# A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN A POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME AT NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY

**by**

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# ABSTRACT

During the past number of years, the pressure on universities worldwide, including universities in South Africa, has increased to bridge the gap between higher education and society. This includes becoming active partners with its communities. Therefore, the importance of community engagement as one of the three pillars of higher education, alongside teaching and learning, and research, has gained considerable momentum. Higher education institutions in South Africa are also increasingly challenged to elevate the status of their teaching and to raise their levels of community engagement. This also pertains to the area of postgraduate education, which points to the need for a close relationship between teaching, learning and research. The aim of this study was to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in a postgraduate Play Therapy programme. This was done using a contextualised perspective on higher education with reference to current higher education legislation in South Africa as well as curriculum development in general. A literature review of community engagement provided a perspective on the current state of community engagement - nationally, as well as internationally. The study used a qualitative single case study design and an interpretive paradigm to generate empirical data. The first phase of the empirical part of the study focused on determining the current state of community engagement within the postgraduate Play Therapy programme. Data was generated using questionnaires completed by current students and lecturers.

In the second phase of the empirical study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with lecturers from 13 national as well as international higher education institutions to review curriculum frameworks and content from other higher education community engagement models. The last empirical phase included two focus groups, one with current students and one with current lecturers in the postgraduate Play Therapy programme under investigation.

From the findings of the study, a curriculum framework emerged which outlines community engagement within the postgraduate programme. The emerging framework points to the need for a stronger integration of teaching and learning with community engagement (service component) through service learning. In the South African context

and within the programme that was investigated, service learning provides for engaged learning which includes experiential learning and opportunities for students to engage in interactive and experiential processes. The study has also pointed out that research within the postgraduate programme should reflect, in a much stronger way, links to community-based research. Such links may benefit a scholarship of engagement. Also, the research component of the programme needs to be linked more closely to teaching and learning in order to better inform the curriculum in terms of trends, needs and priorities. These activities need to take place within community partnerships with a reciprocal benefit to both the programme and the communities involved.

**KEYWORDS:** Community engagement, curriculum framework, curriculum development, higher education, postgraduate education, Play Therapy.

# OPSOMMING

Universiteite wêreldwyd, asook in Suid-Afrika, het gedurende die afgelope paar jaar druk ervaar om die gaping tussen hoër onderwys en die gemeenskap te verminder.

Dit sluit in om aktiewe vennote van gemeenskappe te word. Die belangrikheid van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid as een van die drie pilare van hoër onderwys, saam met leer, onderrig en navorsing, het dus aansienlik toegeneem. Hoëronderwysinstansies in Suid-Afrika word ook uitgedaag om die stand van hul leer en onderrig te verhoog en die vlakke van hul gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid te versterk. Dit geld ook vir nagraadse opleiding, wat neerkom op 'n hegter verband tussen leer, onderrig en navorsing.

Die doel van hierdie navorsing was om 'n gekontekstualiseerde en geïntegreerde kurrikulumraamwerk vir gemeenskapsgerigte leer, onderrig en navorsing binne 'n nagraadse program in Spelterapie te ontwikkel. Dit is gedoen deur 'n kontekstuele oorsig van hoër onderwys te gee met verwysing na die huidige hoëronderwys-wetgewing in Suid-Afrika asook 'n oorsig oor kurrikulumontwikkeling. 'n Literatuuroorsig van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid het perspektief op die huidige stand van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid landwyd én wêreldwyd verskaf.

Hierdie studie berus op 'n kwalitatiewe enkelgevallestudie-ontwerp en benut 'n interpretatiewe paradigma om die empiriese data te genereer. Die eerste fase van die empiriese gedeelte van die studie was gerig op die bepaling van die huidige stand van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid in die meestersprogram in Spelterapie. Data is gegenereer deur die gebruik van vraelyste wat deur huidige studente en dosente ingevul is.

In die tweede fase van die empiriese studie is semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met dosente van 13 nasionale asook internasionele hoëronderwysinstansies gevoer om die kurrikulumraamwerke en inhoud van ander hoër instansies se gemeenskaps-betrokkenheidsmodelle te verken.

Die laaste empiriese fase sluit twee fokusgroepe in - een met huidige studente en een met huidige dosente in die meestersprogram in Spelterapie, wat die onderwerp van hierdie studie uitmaak.

'n Kurrikulumraamwerk het vanuit die bevindinge van die studie ontstaan wat 'n uiteensetting van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid in die meestersprogram in Spelterapie verskaf. Die opkomende raamwerk dui op die behoefte aan sterker integrasie van leer en onderrig met gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid (dienskomponent) deur middel van diensleer. In die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks en in die program wat ondersoek is, bied diensleer die geleentheid vir betrokke leer wat die volgende insluit: ervaringsleer en geleenthede vir studente om betrokke te raak by interaktiewe ervaringsprosesse.

Die studie het ook uitgewys dat navorsing in die meestersprogram op 'n baie sterker wyse die verband met gemeenskapsgerigte navorsing moet reflekteer. Hierdie konneksies kan ook die vakkundigheid van betrokkenheid versterk. Daarby moet die navorsingskomponent van die program nader aan leer en onderrig beweeg sodat die kurrikulum altyd die jongste tendense, behoeftes en prioriteite weerspieël. Hierdie aktiwiteite moet in gemeenskapsvennootskappe plaasvind om voordele vir die program sowel as die betrokke gemeenskappe te bied.

**SLEUTELWOORDE:** gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid, kurrikulumraamwerk, hoër onderwys, kurrikulum-ontwikkeling, nagraadse opleiding, Spelterapie

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHéR | Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research |
| CBPR | community-based participatory research |
| CBR | community-based research |
| CCE | curricular community engagement |
| CCYFS | Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies |
| CE | community engagement |
| CHE | Council on Higher Education |
| CHESP | Community-Higher Education Service Partnership |
| CSL | community service learning |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| EHE | *Encyclopaedia of Higher Education* |
| FCCD | Forum for Continuous Community Development (NWU) |
| HE | higher education |
| HEI | higher education institution |
| HEIs | higher education institutions |
| HEQC | Higher Education Quality Committee |
| JET | Joint Education Trust |
| NCHE | National Commission on Higher Education |
| NPHE | National Plan for Higher Education |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| NWU | North-West University |
| PAR | participatory action research |
| QA | quality assurance |
| SL | service learning |
| UNISA | University of South Africa |

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# CHAPTER 1

# ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

During the past number of years universities worldwide, including universities in South Africa, were challenged to move beyond the ivory tower image as this symbolises institutions removed from the realities of society. In order to change this perception, universities were challenged to bridge the gap between higher education and society, and to partner actively with communities in order to become engaged institutions and facilitate equity (Bender 2008a:1154; Akpan, Minkley & Thakrar 2012:1).

In South Africa, higher education institutions were collectively challenged by audit criteria, accreditation criteria, national policies and commissions to strengthen the commitment between South African higher education and the public by elevating the status of teaching and raising community engagement to a level well above the current one of public service (Bender 2007:127; Alperstein 2007:59; Bender 2008a:1154). The publication of the Education White Paper 3 by the Department of Education (1997) laid the foundation for community service to become a core part of higher education in South Africa. This inclusion of community service led to the uplifting of community engagement as one of the three pillars of higher education, alongside teaching/learning and research (DoE 1997). Within the South African context, community engagement is defined as follows by the Glossary of the Higher Education Quality Committee's Criteria for Institutional Audits (HEQC 2004:15):

> "Initiatives and processes through which the expertise of the higher education institution in the areas of teaching and research are applied to address issues relevant to its community. Community engagement typically finds expression in a variety of forms, ranging from informal and relatively unstructured activities to formal and structured academic programmes addressed at particular community needs (service learning programmes)."

This transformation in higher education also led to changes in perceptions of "community service" (DoE 1997) and "academically based community service" (HEQC 2001) to "community engagement" including service learning (HEQC 2004).

Community engagement was followed by a movement towards the notion of a "scholarship of engagement" (Fourie 2003:32; HEQC 2006a:7; Bender 2007:127-29; Bender 2008b:83; Lazarus, Erasmus, Nduna, Hendricks & Slamat 2008:58; Waghid 2009:74) and included a recently renewed focus on the scholarship of integration. The scholarship of integration is seen as a domain that has been poorly developed relative to the other three scholarly domains (Le Grange 2007:507). The scholarship of engagement refers to reciprocally connecting the knowledge resources of universities to the social and ethical problems of the communities. Through these connections, a special climate can be created in which the academy and the communities communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other leading to scholarly activities (Boyer 1997:92). These connections also provide the opportunity for increased community involvement through community activities such as service learning (Erasmus 2005:1). Therefore, the academy is challenged to become a more vital partner in the search for answers to social, economic and moral problems and to reaffirm its commitment to the scholarship of engagement (Boyer 1997:11).

Many higher education institutions responded to the challenge of increased community engagement by applying their teaching, research and expertise to local, regional and national problems, often joining with community partners in mutual and reciprocal partnerships (O'Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh & Giles 2011:84). Barker (2004:124) and Macfarlane (2007:53) agree that the expertise of the university needs to be connected and applied to community needs through the integration of teaching and research as well as the integration and application of scholarship which includes reciprocal practices in the production of knowledge. Mwaniki (2010:410) also emphasises that community engagement needs to be recasted as a core function of the university into mainstream academic discourse.

O'Meara (2008:28) argues that important barriers to the promotion of community engagement in universities may be the lack of imagination about how to connect disciplinary scholarship to community purposes; how to integrate teaching, research and community involvement towards meeting community needs; and how to approach long-term careers as engaged scholars. Bednarz, Chalkley, Fletcher, Hay, Le Heron, Mohan and Trafford (2008:87-89) add that at national as well as institutional levels there is a need for flexible and responsive processes for programme approval of new

programmes and programme amendments to respond to communities' needs and that it is only through curricula that the values, beliefs and principles relating to learning, understanding, knowledge, the individual and society are realised.

Bringle and Hatcher (2000:273) argue that it seems important that curricula need to be reformed and improved by progressing from "community service", "internships", "practicals" or "charity work by students" as "add-ons" to modules/courses in academic programmes that integrate community service learning (CSL) into core curricula. CSL is conceptualised as a form of experiential education and as a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote students' academic enhancement, personal growth and social responsibility. Students render relevant and meaningful service in a community and the community, in return, offers experiences which inform the academic content of a module or course (Bringle & Hatcher 2000:273). Consequently, it is important that higher education institutions work towards the promotion and support of an integrated curriculum model for community-engaged teaching and learning by embedding community engagement into their teaching/learning function. It is ultimately through curricula that the ideas of higher education are put into action (Bender 2007:134).

In the context of the above-mentioned changes and challenges, the importance of social responsibility and awareness among students, as well as the role of higher education in social and economic development through community service programmes were also emphasised (DoE 1997). Hence, social responsiveness and accountability are not only moral imperatives, but also fundamental elements of the knowledge society and Mode 2 knowledge production (Albertyn & Daniels, 2009:409). Mode 2 knowledge production is described by Kraak (2000:2-3) as problem-solving knowledge which is intrinsically trans-disciplinary, trans-institutional and heterogeneous. Mode 1 knowledge production, on the other hand, is seen by Gibbons (2003) as more pure, disciplinary, homogeneous, expert-led, supply-driven, hierarchical, peer-reviewed and almost exclusively university-based research.

The emergence of Mode 2 research led to major changes in the sense that knowledge is not only generated in the traditional, basic and discipline-driven manner within universities, but in new forms in the market and community, and, most importantly, in the interface between higher education and society. Therefore, knowledge production

is becoming an increasingly open system in which a number of actors from different disciplines and from outside higher education participates (NCHE 1996:125-126; DoE 1996:35; DoE 1997:31). Mode 2 knowledge production therefore leads to knowledge created in broader trans-disciplinary, social and economic contexts - that occurs within contexts of application and involves greater involvement with local communities and governments (Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwarzman, cited by Scott and Trow (1994) in Albertyn & Daniels 2009:410).

The recently introduced idea of Mode 3 knowledge production is regarded as a far-reaching conceptualisation of knowledge production and an extension of Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge production. Mode 3 knowledge production actively engages higher order learning in a multilateral, multimodal, multinodal and multilayered manner with entities from government, academia, industry and society.

During this engagement co-opetition, co-specialisation and co-evolution processes are driven to lead to the formation of modalities such as innovation networks and knowledge clusters (Carayannis & Campbell 2012:4-5). Jiménez (2008:54) agrees that some of the properties of Mode 2 research are shared with Mode 3 knowledge production, but with the distinctive characteristic of being closely linked to current societal needs.

The important role that higher education plays in the promotion of social responsibility and awareness among students (DoE 1997) places increased responsibility on higher education to produce skilled graduates competent in critical analytical and communication skills to deal with change, diversity and tolerance to opposing views (DoE 1997). Therefore, higher education institutions are challenged to equip their students by putting processes into place to facilitate the production of knowledge. These processes need to develop the skills graduates require to live in a diverse society, to make responsible and informed decisions, and to work collaboratively with the view of contributing to social transformation (Albertyn & Daniels 2009:409). This could enable graduates to deal better with change, diversity and tolerance in order to work in communities within the South African context and to empower and mobilise people in the community to deal with social issues within South Africa (O'Meara 2008:28).

According to Smith and Bath (2006:262), generic graduate attributes, which should be acquired by all graduates regardless of discipline or field of study, may be considered as the central achievements of the higher education process. Such attributes or qualities may include critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, problem-solving skills, logical and independent thought, communication and information management skills, intellectual rigour, creativity and imagination, ethical practice, integrity, tolerance, teamwork and leadership which are important aspects in any curriculum. O'Meara (2008:27) suggests that students who learn to became engaged scholars through engagement which involves teaching through service learning and/or community-based research simultaneously learn to become integrated professionals who connect different aspects of their work.

The postgraduate programme of the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies (CCYFS) at North-West University (NWU) is not excluded from the changes and challenges as stated above. Therefore, the current mode of teaching/learning, research and community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS is also challenged. This is due to the fragmented nature of the programme's core functions, namely teaching/learning, research and service.

Hence, the aim of this study is to determine the current state of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies at North-West University, and to propose a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research.

The CCYFS's postgraduate programme uses research to gain a better understanding of children, youth and families in distress in South Africa in order to enhance their emotional well-being. This postgraduate programme aims to apply this expertise through community initiatives to the benefit of the community. In addition, this programme aims to deliver postgraduates with advanced knowledge, skills, attitudes and applied competencies within the caring fields (Bloem 2010) as South Africa is home to almost 19 million children of whom 64% live in poverty. South Africa still has high levels of violence against children despite a world-renowned constitution, a legislative overhaul that safeguards children's rights and the more than 56 500 children who were reported to be victims of violent crimes in 2009/2010. The country's high

prevalence of HIV and Aids has also resulted in high rates of orphaned children (Kibel, Lake, Pendlebury & Smith 2010).

Next, this chapter will provide an overview of the problem statement as well as the problem formulation, the main research question and supporting questions (see 1.2) that were formulated from the main research question. Subsection 1.3 will provide an overview of the research methodology which will be followed by the clarification of the key concepts and how they relate to the study (see 1.4). The last section (see 1.5) will provide an overview of how the dissertation is presented and organised.

## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH QUESTION AND PURPOSE

Against the backdrop of the transformation of higher education and the subsequent increased importance of the centrality and integration of teaching, research and service into the curriculum, this study evolved from the researcher's own involvement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The researcher has been co-responsible for and involved in the community engagement component of this postgraduate programme for the past six years and has first-hand experience of the way in which community engagement has been constructed and applied. This has led to a growing awareness of the lack of an integrated curriculum framework to guide the integration of teaching, research and community engagement in the curriculum.

The postgraduate programme of the CCYFS was initially presented in a different format through the Huguenot College (UNISA). The collaboration agreement between Huguenot College and the then Institute for Child, Youth and Family Studies came to an end due to Huguenot's College's failure to provide an academic address for the master's and doctoral degrees in Play Therapy as stipulated in the agreement. In order to complete the programme offering and continue the current offering under a new degree name at a different academic institution an alternative academic partner had to be found. In March 2011, North West University (NWU) became the new academic home to the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS (Bloem 2010:2).

The postgraduate programme of the CCYFS currently consists of the three core functions, namely teaching which is structured into credit-bearing short courses, a research component which is introduced in the second year, and a community

involvement component which is seen as a practicum and which is introduced in the second year. The three components are currently unattached and fragmented. In order to pursue a scholarship of engagement in the context of higher education and curriculum studies, it is essential to determine the current status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS and from that develop an integrated curriculum framework for community engaged teaching, learning and research. This may inform programme development and improve the quality of education.

A preliminary literature survey indicated that, although there is a body of literature on community engagement activities within the South African context, there is currently no research in the field of play therapy in South Africa with regard to community engagement. Therefore, this study may contribute to this gap in knowledge.

North-West University, which is home to the CCYFS's postgraduate programme, is currently one of two universities in South Africa focusing on play therapy. Current research in the field of community engagement mainly focuses on undergraduate programmes with full-time students. The fact that this study is focused on a postgraduate programme with part-time students adds another dimension and challenge to the research and structuring of the curriculum.

The study was contextualised in the current debates in higher education and took into account the field of curriculum studies within higher education. The study drew on information from the South African higher education system and was positioned within the institutional context of North-West University. It was perceived that this study could contribute to the body of knowledge on community engagement and play therapy. It is also envisaged that the findings of this study could inform postgraduate curriculum design with an engaged focus and additional insights into developing teaching and learning strategies, as well as curricula to address these challenges.

### 1.2.1 Research question, study aims and objectives

Given the current position of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, the main research question was formulated as: What would constitute a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community

engagement within the postgraduate programme of the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies (CCYFS), North-West University (NWU)?

The following subsidiary research questions, which served to answer the main research question, guided the study:

a) What is the current status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?

b) What do the course experiences of current students and lecturers reveal about community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?

c) What are the contours of a curriculum framework for the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?

The main aim of the study was to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU.

To achieve this primary study aim, the following study objectives were formulated:

a) To review relevant literature on curriculum design in order to identify the merits and limits of various approaches to community engagement;

b) To determine, from the experiences and activities of current students and lecturers, the status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme;

c) To review curriculum frameworks and the content of other community engagement models at national and international higher education institutions (HEIs);

d) To develop a curriculum framework for effective community engagement in the postgraduate programme.

## 1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to address the main research question and its subsidiary questions an interpretive paradigm was used. An interpretive paradigm is a view of social science, or

a lens through which the practice of research is examined (cited by Cohen *et al.* 2001 in Maree & Van der Westhuizen 2007:32). The interpretive paradigm furthermore allows for the reality that the world is interpreted through the mind and is constructed by different viewpoints through different processes of observation, and that it places an emphasis on experience and interpretation (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit 2004:20).

A single case study research design was used to gain in-depth knowledge about the proposed topic and to assist in solving the problem at hand (Snape & Spencer 2003:22-24; Denscombe 2007:36; Fouché & Schurink 2011:320-323). Creswell (2009:13) describes case studies as a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. This design was applicable to this study as it explored community engagement as activity within an academic programme. An explorative literature review (Delport, Fouché & Schurink 2011:302) on South African as well as international literature on community engagement, higher education and curriculum design was utilised as a frame through which the research topic was viewed. The literature review was also used during analysis to compare themes and categories that have emerged from the empirical data (Creswell 2009:30-31; Yegidis & Weinbach 2009:21).

To explore and describe this specific case, multiple data collection methods and sources were used in the data gathering process. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007a:76), this is a key strength of the case study method. Yin (2009:132) also states that a case study design can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative data. In this case study, semi-structured questionnaires were completed by current students as well as lecturers (Delport *et al.* 2005:167). Purposive sampling (Berg 2009:50-51) was used to obtain participants for the student questionnaire while convenience sampling (Ritchie & Lewis 2005:81) was used for the lecturers. Semi-structured interviews (Nieuwenhuis 2007b:87; Denscombe 2007:177; Greeff 2011:351-352) were also conducted with lecturers from national and international HEIs that presented postgraduate degrees in counselling, play therapy, psychology and/or social work with a community engagement component.

In combination with the above-mentioned questionnaires and interviews, and toward the end of the data-collection stage, focus groups (Nieuwenhuis 2007b:87; Denscombe 2007:178; Greeff 2011:360-375) were conducted with current registered students and

lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS who were willing and available to participate in these groups. Again, purposive sampling was used to find participants for the student focus group while convenience sampling was used to obtain participants for the lecturer focus group.

Qualitative content analysis was used to guide the data analysis (Creswell 2009:238). The data obtained was first coded (Creswell 2009:238) and then analysed by reducing the data, sifting the significant data and insignificant data, and identifying significant categories and themes (Neuman 2000:420; D'Cruz & Jones 2004:152-153; Babbie 2010:338; Schurink *et al.* 2011:397). A basic analysis was undertaken followed by a higher level of analysis (Hancock 2002:17). Data triangulation was enhanced by means of various data-gathering methods to promote the trustworthiness and credibility of the data (Denscombe 2010:136, 297; Schurink *et al.* 2011:420). A detailed description of the methodology for the empirical part of the study is provided in Chapter 5.

## 1.4 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The terminology that was used in this study will be discussed and clarified in the paragraphs below.

### 1.4.1 Higher Education (HE)

Different conceptions of higher education exist. Although higher education, as a concept, has a much broader meaning than just a collective term for HE institutions, Naidoo (2005) defines the concept as a sector or sub-system of education, which distinguishes it from other systems such as economics and health in society.

Within the South African context, the Higher Education Act (1997), which was amended to align it with the National Qualifications Framework Act (2008), defines Higher Education as: "all learning programmes leading to qualifications higher than grade 12 or its equivalent in terms of the National Qualifications Framework as contemplated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act (Act No 58 of 1995), and includes tertiary education as contemplated in Schedule 4 of the Constitution; a qualification that meets the requirements of the HEQF".

### 1.4.2 Higher Education Institution (HEI)

A higher education institution within the South African context is defined in the Higher Education Act (No 101 of 1997) (RSA, 1997:9) as:

"any institution that provides higher education on a full-time, part-time or distance basis and which is-

a) established or deemed to be established as a public higher education institution under this Act;

b) declared as a public higher education institution under this Act; or

c) registered or conditionally registered as a private higher education institution under this Act."

Hayward, Ncayiana and Johnson (2003:viii), when referring to higher education institutions, highlight the vital functions of higher education institutions as the following: the advancement and transmission of knowledge, learning and wisdom; opportunities for intellectual, ethical and skill development of individual students; the provision of an engine for the nation's development and growth; service as a repository of a society's knowledge and culture; the provision of key links to economic, social and political development to members of the society; and contribution to the well-being of the community, the nation and societies internationally.

### 1.4.3 Community engagement

The term community engagement (CE) was selected to encompass the broadest conception of interactions between higher education and community and to promote inclusivity. It furthermore represents broad thinking about collaborations between higher education and the community, and intentionally encourages important qualities such as mutuality and reciprocity. Community engagement is defined as "the collaboration between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Driscoll 2009:6).

Within the South African context the Council on Higher Education's Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC 2006a:11) describes community engagement as the combination and integration of teaching and learning (e.g. service learning), professional community service by academic staff and participatory action research applied simultaneously to identify community development priorities. In the context of higher education, this community engagement can take on different forms such as distance education, community-based research, participatory action research, professional community service and service learning.

For the purpose of this study, the above definition of the HEQC was used as the study is performed within the South African context.

### 1.4.4 Service learning

In South Africa, the definition provided by the HEQC is as follows: "service learning is a form of 'applied learning which is directed at specific community needs and is integrated into an academic programme and curriculum. It could be credit bearing and assessed, and may or may not take place in a work environment' (HEQC 2004:26).

Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo and Bringle (2011:216) refer to service learning (SL) as a pedagogical strategy that links students with communities. This is done through specific educational and community goals for both. Furthermore, service learning is seen as a method for strengthening the relationships between the campus and various communities. Thomson *et al.* (2011:216) support the definition of Bringle (1995:112) who defines service learning as "a course-based, educational experience in which students: (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility".

For the purpose of this study, the above definition of Bringle was used for service learning.

### 1.4.5 Curriculum framework

O'Day and Smith (1992:25) state that a curriculum framework outlines the content that needs to be taught in core disciplines. Furthermore, they state that all elements of the

broadly defined education system are linked in a common effort to accomplish common goals. Sutherland (2009:12) defines framework as the term that refers to an underlying set of ideas, principles, agreements or rules that provide the basis or outline for an academic programme at an HEI.

The above definition of Sutherland was used as guide in this study.

### 1.4.6 Postgraduate programme of the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies at the NWU

The postgraduate programme of the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies (CCYFS) is offered under die auspices of the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies, North-West University. Currently, the postgraduate programme includes a master's degree in Psychology and Social Work with a focus on play therapy. The content of this degree consist of four credit-bearing short courses which are presented in the first year of study and a practicum component in the second year where students have to complete a certain number of compulsory therapeutic hours in individual work and group work. Students also have to complete a research dissertation. The short courses include the following: Basic principles, theories and philosophies of Gestalt play therapy (G03 100 1); The therapeutic relationship and process in Gestalt play therapy (G04 100 1); Practice-directed use of Gestalt play therapy (G08 100 1); and Advanced integration: Play therapy (G09 100 1). These credit-bearing short courses are presented on NQF level 9 (see Addendum A on the attached CD for a full description of the curriculum).

### 1.4.7 Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies, North-West University

The Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies is a postgraduate research centre situated in Wellington. It operates under the research focus unit, AUTHéR (Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research), Faculty of Health Sciences, North-West University, Potchefstroom.

## 1.5 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

**Chapter 1 (Orientation to the study)**: This chapter serves as an introduction and provides an orientation to the study. The introduction includes the background and

problem statement, research question as well as the objectives that were formulated to achieve the aim of the study.

**Chapter 2 (An overview of community engagement)**: Chapter 2 comprises a literature review on community engagement. The chapter provides an overview of community engagement. It includes the conceptualisation of community engagement locally and internationally as well as the paradigm shifts community engagement has gone through to be gradually integrated into teaching and research. This integration includes various forms of engagement, concepts in the field and institutional models.

**Chapter 3 (Perspectives on higher education)**: This chapter consists of a literature review aimed at contextualising the current perspectives on higher education internationally as well as in South Africa. The changes within the higher education system brought about through legislation from the Department of Education (currently Department of Higher Education and Training) are described with a specific focus on community engagement.

**Chapter 4 (Curriculum development in higher education)**: Chapter 4 focuses on curriculum development in higher education with an emphasis on the process of curriculum development, including curriculum development models and the development of curriculum frameworks.

**Chapter 5 (Research methodology)**: Chapter 5 outlines the research design and methodology used in the empirical portion of the study. The case study design, data collection methods and procedures that were used are described. The validity and reliability of the study are also dealt with in this chapter. The context of the university within which the study was conducted is also discussed.

**Chapter 6 (Implementation of the study and data analysis)**: Chapter 6 provides the presentation and discussion of the data obtained during the study. The data is analysed, the findings are discussed in detail, and, finally, an interpretation of the results is presented.

**Chapter 7 (Synthesis, conclusions and recommendations)**: The final chapter provides a summary of the research activities and findings. The ensuing recommendations culminate in a curriculum framework for community engaged

teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. The limitations of the study, together with recommendations for future research, are contained in this chapter.

## 1.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided the introduction and background to the research undertaken and served as an introduction to the chapters that follow. The purpose of the study, statement of the problem and objectives of the study were presented. The selected conceptual parameters were clarified and the selected methodological and epistemological assumptions, as well as the research design and research methodology, were presented. Finally, a broad overview of what is to be presented in Chapters 2 to 7 and the ethical considerations and quality criteria for this study were introduced.

# CHAPTER 2

# AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The landscape of higher education has changed as a result of greater engagement with communities (Boyer 1990, 1996). Community engagement (CE) has emerged as an unofficial movement in higher education and, although at times not well defined, as one of the three core missions of higher education along with teaching and research (Soska, Sullivan-Cosetti & Sudershan 2010:139). In South Africa, community engagement was a relatively unknown concept in higher education until the late 1990s. Since then, the development of community engagement has been closely connected to the policy imperatives and subsequent transformation in higher education (Lazarus *et al.* 2008:58).

This chapter will provide an overview of community engagement, with a focus on the conceptualisation of community engagement locally and internationally. This will be followed by an overview of the paradigm shifts through which community engagement has gone to be gradually integrated into teaching and research. This integration includes various forms of engagement, concepts in the field and institutional models.

## 2.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: CONTEXTUAL AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

According to Driscoll (2009:6), community engagement (CE) as concept refers to the broadest conception of interactions between higher education and the community in order to promote inclusivity. This definition of community engagement is used for classification while representing broad thinking about collaboration between higher education and the community. This definition of CE also intentionally encourages important qualities such as mutuality and reciprocity.

Driscoll (2009:6) describes community engagement as the collaboration between HEIs and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global). This collaboration includes the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of

partnership and reciprocity. According to Weerts and Sandmann (2010:632), this definition suggests that engagement differs significantly from traditional conceptualisations of public service and outreach. The concepts of service and outreach, specifically, are typically conceived as one-way approaches to delivering knowledge and service to the public. Engagement, on the other hand, emphasises a two-way approach in which institutions and community partners collaborate to develop and apply knowledge to address societal needs.

Community engagement is undertaken for various reasons depending on the mission of the university and the goals of the university, academic staff and students. The purpose of community engagement is dependent on the university context, the student group that is involved, the community group that is involved as well as the desired learning outcomes (Bednarz *et al.* 2009:91). Within the context of higher education, community engagement can take on different shapes and forms, which may include distance education, community-based research, participatory action research, professional community service and service learning (SL) (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002:503; Krause, 2007:279; Bednarz *et al.* 2008:89; Lazarus *et al.* 2008:61). In the fullest sense, community engagement and the integration of teaching and learning (e.g service learning), professional community service by academic staff and participatory action research are applied simultaneously to identified community development priorities. The key concepts of community engagement will be discussed in the next section.

## 2.3 KEY CONCEPTS IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Bender (2008a:1154) states that community engagement is a fashionable term that is fluctuating. Although many university policies, documents, annual reports and websites use community engagement, curriculum-related community engagement and service learning almost like synonyms, these terms are not interchangeable. Pre-existing practices such as experiential education, community service, community development, community-based education, clinical practicals, practicum sessions, community outreach and even service learning have simply been renamed community engagement. Therefore, it is important to unpack community engagement as well as the concepts related to community engagement.

### 2.3.1 Engagement

Bender (2008a:1163) defines engagement as the partnership between a university's knowledge and resources, and those of the public, service and private sectors in order to enrich scholarship, research and innovation; enhance the curriculum as well as learning and teaching; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and social responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. Engagement is articulated by Boyer (1990) as a way to demonstrate the broader role of higher education by integrating public purpose and benefits into teaching and research.

Wedgewood (2003:151) describes engagement as enriching. It enriches the learning of the students, it provides a stimulus and inspiration for the research agenda, it brings new skills and knowledge to the stakeholders and it provides different perspectives and insights into the problems and issues of society. Saltmarsh and Gelmon (2006:27-29) refer to this term in the context of engaged departments contributing to the engaged learning on the part of the student. This framework refers to processes rather than outcomes such as discussions and simulations, and does not require students to leave the classroom and become involved in the local community as part of their learning.

### 2.3.2 Community engagement (CE)

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC, 2006a:11) describes community engagement as the combination and integration of teaching and learning (e.g. service learning), professional community service by academic staff, and participatory action research applied simultaneously to identified community development priorities.

In their definition of community engagement, McNall, Reed, Brown and Allen (2009:217) focus on the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and social responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. Norris-Tirrell, Lambert-Pennington and Hyland (2010:174) highlight the interaction by stating that community engagement is a conversation that should not be thought of as two parties looking at each other and interacting. Instead, community engagement should be seen as a triangle where the

parties are looking at the world together. In the productive interaction between these three entities, a world of possibilities opens in front of the parties, placing demands on them to grow and change. This conversation requires relationships based on reciprocity, and a give and take of resources, ideas, power, products and responsibilities.

Brenner and Manice (2011:85-86) discovered that community engagement is a strategy to build trust between researchers and the population groups and communities asked to participate in studies. The continuum of involvement of the communities varies and can include community consultation, community-based participatory research and community consent to research. At the same time, many researchers have recognised that community involvement can improve the quality, relevance and impact of their research.

Bednarz *et al.* (2008:89) find that community engagement can be achieved through a variety of activities and practices. This includes service-based community projects, volunteer work, work-based learning and fieldwork, and research collaboration (see Figure 2.1). Certain goals are developed for each involved party as illustrated in Figure 2.1.

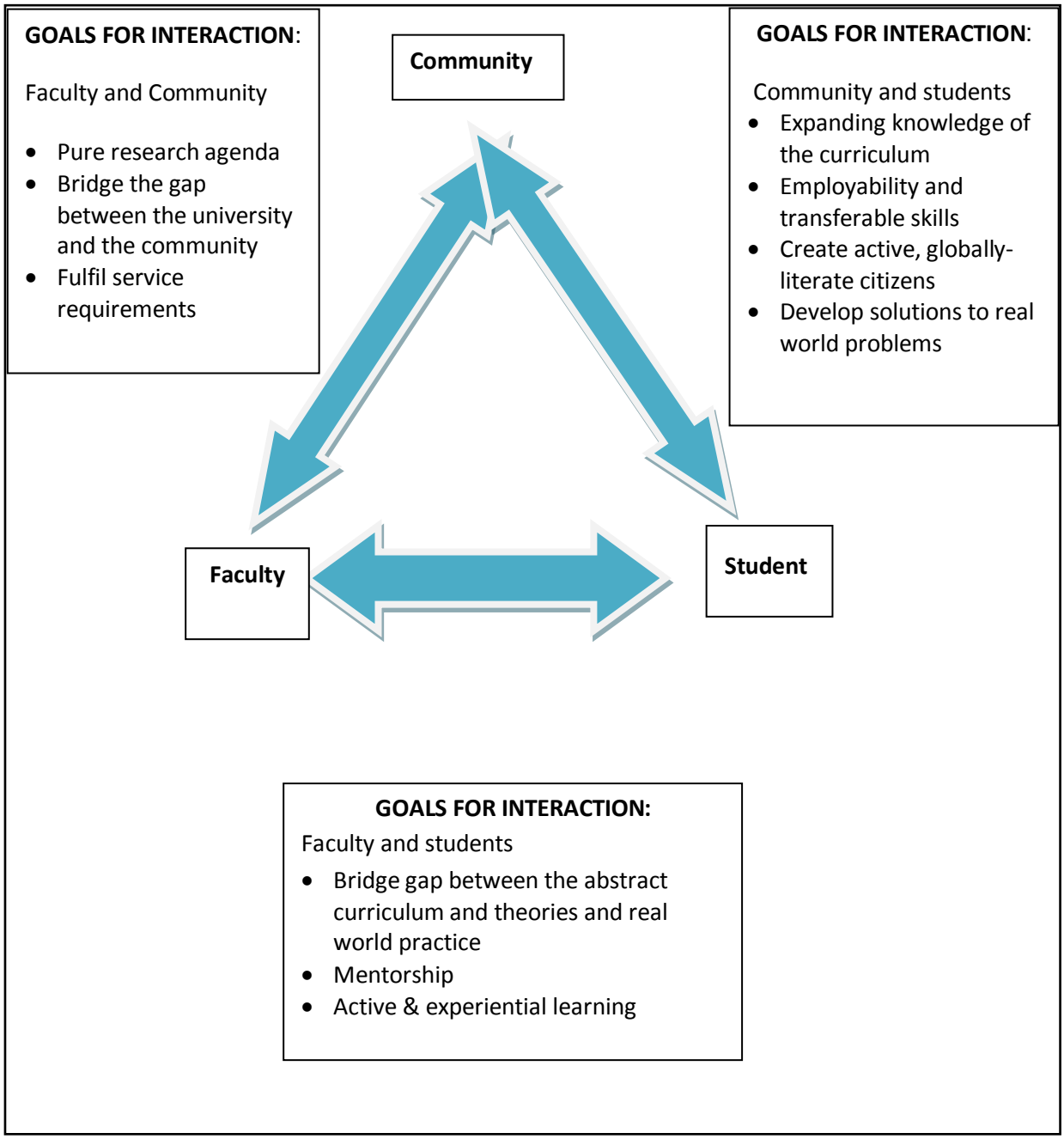


**Figure 2.1: Community engagement goals** (Bednarz *et al.*, 2008:89)

Source: Bednarz *et al*. (2008:89).

Bender (2007, 2008a:1164) suggests that the concept of community engagement should be used with community-engaged teaching in a programme or module as a teaching methodology, and community-engaged learning as a learning strategy. Therefore, a research university can reshape the definition and concept to fit that university's context, culture and functions of scholarship.

Bednarz *et al.* (2008:89) emphasize that it is crucial for community engagement to be seen by both academic staff and students as an integral and important component of the curriculum, linked with other learning and teaching activities and therefore providing an important form of experiential learning. To achieve its objectives, community engagement needs to be a three-stage, active learning process involving (i) preparation, thinking and discussion in the classroom prior to the engagement; (ii) active and effective engagement with the community to meet specific pre-determined objectives; and (iii) reflection on the experience and learning upon returning to the classroom.

### 2.3.3 Curricular community engagement

Bender (2007:128; 2008a:1159) conceptualises curricular community engagement (CCE) as a curriculum, teaching, learning, research and scholarship activity which engages academic staff, students and community service agencies/organisations in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. These interactions address needs identified by the community, deepen students' academic learning and enrich the university's scholarship. CCE is an indicator of the intersection and cross-cutting models of community engagement and a benchmark for community engagement. A number of South African universities regards CCE is one of the main categories of community engagement. These universities focus on the integration of community engagement into the curricula of formal academic programmes, also referred to as community-engaged teaching and learning. CCE can be subdivided into various types of community engagement such as community service (national service), community-based education, internships (clinical practice or practicals), work-based learning, co-operative education, community-based learning, service learning, community-based projects, and community outreach.

Bender (2007:128) argues that CCE cuts across the mission of teaching/learning, research and service. As such, CCE is not a separate, add-on activity or charitable work, but a particular approach to university-community collaboration. It should therefore form part of mainstream education. Within this framework, CCE is viewed as mutually beneficial to all the engagement partners. It is characterised by mutual planning, implementation and assessment between the partners.

According to Bender (2008a:1168), South African academics interested in CCE have a golden opportunity to develop significant undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The integration of teaching/learning, research and community engagement provides diverse and rich benefits for a research university and communities. CCE is an opportunity to conduct serious and scholarly work (Bringle & Hatcher 2005). CCE will be most significant when it results in the scholarship of engagement that integrates the functions of scholarship, namely teaching, discovery, application and integration.

### 2.3.4 Community

'Community' is described as one of the most dominant themes debated internationally and is etymologically untangled in several ways. Higgins (2007:282) found "Gemeinschaft" as the German word for community, where Kant (1998) (in Higgins 2007) makes a distinction in Latin between "communion", an exclusive sharing space protected from the outside, and "commercium", the processes of exchange and communication. Gerard Delanty (2003) begins his analysis with "communitas" [Latin], as the expression of belonging, irreducible to any social or political arrangement. William Corlett (1995) (in Higgins 2007) considers two different strands: firstly "communis" as in 'with oneness or unity', and secondly "communes" emphasizing the doing of one's duty. Philip Alperson's (2002) (in Higgins 2007) articulate community as a state of being held in common; he advocates an understanding that is both ontological and structural, referring to community as a relation between things. In the field of anthropology, the term is usefully isolated with three broad variants: (1) common interests between people; (2) a common ecology and locality; or (3) a common social system or structure (Rapport & Overing, 2000).

Esposito (2000:2) is of concern that contemporary political philosophies now and again translate 'community' into a political-philosophical lexicon by distorting it. The political philosophy often then reduces it to an "object" of a political-philosophical discourse that forces community into a conceptual language that radically alters it, while at the same time attempts to name it. Community is seen as a 'wider subjectivity".

The contentious result of the sometimes unambiguous etymological journey with respect to various philosophies of community, demonstrates the *munus* that the

*communitas* shares isn't a property or a possession. It isn't having, but on the contrary, is a debt, a pledge, a gift that is to be given, and that therefore will establish a lack. The subjects of community are united by an "obligation" in the sense that we say "I owe you something," but not "you owe me something" (Esposito 2000:5-6).

Lange (in CHE, 2008) found that, after an overview of the outcome of the HEQC's institutional-level audits, that the question as to what communities are, who they are and where they are, is often problematic. When questioning the institutions about who their communities were, some responded in historical terms which suggest that they had remained stuck in the community divisions of the apartheid era. Furthermore, it was found that some defined their communities in conservative terms, while others were more progressive. Through this, the question was raised whether there is a need to open or broaden the concept of community, as communities can be a form of democratisation, tolerance and pluralism. Another question was asked whether the community includes those living on the doorstep of the institution or those further afield. Community could also be understood as everybody who is outside the institution. This may include industry, the labour market, provincial and local government, and NGOs. Therefore, there is no clear answer to the question of who the community is.

Naidoo (in CHE, 2008) responded to this issue through his observation that we should engage with a broader definition of community or communities, rather than looking at a reductionist way of defining community. When community is defined in a reductionist way, the emphasis falls on the differences between institutions. However, the different faculties within an institution may define the concept of community in ways that are useful to them based on how a particular grouping of disciplines engages with communities. Institutions may have good policies and structures in place, but they can end up "playing the community engagement game" without contributing to the reconstruction and development of the country. These institutions will make the right gestures and appear to meet the criteria, but they often fall short of serving the actual essence of reconstruction and development.

Within the service learning context, communities refer to those specific, local collective-interest groups that participate in the service learning activities of the institution. These communities are no longer regarded as recipients but as partners who have a say in the identification of service needs and development challenges. Furthermore, these

communities participate in defining the service learning and development outcomes, identifying the relevant assets that they have in place, evaluating the impact and contributing substantially to the mutual search for sustainable solutions to challenges. Within the South African context, the members of such communities would generally be the disadvantaged and materially poor inhabitants of under-serviced urban, semi-urban or rural areas. In most instances these communities may be accessed most efficiently through service sector organisations, such as government or state departments, as well as non-governmental, community-based or faith-based organisations (HEQC/JET, 2006a:16).

It is also important to distinguish between community engagement and non-scholarly forms of service, such as outreach, which may be confused with community engagement. Most of the definitions of community engagement seem to emphasise the relationship between the university and the community, suggesting that community engagement needs to have a link with teaching, learning and research, and that the curriculum must be enhanced through community engagement activities.

The discussion above suggested that different perspectives on community engagement exist and therefore it is essential to define community engagement in the postgraduate programme. Until community engagement is properly defined and for the purpose of this study the definition of the CHE's Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC, 2006a:11) for community engagement will be used. According to the HEQC, community engagement is described as the combination and integration of teaching and learning (e.g. service learning), professional community service by academic staff and participatory action research applied simultaneously to identified community development priorities. The definition does not attempt to constrain other definitions of engagement, but rather to acknowledge the full range of engagement activities undertaken by South African universities. As stated earlier, this definition will be reshaped to fit the CCYFS' context, culture and functions of scholarship.

## 2.4 DIFFERENT FORMS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement can take on different forms and shapes within the context of higher education. It may include distance education, community-based research, participatory action research, professional community service and service learning. In

its fullest sense, community engagement is the combination and integration of service with teaching and research, applied to identify community development priorities (Lazarus *et al.* 2008).

It is possible to differentiate between various community engagement activities. Furco (1996) provides a widely used typology which is built on the idea of reciprocal learning and the balance between different foci. The two key principles identified by Furco are *intended beneficiaries* and *primary intended purpose* or focus of the activity. The intended beneficiary can range from the community to the student, and the purpose or focus of the activity can range from service to learning. For the South African context, Furco's theory has been adjusted slightly to incorporate the most widely used local terms and definitions (Furco 1996; HEQC 2006a) (see Figure 2.2).

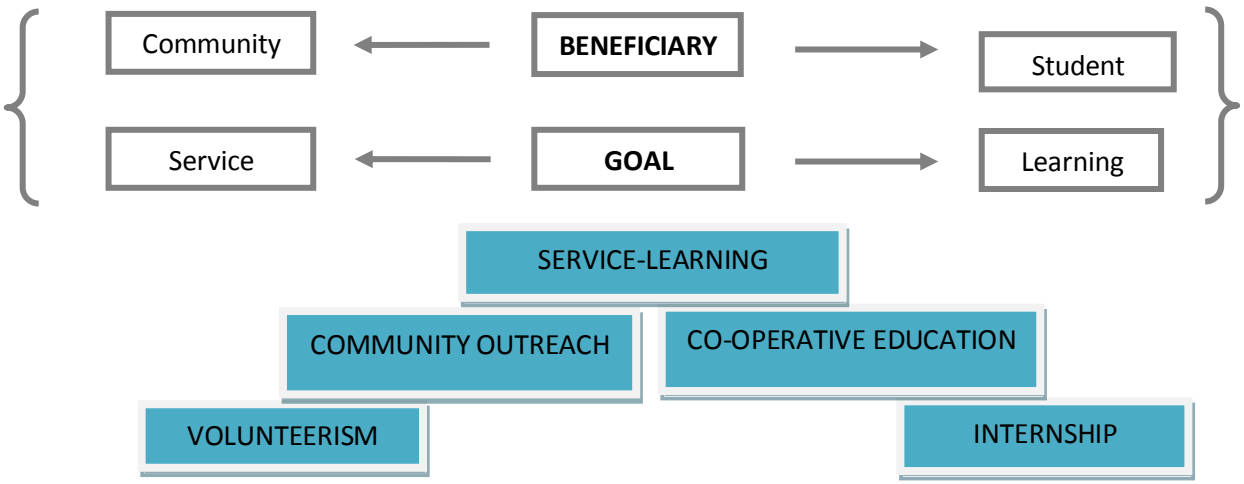


**Figure 2.2: Distinctions among community engaged learning**

Source: Adapted from Furco (1996).

### 2.4.1 Volunteerism

Volunteerism is on the one extreme of the service learning continuum. Cress (2005:7) defines volunteerism as students who are engaged in activities aimed at service for the sake of the beneficiary or recipient (client, partner). The HEQC (2006b:22) agrees that, with volunteerism, the primary beneficiary is the recipient (community) and the primary goal is to provide a service. These programmes are essentially altruistic as they have been designed to benefit the service recipient. Although the students may learn from these programmes, they are generally not related to, or integrated into, the student's

field of study. They usually fall under extra-curricular activities, which take place during school holidays and outside tuition time. In general, students do not receive any academic credit for their volunteer work, and volunteer programmes are funded by external donors and student fundraising efforts. Volunteer programmes are commonly small in scale and have a loose relationship with HEIs.

Briere and Foulkrod (2011:146-147) state that the traditional concept of volunteerism is rather unappealing in higher education, but volunteerism can still be a useful and important avenue for universities to pursue. For the most part, volunteerism does not include a reflection on one's experiences.

### 2.4.2 Internship

Internships are on the other extreme of the service learning continuum. With internships, students engage in activities to enhance their own vocational or career development. The primary beneficiary is the student and the primary goal is to provide students with hands-on experience that enhances their learning and understanding of issues relevant to their field of study. Internships are fully integrated into the curriculum of the student and assist students to achieve their learning outcomes. Internships are used in professional programmes such as social work, medicine, education and psychology (HEQC 2006a:52). Colburn and Newmark (2007:17) comment that internships provide students with the opportunity to experience what will become for them, a significant part of life - work - while they are still in a position to reflect critically on issues they are currently dealing with. Colburn (2007:58) observes that internships are often excluded from the category of service learning owing to their association with work and the workplace. The latter furthermore argues that in internships, or experiential education programmes, students are more likely to be placed in positions where they carry out activities with the expectation that they will acquire specific skills or training that will enable them to undertake a particular type of work after completion of the programme. Therefore, any definition of experiential learning that excludes internships from the opportunity for theoretical reflection and life engagement accorded to service learning appears rooted in mistaken assumptions.

### 2.4.3 Community outreach

The goal of community outreach, as with volunteerism, is to provide a service (primary focus) to the recipient or community (primary beneficiary). The engagement of students in such activities is more structured and it requires more commitment from the students. Community outreach programmes are usually initiated from within the HEI by a department or academic staff or even the institution itself. Recognition can be given by means of academic credit or in the form of research publications. As the service becomes more integrated with the academic module and the students begin to engage in formal intellectual dialogue about service issues, the programme moves closer to the centre of the continuum to become more like service learning (SL). A main feature that distinguishes academically based community outreach programmes from service learning is that the former tend to be an activity and initiative of the HEI where SL is fully integrated into the curriculum. Therefore, SL is not seen as an "outreach" activity but as an integral part of the curriculum (HEQC 2006a:22-23).

### 2.4.4 Cooperative education

In cooperative education, as with internships, the primary goal is learning (primary focus) on the part of the student (primary beneficiary). The programme provides students with co-curricular opportunities that are related to, but not always fully integrated with, the students' curricula. The primary purpose of cooperative education is to enhance the students' understanding of their areas of study. Many examples of the use of cooperative education can be found at universities of technology. Cooperative education differs from SL in terms of student placements. Cooperative education mostly provides pre-professional opportunities in industry, whereas SL placements are mostly in service agencies or directly in the community. Although both cooperative education and SL are aimed at enhancing student learning and understanding, SL has the additional aim of providing a service to the community (HEQC 2006a:22-23).

### 2.4.5 Service learning (SL)

In the middle of the typology, representing the balance between the different goals and beneficiaries, is service learning. Service learning provides opportunities where both the community and the student are the primary beneficiaries and where service learning and student learning receive equal attention. Reciprocity is a central

characteristic of service learning. The intentional focus is the integration of community service with scholarly activity such as student learning, teaching and research, and the enhancement of scholarly activity, particularly student learning, through service to the community. Service learning is also ingrained in a discourse that proposes the development and transformation of higher education in relation to community needs (HEQC 2006a:23).

Stanton, Giles and Cruz (1999) in Nduna (2006:490) make a clear distinction between community service as a philanthropic activity and community service as a scholarly activity. A philanthropic view of community service regards students' service as charity and students volunteering to help communities. When community service is seen as a scholarly activity, it is integrated into mainstream academic programmes and research, and it is called service learning. Service learning is aimed at community development by providing students with opportunities to render meaningful service to the benefit of such communities. Service learning is also aimed student development by providing students with opportunities to meet both the learning outcomes of the course and the critical cross-field outcomes as required by the South African education system. In addition, service learning is aimed at the development of academic staff by creating opportunities for experiential learning to improve classroom teaching.

Krause (2007:279) comments that service learning programmes must include a strong reflective component where students utilise higher-order thinking skills to make sense of the service experience and to extend their formal learning. Bender (2007, 2008) emphasises that currently only service learning meets participants' criteria for community-engaged teaching and learning at universities in South Africa. Service learning as a form of community engagement will be discussed in Section 2.9.

In the discussion of the different forms of community engagement it became apparent that within the curriculum framework to be developed through this study it is essential to determine what form of community engagement will be utilised in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

## 2.5 THE CHALLENGES INHERENT IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In the criteria for institutional audits (HEQC 2004) community engagement is proposed as one of the sub-areas for inclusion in the quality assurance mechanisms of HEIs. This creates an impression that it is seriously regarded as an appropriate mechanism for strengthening the social commitment and social responsibilities of HEIs. Although this is the impression, it seems that all HEIs do not currently have an emphasis on community engagement. Moore and Ward (2008:5) are of the opinion that although some research institutions have restructured their tenure and promotion guidelines following Boyer's (1990) reconsideration of scholarship, others intentionally still foster a culture of outreach and engagement in their institutions, with many faculties still resisting the expression of social responsibility in their scholarships. This is often due to concern for "how it counts" or how community-engaged scholarship aligns with the promotion and tenure guidelines within the context of the necessity of research.

Ward (2003, 2005) states that many research intensive campuses still focus on research, de-emphasised teaching and a conceptualisation of service that often has nothing to do with community engagement. Moore and Ward (2010:44-45) find that what is often missing, is the careers of academic staff is portrayed and built around an integrated approach to teaching, research and service emphasising community-university engagement. Furthermore, service learning does not represent a comprehensive view of community-university engagement. The successful institutionalisation of community engagement, including service learning, could be aided by the shift in focus from institutionalising service learning to realising the rhetoric of service and engagement championed by so many institutions. Universities' outreach and engagement may be expressed through teaching, research and service, but engaged scholarship, service learning and community service are interrelated and involve various aspects of the academic staff’s role.

Fourie (2003:5) underscores the value of the integration of service learning and research by stating that an integrated approach to community service is powerful because it recognises and builds upon what is most distinctive about universities, namely scholarship and critical inquiry which pursue knowledge, truth, insight and understanding.

## 2.6 ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement holds certain identified advantages for HEIs, students as well as communities. Bednarz *et al.* (2008:91-92) state that community engagement enhances knowledge and skills by encouraging students to apply curricular material to "real-world" situations and to reflect on those experiences. In addition to enhancing academic content, community engagement also brings cognitive benefits. Development of interpersonal communication skills in combination with academic learning and increased student motivation is a frequently observed result of community engagement. Community engagement also offers students opportunities to work with communities in order to understand and help resolve the problems that these communities face. Following from this, community engagement may encourage heightened levels of moral and social responsibility. According to Millican and Bourner (2011:91-92), learning based on community engagement holds the following potential benefits for students and higher education: It can broaden students' horizons by increasing their awareness of the world around them; it can enhance students' social self-efficacy; it can provide a source of material for certain subjects and an opportunity to apply the learning acquired on campus; it can enhance the employability of students by developing their teamwork and communication skills; it can enhance the academic performance of students; it can develop the interpersonal and leadership skills of students; it can provide students with opportunities to gain greater self-knowledge, including knowledge of their own strengths and values; and it can provide students with opportunities to expand their capacity for reflective thinking and reflective learning, which is a key component of the capacity for lifelong learning.

Community engagement strategies and skills can also build trust and reduce historical mistrust among researchers, communities and the populations being studied, as well as contribute to the quality of study designs, methods and the dissemination of findings (Brenner & Manice 2011:85).

## 2.7 THE SCHOLARSHIP OF ENGAGEMENT

Boyer (1990) suggests that modern HEIs are moving towards a scholarship of engagement which integrates the traditional core functions of universities through the four forms of scholarship. He argues that, within this framework (Boyer's Model of

Scholarship), all forms of scholarship should be recognised and rewarded, and that this will lead to more personalised and flexible criteria for gaining tenure (Boyer, 1990:16-24). Before focusing on the scholarship of engagement, it is important to describe the four forms of scholarship that serve as basis for the scholarship of engagement.

The first element of Boyer's model, namely discovery, is the one most closely aligned with traditional research and the most familiar model of scholarship. Discovery contributes not only to the stock of human knowledge but also to the intellectual climate of a college or university. New research contributions are critical for the vitality of the academic environment, and therefore the value of discovery scholarship should not be diminished. It involves research undertaken within disciplines and a commitment to knowledge for its own sake. The scholarship of discovery does more than just contribute to the body of knowledge in the discipline; it also includes contributions that academics make to the climate of the HEI. The excitement with which academics do original research provides a model of the way in which students should conduct their work (Boyer 1990:16-24).

The second element, integration, focuses on making connections across disciplines. This includes the interpretation of a person's own research so that it is useful beyond his or her own disciplinary boundaries and can be integrated into a larger body of knowledge. The rapid pace of societal change, within a global economy, has elevated the importance of this form of scholarship. This also involves bringing new insight to bear on original research. This involves making connections across disciplines so that specialised knowledge is placed in a larger context or, as Boyer (1990:19) puts it: "fitting one's own research - or the research of others - into larger intellectual patterns". This may involve members of different faculties in collaboration to describe/define a reflexive practitioner.

The third element, application, focuses on using research findings and innovations to remedy societal problems. Included in this category are service activities that are specifically tied to one's field of knowledge and professional activities. Beneficiaries of these activities include commercial entities, non-profit organisations and professional associations. The knowledge is not produced in a linear fashion. The arrow of causality can, and frequently does, point in both directions. Theory leads to practice and practice leads to theory. Community engagement, viewed and practised as a scholarly activity,

provides the context for dialogue between theory and practice through reflection (Boyer 1990:16-24).

The final element in Boyer's model is the scholarship of teaching. Within the framework of a scholarship of engagement, the traditional roles of teacher and learner become somewhat blurred. What emerges is a learning community including community members, students, academic staff and service providers. The academic community continues to emphasise and assign high value to academic members' involvement in activities other than teaching. It also implies that teachers, through critical reflection on their practices, become active learners (Le Grange 2007:508).

The presentation of Nibert (undated) in Table 2.1 is a clear description of the Boyer's Model of Scholarship.

**Table 2.1: Boyer's Model of Scholarship**

Source: Nibert (undated)

| Type of Scholarship | Purpose | Measures of Performance |
|---|---|---|
| **Discovery** | Build new knowledge through traditional research | Publishing in peer-reviewed forums<br>Producing and/or performing creative work within established field<br>Creating infrastructure for future studies |
| **Integration** | Interpret the use of knowledge across disciplines | Preparing a comprehensive literature review<br>Writing a textbook for use in multiple disciplines<br>Collaborating with colleagues to design and deliver a core course |
| **Application** | Aid society and professions in addressing problems | Serving industry or government as an external consultant<br>Assuming leadership roles in professional organizations<br>Advising student leaders, thereby fostering their professional growth |
| **Teaching** | Study teaching models and practices to achieve optimal learning | Advancing learning theory through classroom research. Developing and testing instructional materials<br>Mentoring graduate students<br>Designing and implementing a program-level assessment system |

Le Grange (2007:509) argues that a distinction needs to be made between the function of scholarship and forms of scholarship as these can be mistakenly seen as the same. Boyer's view of scholarship refers to different functions of scholarship, as seen in Table 2.1, and not to different forms or types of scholarship. This entails that scholars should engage in activities involved in the construction of new ideas/theories (scholarship of discovery), apply insights to real-life problems (scholarship of application), integrate knowledge (scholarship of integration) and to share insights with students (scholarship of teaching). Le Grange (2007:509) furthermore refers to the forms or types of

scholarship that are aligned with the core functions of universities (namely research, service and teaching) as research-h scholarship, teaching scholarship and service scholarship. Table 2.2, adapted by Le Grange (2007:509), illustrates the distinction made between the form of scholarship and the function of scholarship. This model, developed by Hymann *et al.* (2001), is referred to as the UniScope multi-dimensional model of scholarship.

**Table 2.2: The integration of forms and functions of scholarship**

Source: Le Grange (2007:509) adapted from Hyman, Gurgevich and Alter (2001:15)

| **UniScope** | | **The FUNCTIONS of Scholarship** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **DISCOVERY** of Knowledge | **INTEGRATION** of Knowledge | **APPLICATION** of Knowledge | **EDUCATION** Sharing of Knowledge |
| The FORMS of Scholarship | TEACHING Scholarship | Discovery Teaching | Integration Teaching | Application Teaching | Education Teaching |
| | RESEARCH Scholarship | Discovery Research | Integration Research | Application Research | Education Research |
| | SERVICE Scholarship | Discovery Service | Integration Service | Application Research | Education Service |

Le Grange (2007:509) argues that although this model is not used to illustrate the scholarship of integration it can be used to provide a broader view of the scholarship of integration. As academics would be predominantly be research scholars, service scholars or teaching scholars it is recommended that in a similar way universities should position themselves more strongly in terms of one or more of the scholarship forms as it is not desirable or practical to develop all three core functions of the university equally well.

