accomplishments in the social field. People in Western democracies are more conscious about certain social norms. Also, they are aware of the fact that there exists an important demand for autonomy and free independent functioning; and more so that freedom and responsibility co-exists in certain equilibrium. Even though people are not free as per the word, they opt to be free from limitations, conditions of exploitations, inequality and oppression.

On the individual level, a private political reply to these ideas progresses. This is often referred to as life politics (Giddens, 1991). On the collective level, life politics is centered on what happens to people that have realized a certain level of consciousness and ability to act, and require community empowerment processes in order to achieve their aspirations for personal sovereignty.

The usual question under this section is whether empowerment forms a significant change in the power field. This is often referred to as a Foucauldian question, without a simple answer, but at same time it generalizes, simplifies and serves the existing power relations. This analysis has been deemed correct for individual empowerment precisely. Through empowerment a person gains an advanced level of awareness about his abode in the power relations, but his achievements are not perceived in the existing power fields (Giddens, 1984). According to Michel Foucault (1982), there are human actions and occurrences that have managed to escape the net of power and to preserve their freedom, and then institutionalization is the major threat to

their existence. In his opinion, the means to develop new knowledge around empowerment and organize it in an institutional way is likely to lead to a situation where the individual will need more control over his or her life and fate. Therefore, conceptualizing empowerment can be interpreted as an attempt by power/ knowledge to take over control of the human social occurrences. This is one of the problems in the Foucauldian analysis. Hence, any attempt to organize knowledge in an organized way is a suspicion as an attempt on normalization at judgement and domination. However, there is truth on this aspect. Any aspect acquired by scientific means and transferred to social institutions is likely to lose its authenticity.

Foucault however justified his non-participation in creating a theory in the field of power as a means to cause harm to any social matter that is destined to scientific generalizations. Nevertheless, anyone that accepts him can develop a theory within this contradiction, with the means that Foucault's evaluation of the extent of interconnectedness between the technologies of power and social knowledge was an overstatement.

### 3.6 Other concepts

#### 3.6.1 Transformation

Transformation can be seen as a change that occurs in one's life or system. Transformation occurs in every work of life and can be seen in different directions in terms of Diakonia depending on the focus. As a Diakonia concept, transformation is an essential change that occurs in every one's life in order for man to be empowered. The strategies used by SAFIR in empowering its participants and volunteers can be termed transformational since it can be seen as the foundation of change for former addicts. In the book *Diakonia in context*, "transformation engages and changes all who are part of it (LWF 2009: 43)." This simply affirms the fact that, a man's life can only be transformed if he or she wants it to be changed. SAFIR is a center which embraces and encourages those who are voluntarily willing to change or put an end to any form of addiction per se. on the other hand, Kjell Nordstokke sees transformation as "social change and development" (Nordstokke 2011:78). Thus the ability for one to experience all form of changes and improvement in one's life is as a result of transforming a person's life for better result. This form of social transformation has been of great help to many persons today especially when we relate it to social ills that have chopped our today's society, such as addiction and other horrible things prevailing in our society. The bible also talks about the story of Jesus

Christ which is the center of transformation and went further to talk about the essence of inward transformation which stands as a complete change in man's life. There are basically two categories of transformation such as rigid and non-rigid. Rigid transformation is that which does not change a man physically and non-rigid is that which does not change a man physically, but rather changes his or her morale and reasoning. Therefore, my focus will be on non-rigid transformation since it deals with morale and reasoning which binds with my research question. In other words, Bryant Myers stated that, "transforming people begins with helping people discover that their human dignity and identity are intrinsically related to God in Christ through his redemptive purpose in salvation history" (Myers B. 2011:179). This is to say, before transformation, people need to discover who they really are by accepting their status as God's creature, in order for them to realize and identify their mistakes in order to change their lifestyle. The bible says we must be ready and willing to admit our mistake for forgiveness to take place (proverbs 28:13). On the contrary, SAFIR is rendering services to its volunteers and participants without considering their past, but are rather concerned with the future of these volunteers and participants.

### 3.6.2 Inclusiveness and Hospitality

Inclusiveness can be defined as a form of equal treatment given to all without any form of discrimination or bias whereas hospitality is the warmth and love showed towards a stranger irrespective of the race, culture, and ethnicity. Inclusiveness and hospitality shares a common view when dealing with social life and norms in our societies. SAFIR deals with people from different background and life style and thus this is an inclusive step forward because it does not select a particular few, but is rather open to all who seeks them. This is very relevant to the institution because, they implement diaconal praxis which governs Diakonia as well as the four major rules listed above by Knud Jørgensen (Dietrich et Al 2014:91) in one of his articles. The bible teaches us to be hospitable to one another as Abram was, towards strangers (Gen 18:1-15). It should be understood that, hospitality is part and parcel of our day to day life. We have been hospitable towards one another knowingly and unknowingly. This is to say that caring for one another for instance, caring for the sick, those in prison by providing food, water, shelter, clothes, money and more to it advice to the poor and needy or beggars in the street is being hospitable and thus inclusive since no specific persons are looked upon. In the book Diakonia as Christian Social Practice, the concept of hospitality is seen as "let brotherly love continue. Be not

forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Dietrich et Al 2014:161). In other words, this is to say, human beings by nature have the responsibility to love and cater for one another as God our creator teaches us in His Holy book. An inclusive community as stated in Richard A. Burrige book (Burrige A.Richard 2007: 220), is “The call to ‘be perfect as your heavenly is perfect’”. This therefore stand on the essence of love and concern showed to one another as our heavenly shows us without any form of discrimination and bias, thus by being inclusive towards the good and the bad.

## 4. METHOD

This chapter describes the research methodology used in this study. The chapter outlines is chosen from research approach, research strategy, the data collection method and the reliability and validity of the study.