Recent studies suggest a shift towards focusing on the scholarship of integration as this seems to be a domain that has been poorly developed in relation to the other three scholarly domains.

The scholarship of integration is aimed at gaining new insight based original research. As Boyer (1990:18) stated earlier, the scholarship of integration means "making connections across disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too". Le Grange (2007:507)

argues that Boyer's notion of scholarship might also be associated with Gibbon's notion of Mode 2 knowledge as knowledge production is increasingly trans-disciplinary. Boyer and others (Lazarus 2001; HEQC 2006a; Bringle & Hatcher 2007; Albertyn & Daniels 2009) also equate the scholarship of integration with the scholarship of engagement.

The scholarship of engagement could be considered an extension of Boyer's model of scholarship, which emphasises true collaboration between academics and the community. The term *scholarship* was used by Boyer to indicate practices that cut across the categories of academic scholarship. *Engagement*, on the other hand, suggests a reciprocal, collaborative relationship with a public entity. Hence, the scholarship of engagement was defined as consisting of "research, teaching, integration and application scholarships that incorporate reciprocal practices of community engagement into the production of knowledge" (Barker 2004:124). The HEQC (2006a) states that community engagement, as a scholarly activity, is of critical importance to shape students as future citizens as well as to produce knowledge that is most relevant and useful in the South African context. The notion of a scholarship of engagement suggests an ideal where all core functions are integrated through a synthesised scholarship that encompasses all of the sub-scholarships above. The generation of knowledge is contextualised in a broader social context which informs its application through community engagement. The outcome is a process whereby all stakeholders are included in a community of learning that discovers, applies, integrates and teaches interdependently and continuously. Macfarlane (2007:53) adds to the concept of the scholarship of engagement by stating that it is about connecting and applying faculty member's expertise to community needs in order to bring about an integration of teaching and research. It tends to be used inclusively to describe practices cutting across disciplinary boundaries and teaching, research and outreach functions in which scholars communicate to and work for as well as with communities.

Barker (2004:123-135) has a problem-driven and pluralistic approach to the scholarship of engagement, which includes the following five practices of engagement:

(a) Public scholarship. Public scholarship is a central focus of the scholarship of engagement. It is described as academic work that incorporates deliberative practices such as forums and town meetings to enhance scholarship and address community problems.

(b) Participatory research. This is very closely related to public scholarship and it stresses the active role citizens can play in the production of academic knowledge.

(c) Community partnerships. The primary emphasis of community partnerships tend to be on social transformation.

(d) Public information networks. These networks are created by various centres of scholarship of engagement. These networks typically help communities to identify resources and assets by providing comprehensive databases of local activists, advocacy groups and available services.

(e) Social skills or social literacy. A healthy democracy requires minimal competence in knowledge of institutions, economics, and science and technology to make educated and informed decisions.

Sandmann, Saltmarsh and O'Meara (2008:55-56) developed an integrated model for the advancement of the scholarship of engagement which incorporates the following four elements: (1) preparing future faculty, (2) the scholarship of engagement, (3) promising practices of institutional engagement, and (4) institutional change models in higher education. These four elements are aligned along two axes, namely the horizontal axis, which represents faculty socialisation, and the vertical axis, which represents institutionalisation. The proposed model is designed to accomplish transformational change for the scholarship of engagement to become a core value of higher education.

No other current models for the scholarship of engagement, except for the models of Barker (2004) and Sandmann *et al.* (2008), could be found. Yet, developing models for the scholarship of engagement will form part of an ongoing shift or future shift from community engagement as a core function towards the synthesis of core institutional functions through a unified scholarship (HEQC 2006a; HEQC 2006b; Lazarus 2007; Lazarus *et al.* 2008; Bender 2008; Thomson *et al.* 2008; Lazarus 2001).

## 2.8 SERVICE LEARNING AS A FORM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

For many higher education institutions and educators, service learning has become the "engagement tool of choice" (Zlotkowski 2005:153). Although Boyer never used the term service learning, it is recognised as the fundamental academic intervention to

reach Boyer's vision of a scholarship of engagement. Community engagement is linked to the curriculum through service learning (Saltmarsh 1996; Games *et al.* 2000; Lazarus 2001). Service learning does not encompass the whole sphere of community engagement but serves as a basis for informing and valuing service, teaching and research, as well as a motion for revisiting community involvement towards community engagement (Bringle *et al.* 1999; Bringle & Hatcher 2005; HEQC 2006a; Bringle *et al*. 2006).

Erasmus (2005:19) agrees that service learning is a mechanism to enhance the relevance of HEIs' teaching and research activities through integrating their community service initiatives within the paradigm of a scholarship of engagement. Service learning is described as a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instructional planning and reflection to enhance the students' learning experiences, teach social responsibility and also strengthen the community (Shockley & Noblet 2009:135). O'Brien (2009:31) adds to the definition of service learning by regarding service learning as a form of academically accredited experiential learning in which students' texts are their experiences as they work in the real-world usually non-profit organisations, government structures or selected communities. The communities and organisations determine the nature of the work and usually enable the organisations to further their own goals and allow knowledge to be discovered, transmitted, applied and integrated by both students and their community-based "hosts". The students' understanding and learning from their experiences are facilitated through structured oral and written reflection. Service learning as pedagogy emphasises mutually defined, socially responsible and responsive teaching, research and service activities. The meaningful, enduring partnerships between the various stakeholders in higher education and the private, public and community organisations are of importance.

It seems that the most widely accepted and widely used definition of SL is that of Bringle and Hatcher (2005:127) who define service learning as follows: "Service learning is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organised service activity that meets identified community goals and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of social

responsibility." Within the South African context, the HEQC (2004:26) defines service learning as "a form of applied learning which is directed at specific community needs and is integrated into an academic programme and curriculum. It could be credit bearing and assessed, and may or may not take place in a work environment".

Erasmus (2005:1) emphasises that the integration of research and community service learning (SL) opens opportunities to contribute to the transformation of HE in South Africa, through which institutions of higher education are urged to become more democratic, more responsive to community challenges and conducive to partnership-building with a variety of stakeholders. Robinette and Noblet (2009:135) add that service learning provides an opportunity for students to discover the importance of addressing their needs as individuals and as members of a community. Problem-based learning, collaborative learning, undergraduate research, critical thinking, multiculturalism and diversity, community awareness, leadership skills, and professional and social responsibility are all associated with service learning programmes.

Bringle and Hatcher (2002:505) emphasise that high-quality service learning demonstrates reciprocity between the university and the community when the service activity is designed and organised to meet both the learning objectives of the course as well as the needs that have been identified by the community. Cotton and Stanton (1990) in Bringle and Hatcher (2002:505) argue that planning, orientation, training, supervision and evaluation are key aspects of successful SL experiences.

### 2.8.1 Criteria for service learning

Although different models of service learning exist, all models of service learning should comply with four key criteria (Howard, 2001):

#### *2.8.1.1 Relevant and meaningful service to the community*

The service that is provided needs to be meaningful and relevant to the community, the students and the HEI. The service that is delivered must be relevant in terms of improving the quality of life for the community as well as achieving module outcomes. Smith-Tolken (2010:124) defines scholarly service activity as” the act of applying implicit and codified knowledge in a community setting, directly or indirectly, focused on

the agreed goals or needs while ascertaining growth through the acquisitioning of skills and an enhanced understanding of the meaning-making content by all the actors involved." The recurrence of service learning needs to be negotiated with the community. As asserted by Bringle, Phillips and Hudson (2004), the importance of reciprocity is clear from this criterion.

#### *2.8.1.2 Enhanced academic learning*

Service learning experiences must strengthen the accomplishment of the learning outcomes, and also complement learning resources. Student learning must take place during activities, experiences, learning strategies and assessment. There needs to be a clear connection between module objectives and service activities (Howard 2001; Stacey, Rice & Langer 2001).

#### *2.8.1.3 Purposeful social learning (social responsibility)*

Social learning can be interpreted as anything that "prepares students for citizenship". Social learning can also be defined as any learning that contributes to the student's preparation for community-based involvement in a diverse democratic society. It can include knowledge, skills and values to make an explicit, direct and purposeful contribution to the preparation of students for active involvement in future communities and social responsibility (Howard 2001:28).

#### *2.8.1.4 Structured opportunities for reflection*

As the community service experiences need to relate to the module, students need structured opportunities to reflect. Reflection is regarded as a crucial element in transforming, clarifying, reinforcing and expanding concrete experience into knowledge. Reflection assists in gaining a deeper understanding of module content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and/or an enhanced sense of personal values and social responsibility (Kolb 1984; Eyler & Giles 1994; Bringle & Hatcher 1999; Zuber-Skerritt 2001).

### 2.8.2 Models of service learning

Furco (2003:13) states that no two service learning activities are the same. In order to accommodate different needs, various models of service learning have been

developed. Heffernan and Cone (2002) and Campus Compact (in Mouton & Wildschut 2005:120-121) summarise these models as follows:

#### *2.8.2.1 Pure service learning model*

This model has at its intellectual core the idea of service to communities by students, volunteers or engaged citizens. These courses send students out into the community to serve. Pure service learning is not lodged in a specific discipline.

#### *2.8.2.2 Discipline-based service learning model*

This service learning model is lodged in a specific discipline. Within disciplined-based service learning students are expected to do community service and reflect on these activities using module content as a basis for understanding. Students are expected, throughout the semester, to have a presence in the community and reflect on their experiences on a regular basis using course content as a basis for their analysis and understanding.

#### *2.8.2.3 Problem-based service learning model*

Students (or teams of students) relate to the community much as consultants would and work with the community to understand and address specific community problems or needs. This model presumes that the students will have some knowledge they can draw upon to make recommendations to the community or to develop solutions to the problem.

#### *2.8.2.4 Capstone model*

According to this model, specific modules are usually presented in the final year of a degree course in a given discipline. Students can draw upon and synthesise the knowledge gained through all their academic work and combine it with relevant service work in the community.

#### *2.8.2.5 Service internship model*

As with all internships, service internships require extensive work in a specific setting (in this case a community setting). A service internship also provides regular reflective opportunities using discipline-based theories. As in traditional internships, students are

generally charged with producing a body of work that is of value to the community or site. Service internships are distinguished from traditional internships through their focus on reciprocity, or the idea that the community and the student benefit equally from the experience.

#### *2.8.2.6 Community-based action research model*

In this model, students work closely with academics to learn about research methodology while serving as advocates for communities (Mouton & Wildschut 2005:120-121). This type of service learning is similar to an independent study option for those students who are highly experienced in community work. Community-based action research can also be undertaken by small classes or groups of students.

### 2.8.3 Theoretical frameworks for SL

"Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand" (Confucius 450BC).

This famous saying of Confucius, focusing on the importance of involvement, experience and engagement, can be considered as the "birth" of experiential education. Since then, numerous theories have focused on the importance of experience as the source of learning and development.

The field of experiential education is seen as the pedagogical foundation of service learning (HEQC 2006a:16). Service learning is rooted in the theories of constructivism and rests on a sound pedagogical method of active learning (Chapdelaine, Ruiz, Warchal & Wells 2005). Service learning is about doing, acting and learning from experience, and about using the knowledge and skills learned. It is about having assumptions challenged through confronting new perspectives or puzzling experiences, and learning to sort out complex, messy real-world situations. It is about knowledge in use, not just about acquiring and being tested on facts (Eyler 2002).

To ensure that service promotes substantive learning, service learning connects the experiences of the student to reflection and analysis in the curriculum (Duley 1981 in HEQC 2006a:14). Action and experiential learning and reflective learning are types of learning integrated in community engagement activities. These two types of learning

will be discussed with a specific focus on Dewey and Kolb's theory of experiential learning as well as reflective learning.

#### *2.8.3.1 Action and experiential learning*

Action learning and experiential learning are both based on the belief that experience and constant reflection on experience are the keys to effective learning (Zuber-Skerritt 1992, 2002). Experiential learning is a holistic, integrative perspective that combines experience, perception, cognition and behaviour (Kolb 1984). Experiential learning shifts the onus from learning from the lecturer, as the sole source of knowledge, to students, who then become partners in the learning process and experiences beyond the classroom, for what such experiences can add to student learning.

The essential principle of experiential learning is that an individual learns best by doing something (Ward 2003). The philosophy behind experiential learning is to integrate students' experience with the curriculum and to combine senses, emotions, physical conditions and cognition in a holistic way (Kolb 1984). This shift of experiential learning in teaching and learning paradigms points towards more opportunities for students to engage in different forms of community engagement. Kolb and Kolb (2005) state that the theory of experiential learning is based on six propositions. Firstly, experiential learning emphasises that, in order to improve learning, the primary focus should be on engaging students in a process that best enhances their learning. That process should include feedback on the effectiveness of students' learning efforts and should also include a process by which students are involved in different experiences, namely concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active participation. Students who engage in such a process achieve new knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Secondly, experiential learning is facilitated best when the process draws out the beliefs and ideas of the student about a topic, to be examined, tested and integrated with new, more refined ideas. Thirdly, learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world. Therefore, conflict, differences and disagreement drive the learning process. In the process of learning, students are called upon to move back and forth between opposing modes of reflection and action, feeling and thinking. Fourthly, learning is a holistic process of adaptation to

the world. Not just the result of cognition, learning involves the integrated functioning of the total person - thinking, feeling, perceiving and behaving. The fifth characteristic states that learning results from synergetic transactions between the person and the environment. Finally, learning is the process of creating knowledge. Experiential learning theory proposes a constructivist theory of learning, whereby social knowledge is created and recreated in the personal knowledge of the learner (Kolb & Kolb 2005).

One of the greatest educational theorists who advocated experiential learning was John Dewey. Dewey was opposed to the traditional educational system in which learners were passive recipients of knowledge. He viewed the role of the student in traditional education to be submissive, compliant and receptive. Hence, he emphasised the importance of hands-on education and argued that all educational activities should involve the learner, through active participation, in experiences linked to the knowledge that is to be acquired (Dewey 1938, cited in HEQC 2006a).

Dewey's central concept is experience and the social processes embedded therein. He insists on the importance of action and practice (Dworkin 1959). Dewey's formula - experience plus reflection equals learning - serves as the progressive foundation for the development of different perspectives on experiential learning (Dewey 1963). Although Dewey never used the term *service learning*, his perceptions and philosophy of education informed and contributed to the pedagogy of service learning. In creating a new paradigm for pedagogy, Dewey considered the following five areas that can easily be related to service learning:

(a) Linking education to experience. Dewey proclaims that intelligence is the reorganisation of experience through *reflection on action.* Therefore, "we learn in the process of living" (Saltmarsh 1996:16). Dewey emphasised the importance of connecting theory and practice: action and doing on the one hand, and knowledge and understanding on the other. Saltmarsh (1996:15) summarises this expressively: "Learning is active; the learner is an explorer, maker, creator."

(b) Democratic community**.** Dewey describes education as a social process connecting the *I* to the *we*. All communication is educative: face-to-face

interaction, associated living and joint communicated experience are essential to education.

(c) Social service. Learning includes participation in a democratic community and contributing to social wellbeing. Dewey's perspective is orientated towards the wellbeing of society as a whole, interdependence of interest, positive opportunities for growth, and social rights and possibilities (Saltmarsh 1996:17).

(d) Reflective enquiry. Reflective enquiry critically connects and breaks down the distinction between "thought and action, theory and practice, knowledge and authority, ideas and responsibilities". It provides an opportunity for the creation of meaning from associated experience (Saltmarsh 1996:18). Through reflective enquiry, actions are transformed into experiences, which are in turn transformed into learning (see Figure 2.3).

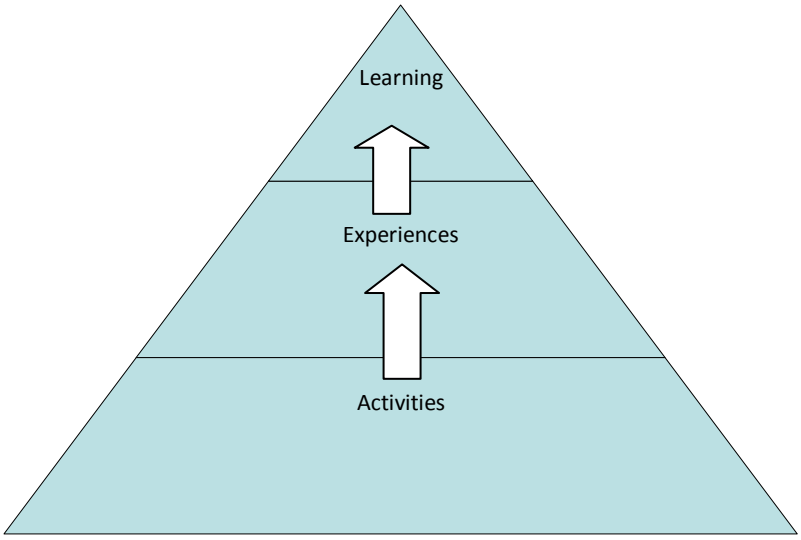


**Figure 2.3: Transformation through reflective enquiry**

Source: Saltmarsh (1996:18).

(e) Education for social transformation. According to Saltmarsh (1996:19), Dewey believed that education is linked to social reconstruction and that it is a primary means of social transformation, and that schools have a role in the production of social change. The aims of learning from experience, a connected view of

learning, social problem solving and education for citizenship, which are the cornerstones of service learning, are implicit in Dewey's writings (Eyler & Giles, 1994).

(f) Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning. Despite numerous refinements and applications of the experiential learning theory, the well-known model of David A Kolb (1976; 1981; 1984) and his associate Roger Fry (Kolb & Fry, 1975) remains a central reference point for discussion. Kolb and Fry (1975), building on the ideas of Piaget, Dewey and Lewin (1951), explored the processes associated with learning from experience. They regarded experiential learning as a strategy integrating education, personal development and work (see Figure 2.4 below).

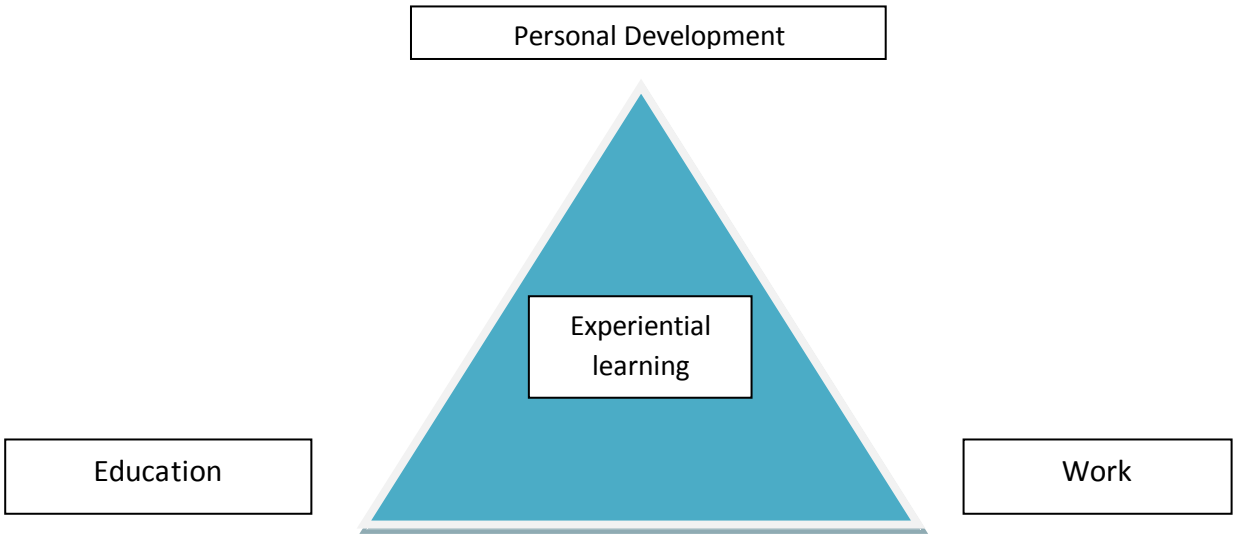


**Figure 2.4: Experiential learning as the process that links education, work and personal development**

Source: Kolb (1984).

Kolb's (1984) concept of experiential learning explores the cyclical pattern of learning from experience through reflection to conceptualising and action, returning to further experience. These four elements or stages can be explained as follows (Kolb 1984; Smith 2001; Atherton 2011):

(a) Concrete experience. Concrete experience corresponds with direct practical experience, as opposed to something which is theoretical but perhaps more comprehensive and represented by abstract conceptualisation. Within service learning this might involve doing something for someone in a community or service agency. Zlotkowski (2001:25) agrees with the above statement, claiming that higher-order thinking grows out of real-life experiences.

(b) Reflective observation. Reflective observation concentrates on what the experience, or its connotations, means to the individual. It requires observation, examination, analysis and interpretation of the impact of a specific concrete experience. Active experimentation transforms the theory of abstract conceptualisation by testing it in practice and relates to its denotations. Bringle and Hatcher (1999) regard reflection as a crucial element in transforming concrete experience into knowledge. Zuber-Skerritt (2001) maintains that all individuals, in reflecting on their everyday experiences, create a worldview or lens, which determines their future behaviour and strategies.

(c) Abstract conceptualisation. The next step in the experiential learning cycle gives meaning to discoveries by relating them to other discoveries or other forms of knowledge. Through abstract conceptualisation, theories or explanations of why something happened are formed. This may be followed by the beginning of general rules describing the experience; or the application of known theories in conceptualising the experience.

(d) Active experimentation. Taking further action and testing conceptualisations and their implications in different situations form the focus of this stage. The person learning makes a connection between learning experiences, the theoretical grounding of these experiences and the real world. Active experimentation transforms conceptualisation: testing abstractions in practice, and constructing and modifying the next concrete experience.

Kolb and Fry (1975) argue that the experiential learning cycle is flexible and that it can begin at any one of the four points. The learning cycle should therefore be approached as a continuous spiral (Atherton 2011:1). The experiential learning cycle provides a conceptual framework for the unique blending of hands-on experience and learning

with reflection as the vital link, for example real-life simulations (case studies), role-plays, fieldwork, internships and many more. Kolb's (1984) cycle can also be used as a map to structure the environment for service learning: giving students the opportunity to achieve appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes, and enhancing the development of a higher level of competence. Due to the sharing of similar philosophical assumptions, action learning, which can be defined as "learning from concrete experience and critical reflection on that experience" (Zuber-Skerritt 2002:114), is sometimes used as a synonym for experiential learning.

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle provides a theory for learning that is well applied to community engagement as it requires the concrete experience of social realities of communities outside the institution. It outlines a process for interpreting those experiences, and processing them and acting on them. The cycle is particularly useful for service learning as the service serves as experience. Reflection upon the experience is mandated, links to academic theory and the curriculum are requisite, and the intention is to provide enhanced service to the organisation and communities with which the students work. This experiential learning cycle is relevant to the outcomes for the service agency hosting students because Kolb's cycle represents the movement of students from direct experience to action at the service agency. It provides a better understanding of how service learning students are expected to take their experiences in community development agencies, reflect upon them, link them to abstract concepts and theories, and ultimately apply them in the context of the organisation in the interest of the community of intended benefit (Carmichael 2009:232). Figure 2.5 below illustrates this learning cycle.

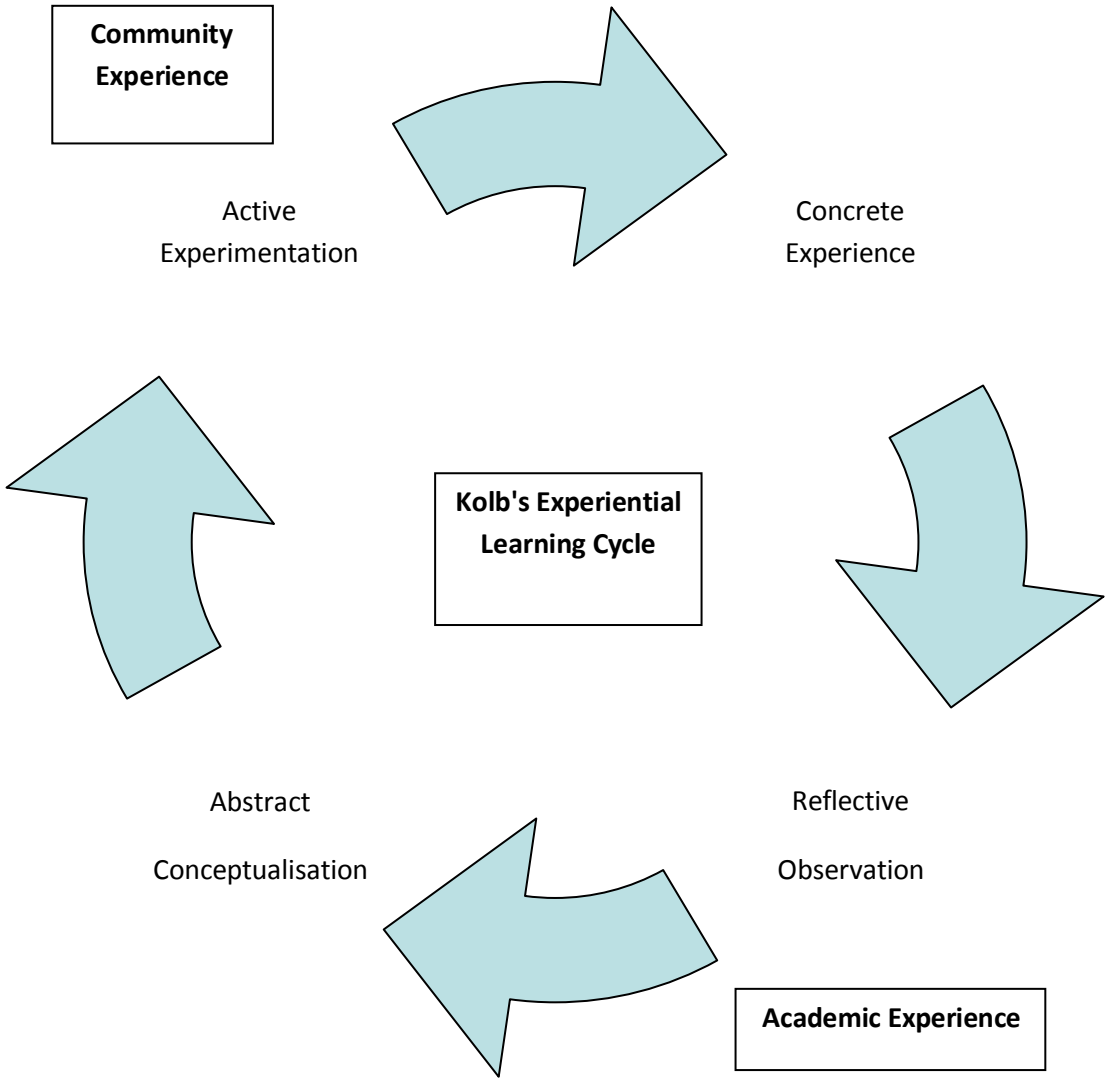


**Figure 2.5: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle in the Context of service learning**

**Source:** Carmichael (2009:232)

If Carmichael (2009:232) evaluated Kolb's (1984) learning cycle within the context of service learning (see Figure 2.5), the concrete experience would take place in the community or organisation. The reflection or reviewing process followed by the abstract conceptualisation stages could take place in study groups, self-study or the classrooms, where theories and concepts would be discussed in the context of the concrete experiences. The reflection should be structured to lead to deeper learning and to encourage a particular focus or point of view (Bringle & Hatcher 1999). This will

enable the learner to answer the question "Why?" and to contextualise the problem, which in turn facilitates adult learning (Knowles & Holton 2000).

#### *2.8.3.2 Reflective learning*

“Reflection” is seen as a key concept in adult education and more specifically within experiential learning and can be refer to as “activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it” (Boud, Keogh & Walker 1985:33). Reflective practice is a pedagogic tool which is widely used within formal, informal, individual and organizational learning activities as well as processes. The concept and practice of reflection has undergone considerable change and development in its definition and application (Mezirow 1991; Illeris 2007) and takes different forms in different contexts (Hoyrup 2004).

Ruch (2000:108) describes reflective learning as:

> *Reflective learning is a holistic, creative and artistic phenomenon which endeavours to hold theory and practice together in a creative tension. It also allows for uncertainty and mistakes and acknowledges the humanity of practitioners and clients. Reflective learning which acknowledges the complexity, diversity and emotionality of situations offers more scope for student practitioners to reach informed decisions which, by embracing the breadth of knowledges which influence decisions, could help avoid defensive, routinised and ritualistic responses.*

Reflective learning is described by Brockbank, McGill and Beech (2002) as an intentional process whereby the social context and experience of the learner are acknowledged. Learners are active individuals, completely present, engaging with one another, open to challenge, and the outcome involves transformation as well as improvement for both individuals and their professions. Careful reflection is integral to the success of learning. Without reflection, the individual has a set of experiences that are unconnected and ineffective in changing how he or she learns about the world. However, reflection is not an inherent skill, and has to be taught in order for it to be effective and not superficial. It appears that many individuals do not reflect spontaneously on their learning. Hence, the skills required for reflection must be taught.

Brockbank and McGill (2007:4-5) furthermore highlight the importance of the context in which learning takes place. As learning is a social process and will influence the degree of 'agency' experienced by the learner. This social process is critical to learning as transformational or critical learning requires conditions that enable the learners to reflect upon the learning not only by themselves but with others. The context of learning and what the learner perceives consciously or not, as the ability to think, feel and act in any situation, is crucial to the means by which that person becomes a transformational learner. The ability to become a reflective learner includes to be able to shift across paradigms of knowledge and self as well as perceive and act in ways that may transcend understanding.

Dunbar-Krige (2006) writes that supervisors should not necessarily teach how to reflect. Instead, they need to facilitate the reflection process by developing a thoughtful context in which individuals can extract meaning from their experiences. The use of techniques, such as maintaining a reflective journal, can help individuals to sort information into recognisable patterns and to make connections between past experiences and current learning. In conclusion, individuals who reflect on an experience are better able to extract lessons from the experience, to understand themselves in relation to the experience and to apply the learning to other areas of their lives.

Jordi (2011:181) argues that embodied reflective practices can be used to encourage an integration of varied and disconnected aspects of the human experience and consciousness. Jordi (2011:193) builds on Gendlin's work when he states that reflective practice is seen as the facilitation of a dialogue between the bodily felt experience and cognitive formulation and expression of that experience. This process suggests mind-body integration. If reflection is only seen as a purely cognitive exercise, it excludes much of the richness and complexity of human experience and consciousness from knowledge creation.

## 2.9 MODELS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The definition of community engagement includes various forms of community involvement - such as service learning, participatory action research, distance learning and professional service (Bringle & Hatcher 2005:28-29). Brenner and Manice (2011:88) state that all the community engagement models are underpinned by the

exchange principle. This asserts that research should create and maintain exchanges of value to the community or population being studied in the form of prevention initiatives, education, community capacity building and/or policy advocacy. The latter differentiates between community-based participatory research (CBPR), community-placed research and community consultation.

### 2.9.1 Community-based participatory research (CBPR)

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) includes equal involvement of researchers and those affected by the issue under study in all aspects of the research process. This includes dialogue and exchange between community representatives or members regarding values, consent, study design, methods and distribution. Formal agreements are drawn up between community and researchers regarding the rules of engagement or partnership. Examples include community-academic research partnerships and community action boards (Brenner & Manice 2011:88).

### 2.9.2 Participatory action research

According to Bringle and Hatcher (2005:37), participatory action research (PAR) or community-based research is conducted when research is executed in and with the community in a manner that engages faculty members, students and community members in projects. Through this research, the community's identified needs are addressed. Therefore, the activity represents a combination of research and service. PAR that encompasses service learning also allows students to be participants in the development of collaborative research in ways that strengthen their academic learning and social competencies. According to Schneider (2012:153), the essence of PAR is to involve ordinary community members in generating practical knowledge about issues and problems of concern to them and thereby to promote personal and social change. PAR is therefore a philosophy of engagement in the research process rather than a research method as PAR does not direct the researchers to a particular research site or data collection strategy. Instead, PAR supports work in a range of organisational and community settings, and uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches. PAR promotes the following: inclusive, collaborative learning and inquiry; reciprocity between theory and practice; the fundamental premise that community members possess and can generate valid knowledge about the social systems in which they

participate; the premise that community members should be full partners in defining, investigating and acting to meet the relevant challenges; and reflection on service experiences; and the actions to bring about social change. Erasmus (2005:12) emphasises that the integration of service learning and research in South Africa might require a more concerted effort to bring about the above paradigm shift.

Criticism against PAR is the unevenness of partnerships (Stuart & Whitemore 2002:2; Reardon 2003:57). To a large extent, these partnerships have enabled universities to access third-stream funds, but have not always contributed to addressing the needs of the relevant communities. In many cases, research has also been fairly effective in identifying the needs of the community. However, research has mostly failed to provide appropriate solutions to these problems (Reardon 2003:57). Hence, communities tend to be of the opinion that research may be good to provide students with degrees, but it is not always helpful to solve the community's problems. Levesque (2002:26) recognises that the needs of communities and academics usually differ considerably. Stuart and Whitemore (2002:8) add that the application procedures and the essence of PAR are sometimes in conflict as the fundamental assumption in such research is participation, from the development stage to that of approval and implementation. In many cases, however, communities are not involved in the university's procedures of approval.

### 2.9.3 Community-based research (CBR)

> *"CBR is a partnership of students, faculty, and community members who collaboratively engage in research with the purpose of solving a pressing community problem or affecting social change" (Strand* et al. *2003).*

CBR is seen as a research model in which academic staff, students and community partners collaborate to address shared questions on research projects. Wade and Demb (2009:7) describe community-based research as a form of scholarly work that is often cited as scholarly work that meets societal needs while fulfilling the research function of academic staff. It is presented as the most recognisable demonstration of a collaborative, research-orientated activity that meets scholarly objectives while contributing to the welfare of the community. Community-based research differs from traditional research in that the research objective is to produce information that will

benefit community members or agencies serving the community. Community-based research is applied research and may include student involvement.

Duke and Moss (2009:32) add that this type of research involves community members in identifying specific community-based problems. The method supports a highly collaborative model of data gathering, analysis and policy formation between university researchers and members of the community. The researchers work with community members to utilise the findings in ways that it will directly benefit the local community. This differs from an expert model of research in which the researchers themselves have the authority and control over the research questions. Marullo, Moyedi and Cooke (2009:63) view CBR as a particular type of service learning through which students and academic staff undertake research projects (sometimes using a participatory action research model) in collaboration with community-based organisations to address needs or questions identified by the community. This differs from traditional service learning where students typically participate in direct service activities with community partners, and often assist in the delivery of services to a client population defined by their service needs. As a result, some people might think of CBR as a next stage of SL and engaged scholarship. Israel *et al.* (2008) add that community-based research rests upon the principle of empowerment; it is said to build upon strengths and resources within communities and to promote a co-learning and empowering process. During this process, participants gain knowledge, skills, capacity and power.

## 2.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of community engagement. It unpacked the contextualisation and conceptualisation of community engagement, which provided the foundation for the discussion of community engagement in this chapter. It was evident from this discussion that community engagement is defined in different ways and that an appropriate definition for this particular postgraduate programme of the CCYFS needs to be determined. The various forms of community engagement were discussed with a focus on the challenges and advantages of community engagement. The different conceptual frameworks in higher education were discussed. These conceptual frameworks need to be linked to the community engagement strategies of NWU as this study is contextualised within this university. The scholarship of engagement was discussed, which is linked to engaged scholarship that will be unpacked in Chapter 3.

As there are additional forms of community involvement besides service learning, the different models of community-based research were discussed. Service learning as a form of community engagement was also explored as this is often the engagement tool of choice.

The next chapter will provide an overview of higher education as this study is contextualised within higher education.

# CHAPTER 3

# PERSPECTIVES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) in the 21st century are facing a range of challenges (McCarthy & Tucker 2002) related to complex issues such as globalisation, transformation and diversity (Mitchell, Trotter & Gelmon 2005; O'Brien 2005; Albertyn & Daniels 2009). The requirement of increased community participation and greater social responsiveness of HEIs are also indicated as key challenges (DoE 1997; Bender 2007; Lazarus *et al.* 2008). This is due to a more comprehensive approach towards engagement as a core value of the university of the 21st century. Hence, engagement is key to the community mission of higher education and, more importantly, to the production of and engagement with new knowledge (Erasmus 2005).

The public expects more from higher education than ever before in order to satisfy the growing demands of living in an increasingly complex global society (Le Grange 2009:108). Within this complexity another matter arises, which is that of the responsibility of the university (Barnett 2011:100). It is expected of universities to provide students with well-rounded education as well as to prepare them to be workers in the economy, citizens in a democracy and contributors to the community (McCarthy & Tucker 2002:629). Additionally, the information age with its rapidly evolving technology demands a highly knowledgeable and skilled workforce and an ingrained civic culture of involvement and creativity (Thornton & Jaeger 2007; Billings & Terkla 2011). Albertyn and Daniels (2009:409-410) agree that in an ever-changing context, HEIs are required to equip graduates by putting processes in place to facilitate the production of knowledge and the development of skills required to live in a diverse society. Furthermore, HEIs are required to enable students to make responsible and informed decisions, and to work collaboratively in order to contribute to social transformation. This requirement challenges the modes of teaching and learning, and research and community engagement, and therefore calls on HEIs to develop new institutional cultures (Albertyn & Daniels 2009:410).

Chapter 2 outlined global reform trends in higher education with specific reference to the South African context, where necessary. Chapter 3 will look at the university as a higher education institution and focus on policy changes and documents pertaining to South African HEIs with a specific emphasis on community engagement.

## 3.2 HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) AS FIELD OF STUDY

Higher education (HE) was recognised as a field of study in the 1930s when Flexner (1930) compared university systems (Bitzer & Wilkinson 2009:373). Flexner's work was followed by that of Dressel and Mayhew (1947) who focused on outlining programmes of study and research in HE in the United States. With their emphasis on the promotion of research and scholarship, they highlighted HE problems that indicated emerging models of studying in HE. Their work and publications are seen as ground-breaking by Bitzer and Wilkinson (2009:373). The publication of *The Encyclopaedia of Higher Education* (EHE) in 1992 was seen as another major contribution to the development of the field of higher education. This four-volume publication investigated, among others, five significant areas, namely HE and society; the institutional fabric of the higher education system; governance, administration and finance; faculty members and students; and disciplinary perspectives on HE. The inclusion of "HE and the society" as a topic under the analytical perspective demonstrated the importance of the connection between HE and the community. Several other publications, which added to the international development of HE as a field of study and research, are highlighted by Bitzer and Wilkinson (2009:373-374).

Internationally as well in South Africa, HE studies are not considered as a discipline but rather as a field of study as HE as a phenomenon can be studied from numerous perspectives using numerous methodological combinations (Bitzer & Wilkinson 2009:372). Tight (2003:7-8) identifies eight major themes and subthemes in higher education studies which can be seen as a valuable starting point. However, this is not a definitive list as study categories can overlap. The themes and subthemes in higher education studies include the following:

(a) Teaching and learning - including approaches to studying, learning styles and pedagogical styles.

(b) Course design - including assessment, competencies, the higher education curriculum, learning technologies, portfolios, reflection, writing and postgraduate studies.

(c) The student experience - including access, counselling, motivation, diversity, success and non-completion, employment and evaluation.

(d) Quality - including course evaluation, grading and outcomes, national monitoring practices and system standards.

(e) System policy - including economics of scale, funding, national policies, policy studies, globalisation, massification and returns on investments.

(f) Institutional management - including autonomy, departments, institutional leadership and governance, institutional development and history, institutional structure, mergers, marketisation and relationships between higher education, industry and community.

(g) Academic work - including careers, induction, mobility, professionalism, academic roles, academic development, training, writing and women academics.

(h) Knowledge - including the nature of research, disciplinarity, forms of knowledge, research and the nature of the university.

Bitzer and Wilkinson (2009:393) suggest a South African extension of Tight's classification of themes in HE studies and research by adding the following two themes: HE transformation in South Africa, and HE and socio-cultural links/relationships/responsibilities. This study could be linked to topics such as curriculum design, and socio-cultural links, relationships or responsibilities, as the aim of the study is to develop an integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. The next section provides a broad overview of the policy reforms in HE.

## 3.3 REFORM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Worldwide, higher education has gone through significant changes and growth (García-Aracil & Palomeres-Mentero 2009). Maassen and Cloete (2002:13-14) indicate that the first signs of these changes became visible towards the end of the 1980s when communist regimes collapsed and the political domination of neo-liberal market ideologies increased. This led to the creation of an environment for socio-economic and political change during the 1990s that would assert considerable reform pressures on all sectors of society, including higher education. According to Maassen and Cloete (2002:13-14), the transformation processes were strongly affected by global trends and pressures, and formed an important basis for national public sector reforms in terms of higher education.

Over the past 10 to 15 years, higher education had to face globalisation, transformation as well as increasing social demands in terms of higher education. As Brennan (2008:285) states, the interactions between higher education and the rest of society reflect the increasing social embeddedness of higher education institutions. This happens within a multitude of communities that have their own particular demands. These demands include increased social engagement, accountability, relevant knowledge and the education of ethical, competent leaders and citizens. O'Brien (2005:66) adds that it also includes the need for creative teaching and learning, the recognition of different sources of knowledge and diverse style of learning. The social demands on HE were furthermore accompanied by the need for lifelong education in order to keep abreast of rapidly changing job requirements (Maassen & Cloete 2002: 23-26).

Although social needs and expectations were leading to higher numbers of students enrolling in higher education worldwide, public investment in higher education decreased (Maassen & Cloete 2002:23-26). According to Olsen (2000), trends indicated that the political and financial support for higher education was decreasing, causing the traditional agreement between society and higher education to become problematic. Maassen and Cloete (2002:15-16) argue that due to the deterioration of the relationship between higher education and society, higher education focused less on academic freedom and the collegial self-steering of academics. Instead, higher education is being re-interpreted as a "service-company with society as its

marketplace". Wergin (2006) supports this by adding that public confidence in HEIs has declined during the past two decades as HEIs are no longer seen as the vital centres of nations' activities or sources of social wisdom and intellectual leadership. Gumport (2000) argues that in addition to the above there was growing tension between two dominant perspectives on higher education. The first perspective interprets higher education as a social institution, while the second sees higher education mainly as part of the national economy, in other words as an industry. Although the above opinions differ, they all emphasise significant changes in the relationship between the state, higher education and society. They also highlight the important influence of globalisation on these changing relationships (Maassen & Cloete 2002:17-19).

Although societal demands, globalisation and transformation necessitated reform in higher education, Subotzky (2000:213) accentuates that a further fundamental shift is required for academics as they need to move from seeing the role of the university as that of producing basic knowledge and providing applied knowledge to helping in the resolution of problems. Universities also need to be jointly responsible for social change, in partnership with relevant bodies within the community. Buckley (2012:334) adds that knowledge sharing can be compromised if academics view "knowledge as power" (a traditional view of universities as monopolies of knowledge or "ivory towers") and not "knowledge sharing as power" (Skyrme 2012) (a prerequisite in the 21st century's knowledge society). Winter, Wiseman and Muirhead (2006:212) agree that although not necessarily historically accurate, the image of a university as an ivory tower is nonetheless an enduring one.

Worldwide, higher education is being challenged and forced to change. Higher education in South Africa has not been excluded from these changes and formed part of the political and economic transition process that is defined as globalisation (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton 1999; Maassen & Cloete 2002:14).

### 3.3.1 Reform in South African higher education

The post-1994 period saw unprecedented changes in South African higher education (Badat 2009:455) with the first two years being dominated by a drive to formulate policies. Several policy processes where put into place aiming at transforming higher education (Le Grange 2009:108). According to Albertyn and Daniels (2009:13), this

policy development was largely driven by the new constitution of the country and commenced after 1994 with the appointment of a National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) (Cloete, Fehnel, Maassen, Moja, Perold & Gibbon 2002:15; Cloete 2002:87; Hall & Symes 2005:200). The role of the NCHE was to develop a policy framework for the transformation of South Africa's higher education sector. This process started in Parliament in 1995 and culminated in the Higher Education Act of 1997 (Albertyn & Daniels 2009:13). The next phase converted the NCHE's report into a White Paper (DoE 1997; Lungu 2001:94) and a new Higher Education Act which was promulgated in 1997. During 1997, the new constituted higher education division within the new unified Department of Education (DoE) started the implementation process (Cloete 2002:87).

After the transition to democracy in the 1990s, the relationship between universities and society in South Africa changed radically (Hay & Monnapula-Mapesela 2009: 12). Albertyn and Daniels (2009:12) observed that the reality of 1994 and the new government set an enormous new transformation agenda. South Africa had high expectations of its universities. These universities needed to refocus their roles and fulfil their traditional role of contributing towards social, political and economic development through facing the demands of greater responsiveness to societal needs through, among others, research and innovation (Wade & Demb 2009). Albertyn and Daniels (2009:410) argue that because social responsiveness and accountability are not merely moral imperatives the implications of globalisation for development, specifically within the politico-historical African/South African context, increase the urgency of being responsive to communities surrounding HEIs.

Globalisation, as well as the democratisation of South African society, calls for the transformation of the South African education system (McDonald & Van der Horst 2007:1), compels government to reconsider the role of HEIs in the reconstruction and development of the country (Erasmus 2005:2), and emphasises the need for universities to become more relevant in terms of the socio-economic realities of South Africa (Marais & Botes 2005:179). Waghid (2012:71-72) acknowledges that, in view of all the challenges that various African universities are facing, South African public universities have been changing fundamentally from exclusive apartheid-era knowledge producers to institutions of higher education focusing on research, teaching

and learning, and community engagement. All universities in South Africa, in response to the National Plan for Higher Education (2001), have stressed the strong interrelation between research, teaching, learning and community engagement.

According to Bawa (2003:51), these local challenges are seen as folded into global challenges and are characterised by a continued focus on access and equity (DoE 1997; Albertyn & Daniels 2009:410), quality, the relevance of the university in development, and issues around effectiveness and efficiency. Badat (2009:458) writes that these challenges have appeared simultaneously and not sequentially, and they represent a significant challenge.

The following three pillars have been identified to support the higher education transformation agenda in South Africa:

(a) The democratisation of and increased participation in the higher education system by an ever-increasing diversity of interest groups with the aim of eradicating the inequalities of the past;

(b) Greater responsiveness through the ability and willingness to react to a wide variety of social and economic needs as well as a commitment to seek solutions to societal problems which, in turn, require adaptations in respect of teaching and learning methods and curricula;

(c) Increased cooperation and partnerships between higher education institutions and all sectors of society (community, public sector and private sector) to build mutual trust, as well as to increase accountability and transparency in the higher education sector (NCHE 1996; DoE 1997).

Universities as higher education institutions are not excluded from these changes. Hence, the importance of focusing on the university as a higher education institution.

## 3.4 THE UNIVERSITY AS HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Barnett (2011:62) argues that in becoming a university, a university is seeking to become itself. In becoming itself, a university is always striving to take itself forward, attempting with all its energies to go in some self-determined direction. A university can only fully become itself through taking its own self-understanding forward. Therefore, it will conduct inquiries into itself. Such self-inquiry goes far beyond the collection of "management information" to embrace the most subtle self-understandings. According to Barnett (2011:62), several aspects could from part of the growth of a university's self-understanding. These aspects can include the university's morale, ethos and culture, its sense of itself in the world, the changing character of the "academic identities" within its students' sense of themselves and what it is to be a student, the possibilities for a university's research and scholarly endeavours, and many other matters. Barnett (2011:63) observes universities as multiplicities in themselves that have different dimensions - including their relationship with the state, forms of knowledge, modes of learning, purposes of inquiry, and their orientation to engagement with the community.

Barnett (2012:1) describes a university as a social institution that has extraordinary longevity and ever-expanding functions, not only in knowledge production and knowledge transfer but also in a manifold of relationships with the state and society. Garcıa-Aracil and Palomares-Montero (2009:218) describe the university as the most important social space for the promotion of ideas and intellect.

Lategan (2009:57-58) states that a university concerns itself with knowledge, the training of professionals and educating people, which is further specified as scientifically oriented research and teaching. Lategan (2009:57-58), in his definition of a university, emphasises the importance of research and teaching/learning as stated: "... *an academic institution at which research is conducted and teaching/learning is offered within the organised cadre of the contact between lecturer and student".* Lategan (2009:59) furthermore adds that if an institution is not engaged in teaching and research it cannot qualify as a university. Turner, Wuetherick and Healey (2008:199) emphasise that as the societal expectations grew for universities to be both centres of research and innovation as well as sites for high-quality education, the exploration of student perceptions on the research mandate of their universities became more important.

Although there are strong differences in views on the link between research and teaching, it reflects the importance of linking research and teaching in the identity of many academics (Henkel, 2000). Healey (2005:68-69) states that for most academic staff members, their primary commitment is to their subject or profession and that the research-teaching links vary between disciplines. Therefore, departments and individuals vary in the way that they construct the linkage between research and teaching. Jawitz (2009:243) finds that the relationship between teaching and research within a specific discipline impacts the nature of academic work and hence academic identity.

In most disciplines, teaching is viewed as a generic activity that lies "on top of" the "real" academic work, namely research, and that is "unconnected with the disciplinary community at the heart of being an academic". Laggan (undated) states that although universities are often recognised and respected for their academic excellence and the level of research undertaken, the two fields are often kept separate within individual institutions. Laggan argues that if teaching and research are connected, research will enhance teaching, which can increase student experiences as well as enable the development of transferrable skills such as problem-solving skills, effective questioning and independent thought. The benefits to students are substantial. Research-led teaching engages students at a deeper level than traditional teaching methods. The benefits of linking teaching with research are also beneficial for professional development as universities can be seen as a bridge between school and the workplace. Research-led teaching encourages the same skills that prepare students for a life of learning within a professional setting. Ghannam (2007:227) also emphasises that the strong interaction between teaching and research encourages academics to inspire, motivate, energise, stimulate and promote their students towards the real goals of student education as teaching and research are actively linked together, one informing and energising the other.

From the above views it seems evident that universities need to fulfil certain expectations and roles which can lead to tension. It also became apparent that HEIs have a social responsibility towards the community.

### 3.4.1 The social responsibility and accountability of HEI

Millican and Bourner (2011:91) write that although in the early 19th century some believed that a university education was only about the pursuit of knowledge and the understanding of a recognised field of study, this view had changed by the end of the 20th century to a view that there is a moral dimension to education at all levels, including higher education. Peterson (2009:541) states that with regard to the moral dimension of higher education and in order to produce socially responsible students who are able to engage with the critical problems of our times, significant shifts are necessary within higher education pedagogy and research. This includes a shift towards community-based experiential learning which can result in enhancing student learning and community engagement and alter the epistemological priorities and methodologies of the university. Engaged scholarship can also expand the social, cultural and human capital of both local communities and universities, and enhance our attempts to understand and address social ills.

According to Albertyn and Daniels (2009:409), it is the responsibility of HEIs to equip graduates through knowledge and the development of skills to live in a diverse society, to enable students to make responsible and informed decisions, and to work collaboratively in order to contribute to social transformation. Millican and Bourner (2011:91) state that the development of a student's sense of social concern is an outcome central to student community engagement programmes as these programmes add a dimension to university education that may otherwise be limited to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of an academic subject.

Worldwide, growing pressure to enhance social responsibility and broaden the social purpose of higher education in the light of globalisation practices has sparked renewed interest in the contribution of HE to the public good and community development (Subotzky, 2000:111). This was in response to evidence of the widening disparity between conventional academic practices and societal needs, and the role of universities in fostering the public good. This concern was accompanied by new emphasis on the policy dimension of research, the establishment of collaborative linkages with government and the private sector, as well as the reappraisal of the service and outreach function of higher education.

Subotzky (2000:112) adds that the community service partnership model and, within this, community service learning, has emerged as an important means by which HEIs can directly serve social development. The importance of this partnership model is that it constitutes a complementary alternative to the economic development of HE; it also integrates and mutually enriches experiential learning, socially relevant research and community service; the knowledge that is produced resembles the socially distributed, applications-driven, Mode 2 knowledge production; and involves collaborative forms of decision-making. According to Subotzky (2000:113-115), although there are several positive outcomes and benefits for students (Ward & Wolf-Wendel 1997; Perold 1998 in Subotzky 2000:113-114), learning and research should be integrated in a social change and partnership model in order to contribute towards basic community development and to integrate research activities.

### 3.4.2 The university and the production of knowledge

From the above sections, it has become apparent that there have been radical changes in HE as well as in the role of the university in a knowledge society that is also changing. Watson (2003:28-38) writes that the role of the university in a knowledge society is changing due to the consequences of two sets of pressures: "inside-out" developments and "outside-in" developments. Inside-out developments refer to intrinsic pressures concerned with a set of epistemological challenges. Here, Watson refers to the theoretical intervention of Michael Gibbons and his colleagues - the shift from Mode 1 knowledge (pure, disciplinary, homogeneous, expert-led, supply-driven, hierarchical, peer-reviewed and almost exclusively university-based) to Mode 2 knowledge (applied, problem-centred, trans-disciplinary, heterogeneous, hybrid, demand-driven, entrepreneurial, network-embedded). Kraak (2000:2-3) describes Mode 2 knowledge production as problem-solving knowledge which is intrinsically trans-disciplinary, trans-institutional and heterogeneous. Mode 2 knowledge is an outcome of powerful social forces such as globalisation and the democratisation of access, which has resulted in dramatic changes in the structure and functioning of HEIs. According to Le Grange (2009:105), outside-in developments refer to social concerns and include aspects such as socio-economic patterns of participation, including who gets access to education, health care and so on. Albertyn and Daniels (2009:409) focus on the importance of

social responsiveness and accountability as the fundamental elements of the knowledge society and Mode 2 knowledge production.

The emergence of Mode 2 research led to major changes in the sense that knowledge is not only generated in the traditional basic and discipline-driven manner within universities, but in new forms in the market and community, and, most importantly, in the interface between HE and society. Therefore, knowledge production is becoming an increasingly open system in which a number of actors from different disciplines and from outside HE participates. The knowledge is increasingly trans-disciplinary and trans-institutional, and new types of quality assurance and funding are emerging in response to these trends (NCHE 1996:125-126; DoE 1996:35; DoE 1997:31).

According to Gibbons (2003:69-70), in a Mode 2 society, engagement will become an actuality to the extent that universities encourage reverse communication and actually help society to learn to speak back effectively. Engagement "as a core value" will be determined by the extent to which universities invest resources in the facilitation and management of transaction spaces and support the appropriate boundary work that is necessary to generate the cooperation required to formulate and pursue complex problems through research. Engagement "as a core value" will therefore be evident in the extent to which universities do actually develop the skills, create the organisational forms and manage the tensions between Mode 1 and Mode 2 research. It is through commitment to resolve these tensions - by shifting from the production of merely reliable knowledge to socially robust knowledge - that universities will be able to demonstrate that they have embraced engagement as a core value.

Carayannis and Campbell (2012:4-5) have introduced a new approach, namely the Mode 3 Knowledge Production System, which is seen as a far-reaching reconceptualisation of knowledge production. postulate This is seen as an extension of Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge production systems, and it is described as a multilayered, multimodal, multinodal and multilateral system, encompassing mutually complementary and reinforcing innovation networks and knowledge clusters consisting of human and intellectual capital, shaped by social capital and underpinned by financial capital. The Mode 3 Knowledge Production System architecture focuses on and leverages higher order learning processes and dynamics that allow for both top-down government, university and industry policies and practices, and bottom-up civil society

and grassroots movements, initiatives and priorities to interact and engage with each other towards a more intelligent, effective and efficient synthesis (Carayannis & Campbell 2012:4-5). In so doing, Mode 3 ensures a tighter and more robust coupling of vision with reality and helps to reify the socio-economic and socio-political being and becoming by achieving between aspirations and limitations.

Mode 3 is therefore the knowledge production system architecture that engages actively with higher order learning in a multilateral, multimodal, multinodal and multilayered manner, involving entities from government, academia, industry and civil society, and driving co-opetition, co-specialisation and co-evolution resource generation, allocation and appropriation processes that result in the formation of modalities such as innovation networks and knowledge clusters. Jiménez (2008:54) agrees that some of the properties of Mode 2 research are shared with Mode 3 knowledge production, but with the distinctive characteristic of being closely linked to current societal needs.

The importance of Mode 2 research stood out in the previous discussion of the different knowledge production modes. It is therefore essential to re-evaluate the current state of research within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS as research is seen as one of the core functions of the CCYFS.

### 3.4.3 Universities as engaged institutions

Lategan (2009:58) emphasises the responsibility of universities towards society when he states that universities have a developmental role to take on. Hence, no university can afford not to be engaged in society. The ivory tower image of the university symbolises an institution removed from all the realities of society. The university remains a societal structure and must therefore contribute to society at large. However, Marais and Botes (2005:180) argue that current models of community partnership place too much emphasis on community needs and too readily assume that universities can and should address these needs. Waghid (2012:74) adds that the functions of teaching, research and community engagement are interrelated and that one function on its own cannot fully represent the core functions of the university.

Bartel, Krasny and Harrison (2003:92) believe that the outreach from universities can offer more to the university than service, student recruitment and public relations. In

order to understand the service of the university, the concept of engagement is used. Engagement refers to how the university engages with business and industry in addressing societal challenges. Engagement with society offers the university the unique opportunity to develop and transmit from and to society. Engagement is never about doing something for a community, but always about doing something with the community (Lategan 2009:58). Wedgwood (2003:127-129) finds that engagement brings value to institutions through networks and contacts which broaden and enrich the range of resources available to them to support their core work. There are various approaches, policies and practices in terms of engagement. For some disciplines and subjects, engagement forms a natural part of the subject area; for others it can be seen as undermining their integrity. Some institutions have evolved with engagement as part of their culture; for others engagement is a stranger. In order to encourage engagement, policies and incentives need to be put in place as HEIs respond to policies and the priorities of academic departments. In turn, HEIs' staff members will partly respond to what is esteemed and rewarded within their own institutional environment (Wedgewood 2003:127).

Marginson and Van der Wende (2006) argue that universities are morally accountable to society in general through scholarship, research and leadership with the communities which they serve. This moral accountability includes the responsibility of higher education to be engaged in the process of social transformation as well as the performance of the university's national function of instruction and research. Hence, there is increasing pressure on universities to be more engaged in the broader community (Mitchell *et al.* 2005:158), to become more relevant (Marais & Botes 2005:180) and to be more fully engaged with community needs, regional issues and economic development through locally applicable research (Winter *et al.* 2006:212). The dynamic challenges of universities as organisations, together with the ever-increasing demand on universities to be responsive to societal needs, call for a continuous revisiting of the role of universities (Lategan 2009:55).