### 4.1. Research Approach

A research can either be explorative, descriptive or aim at testing a hypothesis. In order to explore the research problem to accomplish the research purpose, this study adopts a qualitative method, as the research approach for this thesis. Qualitative research is aimed at gaining a better understanding of a field of study and answering questions of the how and what in this study (Yin, 2003). Zalan and Lewis (2004) explains that qualitative research is suited for finding casual relationships, looking at processes, events and showing how this leads to specific outcomes. This study focuses on the strategies used by SAFIR to empower participants and volunteers in the Oslo community, and it is perceived that qualitative research is suitable and most effective for this area of study (Zalan and Lewis, 2004).

In this study, I will be adopting an inductive approach which will be an opening to what might have occurred throughout the research process and does not start the study with any preconceived ideas about the subject, neither with any expectations. I will allow the findings to emerge from the research. I will be getting inspiration from the circumstances surrounding the research area and the empirical data. Again, inductive reasoning develops from specific information and facts to wider generalizations and theories. This is commonly referred to as the “bottom up” approach (Saunders et al., 2009). Also, the author adopts an inductive approach because from the beginning it is more open minded and exploratory compared to a deductive approach, which is narrower and focuses on testing or confirming theories (ibid). On the other hand, this study



partly adopts a deductive approach. The author investigates the main challenges faced by SAFIR in the empowerment of participants and volunteers in Oslo, since these factors are considered as the main problems facing empowerment institutions in the region. Thus, the outcome of this study is a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning.

#### 4.2. Research strategy

According to interpretivists, social life is too multifaceted to be generalized into law like-assumptions. This is a divergent view on positivists who are centered on human factors than on objects (Saunders et al., 2009). In this study, the author uses the interpretivist approach, since the aim of this thesis is to discover the various methods used by SAFIR to empower participants and volunteers in Oslo. It is not adequate to simplify this problem by creating a general model for empowering agencies to follow as well as many factors can influence the strategies of an agency or institution in Norway. Still, the author perceives that we can only attain a deeper understanding of an empowerment agency's strategy only through individual in-depth interviews. To conclude, empowerment of participants and volunteers is a complex topic and thus subject matters on this field can best be tackled by an interpretivist approach.

#### 4.3. Case study

A case study can either be single or multiple. In order to satisfy the requirements for this study, I will adopt a single case study strategy. Case studies are aimed at making observations on one or several cases and to explain gathered information (Dul & Hak, 2008). According to Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007), the main focus of a single case study approach is to understand the dynamics which ensue with single settings and the various levels of analysis within an embedded design. A single case study can be referred as a social research within a single case, which is most often an institution, organization, or company. A case study objective is to research facts of a case through the use of ethnographic research methods (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 68). The main advantage of a single case study is that detailed information about the selected organization is collected and analysed (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2005).

A case study approach is the desired research method when the research question is centered on words "how" and "what" (Yin, 2014: 9). The research question of this thesis is centered around the problem area: How have SAFIR empowered participants and volunteers in Oslo until now?

And what challenges do SAFIR faced in the empowerment of these participants and volunteers in Oslo? These questions fit the requirements of the case study research question.

Another requirement for the use of a case study method is the researcher's lack of control over the study procedures and a case study can either be explanatory or exploratory in nature, with main focus on contemporary, real-life contexts (Yin, 2014:1). This thesis investigates a present-day situation and a real life organization, which makes the case study approach effective and applicable (ibid).

Another important factor of a case study is that, the research should study occurrence which is not out his control, meaning that the research results cannot be influenced by the researchers' presence (Yin, 2004:9). This thesis investigates the strategies used by an empowerment organization in Oslo, Norway, centered on the precise match for one single organization, thus it is expected that the decision making process cannot be influenced since it must be the possible strategic direction of the company. However, the case study approach has been criticized and questioned for lack of rigorous research and the generalizations of the conclusions (Yin, 2004:9). Nevertheless, all qualitative studies are inevitably affected by experience, knowledge and the preconception of the researchers (Bryman & Bell, 2011: 395-399).

A case study in most cases relies on multiple sources of evidence and having a strong theoretical proposition before collecting data is vital. This will not only facilitate data collection, but also help in generalizing the case study results (Yin, 2004:13). This thesis is centered on relevant theories on empowerment strategies of participants and volunteers.

The case of organization of this study is SAFIR. The organization was chosen as a case study in order to prove the strategies used by empowerment organizations of participants and volunteers in Oslo. This study is aim at proving that there is a well-functioning organization in Oslo, Norway and thus, the application of the case organization concludes these findings and provides an answer to the research questions as real life situations of empowerment. The research questions are directed to strategies employed to empower participants and volunteers in Oslo and the difficulties or challenges faced by the case organization.

#### 4.4. Sampling units

When selecting the case organization for this study, the author had an open mind as to which organization to use. The choice of the organization was done independently mindful of their area of empowerment. The author set some criteria for the selection of the organization for this study. The first and main criterion is that, the organization must be based in Oslo and that it must have empowered a good number of people within their area of jurisdiction.

An important criterion was the availability of the case organization for the interviews as well as their ability to commit time to the author.

#### 4.5. Data collection

The research method selected by the author determines how information was collected throughout the research process. The purpose of collecting data is to gather relevant information in order to answer the research question. Wiedersheim-Paul and Eriksson (1997), opined that there are two ways of collecting data, either through primary or secondary sources. However, this study encompasses both means of collecting data. Primary data was collected from the original source, through face to face interviews. Retrieved material was consistent with the research questions. Secondary data on the other hand is information that has already been collected for another purpose (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). Secondary data was collected from articles, reports, and academic journals. The author made use of archival records such as organizational records of institutions on empowerment of participants and volunteers. The author contacted the manager of the case organization and obtained the contacts of participants and volunteers that had undergone the empowerment process. I equally used secondary sources to support the findings obtained through interviews. Documentation took the form of reports and formal studies. Further, interviews were scheduled, i.e. deciding appropriate dates and how the interview should be conducted. In total, five interviews were carried out, which included the manager of the said organization, two participants and volunteers, one participant and one volunteers that had been empowered by the said organization. However, it is important to understand that, this study was carried out in only one organization. This is due to the fact that, I decided to limit myself to only one organization dealing with former drug addicted persons.