#### *3.4.3.1 Engaged scholarship*

Stanton (2008:24) argues that community-engaged scholarship should be a distinctive feature of research universities' contributions to the movement of strengthening community engagement within higher education. These contributions and values

should be located directly in the research institutions' core missions; research, teaching and services. Winter *et al.* (2006:127) state that Boyer (1990), Harkavy and Benson (1998) and Savan (2004) are of the opinion that applicable and functional research is understood to form part of the role that universities can play in furthering the social well-being of their communities. It also provides an opportunity for universities and academics to maintain their relevance in a knowledge society where the production of knowledge is no longer the sole jurisdiction of the university. Community-engaged scholarship also has, according to Petersen (2009:541), the potential to cut across and unite the three traditionally fragmented missions and to bring about significant change within universities. However, significant shifts in higher education pedagogy and research are needed in order to produce socially responsible students who are able to engage with the critical problems of our times.

In Gonzalez-Perez (2010:167), Boyer (1990) invokes the term scholarship to overcome the gap between teaching and research, and to give legitimacy to the full range of academic work. Boyer writes:

> *"Surely, scholarship means engaging in original research. But the work of the scholar also means stepping back from one's investigation, looking for connections, building bridges between theory and practice, and communicating one's knowledge effectively to students"* (Boyer 1990:16 as quoted in Gonzalez-Perez 2010:167).

Macfarlane (2007:48) argues that, in a university context, scholarship has long been understood in relatively narrow terms as research that relates to disciplinary or professional expertise. This refers mainly to research that seeks to discover new facts or social phenomena. Therefore, Lazarus *et al.* (2008:61) emphasise that the many new issues driving research in education and the exposure to real-world situations that is afforded by, say, service learning, provide opportunities for researchers and their students to ask more relevant research questions in their scholarly quests.

Stanton (2008:23-25) distinguishes engaged research from engaged outreach and/or extension work by arguing that engaged research must offer direct or indirect benefit to a community (where community includes local, national and global communities). Engaged research should improve conditions in the world, should have a public purpose beyond developing new knowledge for its own sake and should meet

traditional, high standards of research. Community engaged research should furthermore be concerned with beneficial results *in addition* to academic rigidity. Stanton (2008:23-25) adds that the quality of engaged research should be identified and assessed on how well knowledge claims can meet conventional scholarly standards, as well as on how well the research findings "work" in particular contexts with particular people to achieve particular purposes. The research results can be deemed "replicable" in the sense that they can be generalised from one community setting to the next.

Van de Ven (2007:9) describes engaged scholarship as a participative form of research through which the different perspectives of key stakeholders are obtained in studying complicated problems. This can include researchers, users, clients, sponsors and practitioners. This definition, according to Sandmann and Thornton (2008:224), embraces the ideas of other scholars such as Holland (2005) who defined engaged scholarship as highly collaborative and therefore incorporating multiple perspectives and approaches to complicated problems. Van de Ven (2007:9) also emphasises that engaged scholarship is an identity reflection on how scholars view their relationships with communities, and it involves negotiation, mutual respect and collaboration as a learning community. Engaged scholarship is also seen as a form of inquiry where researchers involve others and leverage their different perspectives to learn about a problem domain. It is about studying complex problems with and/or for practitioners and other stakeholders. To enable researchers and practitioner stakeholders to understand the research problem and questions, Van de Ven (2007) developed a research process model called the Engaged Scholarship Diamond Model. The Engaged Scholarship Diamond Model consists of four sides that represent problem formulation, theory building, research design and problem solving. These four activities can be performed in any sequence during research efforts, but proposes a step towards "engaged" inquiry by grounding scholarship in the reality of the practitioner through the problem formulation process. Figure 3.1 provides a display of the Engaged Scholarship Diamond Model.

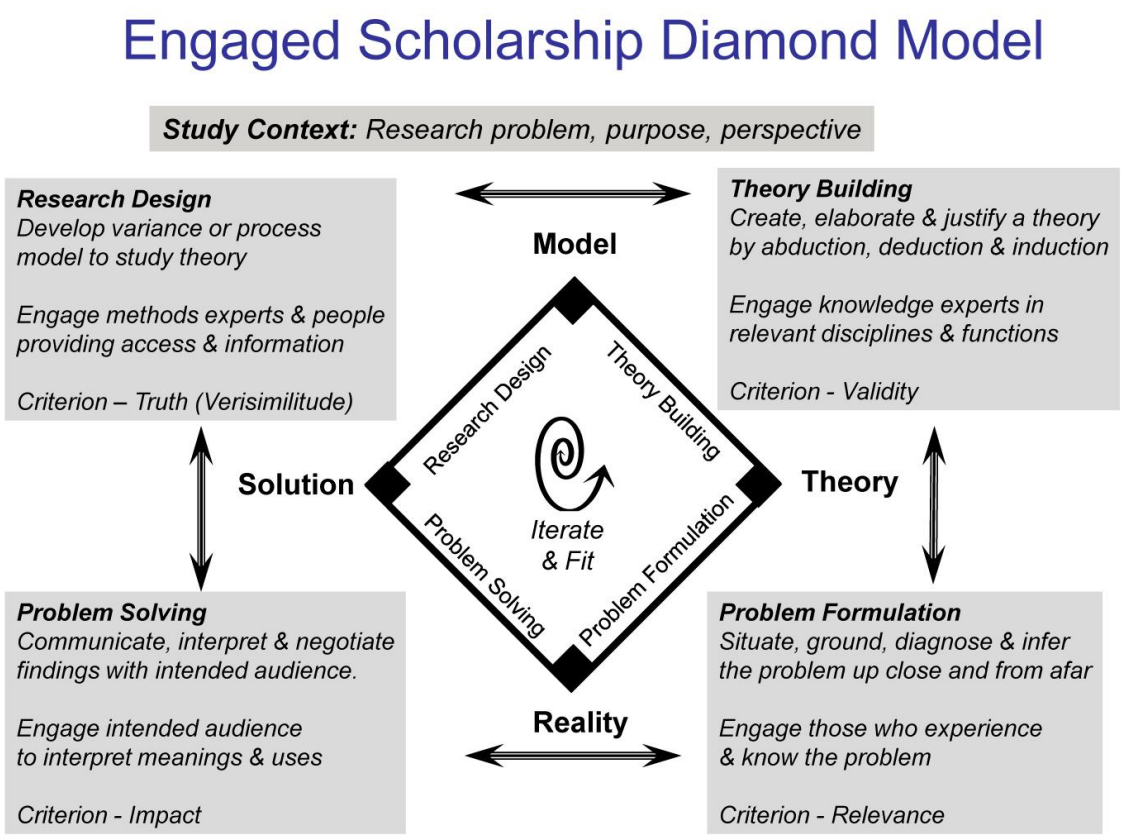


**Figure 3.1: Engaged Scholarship Diamond Model**

Source: Van de Ven (2007).

Bartel *et al*. (2003:94) find that the coupling of research to practice greatly increases the probability that research will be used to inform policy and will be employed by practitioners. They state that many university researchers find significant satisfaction in seeing the results of their research used in the development of policies and practice. Bringle *et al.* (2005:35-36) emphasise that research is most informative when the information that is gained through the data collection, whether it is qualitative or quantitative, is relevant to supporting, developing, refining and revising theoretical propositions that can guide future programme design and implementation. Although universities are encouraged to integrate engagement, Weerts and Sandmann (2010:633-634) argue that engagement may be slower to take hold at research universities. They also argue that research universities tend to be larger, more complex and more decentralised than colleges and universities in other sectors. Furthermore, research universities are often comprised of cosmopolitan faculties which have

developed national and international reputations based on their success in advancing traditional forms of scholarship. These research universities sometimes maintain restrictive definitions of research that inhibit community-based work.

#### *3.4.3.2 Integration of teaching, research and service*

Greenbank (2006:109) draws on the work of Boyer (1990) and argues for a broader definition of research, greater recognition of the role of services, and the integration of teaching, research and services as interconnected scholarly activities. Ward (2003) also calls for the integration of teaching, research and service to meet institutional demands for research and to engage with community needs.

Greenbank (2006:109), in Figure 3.2 (see Figure 3.2), demonstrates the integration of teaching, research and service, and identifies student learning, rather than the academic's learning, as the focus of teaching, research and service. The model also deliberately places teaching at the top of the triangulation of academic roles in order to emphasise the priority that should be given to teaching.

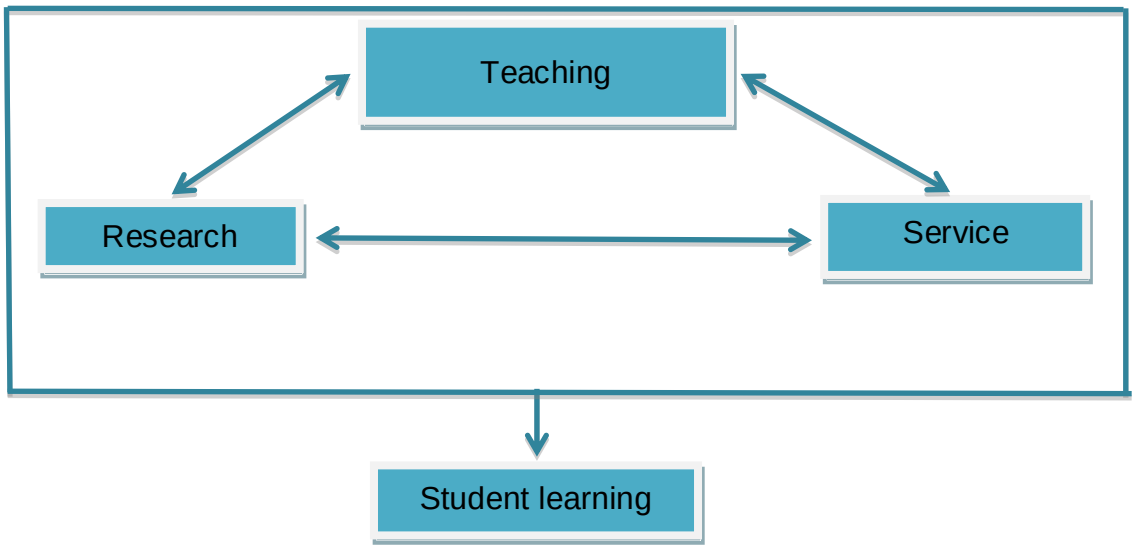


**Figure 3.2: The integration of teaching, research and service**

Source: Greenbank (2006:109).

Although society still expects universities to be sites of high-quality education (Turner, Wuetherick & Healey 2008:199) and even though Greenbank (2006) emphasises

teaching, growing societal demands and changing roles and functions of HEIs demand the integration of the three core functions.

The previous section focused on the university as higher education institution and on the challenges and societal demands of these institutions. The next section will focus on community engagement as one of the core functions of higher education.

## 3.5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS A CORE FUNCTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Boyer (1996) provides a vision for the engaged campus that gives higher education an opportunity to expand its agenda, enhances the quality of its work and improves society (Bringle & Hatcher 2005:25). Weerts and Sandmann (2010:632-633) indicate that, during the past decade, community engagement has emerged as an important priority among many colleges and universities in the United States. International community engagement has gained momentum over the past five years due to a number of important influences.

In 2006, the Carnegie Foundation created an elective classification system recognising campuses by their commitment to community engagement via curricular activities and community partnerships (Carnegie 2009). The work of the Carnegie Foundation has brought national attention to engagement and has served to legitimise this work across the country. In addition, professional networks and professional development opportunities in terms of engagement have flourished. Recently, over 23 national associations have formed a coalition to promote engagement through the Higher Education Network for Community Engagement (Weerts & Sandmann 2008:74). Regional accreditation bodies are increasingly supportive of community engagement, and are beginning to include indicators of engagement in their assessments of institutional quality. In short, the totality of these factors has created a surge of interest in engagement-related activity on campuses across the United States.

Bernardo, Butcher and Howard (2012:187) write that community engagement in higher education is often described in terms of a cluster of activities which include service learning, programmes and research that address specific social, economic and political needs. Within an Australian context, nine dimensions of community engagement have

been identified which include engagement through teaching and learning, curriculum design, policies, research, external relations, social and cultural engagement, partnerships with schools and educational providers, economic engagement in organisations, and participation of students. In addition, Bernardo *et al.* (2012:189) state that community engagement in the United Kingdom can include responding to a specific need of the community without any return to the university, investing in a particular interest in the community which can be mutually beneficial to the university and the community, and addressing the core needs of the university structured in a way that also benefits the community.

Community engagement has been established to benefit and enhance higher education by bringing forth new knowledge through research, and by improving teaching and learning processes (Bernardo *et al.* 2012:189). Therefore, community engagement is much broader and a more respectful view of the relationship between the community and university where the centrality of the relationship between the university and community is emphasised. The relationship is framed by the mutuality of outcomes, objectives, trust and respect (Bernardo *et al.* 2012:189).

Currently, there is a widespread and formal promotion of community engagement in universities. However, there is also conceptual confusion, debate and contestation, as reflected in different interpretations of what is regarded as "engaged practice". Furthermore, universities are grappling to define what "community engagement" or "social responsiveness" means as well as what strategic and systemic changes are taking place or should take place in order to realise new visions (Kruss 2012:2).

### 3.5.1 Community engagement within the South African context

Internationally, as well as in South Africa, the importance of community engagement as one of the three pillars of the higher education enterprise alongside teaching, learning and research has gained considerable momentum. As Lazarus *et al.* (2008:58) state, the 1996 report of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) indicated that the contribution of higher education to the reconstruction and accompanying challenges facing post-apartheid South Africa, particularly in the broader African context, was inadequate. Accordingly, in that same year, it spelt out its goals for higher education. These included the need to afford greater prominence to community engagement.

Since the release of the Department of Education's White Paper in 1997, the debate on community engagement in South African higher education has sharpened its focus by defining community engagement not as one of the three silos of higher education along with teaching and research, but as an integral part of teaching and research - as a mechanism to infuse and enrich teaching and research with a deeper sense of context, locality and application. With this change in perception, the terminology used for community engagement has shifted from "community service" (DoE 1997) and "knowledge-based community service" (HEQC 2001) to "community engagement" (HEQC 2004) and a "scholarship of engagement" (HEQC/CHESP 2006) (O'Brien 2005:65).

Until the late 1990s, community engagement was a relatively unknown concept in South African higher education. During the past decade, however, it has gained considerable ground (Lazarus *et al.* 2008:58). Prior to the White Paper of 1997, no policy mandates or directives for community engagement in South African higher education existed. The first empirical research and social science literature review on community engagement in South African higher education were developed by a survey undertaken by the Joint Education Trust (JET) initiatives during 1997 and 1998 to develop an understanding of community engagement and its potential role in South African higher education. This survey also stimulated the debate around community engagement and looked at historically advantaged and disadvantaged universities and their programmes and curricula. Building on the results of this survey, JET launched a Community-Higher Education Service Partnership (CHESP) project in 1999. The purpose of CHESP project was to support the conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and research of pilot service learning initiatives. The data generated through this process was used to inform higher education policy and practice at a national, institutional and programme level (CHE 2004).

Most of the early studies on community engagement in the South African higher education context were facilitated by the Community-Higher Education Service Partnership (CHESP) initiative in 1999. This initiative was a response to the call of the White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education (1997) for "feasibility studies and pilot programmes which explore the potential of community service in higher education" (Lazarus *et al.* 2008:58) and it laid the foundation for the inclusion of

community service as an essential part of higher education (Lazarus 2000:4). This was followed by the Higher Education Act (1997) and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001). This will be discussed in more depth in the next section. In December 2000, the Department of Education (DoE) commissioned the development of a policy framework to give expression to the community service mandate of the White Paper and to provide direction for the growing interest in, and proliferation of, service learning programmes in higher education. During 2003, a collaborative effort between the HEQC, a number of HEIs and JET generated comprehensive criteria for the quality assurance (QA) of service learning at an institutional and programmatic level (CHE 2004).

Albertyn and Daniels (2009:410) emphasise that although universities have different missions, cultures, histories and community contexts, community engagement needs to be infused in the teaching, learning and research cultures of higher education institutions in South Africa to facilitate the manner in which institutions decide to embrace community engagement. Therefore, Albertyn and Daniels (2009:410) add that the broadest aim of change in post-apartheid South Africa had to be translated into new missions, strategies and directions for the core functions of universities, namely teaching/learning, research and community engagement (CE). In the transformational processes of South African HE, the discourses included references to community engagement either directly or indirectly, placing it in the centre of the modes of knowledge creation and debates on indigenous knowledge systems (Kraak 2000; Gibbons 2006). The university's core functions are described in many sources as teaching and learning, research and community engagement (or by similar concepts that may vary among individual institutions). The concept of CE seems therefore to encompass different forms of engagement (Lazarus 2007; Lazarus *et al*. 2008) within particular institutional models (Bender 2008a) and appears to strive towards integrating the three core functions of HEIs.

During the past few years, numerous HEIs in South Africa have developed institution-wide policies, guidelines and strategies for community engagement and service learning. A number of institutions have identified community engagement through service learning as a strategic priority and have allocated resources from their central budget towards its implementation. Most HEIs that have made significant progress in

terms of community engagement have also dedicated physical space and financial and human resources towards the implementation of their community engagement policies and strategies. Several institutions have established a central office dedicated to community engagement and service learning. Between 2000 and 2004, JET supported the conceptualisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of approximately 200 accredited academic courses in 39 academic disciplines across nine HEI campuses involving more than 6 000 students ranging from first year to master's level. All courses were designed to incorporate the principles and practice of service learning (CHE 2004).

The next section will provide an overview of South African higher education legislation as well as the policies that specifically focus on community engagement as this forms the core of this study.

#### *3.5.1.1 South African higher education legislation and policies relevant to community engagement*

Cloete (2002:94-95) points out that, following the 1994 election, it was promulgated that the Commission of Higher Education must "preserve what is valuable and address what is defective and requires transformation". The appointment of the Commission was a continuation of a policy formulation process that started in the late 1980s. The first major policy document that formed the basis for the development of higher education policy during the 1990s was the Post Secondary Education report of the National Education Policy Investigation. As this was the first initiative in the policy-making process, it focused more on frameworks and options than actual policy proposals. Maassen and Cloete (2002:21-22) emphasise that it is important to understand the relationship between policy intentions and policy outcomes in South African higher education because of the relationship between educational and economic reform agendas. In South Africa, there is tension between the higher education reform agenda which emphasises national themes such as redress, democratisation and equity, and the global reform agenda which promotes themes such as efficiency, competition, effectiveness and responsiveness. The national higher education agenda in South Africa has been made compliant with the global reform agenda.

Lazarus (2000:4) states that although over the past few years the issue of community service has been debated and many deliberations and policy documents in higher education in South Africa surfaced, Education White Paper 3 (1997) laid the foundation for the inclusion of community service as part of the higher education institutional transformation in South Africa. Other documents that followed include the Higher Education Act (1997) and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001).

*(a) White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education*

As mentioned, the Department of Education's White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education (DoE, 1997) laid the foundation for making community service an integral and core part of higher education in South Africa. This White Paper sets out broad national goals and refers to CE as an integral and core part of higher education in South Africa. The White Paper makes specific reference to the role that CE can play in transforming the higher education system, and calls on HEIs to "demonstrate social responsibility and their commitment to the common good by making available their expertise and infrastructure for community service programmes" (DoE 1997:10; CHE 2006).

The White Paper (DoE 1997) states that higher education plays a central role in the social, cultural and economic development of modern societies. It further states that, in South Africa, the challenge is to redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs and to respond to new realities and opportunities. It has to lay the foundations for the development of a learning society which can stimulate, direct and mobilise the creative and intellectual energies of all the people towards meeting the challenge of reconstruction and development.

This White Paper also makes specific references to the role of community service within the overarching task of transforming the higher education system (DoE 1997). It calls on institutions to demonstrate their commitment both to the common good and to social responsibility. This can be achieved by making their expertise and infrastructure available.

The White Paper (DoE 1997:10) defines four objectives of higher education; two of the four can be related to the community service obligation of HEIs. Firstly, it is "to address

the development needs of society" and, secondly, "to contribute to the socialization of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens". The White Paper (DoE, 1997:11) further identifies specific needs and challenges that relate to HEIs' community service obligation. This includes the inability of higher education systems (as observed at the time the White Paper was written) to "meet the moral, political, social and economic demands of the new South Africa". It further states that "higher education has an unmatched obligation to help lay the foundations of a critical civil society" and that "the sense of common citizenship and commitment to a common good" must be strengthened. The paper also states that one of the requirements for transformation of the higher education system includes responsiveness to societal interests and needs.

The White Paper (DoE 1997:10-11) also refers to the role of community service in the overarching task of transforming the higher education system in South Africa. Two objectives specifically refer to social responsibility. The one objective, at national level, is to promote and develop social responsibility and awareness among students of the role of higher education in social and economic development. This should be achieved through community service programmes (DoE 1997:10-11; Lazarus 2000:4; Lazarus 2001:1; Erasmus 2005:3; Bender 2007:130). The White Paper (DoE 1997:11) also shows an interest in community service programmes for students to harness the social commitment and energy of young people.

The HEQC (2006a:4) summarises the objectives of the White Paper as clear signals for HEIs to review their societal purpose and to develop strategic initiatives to give effect to these goals. It is emphasised that these initiatives should be integrated in the core business of HEIs, namely teaching, research and community service. Therefore, community service should become embedded in the culture and values of HEIs through service learning, thus ensuring that students, HEI staff and the community benefit from such initiatives.

*(b) Higher Education Act*

The Higher Education Act (1997) builds on the White Paper and provides a legislative framework for the recommendations of the White Paper. The Act puts structures in place for the state to oversee the successful functioning of HE in South Africa and

gives official recognition to the new South African higher education system. As stated in the Act, its purpose is:

> "to provide for the establishment, composition and functions of a Council on Higher Education; to provide for the establishment, governance and funding of public higher education institutions; to provide for the appointment and functions of an independent assessor; to provide for the registration of private higher education institutions; to provide for quality assurance and quality promotion in higher education; to provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal of certain laws; and to provide for matters connected therewith" (RSA 1997:1).

This Act also makes provision for the establishment of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) as a permanent subcommittee of the Council on Higher Education (CHE). The CHE was established to facilitate and regulate the transformation of higher education. The founding document of the HEQC also identified academically based community service as one of the three areas for the quality assurance of higher education, along with teaching and research (HEQC 2006a:4-5). The Higher Education Act is followed by a National Plan which elaborates on a set of strategic objectives, benchmarks and operational frame for progress towards transformation (CHE, 2004:36).

*(c) The National Plan for Higher Education*

The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) (2001) provides the framework and mechanisms for the restructuring of the higher education system to achieve the vision and goals for the transformation of the higher education system outlined in the Department of Education's White Paper 3 and the Higher Education Act (Ministry of Education 2001). This is done through an implementation framework and the required interventions for the transformation of HEIs. This document further aims to provide achievable goals with deadlines for implementation to make transformation substantially more than just a paper exercise, as it had been previously (Ministry of Education 2001).

The previous section focused on South African higher education and community engagement policies. However, it is also essential to determine the current state of community engagement in South African higher education.

#### *3.5.1.2 Current state of community engagement in South African higher education*

Universities were traditionally known for their devotion to teaching and research; now the focus seems to have shifted to a "triple mandate" of teaching and learning, research and community engagement (Akpan, Minkley & Thakrar 2012:1). Erasmus (2005:2) states that the integration of research and community service learning, also referred to as service learning, opens opportunities for contributing to the much discussed transformation of higher education in South Africa through which institutions of higher education are urged to become more democratic, more responsive to community challenges and conducive to partnership-building with a wide variety of stakeholders.

Therefore, Bender (2007:134-135) suggests that HEIs should promote and support an integrated curriculum model for community-engaged teaching and learning. This is achievable when community engagement is embedded into the teaching/learning function of the institution. At both national and institutional levels, there is a need for flexible and responsive processes of programme approval (new programmes and programme amendments responsive to communities' needs). The ideas of higher education are translated into action through curricula because the values, beliefs and principles relating to learning, understanding, knowledge, disciplines, the individual and society are realised through curricula.

In South Africa, there has been a shift towards the integration of community engagement as a core function in HE. However, as stated by Akpan *et al.* (2012:2), community engagement (not unlike teaching, learning and research) is loaded with epistemological, theoretical and practical issues, and it is suggested that the knowledge base of community engagement is unsystematic. In 2010, more than a decade after the release of the higher education White Paper, this was formally acknowledged by the South African Council on Higher Education (CHE) when it lamented that community engagement remained a "marginal, uncoordinated necessity" in South African universities (Akpan *et al.* 2012:1).

These issues were pondered by papers presented at the conference on *Community Engagement: The Changing Role of South African Universities in Development*, held in East London from 8 to 9 November 2011. The conference examined the evolving role

of South African (state-funded) universities in development and sought to foster an understanding of how higher education conceptualises community engagement, the processes involved in institutionalising and formalising community engagement, community engagement practices and their developmental impact, and the integration of community engagement into teaching-learning and research. Despite numerous attempts by scholars to clarify "community engagement", it remains a vague concept in South African higher education institutions. Conceptual frameworks are sorely lacking and there are no universally accepted standards against which to measure the impact of community engagement (Akpan *et al.* 2012:2).

Current research on community engagement in South African higher education is captured in the 2010 Council on Higher Education (CHE) publication. Here, Hall's (2010) seminal work argues for the promotion of research on the conceptualisation of community engagement. Hall (2010) suggests that it is necessary to map what universities are actually doing in terms of teaching and responsiveness, to investigate the institutional systems' incentives and support, and to determine how new organisational forms are aligned with development needs. Nongxa (2010) adds that the current need is to pay attention to what academics do and say. Muller (2010) likewise calls for an inductive process of identifying successful engagement practices as a way to begin constructing a typology which is appropriate in terms of the diversity of institutional and local developmental contexts. Slamat (2010) also emphasises the issue of differentiation, arguing for the recognition of the differences among higher education institutions and a profiling of all activities defined as "community engagement" within each institution in order to facilitate a bottom-up process that can feed into the national debate (Kruss 2012).

## 3.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS CORE FUNCTION OF HEIs

Three models of community engagement in HE conceptualise the way in which community engagement is applied as a core function of the HEI, namely the Silo Model, the Intersecting Model, and the Infusion/Cross-cutting Model (HEQC/JET 2007; Bender 2008b:87,88; Bender 2009:306-307). These models provide examples of institutional approaches to community engagement.

### 3.6.1 The Silo Model of community engagement

This model is the original or "traditional" model in which the three core functions of HEIs, namely teaching and learning, research and community service, are conceptualised. These functions are often pursued relatively independently of each other. The different sizes of the silos represent the institutional priorities attached to each of the functions, and the functions occupy separate silos as they are organised and implemented independently of each other (Figure 3.3). This suggests that the core functions operate in institutional isolation of each other and that they are organised around the given institution's priorities. Although this model allows institutions to determine the priorities of their core functions, the current representation is a generalised one indicating community service as a lesser priority of the core functions. Bender (2009:306) adds that this model usually does not acknowledge the potential that community engagement offers as a scholarly activity in terms of its contribution to teaching-learning and research.

Bender (2008b:87) emphasises that important distinctions within this model are problematic, prompting criticisms and spawning other conceptual models. The phrasing of community service, as opposed to references to community engagement, suggests a unidirectional flow from the institution to those being served. The model's representation of only the three core functions lacks context and suggests that these functions are entirely institutionally based, implying that the institution is already the owner of relevant contextual knowledge. Where it engages in service, one can assume that this is done in a largely philanthropic manner. Furthermore, community service tends to suggest voluntary involvement, rather than an institutional responsibility that HEIs take up with the same professionalism and commitment that they do the other core functions.

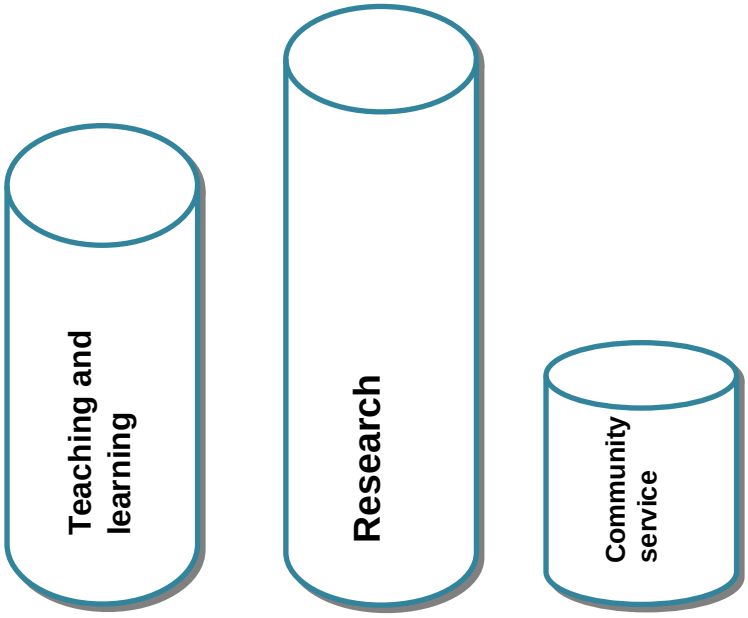


**Figure 3.3: The Silo Model of community engagement**

### 3.6.2 The Intersecting Model of community engagement

The HEI has three roles - teaching and learning, research, and community engagement - and acknowledges that there is some intersection between them (see Figure 3.4). SL and some form of community-based research will be at the intersection of these three roles. Where there is no intersection, community outreach and volunteerism continue as separate activities (HEQC 2006a; Bender 2009:307).

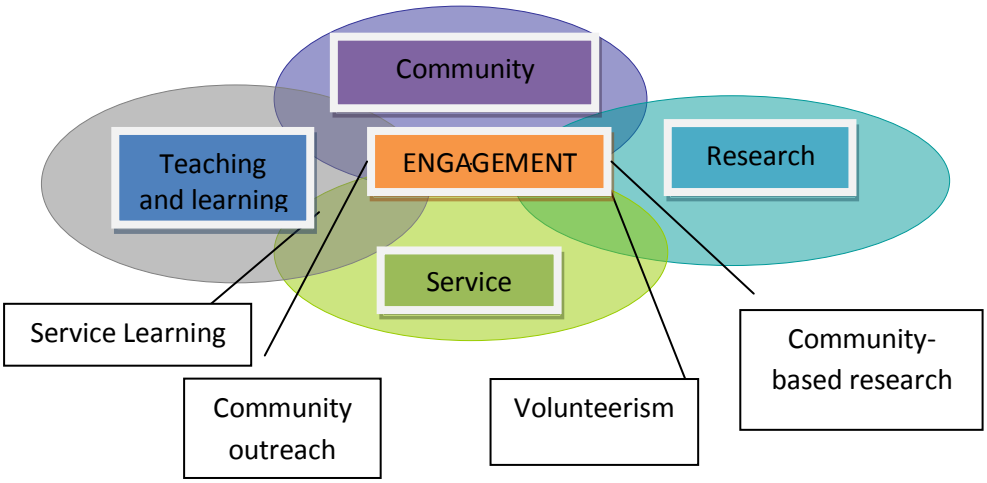


**Figure 3.4: The Intersection Model of community engagement**

Source: Bender (2008b:89, adapted from Bringle, Games & Malloy, 1999).

Bender (2008b:88) observed that the distinguishing feature of this model is its suggestion that HEIs have always been, and continue to be, involved with communities through existing activities. The implication is that HEIs already integrate various functions in community engagement. Hence, they need not seek a radical shift in how they approach any of their core functions. The social and relational nature of the various functions suggests that community engagement has always been embedded to a certain degree and does not distinguish between differing priorities or emphasis in the various functions. Lazarus (2007) adds that conscious efforts to embed community engagement in higher education show that although community service already existed, HEIs did not have the institutional strategies to operationalise it (Lazarus 2007*)*. These efforts included the CHESP initiative.

Bender (2008b:88-90) questions the extent to which social responsibility is consciously embraced and nurtured in this model. She argues that the Intersecting Model is clearly a useful model in terms of giving recognition to long-standing activities with implications and acknowledgements outside of the institution. It assumes involvement with the community owing to the existence of the university, and does not critically engage with the approach to existing activities and community involvement but merely acknowledges and assumes they are there. Bender (2008b:90) further argues that new approaches to community engagement that consciously acknowledge civic responsibility, existing social relations and targeted developmental outcomes require shifts in how the university approaches its traditional roles and functions.

### 3.6.3 The Infusion Model of community engagement

In this third model of community engagement, the distinction of service is dropped entirely. The Infusion Model, also called the cross-cutting model, provides the full integration of the core functions in the central area of the diagram, and identifies the potential of teaching and learning, research and community engagement to be fully combined. Although the previous models allowed overlap between two functions, they did not allow for the integration of all three. The Infusion Model, on the other hand, allows integration. The Infusion Model (see Figure 3.5) further allows for the location of activities constituting community engagement in the form of a typology, as discussed with the previous model (HEQC 2007).

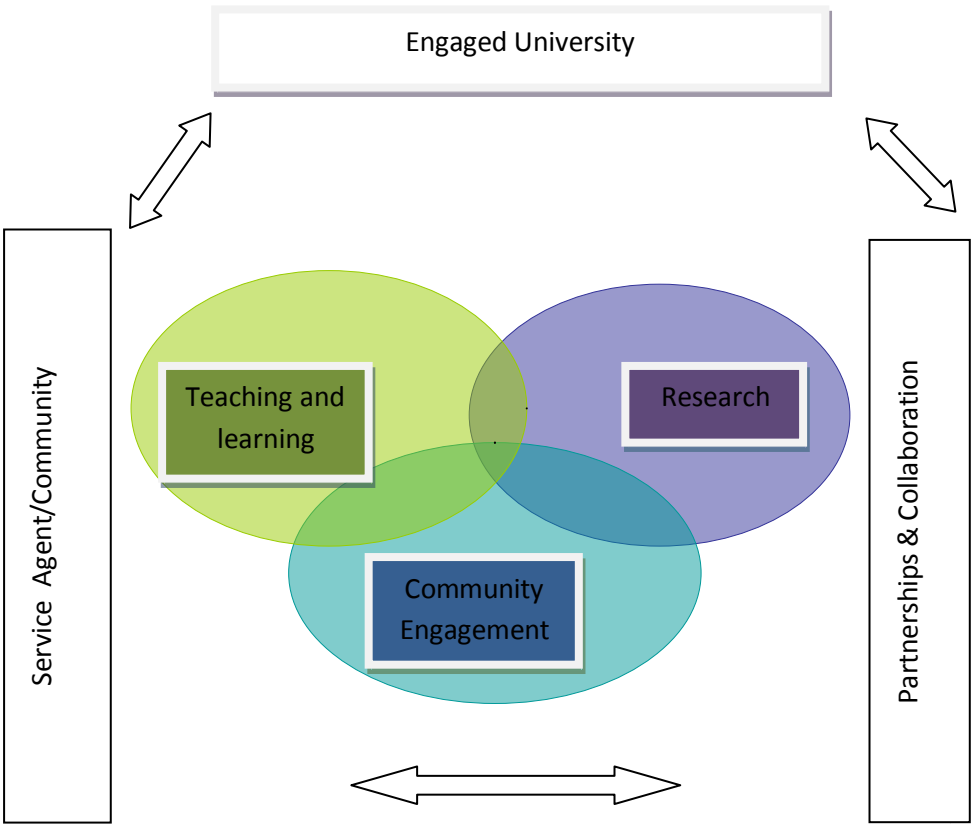


**Figure 3.5: The Infusion (Cross-cutting) Model of community engagement**

Boyer (1990:18) emphasises through the scholarship of integration the connection across disciplines. Here, the specialties are placed in a larger context, "making connections across disciplines, placing the specialties in a larger context and illuminating data in a revealing way". Bender (2008b:90) argues that the Infusion Model of community engagement locates the core functions of HEIs in the context of a broader environment, building upon established models and adding another level of complexity by including the institution, potential partners and collaborators, as well as service agencies and communities. The Silo Model provided no contextual indications for the execution of the core functions and the Intersecting Model only provided the ambiguous "community", both failing to acknowledge the interaction and exchange between HEIs and other involved parties in the execution of the three core functions. Importantly, the Infusion Model makes provision for partnerships and collaboration, potentially including both the public sector and private sector, as well as service agencies and the respective communities in which direct exposure to and confrontations with pressing social issues take place. The Infusion Model provides a

fuller conceptualisation of community engagement as a core function since institutions are not involved in knowledge production only for the purposes of teaching and learning or research. HEIs also engage for the purposes of societal transformation and development, for private interests, and for the generation of income, among others. Such a model identifies the university itself as an actor and suggests that community engagement is more than just a core function as it is also a perspective or imperative of the "engaged university" - a notion that Boyer (1996) championed in his call for a scholarship of engagement.

As the CCYFS is a postgraduate research unit within North-West University (NWU) and the study is contextualised within the NWU, it is important to take into account the university's strategy or conceptual framework of community engagement. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

## 3.7 CONCLUSION

The discussion above indicated that the concurrence of globalisation and demands on HEIs internationally and in South Africa for greater responsiveness to societal and economic needs through research and innovation have forced HEIs to bridge the gap between higher education and society, and to partner actively with communities. Furthermore, HEIs are challenged to become engaged institutions. Certain policies and procedures were implemented in South African higher education to adhere to transformation and put community engagement at the foreground.

Internationally as well as in South Africa, the importance of community engagement as one of the three pillars of the higher education enterprise alongside teaching and learning, and research, has gained considerable momentum and is challenging the "face" and roles of universities as HEIs. As the curriculum translates the ideas of higher education into action, it becomes imperative to focus on curriculum development in higher education. Therefore, the next chapter will focus on curriculum development in higher education.

# CHAPTER 4

# CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

When education in Southern Africa is placed under the spotlight, various problems can be directly related to the curriculum (Carl 2002:24). In order to attempt to solve these problems and to ensure that dynamic and relevant curriculum development takes place, reflection on and investigation of the field of curriculum studies become essential (Carl 2002:24).

The level on which curriculum is focused impacts the outcome and direction of the research as well as the proposed curriculum framework. A curriculum at national (macro) level will differ from the curriculum of a specific institution (meso level) and the curriculum of a specific subject or field of study (micro level) (Carl 2002:24). The aim of this study is to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, which focuses on a specific field of study and which is nested within the CCYFS. This curriculum framework of the CCYFS's postgraduate programme will therefore be approached as a micro-level curriculum. The meso level will also be taken into account as data will be gathered from other national as well as international HEIs.

The next section will explore the definitions and concepts related to curricula, curriculum development and curriculum frameworks. After that, this study will focus on the process of curriculum development, curriculum development models and the development of curriculum frameworks.

## 4.2 DEFINING CURRICULUM, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONCEPT OF A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The next section will focus on defining various concepts of curriculum as well as curriculum framework.

### 4.2.1 Curriculum

Curriculum theorists define curricula in various ways. Du Toit (2011:60) argues that although various authors (Beane, Toepfer & Allessi 1986:30,33; Graham-Jolly 2009: 247-250) have different opinions about the concept of a *curriculum*, there is no agreement as to a precise definition of curriculum. There also seems to be little difference between the various definitions of the concept. Posner (1992:4) agrees that there are fundamental differences in the conception of curriculum as some focus on the curriculum as means or ends while others focus on curriculum as a plan for, or a report of, actual educational events.

Ross (2000:8) views curriculum as "what needs to be learned" or "what is worth knowing". He also states that the word *curriculum* originates from the Latin verb *currera* and that it can be translated as *racetrack* or *a course to be run*. Within the educational context, "racetrack" can be interpreted as the course of study. In their definition of curriculum, Parkey and Hass (1999:15) focus on "what is worth experiencing, doing and being". In contrast, Oliva (2005:14) views curriculum as a discipline, a subject of study and, on the graduate level of higher education, as a major field of study. It is therefore both a field within which people work and a subject to be explored.

### 4.2.2 Curriculum framework

Carl (2002:42) describes a curriculum framework as a written document in which general policy and instructional activities are set out. This is done for each particular subject and it contains the broad objectives of the instructional activities and the core contents in the form of subjects/themes as headings and guidelines.

### 4.2.3 Curriculum development

Oliva (2005:23) describes curriculum development as a rational activity and a comprehensive term that incorporates curriculum planning, design, implementation and evaluation. In turn, Carl (2002:44) proposes that curriculum development is seen as an umbrella and a continuing process in which structure and systematic planning methods are strongly outlined from design to evaluation. Curriculum development therefore includes a number of phases - such as curriculum design, curriculum dissemination, curriculum implementation and curriculum evaluation. The ultimate aim of curriculum

development is to enhance the effectiveness of education by means of a more effective and meaningful curriculum. The process of curriculum development will be explained in more detail in the next section.

## 4.3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

Educational systems as well as curricula are affected by changes in society, which are normal and expected consequences of changes in the environment (Oliva 2005:45). Bourner (2004:39-49) explains the changes within the HE curriculum by identifying four phases of focus over a period of three decades:

### 4.3.1 Phase 1 - the traditional curriculum

The 1970s was described as the phase of the "traditional" curriculum. During this phase, the focus of interest in the curriculum was on the delivery of knowledge and understanding. Assessment was also highlighted as external examiners from other institutions were appointed to ensure comparability of standards across institutions. There was an emphasis on knowledge and understanding, on evidence of "critical thinking" in the context of testing ideas, and on evidence of a subject discipline.

### 4.3.2 Phase 2 - transferable skills

In the 1980s, the focus shifted to transferable skills. The traditional curriculum of HE was confronted by rising unemployment among new graduates and this had to be reviewed. To ensure graduate employability the demonstration of subject knowledge was not enough. Hence, the focus shifted to the development of skills. Transferable skills that would contribute to "work-readiness" were listed. This change in curriculum philosophy guided the integration of "transferable skills" in the curriculum.

### 4.3.3 Phase 3 - lifelong learning

The early 1990s focused on preparation for lifelong learning. As the number of transferable skills that contributed to graduate employability seemed to rise rapidly, there was a concern that these skills were entry-level skills for higher education. This caused concern about graduate standards. Solutions to this difficulty included the need for students to take more responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, students would receive less content input and more process input. Lifelong learning implied that

the universities must be prepared for people to enter universities at different times of their lives and for the development of courses for post-graduates to return for "topping up" with the latest knowledge at regular intervals throughout their lives.

### 4.3.4 Phase 4 - reflective learning

The second half of the 1990s focused on reflective learning. In order for universities to enhance the prospects of graduates in the context of accelerating technological and economic change, students need to be prepared to become lifelong learners and manage the achievement of their own learning goals. The term *reflective learning* was increasingly associated with the term *lifelong learning*. The key to experiential learning was seen as reflection and the role of reflection in learning was already established.

The broadening of the higher education curriculum over the past three decades can be summarised as follows: Until the 1970s, the dominant paradigm was based on the delivery of knowledge. In the 1980s, this paradigm was challenged by the curriculum of competence based on skills to ensure employment, which was challenged by the lifelong learning paradigm in the 1990s. This paradigm stressed the importance of the ability to plan and manage one's own learning. Since the late1990s, lifelong learning has been challenged by a curriculum based on reflective learning (Bourner 2004:39-49).

## 4.4 THE PROCESS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

South Africa, as well as the South African HE, has gone through significant change which calls for dynamic curriculum development so that relevant education can prepare learners for a world of work. Curriculum development, as seen in its definition, provides an umbrella for a continuing process in which structured and systematic planning methods figure strongly from design to evaluation. Various phases are included in this process: curriculum design, curriculum dissemination, curriculum implementation and curriculum evaluation. The final aim of curriculum development is to bring about more effective education by means of a more effective and meaningful curriculum (Carl 2002:44).

The following figure (Figure 4.1) is an illustration of the phases of curriculum development as illustrated by Carl (2002:54).

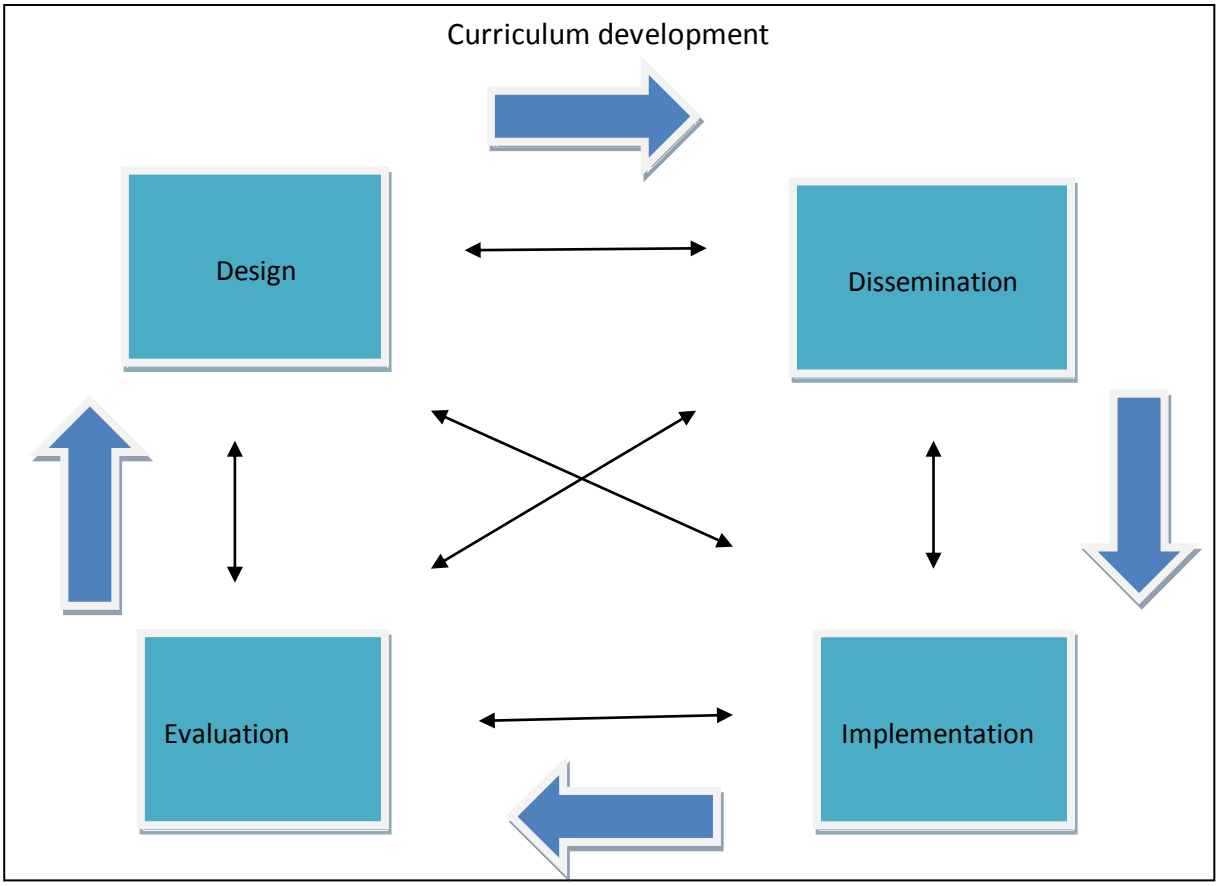


**Figure 4.1: Phases of curriculum development**

Source: Carl (2002:54).

As seen in Figure 4.1, curriculum development consists of various phases. The curriculum design phase involves the planning of a new curriculum or the replanning and reviewing of an existing curriculum once a full re-evaluation has been done. Aspects such as flexible planning and decision-making are important during this phase, which includes characteristic components such as purposefulness, contents, methods, learning experiences and evaluation. Curriculum dissemination is sometimes referred to as implementation in the curriculum. During this phase, curriculum consumers are prepared for the intended implementation and the information is disseminated. This is done through the distribution or publication of information, ideas and notions. This prepares all those involved and informs them of the proposed curriculum. Curriculum implementation refers to the phase during which the relevant curriculum design is applied in practice. During the curriculum evaluation phase, the success and effectiveness of the curriculum and also the effect of the curriculum on learners are

evaluated (Carl 2002: 53-55). As the aim of this study is to propose an integrated curriculum framework, the process of curriculum development will be utilised to guide this process.

Harden, Sowden and Dunn (1984:356) find that the basic questions in curriculum development are sometimes not answered. According to them, the ten questions below need to be answered when developing a curriculum. These questions will also assist in guiding this study in the development of the curriculum framework.

- What are the needs in terms of the outcome of the educational programme?
- What are the aims and objectives of the programme?
- What content should be included?
- How should the content be organised?
- What educational strategies should be adopted?
- What teaching methods should be used?
- How should assessment be carried out?
- How should details of the curriculum be communicated?
- What educational environment or climate should be fostered?
- How should the process be managed?

## 4.5 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT MODELS

One's view of a curriculum and curriculum development will determine what a curriculum will look like in practice. Views and assumptions influence the construction of the curriculum. Hence, it is important to have clarity on what these views and orientations are (Carl 2002:55). The use of models to illustrate certain principles and procedures in curriculum development can therefore assist in conceptualising the process of curriculum development. An analysis of curriculum development models offered in literature provides informative and useful data which can be used as input to structure the curriculum framework for integrated teaching/learning, service and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS - which is the very aim of this study.

Du Toit (2011:65-72) argues that although the contributions from various curriculum theorists were mainly aimed at curriculum development in schooling, these models or variations of them were also used by educationist, non-educationist and curriculum planners at higher education institutions. For the purpose of this study, a brief discussion of curriculum development with reference to a number of significant curriculum theorists is offered. These theorists were instrumental in the design of models that paved the way for curriculum practitioners and researchers who supported traditionalist or progressive views on curriculum design.

### 4.5.1 John Franklin Bobbitt

Bobbitt believes that students need to be prepared for adult life by means of scientific techniques. He therefore identified a five-step scientific method for curriculum making: (a) analysis of human experience, (b) job analysis, (c) deriving objectives, (d) selecting objectives, and (e) planning in detail. Step one dealt with separating the broad range of human experience into major fields. Step two was to break down the fields into their more specific activities. The third step was to derive the objectives of education from statements of the abilities required to perform the activities. The fourth step was to select from the list of objectives those which were to serve as the basis for planning pupil activities. The final step was to lay out the kinds of activities, experiences, and opportunities involved in attaining the objectives. Examples of higher education institutions' curricula planned according to these scientific steps include professional degrees for chartered accountants and medical doctors. Bobbitt's scientific curriculum planning method is viewed as part of the traditionalist's custom. These curricula are designed top down around subjects and/or disciplines, and students do not play any role in the creation of the curriculum (Du Toit 2011:66).

### 4.5.2 Ralph Tyler

Tyler's curriculum model is probably the most popular model used in the planning and design of curricula at various educational levels. His model is also known as the Tyler rationale. In this model, content is a crucial element in curriculum planning. Tyler's model is classified as an aims-objective model that is product-driven. It is seen as a means-end model where the end is first decided upon before the means to reach the end are determined. The logical sequence in this model assumes a linear view on the

means and ends (Du Toit 2011:67-68). According to Bitzer (2011:38), Tyler highlighted four major areas of curriculum enquiry, namely the purpose of the curriculum, the learning experiences that should be provided to students to meet these purposes, the most effective way to organise this curriculum, and the best way to determine the outcomes of learning and attainment based on the purposes of the curriculum.

### 4.5.3 Hilda Taba

Taba's (1962) five-step curriculum model for curriculum design is an expansion of Tyler's model. Taba's model differs in that a bottom-up approach is followed by working inductively with the educators in the design of the curriculum. She envisages that the curriculum will support students to become critical thinkers who search for meaning in the world in which they live. Taba's five steps for accomplishing curriculum change is defined as: production by teachers of pilot teaching-learning units representative of the grade level or subject area (diagnosis of needs, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organization of content, selection of learning experiences, organization of learning experiences, determination of what to evaluate and the ways and means of doing it, checking for balance and sequence), testing experimental units, revising and consolidating, developing a framework and lastly installing and disseminating new units.

Taba's (1962) objectives are therefore integrated by addressing in-depth content as well as skills and attitude. She furthermore focuses on intergroup or multi-cultural education and supports the cross-discipline design of the curriculum. The value of action research and the importance of evaluation in the educational process are high on her agenda. This model lends itself to the design of a curriculum in gender studies in the humanities and social sciences (Du Toit 2011:68-69). According to Bitzer (2011:38), Taba (1962) argues that curriculum changes signal institutional changes where teachers are seen as active participants who help to determine the goals and objectives of learning.

### 4.5.4 John Dewey

Dewey's theory of curriculum is centred around the relationship between school and society, more specifically a democratic society. Dewey advocates an experiential approach in curriculum development, emphasising that one learns by doing. He

emphasises the importance of both sociological as well as psychological learning as the two aspects of the education process. According to him, both are equally important. Dewey believes that curricula must be designed by taking learners and their experiences into account and by actively involving learners in an experiential, inquiry-orientated curriculum. Curriculum design involves continuously investigating and constructing meaning to better understand the learner's world (Du Toit 2011:70). According to Du Toit (2011:70), Dewey's higher education perspective of curricula is trans-disciplinary and holistic, and it values social as well as cognitive learning. Dewey also emphasises the importance of student participation in the process of curriculum design.

### 4.5.5 Lawrence Stenhouse

Stenhouse believes that curriculum development should be driven by the knowledge related to and underpinned in the disciplines, which should be developed by means of inquiry-based learning (Scott 2008:36). Furthermore, he does not support a didactic form of teaching where the student is the passive receiver of knowledge. The end-product of this process is the outcome of the assessment which will determine whether a student has obtained the knowledge. Stenhouse argues that the didactic way of teaching is mainly concerned with the triviality of the discipline. Didactic teaching does not offer students the means to think in the disciplines. The process central in Stenhouse's curriculum planning model is a hermeneutic process of understanding in inquiry-based education, where meaning exists in the process of interpretation and not in the object of knowledge (Scott 2008:31-41; Du Toit 2011:71).

### 4.5.6 Paulo Freire

Freire has a critical perspective of curriculum planning as he describes the technical production of curriculum planning as "banking education" where the teacher regulates the way the student should conceive the world (Posner 2009:258). He believes that teacher and student will be empowered to discriminate critically the way in which they view and live in the world. Students are therefore cooperatively and by means of dialogue involved in the formulation of generative themes to be used in the curriculum. The curriculum planning is not technical but seen as political, ideological and bottom-up. Therefore, there is no end-product such as learning outcomes that a learner needs

to demonstrate. It is seen as a critical reflection and an action upon the reality (Posner 2009:258-259).

### 4.5.7 Summary of the different curriculum models

Bobbit and Tyler's models are criticised as being "adult centered" because the social convention dictates how the institution forms the students. Tyler's model is mostly objective-driven and implies that the process is not sufficiently valued. There is also an emphasis on cognitive learning at the cost of social learning. Tyler's model is functional in terms of student training but its suitability for higher education in a holistic and interdisciplinary manner is questioned. In Taba's model, students do not play a central role in curriculum development, but this model challenges lecturers to research and improve on their own practices. Stenhouse's process-based curriculum focuses on understanding and not grading or assessment as a product. The interdependence of learning as well as the importance of setting standards and authentic assessment is highlighted. The significance of inquiry learning as a means to get students actively involved in knowledge building is advocated in this model. As Taba emphasises, the importance of action research to improve own practice as well as the essence of learning from colleagues is stressed. Therefore, higher education can gain significantly from this model as it focuses on the purpose of higher education, namely to educate students who demonstrate a critical disposition regarding their role in teaching and learning as well towards the broader social reality in which they will function. The absence of learning outcomes creates a challenge in terms of assessment and the setting of standards. The multiplicity of the various theories highlights the fact that there can be no fixed recipe or strict rules in the design of a curriculum.

## 4.6 APPROACHES TO CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Several approaches and models exist in curriculum development. For the purpose of this study, only a limited number of approaches were selected and discussed as they seemed more applicable in this context.

### 4.6.1 Six-step approach to curriculum development

Kern, Thomas, Howard and Bass (1998:4) developed a six-step approach to curriculum development which is derived from the generic approaches by Taba (1962), Tyler

(1950), Yura and Torres (1986), McGaghie *et al.* (1978) and Golden (1982). This approach is based on the underlying assumptions that educational programmes have aims or goals, that educators have professional and ethical obligations to meet the needs of their learners, that educators should be held accountable for the outcomes of their interventions, and that a logical and systematic approach to curriculum development will help to achieve these ends.

This approach is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

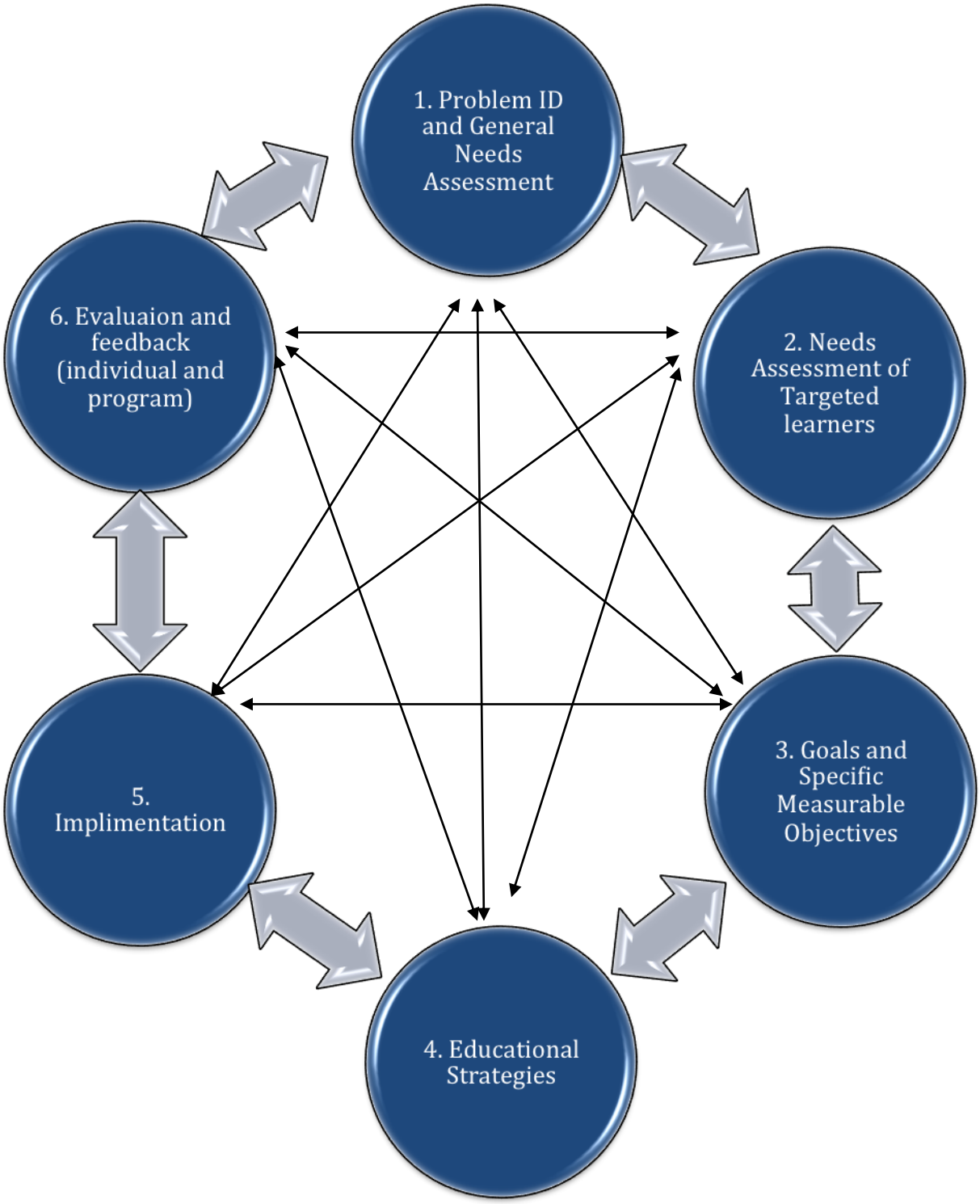


**Figure 4.2: Six-step approach to curriculum development**

Source: Adapted from Kern, Thomas, Howard & Bass (1998:4).