The purpose of conducting interviews was to enable respondents speak freely about their experiences in order to gain a better understanding of the research problem. All interviews were

conducted face-to-face and lasted for one hour each. This allowed the author to have a normal conversation where he could investigate further based on respondents' answers. As we saw earlier, the author chose a loose structure when conducting the interviews, in order to permit the respondents to speak freely. This is often referred to as the semi-structured interview, where a list of questions is being used by the interviewer. Moreover, during the interview, the interviewer will ask follow-up questions that he deems vital based on the respondents answers (Bryman and Bell, 2011:40).

#### 4.6. Operationalization

When I contacted the respondents, I introduced myself and my topic of research. I needed managers, participants and volunteers with good sanity that could answer questionnaires and provide important information on the strategies of empowerment and challenges faced by the said organization in the empowerment process in Oslo. Out of the five respondents, one is the branch manager of SAFIR in Oslo, while the two others are participants and volunteers, one participant and one volunteer working with the organization. All these five respondents were asked the same questions in order to permit comparison of their answers. Some questions were introduced in the course of the interview. One common question that was asked to all the respondents was ..... *"How can you define SAFIR in your own word?"*

However, the outcome of study should not be seen as a strategy employed by a particular organization in Oslo, but as a contribution to the already existing literature on empowerment on participants and volunteers in Oslo.

#### 4.7. Validity and Reliability

There are two ways of assessing the value of qualitative and quantitative research which are reliability and validity (Merriam, 1998:199). Validity is measured by the accuracy of the deductions at the end of a study (Bryman and Bell, 2011:307). To ensure the validity of this research, the author checked the authenticity of all materials before using them. Reliability is measured by determining stability and consistency in the results when repeated over time (Bryman and Bell, 2011:307). The level of reliability when using interviews is highly related to the interviewers' ability and how the answers are registered. Therefore, it is possible to make mistakes in the assessment. To obtain high reliability the author has to be cautious and critical with the information collected (Trost, 2012; Patel and Davidson, 2011:26-27). This study was

carried out through an interactive process between the information collected and the analysis. This was essential because it helped the author to produce reliable and trustworthy findings. Throughout the interview process, careful notes were taken and the author also tape recorded the interviews in order to get all the information. The interview tapes were listened to several times and later transcribed. These transcriptions were read and forwarded to the interviewees for feedbacks and clarification. Furthermore, data collected from various sources was continuously compared and analyzed to find differences and contradictions. The essence of this was to ensure that all collected data was valid and reliable. To further ensure reliability, the author ensured that all selected interviewees were relevant to the field of study. Merriam (2009:199-200) argued that reality is a mental construction by human beings and he explained that the data analysis and interpretation in qualitative research are likely to be real than in quantitative research. This is as a result of the fact that data is collected by human beings and they have a direct link in reality through interviews and observations (ibid: 199-200).

#### 4.8. Limitations to the study

This study uses a single case study approach. Even though single case studies have numerous advantages, it equally has limitations particularly when it comes to external validity and generalizability of the results (Bryman & Bell, 2011:61). This is as a result of the fact that a case study cannot be representative to an extent that its findings are applied to other cases. SAFIR is the case organization for this thesis, it is chosen in order to understand the strategies used in empowering participants and volunteers.

Also, I could only interview two participants and volunteers, one participant as well as one volunteer who have undergone the empowerment process.

### 5. PRESENTATION OF DATA

In this chapter, I will be presenting *reactions* encountered by participants and volunteers as reported in my empirical work or findings. My data collected was based on six interviewees; first and foremost, I interviewed the manager at SAFIR, two participants and two volunteers. Due to limited time, I will be limiting myself on five of the interviewees since most of the data collected from participants and volunteers are similar. I will therefore, divide the data in to two main categories. That is;

- Reactions gotten from above (the organization/Administration/ Manager)
- Reactions gotten from within (Participants and Volunteers)

As seen above, the administrators of SAFIR stand as active actors in rendering services, while within are the participants and volunteers who acts as the targeted people in the organization. In order to avoid hierarchy within the organization and its participants and volunteers, I therefore choose to replace the names with the above mentioned groupings or reactions that will be useful to elaborate on my empirical findings.

### 5.1 Reaction from Above

In this section, my respondents made mention of two important factors;

- They defined SAFIR in a similar way and
- Secondly, gave the vital characteristics of SAFIR.

These respondents were able to brief me about SAFIR and what the organization is doing such as the strategies used to empower them as well as the challenges faced. As earlier seen in the background history, these strategies involve the green corner activities, theatre act, storytelling, school, open lunch, spot activities and biweekly activity.

Furthermore, the **manager at SAFIR** recounted how the participants and volunteers feel isolated and rejected in society due to their previous life style:

.....participants and volunteers as we address them sometimes feel depressed and isolated thinking that the world sees them as losers especially when they are at bus stops, waiting to take a bus, their sub-conscious mind keeps reminding them on how people watch at them and sees them as “junkies”. I choose to work here because I like to render services. My zeal has always been to render services to people who are in need of it. I am not a drug addict and has never tasted drug in my life but I desire to work with these people in order to help them transform their lives from nothing to something as they consider themselves to be.

This information is vital when elaborating on the empirical findings because it empowers and motivate the human ability to be one. Nevertheless, my respondents try to give me a clue about SAFIR from individual perspective to a general point of view and some other basic information governing the organization. Eventually as a diaconal institution, there was the need to practice some sort of inclusiveness and hospitality since its deals with people from different background and culture. This aspect of hospitality experienced by the participants and volunteers has termed the institution “ideal” as it will be elaborated in the data below.

### 5.1.2 SAFIR’S Work

The interviews gotten from participants and volunteers shows that, the institution empowers people through the various activities organized in order for it, to occupy and take their minds off drug. On the other hand, these activities can also be seen as Diakonia in which the organization is rendering services to the participants and volunteers. My respondent 1 noted that:

..... The institution organizes activities for former drug addicted persons in order to occupy them and makes them feel belonging and inclusive in all aspect of life so that they should not by any chance see themselves as handicap persons in the society. I think this is a good therapy and it should be encouraged for everyone, because activities such as sport, tours, trips, education are good for the human body.

### 5.1.3 The Symbolism of SAFIR

SAFIR as earlier seen is a branch created by the Church city mission to cater for drug addicted persons in Oslo, Norway. This organization is very symbolic and at the same time, very ironical. It is symbolic in that, their activities portrays who they really are and ironical in the sense that, it rules and regulations are not influenced by church doctrines since it was created by the Church City Mission which is a branch of the Church Of Norway. **Respondent 2** reacted to this question in a way that impressed me when he said:

.....SAFIR is an institution that embraces all who seek them without asking any question that can remind you of the past. I was invited for lunch some seven years ago and the way I was welcomed and treated made me to start participating in their activities

till now. I love to be a volunteer and a participant in order to help keep me off my past and have helped me to forget about “those companions” (addicted friends). SAFIR has built me physically to become responsible in life and has never in anyway addressed “us” as addicts.

Still, **Respondent 3** pointed out the circumstances that made her know about SAFIR. She proceeded with the view that, she is working as a volunteer in the housing school at SAFIR for the past one year:

..... My doctor recommended me to SAFIR in order to keep myself busy as well as to take my mind off drugs. The institution is open to all and what I like the most is the fact that, it does not remind you of the past. It has helped me to be confident, comfortable, respectful, decisive, belonging as well as made me to forget my past. I am proud to say that, this institution made me who I am today.

On the other hand, **Respondent 1 (manager)** stated that:

.....I have been working here since 2009 but I started as a volunteer and later on when the position was vacant, I applied and I was granted irrespective of my background because my field of study is nursing and not Diakonia or Social work. This is to show that, the institution is open to everyone and more to it; SAFIR is run by all and it is not just an administrative affair.

#### 5.1.4 Wednesday’s lunch

The institution invites people from other part of the neighborhood to join them for lunch every Wednesday. This come together is some sort of inclusiveness and hospitality that the institution uses to bring people together in an enclosed environment where different taught and views are shared. This togetherness also enables the participants and volunteers to interact with people of similar ideas and those with diverse minds. This is to say that, the participants and volunteers meet and interact with those facing drug problems, those who have been victims of drugs and are



now drug free, those who have never tasted or involve in drug as well as those whose relatives and friends are victims of drug. On the other hand, this can be seen as a social forum or gathering in which people turn to share their experiences and ideas with one another and the possibility of becoming drug free, which is beneficial to those suffering and those whose friends and relatives are suffering from this abuse.

Furthermore, there is the room for other form of discussion in the social, economic, political and religious sphere in which ideas are put together in the form of discussion and relaxation. This idea of social integration between participants and volunteers and others from different background and nationality has brought forth joy and happiness in the life of many. This is what I got from one of my respondent. My respondent 2 admitted that, his first entering in to SAFIR was a result of the lunch date and he went further to explain that:

.....I came in to SAFIR in respect of the invitation to share a common meal.

The moment I stepped my feet in to the building, I felt I was in a second home because of the warmth welcome they gave to me. I felt like, I was missing out something in life. I had the opportunity to dine with others from a different background who has experienced or had friends or relatives who have had similar experience like mind. From there on, the institution became my second home because it makes me brave, courageous and hard working. I love this institution for empowering me in different ways.

On the other hand, another participant said, I was invited here for lunch, that is how I happen to know about the institution. I love everything about the institution especially the staffs. These people are very welcoming and due to that, I became a participant in the institution. I participate in all the activities because it empowers me mentally, physically and psychologically especially when it comes to my day to day life.

#### 5.1.5 The housing school

This is one of the most important activities that the institution uses to empower the participants and volunteers. Education is one of the prime factors in life especially when it comes to interacting and socializing with people. The institution saw the need to introduce the housing

school which goes operational weekly. It will be interesting to note that, my respondent 2 and 3 are teachers in the housing school. Furthermore, the housing school empowers them and offers the following courses such as; how to get help, help on tax return, Torvald Stoltenberg inspiration speeches, how to visit street jurist, internet technology (how to check emails etc.) These courses inspire them in the following ways;

- The courses offered, enables participants and volunteers (P&V) to meet others in the same situation and exchange words.
- The courses enable these P and V to get help and input on how to overcome their daily challenges.
- The courses also addresses social housing issues
- The courses inspire them and give them new knowledge.

## 5.2 Reactions from within

### 5.2.1. The green corner

As the word green signifies life, so too is the Green corner at SAFIR stated in chapter 2:3 brings out the life in the participants and volunteers at SAFIR. This green corner is such a symbolic atmosphere for these persons as stated by my respondents which help to bring out the artistic nature in them. According to my respondent 1(manager of SAFIR), the green corner is one of the most talented and lovable activities that these participants and volunteers love. The institution realizes that, there was the need for them to introduce an activity that will help bring out the talent in them. It should be noted that this *green corner* is a building at SAFIR which was renovated by the participants and volunteers to carry out carry out activities such as drawings, painting and other craft work. Everything in it was created by these participants and volunteers. Therefore, I chose to connect the meaning of green and that which I witness at SAFIR to be life because truly, the activities at green corner bring out the life in the participants and volunteers. After seeing all this, I was tempted to find out from the manager, how the green corner empowers participants and volunteers:

.....the green corner empowers the participant and volunteers in such a way that, they turn to feel included and despite the negative impression uphold by the public about them, they can still be productive in society Therefore, they feel more confident in

themselves and this makes them more and more talented by making them discover more artistic approach to implement when it comes to art work.