With reference to Figure 4.2, the first step is the identification and critical analysis of a need or problem. This complete problem identification requires an analysis of the current approach and the identification of an ideal approach. The second step includes a needs assessment of the targeted group of learners. Once the needs of the targeted learners have been identified, goals and objectives for the curriculum can be determined, starting with the general goals and leading to specific, measurable objectives. The objectives can include cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudinal) or psychomotor (skills and performance) objectives for the learner. The educational strategies need to be identified and the curriculum needs to be implemented. The last step involves evaluation and feedback, which includes the assessment of the performance of the individuals as well as the curriculum. The purpose of the evaluation may be formative or summative (Kern *et al.* 1998:5-7).

Kern *et al.* (1998:7) emphasise that curriculum development does not usually proceed in linear fashion or in sequences. Instead, it is a dynamic and interactive process. For a successful curriculum, curriculum development never really ends.

### 4.6.2 The SPICES Model as strategy in curriculum development

Harden, Sowden and Dunn (1984:284) developed the SPICES model of curriculum strategy analysis. This model focuses on the curriculum in a medical school and can be used in curriculum planning or review. The SPICES model uses innovative instead of traditional strategies to develop a curriculum. These strategies can be positioned on a spectrum between two extremes (see Figure 4.3).

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **S** | **S**tudent-centered | ---------- | Teacher-centered |
| **P** | **P**roblem-based | ---------- | Information gathering |
| **I** | **I**ntegrated | ---------- | Discipline-based |
| **C** | **C**ommunity-based | ---------- | Hospital-based |
| **E** | **E**lectives | ---------- | Standard programme |
| **S** | **S**ystematic | ---------- | Apprenticeship-based or opportunistic |

**Figure 4.3: The SPICES model of curriculum strategies**

Source: Harden *et al.* (1984:284).

#### 4.6.2.1 Student-centred versus teacher-centred learning

With the student-centred approach students take more responsibility for their own learning. Therefore the emphasis is on the students and on what and how they learn. The teacher-centred approach the teacher is the centre or the key figure. There is an emphasis on the activity such as the formal lecture. Therefore individual students have little control over what they learn, the order in which they learn as well as the methods they have to use.

#### 4.6.2.2 Problem-based learning versus information-gathering learning

In problem-based learning students approach patient problems, health delivery problems medical science problems or research problems. This provides the students the opportunity to develop their clinical problem-solving skills and an integrated body of knowledge. In information-gathering the major objective is the acquisition of facts, concepts and principles.

#### 4.6.2.3 Integrated teaching versus discipline-based teaching

Integrated teaching includes the organization of teaching matter to interrelate or unify subjects frequently taught in separate academic courses or departments. This integration can be done horizontally or vertically between disciplines. Discipline-based teaching emphasizes classical disciplines such as anatomy, biochemistry, pathology, community medicine and surgery. Contact with patients tends to be later.

#### 4.6.2.4 Community-based education versus hospital-based education

One criticism can be aimed at the ivory-tower approach of programmes. A stronger focus on community-based education can provide the following advantages: provides community orientation, useful community-based learning experiences, the use of untapped resources and the encouragement of active learning. The hospital-based approach to medical education is centred on the main teaching hospital. The staff in the university departments are attached to these hospitals as teachers.

#### 4.6.2.5 Electives versus standard programmes

In a standard education programme, all students will pass through a set of prescribed courses. There are seldom opportunities to study a subject in more depth or to study a subject of their own choice. Elective programmes provide students the opportunity to select subjects or projects of their own choice. Electives are a way of coping with an overcrowded curriculum, provide students with increased responsibility to further their own learning, can facilitate career choice by students, can meet students' individual aspirations and can bring about attitude change.

#### 4.6.2.6 A systematic approach versus an apprenticeship or opportunistic programme

The programme, in a systematic approach, is designed for all students so that the experiences necessary for their training are covered. Both the breadth and the depth of their knowledge are tested. Within an apprenticeship programme students are in some way bonded to one teacher/unit/hospital ward over a period of time.

### 4.6.3 Building blocks of curricula

Barnett and Coate (2005:59-65) refer to curricula as engagement which is divided into three building blocks, namely knowing, acting and being. These building blocks provide a frame through which to understand and communicate different patterns of curricula across disciplines, courses and curricula. Firstly, knowledge and skills are both important building blocks of curricula in higher education. Yet, they can be interpreted narrowly. Knowing is distinct from knowledge as it has an active, dynamic component and is always in a state of flux. This state of flux is due to the fact that the knowledge is socially developed through sheer effort and contact between human minds. Skills are understood as having their place with a wider zone of willed action and acting, where the student has and takes responsibility for the way in which he or she realises skills. Acting is seen as a necessary component of degree courses and it may be overt or a personal matter. The two building blocks, knowing and acting, cannot provide a sufficiently firm base for higher education curricula as they need a third build block called *being*. This is described as focusing on the realisation, self-confidence, self-understanding and self-reliance.

Barnett and Coate (2005:70-79) distinguish various frameworks for curricula depending on the subject area. As this study falls within the subject areas of arts and humanities as well as professional subjects, only the framework of these subject areas will be discussed.

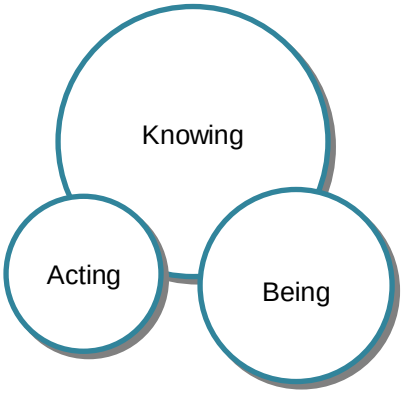


**Figure 4.4: Curricula in arts and humanities subjects**

Source: Barnett & Coate (2005:79).

As Figure 4.4 suggests, the knowledge (knowing) domain in arts and humanities forms a dominant and important component of the curriculum. Therefore, curricula in these subject areas are mostly designed based on the knowledge content that needs to be transferred to students. The knowledge fields of arts and humanities subjects are fluid and yet sometimes the content of these subjects appear overbearing and heavy-handed, resulting in an overcrowded curriculum. As new knowledge is added to the syllabus, the knowledge content deemed necessary grows even bigger. The self domain (being) is a dynamic component of arts and humanities curricula, and it is, to an extent, integrated into the knowledge domain. The acting domain is a smaller component that tends not to be well-integrated with either the knowledge or self domains (Barnett & Coate 2005:75-77).

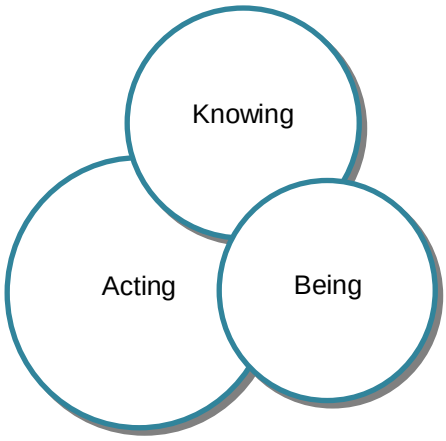


**Figure 4.5: Curricula in professional subjects**

Source: Barnett & Coate (2005:77).

The knowledge domain in professional subjects is less prominent (see Figure 4.5). This is because the professional subject areas are externally oriented and their curricula often reflect the professions they represent rather than changing concerns within academic disciplines. The curricula of these subjects are also strongly oriented towards the practical, external demands of the profession. Therefore, the action domain forms a substantial component of curricula. Curricular patterns in professional subjects show the integration of the self (being) and the action domains. It was found that in the professional subjects, students often undertake activities designed to develop their sense of being a professional, with an underlying knowledge base and associated practical skills (Barnett & Coate 2005:77-78).

## 4.7 THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The previous section provided a discussion of the approaches and models in curriculum development. As the aim of this study is the development of a curriculum framework for integrated teaching/learning, service and research within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, it is essential to focus on the development of a curriculum framework and the aspects associated with this process.

Curriculum development, as previously defined, is seen as a continuing process in which structure and systematic planning methods figure strongly from design to evaluation (Carl 2002:44). Therefore, the development of a curriculum framework takes place within this process of curriculum development and in terms of the curriculum

development principles. These principles include undertaking research, carrying out a situation analysis, formulating objectives, and selecting, classifying and formatively evaluating contents (Carl 2002:42).

Crafford (2006:102) identifies the following essential components of a sufficient curriculum framework:

**(a) Competencies.** There should be a specific focus on the competencies that learners will need in their family, civic and career roles. This needs to be clearly detectable in a curriculum framework.

**(b) Situation analysis.** The needs assessment should be based on a situation analysis to provide basic knowledge about the required competencies and to steer the curriculum design process. The situation analysis should form one of the initial activities and it should be repeated regularly in order to make relevant changes and adjustments.

**(c) Contextual role-players.** Within a curriculum framework, the needs and requirements of contextual role-players, such as statutory and legislative bodies, providers of learning, and commerce and industry have to be taken into account. This includes national as well as international factors, were applicable.

**(d) Integration.** Articulation, mobility and integration among the components should be clearly described through the framework. Feedback and interaction lines need to be indicated.

**(e) Outcomes.** Viable, realistic and attainable outcomes need to be formulated, easy to track and embedded in the curriculum. Specific and critical outcomes are crucial.

**(f) Lifelong learning.** The development of lifelong learning needs to be emphasised among students.

**(g) Constructive alignment.** An approach of constructive alignment should be accommodated in the framework. This includes the alignment of learners' needs, role-players' requirements, learning outcomes, learning materials, the adopted methodology, assessment criteria, tasks, methods and techniques.

(h) **Deep learning.** It is crucial to include teaching and learning activities which involve learning facilitators and learners in a process of enquiry and self-discovery to move towards deep learning.

(i) **Assessment.** Assessment which is fair, valid and reliable, and which includes both summative and formal assessment should form an integral part of the curriculum design.

(j) **Schematic representation.** The components of the curriculum framework should preferably be presented in a diagram or chart to simplify interpretation, understanding and implementation.

The next section will provide an overview of the context of the study.

## 4.8 CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS which is situated within the institutional context of NWU. In order to provide an understanding of the context of this study, the next section will focus on the history and current state of this programme, and also on NWU as an institution.

### 4.8.1 The postgraduate programme of the CCYFS

This postgraduate programme has gone through several changes. It is therefore important to describe the background and history of this programme.

#### *4.8.1.1 Background and history of the programme*

In 2001, the Centre for Play Therapy and Training formally entered into a cooperation agreement with the Huguenot College in terms of which the Huguenot College would provide an academic address, via UNISA, and an administrative and physical infrastructure for the Centre while the Centre provides training through a master's degree and doctoral degree. These degrees were approved by UNISA's Senate on 21 May 2002 and were registered as a Magister Diaconiologiae and a Doctor Diaconiologiae with specialisation in Play Therapy (Bloem 2010).

New academic offerings developing from play therapy forced the management team to consider a departmental restructuring in order to meet demands from the market.

Training in Gestalt play therapy led to the identification of a second focus and third focus, namely dealing with trauma in children, families and society, and training for couples and family therapy. Focusing on research, the academic structure of the department took an entrepreneurial route and established an institute focusing on research, academic programmes and community interaction. The Department of Play Therapy was formally restructured as the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Studies, and became operational on 1 July 2008 (Bloem 2010).

Since 2002, almost all postgraduate professionals in the field of play therapy in South Africa (i.e. 90% of all postgraduate students, including 5% from the University of Pretoria and 5% from the University of the Free State) aligned training in this field with the needs of the community and state. Almost all of them completed the NWU CCYFS's postgraduate programme. The training was done through a structured master's degree (MDIAC: direction Play Therapy) in partnership with UNISA. This developed a niche market for transdisciplinary training in this field. The collaboration agreement between Huguenot College and the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Studies came to an end when Huguenot College failed to provide an academic address for the master's and doctoral degrees in Play Therapy as stipulated in the agreement. In order to complete the programme and continue the current offering under a new degree name at a different academic institution, alternative new academic partner had to be found. In March 2011, North-West University (NWU) became the new academic home of the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS (Bloem 2010:2).

The interdisciplinary nature of the degree implies that the training adds value to professional persons who have qualified for social services professions and who already enjoy the protection of professional councils. This includes social workers (SACSSP), psychologists (HPCSA), occupational therapists (HPCSA), youth workers (Council for Child and Youth Care workers) and educators (South African Council for Educators) (Bloem 2010:4).

#### *4.8.1.2 The focus and aim of the programme*

During May 2009 a new South African National Department: Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities were introduced. The strategic focus of this department includes child protection and the development of structures to safeguard the social and

economic well-being of children and youth (Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities Strategic Plan 2012/13 - 2016/17). The process introduced in the national roll-out of this postgraduate programme included the development of structures that provide for the psychological, intellectual, emotional and social development of children (Bloem 2010). This is in line with the objectives of the new Children's Act (Act 38 of 2005:30) where the responsibility of state is extended to society and, in particular, research and academic institutions, to make provision for structures, services and means to promote and monitor the sound physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional and social development of children (Bloem 2010; Act 38 of 2005). The Children's Act is also seen as one of the pillars of National Department: Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities.

This process has created a need for postgraduates in the field - especially postgraduates with specialised training such as play therapy which fully focuses on children in need. Furthermore, the strategic importance of an integrated child-care and protection strategy is underscored by its relevance to government departments such as the Department of Education, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Justice, especially at local government level, due to the fact that this new state department is in its second parliamentary season. Urgency to commission and facilitate appropriate and relevant research for policy development and implementation was voiced. The design, implementation and facilitation of programmes and interventions that are relevant to the needs of children are priority for this department (Institute for Child, Youth and Family Studies, undated).

The postgraduate programme of the CCYFS was aligned with the strategic vision and mission of higher education as part of the research focus areas within this programme, namely human rights and development; and youth, gender, family and a caring society (Bloem 2010). This programme also focuses on applied science and research methodology, which enables graduates to scientifically address real-life problems to the benefit of South African society, thereby contributing to the outward-oriented role of any university (Bloem 2010).

The primary purpose of the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS is to provide postgraduates with advanced knowledge, skills, attitudes and applied competence at (1) grass roots level, (2) managerial, consultation and policy-making levels, and (3)

academic domains within the caring fields in order to contribute towards the comprehensive healing and development of an indigenous, applied, evidence-based as well as theoretical basis for Africa and her people. This will contribute to the vision to provide South African and global communities with postgraduates in the human service delivery fields who are constructively involved in their communities as individuals, as leaders and as facilitators of social and personal transformation and change. Since 2001, almost 200 students have completed training in Play Therapy (Bloem 2010).

A third purpose of the CCYFS qualification is to provide South African and global communities with experts in specific fields of knowledge who can undertake independent research and contribute to the intellectual development, growth and psycho-social well-being of their communities. Hence, the slogan: "For Africa by Africa" (Bloem 2010).

#### *4.8.1.3 Outcomes of the programme*

The three core functions of a higher education institution - namely teaching, research and community interaction - is utilised to structure its functioning and activities. Underpinned by a scientific basis, it contributes towards building the scientific, technological and intellectual capacity of South Africa and Africa through structured teaching, supervised research and community interaction by means of internships. The programme follows a relational-developmental approach, applicable to children, youth and families in diverse contexts and therefore plays a role in the development of South African society. This direct involvement of students in communities and the current curriculum's high level of interaction serve as strong assets of the programme (Bloem 2010:2).

Students who have completed the programme need to show competency in this field, with the following specific outcomes:

> A master's student in Play Therapy is actively engaged in becoming a specialist in the field of Play Therapy. As such, she or he develops and holds certain values and integrates knowledge and skills to achieve his or her objectives. The specific outcomes show how knowledge, skills and values are integrated in Play Therapy in the SAQA fields of Education, Training and Development (05), Human and Social Studies (07), Health Sciences and Social Services (09) and Services (11) (Bloem, 2010:2).

#### *4.8.1.4 Level of outcomes*

The programme is presented on postgraduate level and therefore students, in order to obtain qualifications, need to achieve the outcomes on NQF Level 9, which includes the following:

(a) Scope of knowledge. The learner must be able to demonstrate specialist knowledge to engage with and critique current research or practices, as well as advanced scholarship or research.

(b) Knowledge literacy. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to evaluate current processes of knowledge production and to choose an appropriate process of enquiry for the area of study or practice.

(c) Method and procedure. The learner must be able to demonstrate command of and the ability to design, select and apply appropriate and creative methods, techniques, processes or technologies to complex practical and theoretical problems.

(d) Problem solving. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to use a wide range of specialised skills in identifying, conceptualising, designing and implementing methods of enquiry to address complex and challenging problems within a field, discipline or practice; and show understanding of the consequences of any solutions or insights generated within a specialised context.

(e) Ethics and professional practice. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to make autonomous ethical decisions which affect knowledge production or complex organisational or professional issues. Learners must also show their ability to contribute critically to the development of ethical standards in a specific context.

(f) Accessing, processing and managing information. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to design and implement a strategy for the processing and management of information in order to conduct a comprehensive review of leading and current research in an area of specialisation to produce significant insights.

(g) Producing and communicating information. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to use the resources of academic and professional or occupational discourses to communicate and defend substantial ideas that are the products of research or development in an area of specialisation. Learners must also be able to use a range of advanced and specialised skills and discourses appropriate to a field, discipline or practice, and to communicate with a range of audiences with different levels of knowledge or expertise.

(h) Context and systems. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to make interventions at an appropriate level within a system, based on an understanding of hierarchical relations within the system and the ability to address the intended and unintended consequences of interventions.

(i) Management of learning. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to develop his or her own learning strategies which sustain independent learning and academic or professional development. Learners must also be able to interact effectively within the learning or professional group as a means to enhance learning.

(j) Accountability. The learner must be able to demonstrate the ability to operate independently and take full responsibility for his or her own work. Learners must also, where appropriate, lead and initiate processes and implement systems, ensuring good resource management and governance practices (SAQA, undated).

#### *4.8.1.5 Professional outcomes*

Play Therapy is regarded as a specialist mode of intervention offering help to children with emotional and social distress. Scientifically, it is based on the help-giving strategy of the Gestalt therapeutic approach in psychology. The methodology and intervention strategy is also consistent with the social service professions, particularly social work, education and counselling. It may be concluded that Play Therapy gives support and adds value to existing knowledge and the scientific basis of the help-giving professions (Bloem 2010:2). The programme aims to educate and train students academically and professionally by aligning its content with already existing international programmes in

Play Therapy. In doing so, students will be empowered to pursue careers in the social service professions, both nationally and internationally (Bloem 2010:2).

The demand for well-trained play therapists has increased dramatically over the past ten years (Joiner & Landreth 2005:50). A study by Joiner and Landreth (2005:49) determined the core skills that play therapists should be able to demonstrate. The core skills identified in this study include the following methods/skills: The ability to reflect feelings, responses that convey understanding to the child, the reflection of content, the ability to set limits, the selection of age-appropriate toys/media, identifying themes in play sessions, tracking behaviour, client termination or transfer, stages of play therapy, identifying the variables to be considered when placing children in play therapy, responses that facilitate decision making and returning responsibility, tolerance of noise and messiness, succinct responses, parent consultations, the conceptualisation of the client as identified by the theoretical orientation of choice, the ability to relate themes to the child in play sessions, responses that facilitate creativity and spontaneity, teacher consultations, and esteem-building responses.

Play Therapy International (PTI) identifies the following competencies and skills required of play therapists: Skills required for the application of practice (enabling) competencies, therapeutic competencies for practice, the expectations of health professions, filial play competencies, practice management, clinical governance (quality management competencies), competencies for using play therapy in specific settings, competencies for using play therapy in specific conditions, competencies required to conduct original research, competencies required for play therapy training and the management of play therapy services.

#### *4.8.1.6 The new context of the programme*

Within the new academic home of North-West University, a new curriculum as well as a new degree needs to be developed to obtain SAQA accreditation. The programme currently consists of the following: Four credit-bearing short courses in Basic principles, theories and philosophies of Gestalt play therapy (24 credits), The therapeutic relationship and process in Gestalt play therapy (24 credits), Practice-directed use of Gestalt play therapy (32 credits), Advanced integration: Play therapy (10 credits), a practical component where students have to complete individual work (3 - 5 children), a

life skills group and a therapeutic group, a service learning project and 50 hours of supervision. In order to obtain a master's degree in Psychology and Social Work the students have to complete a research dissertation of 180 credits. (See Addendum A on the attached CD for the current curriculum of the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.)

The new postgraduate degree with a focus on Play Therapy will be presented by the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies, underpinned by their vision: excellence and innovation in promoting the well-being of children, youth and families in the African context and their mission: to enhance the well-being of children, youth and families in the African context through excellence and innovation in practice-based, transdisciplinary teaching and learning, research and community engagement nested in reciprocal partnerships. This will be nested in the research unit, AUTHéR (Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research), Faculty of Health, NWU (CCYFS).

The postgraduate programme of the CCYFS will also link directly to the vision, values and mission of North-West University.

**Vision**: To be a pre-eminent University in Africa, driven by the pursuit of knowledge and innovation.

**Values**: The North-West University subscribes to the values of human dignity, equality, freedom, integrity, tolerance, respect, commitment to excellence, scholarly engagement, academic freedom and justice.

**Mission**: The NWU's mission is to become a balanced teaching-learning and research university and to implement its expertise in an innovative way. The institution will achieve this as it lives its values, strives for sound management and pursues transformation, while being locally engaged, nationally relevant and internationally recognised.

The mission has five distinct elements:

Mission element 1: Drive transformation as an integrated, urgent, fair and well-managed process of fundamental and sustainable change to address institutional inequalities while accounting for the needs of the country and its people. The NWU

does this by empowering people through quality education, world-class research and the meaningful implementation of its expertise.

Mission element 2: Develop, educate and empower through innovative and high-quality teaching-learning, well-rounded graduates who are able to think laterally and critically in their service to the country and its people, the continents and the world.

Mission element 3: Develop and maintain high-quality, relevant and focused research, aligned with national priorities, supplying innovative solutions to challenges faced by the scholarly community, the country, the continent and the world.

Mission element 4: Implement the expertise in teaching-learning and research, both commercially and community-directed, for the benefit of the province, the country, the Southern African region, the continent and ultimately the world.

Mission element 5: Position the NWU in the sector as an accountable, effective, well-managed and financially viable and innovative institution, with a strong client focus to enhance the quality of the core business and to ensure sustainability (Van der Merwe, A: RMA SHARE 2.1.1/2012 File reference: 2.1.1_2012).

As this programme is managed within the research unit AUTHéR, the vision of this unit is also relevant.

**Vision**: To be an internationally recognised transdisciplinary entity enhancing human health in Africa.

**Mission**: To enhance human health and well-being through innovative transdisciplinary research.

### 4.8.2 Community engagement at North-West University (NWU)

A major part of NWU's community and public engagement activity is promoted and developed through the NWU Forum for Continuous Community Development (FCCD) (North-West University, 2011). This Forum was founded in 2011, with the objective to tackle past disadvantages and promote grassroots development through partnerships with communities and stakeholders. The FCCD has four interrelated goals: (i) expanding the community engagement, expertise and activities of the NWU in a

proactive way so as to avail the expertise to communities in order to implement relevant community engagement projects; (ii) aligning innovation and social engagement activities with core activities in a holistic manner; (iii) refining quality assurance processes and mechanisms; and (iv) developing, integrating and embedding sustainability into strategy and standard operating procedures and reporting (North-West University, 2011:15-16). (See Addendum B on attached CD for an illustration of the community engagement strategies of the NWU.)

Community engagement, as developed by the FCCD, seeks to undertake work that provides mutual benefit to the community and to the university. The FCCD is responsible for generating only a part of the university's public engagement work (which includes diverse aspects such as student volunteering, access to university facilities, public/open events and socially oriented entrepreneurial activities). These initiatives are to be assessed in various ways, but for now these initiatives are limited to the Volunteering Impact Assessment Framework. Remarkably, those involved with the FCCD are increasingly taking the lead to mobilise the NWU's community engagement activities across the institution.

The NWU's Institutional Plan 2011-2013 includes "engagement: as one of its five values: "engagement with the cultural, social and economic life of our localities, region and nation; with international imperatives; and with the practical, intellectual and ethical issues of our partner organisations" (North-West University, 2010:4). The NWU (2010:5) asserts its uniqueness in the following statement:

> "Most other universities either want to be research-led, or are in practice focusing on teaching-learning. In addition, the NWU is the only university emphasising that the third element of its core business is not (merely) 'community engagement', but implementation of expertise (both in communities and commercially). This specification of the third element of the NWU's activities resonates better as being a viable and sustainable part of the core business and also corresponds with the national development goals cited above."

The above section provided an overview of the context of the study. The history of this program, the structure of the programme in terms of outcomes and context, and also the current state of this programme have been unpacked. This section also focused on

the vision, mission and community engagement in the new academic home of this programme, namely the NWU.

## 4.9 CONCLUSION

The concepts of curriculum, curriculum development and the various models of curriculum development, curriculum changes and the development of a curriculum framework were discussed in this section. The various approaches and principles that should be taken into account when developing a curriculum were also unpacked. The researcher will attempt to apply these approaches and principles in order to guide the process of developing a curriculum framework for postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The information and knowledge obtained from this section, as well as the information on community engagement and higher education, which were discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, will provide the basis for the development of a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

# CHAPTER 5

# RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The two preceding chapters provided a contextual overview of the field as well as the subfield within which the study was positioned and conducted. The purpose of this chapter is to elaborate on the research design and the research methodology that were briefly outlined in Chapter 1. The study is embedded in a qualitative research methodology with an interpretive paradigm and a deductive approach. A case study design was used. The purpose of the study was firstly to explore and describe the current state of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU, and to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU.

In the next section, the researcher will place the study in context by providing a theoretical outline of the interpretive paradigm and an explanation of why this research paradigm is best fitted for this study. This will be followed by a description of the research approach that was used as well as a description of the case study design. The data collection methods and data analysis will also be discussed.

## 5.2 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The next sections present a discussion of the research paradigm, research approach and research design used in this study. Figure 5.1 illustrates the research design of this study.

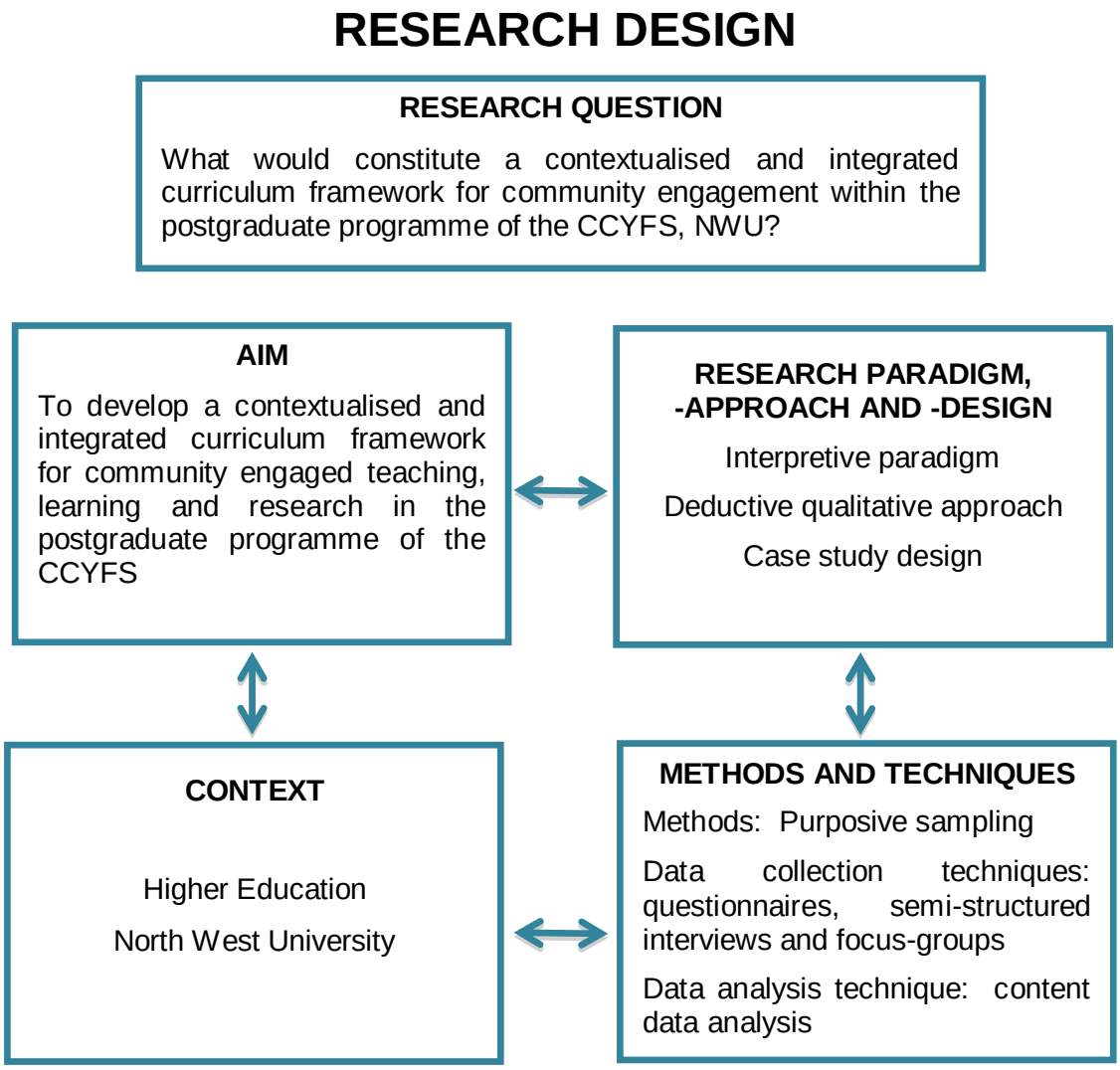


**Figure 5.1: Visual display of the research design**

### 5.2.1 Research question and aim of the study

The research problem of this study was identified based on the researcher's involvement as a practical lecturer in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, as outlined in Chapter 1. The research question, which was formulated from the research problem, guided the study. The primary research question was formulated as: What would constitute a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?

The main aim of this study was to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were formulated: (a) to review relevant literature on curriculum design in order to identify the merits and limits of various approaches to community engagement; (b) to determine, from the experiences and activities of current students and lecturers, the status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS; (c) to review curriculum frameworks and content of other community engagement models at national and international HEIs; and (d) to develop a curriculum framework for effective community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

### 5.2.2 Research paradigm

A research paradigm provides a framework or lens that guides a study and provides the foundation for a research project (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:31; Denscombe 2010:130-131). The lens used is shaped by the researcher's thoughts and beliefs about the fundamental aspects of reality (Nieuwenhuis 2007:47; Christensen, Johnson & Turner 2011:100), and includes the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:31). These philosophical assumptions of the researcher provide the foundations for the research as they underpin the research perspective adopted on the research topic; it shapes the nature of the investigation; it informs the methods that are used and the questions that are asked; it assists to specify the types of things that qualify as worthwhile evidence; and it points to the kind of conclusions that can, and cannot, be drawn on the basis of the investigation (Denscombe 2010:117). The various social research philosophies are illustrated in Figure 5.2.

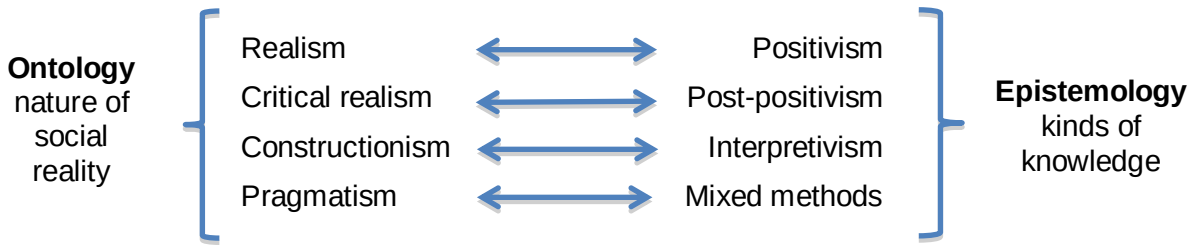


**Figure 5.2: A simplified model of the basic social research philosophies**

Source: Denscombe (2011:117).

This study was positioned within an interpretive research paradigm. The interpretive paradigm provided the lens through which the context and qualities of the specific phenomenon and the meanings people assigned to them could be understood (Nieuwenhuis 2007:59). People's capacity to make sense of reality, which has no order or structure, is important in the interpretive paradigm (Denscombe 2010:119). Henning (2004:20) adds that the interpretive paradigm places an emphasis on experience and interpretation, and that the different viewpoints are built through different processes of observation. It was therefore essential, within this study, to explore the experiences of the participants as well as their interpretations of these experiences in order to understand the phenomenon under study. As the interpretive paradigm also recognises the value of qualitative data, which was used in this study, it provided a way of exploring the richness, depth and complexity of the phenomena under study.

### 5.2.3 Research approach

The research approach influences the research design and gives the researcher the opportunity to consider how each of the various approaches may contribute to, or limit, the study (Creswell 2003). Denscombe (2010:132-133) states that qualitative research is primarily concerned with "the way in which people shape the world" and emphasises the ways in which human activity creates meaning. It provides an in-depth description and understanding of the human experience (Lichtman 2010:13). Qualitative research studies things in their own natural settings (Leedy & Ormrod 2005:133; Gray 2009:166; Fouché & Schurink 2011:308; Marshall & Rossman 2011:26) and attempts to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Marshall and Rossman (2011:26) refer to the fact that qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretive and grounded in the lived experiences of people.

The deductive approach moves from the general to the specific (Babbie 2001:35) and is seen as a theory-testing process which commences with an established theory or generalisation and seeks to see if the theory applies to specific instances (Hyman 2000:83). Yin (2009) also supports the use of a deductive approach instead of an inductive approach in case study methodology as case study research should commence with a statement of propositions - answers to "how" and "why" questions - which need to be tested with the data gathered. Therefore, a deductive approach was used for this study as the literature review provided a general overview of the

established theory after which the researcher moved to the more specific community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS and tested the empirical data with the literature.

### 5.2.4 Research design

The research design serves as a guideline for researchers to structure their studies. The research design guides the collection and analysis of information relevant to answer the research question (Polit & Beck 2006:16) and summarises the nature, aims and context within which the research should take place (Klopper 2008:68). According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:10), the research question is linked to the research purpose in a particular study, which can be exploratory, descriptive or explanatory. The purpose in this study was exploratory and descriptive in nature. Neuman (2000:510) defines exploratory research as research into an understudied area where new ideas and a more focused research question need to be developed. This type of research typically involves gathering information from a small sample (Struwig & Stead 2001:5). The application of exploratory research is considered relevant as community engagement within the specific postgraduate programme of the CCYFS is under-researched and new ways of integrating teaching, research and service within the curriculum need to be developed.

#### *5.2.4.1 Case study research design*

A case study design was chosen for this study as it was most suitable for answering the research questions asked in this study (Polit & Beck 2006:17; Creswell 2009:129). Case studies are seen as a means of empirical inquiry that investigates a particular phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin 2003b:13). Case studies provide an in-depth account of the events, relationships, experiences or processes occurring in that particular instance (Denscombe 2007:35). According to Henning (2004:40), case studies lend themselves to placement within an interpretive paradigm and therefore fit well with what was intended in this study.

Within case studies there is less emphasis on the general and more emphasis on the particular (Thomas 2011:3) to provide an in-depth description of one thing - such as a process, programme, event or activity (Miller & Salkind 2002:162, Hancock & Algozzine 2006:15; Denscombe 2007:35-37). Within this study, it was essential to obtain an in-

depth description of the current state of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. This description provided an in-depth understanding of the programme as well as the phenomenon which generated knowledge to inform policy development, professional practice and community action from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of the particular phenomenon (Simon 2009:21).

Denscombe (2007:35-37) states that the case may refer to a process, activity, event, programme or individual, or multiple individuals, and that it forms the basis of the investigation. The case study is normally about something that already exists. The phenomenon, which is studied, has identifiable boundaries (Henning *et al.* 2004:41; Gerring 2007:19) and is seen as a bounded system, bounded by time and place (Creswell 2007:73). The case or "bounded system" in this study was the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. This specific programme is situated within the CCYFS of North-West University. Multiple data collection methods are used in case studies (Creswell 2007:73; Denscombe 2007:35-37;), and in this particular study questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used.

A descriptive case study (Yin 2003; Stake 2005:445) was used as the descriptive case study endeavours to describe, analyse and interpret a particular phenomenon, which was required for this particular study. There are several procedures (Merriam 1998; Stake 1995) for conducting case studies. Stake's (1995) approach was highlighted by Miller and Salkind (2002:163-164) as conducting single or multiple case studies, which is also applied in this study. Stake (1995) identified the following stages when conducting case studies: Provide an in-depth study of a bounded system; ask questions about an issue under examination or about the details of a case that is of unusual interest; gather multiple forms of data to develop in-depth understanding; describe the case in detail and provide an analysis of issues or themes that the case presents; in both description and issue development, situate the case within its context or setting; and make an interpretation of the meaning of the case analysis.

The above stages, as indicated by Stake (1995), were applied to this study in the following manner: Before the researcher commenced with the empirical part of the study, the bounded system, namely the current postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, was explored in detail. This was followed by the second step, as suggested by

Stake (1995), where the research questions were formulated from the research problem. The next step includes multiple forms of data collections, which in this study included questionnaires, document review, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. This provided an in-depth understanding of the case. The case was described in detail, content data analysis was used to analyse the data, and concurring themes were determined. During the data analysis, the context of the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS was taken in account. The last step according to Stake is to make an interpretation of the meaning of the case analysis. Next, the case study was interpreted, the data was presented and recommendations were made.

## 5.3 RESEARCH PHASES

The research was conducted in three phases, as schematically represented in Figure 5.3:

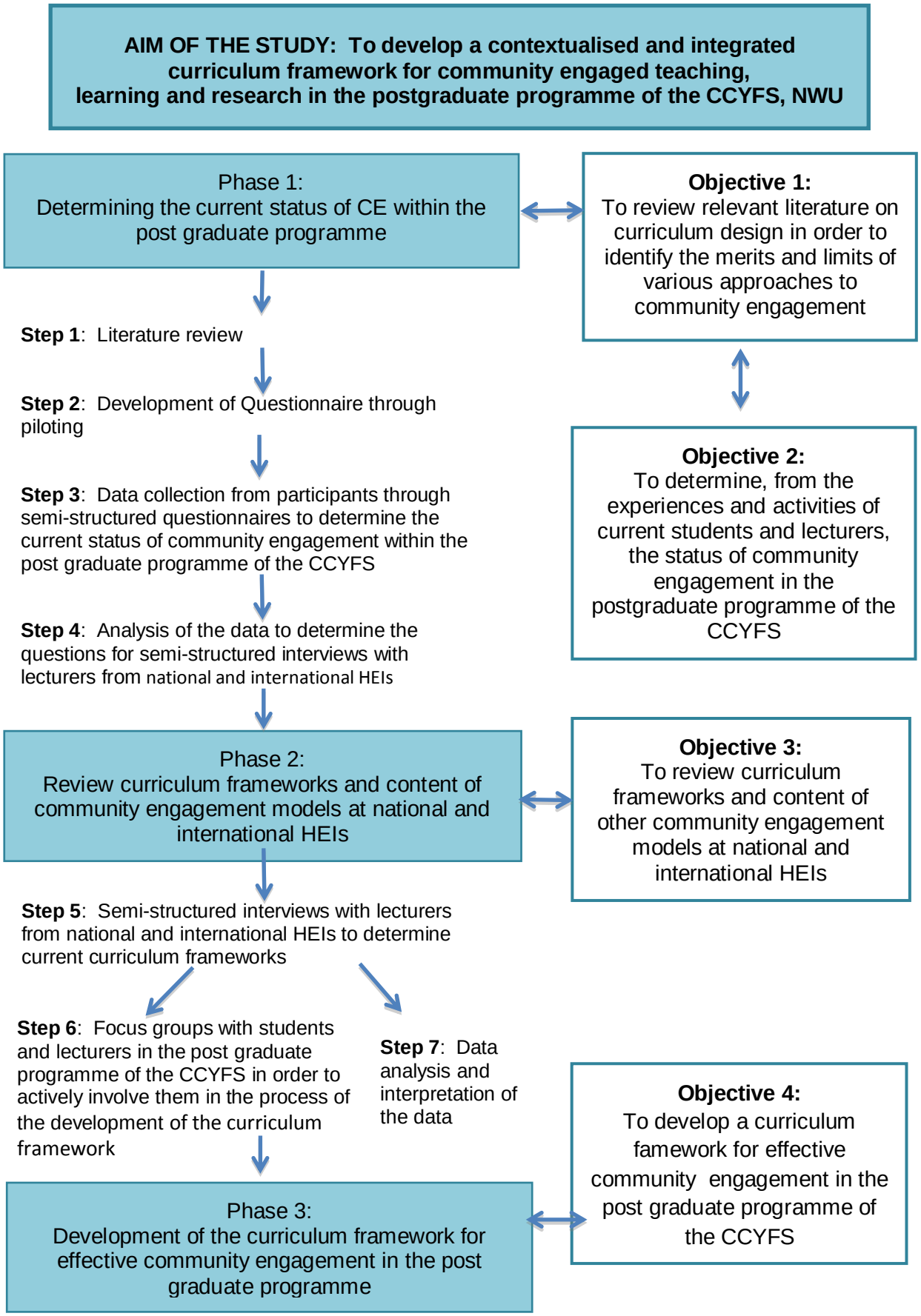


**Figure 5.3: A visual representation of the research phases in this study**

The aim of the study was to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. To achieve this aim, three objectives were formulated. The first objective was to review relevant literature on curriculum design in order to identify the merits and limits of various approaches to community engagement. The second objective was to determine from the experiences and activities of current students and lecturers, the status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

During Phase 1 of the research, the aim was to achieve Objective 1 and Objective 2. This was done through the following: a literature review (Step 1), the development of a questionnaire through piloting (Step 2), data collection from participants through semi-structured questionnaires to determine the current status of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS (Step 3), and the analysis of the data to determine the questions for semi-structured interviews with lecturers from national and international HEIs (Step 4).

Phase 2 of the research focused on the third objective, namely to review curriculum frameworks and the content of community engagement models at national and international HEIs. During this phase, semi-structured interviews with lecturers from national and international HEIs were conducted to determine current curriculum frameworks and the content of other community engagement models (Step 5). Focus groups with students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS were also conducted in order to actively involve them in the process of the development of the curriculum framework (Step 6). The data that was collected during this study was analysed and interpreted (Step 7).

During the last phase, Phase 3, the curriculum framework for effective community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS was developed to achieve the fourth objective, namely to develop a curriculum framework for effective community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

## 5.4 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The bounded case in this study, which is the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, consists of students as well as lecturers, and therefore participants for Phase 1 of the research were drawn from this group. The aim of the first phase was to determine, from the experiences and activities of current students and lecturers, the current status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. In Phase 2, the aim was to review curriculum frameworks and the content of other community engagement models at national and international HEIs. The participants during this phase comprised of lecturers from national as well as international HEIs. A group of current students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme was used in the focus groups as a source of validation and triangulated data control.

### 5.4.1 The selection of the participants

Purposive sampling was used as a type of sampling which allowed the researcher to select participants with specific knowledge or expertise to represent the population (Berg 2009:50-51). This sampling was done with a specific purpose in mind (Jansen 2007:10). Purposive sampling was used to obtain participants for the student questionnaire as well as the student focus group and the semi-structured interviews. Convenience sampling (Ritchie & Lewis 2003:81) was used to select participants for the lecturer questionnaire as well as the lecturer focus groups. This was regarded as an appropriate sampling method as the lecturers were easily accessible. Gerring (2007:21) writes that, although in case studies and therefore also in this particular case study, the sample is small and consists of a single case, the nature and aim of the qualitative enquiry is for depth rather than the "quantity of understanding" (also see Henning *et al.* 2004:3).

The characteristics of the population of interest were specified after which the selection criteria were formulated and the participants selected (Christensen, Johnsen & Turner 2011:159). With the first criterion, sufficiency was emphasised in order to ensure that the participants reflected the population and that others outside the sample might have a chance to connect with the experience of the participants (Seidman 1991:45).

Figure 5.4 below sets out the selection and inclusion criteria for participants in Phase 1 of the study.

**Selection criteria for participants in Phase 1**

**Participants for Phase 1:**

**(Questionnaire A)**

- **Inclusion criteria**

Registered students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU

Students in their second or third year of studies

Students who are proficient in English as the questionnaires were in English

Gender was not a criterion

Students who are willing to participate in the study as volunteers

- **Exclusion criteria**

Students who are still busy with their practicums and who are supervised by the researcher were excluded

First-year students were excluded as they have only been exposed to the theoretical modules of the programme

**Participants for Phase 1:**

**(Questionnaire B)**

- **Inclusion criteria**

Lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU

Lecturers willing to voluntarily participate in the study by completing a questionnaire

- **Exclusion criteria**

None

**Figure 5.4: Selection criteria for participants in Phase 1 of the study**

Figure 5.5 demonstrates inclusion as well as exclusion criteria for participants in Phase 2 of the study.

## Selection criteria for participants in Phase 2

**Participants for Phase 2 (semi-structured interviews)**

- **Inclusion criteria**

Needs to be a lecturer or researcher in a postgraduate academic programme at an HEI (national or international)

Proficient in English or Afrikaans

The postgraduate academic programme needs to focus on the training of therapist or counsellors with a practical or internship component

Experience or knowledge of community engagement and/or SL activities within their programme

Willing to voluntarily participate in a one-on-one semi-structured Skype/ telephone interview of about 1 hour

- **Exclusion criteria**

None

**Participants for Phase 2 (focus group with students)**

- **Inclusion criteria**

Registered students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU

Students in their second or third year of studies

Proficient in English as the focus group was conducted in English

Gender was not a criterion;

Willing to participate in the study as a volunteer

- **Exclusion criteria**

Students who are still busy with their practicums and who are supervised by the researcher were excluded.

First-year students were excluded as they have only been exposed to the theoretical modules of the programme

**Participants for Phase 2 (focus group with lecturers)**

- **Inclusion criteria**

Lecturers in the post-graduate programme of CCYFS, NWU

Lecturers who are willing to voluntarily participate in the study by completing a questionnaire.

- **Exclusion criteria**

None

**Figure 5.5: Selection criteria for participants in Phase 2**

### 5.4.2 Selection procedure of participants

In Phase 1, the data-gathering phase in which students were selected as participants to complete the questionnaires, a class list with all the current registered students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS was obtained from the administrative person at the CCYFS. This was done with permission from the programme head. An email with an attached information brochure outlining the purpose and aim of the study, a consent form as well as a questionnaire was sent to all the students. All the students who replied and who were willing to participate in the study were selected.

In order to select participants from the group of lecturers, an email with an information brochure outlining the study, as well as a questionnaire was send to all seven lecturers in the CCYFS postgraduate programme. All the lecturers who replied and who were willing to participate in the study were selected as participants.

Participants for the semi-structured interviews were selected by firstly doing an internet search to determine national and international HEIs that presented postgraduate degrees in counselling, play therapy and /or psychology and that met the specific criteria as stated above. The lecturers or researchers at these HEIs were contacted via email and requested to participate in the study. Those who replied and gave consent to participate were selected as participants in the interviews.

The participants for the first focus group were postgraduate students who gave consent to participate in the study and who indicated that they are also willing to participate in the focus group. The participants for the second focus group consisted of current lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS who indicated on their consent forms that they are willing to participate in a focus group.

## 5.5 DATA COLLECTION

The basic material with which researchers work can be quantitative or qualitative data. In order to draw valid conclusions from a study, it is essential that the researcher has sound data to analyse and interpret (Durrheim 2006:51). Creswell (2009:178-180) identifies various steps in the data collecting process, namely setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations

or interviews, documents and visual materials as well as establishing the protocol for recording the information.

To explore and describe this particular case study, multiple sources and mainly qualitative data collection methods (interviewing, semi-structured interviews and focus groups) were used in the data gathering process. Questionnaires were also used to obtain qualitative data. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:76) and Denscombe (2007:37), the use of multiple sources and various data collection methods is a key strength of the case study method. Creswell (2009:175) supports this by stating that in qualitative research different forms of data collection must be used, rather than relying on a single data source. Furthermore, Yin (2009:132) states that a case study design can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative data.

According to Silverman and Marvasti (2008:50), one of the unique features of qualitative research is that data collection is not only limited to a particular method or a set of variables, but is an open-ended process that encompasses all the contextual information related to the research topic and the research site. Silverman and Marvasti (2008:145) are also of the opinion that most research methods can be used in either qualitative or quantitative methodologies and that these research methods take on a specific meaning according to the methodology in which they are used. Different types of data collection are indicated, but the most suitable data collection methods that were used in this study are interviews (semi-structured interviews and focus groups) and questionnaires. Therefore, the next section will focus on the specific data collection methods used in this study.

### 5.5.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are research methods through which people are asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order (Delport 2011). Questionnaires can be used in case studies as they involve seeking the in-depth opinions and perspectives of a small number of participants. Two different questionnaires were used during the first phase of this case study. Each questionnaire will be described separately, and will be referred to as Questionnaire A and Questionnaire B.

#### *5.5.1.1 Construction of Questionnaire A*

The aim of the questionnaire was to determine the current state of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. Literature was reviewed and examined before the construction of the questionnaire to determine whether existing instruments could be used in the gathering of the information for this study. According to Hart and Northmore (2010), there is no simple solution for the development of audit and evaluation tools for measuring university community engagement. It was found that several instruments do exist (see Addendum E on attached CD for a summary of available approaches and tools) and that they measure specific aspects as indicated in Addendum E. None of the existing instruments seemed appropriate as they focused more on the institution. Hence, they were not applicable to provide an overview of community engagement within this specific programme. Therefore, the researcher found it necessary to design her own instrument to suit this specific study. In the development of the questionnaire, existing instruments were reviewed and a preliminary list of items was developed to correspond with the research question. The content of the questionnaire was also developed based on the perspectives gained from the literature review.

To enhance the accuracy of the questionnaire, the questions were discussed with the promoters and were pilot-tested to reduce the incidence of non-response to the questionnaire (Gray 2009:259). Pilot testing aims to identify problems and correct them before the instrument is used (Christensen *et al.* 2011:353). The piloting of the questionnaire was done and questions were reformulated and adapted according to the feedback received.

#### *5.5.1.2 Types of questions included in Questionnaire A*

This self-administrated questionnaire contained mostly open-ended questions as open questions provide the potential for richness of responses (Gray 2009:259, 337-339; Maree & Pietersen 2007:160-161). The questions were divided into various sections allowing for issues to be addressed in a logical sequence (Leedy & Armrod 2001). The questions were formulated based on the literature review (Chapters 2, 3 and 4) and were stated as follows:

Question 1: In which year of study were you in 2011? This question aimed to determine the current study year of the student. Alreck and Settle (2004:24) find that demographic groups differ significantly in terms of issues of importance. Hence, demographic groups can be used to identify segments, groups, audiences or constituencies of people who were both identifiable and behave in similar ways.

Question 2: Please state your current understanding of community engagement. This question focused on determining how the students see and define community engagement and specifically in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

Question 3: Do you think that you have benefitted from your involvement in the community (e.g. school, NGO, children's home) in which you did your internship/practical work other than gaining experience in play therapy? If yes, what did you gain/learn? If no, kindly motivate. The aim of this question was to determine whether their involvement in the community was to their benefit and, if so, how did they benefit from this involvement.

Question 4: Do you think that the community (e.g. school, NGO, children's home) benefitted from your involvement? If yes, how did they benefit? If no, please motivate. The focus of this question was to determine whether the students feel that the communities have benefitted from their involvement.

Question 5: Would you have wanted to be more involved in the community (e.g. school, NGO, children's home)? If yes, how do you think that would have been possible? The aim of the question was to determine whether the duration of the current involvement of the students in the community had been sufficient and whether the duration should be increased or decreased.

Question 6: Would you have preferred to be involved in a community from your first year? If yes, how do you think this could have happened? The question was aimed at determining whether the students feel that they want/need to be involved in the communities from their first year of study.

Question 7: Do you think that your internship gave you sufficient opportunities to achieve therapeutic competencies and skills? Yes/no, please motivate your answer.

The aim of the question was to determine whether the current programme (practical work/internship) provides sufficient opportunities for the students to achieve competencies in the skills that are taught.

Question 8: During your studies, you were exposed to experiences and given the opportunity to reflect on your experiences. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by marking the appropriate number with an X: Through reflection your sensitivity to the community was enhanced (Yes/No); Through reflection your awareness of social responsibility was enhanced (Yes/No); Reflection provided you with the opportunity to further understand the module content (Yes/No); Reflection provided you with the opportunity to broaden your appreciation of the discipline (Yes/No); Reflection provided you with the opportunity to make the connection between service and the module work (Yes/No). All of these questions focused on the affectivity of the use of reflection in the programme.

Question 9: Do you think that the theoretical modules, internship/practical and research were fully integrated (they received equal attention) into the curriculum? Yes/no, please motivate your answer. This question was aimed at determining how the students experienced the integration of the three core functions.

Question 10: Did you formulate your research question/problem from your internship/practical involvement? If yes/no, please motivate your answer. This question was aimed at determining whether the students were able to or could identify their research problem/question from their involvement in the community.

(See Addendum G on attached CD for Questionnaire A.)

#### *5.5.1.3 Construction of Questionnaire B*

As indicated in Section 5.5.1.1, several instruments can be used to determine the state of community engagement in a university, the details of which are indicated in Addendum E (on the attached CD). In the researcher's search for an appropriate instrument, she found a rubric which had been developed for use in academic departments. The questionnaire consisted of a rubric designed by Prof Kevin Kecskes, co-director of the Centre for Academic Excellence, Portland State University, USA. The rubric was designed to assess the capacity of a higher education academic department

for community engagement and to help its members identify various opportunities for engagement. The assessment rubric builds upon existing and/or validated prior work of Kecskes and Muyllaert (1997), Furco (2000, 2003), Gelmon and Seifer *et al.* (2005), and Kecskes (2006 as cited in Kecskes 2006). This instrument is based on advice from key informant interviews and the recognition of the importance of the role of academic departments in the overall institutionalisation of community engagement in higher education (Holland 2000; Furco 2002; Battistoni *et al*. 2003; Morreale & Applegate 2006; Saltmarsh & Gelmon 2006; Zlotkowski & Saltmarsh 2006 cited in Kecskes 2006). This questionnaire (see Addendum G on attached CD) was used after consultation with Prof Kecskes on 7 July 2011 and after permission was granted by him to use this instrument. The questionnaire was used to obtain the views and understanding of current lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS on the current state of community engagement within the CCYFS postgraduate programme.

The rubric is structured along six dimensions, which are considered by most community engagement experts to be key factors for the institutionalisation of community engagement in higher education academic departments (Wergin 1994, 2003; Holland 1997; Battistoni *et al*. 2003; Gelmon & Seifer *et al*. 2005; Zlotkowski 2005 cited in Kecskes 2006). Each dimension is composed of several components that characterise the dimension. For each component, a four-stage continuum of development has been established. This continuum starts with Stage 1, which indicates levels of *awareness building.* This is followed by Stage 2, which is described as *critical mass building.* Stage 3 focuses on *quality building* while Stage 4 focuses on *institutionalisation.* This continuum suggests how a department can shift from Stage 1, which is awareness building, to the full institutionalisation of community engagement within the academic unit (Furco 2000, 2003; Kecskes & Muyllaert 1997 as cited in Kecskes 2006).

The conceptual framework for the rubric is based largely on three knowledge sources: 1) the prior self-assessment rubric, matrix and benchmark instruments cited above; 2) various literature sources that discuss the critical elements for institutionalising community engagement in higher education; and 3) key informant interviews that provided foundational information for the development and enhancement of this rubric (Kecskes 2006). (See Addendum H on attached CD for Questionnaire B.)

### 5.5.2 Interviewing

Interviewing as an important qualitative data collection method was used in this study. Interviewing is regarded as a more natural form of interacting with people than asking them to complete a questionnaire, do a test or perform some experimental task. Therefore, interviewing fits well with an interpretive paradigm of research (Kelly 2006:297). Within this study, through the interviews, the researcher attempted to understand the programme from the participants' point of view and to provide an opportunity for the meaning of the participants' experiences to unfold and for their lived world to be uncovered (Kvale, cited in Sewell 2001:1).

Interviews are used to obtain information through direct interchange with individuals or a group that is known or expected to have the knowledge that the researcher is seeking (DePoy & Gilson 2008:108). Greeff (2011:342) describes the interview as a social relationship designed to exchange information between the participant and the researcher.

According to Fontana and Frey (2005:698-699), qualitative researchers realise that interviews are not neutral tools of data gathering but rather active interactions between two or more people leading to negotiated, contextually-based results. The use of interviews as a means of data gathering is seen as a "universal mode of systematic inquiry".

#### *5.5.2.1 Semi-structured interviews*

Semi-structured interviews are non-standardised and are often used in qualitative data collection. The interviewer has a list of issues or questions but may not deal with all of them in each interview. The order of questions may also change depending on what direction the interview takes. Additional questions may be asked, including some which were not anticipated at the start of the interview, as new issues arise (Bernard 2000:191; Gray 2009:373). Thomas (2011:163) sees semi-structured interviews as getting the best of both worlds. During the interview, structure is provided by a list of issues (rather than specific questions) to be covered and the researcher or interviewer has the freedom to follow up points as necessary. The list of issues is also referred to as the interview schedule.

In this study, semi-structured interviews (Nieuwenhuis 2007:87; Denscombe 2007:177; Greeff 2011:351-352) with lecturers at HEIs were used as data collection method. The semi-structured interviews allowed for the flexibility to respond to the emerging perspectives of the interviewees as the interviews unfolded (Merriam 1988). The participants for these interviews were selected through purposive sampling and according to the specific criteria as described in section 5.4.1. An interview guide was used during these interviews. An interview guide is described by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:103) as a set of areas and questions about a certain topic that the researcher brings to the interview. The interview guide was compiled after a literature review and with the information obtained from the completed questionnaires. To ensure the appropriateness of the questions, the interview guide was verified by experts in the field of community engagement. These experts also had knowledge about the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. How these interviews were conducted and the information obtained during the interviews is presented in Chapter 6.

#### *5.5.2.2 Telephonic interviews*

Greeff (2011:355) states that the increasing use of telephone interviews across diverse fields of research suggests that the method has significant value. Since the time required for an effective telephone interview is less than in a face-to-face situation, telephone interviews are suitable for projects with a clearly defined focus. In this study, telephone or Skype interviews were used as the participants were from HEIs situated all over the country as well as beyond South Africa's borders. Greeff (2011:356) suggests that in preparation for the telephone interview an initial letter or e-mail should be sent to the participants. This letter should contain the following information: an introduction of yourself, what you are aiming to find out, when you will contact the participant, the duration of the interview and your contact details. The relevant letter, as well as consent forms, was e-mailed to all the identified lecturers at the various HEIs. The consent form included permission to participate in the study as well as permission to record the interview.