Moreover, it was interesting to know that, my respondents got similar ideas regarding the *green corner* activities especially from all the six I interviewed.

**Respondent 2 also stated that:**

..... I never knew I was this talented before coming to SAFIR, I only realized my talent at SAFIR when I was introduced to the *green corner*. I am now very creative and talented in art work so much so that, I think I can represent SAFIR in art work competitions. This activity occupies my mind so much that, I do not think about any other thing apart from the activities at SAFIR.

In addition, I see this strategy as a means by which individuals are been empowered. This is some sort of institutional empowerment in which, the organization uses to build up the minds of these persons thereby facilitating their zeal towards activities organized by the institution rather than things that will take their minds toward drug consumption.

**Respondent 3 also stated that:**

..... I just loved being at the green corner. My passion has been drawing. I like to figure out things and put them in drawing. I draw almost every day because it makes me happy. I got my painting skill was from birth. I like painting pictures and other things. When I was taken to this room, I was overwhelmed with joy.

In all of this, I realized that the participants and volunteers cherishes this activity because it makes them to feel at home in an institution which is more open and comfortable in a taught free atmosphere which do not remind them of their past.

This form of empowerment used by SAFIR can be compared to how Karl (1990) described empowerment in which he saw it as a survival mechanism which encourages individuals to improve their internal belief system established on their observations and experiences (Kasl,

1990). This statement ties up to that which was made by **Respondent 2**, in which he stated that his talent was discovered only when he was at SAFIR.

On the other hand, two out of five respondents stated that the green corner was not their priority at SAFIR.

**According to Respondent 4:**

.....the green corner is an interesting site to engage in to but I have never participated in the drawing or craft work there. Moreover, I go there when I feel like and try to see the interesting works of my mate. I feel relieved each time I see the beautiful works instilled by my mate and I get impressed.

In addition, **Respondent 5** said, I like going there to see what my mates have put up. But I am not good at things like that. It is very interesting and fun to be part of it but on the contrary, I am not talented.

**5.2.2 Theatre forum (theatre act)**

The institution organizes theatre acts activities such as workshops and storytelling. This forum brings people together by staging or displaying whatever they feel like doing or have in mind to act or tell. This is a very interesting activity that makes one to smile, laugh and enable them to forget what ever problem they have in mind. This strategy used, helps to empower them physically, emotionally, mentally and psychologically. It is important for one to know that, this is a physical therapy that helps to build and relax one's mind. I happen to witness a story that was put in a form of a stage play by one of the participant and volunteer at SAFIR where he decided to take on stage, what he encountered during the day. His presentation on stage was:

.....Hi every one, I will like to present a stage play on my encounter with my doctor today. I happen to visit my doctor in his office today for a normal checkup where we talked, laughed and smiled. I later on told him I will like to be a blood donor and he looked at me and said;

**Doctor**

“You cannot donate blood to anyone”

**Respondent**

Why if I may ask?

**Doctor**

Because you are not capable of donating blood due to your health

**Respondent**

But I am fine, strong and healthy, I got everything it takes to donate blood but you keep refusing. Is it because I was a drug addict? Because of that I cannot take decision for myself on what to do and what not to. It is definitely not fair please think about it.

**Doctor**

The doctor stayed quiet and stared at me without saying anything

**Respondent**

I left while banging at the door sighing

This was such an interesting play that makes the participants and volunteers to open a debate on decision making. They(participants and volunteers) went further to state that; despite the fact that they do not consume drugs, they still have no right to decision making when it comes to issues on health. At least “we” are drug free and can donate to anyone without any form of restriction as others do. Another participant also admitted that, she has been limited to particular meals which are good for her health but she does not like it. It should be noted that, this play led to division in the sense that, there were those that supported the doctor idea and those that were not in support of it.

### 5.2.3 Sportive activities

The institution provides sporting activities to its participants and volunteer such as yoga, field trips and visit to the mountain to make them physically and mentally active. This activity is a means of empowerment used by the institution to make the flexible and inclusive in all they do.

This eventually helps them to become more active. I happen to grab interesting information from my respondent 2 who stated that:

..... my best sporting activity is the visit to the mountain. This is because I learn new things, see new things and as well experience new things. I love adventures, I like discoveries and I like to learn new things every day. Learning is my priority that's just me.

I think that this kind of activity needs to be encouraged and supported by higher authorities because it serves as some sort of relief, it builds up relationship with friends and co-workers as well as it enables one to interact with others from different backgrounds and institutions.

On the other hand, my respondent 1 stated that:

.....This is one of the strategy the institution uses to empower these participants and volunteers because we realized that, the society today is full of adventurers and inquisitive persons who seeks to experience and know things that were beyond their expectations. As you can see, it's fun to discover new things that is why, these participants and volunteers see this as a means to catch fun and discover new things.

This is eventually activities, which enable one to experience another side of life, and to know what exactly is happening out there in an open field and not an enclosed environment in which they have been leaving in. I for one also like adventures; I love outdoors activities that help me to experience the other side of life. In general, outdoors activities help one to see/discover the beautiful nature of life which is also, a therapy to long life.

### 5.3 Challenges faced by SAFIR

SAFIR is one of those institutions that cannot be run without challenges. In this section, I will be looking at three types of challenges which includes; challenges from above (administration) and

challenges from within (participants and volunteers) as well as similar challenges faced by both the institutions and its P&V.

### 5.3.1 Challenges from above

#### 5.3.1.1 Lack of funding

Firstly, SAFIR is faced with problem of lack of funding to execute its agenda/project. The responsibility to cater for the participants and volunteers is shared by the central government and the municipality and the role of the government is to establish principles, guide lines and to oversee the management of SAFIR. Meanwhile, municipalities are political representatives that ensure or provide good quality life and promote good health for the participants and volunteers. However, during the last decade, SAFIR which is part of the Church Mission and belong to the municipality, have not been able to obtain proper funding to carry out their said agenda. In addition to the above mentioned, my respondent 1 affirms that, due to lack of proper funding, the institution have been forced to rescheduled its objectives and plan of action. She continued by stating that:

.....Sometimes, there are out doors activities that the institution will want to participate more often in such as visiting the mountain, tours, trips and so forth, but due to lack of funding to execute the plan of action, the project cannot be carried out.

#### 5.3.1.2 The issue of relapse

SAFIR is faced with the problem of relapse from former addicts. Some of these participants and volunteers get stuck in the recovery process due to stress. Therefore, they turn in to inappropriate coping mechanism as a means to deal with their dissatisfaction. This action leads them to start consuming drugs once again.

#### 5.3.1.3 Problem of monitoring

The institution faces the problem of monitoring its participants and volunteers which is difficult to lay a proper and comprehensive monitoring system that can oversee the day to day activities of the P&V. This is due to an ineffective policy which some of them from time to time smuggles and relapse to drug consumption. Although SAFIR has put in place many activities to contain the participants and volunteers, their rules and regulations at the center are sometime not respected

by recalcitrant and thus, this makes it difficult for the institution to enforce its agenda. Respondent 1 added by saying:

..... As an institution, it is very difficult to monitor these persons when it comes to their day to day activities. As you can see, they leave in different areas and neighborhood and there is no special convey set aside to monitor their movement except for individual discipline. Therefore one cannot know, in case they smuggled themselves to start the consumption. The key to steadfast at this point in time is to be discipline, honest and confident to one self, whenever they feel tempted to practice old habits (drug consumption).

### 5.3.2 Challenges from within

#### 5.3.2.1 Lack of access to dental care

Due to the former life style of the participants and volunteers on drug consumption, some of their tooth eventually leads to impairment which requires and demands for dental treatment. This treatment is usually not granted to them because it costly and expensive, except in cases of painful symptoms. My respondent 4 affirms to me that, he was never allowed to visit the dentist until when he developed tooth ache. This is because the cost is quite high and it requires personal expenditure to visit a dentist in Norway. My respondent 4 admitted that:

.....I got tooth ache as a result too much intake of drug and I am facing a lot of challenges about it. This is because the Norwegian health system does not cover dental care facilities, so it was very difficult for me to cope and manage with dental problem till date as my allowance cannot be sufficient to carry out this treatment.

#### 5.3.2.2 Stigmatization and discrimination on the participants and volunteers

The participants and volunteers faces problem of stigmatization and in most cases, those involved in drugs are view with infamy (stigma) and are usually referred to as junkies which discourages them in the society. One of my respondents agreed to this point and stated an example below:



..... I feel segregated and looked upon as a low class citizen especially when I move around town. Each time I move around, I have the feeling that, people look at me as a looser due to my previous life style. This feeling always comes in my mind whenever I am at bus stops, train station waiting to board a bus or train. I always think the people still see me as a drug addicted person and a product of no use in the society.

### 5.3.2.3 Disagreement amongst participants and volunteers

These participants and volunteers face some sort of disagreement amongst themselves which is against the objectives of SAFIR. The principal objective of SAFIR is to encourage participants and volunteers to have a common understanding of some vital aspects of life. In some cases, they turn to disagree, which often leads to conflict. A respondent confided in me that, from time to time, there have been conflicts on how certain activities should be managed and controlled which eventually leads to argument. My respondent 5 also added that:

.....This misunderstanding and argument often than not raise tension from debate and discussion between them. As an institution, things like this often happen because we deal with people from different background and different ideology. Misunderstanding is a day to phenomenon in the life of human beings, what more of an institution hosting more than fifty persons. When this happens, the staff or other participant or volunteer calls them to order through storytelling which makes them laugh or create jokes to put their minds at ease or better still can advise them in a friendly manner and not putting the blame on any one.

### 5.3.3 Similar challenges faced by SAFIR and its P&V

#### 5.3.3.1 Decision making and communication from above

Decision making and communication is one of the greatest challenges faced by the institution especially when it comes to taking decision on behalf of the P&V. The institution takes vital decision that concerns their social life and decides on what to do and what not to do. This is very

challenging for the participants and volunteers because they think they are matured enough to take decision for themselves. My respondent 1 was able support this claim and said the following:

..... The institution and other higher authorities set aside to watch over these P&V have the right to decide on what is good in the life of these persons. It should be understood that, the institution only take decisions which they think can improve on their morale and health. These has been a challenge to us because when we tell them what to do and what not to, they insist on doing only that which they think is good for them. For instance, we had a challenging situation here where by, a participant was denied by his doctor to donate blood. This participant thinks his doctor has no influence in his decision and that he was old enough to decide for himself. He saw it as been influential over him which was not true. The truth is, due to his situation he cannot donate blood.

.....On the other hand, the issue of decision making has led to some sort of disagreement between the institution and the participants. In order to promote a healthy life to its participants and volunteers, the institution has higher food experts to educate these on the importance of healthy meal and the types of diet their system requires. This is very challenging for the institution because most of the P&V want to eat what they are used to rather than this which the ones they are expected to eat which is healthier to their body.

#### 5.3.3.1 Decision making and communication from within

Man was born free but everywhere in chains as stated by the philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau is the word a participant uses to describe his situation and how he felt about the decisions taken by the institution and other authority on their behalf. He thinks he is capable enough to run his life the way he wants. He went further to talk about his good will to donate blood. I think this is a good idea in his line of thinking but looking at the other side of the coin, due to his past (drug

addict), he cannot because he has once injected drug which makes him eligible. This is the more reason why his doctor cannot accept him become a donor. My respondent went further to state:

..... I want to donate blood but my doctor can't allow me to do it, because people see me as junkie and of no value in the society. I have the right to take decision for myself no matter what the case may be.