#### *5.5.2.3 Focus groups as interviewing method*

Focus group is a general term given to a research interview conducted with a group (Leedy & Ormrod 2005:146; Kelly 2006:305). A focus group is typically a group of

people who share a similar type of experience or have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic, but who are not "naturally" constituted as an existing social group (Kelly 2006:305; Wilkinson 2008:177). The focus group provides an environment that encourages participants to share perceptions, points of view, experiences, wishes and concerns (Kelly 2006:305). Thomas (2011:164) states that focus groups are different from group interviews where researcher takes a lead role and controls the discussion. In a focus group, the researcher is a facilitator or moderator who aims to facilitate a discussion between participants.

According to Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2005:903), focus groups are efficient because they generate large quantities of material from relatively large numbers of people in a relatively short time and produce data that is seldom obtained through individual interviewing and observation. Frith and Gleeson (2012:64) add that focus groups can encourage participants who feel reticent about expressing their views to talk. They also note that focus groups can provide an opportunity to hear other views, which can stimulate discussions and allow for the elaboration and evaluation of contributions. Gary (2011:233) agrees that a focus group allows for a variety of views to emerge, while group dynamics can often allow for the stimulation of new perspectives. This study used focus groups as method of data collection as this provided an opportunity for the participants to share their experiences in a group situation. The group furthermore provided an opportunity for stimulated discussions. The implementation of the focus groups and the data obtained will be discussed in Chapter 6.

### 5.5.3 Document review

The value of documents as research data is frequently underestimated in conventional research methods books (Berg 1998). In the present study, programme documents (e.g. curriculum content and frameworks) were collected. The data was valuable because it clarified data from the interviews. In addition, these documents facilitated the process of data triangulation by corroborating data collected during the interviews (Yin 1989).

## 5.6 VALIDITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Qualitative data is often criticised for a lack of objectivity and, as a result, for not being trustworthy. Lincoln and Guba (1985:294-301) describe four criteria that should guide the validity and trustworthiness of qualitative data, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. These criteria will be used as guidelines when describing each of the criteria and how they were applied in this study.

### 5.6.1 Credibility

Credibility can be explained as a measure that is parallel to internal validity. The focus leans more towards the establishment of the match between the constructed realities of the participants and those realities as represented by the researcher and attributed to various stakeholders (Crawford, Leybourne & Arnott 2000:1-5). Validity, according to Denscombe (2010:143), also concerns the accuracy of the questions asked, the data collected and the explanations offered. It generally relates to the data and analysis used in the research, and the quality of the data and explanations. Silverman (2005:210-213) describes validity as another word for "the truth". Credibility in this study was enhanced by collecting data from different sources, which included the students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, as well as using different data collection methods. All the participants were informed about the research and written consent was obtained for participation as well as for the recording of the interviews. The transcribed interviews were given to the lecturers that participated in the semi-structured interviews to check for misunderstanding. The researcher conducted all the interviews with individuals and focus groups. The questionnaires were pilot-tested and the interview schedules for the interviews were tested by experts in the field of community engagement.

### 5.6.2 Transferability

Transferability was achieved by thick descriptions (Lincoln & Guba 1985). The range of information that could be obtained was maximised, and the use of multiple data collection methods (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus groups) and sources (students and lecturers) to collect the data, increased the validity and trustworthiness of the data and therefore also the results of the study (Denscombe 2007:136, 297; Schurink *et al.* 2011:420; Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011:51). Flick (2002),

cited by Denzin and Lincoln (2005:5), states that a combination of multiple methodological practices, empirical materials, perspectives and observers in a single study is best understood as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any inquiry.

### 5.6.3 Dependability

Dependability is seen as parallel to reliability. This measure is concerned with the stability of the data over time. The researcher needs to be able to demonstrate any changes or shifts in how the inquiry was conducted (Crawford *et al.* 2000:1-5). Within this study, dependability was achieved by means of an audit trail of the entire research process. There were no changes or shifts in the study, and the research process for the study was followed as indicated in the research proposal, which was approved by the NWU's Research and Ethics Committee. Denscombe (2010:144) writes that reliability relates to the methods of data collection and the concern that these data collection methods should be consistent and not misrepresent the findings. This includes an evaluation of the methods used to collect the data. In addition, the research process needs to be able to provide the same results under different circumstances. Throughout the study, the researcher aimed to construct the study soundly, to use the correct measures to conduct the research and to establish a chain of evidence, forward and backwards (Soy 2006:4).

### 5.6.4 Conformability

Conformability is described as being parallel to objectivity. It is the need to show that data, interpretations and outcomes of inquiries are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the researcher and that the data is not simply creations of the researcher's imagination. All the data needs to be traceable to its source. The logic used to assemble the interpretations into structurally coherent and corroborating wholes needs to be both explicit and implicit in the narrative of the case study (Crawford *et al*. 2000:1-5). In this study, conformability was established by the recording the interviews and transcribing them verbatim to ensure an accurate reflection of the participants' views.

### 5.6.5 Data triangulation

In qualitative research, validity refers to whether the findings of a study accurately reflect the situation and whether the evidence supports the research findings. In order to verify and establish validity within qualitative studies, triangulation is used. This is done through the analysis of the research question from multiple perspectives (Guion, Diehl & McDonald 2011). Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:51) support the fact that triangulation is one way to confirm the validity of research findings by using two different methods to get to the same research question and identifying convergence in the research findings. When two methods produce the same findings, this serves to enhance the validity of the research results. Silverman and Marvasti (2008:260) describe triangulation as an attempt to get a "true" fix on a situation by combining different ways of looking at it.

Within the study, data triangulation, as triangulation method, was used to increase the validity of the study. Data triangulation involves different sources of information in order to increase the validity of the study. These sources are likely to be involved in a programme as participants, other researchers, programme staff or community members (Guion *et al.* 2011). Students as well as lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS were used as sources to obtain data.

## 5.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The process of data analysis and interpretation is an integral part of research, and it commences when data production is initiated. Gibbs (2007:1) describes the process of qualitative data analysis as some kind of transformation where the data is processed, through an analytic procedure, into a clear, understandable, insightful, trustworthy and even original analysis. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the data (Creswell 2005). Bryman (2004:392) writes that qualitative content analysis is seen as the most established approach to the qualitative analysis of documents. According to Bryman (2004:392), it consists of a "searching-out" of underlying themes in the materials that are being analysed with an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge from the data and recognising the significance of understanding the meaning of the context in which an item is being analysed. Hancock (2002:17) describes content

analysis as a procedure where verbal or behavioural data is categorised in order to classify and summarise it.

Content analysis involves coding and classifying the data, or categorising or indexing it (Hancock 2002:17). Corbin and Strauss (2008:66) state that analysis involves coding which involves taking raw data and raising it to a conceptual level. Coding is the verb, and the concepts derived through coding are referred to as codes. Coding actually involves interaction with data (analysis) using techniques such as asking questions about the data, making comparisons between the data and deriving concepts to represent those data. Creswell (2005:238) describes the coding process in qualitative content data analysis as starting with an initial reading of the text, dividing it into segments based on the study's objectives and starting to create codes. Next, the codes are reduced or combined into themes. During this study, Tesch's (1990:142-145) coding process was used.

The data analysis also includes, as stated by Niewenhuis (2007c:99), an interpretive viewpoint as the researcher aims to examine the meaningful and symbolic content of the data and tries to establish how participants derive meaning from a specific phenomenon. To achieve this, the researcher allows categories to emerge from the data and recognises the significance of this for understanding the meaning of the context in which the data is being analysed (Bryman 2004:392).

Hancock (2002:17) identifies two levels of content analysis, namely the basic level of analysis, which is a descriptive account of the data as it was said with no assumptions, and the higher level of analysis, which is interpretive and concerned with what was meant by the response or implied. This is also called the latent level of analysis. In this particular study, data was analysed on two levels: the basic level of analysis where the actual words used by the respondents were analysed, and the higher or latent level of analysis where these words were conceptualised by the researcher and represented in a qualitative manner. According to Henning *et al.* (2004:132), the actual linking of categories do not take place descriptively, but rather on a conceptual level, which implies that the text is converted into concepts.

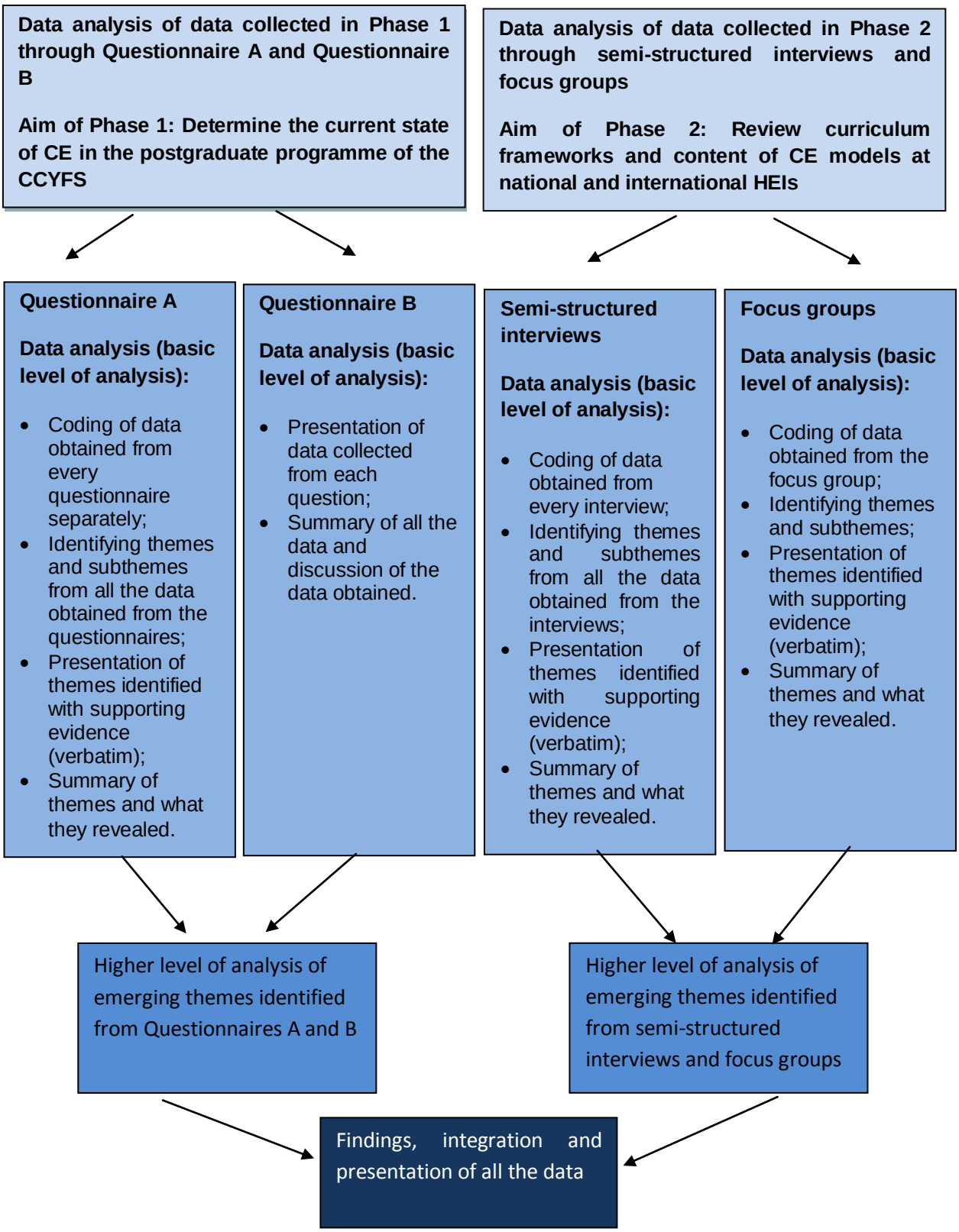


**Figure 5.6: Visual display of the data analysis process followed in this study**

## 5.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The prescribed ethical procedures of Stellenbosch University were aligned with the ethical standards set in the literature (Denscombe 2007). This study was approved by North-West University's Ethics Committee with reference number 620/2011 (see Addendum C on attached CD) after an application for ethical clearance had been submitted. The permission for the study and institutional clearance to use the NWU students and staff members was obtained from NWU (see Addendum D on attached CD). In line with general research practice, the ethical framework in which the study was conducted covered the following:

### 5.8.1 Avoidance of harm

A fundamental ethical rule of social research is that it must bring no harm to participants (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee 2006:141; Babbie 2007:27). The researcher has an ethical obligation to protect the participants against any physical and/or emotional harm (Leedy & Ormrod 2005:101; Strydom 2011:115-116). This includes informing the participants beforehand of the possible impact of the study, which will offer the respondents the opportunity to withdraw from the study if they so wish (Strydom 2011:115-116). Before the study commenced, the researcher informed all the participant of their rights. This included their right to withdraw at any time during the study. All possible steps to avoid any harm to the participants were also taken.

### 5.8.2 Voluntary participation

Participation should be voluntary at all times and no one should be forced to participate in a project (Rubin & Babbie 2005:71). Letters were sent out to participants to request their participation and only those who volunteered to participate were used in the study.

### 5.8.3 Informed consent

Babbie (2007:64) states that increasingly voluntary participation and no harm to participants have become formalised as informed consent. Written informed consent is essential (Wassenaar 2006:72; Babbie 2007:64; Thomas 2011:69) and this was obtained from all the participants. The participants were provided with information to understand what the research is about (purpose of study), the identity of the

researcher, the basis on which participants have been selected for the study, what the participation entails, the time and effort needed by those whose collaboration was being sought, the intended purpose of the data, the means for ensuring the security of the data storage and the extent of anonymity and confidentiality that were assured, the voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw at any time, and a signature and date to provide written consent (Denscombe 2010:67-69). The participants also had to agree voluntarily to participate and this agreement was based on full and open information (Christians 2005:144; Thompson & Chambers 2012:28). Duncan and Watson (2010:49) emphasise the importance of transparency in the research process. By adopting a transparent stance, researchers acknowledge their limitations in addressing troubling ethical dilemmas. The right to decline participation was incorporated in the wording of the consent form and was stressed in the explanations. Participants were respectfully requested to participate, with the right to decline. They could also withdraw at any time during the investigation. If they agreed to participate, a consent form was signed. Confidentiality was protected by saving the data on a hard drive that is password secured. Minimal pressure was put on the participants in terms of the Skype/telephone interviews, as the researcher arranged the interviews at a date and time that suited the participants best (see Addendum D on the attached CD).

All the participants in the study were informed that participation in the study was of a voluntary nature and that their responses would be treated with confidentiality. None of the information was disclosed in any way that allowed the information to be traced back to the individual who provided it (Denscombe 2010:64-65). The identities of all the participants were also protected through the use of pseudonyms for the participants as well as their organisation (Denscombe 2010:65).

### 5.8.4 Deception

Deception includes the misleading of participants, deliberately misrepresenting facts or withholding information from the participants (Sruwig & Stead 2001:69), withholding information or offering incorrect information in order to ensure the participation of subjects when they would otherwise possibly have refused it (Corey *et al.* 1993:230). Strydom (2011:119) also distinguishes between deliberate deception and deception of which the researcher was not aware. According to Christians (2005:145), deliberate

misrepresentation is prohibited. All possible measures were taken not to deceive any of the participants in the study. There was no reason for the researcher not to be open and honest about the purpose of the study.

### 5.8.5 Privacy and confidentiality

Lichtman (2010:55) writes that any individual who participates in a research study has a reasonable expectation that the information provided will be treated in a confidential manner. Codes of ethics insist on safeguards to protect people's identities and those of the research locations. Confidentiality must be assured as the primary safeguard against unwanted exposure. All personal data was secured and made public behind a shield of anonymity (Christians 2005:145; Leedy & Ormrod 2005:102; Denscombe 2010:64-65; Thompson & Chamber 2012:29). The privacy of the participants were ensured by using proper, scientific sampling as it ensures that no person was involved in the study merely because the researcher knows, or do not know, the person, or because it was convenient for the researcher to involve certain persons (Strydom 2011:120). All the information that was obtained during the interviews was treated as strictly confidential.

### 5.8.6 Publication

According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:146), the publication of the research results is important as it is a way of communicating the results to the scientific community. With the publication of the research results, it was important that participants were not identified by name or in any other way that could make it possible for them to be identified. The data that may be reported in scientific journals as well as in the final dissertation does not include any information that identifies the participant or the HEI that he/she represented.

### 5.8.7 Accuracy

Ensuring the accuracy of data is an important principle (Christians 2005:145), and this was valued throughout.

## 5.9 CONCLUSION

A detailed description of the research methodology that was followed in the study was provided. The aim of the research was described by explaining the objectives of each of the three phases, and it was supported by the applicable research design. The criteria for selection were provided as well as the criteria for inclusion and exclusion. The context of the study was also explained. This chapter also covered the interpretive and explorative research paradigm that situated the study within qualitative research as a form of social research. It indicated how qualitative research was applicable to the research problem, questions and purpose. The supporting research methodology of case studies and the subsequent strategies and methods associated with it supported this type of enquiry.

To summarise, the orientation of this case study was to accommodate an interpretive paradigm. The case study was firstly explorative as it seeks to obtain clarity and generate an understanding of the problem that is being addressed. Secondly, it was descriptive, as it sought to give detailed descriptions of the social phenomenon under investigation, i.e. community engagement at an HEI. Thirdly, it was interpretive; seeking to gain an understanding of the meaning and relevance of the data gathered relating to community engagement in curriculum development. This combined approach to the case under investigation was used to capture the complex reality that is being questioned. The case study, which contained both quantitative and qualitative data, was confined to the context of the CCYFS, NWU.

Data analyses and data triangulation were outlined, and issues relating to reliability, trustworthiness and ethics were addressed. Data triangulation will be used to increase the validity of the study. The detailed description of the methodology provides a framework for the results. The next chapter presents the content of the data as it emerged through the methods described in this chapter.

# CHAPTER 6

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY AND DATA ANALYSIS

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters contained a literature review on higher education, internationally as well as in South Africa, with a focus on all the changes and challenges within higher education, an overview of community engagement, curriculum development and the research design and methodology used in the empirical portion of the study. In this chapter, the implementation of the study will be explained. This includes a description of the participants in the study as well as the data produced from the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. This will be followed by a discussion of the analysed data.

## 6.2 STUDY IMPLEMENTATION

### 6.2.1 The participants

Postgraduate students who completed their studies at the CCYFS participated in the piloting of Questionnaire A. A total of 20 registered students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS who gave written consent to voluntarily participate in the completion of the questionnaire, were used as the participants. Of these 20 students, six are in their second year of study, four in their third year of study and ten have been studying for longer than three years.

Another 20 students were excluded from this study as they were still busy with their practicums and they received supervision from the researcher. It was a requirement of the NWU that none of the researcher's own students could participate in this study. First-year students were also excluded as they only had exposure to the theoretical modules of the programme.

Six lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS were used as participants in the completion of Questionnaire B. All of them gave written consent to voluntarily

participate in the study. At the time of the completion of the questionnaires, seven lecturers formed part of the programme. Two of these lecturers are senior lecturers, three are lecturers and one is a junior lecturer.

A total of 13 lecturers participated in the semi-structured interviews. These participants were all lecturers at an HEI. Six of these lecturers were from international HEIs and seven were from South African HEIs. The participants were from different job levels: four are professors, one an associate professor, six have PhDs and two are lecturers. They also represented different professions: eight were from psychology, one from counselling, one from social work, one from play therapy and two from child and youth studies.

Eight registered postgraduate students of the CCYFS participated in the focus group. Eight current lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS participated in the second focus group for the lecturers.

### 6.2.2 Procedure

The data was collected over a period of 11 months. The questionnaires were completed between September 2011 and December 2011. The semi-structured interviews were conducted from April 2012 until June 2012. The lecturers from the HEIs who participated in the semi-structured interviews had full schedules and it was a challenge to accommodate everybody. Some of the interviews were conducted in the early hours of the morning. The quality of the Skype interviews was a challenge at times as there were due to delays in the sound. The two focus groups were conducted in July 2012.

#### *6.2.2.1 Questionnaires*

The aim of the first phase of this study was to determine the current state of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The data collection method that was used to achieve this consisted of two questionnaires. Questionnaire A was completed by current students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS and Questionnaire B was completed by current lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. Although questionnaires are mainly associated with quantitative data, the researcher used the questionnaires to obtain qualitative data as well. The qualitative

data collected through the first questionnaire (Questionnaire A) was analysed by means of content analysis and the data collected from the second questionnaire (Questionnaire B) was described.

(a) Questionnaire A

A list with recent graduates from the CCYFS was obtained from the administration offices at the CCYFS. The questionnaire was first piloted (Delport 2005:167) by sending an information letter with a questionnaire to the recent graduates from the CCYFS. These students did not form part of the sample population of the study. Five completed questionnaires were received within two weeks. The questionnaire was reformulated and adapted based on the feedback received from these students. After the piloting of the questionnaires, the participants were selected through purposive sampling and the semi-structured Questionnaire A was administered (Delport 2005:167). A cover letter was drawn up explaining the aim and purpose of the study, the ethical aspects of the study, and the participant's rights pertaining to the study. Next, the questionnaires, cover letters and consent forms (see Addendum F on attached CD) were emailed to all 100 registered students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS as they reside all over South Africa. The cover letter also emphasised the importance of the study, assured participants of anonymity, provided participants with a means of reaching the researcher should they have any questions, and addressed the issue of informed consent. It stated that the completion of the questionnaire indicated consent but emphasised that participation was voluntary and that participants were free to withdraw at any stage. A total of 20 completed questionnaires (5% of the total) were received within two weeks after distributing them. The students who completed the questionnaires consisted of ten students who have been registered for more than three years, six students who are in their second year of studies and four who are in their third year of studies. The questionnaires were self-administered and the information obtained from the students was used to obtain the students' view and understanding of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS as well as to structure the questions for the semi-structured telephonic/Skype interviews with lecturers from national and international HEIs.

(b) Questionnaire B

Questionnaire B was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the aim and purpose of the study, the ethical aspects and the participant's rights pertaining to the study. The questionnaires, cover letters and consent forms were emailed to all of the lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. These participants were selected through convenience sampling. The cover letter also outlined the importance of the study and assured participants of anonymity. Participants were provided with a means to contact the researcher should they have any questions, and the issue of informed consent was addressed. The cover letter stated that the completion of the questionnaire indicated consent, but it was emphasised that participation was voluntary and that participants were free to withdraw at any stage. Six (85%) completed questionnaires were received within a week after sending them out.

#### *6.2.2.2 Semi-structured interviews*

Emails with a request to participate in the study, a cover letter explaining the aim and purpose of the study, as well as all the ethical aspects and the participants' rights pertaining to the study, and consent forms were sent to HEI lecturers identified as possible participants and who met the inclusion criteria. These participants were selected through purposive sampling. These emails were re-sent at a later stage as the initial response was slow. Thirteen lecturers were willing to participate in the study and were used as participants. Their consent forms were received and an interview was scheduled with each of them.

The interviews were done either via Skype or telephone as the participants resided all over the country. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and one hour. The sound quality via Skype was distracting at times but provided an effective way to conduct the interviews. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim directly after each interview for data analysis to be done. The transcribed interviews were sent back to each participant to verify the content.

A summary of each transcribed interview is presented as Addendum I on the attached CD.

Although the researcher envisaged a more extensive response to the study, the participants in the study were all experienced in their fields and their input and knowledge were considered very valuable.

Table 6.1 provides details of the participants' respective job levels as well as subject groups. Initials are used as pseudonyms to indicate each participant. The table also indicates whether participants were from national or international HEIs.

**Table 6.1: Summary of the participants in semi-structured interviews**

| Participant | Job level | Subject group | National/International HEI |
|---|---|---|---|
| Participant 1 (JC) | Professor | Psychology | International |
| Participant 2 (MB) | PhD | Counselling | International |
| Participant 3 (SJ) | PhD | Psychology | International |
| Participant 4 (TG) | Lecturer | Psychology | National |
| Participant 5 (DK) | PhD | Psychology | National |
| Participant 6 (MJ) | Professor | Play Therapy | International |
| Participant 7 (BB) | Assoc Professor | Social Work | International |
| Participant 8 (AF) | Lecturer | Psychology | National |
| Participant 9 (KW) | Professor | Psychology | International |
| Participant 10 (RS) | PhD | Social Work/ Child and Family | National |
| Participant 11 (PN) | PhD | Psychology | National |
| Participant 12 (TG2) | PhD | Psychology | National |
| Participant 13 (NR) | PhD | Child and Family | National |

#### *6.2.2.3 Focus group interviews*

Two focus group interviews were held after all the semi-structured personal interviews were conducted. This took place a week after the last semi-structured interview. Eight registered students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS participated in the focus group for students and eight lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the

CCYFS participated in the focus group for lecturers. The focus group provided an opportunity to clarify issues and to verify the proposed framework. Written consent was obtained from all the participants. The guide or schedule for the focus group sessions was developed parallel to the topics covered in the interview schedule. Interviews were conducted at the Centre for Child, Youth and Family Studies at North-West University. The focus group interviews lasted between 70 minutes and 90 minutes.

The following procedures were followed in the focus groups:

- The aim and purpose of the focus group was explained to the participants.
- The participants were seated in a circle so that every member could potentially participate fully.
- Questions formulated from the data obtained through the interviews were used to prompt the discussion.

Both focus group interviews were electronically recorded and transcribed verbatim directly after each group interview.

#### *6.2.2.4 Document review*

The documents reviewed included documents on the curriculum frameworks of the HEIs involved in the study and the module content of these academic programmes. The document data was valuable as it informed the data obtained through the interviews. The document analysis facilitated the process of data triangulation by corroborating the data collected through the interviews.

## 6.3 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED

As data analysis and interpretation are integral components of research, this process was started as soon as the data had been collected. First, the data from Questionnaire A and the interviews were analysed, classified and summarised on the basic level of analysis (content analysis). The data analysis process started with the preparation of the data. This was done by transcribing the interviews, sorting the notes and arranging all the data. Next, the researcher read through all the data to obtain a general sense of all the information and to reflect on its overall meaning. The researcher began the

detailed analysis and the coding process by organising all the material into segments of text before bringing meaning to the information. This was done by firstly getting a sense of the whole by carefully reading all the transcribed interviews. The researcher then picked one transcribed interview and read through it to get a bigger picture of the content provided. The researcher's own thoughts were written in the margins. The researcher repeated this with each interview and made a list of all the topics touched on in the interviews. Similar topics were clustered together and were sorted into columns. With this list, the researcher went back to the data and abbreviated the topics as codes. The various codes were indicated on the transcribed text. The most descriptive words were used for the topics and these were turned into categories. The number of categories were reduced by grouping together topics that related to each other. A final decision on the abbreviations for each category was made and the abbreviations were arranged in alphabetical order. The data belonging to each category was then assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis was performed. Where necessary, the data was recorded. Next, the dominant categories, themes and subthemes were identified as guided by the conceptual framework of HE and community engagement.

Recurring patterns and themes were noticed during this basic analysis, which was followed by a higher level interpretive analysis. The aim of the higher level analysis was to identify the patterns or themes which underpin the main findings of the study.

This process included an interpretive viewpoint as the researcher aimed to examine the meaningful and symbolic content of the data and tried to establish how the participants turned specific phenomena into meaning. This was done by allowing the categories to emerge from the data and by the recognising of the significance of understanding the meaning of the context in which the data is being analysed. The researcher's own sense of what to look for was informed by the initial processes of selecting a research topic as well as the theoretical framework and context within which the study was conducted.

### 6.3.1 Data obtained through Questionnaire A

The dominant themes arising from Questionnaire A completed by current students in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS were identified during the basic level of

analysis (content analysis) and this will be presented in the next section. Some of the participants' responses are included. Verbatim quotes are used where applicable and only significant remarks as recorded are presented. Table 6.2 provides a summary of the themes and subthemes that were identified.

**Table 6.2: Summary of themes and codes identified through Questionnaire A**

| Themes | Code | Subthemes |
|---|---|---|
| Defining community engagement | DCE | Community engagement as a process |
| | | Community engagement as a service to the community |
| | | Practicum as community engagement |
| | | Giving back to the community |
| | | An opportunity to become more aware of the needs of the community |
| Relevant and meaningful service | MS | Community as beneficiary |
| | | Student as beneficiary |
| | | Raising awareness of the needs of the community |
| Structuring of community involvement in the curriculum | SC | Duration of involvement |
| | | Community involvement and the curriculum |
| Supervision | S | |
| Reflection | R | |
| Research in the curriculum | RE | |
| Integration of teaching, research and service | TRS | |

#### *6.3.1.1 Defining community engagement*

It was essential to determine how the participants viewed and perceived community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. In their understanding and conceptualisation of community engagement, the following concepts were highlighted:

**(c) Community engagement as a process**

Several of the participants indicated that their perception of community engagement is that it is a process. Responses such as the following were recorded:

> "To me community engagement is a process whereby a person attempts to serve a community as well as trying to empower that community to serve itself."

> "To me community engagement refers to the process by which the community is benefitted through individuals, groups of people, companies, churches, wellness centres and NGOs to empower those in the community on an ongoing basis to manage their own lives to their full potential."

**(d) Community engagement as a service to the community**

In their understanding of community engagement, the concept of service was apparent. Most participants saw community engagement as a service to the community. This statement is supported by the following responses:

> "... a formal accredited programme in which a service is provided to the community ..."

> "A service that is provided to benefit the community."

**(e) Practicum as community engagement**

Several students referred to community engagement as the practicums in which they were involved. They saw community engagement equal to the practicum, as stated in this example:

> "... it refers to those practical hours done with individual and group play therapy sessions."

**(f) Giving back to the community**

The students strongly emphasised that their understanding of community engagement included that they give something back to the community. This is supported by the following statements:

> "Giving back to the community so they may benefit from our knowledge and help."

> "This is where the student engages with the community in a way to give back to them."

(g) **Raising awareness of the needs of the community**

Several students indicated that through their involvement in communities they became more aware of the needs of the community. Therefore, they see community engagement as an opportunity to raise their awareness of the needs of communities. As stated by one respondent:

> "To be aware of the needs of the community ..."

#### *6.3.1.2 Relevant and meaningful service*

All of the participants indicated that through their involvement in communities, these communities gained in some way.

**(h) Community as beneficiary**

All of the participants were of the view that the community gained from their involvement in the community. Their reasons for this differed. The majority indicated that the children benefitted from the therapy. As stated by some participants:

> "The community is not able to access therapeutic services easily. They have to travel long distances, which also costs money they do not have. The community definitely benefitted by having easy access to therapy services."

> "I provided therapy sessions to children who could not normally access therapeutic services because of cost/opportunity. The calibre of the play therapist interns was high as all were honours graduates and had completed a full year of rigorous theoretical training."

Some participants indicated that the community benefitted from their involvement because they received a free service:

> "... the children that I helped could not afford professional help. In this way parents and children could get the necessary support they needed."

Some students were of the opinion that only a small group from the community benefitted from their services, as stated:

> "Although in general it is a small minority that benefit …"

> "I don't think the children benefitted as much from it as I had hoped they would."

(i) **Student as beneficiary**

All of the participants indicated that they benefitted from their involvement in the communities. Most of them indicated that they gained on a professional and personal level. Their involvement in the community provided them with an opportunity to apply theory in practice, as stated by some of the participants:

> "My personal growth was amazing. I became more self-aware of my own processes, as well as how to deal with others' processes. I also learnt how to distance myself in order to protect myself from the brokenness in a way which does not make me a 'hard' person."

> "… I found the theoretical aspects came together in a way that made me look at the school in a different way as well as learning more about their own unique challenges. In terms of personal growth, I feel I grew tremendously over that period of time as well."

Half of the participants indicated that the programme gave them enough opportunities to achieve therapeutic competencies and skills. Their reasons included their exposure to a wide range of cases and sufficient opportunities in the community:

> "At CMR a social worker gets exposure to a lot of different cases."

> "I found the combination of internal and external supervision to be helpful in obtaining important skills. I also found the combination of individual and group

> therapy to broaden my scope of therapeutic competencies. I also worked with many different age groups as well as presenting reasons for therapy which I found to broaden my field of experience."

One participant mentioned that through her involvement in the community, the "gaps" in the curriculum became more apparent, as stated:

> "The complexities of the needs of the children became more apparent. The gaps in the curriculum also became more apparent."

#### *6.3.1.3 Structure of community involvement in the curriculum*

The information the students shared provided insight into how community involvement can be structured within the curriculum.

**(j) Duration of involvement**

In terms of the duration of their involvement in the communities, half of the students indicated that their involvement in the community was long enough by stating the following:

> "I was involved in a very satisfactory manner to the extent where I felt overwhelmed and swallowed by the need of those in the community."

> "I think the practical hours were sufficient."

> "I think for last year my involvement at that stage was enough. It was a very hectic year and I do not think more involvement from my side would have been possible. I would like to get involved with NGOs this year though."

The other half of the students wanted to prolong their involvement in the communities. Their reasons for saying that were:

> "I would have liked to spend more time with the parents, but because of time restrictions it was not possible."

> "I would like to expand what I do and reach more children, help more families and try new therapeutic interventions."

The majority of students indicated that they did not want to be involved on a therapeutic level in the community from their first year of study. Their reasons for this included their need to first obtain a good theoretical basis before having contact with the communities. As stated by some students:

> "No, I feel that it was good to first get an idea of the theoretical base from which you are going to be working from. I was involved in that community already the previous year and found the transition from my previous way of working quite difficult and at times it was hard for children that I had seen in that year prior to my internship."

> "Not on a therapeutic level. I believe entering the world of the child without the necessary theoretical foundation would not be constructive."

Some students indicated that they did not have sufficient skills to be involved in communities from the first year:

> "If I could have worked with a supervisor it would have been nice, but I don't think I had the skill to work unsupervised from the first year."

> "The first year of study was hectic and I needed the time to really grasp the theory and working through issues myself to prepare me to be a skilled professional people helper."

> "No. I do not think I would have been ready."

The majority of students, although not on a therapeutic level as indicated above, wanted to be involved in the community from their first year of study. Their motivation was that they wanted to get involved in a community over a longer period. As stated by these students:

> "However, attending therapeutic panel discussions by the interns in the field, as observers, can prepare them mentally for the challenges they will face, while still in a contained theoretical environment. In that way they will be able to merge theory and practice in a functional way as they may have the opportunity to be reflective on the processes they observed."

"Perhaps by identifying a school or children's home and getting involved over a long period of time. Getting practical experience as soon as possible and having the support of your peers and lecturers would help a great deal."

Other suggestions included spreading the practicum over two years:

"Maybe by dividing the second half of the first year into individual therapy, continuing in the second year and adding group therapy in the second year."

"The practical was such a daunting task for all of us, that I think if we had started the process from the beginning of first year, it would have been a much more natural/less intimidating task. With the course being correspondence based though, I'm not quite sure how that would have been possible."

"Yes, I feel that the community can benefit immensely from students during their studies. Perhaps not as many hours in the first year and maybe working as a group."

"Yes, at a smaller scale than the second year, but it is a valuable way in giving back to the community."

#### *6.3.1.4 Supervision*

Supervision was singled out as a support function in the training. The majority of students indicated that supervision plays an essential role in their development, as stated:

"With all the supervision and the fact that your sessions are recorded for feedback, I think your therapeutic competencies can be observed by your supervisor."

"… the supervision they received helped a lot ..."

"Fortunately, I had an excellent practical study leader which made it more understandable and with the help of my clinical supervisor the year was packed with self-growth and insight about various facets of myself and the clients I were journeying with."

"I had enough supervision and an open door to both my supervisors which assisted me to do play therapy."

The other half of the students stated that they did not have enough opportunity as they did not receive sufficient guidance and help:

"No, I would have liked more guidance and help. To work therapeutically is a very big responsibility and the skills only develop over time.

"I however missed many opportunities in terms of supervision due to 1) technical problems in recording valuable session, 2) timeous feedback between sessions (because of the technical difficulties)."

"I think it should be done over a longer period of time and with more involvement from your lecturers/supervisors."

#### *6.3.1.5 Reflection*

All of the participants indicated that they have gained through reflection in the following ways: their sensitivity to the community was enhanced, their awareness of social responsibility was enhanced, it provided them with an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the module content, it allowed them to make connections between service and module work, and it broadened their appreciation of the discipline.

#### *6.3.1.6 Research in the curriculum*

Most of the students indicated that they would have preferred to be introduced to research at the beginning of their first year of study. Motivation for this included the following:

"Too overwhelming later in the studies."

"Need to be integrated with theory".

"Research can be introduced in each module to support the research thinking development."

"Would have been able to finish research quicker."

The majority of students indicated that they formulated their research problem based on their involvement in the community:

"I am part of a temporary safe care setting. And through my work there, I realise that there is a problem and therefore want to conduct my research about that what I have experienced."

"I helped at a place of safety - and I am now doing my research on child and youth care workers who work in places of safety."

#### *6.3.1.7 Integration of teaching, research and service*

The majority of the students indicated that the three core elements of teaching, research and service were not integrated in the curriculum.

"I am not sure that there was really a link between the practical/theory and the research."

"I really struggled to connect the theoretical dots once I started with the practicals."

"The research module was not well integrated as it was introduced at the end of the first year as a workshop but it felt loose from the other units of study."

"Currently, I feel that the link between practical and research is a little weak but that the theory and practical are well integrated."

"My experience was that they are too separate - year 1 = theory, year 2 = practical and year 3 = research. I believe the best way to learn is to integrate practical examples into theory."

"Research was ignored largely and very much had a lack of guidance during research."

### 6.3.2 Summary of main themes of Questionnaire A

Questionnaire A was utilised to determine the perceptions and experiences of the current students on community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The data was analysed and main themes identified. This section will provide a summary of the main themes that were identified.

**Theme 1: Defining community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS**

From the data obtained from the questionnaires it was evident that there are different understandings and perceptions of what community engagement entails and how it is perceived within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. With reference to the understanding and conceptualisation of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, various concepts were highlighted by the participants. Several of the participants defined community engagement as a process and implicated that it is more than just once-off contact with the community. The concept of service also came to the fore. The majority of participants indicated that they see community engagement as a service that is rendered to the community. The practicum sessions of the students were also described as community engagement and were seen as equal to community engagement. The participants firmly believed that they were giving back to the community through their involvement in the community. Through their involvement, they also became aware of the needs of the communities.

**Theme 2: Relevant and meaningful service**

All of the participants indicated that their involvement in the communities offered some benefit to the communities and to themselves. The community gained through the therapy that was provided to the children. Also, the therapy was provided free of charge. Some participants indicated that their involvement could have offered more benefits to the community - especially to the children in these communities.

All of the participants indicated that they benefitted from their involvement in the communities. Most of them indicated that they have gained professional and person growth as their involvement provided them with opportunities to apply theory in practice. Half of the participants stated that the programme provided them with sufficient opportunities to achieve therapeutic competencies and skills as they were exposed to a wide range of cases. The other half stated that there were not enough opportunities to acquire therapeutic competencies and skills.

**Theme 3: Structure of community involvement in the curriculum**

Half of the participants indicated that their involvement in the communities was long enough while the other half specified that they wanted to be involved in the community over a longer period of time. Most of the participants indicated that, on a therapeutic level, they preferred to be involved from their second year of study as they first wanted to acquire a theoretical basis before they have contact with the community. They also did not have sufficient skills in the first year. Most of the participants indicated that they wanted to be involved in the community from their first year of study and hinted that placements should be identified earlier, that involvement should start earlier and that such involvement should be spread over the two years of study.

**Theme 4: Supervision**

The participants emphasised the importance of supervision as a support function when they stated that supervision plays an essential role in their development. Most of the participants indicated that they were supported by their supervisors. However, some indicated that they did not receive sufficient guidance and assistance.

**Theme 5: Reflection**

All of the participants highlighted the importance and value of reflection in the curriculum. According to the participants, reflection enhanced their sensitivity to the community and their awareness of social responsibility. Reflection also provided them with the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the module content, to make connections between service and module work, and to broaden their appreciation of the discipline.

**Theme 6: Research in the curriculum**

The majority of participants indicated that they would have preferred to be introduced to research at the beginning of their first year of study. They stated that the introduction of research at a later stage during their studies was too overwhelming and that the research was not integrated with the theory. The participants suggested that research should be introduced in each module to support the development of their research skills and to allow them to identify potential research themes at an earlier stage. They also stated that they could have completed their research sooner had they been introduced

to the research module at an earlier stage. The participants were able to formulate their research problem based on their involvement in the community.

**Theme 7: Integration of teaching, research and service**

The majority of the participants indicated that the three core elements of teaching, research and service were not integrated in the curriculum. Some participants indicated that the theory and the practice may be integrated, but not the research.

### 6.3.3 Data obtained through Questionnaire B

The data obtained from Questionnaire B completed by current lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS will be presented in the next section. As the questionnaire had fixed options, the data will be summarised and presented accordingly. The questionnaire consisted of 30 questions distributed among six dimensions. These dimensions represent the key factors for the institutionalization of community engagement in higher education academic departments. Each of the six dimensions is composed of several components that characterize the dimension and furthermore has a four-stage continuum of development with progression from a *Stage One: Awareness Building* towards a *Stage Four: Institutionalization* which suggests that a department is moving closer to the full institutionalization of community engagement within the academic unit. The full description of this questionnaire is contained in the attached CD.

The academic staff members who took part in the study were appointed on the following job levels: half of the participants were lecturers, two were senior lecturers and one was a junior lecturer. The majority of the lecturers have several years of experience.

The data obtained from the questionnaire will be presented and explained in terms of the six dimensions that were identified in the questionnaire.

**DIMENSION I: MISSION AND CULTURE SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Dimension 1 focuses on the mission and the culture of the CCYFS in support of community engagement, and includes the components of the mission, the definition of

community-engaged teaching and service, the climate and culture of the CCYFS, and the collective self-awareness and action within the CCYFS.

**Component 1: Mission**

The current state on the inclusion of community engagement in the mission of the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.1.

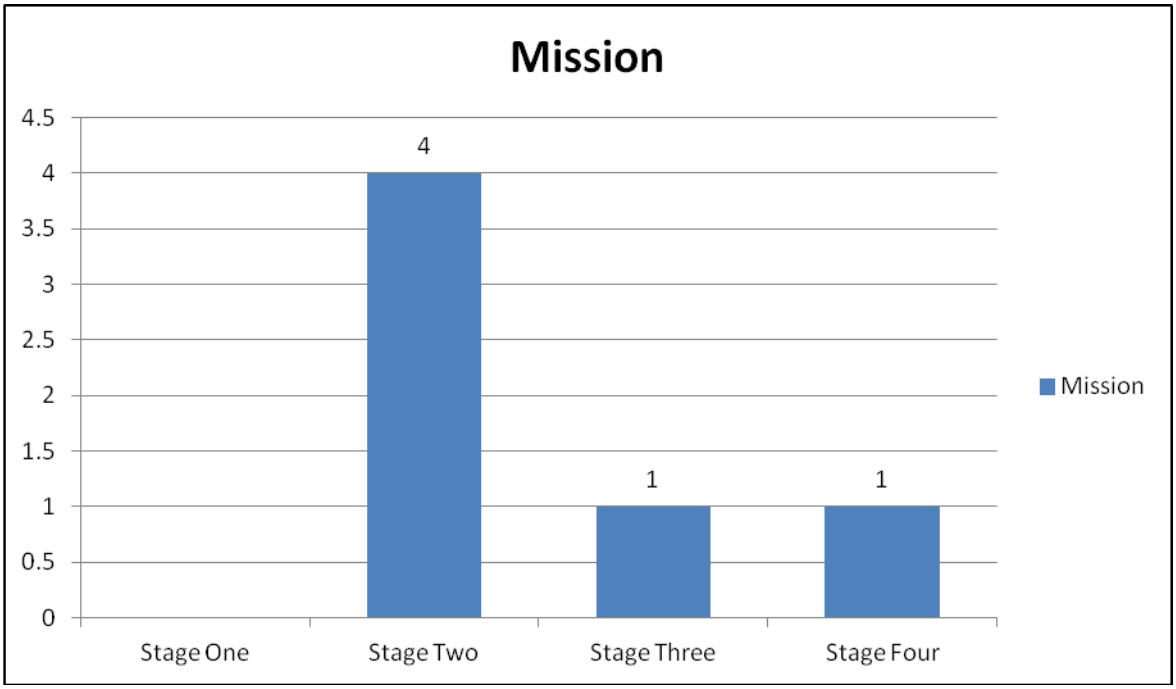


**Figure 6.1: Mission**

The majority of the participants (four) indicated that the mission of the CCYFS indirectly alludes to the importance of community engagement. Only one indicated that community engagement is not directly mentioned, highlighted and/or centrally located in the department's formal mission, while another participant indicated that community engagement does not form a clear part of the primary focus area of the unit.

**Component 2: Definition of community-engaged teaching**

The current state on defining community-engaged teaching within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.2.

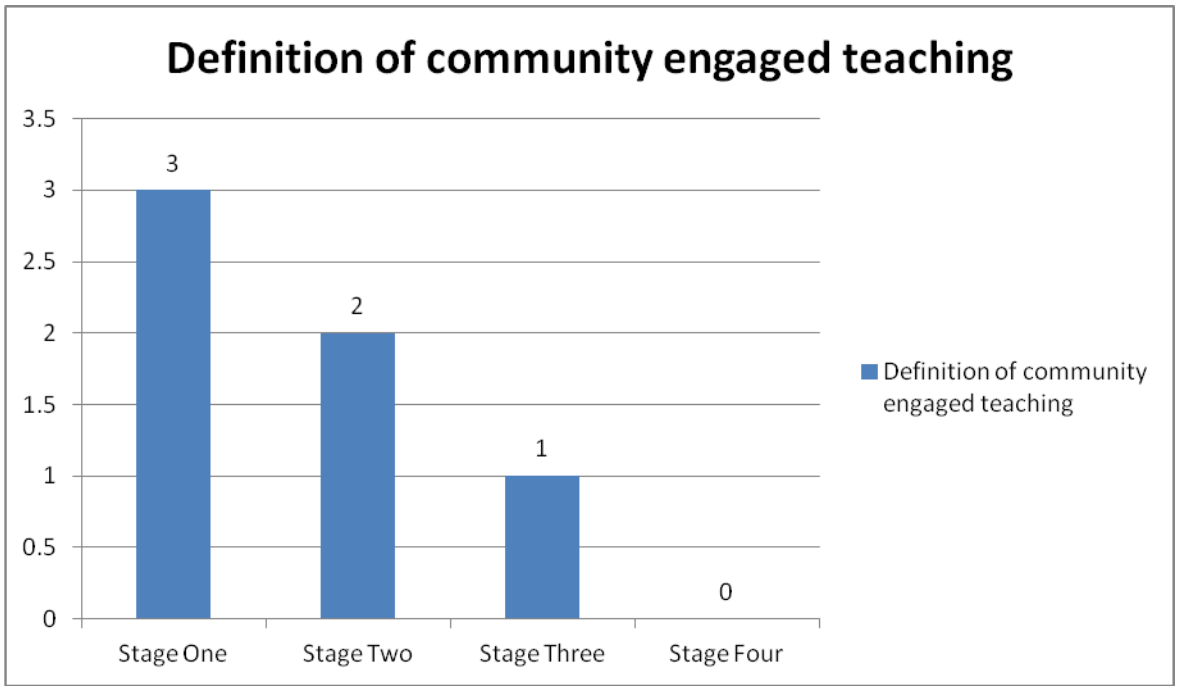


**Figure 6.2: Definition of community-engaged teaching**

Most of the participants (three) indicated that there is no unit-wide definition for community-engaged teaching (including definitions for the terms "service learning" or "community based learning") in the CCYFS. Two participants indicated that there are generally understood and accepted notions of community-engaged teaching, and that these terms are used inconsistently to describe a variety of experiential or service activities.

**Component 3: Definition of community-engaged service**

The current state on defining community-engaged service within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.3.

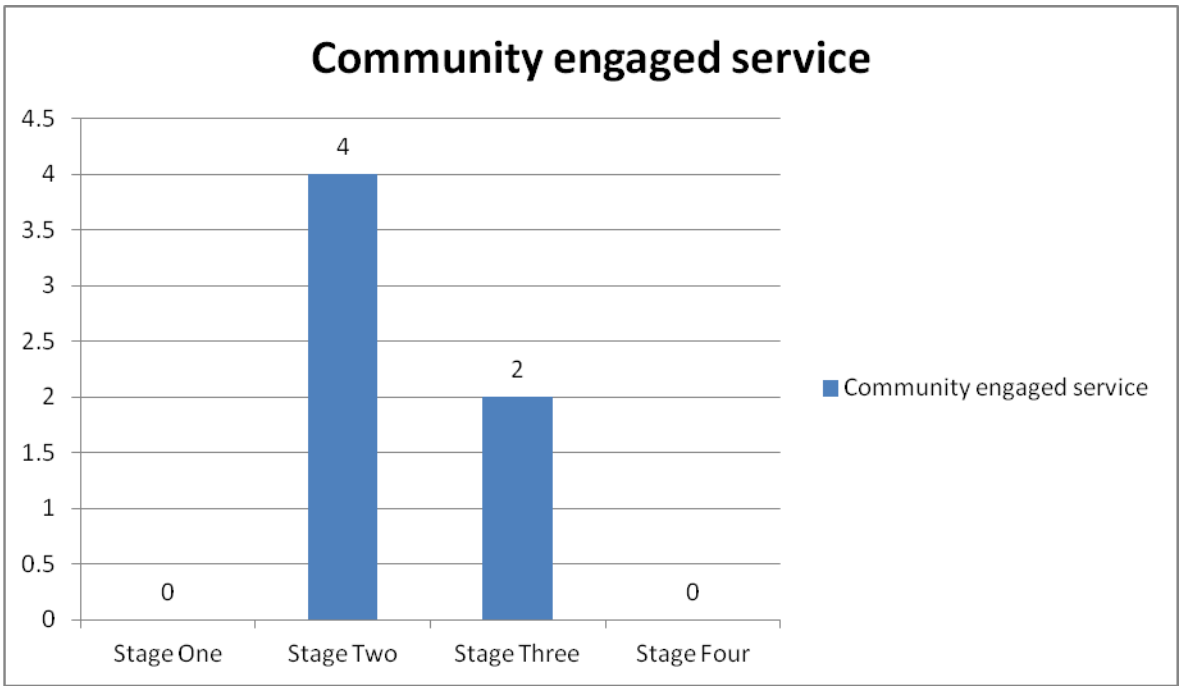


**Figure 6.3: Definition of community-engaged service**

The majority of the participants (four) responded and said that there are generally understood and accepted notions of community-engaged service, which are used inconsistently to describe a wide variety of activities. Two participants indicated that there is a formal definition for community-engaged service in the unit, but there is inconsistency in the way in which the term is understood, accepted and applied.

**Component 4: Climate and culture**

The current climate and culture of the CCYFS in terms of community engagement is illustrated in Figure 6.4.

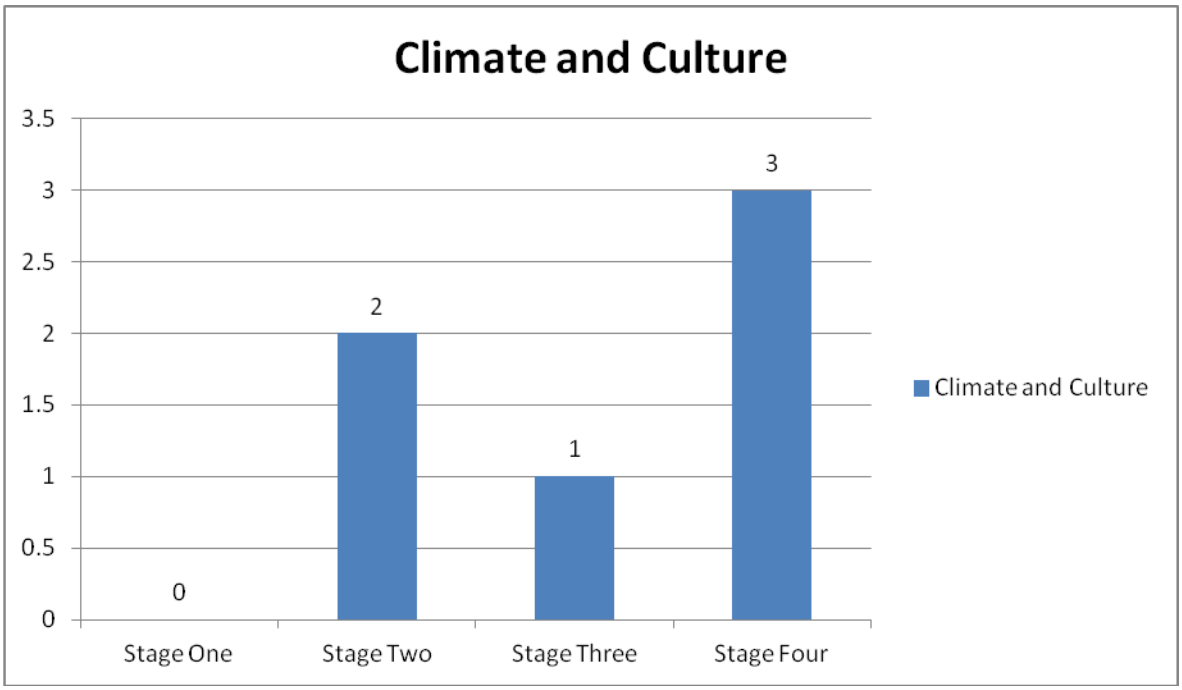


**Figure 6.4: Climate and culture**

Most of the academic staff (three) concurred that the organisational climate and culture of the department is highly supportive of community engagement. Two people indicated that the organisational climate and culture of the department is supportive of CE.

**Component 5: Collective self-awareness and action**

The current state of the collective assessment of practices of community-engaged teaching, research or service within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.5.

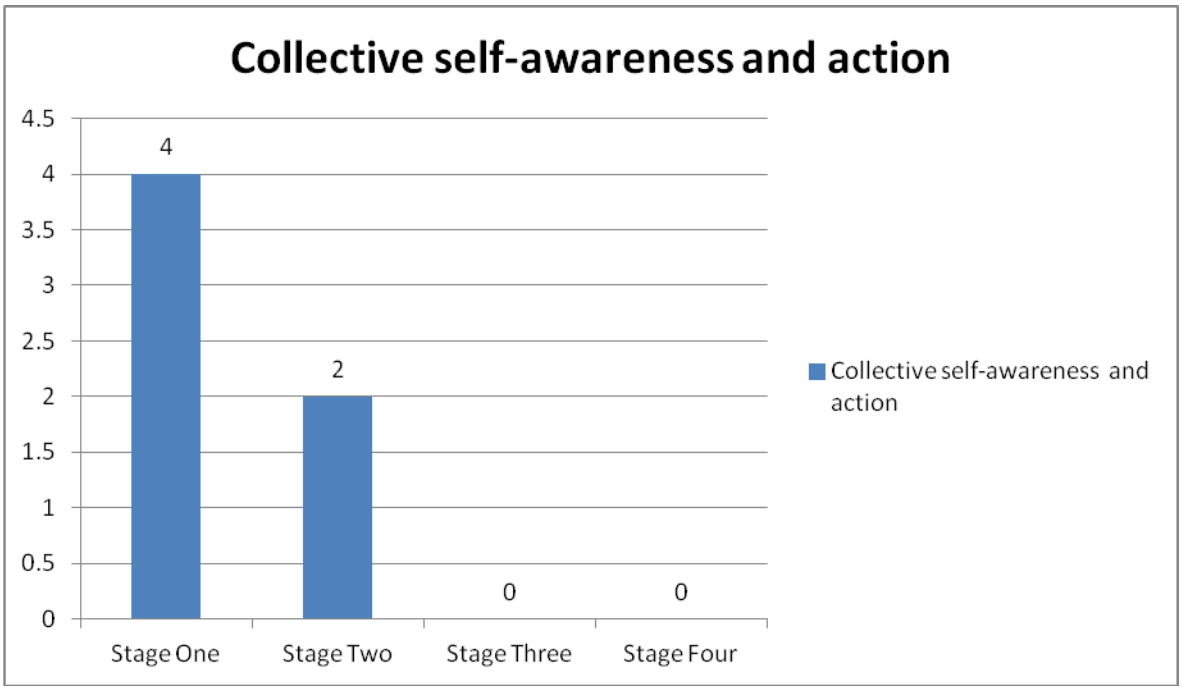


**Figure 6.5: Collective self-awareness and action**

Four of the participants indicated that the CCYFS and its staff members do not collectively assess the practices of community-engaged teaching, research or service. Two participants indicated that the practices of community-engaged teaching, research or service are infrequently assessed.

**DIMENSION II: FACULTY SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Dimension II focuses on the support and community engagement within the CCYFS and includes the components of faculty members' knowledge and awareness, faculty members' involvement and support, curricular integration, faculty incentives, promotion and tenure process integration and tenure track faculty. Faculty in this context refers to the CCYFS.

**Component 1: Faculty members' knowledge and awareness**

The current state on the knowledge and awareness of community engagement of academic staff of the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.6.

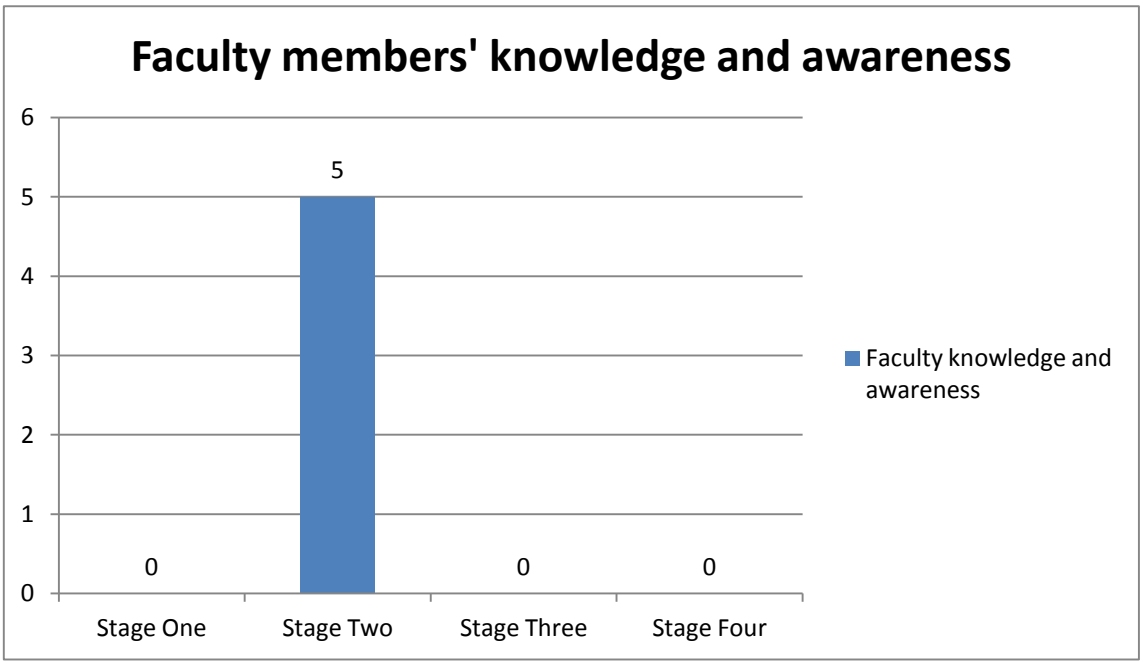


**Figure 6.6: Faculty members' knowledge and awareness**

The majority (five) of the six participants indicated that the CCYFS' knowledge and awareness is in Phase 2, which indicated that only a few academic staff of the CCYFS know what community engagement is and understand how it can be integrated into teaching, research or service. Phase 4 would indicate that most of the academic staff know what community engagement is and that they can articulate its integration into teaching, research and/or service.