.....I love food that contains fat but I was advised not to consume fatty food. This is very challenging to me, knowing that what I like the most needs to be reduced. Any way I will probably see what to do about it.

At this point in time, he realizes that, his doctor and the institution meant well for him that is why they keep restricting him from doing things that can damage his health.

#### 5.4 chapter summary

The author started this chapter by looking at reactions from above (management) and within (participants and volunteers) of SAFIR. In this section, we saw that there are various strategies used by SAFIR in the empowerment of participants and volunteers. Some of the common strategies that we looked at are: green corner activities, theatre act, storytelling, school, open lunch, spot activities and biweekly activity. All these strategies are encompassed into cognitive tactics of empowerment which is aim at changing behaviors and attitudes towards drugs. This involves the use of a motivational therapy that is aim at helping participants and volunteers to stay away from drugs through individual treatment.

In the second part of this section, the author looked at some of the challenges affecting SAFIR. The author grouped these challenges into three groups: First, problems affecting SAFIR as challenges from within. Secondly, problems faced by participants and volunteers as challenges from below. Finally, the third group was made up of similar challenges affecting the management, participants and volunteers.

Looking at challenges affecting management, we saw that the most prominent challenge was that of lack of funding from the local municipalities to execute or carryout SAFIR's agenda as planned. As concerns participants and volunteers we saw that they are faced with the problem of

lack of access to dental care. Some participants complained that they are only allowed to visit the dentist after they must have complained of tooth ache problems. Finally, one similar challenge that is affecting management, participants and volunteers is the problem of communication and decision making.

## 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### 6. Discussion and Conclusion

#### 6.1 Discussion

As formerly stated, the purpose of my research is to identify the strategies used by SAFIR to empower participants and volunteers as well as the challenges faced by the institution in carrying out this empowerment. Two powerful concepts were analyzed in chapter three such as Empowerment and Diakonia as well as other sub concepts such as inclusiveness, hospitality, transformation and substance miss use. In line with reports from my respondents, two types of reactions were identified, that is reaction from above and reaction from within. This section will be based on empirical findings in relation to theories. First and foremost, my research question one will be focused on two main things. That is the housing school and the Wednesday come-together. I will be using the empowerment and Diakonia concepts to discuss in line with reaction from above and within. Secondly, I will be using the Diakonia concepts such as transformation, inclusiveness and hospitality to elaborate on my research question 2 and two main areas will be focused on, which is the green corner and sportive activities, as elaborated using reactions from within. I will there after look at the similar challenges as compared to what the theory holds. Last but not the least, I will look at the merits and demerits of my data/concepts and how they need to be improved. The last but not the least will be the conclusion.

#### 6.1.2 Empowerment in line with research question 1

Empowerment as seen in section 3.5 of this theoretical frame work was discussed in line with strategies used by SAFIR in empowering former drug addicted persons in the organization. In line with this study, empowerment was seen as a model to improve on social, emotional, health, economic and political wellbeing of those that are experiencing difficulties in life (Fisher, 2008; Parpart et al., 2003; Ratna & Rifkin, 2007; Tsey et al., 2007; Wallerstein, 2006; World Bank,

2008). The empirical findings reveal that, the reactions from above and within correspond to the ways by which, SAFIR uses to put smile in the face of the P&V. This smile comes as a result of good treatment and services offered to them by the institution despite their ought which has impacted them morally, psychologically, mentally and socially.

#### 6.1.2.1 Empowerment from above

Looking at empowerment and reactions from above amongst the management/institution, three points were noted as important facts to account for. Firstly, SAFIR is a center that facilitates communication and togetherness with participants and volunteers coming together in a friendly manner. This togetherness amongst these persons with others from different cultures and background has created some sort of harmony and love amongst members as Jesus taught us to. The creative idea to invite people from different background to join and dine with participants and volunteers has created unity amongst people. SAFIR is one of the centers that put in to practice the “soup, soap, salvation” theory as I borrow the word from Salvation Army. This is to say, the institution feeds, provide and educate the people, which is good for the wellbeing of the people.

Secondly, SAFIR uses *the Wednesday lunch* to bring people together as one of the means to empower the participants and volunteers. As human beings we need to interact and share ideas with one another which help to empower man in different ways. In the theory chapter, section 3.5 empowerment was seen as a survival mechanism which helps individuals improve their inward belief system to suit what they observe and experience (Kash 1990). From my findings, I see this concept in how the institution/management interacts with the participants and volunteers including invitees as well as the participants and volunteers towards the invitees. As an observer, in the institution, these former drug addicted persons are very friendly and welcoming as well. I experienced a warmth treatment given to me by them, the first day I step my feet at SAFIR. The institution train these participants to be welcoming, act in a friendly manner and so on.

Furthermore, *the housing school* is another area of captivation, in which I see empowerment as an act of bringing people together, thereby promoting leadership skills amongst the participants and volunteers. This housing school widens the minds of these participants as they become open to things such as internet, how to calculate and apply for tax return, educational talks with volunteers and so forth. This leadership quality can be seen in respondent 2 and 3 (who are also

teachers in the housing school). These people are encouraged and promoted by the institution to handle positions in the organization so as to help build up self-esteem and to encourage others who think they can't be useful to the society. This aspect as leadership has empowered them socially, physically and spiritually so much so that my respondent 2 was proud to say the following;

.....I am who I am today, thanks to SAFIR. They have made me proud, responsible and more to it a dignified person in the society. I had never taught of becoming responsible in life until after joining SAFIR.

#### 6.1.2.2 Empowerment and Diakonia from within

This form of empowerment seen within is experienced by the participants and volunteers who are the primary focus of my research. These persons experience empowerment differently and react differently towards it. From my empirical findings, I realized the fact that SAFIR'S ability to create activities that will inspire the participants and volunteers was a great influence of change in their life definitely. I chose to talk about the green corner and sportive activities because it is one which helps to inspire them.