**Component 2: Faculty members' involvement and support**

The current state on the involvement and support of academic staff of the CCYFS in terms of community engagement is illustrated in Figure 6.7.

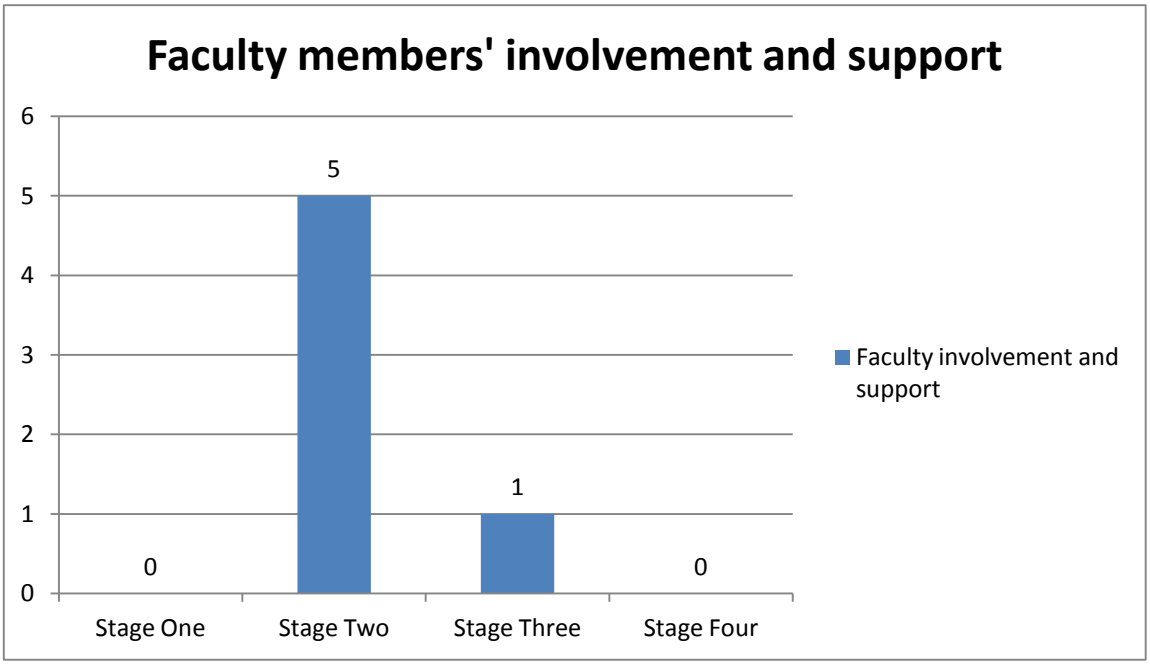


**Figure 6.7: Faculty members' involvement and support**

The majority (five) of participants indicated that only a few faculty members are supportive of community engagement; a few advocate for integrating of community engagement into the unit's mission and/or their own professional work. One participant indicated Phase 3, which signify that many of the academic staff participate in community-engaged teaching, research or service and support the infusion of community engagement into both the centre's mission and the academic staff's individual professional work. Phase 4 would indicate that most of the academic stafft participate in community-engaged teaching, research or service, and that they support the infusion of community engagement into both the centre's mission and the staff members' individual professional work.

**Component 3: Curricular integration**

The current state of the CCYFS curriculum in terms of community-based learning courses is illustrated in Figure 6.8.

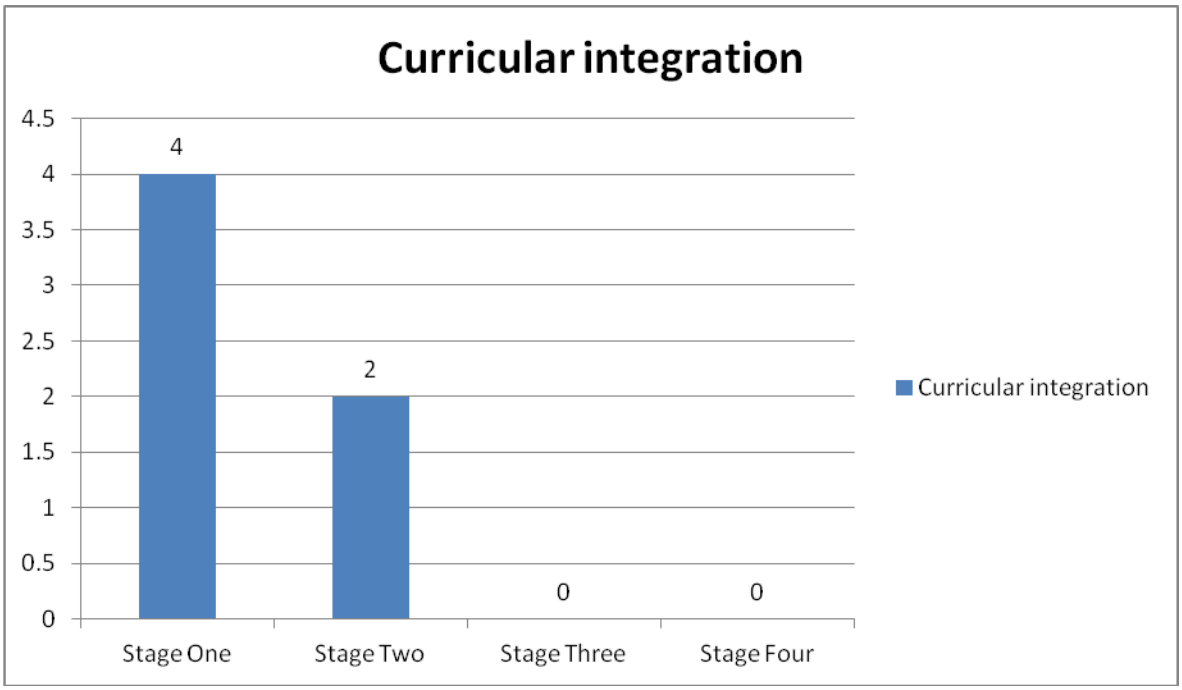


**Figure 6.8: Curricular integration**

The majority (four) of the participants indicated that there are only a few or no electives and no required community-based learning courses integrated into the major curriculum. Two participants indicated that there are some electives, but only a few required developmentally appropriate community-based learning courses integrated into the major curriculum. Phase 4 would indicate that the entire curriculum for the major is intentionally and consistently infused with developmentally appropriate electives and required community-based learning course requirements.

**Component 4: Faculty members' incentives**

The current state of incentives for the CCYFS for community engagement activities is illustrated in Figure 6.9.

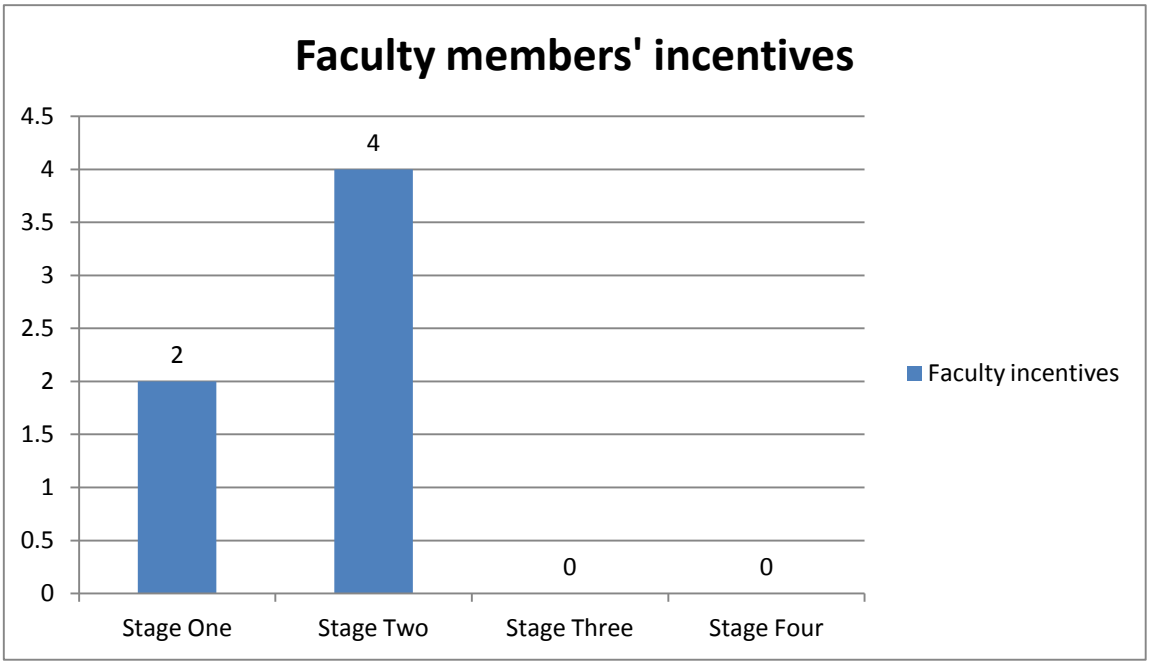


**Figure 6.9: Faculty members' incentives**

Two participants indicated that within the centre, academic staff are not encouraged to participate in community engagement activities; no incentives are provided (e.g. mini-grants, sabbaticals, funds for conferences) to pursue engagement activities. The majority of the participants (four) indicated that academic staff are infrequently encouraged to participate in community engagement activities; a few incentives are provided (e.g. mini-grants, sabbaticals, funds for conferences) to pursue engagement activities.

**Component 5: Promotion and tenure process integration**

The current state of promotion and the tenure process integration of staff members of the CCYFS are illustrated in Figure 6.10.

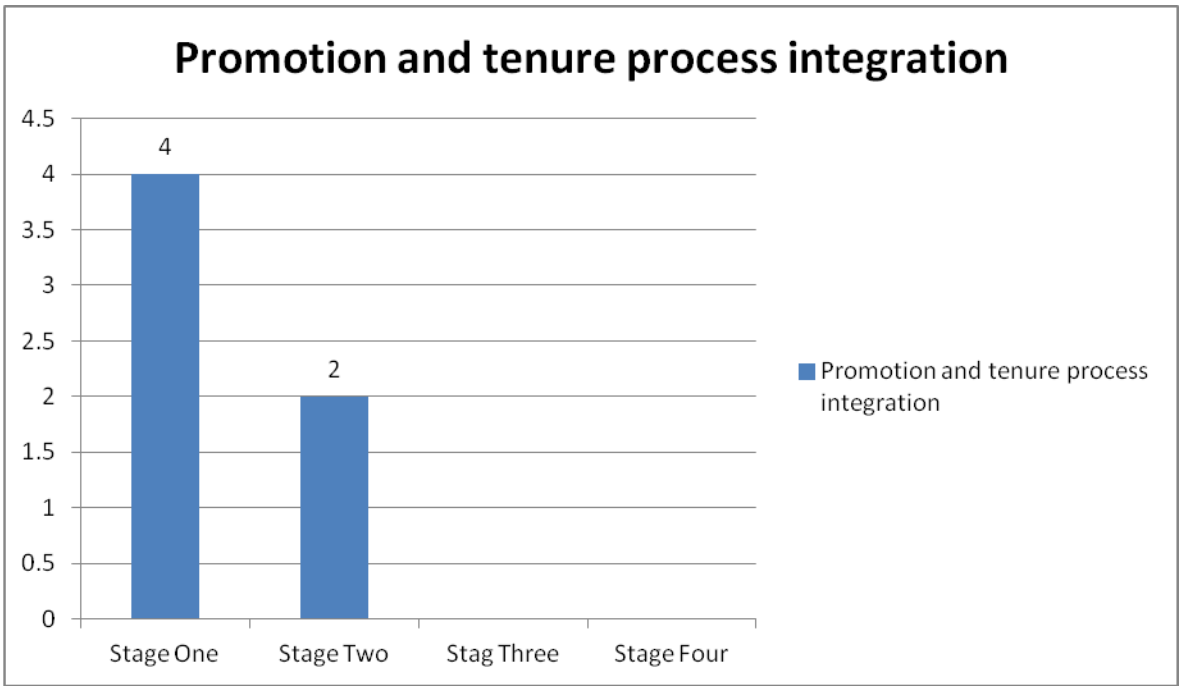


**Figure 6.10: Promotion and tenure process integration**

Most of the participants (four) indicated that the review, promotion and tenure process at departmental level does not reward community-engaged research and scholarship in which a staff member is involved in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community. Two participants indicated that the review, promotion and tenure process at departmental level provides little reward for community-engaged research and scholarship in which a staff member is involved in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community.

**Component 6: Tenure track faculty**

Tenure track faculty is an American concept which refers to an academic phenomenon for university professors and which leads to a lifetime appointment as a professor at a university. An academic would be on a tenure track and would be observed and evaluated in order to be granted tenure. The current state of tenure track positions for staff members of the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.11.

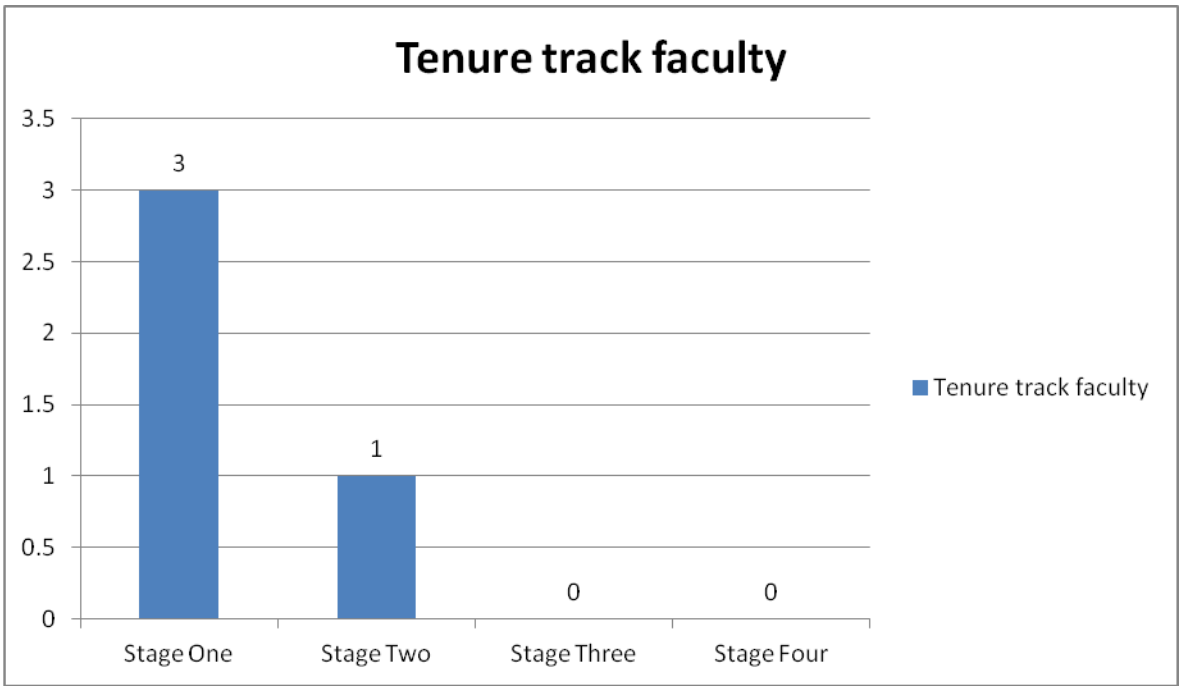


**Figure 6.11: Tenure track faculty**

The majority of the participants (four) indicated that none of the community-engaged faculty holds tenure track positions. One indicated that a few community-engaged faculty hold tenure track positions. Two did not answer this question.

## DIMENSION III: COMMUNITY PARTNER AND PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Dimension III focuses on community partners and partnerships, and their support of community engagement. Dimension III also includes the components of placement and partnership awareness; mutual understanding and commitment; community partner's voice, leadership, access to resources, incentives and recognition.

### Component 1: Placement and partnership awareness

The current state of the placements and partnership awareness within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.12.

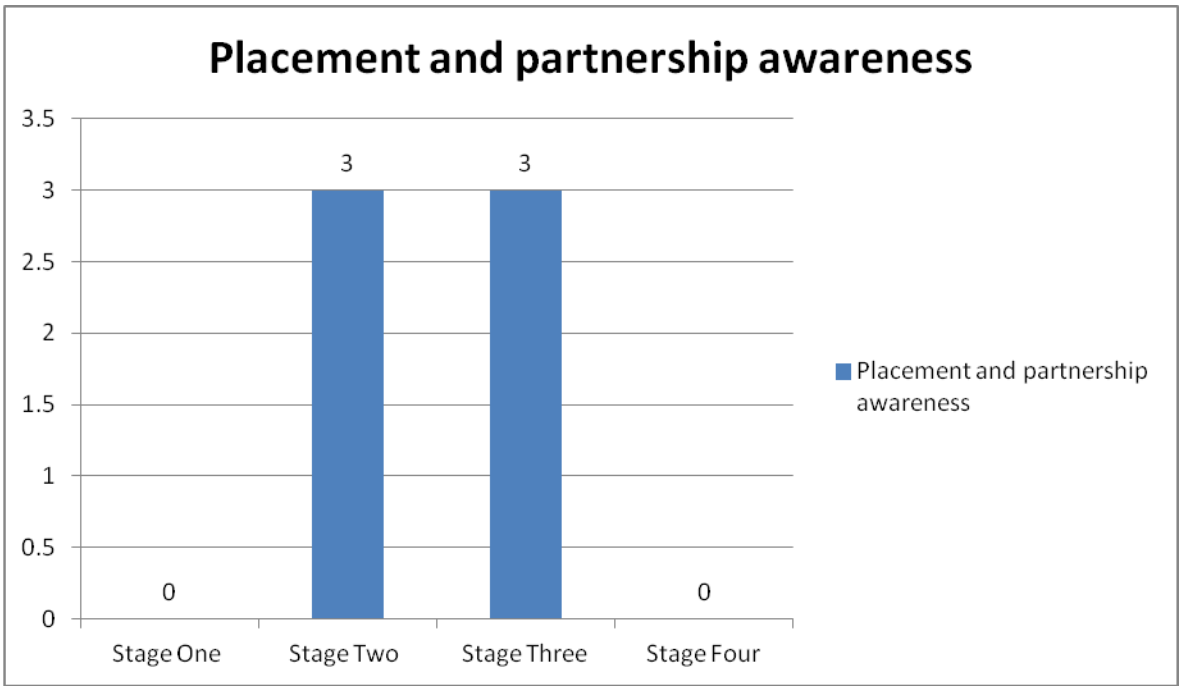


**Figure 6.12: Placement and partnership awareness**

Half of the participants (three) indicated that the CCYFS can identify community agencies that periodically host unit-related work sites or internship placements. The other half (three) indicated that the CCYFS can identify community agencies that regularly host unit-related work sites, community-based or service learning courses or internship placements.

**Component 2: Mutual understanding and commitment**

The current state of the mutual understanding and commitment between the CCYFS and the communities is illustrated in Figure 6.13.

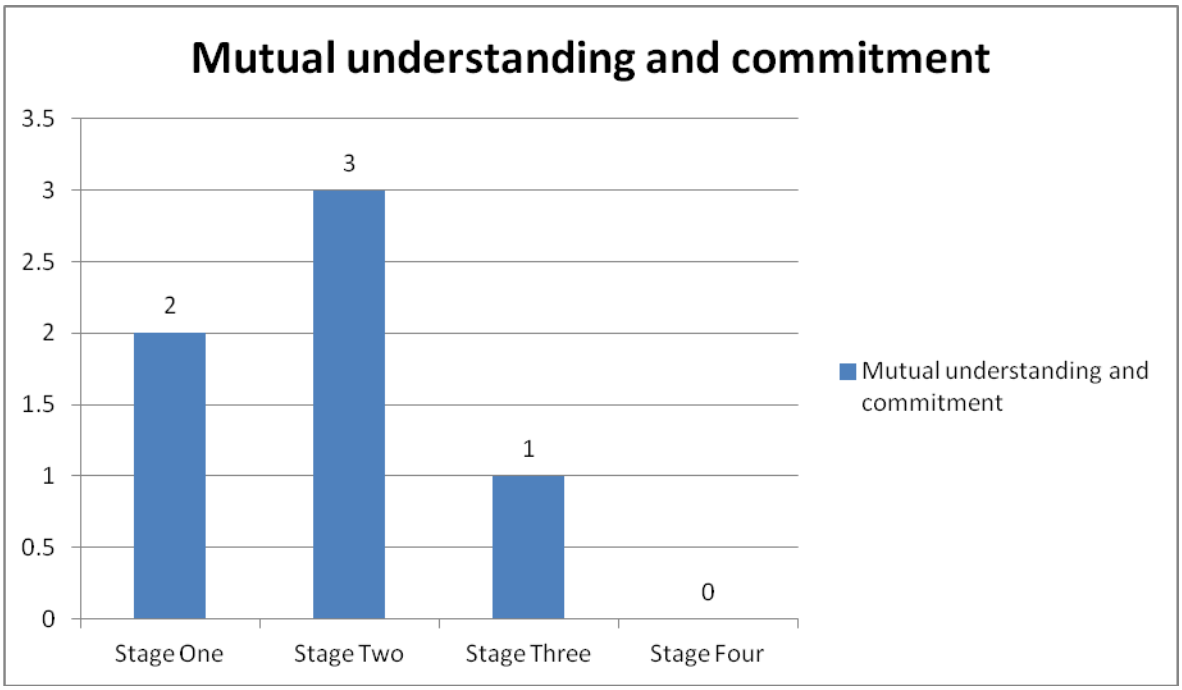


**Figure 6.13: Mutual understanding and commitment**

Two of the participants indicated that there is no understanding between the CCYFS and community representatives regarding each other's long-range goals, needs, timelines, resources, and capacity for developing and implementing community engagement activities. The majority (three) of participants indicated that there is some understanding between the CCYFS and community representatives regarding each other's long-range goals, needs, timelines, resources, and capacity for developing and implementing community engagement activities. One participant indicated that there is good understanding between the CCYFS and community representatives regarding each other's long-range goals, needs, timelines, resources, and capacity for developing and implementing.

**Component 3: Community partner voice**

The current state of the community partners' voice is illustrated in Figure 6.14.

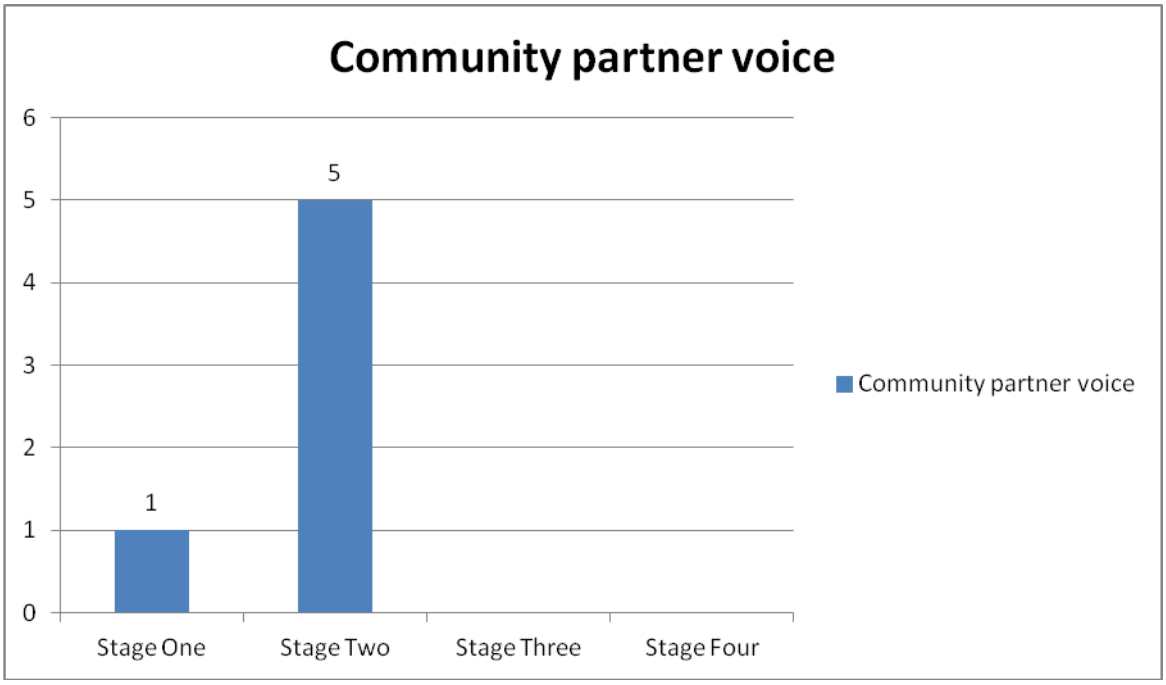


**Figure 6.14: Community partner's voice**

Most of the participants (five) selected Stage 2, which indicates that community partners are rarely invited to express their needs, goals and capacity.

**Component 4: Community partner leadership**

The current state of the opportunities for community partner leadership within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.15.


**Figure 6.15: Community partner leadership**

Most of the participants (five) pointed out that there are no opportunities for community partners to assume leadership roles in unit activities (e.g. serve on advisory committee, faculty hiring committee or review committee, or facilitate student reflection, instruct or collaborate on research). One participant indicated that there are a few opportunities for community partners to assume leadership roles in core unit activities (e.g. serve on advisory and faculty hiring or review committees, facilitate reflection, instruct, collaborate on research).

**Component 5: Community partner access to resources**

The current state of access that community partners have to the resources of the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.16.

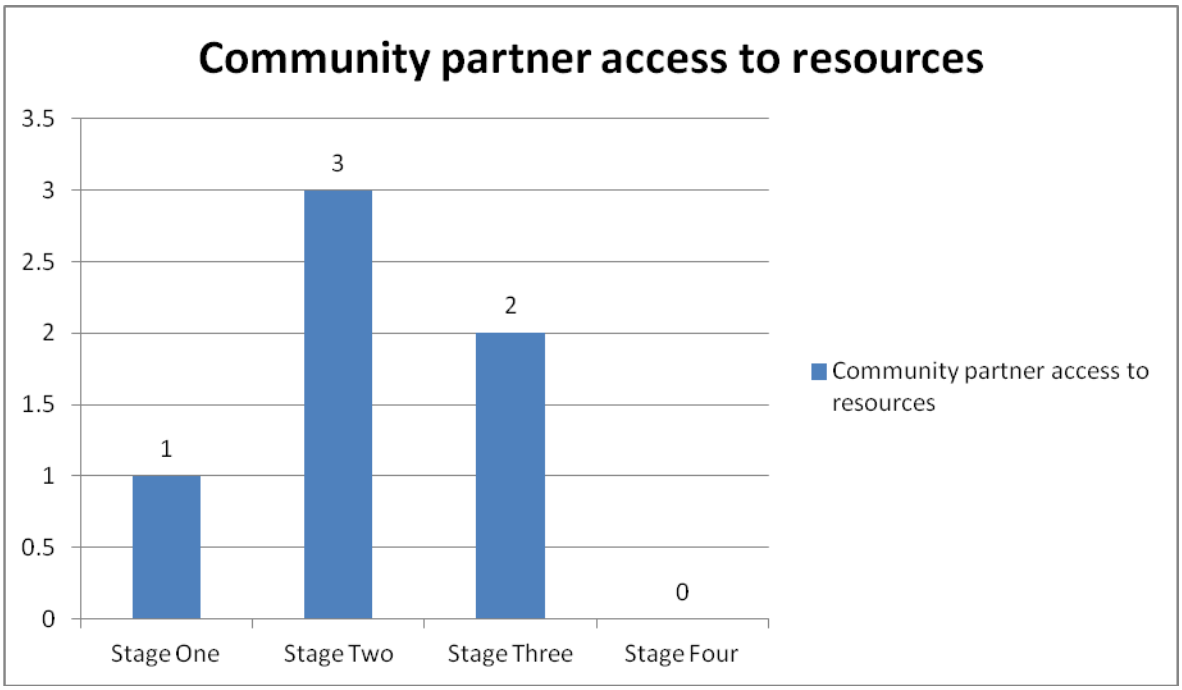


**Figure 6.16: Community partner access to resources**

One participant indicated that community agencies do not access unit faculty and/or students as resources for their work through course-based projects, research, etc. The majority of participants (three) indicated that community agencies rarely access unit faculty and/or students as resources for their work through course-based projects, research, etc. Two participants indicated that community agencies occasionally access unit faculty and/or students as resources for their work through course-based projects, research, etc.

**Component 6: Community partner incentives and recognition**

The current state of the incentives and recognition that the community partners receive from the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.17.

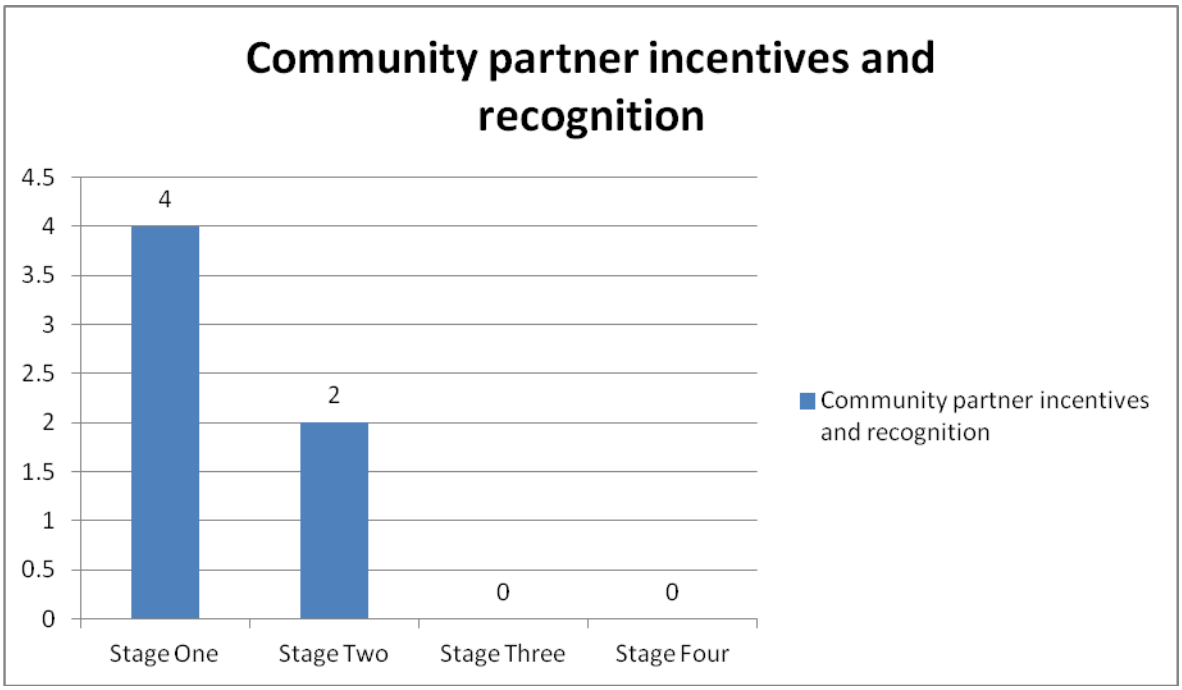


**Figure 6.17: Community partner incentives and recognition**

The majority (four) of the participants point to the fact that very few, if any, community agencies that partner consistently with the CCYFS receive incentives for their involvement in the centre's community engagement activities. Two participants indicated that community partners are rarely provided with incentives for their involvement in the centre's community engagement activities (e.g. adjunct faculty status, compensation, continuing education credits, recognition events).

**DIMENSION IV: STUDENT SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Dimension IV focuses on student support and community engagement, and includes the components of student opportunities, awareness, incentives and recognition, and voice, leadership and departmental governance.

**Component 1: Student opportunities**

The current state of community engagement opportunities for students is illustrated in Figure 6.18.

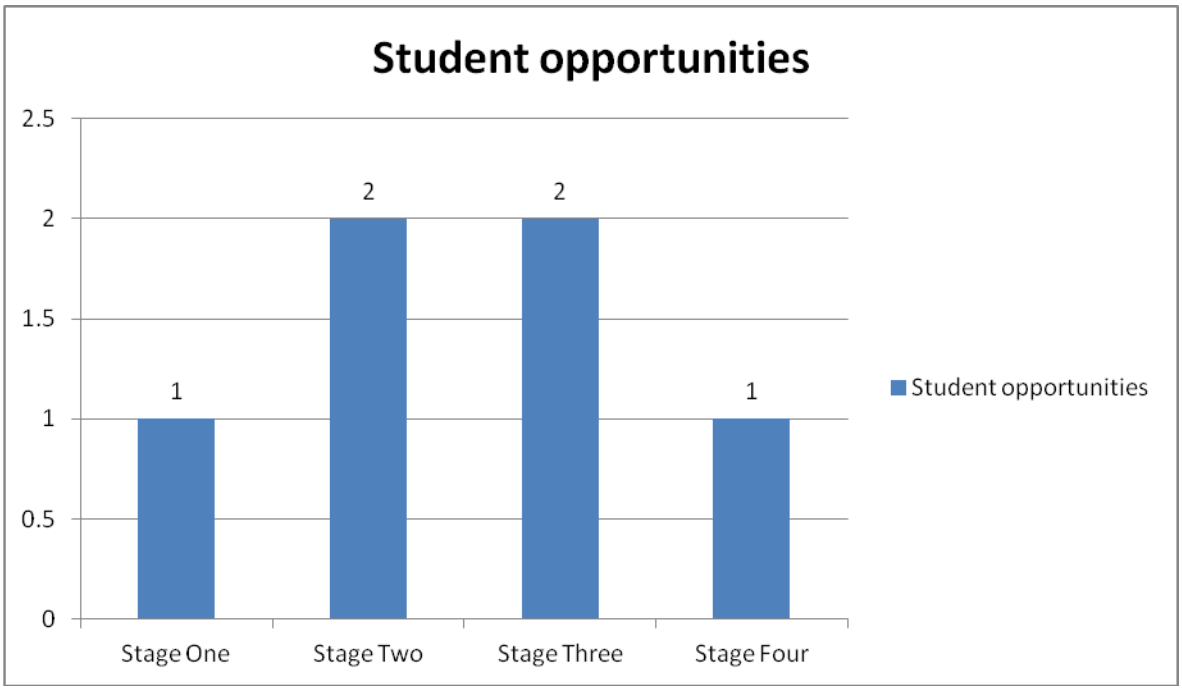


**Figure 6.18: Student opportunities**

One participant (Stage 1) indicated that opportunities do not exist for students in the major to engage with community - either formally through courses and research endeavours, or informally through unit-sponsored student clubs and other "public work" opportunities. Two participants (Stage 2) indicated that a few opportunities exist for students in the major to engage with community - either formally through courses and research endeavours, or informally through unit-sponsored student clubs and other "public work" opportunities. Two participants (Stage 3) indicated that many opportunities exist for students in the major to engage with community - formally through required and elective courses and research endeavours, and/or informally through unit-sponsored student clubs and other "public work" opportunities. One participant (Stage 4) indicated that numerous options and opportunities exist for students in the major to engage with community - formally through required and elective courses and research endeavours, as well as informally through unit-sponsored student clubs and other "public work" opportunities.

**Component 2: Student awareness**

The current state of the students' awareness of community engagement opportunities within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.19.

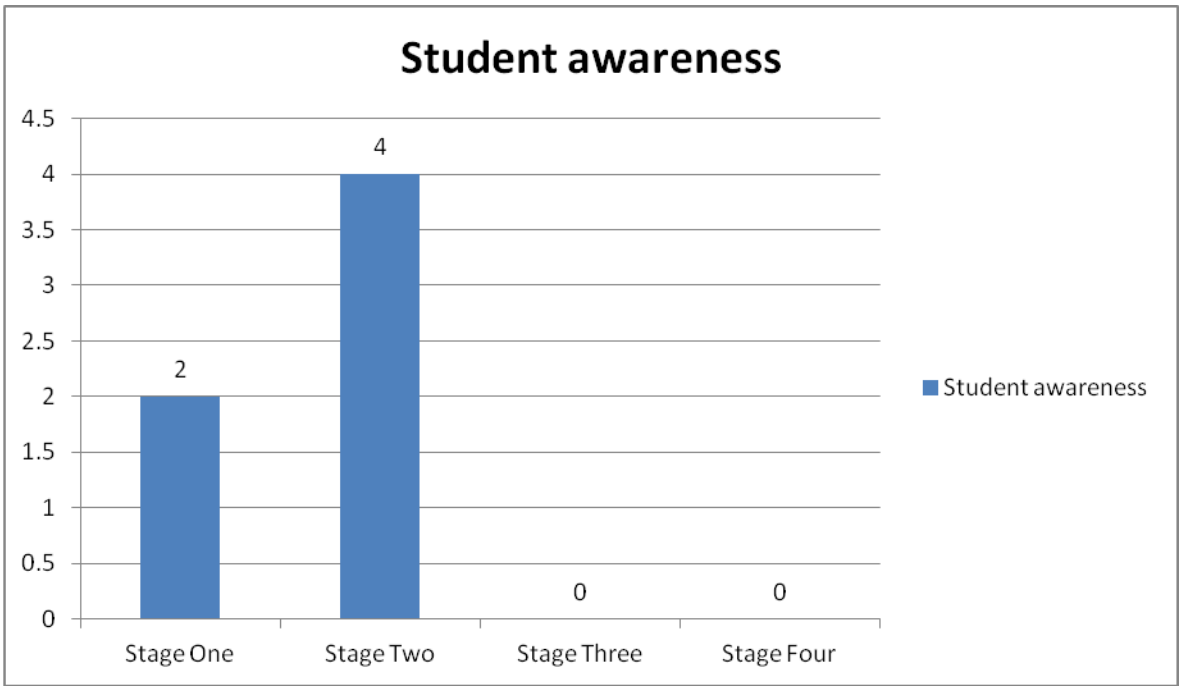


**Figure 6.19: Student awareness**

The majority of participants (four) indicated Stage 2, which indicates that a few students are aware of community engagement opportunities because there are some coordinated and publicised supported mechanisms to inform students about them (e.g. community-based learning course listings in the schedule of classes, job postings, volunteer opportunities, community-engaged research assistantships). Two participants indicated Stage 1, which suggests that no students in the major are aware of community engagement opportunities because there are no coordinated and publicised, department-supported mechanisms to inform students about them (e.g. community-based learning course listings in the schedule of classes, job postings, volunteer opportunities, community-engaged research assistantships).

**Component 3: Student incentives and recognition**

The current state of incentives and recognition for students involved in community engagement activities is illustrated in Figure 6.20.

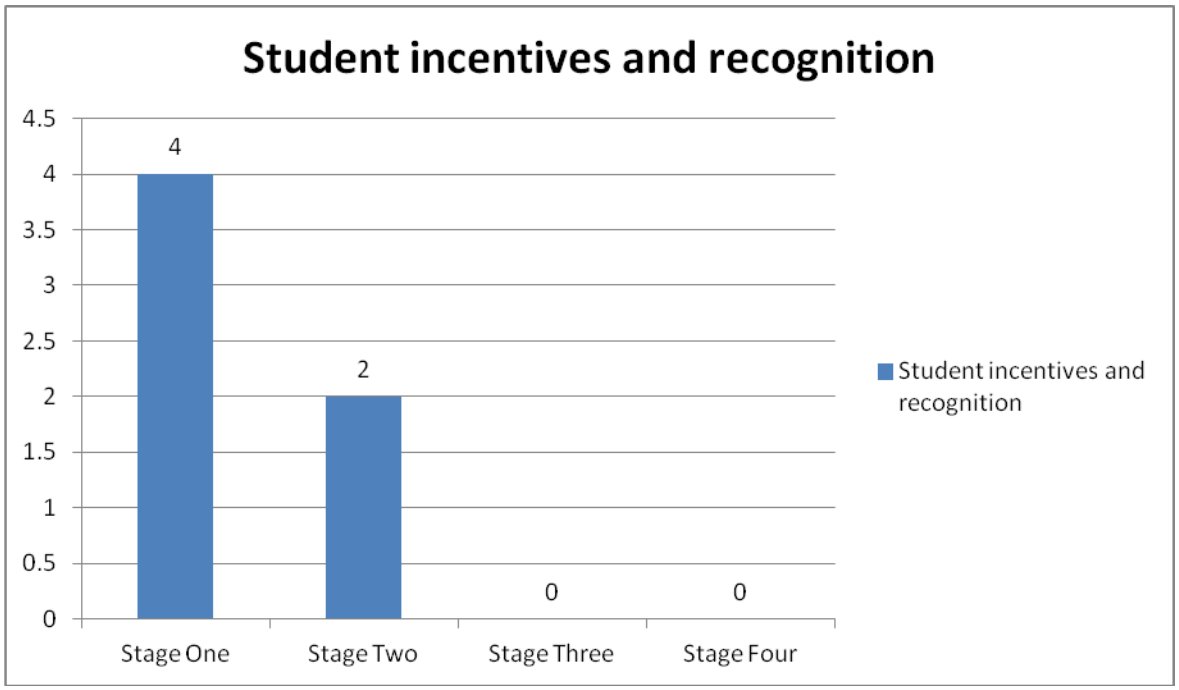


**Figure 6.20: Student incentives and recognition**

The majority of participants (four) indicated Stage 1, which indicates that the CCYFS does not have any formal or informal incentive or recognition mechanisms in place for students to engage with the community (e.g. community engagement notation on transcripts scholarships, annual awards, stories on the unit website and in unit newsletters, verbal encouragement). Two participants indicated Stage 2, which states that the CCYFS has a few formal or informal incentive or recognition mechanisms in place for students to engage with the community (e.g. community engagement notation on transcripts, scholarships, annual awards, stories on the unit website and in unit newsletters, verbal encouragement).

**Component 4: Student voice, leadership and departmental governance**

The current state of the students' voice, leadership and departmental governance in terms of community engagement activities is illustrated in Figure 6.21.

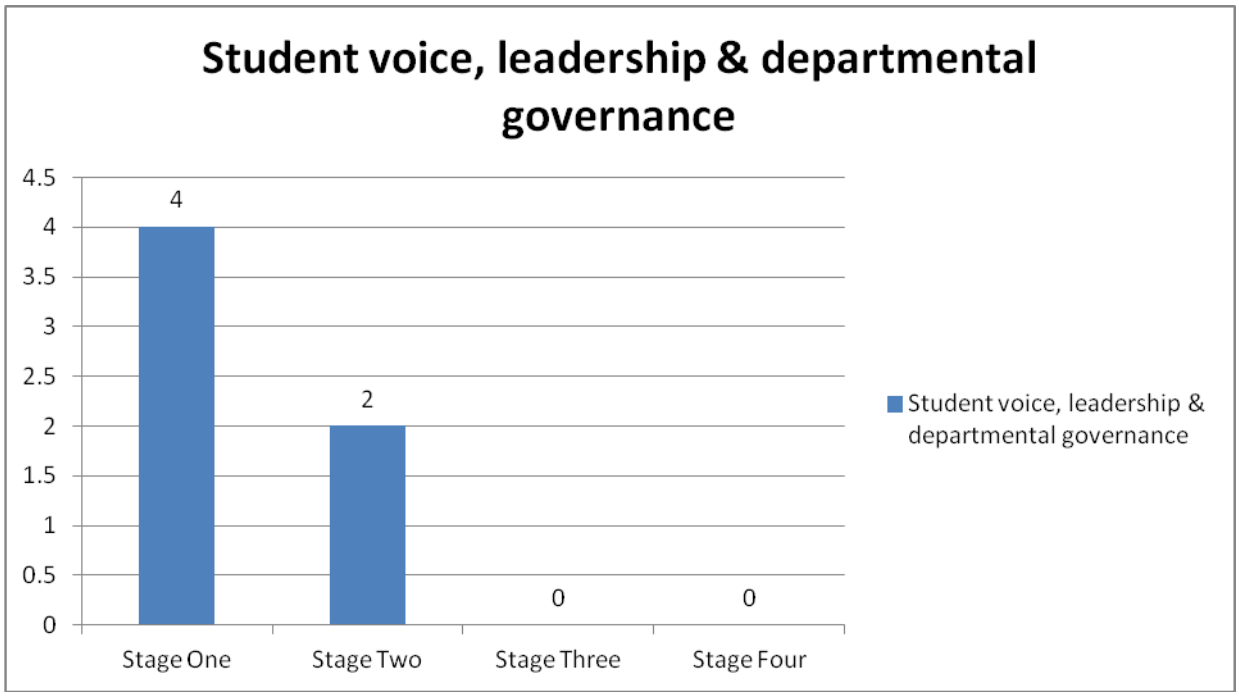


**Figure 6.21: Student voice, leadership and departmental governance**

The majority (four) of the participants point out that there are no opportunities for students to take up formal governance roles, including advising or leading community engagement activities associated with the department of their major (Stage 1). Two participants indicated that there are a few opportunities available for students to take up formal governance roles, including advising or leading community engagement activities associated with the department of their major (Stage 2).

## DIMENSION V: ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Dimension V focuses on organisational support for community engagement and includes the components of administrative support, facilitating entity, evaluation and assessment, recruitment and orientation, marketing, dissemination of community engagement results and budgetary allocation.

### Component 1: Administrative support

Administrative support for community engagement within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.22.

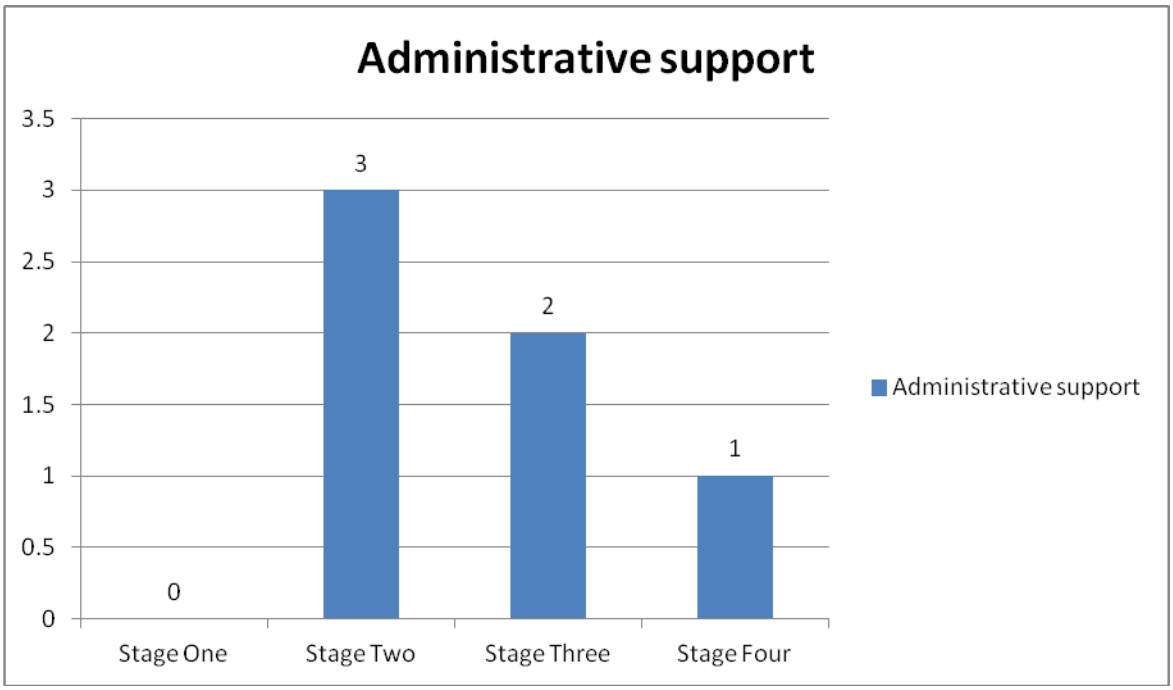


**Figure 6.22: Administrative support**

Half of the participants (three) indicated that the CCYFS head has some understanding of community engagement (Stage 2). Two participants indicated that the CCYFS head mostly understands and supports community engagement (Stage 3) and one participant indicated that the department head fully understands and supports community engagement (Stage 4).

**Component 2: Facilitating entity**

The current state of facilitating structures for community engagement within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.23.

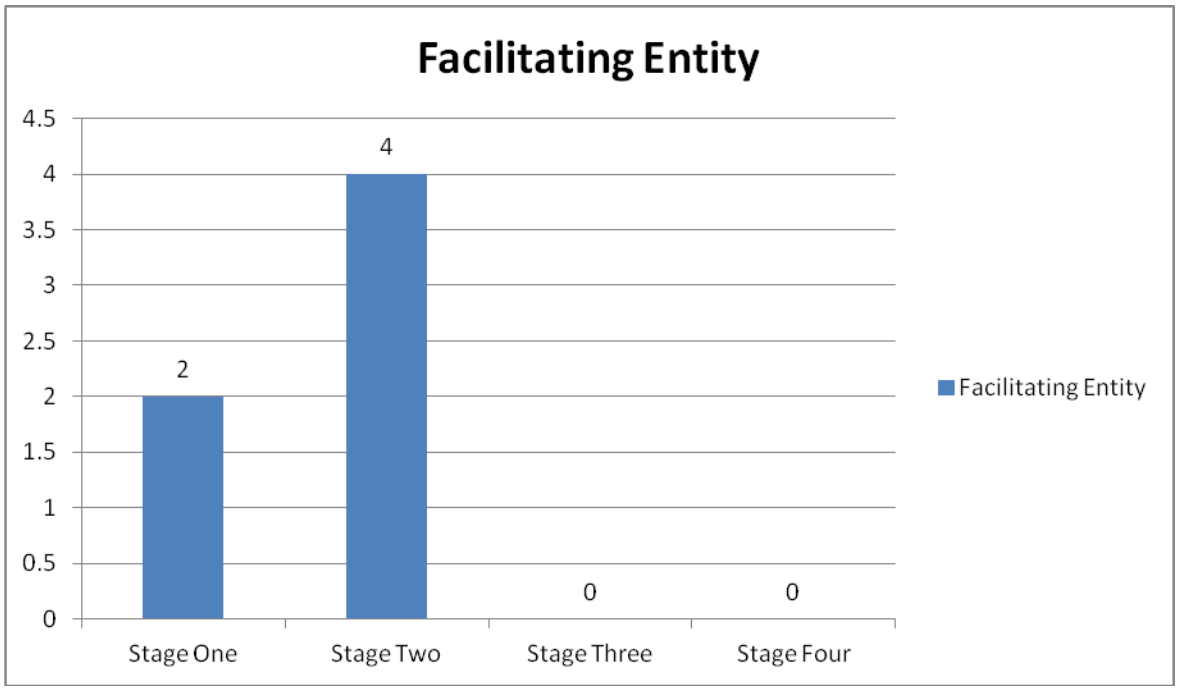


**Figure 6.23: Facilitating entity**

The minority of participants (two) indicated that there are no facilitating structures in place to support the CCYFS, staff, students and/or community constituencies in the implementation or advancement of community engagement (Stage 1). The majority (four) of the participants indicated that a small amount of facilitating assistance is available to unit faculty, staff, students and/or community constituencies in the implementation or advancement of community engagement (Stage 2).

**Component 3: Evaluation and assessment**

The efforts of evaluation and assessment of community engagement within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.24.

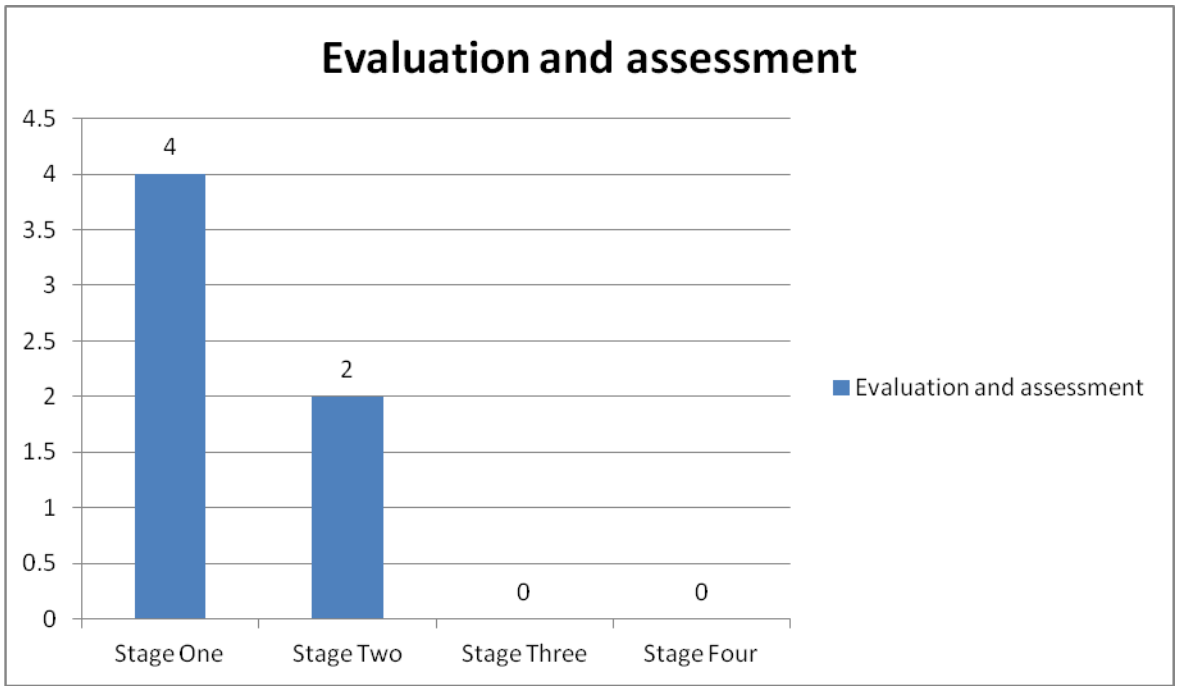


**Figure 6.24: Evaluation and assessment**

The majority (four) of the participants indicated Stage 1 - namely that there is no systematic effort in place to account for the number or quality of community engagement activities occurring in the unit. Two participants indicated that an initiative has been proposed to account for the number and quality of engagement activities taking place throughout the unit (Stage 2).

**Component 4: Recruitment and orientation**

The current state of recruitment and orientation of community engagement within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.25.

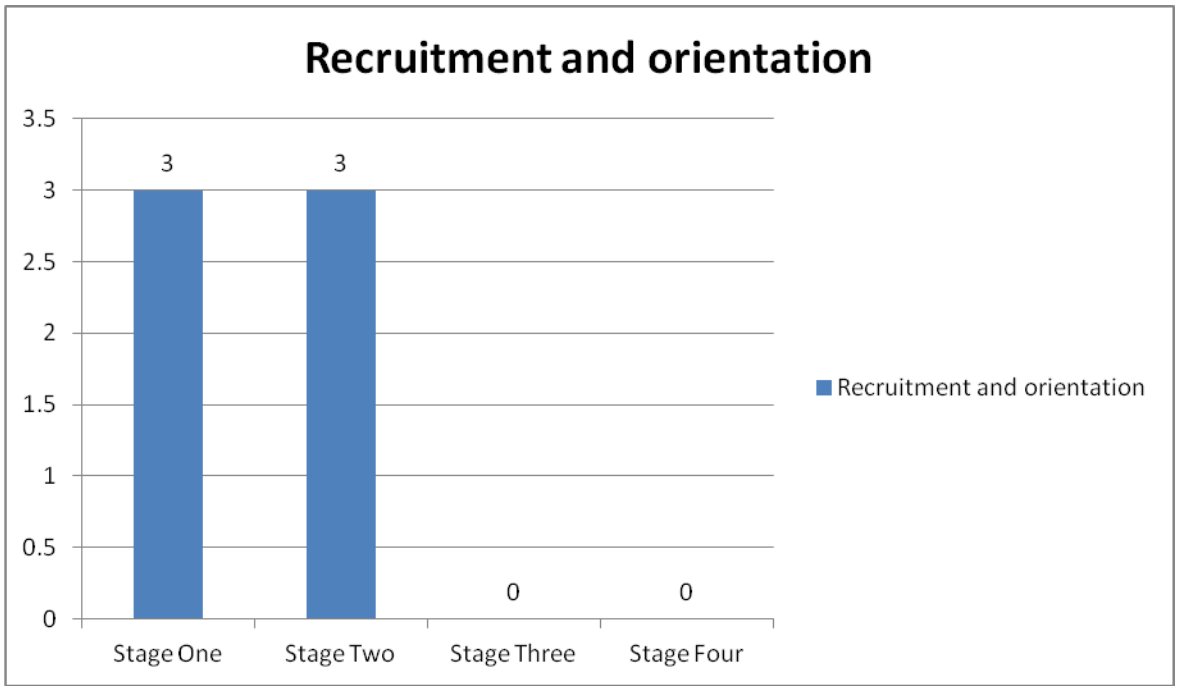


**Figure 6.25: Recruitment and orientation**

Half of the participants (three) selected Stage 1 which represents the absence of community engagement in advertising and advertising materials, interview protocols, orientation and training activities for new CCYFS staff members. The other half (three) of the participants indicated Stage 2, which indicates that community engagement appears inconsistently in advertising materials, interview protocols and orientation activities for new CCYFS personnel.

**Component 5: Marketing**

The current state of marketing of community engagement within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.26.