The green corner as earlier stated is that part of activity which showcases their talent. Many of these participants and volunteers as earlier seen only discovered how talented they were at SAFIR. The concept of transformation can be seen here because this activity helps in building their lives in one way or the other. In the theory chapter, Myers in section 3.6.1 stated that, "transforming people begins with helping people discover that, their human dignity and identity are intrinsically related to God in Christ through his redemptive purpose in salvation history" (Myers Bryant, 2011:179). After carrying out my research, I discovered that transformation is when an individual decides to abandon old habits willfully and follows the new. This can be elaborated with reference from my respondent 2 and 3 who stated that:

I willfully quitted drug because I became miserable in the society

My advice to those still consuming drug is that, they should abandon

Street drug and lifestyle and find a better life here at SAFIR

My respondent 3 added that:

I stopped consuming drug willfully because my daughter was seized  
By the government due to my irresponsible life style not meeting up to parental  
duties. From there on, I became frustrated and decided to quit drug

This is to show that, there is the ability for individual effort to be made when it comes to decision making. Without these efforts, the initial plan cannot be carried out. The participants and volunteers made an effort to keep themselves busy thereby engaging in these activities to stay off drug.

### 6.1.3 Similarity in concept and empirical findings

#### 6.1.3.1 Institutional Diakonia

There is similarity in the theory section 3.2 which is in line with SAFIR's motto. In this section, I find similarity in the concept of institution Diakonia as Knud Jørgensen were by he listed the criteria of a good institution. He further stipulated that, an institution practicing diaconal works should have the ability to be, to relate, to do and to organize. This ties up with the motto of SAFIR which is to do, to be and to learn. I see this as an empowerment strategy which needs to be encouraged. These criteria's used by SAFIR has enable participants and volunteers to gain leadership positions in and out of the organization. This is has enable the participants and volunteers

## 6.2 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In this chapter I will present my main findings from this study as well as answers to my research questions. This conclusion has been drawn based on the empirical findings and the analysis of this study. The chapter rounds up with recommendations both to academicians and proponents of diaconal works in general.

### 6.2.1 How have SAFIR empowered participants and volunteers in Oslo until now?

First, SAFIR as an institution uses empowerment strategies and diaconal works to rehabilitate participants and volunteers. As I presented in the theoretical section and our investigation, empowerment of participants and volunteers entails various strategies. However, recent studies suggest that the family-oriented therapy and the individual treatment are some of the most

sustainable means of empowering participants and volunteers. The family therapy is more suitable for younger children, while the individual treatment is mostly recommended for adults. SAFIR as a center for drug rehabilitation was created by the Church city mission and the Red Cross. The center provides help and assistance to participants and volunteers through diaconal works which serves as the basis for the existence of the center. In addition to empowering through diaconal works, the center has a series of activities like workshops, seminars, lectures and sporting activities which is meant to empower participants and volunteers and at same time ensure their reinsertion into society. These activities serve as a motivational therapy with the objective of ensuring that participants become productive individuals in society. Therefore, I would summarize from above by stating that SAFIR through cognitive tactics uses individual treatment as its main strategy of empowering participants and volunteers.

#### 6.2.2 What challenges do SAFIR faced in the empowerment of these participants and volunteers in Oslo?

Concerning the second question on challenges facing SAFIR, I separated the challenges into challenges affecting management (above); participants and volunteers (within); and finally similar challenges affecting SAFIR and its participants and volunteers.

First, *challenges from above*. I would conclude by stating that the management of SAFIR does not have enough funding to execute its agenda. This affects the institution as a whole since certain new programs cannot be enforced due to lack of enough means to carry them forth. In addition, lack of proper monitoring system has also plagued the functioning of SAFIR.

Secondly, participants and volunteers lack proper access to dental care. This serves as one of the main challenges from within. Other challenges from within include; Stigmatization and discrimination on the participants and volunteers and disagreement amongst participants and volunteers.

Finally, decision making and communication from above and within seems to be the similar challenge affecting both SAFIR and the participants and volunteers. Both management and the



participants and volunteers in most situations get into disagreements over what should take place over important issues facing the lives of participants and volunteers.

### 6.3 FUTURE RESEARCH

First, the empowerment strategy of SAFIR could be considered as a reference for other rehabilitation centers for former addicted persons. The government of Norway has to regularize the dental care act to ensure that people in drug rehabilitation centers can get dental treatment for free.

Finally, this thesis is a qualitative study so readers are advised not to generalize the results. Instead, this thesis calls for academicians and proponents of diaconal works to carry out more research especially on empowerment of participants and volunteers since as of now there is limited research in this field of study.

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## Interviews

### Interview Guide

- 1) What is your role in the organization?
- 2) Why did you choose to work in this field?
- 3) What is your interest in working with these participants and volunteers?
- 4) What strategies has the organization put in place to help these participants and volunteers?
- 5) How effective are these strategies in the life of the participants and volunteers?
- 6) What theory governs the organization and how helpful is this theory towards the wellbeing of the people?
- 7) How is the theory of care and coping implemented in the lives of the participants and volunteers?
- 8) How is the theory of empowerment used in the organization?
- 9) How helpful is the theory of empowerment in the lives of the participants and volunteers?
- 10) How beneficial and helpful is this organization, in the lives of these participants and volunteers?
- 11) What kind of activities has the organization put in place for them?
- 12) How effective and helpful are these activities in the lives of these people?



- 13) How can we compare SAFIR to other organizations when it comes to empowerment and coping?
- 14) What is peculiar about SAFIR when compared to other organizations?
- 15) What are the challenges faced by the organization in dealing with the participant and volunteers?
- 16) What advice can you give to those involved in narcotics?