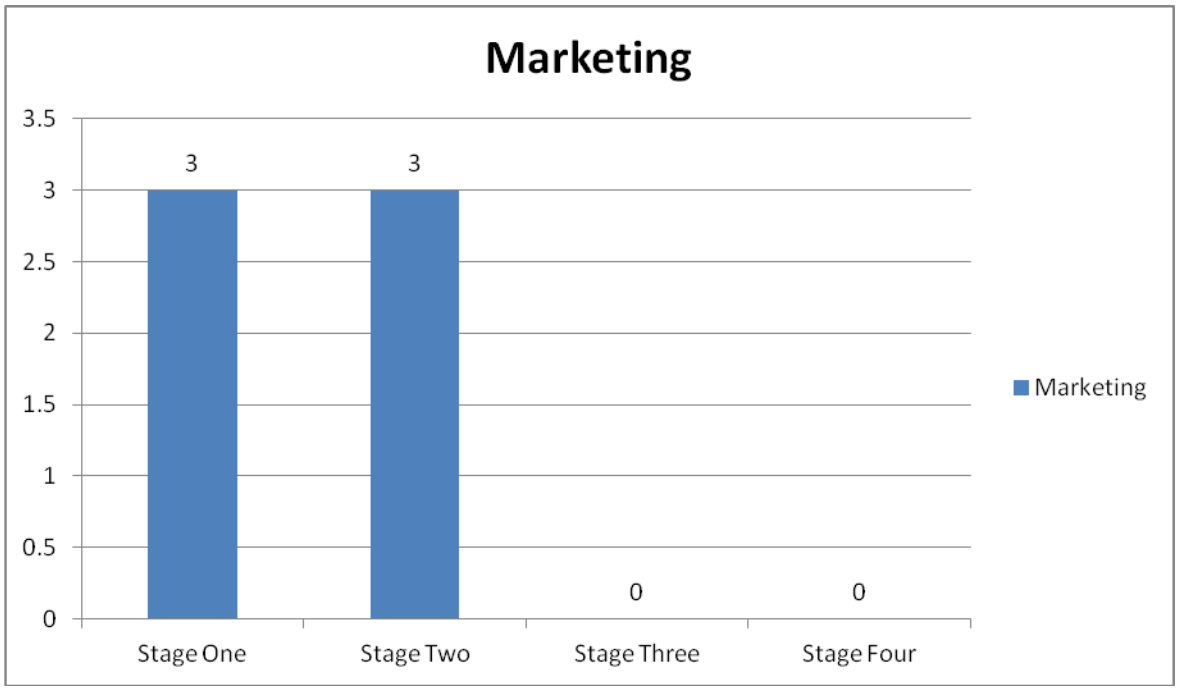


**Figure 6.26: Marketing**

Half (three) of the participants indicated that community engagement does not appear in unit marketing materials (e.g. websites, promotional brochures) (Stage 1). Three participants indicated that community engagement inconsistently appears in unit marketing materials (e.g. websites, promotional brochures) (Stage 2).

**Component 6: Dissemination of community engagement results**

The dissemination of community engagement results within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.27.

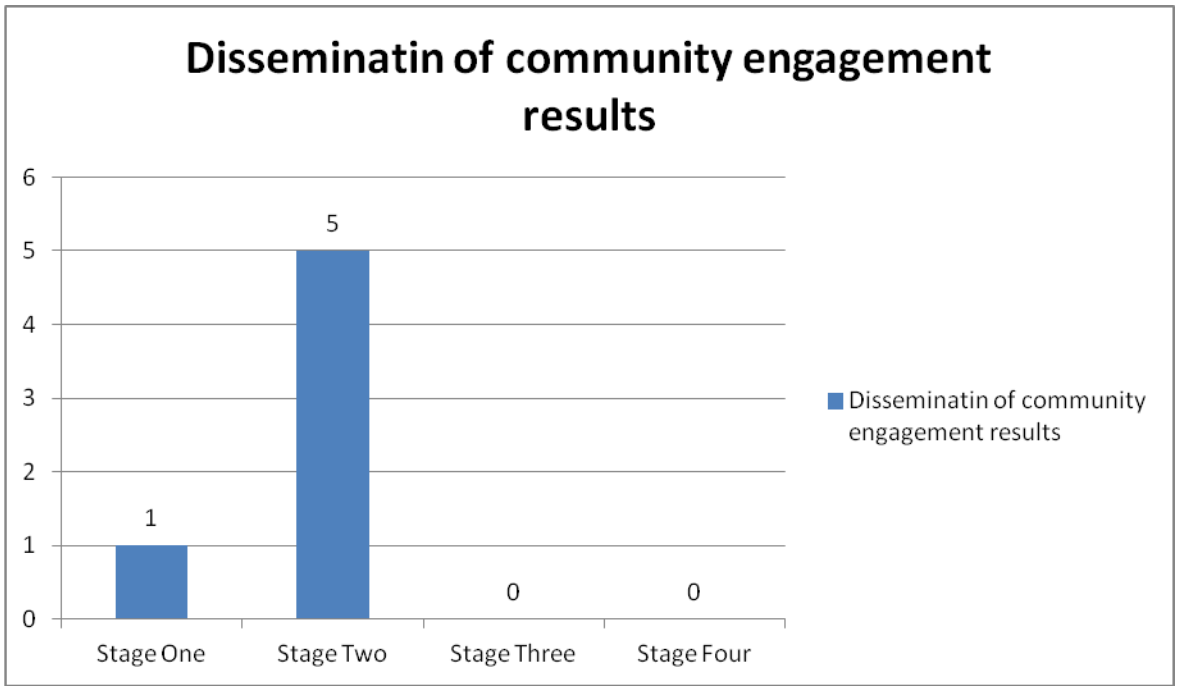


**Figure 6.27: Dissemination of community engagement results**

The minority of participants (one) indicated that no efforts have been made to share results of activities through diverse venues (e.g. community forums, websites, presentations, articles) (Stage 1). Five participants indicated that a few results of community engagement activities are shared through diverse venues (e.g. community forums, websites, presentations, journal articles) (Stage 2).

**Component 7: Budgetary allocation**

The current state of budget allocation within the CCYFS is illustrated in Figure 6.28.

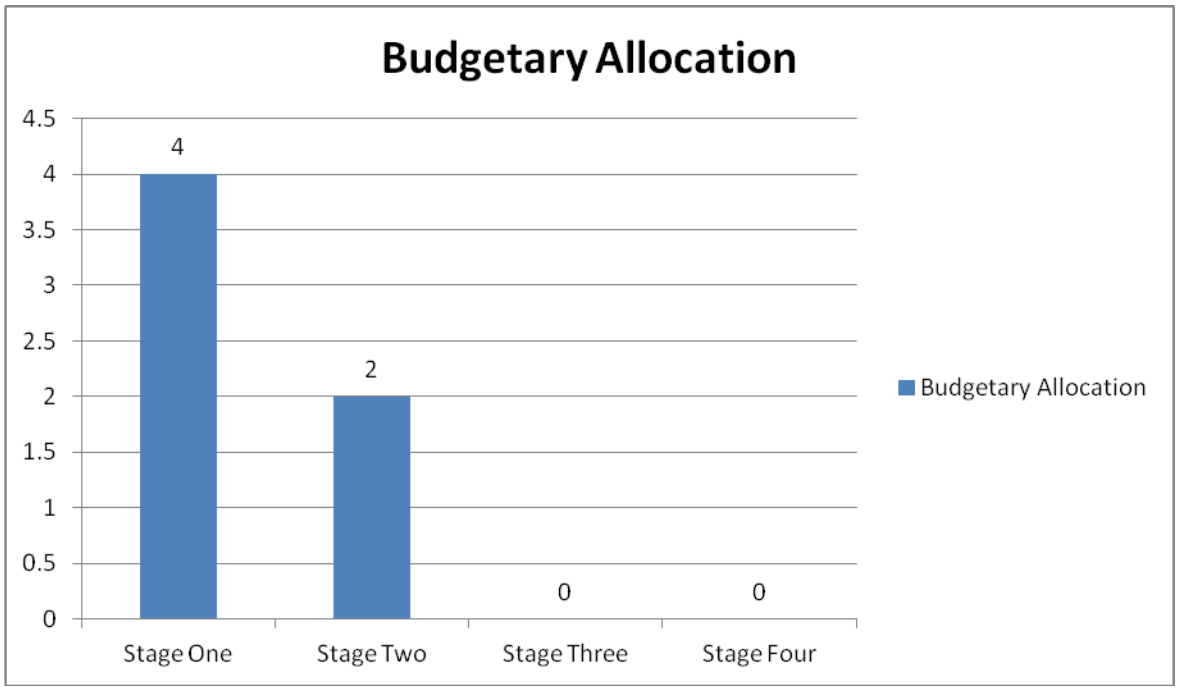


**Figure 6.28: Budgetary allocation**

The majority (four) of the participants indicated that there are no hard or soft (e.g. grants) funding sources that support the unit's community engagement activities (Stage 1). Two participants indicated Stage 2, where engagement is supported primarily but not exclusively by soft funding (e.g. grants) from non-institutional sources (Stage 2).

**DIMENSION VI: LEADERSHIP SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Dimension VI focuses on leadership for community engagement and includes the components of department-level leadership, campus-level leadership from departmental faculty and national-level leadership from departmental faculty.

**Component 1: Department-level leadership**

The current state of departmental level leadership support of community engagement is illustrated in Figure 6.29.

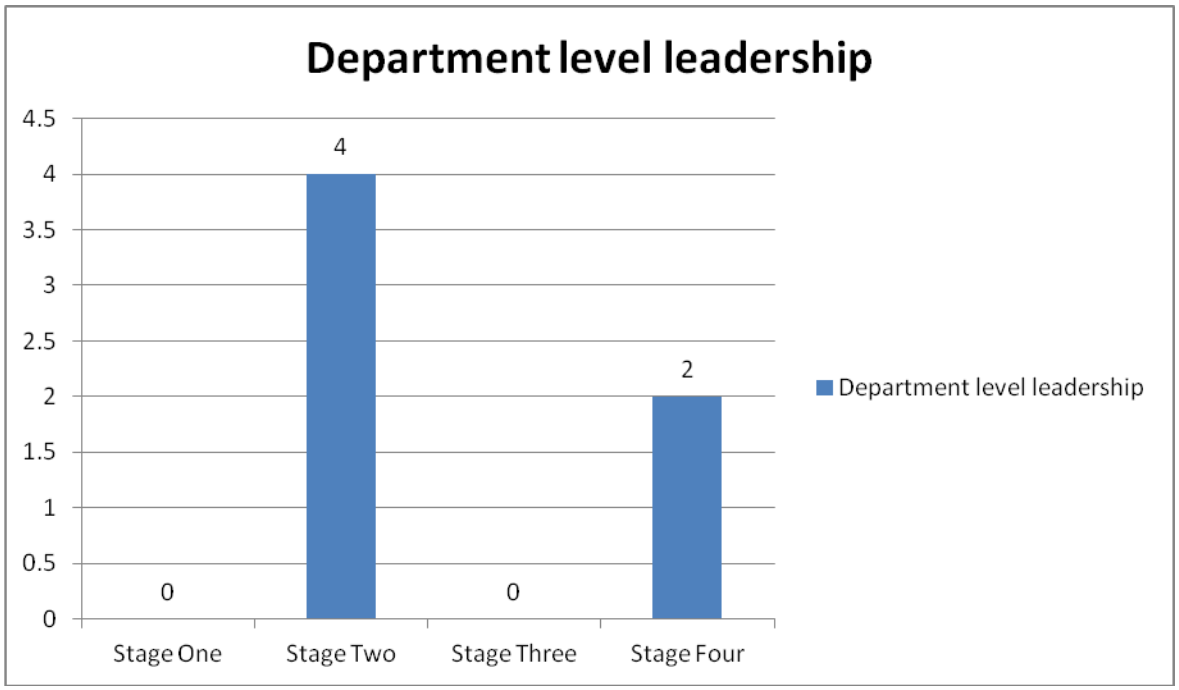


**Figure 6.29: Department-level leadership**

The majority (four) of the participants indicated that the department chair and/or a few of the highly respected, influential faculty members of the CCYFS support community engagement activities in the CCYFS (Stage 2). Two participants indicated that the department chair and/or most of the highly respected, influential faculty members in the CCYFS strongly support and advocate for community engagement activities in the CCYFS (Stage 4).

**Component 2: Campus-level leadership from departmental faculty**

The current state of campus-level leadership of CCYFS members is illustrated in Figure 6.30.

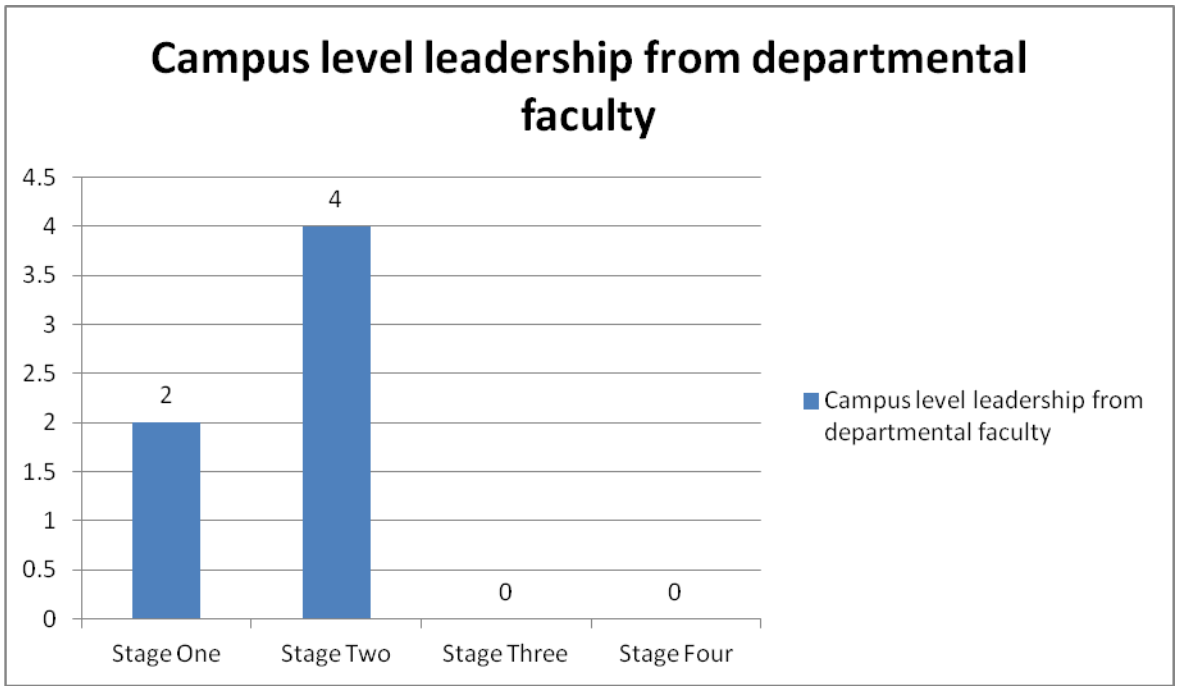


**Figure 6.30: Campus-level leadership from departmental faculty**

Two participants indicated that none of the faculty members from the unit advocates for engagement activities through his or her involvement as a leader in influential institutional roles such as review, tenure and promotion committees, faculty governance, strategic planning and curriculum committees (Stage 1). The majority (four) of the participants indicated that a few of the faculty members from the unit advocate for engagement activities through their involvement as leaders in influential institutional roles (Stage 2).

**Component 3: National-level leadership from departmental faculty**

The current state of national level leadership of CCYFS members is illustrated in Figure 6.31.

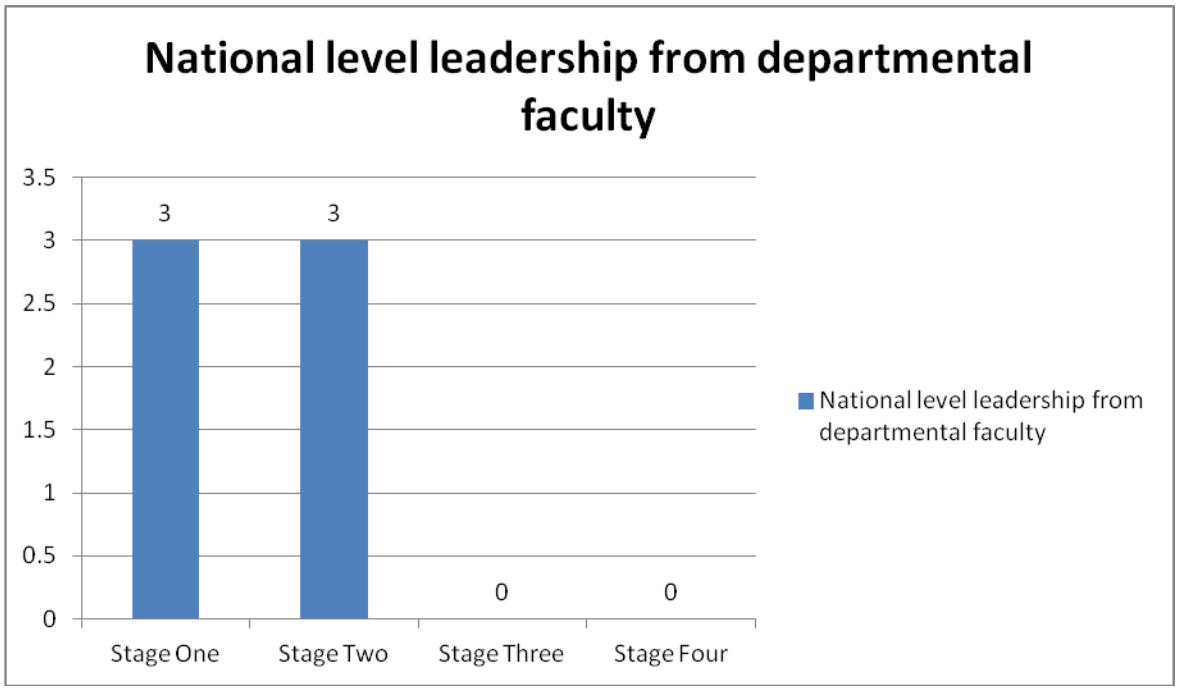


**Figure 6.31: National-level leadership from departmental faculty**

Half (three) of the participants indicated Stage 1 - namely that none of the faculty in the unit demonstrates national disciplinary association leadership. The other half (three) of the participants indicated Stage 2 - which point to the fact that a few of the faculty in the unit demonstrate national disciplinary association leadership.

### 6.3.4 Summary of the main findings of Questionnaire B

The distribution of the job levels of the academic staff members (Table 6.1) indicated that most of the participants are senior lecturers (three) while two are lecturers. The majority of the participants had several years of experience in the academic field.

**Mission and culture supporting community engagement**

The mission of the CCYFS indirectly alludes to the importance of community engagement, indicating that community engagement is not directly mentioned, highlighted or centrally located in the centre's mission. Also, there is no unit-wide definition for community-engaged teaching or community-engaged service. The organisational climate and culture of the CCYFS is seen as highly supportive of community engagement. The practices of community-engaged teaching, research and service are not collectively assessed.

**Faculty support and CE**

Community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS is not fully understood and ways in which it can be integrated into teaching, research and service are not clear. The curricular integration of community engagement is also not evident. Members are infrequently encouraged to participate in community engagement activities and the review, promotion and tenure processes at departmental level do not reward community-engaged research and scholarship.

**Community partners, partnership support and community engagement**

Community agencies that periodically host unit-related work sites or internship placement could be identified, and there is some understanding between the CCYFS and the community representatives regarding each other's long-range goals and needs in terms of developing and implementing community engagement activities. Opportunities for community partners to assume leadership roles in the centre's activities do not exist and community agencies rarely access the CCYFS and/or students as resources for their work through course-based projects and research. No incentives are provided for community agencies for their involvement in the CCYFS's community engagement activities.

**Student support and CE**

Opportunities do exist for students to engage with community, but only a few students are aware of community engagement opportunities. The CCYFS does not have any formal or informal incentive or recognition mechanisms in place for students to engage with communities. No opportunities exist for students to exercise formal governance roles, including advising or leading community engagement activities associated with the CCYFS.

**Organisational support for CE**

Little facilitating assistance is available to CCYFS staff, students and/or community constituencies to implement or advance community engagement. In addition, no systematic effort is being made to account for the number or quality of community engagement activities occurring at the centre. Community engagement is not being advertised sufficiently, and only a few results of community engagement activities are

shared through diverse ways. No hard or soft funding sources exist to support the centre's community engagement activities.

**Leadership support for CE**

The CCYFS and a few of the influential faculty members support community engagement in the centre. Only a few of the staff members in the centre demonstrate national disciplinary association leadership.

### 6.3.5 Higher order analysis of data and identification of emerging patterns

The recurring patterns and themes that were identified during the analysis of data from Questionnaire A and Questionnaire B will be interpreted and presented. The aim of the first phase was to determine the current state of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. Two questionnaires (A and B) were used to collect the data.

**Pattern 1: Definition and status of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS**

Both questionnaires pointed to the lack of a clear definition of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. Different understandings and values are associated with the concept of community engagement. However, the importance of defining community engagement was emphasised. Some concepts were highlighted in an attempt to define community engagement, which include seeing community engagement as a process. It is regarded as a service to the community while the practicum is seen as community engagement and giving something back to the community. Some participants were able to identify the link between theory and practice and to associate the concept of reflection with their work. Research was not indicated or included in any feedback and is not seen as part of the definition of community engagement. It also seems that the voice of the community is lacking in the definition of community engagement as there were no references to the needs of the community. Community engagement also does not seem to be fully understood and it is not clear how it can be integrated into teaching, research and service. The curricular integration of community engagement is not evident.

The organisational climate and culture of the CCYFS is seen as highly supportive of community engagement, but lecturers apparently need to be encouraged to participate in community engagement activities. Review, promotion and tenure processes at departmental level also seem to be in need of attention in order to reward community-engaged research and scholarship. Facilitating assistance appears to be in need of being more available to CCYFS staff, students and/or community constituencies in the implementation and advancement of community engagement. Also, there seems to be no systematic effort in place to account for the number or quality of community engagement activities occurring in the centre. Community engagement needs to be promoted and the results of the community engagement activities need to be shared on diverse platforms. Funding must be sourced to support the centre's community engagement activities.

**Pattern 2: Community partners**

The involvement of the CCYFS (students and lecturers) offered some benefit to the community, but only on certain levels (for example, the children benefitting from therapy and the fact that the services rendered to the children or community is free of charge). Both questionnaires suggested that such involvement can be more beneficial as only a very small group of people currently benefit from these interventions. Again, there was no indication of addressing the real needs of the community.

Only a few community partners could be identified, but the long-range goals and needs to develop and implement community engagement activities were not defined. There appears to be insufficient opportunities for community partners to assume leadership roles in the centre's activities, and the resources of the CCYFS (students, lecturers) are not fully utilised in service to the community.

Opportunities do exist for students to engage with communities, but only a few students are aware of community engagement opportunities. The CCYFS does not have any formal or informal incentives or recognition mechanisms in place for students to engage with communities. No opportunities exist for students to exercise formal governance roles, including advising or leading community engagement activities associated with the CCYFS.

**Pattern 3: Curriculum - structuring of the community involvement**

Responses from participants were inconsistent in terms of the duration of involvement in the community. Half of the participants pointed out that their involvement was sufficient while some indicated that it was insufficient and that they wanted to be more involved in communities. It seems that the participants who indicated that they did have sufficient exposure to the communities had difficulty to cope with a full-time occupation and the additional practicum. Hence, they struggled to manage prolonged involvement. Responses in terms of when to get involved in community engagement activities were also inconsistent. Some indicated that they wanted to be involved in the communities from their very first year of study but after acquiring a theoretical base. Others indicated involvement from their second year of study as the first year was taken up by theoretical modules. It was clear that the respondents were hesitant to get involved on a therapeutic level in communities in their first year of study as they did not have a theoretical basis. The participants who wanted to be involved in the community from their first year of study indicated that placements should be identified earlier and that they wanted to get involved in the community at a much earlier stage. It was also suggested that the involvement should be spread over the two years of study.

**Pattern 4: Research in the curriculum**

The participants indicated that research is not integrated with the theory and the service component of their studies. It appears that the participants experienced the introduction of the research component only in the second year as too overwhelming. As a result, they did not have enough time to complete their research within the time allocated. It was indicated that research needs to be introduced in the first year of study as it will provide more time for research. In terms of the integration of research and theory in the coursework, it was suggested that research needs to be introduced in each module to support the research thinking development. This will allow student participants to identify their research problems based on their involvement in the community.

**Pattern 5: The integration of teaching, research and service**

Responses from the participants indicated that the three core functions, namely teaching, research and service, seem fragmented and not integrated throughout the

course. It furthermore appeared as if the practices of community-engaged teaching, research and service were not collectively assessed.

**Pattern 6: Enhanced academic learning**

According to responses from student participants, their involvement in the community was beneficial as they grew professionally and personally. They indicated that the programme provided opportunities for them to apply theory in practice. Supervision as support function was emphasised in the development and growth of the students, and they indicated the need for adequate support. The student participants' responses show that they made use of structured opportunities for reflection in the modules and practicum sessions, and that their sensitivity towards the community was enhanced. In addition, their awareness of social responsibility was enhanced, they were provided with the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the module content, and they were provided with the opportunity to make connections between service and the module work, which broadened their appreciation of the discipline.

### 6.3.6 Themes from the data collected through interviews

Content analysis was used to analyse the data obtained from the interviews. During the basic level analysis, the emerging themes were identified and these will be presented in the next section. Some of the participants' responses are included. Verbatim quotes are used where applicable and only significant remarks, as recorded, are presented.

Table 6.3 below sets out the themes and subthemes as well as the coding of the themes that were developed based on interviews with the 13 lecturers:

**Table 6.3: Summary of themes and subthemes developed from the data**

| Themes | Code | Subthemes | Code |
|---|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Community engagement | CE | 1.1 Academic learning in CE | ALCE |
| | | 1.2 Mutual benefits | MBCE |
| | | 1.3 Different types of CE | TCE |
| | | 1.4 Role of academics in CE | ACE |
| | | 1.5 Structuring of CE within the academic programme | SCE |
| | | 1.6 Settings for CE | SCE |
| | | 1.7 Partners and partnerships | PP |
| | | 1.8 Social responsibility | SRCE |
| Theme 2: Research | R | 2.1 Supervision in research | SR |
| | | 2.2 Research topics and focus areas | FR |
| | | 2.3 Structuring of research in the curriculum | SCR |
| | | 2.4 Community-based research | CBR |
| | | 2.5 Student's motivation toward research | SMR |
| Theme 3: Practicum supervision | PS | 3.1 Site supervisors | SS |
| | | 3.2 University supervisors | US |
| | | 3.3 The role of supervision | RS |
| Theme 4: Assessment | A | 4.1 Type of assessment | TA |
| Theme 5: Practicum | P | 5.1 Structuring of practicum and outcomes | SP |
| | | 5.2 Social responsibility in practicum | SRP |
| | | 5.3 Internships versus practicum | IP |
| | | 5.4 Practicum hours | HP |
| | | 5.5 Practicum and the community | CP |
| Theme 6: Teaching and learning | TL | 6.1 Frequency of contact | CTL |

| Themes | Code | Subthemes | Code |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 6.2 Integration of teaching and CE | CETL |
| | | 6.3 Practical application of teaching and learning | PATL |
| | | 6.4 Type of contact | TCTL |
| Theme 7: Academic programme | AP | 7.1 Duration of the course | DAP |

### 6.3.7 Data obtained through the semi-structured interviews

**Theme 1: Community engagement (CE)**

The first theme that was identified in this study is how community engagement is perceived by the various universities and how it is applied within the relevant academic programmes. These perspectives, as obtained from the analysed data, will be presented and discussed according to the different subthemes that were identified. The first subtheme identified is the position of community engagement within a programme.

**Subtheme 1.1: Academic learning in community engagement (ALCE)**

The importance of academic learning in the community engagement activity was highlighted by several of the participants, as following comments indicate:

> "... we introduce academic curriculum into service learning base experience, so the students are learning as they do ... so it's serving someone while they're learning their academic skills that's how we define that." (MB)

> "... engagement including components of student learning and student development." (TG)

**Subtheme 1.2: Mutual benefits (MBCE)**

The importance of community engagement activities that are mutually beneficial to students as well as communities were highlighted by several participants:

> "... engagement … that are mutually beneficial ..." (TG)

> "... must have a mutually beneficial cycle for the university and the community to be considered engagement." (AF)

**Subtheme 1.3: Different types of CE (TCE)**

Various participants indicated that different types of community engagement are currently used. Teaching-based community engagement is identified as a type of community engagement that is used, and this is highlighted by one participant:

> "... different types of community engagement which is teaching-based community engagement, which basically involves us going out there or our students going out there and we provide our services ... and then it feeds back into the university system as improvements for the courses or it gives our students some kind of experience that they can use." (AF)

> "Where people can then make appointments and come in on campus and get services from our students under supervision of our qualified clinicians the entire time. That is considered teaching community engagement as far as the research is concerned, giving our students practical experience in the field." (AF)

Work-based experience and community-engaged research is another type of community engagement that was identified as indicated by two participants:

> "… work-based experience and research-based would ... be us going out there and delivering research services for free and coming back to the university and turning it into a credit research output." (AF)

> "... students would engage with external constituencies … or as part of a formal curriculum … or conducting research that is kind of community-engaged research." (DK)

**Subtheme 1.4: Role of academics in community engagement (ACE)**

Some participants identified the important role of the academics and the faculties in community engagement. Different types of involvement were identified, such as the work that the lecturers themselves do in their own time to see clients or their involvement at local schools and local government:

> "... community engagement is work that the lecturers themselves do in their own time, maybe to see clients free of charge or supervise for the community and so forth." (TG2)

> "... faculty members in our programme, involved in particular doing community welfare kind of things in the local schools and with local government and recreation programs and so the faculty, they out there with their students out in the community." (KW)

Academics need to integrate community engagement in all of their roles:

> "... is expected of all of our academics to be involved in … your teaching and learning and research, academic citizenship and community engagement … the way we have integrated it for ourselves in the department is that we try to embed it in everything." (AF)

Academics can use their expertise to engage with communities:

> "The term they use for academics … engaged scholarship, which they basically define as any situation where the academic is drawing on their scholarly expertise to engage with external, non-academic constituencies for public benefit … where you somehow using your area of expertise or scholarship". (DK)

**Subtheme 1.5: Structuring community engagement in the academic programme (SCE)**

Community engagement is structured differently in academic programmes as some will use projects, interventions and/of research while several participants identified their practicum sessions as community engagement. This is highlighted in the comments below where community engagement is seen as interaction with different groups outside the community:

> "... interaction with different groups, both within our university and outside the university and that would be, but particularly outside the university, I would say and that would be a sort of engagement with schools, clinics, NGOs, children's homes ..." (TG)

> "... the community engagement and the community psychology module is a combination of students intervening the theory and principles in a variety of settings". (TG)

The HEIs regard field-based learning or practical learning as their type of community engagement:

> "… incorporate those practicum experiences early on and get people involved, we don't call it specifically service learning, we call it more field-based learning or practical learning." (JC)

> "... do community engagement from the first year ... they work in schools in the local community as well as they work in a clinic where they provide services to clients at the clinic in the community and in addition to that we have a psychotherapeutic clinic on campus that is free." (AF)

Several participants indicated that they have projects in the communities:

> "... the type of projects we had going, secured funding to open satellite clinics in rural school districts and we provided the personnel, we provided the supervision and the focus really was providing services that were free to the community that they couldn't access, otherwise and our child guidance centre on campus is basically a free clinic and we put the school focus of that is provide services to the local area." (JC)

> "… students are required to implement a prevention project in their schools in the community. In addition, we have had regular external funding for projects that involve prevention and intervention activities for bullying prevention and domestic violence, and these are integrated with community-based organisations in three counties." (JC)

> "... they also have to do a community project, they have to go out and do a needs analysis, what is needed in a specific setting and that of course in the end is then assessed in terms of the theory of community psychology but also we talk about how the community has benefited or the community has not benefited, where we've gone wrong and so forth and I think it's continuously part of the conversation in terms of what's happening in the community, are we building

> capacities, what more can be done. So I think it's sort of an implicit thing that we are aware of, of what is needed and what we can do but also developing the professional competencies." (TG2)

Some participants identified the practicum involvement, community service and/or the internships of the students in the community as community engagement:

> "... fair number of students who are in community settings involved in doing counselling kinds of work and practicum in the schools internships." (KW)

> "... the nature of the course is about community engagement, the whole training is … students are based for the duration of the master's degree at the guidance clinic, which is the university' guidance clinic, that is a public service clinic which is really the clients that we have are basically children and families who don't have the resources for private mental health care." (DK)

> "Then there would be community engagement¸ but would be using sort of traditional theoretical models and that would be in a form of counselling, assessment and then our students do some work in local hospitals doing patient intakes and so on." (TG)

> "CE in the department forms part of the master's degree … our students do practical work in settings in the community ..." (TG2)

**Subtheme 1.6: Settings for CE (SCE)**

Community engagement is applied in different settings as highlighted by a number of participants. Most are in schools:

> "... includes some schools in disadvantage areas" (TG)

> "... we have a lot of people who work in schools" (KW)

> "80% of the play therapists work in schools or in school related services" (MJ)

Several are at NGOs:

> "... going into areas such as Hillbrow and in which the students need to meet with different service providers and residents and volunteers and build projects

> in that area and then other area in which they implementing those sort of principles would be within the contents of different NGOs that are working in areas of gender and areas with violence." (TG)

> "... NGOs, children's homes, different sort of social developments, organisations" (TG)

> "... settings are like women's shelters, the other settings are community clinics, outpatients clinic, psychiatric hospital ..." (TG2)

Several are also involved at clinics and hospitals:

> "... clinics …" (TG)

> "... the other settings are community clinics, outpatients clinics, psychiatric hospital ..." (TG2)

**Subtheme 1.7: Partners and partnerships (PP)**

The importance of the community as partner and partnerships between the university and the community was emphasised. The university is seen by the community as a partner, and the community has huge expectations of the university:

> "... the community see the university as a partner ... they have a lot of expectations from the university too … I think there's expectations on both sides, that the community will take students and the students will help the community." (KW)

The relationship between the university and community appears to be very important.

> "... we actually have been involved with the community over a number of years so we've built up a rapport with them and I think we, we sort of have a very good understanding of what's happening there." (TG2)

> "... in some instances the community calls up and says, would you be willing to participate in this and then the students then conduct a needs analysis and go from there." (KW)

> "... the school will actually request from concerned people in the school to the university saying we have a certain number of issues that we think you can assist with. What happen then was that the clinical teaching people went out to the school, did a need assessment and understood what their needs are and they then integrated it with the training needs of the students." (AF)

None of the participants indicated that they had formal agreements with the communities in which they work. They described their relationships as follows:

> "... I don't think we have any long standing long-term agreements, every year we negotiate with a different community or organisation to work with them and then sometimes it runs over two years." (DK)

> "... I am not sure how formal those arrangements are in terms of like written memorandums with understanding or contracts, actually they are not that formal they are more informal." (DK)

> "... I don't think there are formal written agreements. I think they are more sort of consensual and meetings and mutual agreements." (TG)

**Subtheme 1.8: Social responsibility (SRCE)**

The participants were asked about the role of social responsibility within community engagement. Several participants indicated that there is a focus on social responsibility in their programme:

> "... I think it's both (professional competencies and social responsibility) because we are quite aware of the needs of the community … it is an opportunity for them to develop their competencies but in that sense we also contribute to the community and these settings ..." (TG2)

> "... all the modules, have to incorporate that (social responsibility) as a focus. ... It has to be infused in all the modules and in the community modules it is sort of obviously most salient." (TG)

> "... most of our students work in fairly impoverished inner city environments, in schools and they understand the need to provide service back to their

> community relating to that and so for the most part I would say, 90% of our students are very careful to keep focus on the fact that they need to provide service as part of their learning experience." (JC)

> "... the ethos of the whole course is sort of socially relevant for the course ..." (TG)

**Theme 2: Research (R)**

The second theme that was identified in this study focused on research, which is one of the core functions of HE. The analysed data will be presented and discussed according to the different subthemes that were identified within this theme. The first subtheme identified was supervision in research.

**Subtheme 2.1: Supervision (S)**

Some of the participants saw their roles as study leaders as being very supportive:

> "... they (students) tend to practice and avoidance of the steps that they have to go through because each one is a hurdle and that's usually a lot of my work with those students is helping, you know kind of support them and helping them understand, yes these are hoops you have to go through if you want to go get to your goal and serving as a cheerleader to keep them going." (JC)

The frequency of study leading contact ranged from once a month ["... in the beginning the supervision is once a month...." (NR)] up to twice a week or every week ["... it would become more regular maybe every two weeks and eventually every week." (NR)].

**Subtheme 2.2: Research topics and focus areas**

Responses from the participants on the research topics and focus areas of supervision included the following:

Some participants indicated that they provide students with focus areas and the research projects of staff members, and then the students need to choose:

> "We provide them with a list of all the staff members and the staff members' research projects and research interests and then the students get a sort of an

> idea of the topics that they would like to work on more or less and also like a list of three supervisors possible and then we sit and try and allocate but also bearing in mind the work load as well so usually the student is placed within the first three choices of the topic and with a supervisor they would like to work with." (TG2)

> "They start working with a research mentor and usually on their mentors area of research and the work with their mentor for the next year and a half and going into their third year ..." (JC)

The research topics vary:

> "... they are not necessarily based on community needs, it's quite broad in terms of what the supervisors are working on what the students like to work on and so forth." (TG2)

> "... research topics a wide range ..." (JC)

> "... they have to do a research dissertation as part of their master's degree and the topics of the research are usually kind of responding to public mental health needs in some way." (DK)

**Subtheme 2.3: Structuring of research in the curriculum (SCR)**

Several participants indicated that the students are assigned to supervisors in their first year of study.

> "... they (students) get assigned to the study leader, in the first year ... so they can already start in their first year with their research and don't have to leave it until the second year." (AF)

> "... students are assigned to research study leaders in the beginning of the first year, in the first two months." (TG2)

> "... yes, the research study leaders are assigned to the students in their first year." (NR)

Several participants indicated that the students start with research in their first year of study:

> "... they start with research in their first year." (TG2)

> "... they do their research in the first year … they get it out the way and then they've got a clear desk and they can just focus on the clinical work … but it just works better for us as trainers and they do a bit of quality research." (DK)

> "... the research would be from the beginning … it's a focus of the whole class." (KW)

Furthermore, the participants identified various ways in which the research is structured within their curricula. Most of the participants indicated that the research is undertaken in the first year of study:

> "We used to split it into two years, now for one year they just focus on research, they don't have anything else to distract them ..." (DK)

> "... they do their research in the first year … they get it out the way and then they've got a clear desk and they can just focus on the clinical work" (DK)

Research modules are also presented to students:

> "... they have two research modules which are qualitative and quantitative." (NR)

> "... they do ongoing research and are taught research methodology and the final dissertation at MA level ..." (MJ)

> "... they do research assignments during the course." (MJ)

> "... they have two courses just on research and then they do research through the programme." (BB)

Research presentations are made by students:

> "... and then we have a number of sort of presentations with them informal within the team as the collectors. So the whole team is involved in the research and mostly the team does the supervision and then it is the same team sort of

> teaching the modules. So it is sort of part of your interaction with the other programme as a whole and we find that it is easier to get them to progress like that. If we are quite involved in the research and that all the staff are ..." (DK)

A research proposal needs to be finished in the first research module:

> "... the research modules are designed in a way to have a proposal as an outcome because that is very important for the university, if that is not passed within the first year, they cannot come back the second year." (NR)

Classes are research-orientated:

> "... the students are doing research, a lot of the classes are research-orientated classes so they're out doing evaluation and that's something I use to have students do too, they conduct research projects with different groups to do community assessments and that type of thing ..." (KW).

> "... we try and also talk to them about this is sort of scientist practitioner model, using research to inform practice and understanding how research can inform clinical practice, then also how clinical practice can be used to develop new ideas and models and theories about things. So I think having less pressure on them, that actually helps because they have a much better attitude towards their research now and they make a lot of effort and they actually do really nice research whereas before it use to be a bit dodgy." (DK)

**Subtheme 2.4: Community-based research (CBR)**

The participants reported that some of their research is based on the communities where they do their internships/practicum sessions:

> "Most of our students are going to be practitioners, they are not going to be researchers, that's why many of them chose to do their research where they are doing their internship on the setting which they are doing their internship, because that's going to be more relevant to what they will be doing when they complete the program." (JC)

> "... we seek external funding that's going to have a service component for the community and so the research is linked to that, but usually the primary focus of the funding is to provide service to the community." (JC)

> "... just a few identified sites that are research-based where you got a site supervisor which are familiar with research and interested in studying whatever programme it is that the student is participating in." (SJ)

**Subtheme 2.5: Student's motivation towards research (SMR)**

Several participants emphasised that it is important for them to get the students motivated for their research:

> "Yes, we found that the research is always lagging behind and it's like they struggle to focus on it because it's for the, put it on the back burner, it's something they will get to and we thought it would be better to do it and to focus on it and develop their skills in research, make it part of the course that it's also exciting and important and focus on that alone and then start with the course work and the practical, the stuff that they actually want to do as psychologists." (TG2)

They also emphasise the importance of research informing practice:

> "Yes, and that's what we've been doing with this new group with the research first is that we've been focusing all the time on what, how would this research inform your training next year, how does it help you to become a psychologist and I think it really seems to make a difference at the moment." (TG2)

> "... we try and also talk to them about you know this is sort of scientist practitioner model of, you know, using research to inform practice and understanding how research can inform clinical practice, then also how clinical practice can be used to develop new ideas and models and theories about things." (DK)

**Theme 3: Practicum supervision**

The third theme that was identified in this study focused on supervision and the importance of supervision in the practicum training. The first subtheme identified was site supervisors.

**Subtheme 3.1: Site supervisors (SS)**

Site supervisors are used at the sites of practicum. At least three participants reported as follows:

> "… one site visit in which the field supervisor evaluates the student with the university supervisor, face-to-face." (JC)

> "... a few students talked of being very raw and green when they started that service learning experience and felt that is if they needed more supervision interaction than they got on the site." (SJ)

> "... they have a site supervisor and a university supervisor ..." (BB)

**Subtheme 3.2: University supervisors (US)**

The importance of regular contact between the university supervisors and students were emphasised by several participants:

> "... they have 120 contact hours with tutors face to face ..." (MJ)

> "... I see my students every week for two and a half hours." (MB)

> "... supervision once a week ... individual supervision." (TG2)

> "The supervisor then monitors what they are doing on a weekly basis and gives them input ..." (TG)

> "... they must be in regular contact with their allocated tutor during that time and they are continuously assessed on assignments that they have to send in to their course directors ..." (MJ)

One participant indicated that they only have university supervisors, but that professionals at the sites would be of assistance in case of a crisis or if the university

supervisor would only be available for telephonic consultation. They also use external supervisors to assist with supervision:

> "… supervision … It's only at the university because like the women's shelter, there's no psychologist there, there's a registered counsellor there that they can talk to if there is an issue but the supervisor is always just a phone call away should something happen ..." (TG2)

> "... our clinical supervisors are some of the academic staff who are also clinicians, but we actually do have a lot of external clinical supervisors." (DK)

At least one participant indicated that different supervisors are used for the practicum and the research.

> "... separate supervision for practicum and research ..." (DK)

**Subtheme 3.3: The role of supervision (RS)**

Supervision is focused on the skills and the client receiving the service. This was indicated as follows:

> "... supervision is very focused on not only my skills but what I was doing for the clients ..." (JC)

> "... students go out to the organisation and they set up a consultation relationship with the organisation under the supervision of this lecturer ..." (DK)

**Theme 4: Assessment (A)**

Assessment was identified as the fourth theme. The first subtheme identified was the different types of assessments that are used.

**Subtheme 4.1: Type of assessment (TA)**

The participants identified different ways of assessment. Some participants indicated that their students need to submit a portfolio with their work:

> "... they hand in their portfolio, with all the work they have done". (MJ)

> "... if they fail a component, then they have to redo the component assignment before they can hand in their portfolio. By the time the final portfolio comes in, that rarely happens that somebody fails and they don't fail in the first stage they have the chance to resubmit, but if they resubmit they can only have 50% as a total mark." (MJ)

> "... do a final portfolio ..." (BB)

> "... they will be expected to do a portfolio of evidence." (RS)

Group discussions are apparently also used by several participants:

> "... groups and assessments as part of their practicum". (JC)

> "... weekly group discussions ..." (PN)

> "... every other week they have a group discussion on campus and they do logs ..." (BB)

> "... group work ..." (NR)

Written evaluations are used as assessment method ["The field supervisor completes a written evaluation at the end of the semester, and the university supervisor conducts at least one site visit in which the field supervisor evaluates the student with the university supervisor, face-to-face." (JC)] as well as papers and journals ["In the non-practicum classes the students write papers, journal entries ..." (MB); "they could do journal entries ..." (NR)] while some utilise online discussions with classmates ["... participate in online discussions with their classmates ..." (MB); "… do group work online ..." (NR)]. Some use observation as a form of assessment ["It is all done by continuous observations, by observations through supervision, and by the academic work that they send in and the clinical work that they send in, once all the portfolio requirements are done ..." (MJ)].

The importance and value of continuous reflection was highlighted by several participants.

> "... write a weekly reflection on what they are doing and kind of how they process the activities ..." (TG)

"... students submit weekly reflection reports that have to do with their understanding of the dynamics and processes in relation to the children themselves but also in terms of broader group process and interaction with other students and the context in general and then their involvement in therapeutic riding is directly linked to assessment in terms of their continuous assessment ..." (PN)

"... reflections that they do out of the study, sort of illustrate what the connections they are making between theory and practice." (TG)

Students do end-of-year project presentations to the rest of the class:

"... at the end of the year they write sort of project report and present that also to the rest of their classes, what was that they were trying to do and how they evaluated it. What are the successes and weaknesses of the project and so on." (TG)

Continuous assessment is utilised by the lecturers:

"... they must be in regular contact with their allocated tutor during that time and they are continuously assessed on assignments that they have to send in to their course directors ..." (MJ)

"... we check their work from time to time and we also check with the line manager at the organisation that their work is satisfactory and sign off on what they do." (AF)

"... their continuous assessment is based on a sort of community project that they do. They do it throughout the year, obviously the year module and basically looks at sort of applying what they've learnt in class about community psychology, disability, child development, positive psychology to their interaction and understanding of their work with the children during the course of the year." (PN)

"The supervisor then monitors what they are doing on a weekly basis and gives them input ..." (TG)

Assignments are used by several of the participants in their programmes:

> "... assignments in the format of a report or an essay." (NR)

> "… in the weekly lectures they write sort of an assignment ..." (TG)

Case presentation are used as assessment method by the participants:

> "... they have to present a case in fort of the lecturers ..." (TG2)

> "They have to do a seminar presentation on the theoretical aspects of community engagement and some will be around different theoretical paradigms ..." (TG)

**Theme 5: Practicum (P)**

The practicum was identified as the fifth theme. The data was categorised in the subthemes identified through the data analysis.

**Subtheme 5.1: Structuring of practicum and outcomes (SP)**

It was apparent that all of the participants had a practicum component in their programmes. Some of the participants indicated that their practicum or field-based learning is their way of engaging with the community.

> "... what you'd call service learning there is probably what we call our practicum or field-based learning ..." (JC)

The practicums are structured differently, and some participants indicated that their involvement in the community starts in the first year of study.

> "... integrate field-based learning from the very first semester and student start in with a pre-practicum type of experience where they start out shadowing and practicing and that with kids or adults who are actual clients but then we move into the second semester where they are actually starting to provide services to the, whichever setting they are in the school or mental health setting and actually they move into a third semester of practicum and each additional semester the number of hours increases." (JC)

"... do community engagement from the first year and they way theirs work is they are taken out to, they work in schools in the local community as well as they work in a clinic where they provide services to clients at the clinic in the community and in addition to that we have a psychotherapeutic clinic on campus that is free." (AF)

Several participants indicated that their practicum is in their second year.

"They would do their research in the first year and then the practicum in the second year ... (TG2)

"... in their second year they do their clinical, the more clinical work where they are working with children and families and adults at the clinic here …" (DK)

Most of the participants indicated that their practicums are spread over two years of study, starting in their first year of study.

"... integrate field-based learning from the very first semester ... and they move into a third semester of practicums and each additional semester the number of hours increases." (JC)

"... the students are exposed to the community from their first year of study". (MB)

"… they are full-time involved in the communities in their first and second year …" (BB)

"... first-years handle certain types of cases because they need to learn types of skills …" (AF)

Their level of involvement in communities will be determined by their competencies:

"... what they will be capable of doing in their practicum in their first year will be determined by their competency framework that is been put in place for students of practice at whatever level ..." (MJ)

"... school psych programme has a one-day/week field experience in the first semester and a two-day/week one in the second semester. Because of the

> nature of school psychology practice, the bulk of these first-year experiences involve practice in assessment and academic intervention. Most of their counselling experience occurs in their second year practicum at the campus child guidance clinic. However, they also do a consultation practicum in a school, half-day/week during their third semester. Their third year in the programme is the full-time, one-year internship in which they would do all of the above, in terms of experiences."

The main aim of the practicum seems to be the enhancement of the students' competencies and skills, and linking theory with practice. Some of the participants identified the outcome of their practicum or internships as only focusing on professional skills:

> "… the projects are more focused on professional skills but there are some exceptions to that because there are certain settings that use our students, there's a little more service to it but the primary goal is on the development of students towards professional goals versus community service." (KW)

> "... clinical work will focus more on their professional growth and their competencies as a psychologist …" (DK)

> "Involvement in the school and the clinic ... It is entirely linked to the profession they are there in their capacity as psychologist." (AF)

> "... the practicum focuses on professional competency because you have their critical thinking to decide what a client needs and how to serve them so we do have that component in there and it's probably not as heavily rated on the social responsibility of those steps." (MB)

Evaluation of the practicum is done through an examination:

> "In the practicum course there is also no formal exam. The student is required to earn a certain score on a comprehensive exam provided by a vendor in order to graduate." (MB)

> "... evaluation is usually based on practical activities that relate to what they will be doing as counsellors." (JC)

> "... a final exam … two small group projects involving analysis of videos of structural-strategic family therapy sessions, and a final exam which is an individual analysis of a videotaped family session." (JC)

Video recordings of sessions are used in the evaluation of the practicum:

> "... they do videotape sessions of some of those, they bring those back to class and the class mates and their professor critique their process and see what else they need to do for their skills and it is a focus on professional competency because you have their critical thinking to decide what a client needs and how to serve them so we do have that component in there and it's probably not as heavily rated on the social responsibility of those steps." (MB)

Evaluation of practical activities:

> "... evaluation is usually based on practical activities that relate to what they will be doing as counsellors." (JC)

> "The grade for the practicum is assigned by the agency supervisor who meets with the practicum student for at least one hour per week. The university provides a grading form for the agency supervisor to complete." (MB).

**Subtheme 5.2: Social responsibility in practicum (SRP)**

It was also apparent that some participants identified a component of social responsibility that was integrated in their practicum and the importance of social responsibility was highlighted:

> "… I think it's both (professional competencies and social responsibility) because we are quite aware of the needs of the community and we get lots of phone calls from people asking us to get involved so we sort of see it as a bit of both, it is an opportunity for them to develop their competencies but in that sense we also contribute to the community and these settings, we actually have been involved with over a number of years so we've built up a rapport with them and I think we, we sort of have a very good understanding of what's happening there." (TG2)

"... what we are trying to do is train our students to be sort of skilled in both and actually make them very affective in the community work where they can sort of do the one on one if they need to but they can also do more than that." (TG)

"... all the modules, have to incorporate that (social responsibility) as a focus ... It has to be infused in all the modules ..." (TG)

**Subtheme 5.3: Internships versus practicum (IP)**

Several of the participants in professional programmes made a distinction between the practicum inside the programme and the internships outside the programme:

"... so we have practicum experiences and then the internships at the end and it's full-time and it's more traditional work experience whereas the practicum are shorter term." (KW)

"... and then the third year, which is where they no longer really registered as students, but they go on to do an internship in a state mental health system ..." (DK)

"... they had one year practicum and then they went into the internship the second year and completed their dissertation in the internship or actually did not complete it because they didn't have time ..." (TG2)

"... they also do internships which is separately from the therapy that they do within the programme." (TG)

**Subtheme 5.4: Practicum hours (HP)**

A number of participants indicated that their practicum is linked to a certain number of hours or number of cases. For instance, practicum hours range from 100 to 300 hours:

"All field experiences are linked to contact hours. Pre-practicum is 50 hours of shadowing. Practicum I is 100 contact hours; Practicum II is 200 hours; and Internship is 525 hours. A minimum of 40% of each of these has to be direct client contact, per our state regulations. So, that would include individual, group and family counselling, and assessments. We suggest a minimum number of individual clients that students should see per week, depending on the

> experience. With Practicum I, it's a minimum of 3 regular clients per week; Practicum II is 6 to 8; and internship is 15 to 20 individual sessions, since they are working full-time at that point." (JC)

> "... they do their first 100 hours with individuals one-to-one, with clients that are suitable, after assessment and in their second year they work with their second 100 hours with clients that are of a higher problem rating and they also learn how to work with groups." (MJ)

> "... they complete a certain number of hours and get a certain range of experience so that is the one component, but they also have a community psychology module as part of their training." (DK)

> "... 300 total hours including 100 direct client hours for their practicum experience. Because the majority of our students work while attending graduate school it would be almost impossible for them to obtain those hours in one semester. We have divided the practicum into two semesters. The practicums are taken during the last two semesters. It is very similar to the internships that occur after the student graduates and passes the national licensing exam." (MB)

In some instances, students have to complete approximately eight to ten cases:

> "... we expect them to have completed about sort of eight to ten cases within a year. So, they usually carry each case maybe for about sort of two to three months and they can have maybe four or five cases on their books at any one time." (DK)

**Subtheme 5.5: Practicum and the community (CP)**

Several of the participants stated that they have clinics linked to the university where students do their practicum or internships:

> "The bulk of our students tend to do internships within university settings, within the universities at the students' counselling centres." (TG)

> "... in the therapy course, the practical work that they do is mainly seeing clients from the university, mainly students" (TG)

"... when they do their projects, they do not see people for one-on-one work ... they do that on campus." (TG)

"... the master's students' training involves doing case work here at this clinic." (DK)

"We have a campus-based travel guidance centre and they are required to do a full year practicum which is basically one full day a week in the travel guidance centre and then they move into a full-time one-year internship in their third year." (JC)

Several students do their practicum or internship at hospitals or NGOs:

"A few do internships at the public hospitals and then the rest in different NGOs." (TG)

"... the practical component of their training, I suppose is by definition community-engaged because that is sort of the clientele that they are servicing, providing a service for but it is part of their training." (DK)

"... to provide mental health to low-income people, they tend to not have as much money and therefore the practicum students to the internship end up doing more community service that will be the case at a hospital or even the internships that are on campus." (KW)

The level of involvement within communities varies from university to university. Some academics use projects such as psycho-education and individual work:

"Involvement in the community … it does involve individual work with the students but it also involves psycho-education." (AF)

"... the type of projects we had going, secured funding to open satellite clinics in rural school districts and we provided the personnel, we provided the supervision and the focus really was providing services that were free to the community that they couldn't access, otherwise and our child guidance centre on campus is basically a free clinic and we put the school focus of that is provide services to the local area" (JC)

> "... they complete a certain number of hours and get a certain range of experience so that is the one component, but they also have a community psychology module as part of their training." (DK)

> "… the students build projects in that area ... sort of social development project …" (TG)

**Theme 6: Teaching and learning (TL)**

Theme 6 highlighted teaching and learning within curricula and the amount of contact they have with students.

**Subtheme 6.1: Frequency of contact (CTL)**

Most of the participants indicated that they have weekly contact with their students:

> "In all field experiences, learning is integrated through a weekly seminar on campus ..." (JC)

> "... they generally have weekly lectures ..." (TG)

> "... we have interaction every week as well as the service projects." (MB)

> "... we have two block weeks one in January/February and one in July, and that will be face-to-face contact ..." (NR)

**Subtheme 6.2: Integration of teaching and community engagement (CETL)**

Teaching and community engagement are linked by means of courses that are integrated with field experiences:

> "... courses are offered in conjunction with the field experiences." (JC)

Weekly lectures are presented where assignments are written and seminars are presented to link the theoretical aspects of community engagement:

> "... in weekly lectures they write sort of an assignment and they do seminar presentations on the theoretical aspects of community engagement and some will be sort of around different theoretical paradigms and others will be applied skills, like relationship building, collaboration and needs assessment. What they

do, in addition to that, is they put a applied component to their course, they have a weekly slot where they will go into their communities and they spend sort of five hours a week doing sort of different project activities that they have decided on and in small groups which are usually sort of between three and four into that group and then each group has a supervisor that supervise the community practical." (TG)

"... we have interaction every week as well as the service projects. The capstone is just they try to pull together as we do in our practicum …"

**Subtheme 6.3: Practical application of teaching and learning (PATL)**

In the theoretical component, the practical application is built in:

"... in the theory we've also built in a little bit of practical application ... they will go out and actually see how they can apply the theory practically." (NR)

Experiential work is used to link theory and practice:

"... we have lots of different ways of training and assessing there is a lot of experiential work, because I think it is very important that all students go through the process that they will put their clients through later and get rid of all their blocks and problems before they start working with clients." (MJ)

"The teaching is linked to the practical kind of elements, they would have to apply what they were learning in the community ..." (TG)

**Theme 7: Academic programme (AP)**

The academic programme was identified as the seventh theme. The data was categorised in subthemes that were identified through the data analysis.

**Subtheme 7.1: Duration of the course (DA)**

The duration of the courses is generally two years of full-time study:

"... it varies kind of on the individual student, the whole PhD programme ranges from about three to five years, so it's depending on, if students come right in they

can do their course work in two years and one year of research but then some people don't they work part-time or they take longer." (KW)

"… we split it into two years". (DK)

"... Master's programme is a two-year full-time course." (TG)

"... Master's - full-time (TG2)

"... master's degree is full-time." (AF)

"... the practicum and course work in the second year. (TG2)

### 6.3.8 Data obtained through the focus groups

The data that was obtained through the two focus groups was first analysed on a basic level. The analysed data will be presented in the next section.

#### *6.3.8.1 Biographical data of participants of focus groups*

The first focus group interviews included current students in the CCYFS postgraduate programme. The academic levels of the participating students are presented in Figure 6.32.

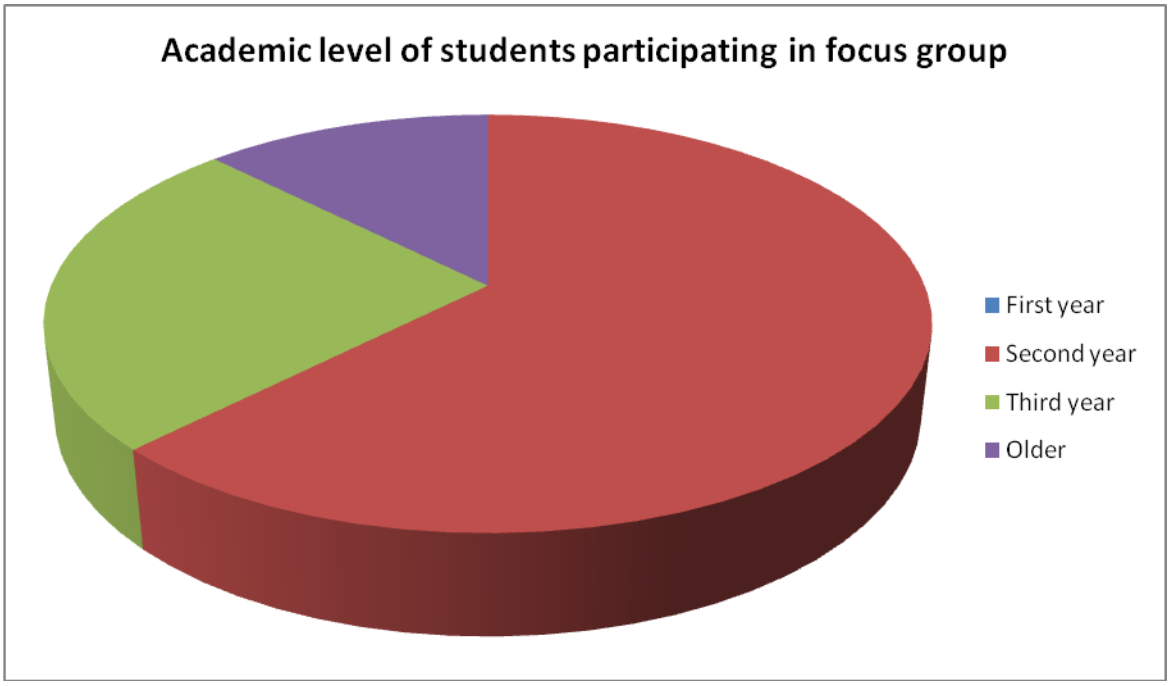


**Figure 6.32: Academic level of students participating in focus group**

Most of the students were in their second year of studies. Two of these students were PhD students while the others were master's degree students.

The second focus group consisted of lecturers in the current postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. Their academic levels are given in Figure 6.33:

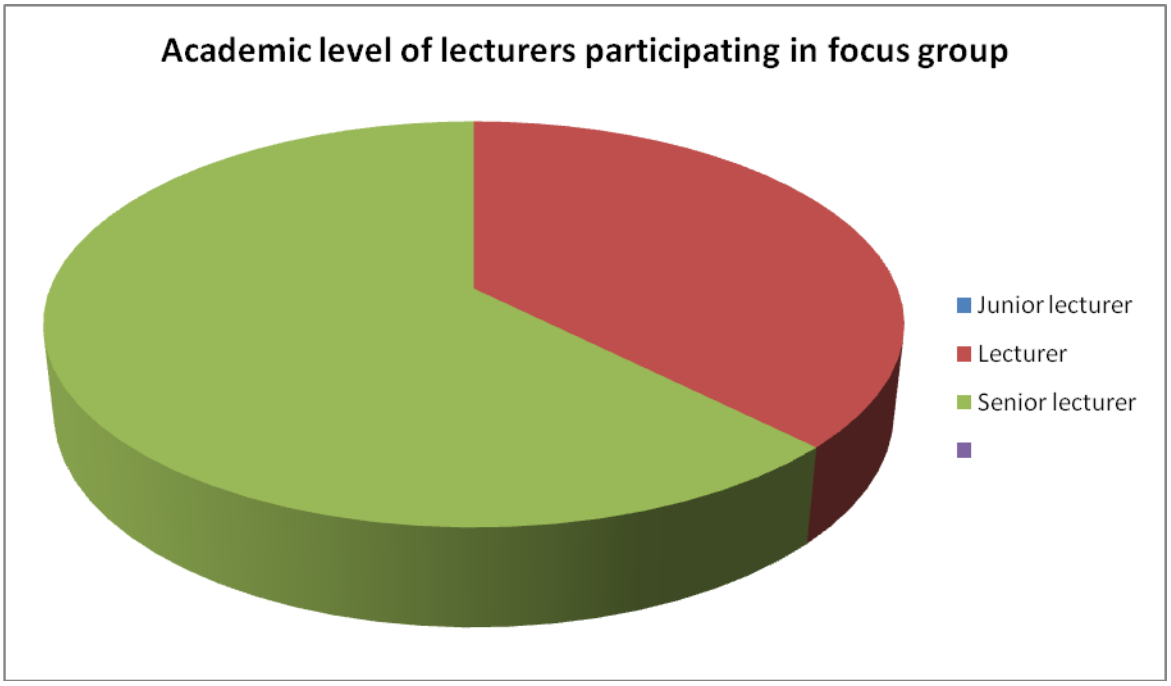


**Figure 6.33: Academic level of lecturers participating in focus group**

The majority of the lecturers who participated in the focus groups were senior lecturers.

#### *6.3.8.2 Data obtained through the focus group with students*

The data was analysed according to the process as described in Section 5.7. Table 6.4 provides a summary of the identified categories, themes and codes.

**Table 6.4: Summary of the identified categories, themes and codes**

| Themes | Code | Subthemes | Code |
|---|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Research | R | Subtheme 1.1: Research in the curriculum | CR |
| | | Subtheme 1.2: Academic writing skills | AWSR |
| | | Subtheme 1.3: Research problem | PR |
| | | Subtheme 1.4: Focus areas | FAR |
| | | Subtheme 1.5: Supervision | SR |
| Theme 2: Practicum | P | Subtheme 2.1: Structuring of practicum in curriculum | CP |
| | | Subtheme 2.2: Practicum supervision | SP |
| | | Subtheme 2.3: Practicum placements | PP |
| Theme 3: Communities | C | | |
| Theme 4: Academic programme | AP | | |

The contents of Table 6.4 will be used to discuss each theme and subtheme that was identified during the basic level of analysis (also known as content analysis). Some of the participant's responses are presented below. Verbatim quotes are used where applicable.

**Theme 1: Research**

The first theme that was highlighted in the focus group was research. The first aspect of research that was discussed is the structuring of research within the curriculum.

**Subtheme 1.1: Research in the curriculum**

Several of the participants in the focus group indicated that they need to be exposed to research in their first year of study. They also stressed the importance of integrating the research theory in the curriculum from the first year of study. Comments from some of the participants supported this issue:

> "... the research was the last module. It was a very big shock to hear all this new information. And if you get it from the beginning, or if that's the first module, you

> can get used to it for the whole year, and you can practice it while you go along, and you can start thinking about the protocol, maybe start working on it." (line 46)

> "... we were out of our depth, all those things that just came to us in the last module was a very big shock." (line 61-62)

> "... it would be better to do it in the first year with the theory, because in your second year with the practical it's already full, having a job and doing practical and doing research. It's a bit loaded. And a lot of people, as far as I've heard now, have had trouble with the protocol that takes the longest. So if you only have one year that you have to do your thesis or research and your practical and or the other things, then there's no time for that really" (line 76-78)

There was a suggestion (which was supported by the group in general) that research can even start before classes commence:

> "... start with like a summer school, like ... and they did something like a little course with us at the end of our first year. You could go if you were doing your research in your second year. That was nice to start formulating over the holidays, start formulating your ideas for your protocol, and then you can work on your protocol throughout your first year, so that the second year with the practical isn't so hectic." (line 86-91)

Two of the participants suggested that research can be introduced after the first module as the first module is an introduction to theory and that the research can be broken down into different modules:

> "... just after the first module, so that you can just start to be research orientated and think about your topic." (line 46)

> "... first module that's theoretic, just an overview, then you can have an introduction to research, and then in your second module, maybe break it open a little bit more." (line 63-65)

Most of the students were of the opinion that they were not adequately prepared for the research as some of them did not have research experience in their Honours year.

> "... in your honours year, you did research … well, the three of us studied together. I haven't touched research, I knew qualitative didn't have to do with numbers, that's what I knew, so, we had no research background, no … nothing. So that made it very difficult to start." (line 127-129)

> "… never been introduced to research, never before in my life ..." (line 135-136)

**Subtheme 1.2: Academic writing skills**

Several of the participants indicated that the assignments are a valuable tool in assisting them to improve their academic writing skills. As stated by one of the participants:

> "I think what's also nice in the first year, is they teach you to start formulating, because you need to do those assignments, and you need to start writing and things like that ..." (line 83-85)

Participants were of the opinion that the assignments could be used in a more effective way to assist them in their writing skills. As stated by some of the participants:

> "We never got, or really got the assignments back, we didn't get feedback about it, we weren't taught the skills of academic writing. So when we started with our research when we started in our second year, we attended the workshop and we had to start. So I think my first draft of our … first protocol of our master's, I mean, was disastrous because we weren't trained in writing that way, where I think if research and the basic concepts of research and things like doing a literature study, and how do you reference and how do you write a reference list, and basic, basic thing, if that can be incorporated with the modules, the assignments that need to be done, I think that would be very efficient." (line 105-113)

> "... read it the first time, I mean, the referencing wasn't there, I wrote paragraphs and paragraphs and mentioned that I got it somewhere from a source and wasn't really academically written. And no one rectified that, so by the time we started working on our protocols and our supervisor said, what are you doing, you have to have at least one reference per sentence, per statement, I was shocked." (line 117-119)

It was suggested by some of the participants that access to completed dissertations and examples of approved protocols would help to improve their academic writing skills. As stated by two of the participants:

> "I think definitely, because I think when we started and our protocols were accepted, yes, the first-time master's, and our supervisor said, all right, now you start with Chapter 1, we were like, what is chapter … what goes in Chapter 1. How do you write Chapter 1, how many chapters are there? And I think it would be good if you have examples of … and especially the style of writing dissertations and lot, and lot and lot studies and good protocols as well, in the December holiday that you can read up and then before you …" (line 438-442)

> "Would it be possible to read not someone else's protocol, but an example protocol, because that would also make it so much easier just to see kind of writing in the language and the relation and things like that." (line 445-447)

**Subtheme 1.3: Research problem**

The participants discussed the possibility of identifying research problems based on community contexts and in particular the communities in which the students did their practicum sessions. The participants indicated that it would be possible. This was associated with the following comments:

> "And can't you then link that with your practical, so that it is all together ..." (line 154)

> "I would say that … if you know what the problem is, what your problem statement will be, then you have to go and seek for a place, where you can do that ... where you can do you practicum as well as your research." ("I would say that … as jy weet wat die probleem is, wat jou probleemstelling gaan wees, dan moet jy gaan soek vir 'n plek waar jy dit kan … waar jy dit jou prakties kan maak en ook jou research doen daar.") (line 156-158)

> "*Ja*, I think what was nice for me is when we started working on our research, we started also with our practical. And my problem statement came from my practical, so … because in the first couple of sessions I had the children, I

> realised, wait a minute, here's a link, here's a theme actually, and from that I identified a problem. So that was quite nice …" (line 159-162)

> "... it also makes it easier, I know, with me, when I did my interviews, that was where I was working, and that's where I did my internship, so it was easy … the logistics of it was … I had loads of data, I could, you know, easy access to that, so linking the research and the community work with the internship." (line 163-166)

> "Your research should define who you become in the field." (line 174)

One participant, however, had a concern with regard to the placements of students:

> "I think you need to be in an environment where you are exposed to a problem in the community in order to come up with a problem statement. A lot of the students that, you know, were in our class, they had … they couldn't come up with a research topic, because they weren't exposed to the community." (line 143-146)

**Subtheme 1.4: Focus areas**

A concern that was highlighted by several of the participants was the focus areas allocated. One concern was that a student may not fit in with the focus area of the assigned supervisor:

> "That's also a problem for me is the focus area. Because it's not necessarily that the person you are, or who's your study leader and your own interest isn't the same, and then it was difficult … well it was difficult for me." (line 176-178)

The group concurred that a student needs to know the focus area of the supervisor before being assigned to that supervisor. It will ensure that they work within that focus area and their research problem can also fit in with that focus area:

> "I know it's … administratively it will be difficult to give everybody what they want, but maybe if we knew beforehand this is the study areas, maybe students could say that I prefer to work … or given number 1, 2 or 3 where they would see themselves." (line 181-183)

"Because it's difficult if you are working from educational psychology perspective, but your study leader is a social worker." (line 184-185)

"... it's also to the advantage of the study leader, because if you think about my topic … it's very much focused on sexuality, which is your area of expertise, and you would be able to assist me much better and enjoy assisting me because it's something that you focus on, where the other study leader is not necessarily interested in that topic and doesn't know a lot about it, so I think it's not only to the advantage of the student, but also it makes the study leader's life much easier." (line 228-233)

"Well, I think that will be the beauty of integrating everything, because the more you get exposed to your field, the more you will see the problems, the more you can corporate the research into your theory. So, it's a holistic process and not a step-by-step process. So, I think, *ja*, it will be difficult to integrate everything and I think, *ja*, a lot of admin, but I think it's possible if they can do that." (line 200-204)

"Maybe even just half through the year so that you can get a feel of what your interest is, and then also, *ja*, because I think your process has to start with what you can identify and what field your interest is in and then all topic and then, maybe, *ja*, you get a few choices and then get selected." (line 208-211)

"I also think that, even when you start, there are some things that you are really interested in already, because of your field of study. I mean, if you went into teaching it's because you … because I got my … can I say, what is my business (*kan ons maar sê wat is my besigheid*)…" (line 212-214)

One of the participants suggested that the new students must meet all the supervisors at the research orientation workshop. This will give supervisors the opportunity to introduce their focus areas at the workshop:

"... if you have a summer school in the beginning, meet the lecturers as … say, start thinking about what you want, but only six months throughout the year say, right, where do you, you know, start assigning the lecturers to the students or the projects." (line 239-244)

Some of the participants were concerned that if they already have a research problem formulated before they start with their studies, and they are assigned to a study leader who does not work within that focus area, they (the students) may have to manipulate their study to fit in with the focus area of the study leader. This is illustrated by the following comment:

> "You have to manipulate, it's actually so unethical, or so, I don't know what you call it, *ja*, to manipulate your topic, your problem statement, everything, that's so far away from the need that you first identified. Now you have to manipulate everything to fit into your supervisor's field, and I said to my supervisor, I'm not gonna do that anymore, she said well it's fine, just carry on with your own thing." (line 218-222)

> "Because that's your process and you're not authentic in what you're thinking and what you are observing, then you are manipulating not only your style, but the participant's as well, because it's almost as though you're writing according to a recipe. And if you do research, how can you do that? It's supposed to be something that you are discovering it's individually driven then ..." (line 223-227)

**Subtheme 1.5: Supervision**

Participants also emphasised the importance of support during their studies:

> "But you absolutely need that support. You need to go and sit, even if it's, if you have a study group and for the first hour you just sit and moan and have someone to kind of just understand the emotion then it gets you back to work." (line 471-473)

Some students suggested a support group:

> "... I always had a need somewhere to, I wanna say a support group from people who finished before us, but, you know, people who are further along maybe in the process, who maybe finished the Master's already … not a tutor or … but I remember, I had a need to …" (line 510-514)

> "Almost like a mentor." (line 515)

"A mentor, or someone you can meet once a month and, you know, who you can phone and say what is the problems …" (line 516-517)

"If I may suggest something, I don't know if any of you have found it, but it's quite difficult to find and make time to meet up with your buddy, because everyone's busy and everyone has to keep schedules, but when we had class in research and the workshops, we were forced to go there. So, I don't want to suggest, like forcing the students once a month to get together, but that might be the only …" (line 611-615)

"Maybe they could just have a hall that would be available for students, let's say on Wednesdays or Saturdays, or something, a central place where we could get together, somewhere central." (line 634-635)

**Theme 2: Practicum**

**Subtheme 2.1: Structuring of practicum in curriculum (CP)**

Participants supported the fact that they first had to complete the theoretical modules before they could start with their practicum:

"I think it was good to do it after the theory, to have that foundation kind of, because I remember my first session I had, I was like, I can't do this, I don't know anything, and when you go into the session, you just remember and you just go to the therapeutic relationship and all those things come up as you sit in the first session. And if you didn't have that … You can't do it before the theory ..." (line 648-651)

The participants suggested the need for a more practical introduction to the practical work:

"Or at least like a research workshop to have for us to prepare us for the thesis. I know there was a practical workshop like that for us as well, like a crash course, but I still felt way too theoretical when I walked into my first session. I had no idea what to do. So, maybe a bit more of an actual practical introduction to the practical work as supposed to this is how you build a relationship, or …" (line 655-659)

"No, I just think each module, even if it's the self it could have a little bit …of practical, a section where you could see it in practice." (line 661-662)

"Yes, I also think if … with every session, as they have said, every session must have a DVD that you can see what you have practised on each other, how it works, as it doesn't always work that way … because you sort of know what to say to make it easier for the other person, but in practice, those children, a lot of them don't react as the theory has taught us, or as we have practised on each other" ("*Ja, ek dink ook net as … saam met elke sessie, soos hulle nou gesê het, elke sessie miskien 'n DVD ook wat mens kan sien dit wat jy nou opmekaar gedoen het, hoe dit werk, want dit werk nie altyd so … want jy weet half wat om te sê om dit vir die ander ou makliker te maak, maar in die praktyk, daai kinders, baie van hulle reageer nie soos die teorie, of soos ons met mekaar gedoen het nie.*") (line 685-689)

"So maybe combine the experiential work with a DVD from the practical, the students busy … that's busy with the practical and you can also discuss that, or whatever." (line 693-694)

Participants also pointed out that it may be more effective if the students could gradually start with their practical work in their first year:

"And also I think it will be helpful rather than overwhelm the student, then you come into your second year, now you have to do your research and your practical, two processes all of a sudden, and have to juggle everything. Now, when you start everything from the beginning, just very elementary, and then just build up so that you can get used to it." (line 884-887)

"But I also think if I look at what we did for practical from our first year in social work, we just got a … even, *ja*, group work, we just got a … we went to a farm and played with the little children in the afternoon, just to get used to building a relationship." (line 905-907)

"How wonderful would it be if you learn about contact making, then you practice on each other, then you watch the DVD, then you go through the organisation

where you're at and your assignment is just to make contact with that child." (line 918-920)

**Subtheme 2.2: Practicum supervision (SP)**

Participants agreed that they needed more supervision in their practicum sessions:

"Because when you start with your practical then you don't really sit with your supervisor and go through all the DVDs. And I think if that process could be monitored closer, then the learning experience would be so much more valuable, because often you also feel isolated there, but we had, you know, external supervisors, on site supervisors, but nobody really, I don't know if you felt that someone really watched your DVDs." (line 695-699)

"I desperately wanted someone to follow the process to see … you know." (line 701)

"What I wanted to say is, I think, I mean it was only you and … were the only two supervisors with a lot of students under you, so, and with so many hours that had to be completed, it was physically impossible for you to watch every DVD. So we completed the DVDs and we finished the processes with how many clients we had to, but you weren't able to sit through a process from session 1 to session 10. Maybe you should do this, look at what you've done there …" (line 711-716)

"*Ja*, so I think, it sounds as if it's changed a bit, but I think it there can only be … let's say a student can take one or two clients and work from session 1 to through a whole process with the supervisor, I mean …" (line 718-720)

And more supervisors:

"Just maybe more supervisors for practicum as well." (line 974)

**Subtheme 2.3: Practicum placements (PP)**

Some of the participants emphasised the importance of a correct placement which can also support the supervision function:

"That's why I also think that … you know how that would work though, but the place where you do your internship is also very important, because I was very fortunate to be at a place where I got an hour of individual supervision once a week, and two hours of group supervision once a week. So three hours Monday, besides your supervision that I had to do, and the peer supervision that I had to do. So that also makes a big difference. I don't know if you could, you know, pick places that you need to go to, because that's why we ended up doing the trauma internship, because they would have preferred someone who was a trauma councellor, that's why we did everything." (line 771-778)

"Can't you then do placements with old Play Therapy students." (line 842)

**Theme 3: Communities (C)**

Several participants emphasised the importance of the contact between the university and the community placements, and mentioned that these communities need to be educated about the role and function of the students.

"But even … even if you have an option … at the school where I work there's a proper playroom, there's a psychologist, but they don't get involved, because it's foreign. I don't know how to explain it, and it is my responsibility to explain it to you, but if you are in a system, things run according to very specific protocol, and it's not in the protocol." (line 848-852)

"But not from the student's perspective, because the student is not high up in it to educate the principal and educate sounds so harsh, but to bring across the message of what it is, because I have done workshops at school about basic functions of play, not anything with counselling, functions of play, and it's almost as though we have all the facilities, but it's still not being used ultimately." (line 853-857)

**Theme 4: Academic programme (AP)**

The participants indicated that they want to have more information of the full academic programme when they start their studies:

"The only thing I'm just thinking of, is, if I know where I'm going to, then I manage the process differently than if I don't know where I'm going, and I'm doing it step by step. As I go along I have to … if you know what I mean. I think if I started the year and I knew this is what I need to be able to reach by the end of this course …" (line 949-952)

"Yes, I would have loved to see, this is what the year looks like and that's what I'm going to have to do this year." (line 954-955)

"Exactly, and then when this was finished, we had, ok, like the next step, and that's my process I have to see the big picture, and then I can orientate myself much better and I can plan ahead much better." (line 960-962)

"And personal life, you know, you have to plan where you put your personal life, or where you orientate that in your head. It's much easier for me to do … to juggle all the things in my life if I know this is what the year's gonna look like. It's like getting in a car and you don't know where you're driving to, where, if you know this is my destination, you can plan, ok, this is the route I'm going to take. So, I think for me that's very important, and that's something I was used to at my previous university, we got a guide and that made it easier in my head, or there wasn't that much confusion." (line 965-968)

#### *6.3.8.3 Data obtained through the focus groups with lecturers*

The same data analysis process as used for the semi-structured interviews was followed with the focus groups. Table 6.5 summarises the identified categories, themes and codes.

**Table 6.5: Summary of themes and subthemes identified through focus group with lecturers**

| Themes | Code | Subthemes | Code |
|---|---|---|---|
| Theme 1: Integration of teaching and learning and research | TR | Subtheme 1.1: Research theory | RT |
| | | Subtheme 1.2: Research minded | RM |
| | | Subtheme 1.3: Research sites | RS |
| Theme 2: Involvement in the communities | IC | | |
| Theme 3: Integration of teaching and learning and practicum | TLP | Subtheme 3.1: Practicum placements | PP |
| | | Subtheme 3.2: Structuring of practicum | SP |
| Theme 4: Community partners | CP | | |
| Theme 5: Practical supervisors | PS | | |

**Theme 1: Integration of teaching and learning and research (TR)**

The participants indicated that they consider it possible to integrate the teaching and learning and the research in the curriculum:

> "I definitely think it is possible. I think I have done that. In the module or the short courses itself the focus is on identity and sense of self. The theory to ground that … uhm … where I asked the students to take any problem that they could identify in the community or wherever and write a problem formulation and research question and orientation and a goal on that and then they had to link it to the work on self of what we have done in the class. They had to write an assignment on that. They could just in short say what design they will be using and data analysis they are going to use and it worked quite well." (line 30-38)

> "I didn't do it this time but just listening to what … said I could've actually ask them, even although I asked them to keep reflective journal. A reflective journal

could have been pretty much like … did it to identify a relationship with which they have a problem so to speak." (line 64-67)

"And then apply the existential dialogue principles and the theory in that problem and sort of identify the problem, give the orientation and take it from there, keep the reflective journal from there onwards." (line 69-71)

Ideas on how this can be done included newspaper articles and reflective journals:

"Newspaper articles are sometimes bringing the real world in a small way. At least that is a start. We use newspaper article in the research and service learning module." (line 116-117)

"I wonder if the reflective journal would whether that also not have to a great extend. It is not that the community is physically there, but each student go into his or her own community and they keep the reflective journal with regards to the people they engage in that community and then they give their feedback in class with regards to … and that is then the theory. If we speak about that it can be the research, the theory and the community that involve there. But perhaps if we talk about that it would be like specific communities. I don't know, whether that is possible as the students are all over the place." (line 118-124)

"But can you think what the value can be if you have a specific project at a specific organisation and students gain there even if it is for a practical part of the work and bringing reflective journals in with the theory, cause that is what we want to do, let's say, if it is about relationships for example and that's the problems we are working within our field of study where they are involved with a specific organization where they do their research, so it is not only the theory and the reflective journal but it is about really brining in the specific things that we are doing in theory and the things that we are doing in practical work and keeping a journal of that, that is going to be quite a different picture to get from that." (line 125-132)

**Subtheme 1.2: Research theory**

The participants emphasised that the students need to have a solid theoretical research grounding before they may be able to integrate research and teaching and learning. Yet, the participants agreed that integration is possible.

> "… I think it helped (the students) because of the research module … they had the research module just before your module. They had the research module. That really helped." (line 41)

> "I think if they didn't have any research lecture it would be very difficult. I think that helped. The assignments were good." (line 44-45)

> "I think so they should even have it (research) before any module. Because what we did with that. We integrate the service learning, community engagement and community based research in the short course. So they already had the two pillars already integrated and we referred to the theory all the time." (line 49-53)

> "They must have the have a very solid understanding, I think, of the three pillars but also how they would interlink throughout the course. So, we already made a good shift this year and last year, because they now get the module so much earlier." (line 56-58)

It was suggested that a research workshop, orientation week or summer school must be presented before commencement of the classes. The workshop or summer school could focus on the theoretical basis of research, academic writing skills, as well as an orientation of the entire academic programme. The duration suggested for the workshop was one full week:

> "The other option is to have it just as the year started. As they have until March to register. Even if you present something in January." (line 275-276)

> "We even did it with our honours students, they were part-time students but we informed them before the time that they have a week introduction at the beginning of the new year. They had to come for a week and people also had to organise to have leave for that time. So, if they are except in the programme they have that responsibility. I would really extend that to a week, so that they

would know what is coming and done in depth. And that they can go in with a real plan how …" (line 279-284)

"I also like to support that week on orientation that if we are more clearer on what the exit-level outcome is and communicate that to the students then they can also take full responsibility of their own learning experience, most of the time we as lecturers take responsibility of the integration, but I think it is also their responsibility to reflect on the integration of knowledge, skills and reflection. So we can give them a document in hand that in a way explain the holistic curriculum and if we could communicate it very clearly to them our responsibility and their responsibility and also the relationship between theory and practice. That helped me a lot in understanding the value of research that you are practitioner and the value that it informs your practice." (line 355-363)

"I also support that, that we do it in the previous year, I also think it is a necessary. If I heard you correctly that they have the time before they start in January." (line 367-368)

"Even if we get them year in January for a week and proper orientation on things like critical thinking. The things that they need to know from the beginning." (line 372-374)

The participants emphasised that although it is possible to integrate the teaching and learning and the research, this process needs to be planned and structured in the programme:

"The same for me but I think it is something that we specifically need to plan. I think if we do the research module first or the short course and then afterwards, cause I think, I am also not planning at this stage to do mine like that, but I think it is something that we need to continue in all the modules and see how many aspects of research we can incorporate. I mean you can't do everything in your module, so it is also planning amongst everybody that is presenting the theory how many elements in the research process, I don't know what to call that, that you can incorporate in the theory as well." (line72-78)

**Subtheme 1.2: Research-minded approach (RM)**

Participants indicated that students need to be research-minded throughout the modules:

> "… it is also a way of thinking." (line 80)
>
> "It is the research and think about the research methodology and how to formulate a problem, but I also think it is a way of thinking when doing research. It is also something about applying that hmm… when we do the module and the, even the themes that we are dealing with." (line 82-85)
>
> "I agree with … In a sense it is still fragmented, now we do the theory the Gestalt theory so to speak. In the assignment we bring in the research. In presenting the theory in a way we as lecturers should then also focus on the research part of it." (line 89-91)
>
> "I can remember one of the students made a comment, I can't remember which class, that ... feedback on the assignments helped her a lot when she had to write the protocol, because of the referencing and those kind of things. So I think what we need to do, and we said that to the students and to ourselves that we want to get them research minded much earlier in the process, but maybe for us, for me it is now easier because I presented the classes this time around, but we constantly have to be research minded and see are we working towards in relation to their thinking, the use of language, the scientific use of words. But I think it is very much part of when they do an assignment that we do look at that. But we should definitely be research minded and also …" (line 99-110)

**Subtheme 1.3: Research sites (RS)**

One of the participants suggested that if sites are identified for research projects, the students can be involved in different phases in the project:

> "… if we have particular sites where we have people who collect data. Isn't that going to be different. Now we are in a position where our students don't have to collect data. So if we work in a project and we already have the data, it doesn't really matter were the student sit. The student can come for a week to the site

and go back with the data. So maybe we must think differently. So maybe if we already have identified five schools in the Pretoria area and if we already have fieldworkers gathering the data and we introduce the new students into the project and they can't come with their particular community. We identify community and they can come for a week, meet the communities, have one or two interviews with the other … that is acceptable practice." (line 337-346)

**Theme 2: Involvement in the communities (IC)**

Several participants suggested that the lecturers need to get more involved in the communities with their students and emphasised the importance of this:

"… I want to use the term service learning now, but I know that is a restrictive term, but with community engagement that must be here and I think we must follow … example as well and go out into the community because that is the only way how we are going to pull ourselves more, the lecturers with our students" (line 107-112)

"… but I feel quite strongly that work that in the work we are doing and we want to reach out to people experiencing specific problems with children in need, in the context of communities I think we need to go out more out to communities out there, bigger than just a family, to organisation to, as … is doing, to specific communities, you hear what I am saying. There is a need to take students, not literally if you are involved in a project like … at … village. I think there is a need, if this is what our training is about and helping really troubled children or children in need to know what is going on there." (line 137-143).

**Theme 3: Integration of teaching and learning and practicum (TLP)**

The use of live case studies was supported by several participants:

"I am just wondering about real-life case studies. I think that would be for us as lecturers. I think we need to write up our case studies … So if we can pull together our perspectives on case studies and write an in-depth case study ... Working with real-life case studies, maybe, from sort of integrated theoretical approach that you don't fragmentise the particular perspectives so much that the

student have a holistic approach so we can say that you have an holistic approach and then look at each view." (line 145-157)

"I also support the idea of a case study and I also think the community partners can also write up good case studies and they can even come and present it in class. And then there can be a discussion around the relationship between the theory and the practice. With a representative of the organisation and then there can be a good discussion about the different theory. Then we are also true to the reciprocal part of the partnership." (line 170-174)

**Theme 3.1: Practicum placements (PP)**

A suggestion, namely that students use their practicum placements for their practicum and research, was supported by several of the participants:

"I think it would, but then there should not be any additional burden for the students, then you must really know how we do it. How we structure it, with us as lecturers what is the other one doing and how can we align that, then it could work." (line 179-181)

**Subtheme 3.2: Structuring of practicum (SP)**

It was suggested that the students are placed at the practicum sites from their first year of study. Several participants agreed with this:

"But I think the intensity of the practicum work that they are going to do in the first year it is going to link with different modules. At that specific placement there can be some work with relation to that, not so much intensity and as they go on and receive more skills and knowledge, they can work on a different level." (line 186-189)

"… and if you can link that to the different theoretical modules …" (line 192)

"I can see how that can work because we already, you come in with the practical with the second part of the research but we simply make it that you come in with the first part of the research and it will take away a lot of uncertainty of the students, I think they are wondering. They have some information but they are

> still wondering what is going to happen in the second year. We have to bring it in the first year so that they link so that they can do that. And then it would also be easier if we could bring it in with the theoretical modules." (line 193-198)

> "I think it is possible, it is going to take just fine planning ..." (line 206)

> "They can do a survey, or it is about the levels of engagement. You check the level of engagement. If they continue learning they will engage more." (line 227-228)

Practicum placements from the first year of study can pose certain challenges as students study part-time while working full-time. This challenge was voiced as follows:

> "I was also thinking alone those line, another challenge would be, that our students are not full-time students, they are part-time students so all of them work already in specific organisation they are employed by who ever, to say ok we work in these communities, how would they then be involved, that might also be a challenge involving the communities and specific communities." (line 217-221)

**Theme 4: Community partners (CP)**

The importance of the involvement of the lecturers with the community partners was also emphasised by participants:

> "I think that is where your partnerships play a very important role." (line 233)

> "I think there is maybe some relevant in terms of the importance of the partnerships is that sometimes the expectations they have is sometimes different what we expect of the students. Then in the beginning, for example they work on themselves, so that they partnerships do not expect them do to more." (line 239-246)

> "What I want to suggest that the partners need to be involve there or some representative of the partnership needs to be involve there. It is only when you get them together and form some formal … to have them in and explain the same process that you explain to the students and to them. It is a formal

> agreement. I found that the schools and the area, when you get them all together in a meeting, that it is more formal and the keep to the agreement. I would suggest that you consider having partners there. I know the logistics is a nightmare but in terms of the process it is better." (line 284-290)

**Theme 5: Practical supervisors (PS)**

Some of the participants indicated that they feel the students need to have a separate supervisor and a practicum supervisor:

> "I personally agree with what the rest are doing. I think … I just think at the end if you have people that specialise in the practical work. I do agree that the study leaders and the practical supervisors need to work together. They need to have that integrated learning experience for a student, but I personally feel that if you have somebody specialising on study leading that do that, and someone else. That the burden is less, I haven't even thought on the idea on the fact that they have different input, which I also think is better than just have one." (line 311-316)

> "... but I do think that we will probably end up with a bit of a mix, depending on the students, their needs, depending where we are, because I can see myself, becoming it is just an example at … centre they have a centre, where one of my old students are working, I can see myself going there once a week going to a community in … for instance, going there doing - whatever they have to do in terms of their requirements in terms of their practical work. I must go with them and be there, they can identify their research topic there, there is facilities for them to work there, they see people from different communities there. They are also working with children in a more fluent community, the ... area, I can see myself then becoming involve with the supervision of the practical work because it will be linked to their research and I need to have knowledge on the theoretical modules to bring that in. Then what you can integrate." (line 320-330)

### 6.3.9 Higher order analysis of data and identification of emerging patterns

During the basic analysis (content analysis) of the interviews, recurring patterns and themes came to the fore and were followed up by higher level analysis. This analysis

was interpretive and it focused on the meaning of the responses - on what was implied or inferred. The analysis was also aimed at identifying patterns or themes which are the main findings of the study. The data obtained from the interviews are now presented and the following patterns were identified:

#### *6.3.9.1 Pattern 1: The importance and relevance of community engagement*

Different types of community engagement are reportedly used within academic programmes - such as teaching-based community engagement, work-based experience and community-engaged research. Although perceptions of community engagement differ, certain concepts were central to most of the responses. The importance of academic learning in community engagement activities was highlighted. What appears to be important is that community engagement activities need to be mutually beneficial to students and communities. Academics play a very important role and their involvement in community engagement activities was defined as the work that these lecturers themselves do in their own time when seeing clients or their involvement with local schools and local government. This points to an integration of community engagement in all of their roles and to the use their expertise to engage with communities.

Community engagement is structured differently at different HEIs, and it is implemented as projects, interventions and research. Several participants also identified the practicum as community engagement. This includes interaction with various groups outside the community, field-based learning or practical learning. Community engagement is mostly applied in schools, NGOs as well as clinics and hospitals. There appears to be a strong focus on social responsibility in programmes and the importance of the involvement of lecturers in community partnerships was emphasised.

#### *6.3.9.2 Pattern 2: The importance of relationships with communities and community partnerships*

The importance of the community as a partner of the university, and the relationships and partnerships between universities and communities was emphasised. The community regards the university as a partner and it has high expectations of the tertiary institution. No formal agreements appear to be signed with the communities in

which the universities work. Regular contact between the community practicum placements and the university appears to be crucial.

#### *6.3.9.3 Pattern 3: The integration of research in the academic programme*

All evidence point to the need for research to be integrated throughout the programme and the need to start with research in the first year of study. Research topics and focus areas were emphasised as an important aspect of research planning. Students have also voiced the need to be assigned to supervisors in their first year of study, with an emphasis on the improvement of academic writing skills to be addressed from the beginning of studies. It was suggested that assignments may also be used for this purpose. The need for access to completed dissertations and examples of approved protocols was highlighted. It is important for students and lecturers to have a research-mindedness approach, with research theory to be integrated in the curriculum from the first year of study. It was emphasised that students need to have a solid theoretical research basis before they may be able to integrate research and teaching and learning. This needs to be planned and structured in the programme. The need for a research workshop or summer school focusing on the basics of research and academic writing was voiced - possibly to be offered before classes commence. A full orientation to the complete academic programme, offered over a week, also seems to be an important issue.

Support for students in the research process seems important and evidently needs to be addressed. The supporting role of the research supervisor appears to be essential and regular contact between students and research supervisors seems essential. Research supervisors' roles in motivating students also seem crucial. Research problems can be identified in communities in which students are involved.

Students need to be introduced to focus areas as well as research supervisors' specific focus areas at a very early stage in order for the students to align their work in terms of these focus areas. It was suggested that the participants meet all the research supervisors at a research orientation workshop where the faculty members or research supervisors introduced their focus areas. The need for research support groups was also expressed.

#### *6.3.9.4 Pattern 4: Practicum supervisors*

Practicum supervision was emphasised throughout the study. The importance of frequent supervision was highlighted and supported by participants. Student participants valued more support from supervisors and the availability of more supervisors. The need to have a separate research supervisor and a separate practicum supervisor was articulated by the student participants as well as the lecturers. It seems essential that external supervisors and site supervisors must be qualified and equipped to guide students and provide supervision.

Regular contact between the students and the university supervisors seems important. It seems important that within supervision there needs to be a focus on the skills of the students as well as the client receiving the service.

#### *6.3.9.5 Pattern 5: Integration of teaching/learning, research and service*

The integration of teaching/learning, research and service was emphasised. It was highlighted and supported that this needs to introduced from the start of first year of study and span the entire programme. It was emphasised that the integration needs to be planned and structured as part of the whole programme, including in the outcomes and ethos of the programme. It is essential that reflection forms part of the programme. The practicum needs to be integrated with teaching and learning from the start of first year of study and it needs to span the entire programme. Teaching and community engagement are integrated by means of courses which are integrated with field experiences. Theory and community engagement are linked by means of regular lectures and presentations which lead to assignments on community-oriented topics.

Most of the participants agreed that they first had to do the theory modules before they could start with their practicum sessions and become involved in the community on a therapeutic level. The students' level of therapeutic involvement needs to correspond with their level of competency. The focus on social responsibility within certain practicums was highlighted. The importance of experiential learning was stressed and with that more exposure to practical work. The use of live case studies is supported as another way to integrate theory and practice.

The need for appropriate and effective practicum placements was highlighted by the participants as practicum placements could be used for practicum experience as well as research. Different participants assigned different meanings to the practicum - some refer to practicums as field-based learning and as a way of engaging with the community. The main purpose of practicum experience is to enhance their competencies and skills, and to link theory with practice. Practicums are currently assessed by means of examinations, video recordings of sessions and the evaluation of practical activities. Practicums are linked to hours, which range from 100 to 300 hours. Students have to complete approximately eight to ten cases. Several of the HEIs have clinics linked to the HEI where students are placed for practicums. Students are also placed at hospitals, NGOs and schools.

#### *6.3.9.6 Pattern 6: Assessment*

Different types of assessments were identified, which include the submission of a portfolio with work, group discussions, written evaluations, papers and articles in journals, online discussions with classmates, observation, continuous reflection, end-of-year project presentations in class, continuous assessments, assignments and case presentations.

## 6.4 SUMMARISED DATA DISPLAY OF ALL THE THEMES

Figure 6.34 illustrates all the themes and subthemes identified in the empirical part of this study.

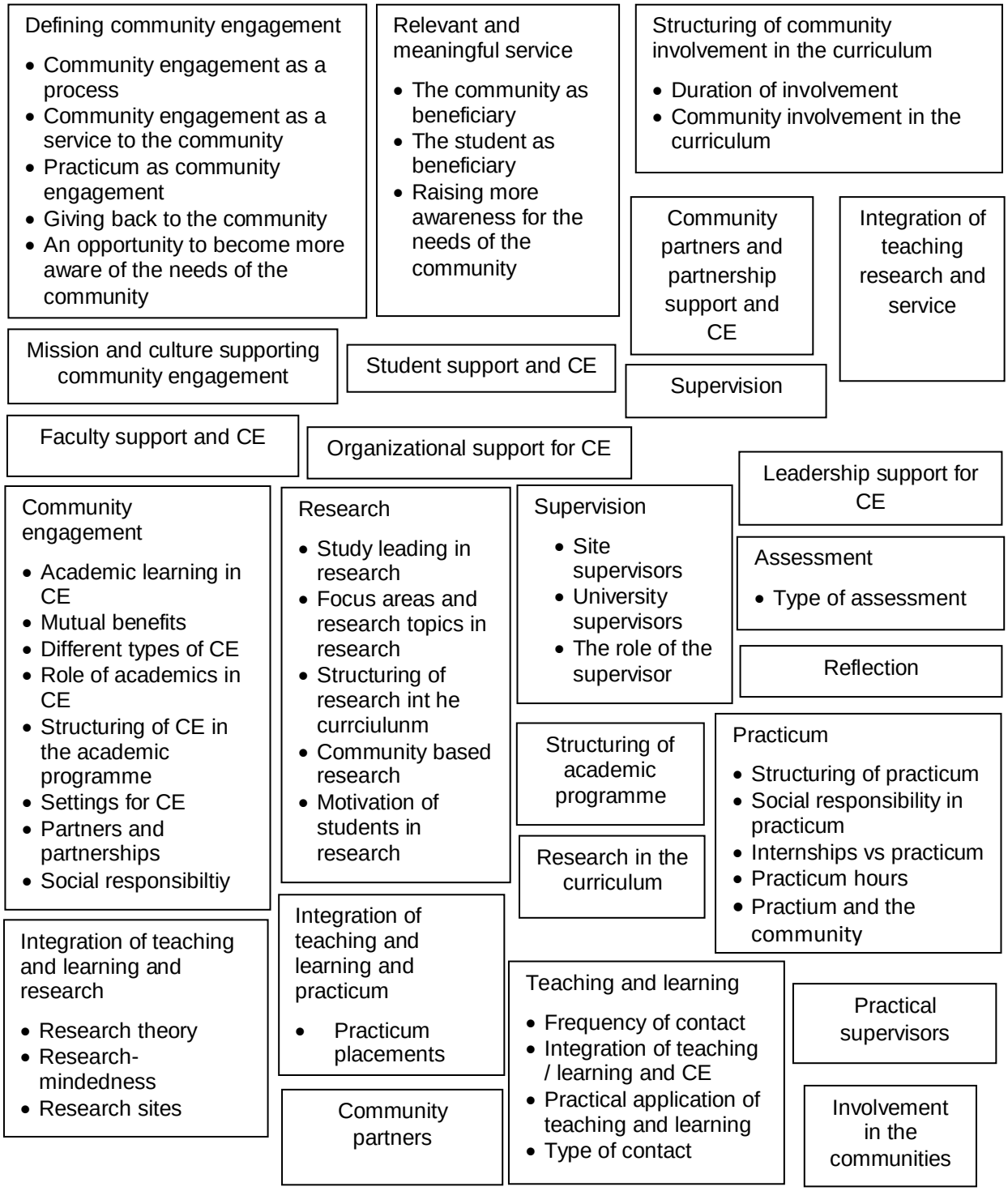


**Figure 6.34: A visual representation of all the themes and subthemes**

## 6.5 CONCLUSION

The study was implemented in three phases. During the first phase, the current state of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS was determined. This was preceded by a literature review in order to develop a questionnaire. The questionnaire was piloted and data was subsequently collected through semi-structured questionnaires from current students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The latter was to determine the current state of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

During the second phase, semi-structured interviews with lecturers from national as well as international HEIs were conducted to determine current curriculum frameworks and the content of other community engagement models. Next, separate focus groups were conducted with current students and with lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS in order to gain first-hand experiential data.

This chapter also analysed, described, displayed and discussed the results of the empirical part of the research as it relates to the main aim of the research, namely to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. The results of the study were structured into the results from the two questionnaires and the results from the interviews and two focus groups.

The third and last phase included the development of the curriculum framework for effective community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The integrated curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS will be presented in the next and final chapter. This will include the limitations of the study, together with recommendations for future research.

# CHAPTER 7

# DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to develop a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The data collection methods that were used in this study included a literature review, a questionnaire directed at the current students in the postgraduate programme, a questionnaire aimed at the current lecturers in the programme, semi-structured interviews with lecturers at national and international HEIs, and focus groups with current students and lecturers.

The use of multiple data collection methods enabled the researcher to corroborate, elaborate and illuminate the findings in order to investigate the social phenomenon of community engagement from different angles.

Chapter 1 focused on the orientation to the study, introducing the relevant background information relating to the identified research problem while Chapter 2 provided a literature review on community engagement. Chapter 3 focused on higher education and included international as well as national perspectives on the current higher education environment. Chapter 4 provided a literature overview on curriculum development. The research methodology, approach, design, data collection methods and data analysis were discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 provided a description of the implementation of the research as well as the presentation of the data obtained through the study.

This chapter concludes with the proposed curriculum framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU as well as the limitations of the study, together with recommendations for future research.

## 7.2 SYNTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The following section provides a summary of the study.

### 7.2.1 The research question

The study endeavoured to answer the questions below, representing the main focus of the study. The main research question was stated as:

*What would constitute a contextualised and integrated curriculum framework for community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?*

Three subsidiary research questions guided the study which sought to answer this question:

*What is the current status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?*

*What do the course experiences of current students and lecturers reveal about community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?*

*What are the contours of a curriculum framework for the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU?*

### 7.2.2 The aim of the study

The main aim of this study was to develop a contextualised and integrated framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. The first step was to determine the current status of community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. This was done through a self-administered questionnaire which was completed by current students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. In the next step, the curriculum frameworks and content of other community engagement models at national and international HEIs were reviewed. This was done through document review and semi-structured interviews with lecturers from national as well as international HEIs.

Based on the empirical data obtained and linked to literature perspectives, a framework for community-engaged teaching, learning and research was developed. The framework was established through the conceptual interpretation of theoretical data as well as the empirical data generated through the semi-structured interviews with lecturers from different HEIs and two focus groups with current students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. The study was contextualised within the South African higher education environment as well as within the NWU as HEI.

## 7.3 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

In the next section, the researcher will discuss and interpret the findings of the study and the main themes which emerged from the data obtained from Questionnaire A and Questionnaire B, the semi-structured interviews and the focus groups. Below is a summarised representation (Figure 7.1) of the dominant themes identified from the data obtained from the questionnaires, individual interviews and focus group interviews.

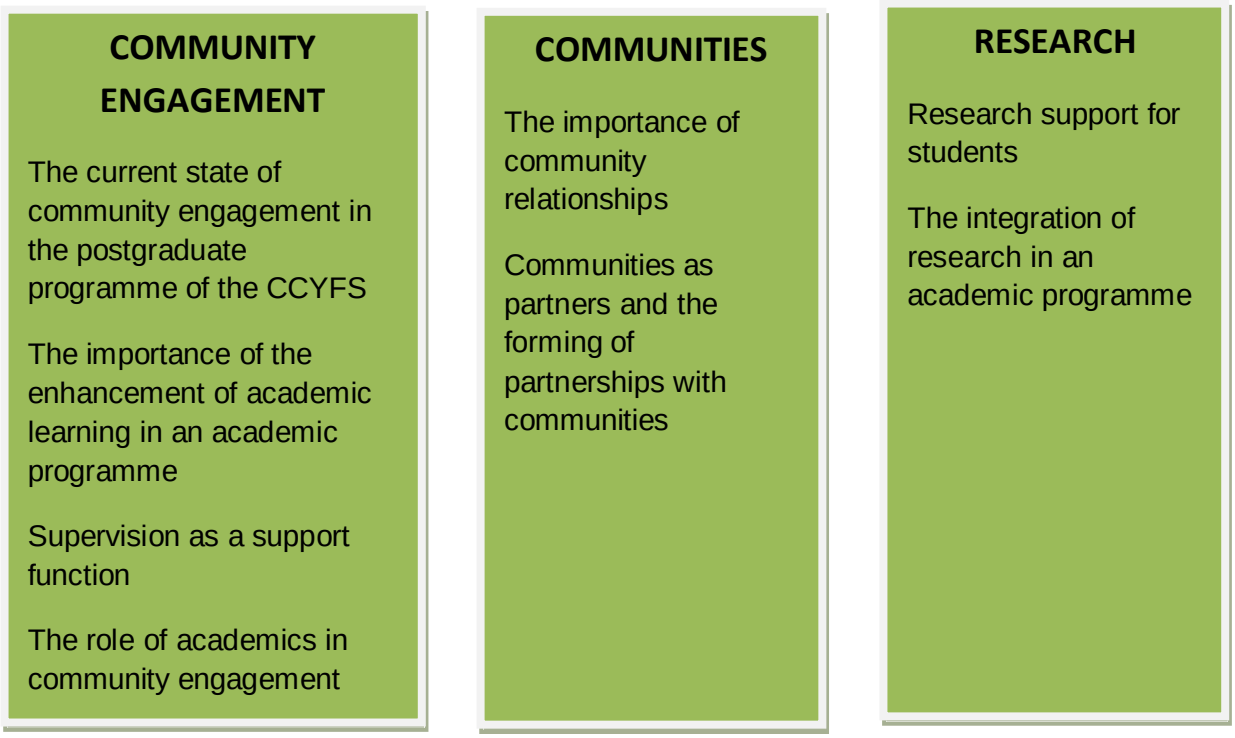


**Figure 7.1: Dominant themes identified from this study**

### 7.3.1 Discussion of dominant themes identified from the study

#### *7.3.1.1 Community engagement*

In order to achieve the aim of this study, it was essential to first determine what the current status of community engagement is within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

##### *7.3.1.1.1 The current state of community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS*

In the literature review, Chapter 2 focused on community engagement. Aspects such as the following were highlighted during this review: the definition of community engagement, and the various types of community engagement. Although the conceptualisation of community engagement within the South African context is currently under debate (Akpan *et al.* 2012:1-2), Bender (2008a:1164, 2007) argues that the definition of community engagement should be reshaped to fit the university context, culture and function of scholarship. According to Bednarz *et al.* (2009:91), the definition of community engagement depended on the university context, the student and community group involved as well as the desired learning outcomes. From the data it emerged that community engagement, within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, is currently not clearly defined. This was confirmed by the data obtained from the questionnaires as well as the focus groups. Various concepts where highlighted, such as viewing community engagement as a process, seeing it as a service rendered to the community, viewing the practicum as community engagement, seeing community engagement as giving something back to the community, and becoming aware of the needs of the community.

Bender (2008a:1154) emphasises that practices such as practica, community-based education and clinical practicals cannot simply be renamed community engagement.

Currently, it seems that community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS is seen as being equal to the practicum of the students. Hence, it represents the service function of the programme. The focus of the practicum is currently mainly to provide the students hands-on experience to enhance their learning and understanding of issues relevant to their field of study and the achievement of

learning outcomes. The data also suggests that the students are the primary beneficiaries and not the community. This view arguably forms the one extreme in the range of definitions of community-engaged learning (Furco 1996). The same applies to internships. The other extreme in the distinction of community-engaged learning (Furco 1996) would be volunteerism, where the students are engaged in activities where service is emphasised for the sake of the beneficiary (Cress 2005:7).

Krause (2007:279), Bringle and Hatcher (2002:503), Bednarz *et al. (*2008:89) and Lazarus *et al.* (2008:61) state that community engagement can take on different forms and is used differently within the academic programmes. The data obtained from the lecturers from the different HEIs indicated that community engagement is structured differently and is implemented as projects, interventions, teaching-based community engagement and community engaged research, work-based experience and research. Several of these participants also identified the practicum and internships as community engagement. This includes interaction with different groups outside the community, field-based learning or practical learning. It was evident from the data that community engagement is mostly applied in schools, NGOs, clinics and hospitals. Several HEIs have university clinics on campus where communities have access to free services. In terms of the CCYFS's postgraduate programme, it is important to define community engagement and not just rename the current practicum as community engagement.

The HEQC document (2004:19) emphasises the importance that services need to focus directly on the needs of communities. The importance of social responsibility and the community as beneficiary was accentuated through the data obtained from the participants from the HEIs. The data obtained from the students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS indicated that there was some benefit for the community and some focus on social responsibility. However, as previously stated, the main focus was not the needs of the communities.

Student participants' responses were inconsistent in terms of the duration of the involvement in communities. Half of the participants indicated that their involvement was sufficient while others indicated that their involvement was not enough and that they wanted to be more involved in the communities. It seems that the participants who indicated that their involvement was sufficient had difficulty in coping with full-time

occupations and the additional practicum. Hence, they struggled to manage prolonged involvement. This issue probably needs to be taken into account in programme structuring. As most of the participants indicated that they wanted to be involved in communities for a longer time, it seems necessary to take this into account in the restructuring of the programme.

The organisational climate and culture of the CCYFS is seen as highly supportive of community engagement, but apparently lecturers need to be encouraged to participate more in scholarly activities in order to promote community engaged scholarship (Stanton, 2008:24). The data showed that academics play a key role in the communities. The involvement of academics was defined as work that the lecturers themselves do in their own time to see clients, or their involvement at local schools and local government. O'Meara *et al.* (2011:84) emphasise the importance of applying this expertise to local, regional and national problems. This is also supported by the NWU policy which states that a core business of the university is the implementation of expertise in communities and commercially (NWU, 2010:5).

The involvement of academics may also increase promotion processes at departmental level as well as rewards for community-engaged research and scholarship within the CCYFS as it seems from the data that academics are apparently not rewarded for community-engaged research and scholarship. According to Bednarz *et al.* (2008:89), both faculty members and students should regard community engagement as an integral and important component of the curriculum, linked with other learning and teaching activities.

Although it seemed that the organisational climate and culture of the CCYFS is supportive of community engagement, it appeared that the necessary support and assistance is not available to staff, students and communities to facilitate, implement and advance community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. It seems that there is no systematic effort in place to account for the number or quality of community engagement activities occurring in the centre. There is also a need to promote community engagement and to share the results of the community engagement activities on diverse platforms. These activities will require funding.

*7.3.1.1.2 The importance of the enhancement of academic learning within an academic programme*

Zuber-Skerritt (1992, 2002) highlights that experiential learning is based on the belief that experience and constant reflection on experience are the keys to effective learning. Howard (2001) and Stacey *et al.* (2001) accentuate that student learning must take place during activities, experience, learning strategies and assessment. The importance of academic learning within the activities was also highlighted by the data obtained from the participants from the HEIs. From the student questionnaires and the student focus group it appeared that students' participation in communities added to their professional and personal growth. The involvement in communities, according to the results, provided them with opportunities to apply theory in practice.

The importance of reflection in academic learning is supported by Kolb (1984), Eyler and Giles (1994), Bringle and Hatcher (1999) and Zuber-Skerritt (2001). Reflection is regarded as a crucial element in transforming, clarifying, reinforcing and expanding concrete experience into knowledge. Student participants' responses indicate that the structured opportunities for reflection used in the modules and practicum sessions apparently led to the enhancement of their sensitivity towards the community, and increased awareness of social responsibility. This provided them with the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the module content, and it gave them an opportunity to make connections between service and the module work. In addition, it also broadens their appreciation of the discipline.

According to Howard (2001:28), social learning prepares students for social responsibility and contributes to the students' preparation for community-based involvement in a diverse democratic society. Social learning can include knowledge, skills and values, making an explicit, direct and purposeful contribution to the preparation of students for active involvement in future communities and social responsibility.

The data presented from the HEI lecturers showed the importance of social learning. Bringle and Hatcher (2004:127) emphasise the importance of enhancing social responsibility. The White Paper (DoE 1997:10-11) notes that one of the goals in the transformation of HE is also to promote and develop social responsibility and

awareness among students of the role of higher education in social and economic development. The data obtained shows a strong focus on social responsibility in the academic programmes. The data from the students indicated that it seems that through their involvement in communities, they became more aware of the needs of the community. Also, their sensitivity towards the needs of the community was enhanced.

Joiner and Landreth (2005:49), and PTI identify certain competencies and skills that are essential in the training of Play Therapy students. The data suggested that the students did not feel equipped to engage with communities on a therapeutic level from their first year of study as they first need a theoretical grounding as well as appropriate competencies. The importance of the level of competencies was also highlighted by the HEI lecturers when they indicated that students need to be on a certain competency level and have certain skills before they can engage with communities.

#### 7.3.1.1.3 Supervision as support function

From the data it seems apparent that supervision is essential in the practicum sessions as well as in the research component. Research support was emphasised by the student participants as well as the lecturers from the HEIs. The lecturers indicated that regular contact is essential, and this need was also supported by the students. In their definition of supervision, Gray and Roy (2005) in their definition of supervision emphasize emphasise the support function of supervision by stating that supervision is a form of mentorship, guidance and helping the student through the complex and challenging process of research. The results from the student questionnaires indicated that it seems that supervision is currently inadequate.

### *7.3.1.2 Communities*

#### *7.3.1.2.1 The importance of community relationships*

Norris-Tirrell *et al.* (2010:174) emphasise the importance of the relationship between communities and universities. This relationship is based on reciprocity - a give and take of resources, ideas, power, products and responsibilities. From the data obtained from the interviews with the various HEI lecturers it emerged that the relationships between the university and the community are very important. The student participants also indicated that they would describe their contact with the communities as a process of

involvement and not just once-off contact. The importance of relationships with communities was also stressed by the current lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

*7.3.1.2.2 Communities as partners and the forming of partnerships with communities*

Partnerships and reciprocity are core elements within community engagement (The Carnegie Foundation, 2009:1). This was highlighted by the data obtained from the participants from the HEIs. The data obtained from students and lecturers in this study indicated that the role that communities play was not apparent. The involvement of the CCYFS (students and lecturers) offered some benefits to the community, but only on certain levels. For example, the children benefitted from therapy and the fact that it was offered as a free service to the children (community). Results from both questionnaires indicated that involvement can be more beneficial as only a very small group currently gain from the interventions. Again, there was no indication of really addressing the needs of the community or even determining their needs before involvement. Bernardo *et al.* (2012:189) also highlight the fact that the relationship between universities and society is framed by mutuality of outcomes, goals, trust and respect.

The results also indicated that only a few community partners could be identified. However, the long-range goals and needs for developing and implementing community engagement activities were not defined. Bringle *et al. (2004)* emphasise the importance of reciprocity. Also, there seems to be a lack of opportunities for community partners to assume leadership roles in the centre's activities, and the resources of the CCYFS (students, lecturers) appear not to be fully utilised by the community.

From the data it appears that opportunities exist for students to engage with communities, but only a few students are aware of community engagement opportunities. Clearly, the CCYFS does not have any formal or informal incentives or recognition mechanisms in place for students to engage with communities. Furthermore, no opportunities exist for students to take on formal governance roles, including advising or leading community engagement activities associated with the CCYFS.

The significance of the partnerships between universities and communities was emphasised and seen as very important. Driscoll (2009:6), when defining community

engagement, highlights the fact that collaboration between HEIs and communities takes place within a context of partnership and reciprocity. McNall *et al.* (2009:217) also focus on partnerships when defining community engagement. From the data it seems that within the CCYFS the forming of partnerships is currently not a priority. There appears to be irregular contact between the CCYFS and community partners.

#### ***7.3.1.3 Research***

##### *7.3.1.3.1 Research support for students*

With regard to research within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, the students said they felt overwhelmed when it was only introduced in the second year of study as there was not enough time to finish their research projects. Also, they seemed to struggle with academic writing skills. Data from the HEI lecturers indicate that research in academic programmes should be introduced in the first year of study. The data received from the lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS indicated that it seems that a solid theoretical research basis is essential. The data received from the HEI lecturers suggests that in order to prepare students for research, research workshops should be presented. The research theory should be integrated through research, theoretical modules and research-oriented classes.

The data from the HEI participants indicated an emphasis on the transfer of academic writing skills as well as on the research-mindedness of students. The shortage and importance thereof was indicated by the data obtained from current students and lecturers in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS.

##### *7.3.1.3.2 The integration of research within an academic programme*

The linking of research and teaching within an academic programme is emphasised by Henkel (2000). The results from the student questionnaires indicated that it seems that to some extent the teaching/learning and practicum is integrated, but not the research. From the data obtained from students and lecturers, it emerged that currently research, within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, is not integrated with teaching or the service component. Stanton (2008:23-25) argues that engaged research provides an opportunity for the community to benefit in a direct or indirect manner. Bringle and Hatcher (2005:28-29) emphasise that SL scholarship and research should be

conducted across the implementation of a course, at a strategic time for an academic programme, and in a manner that demonstrates growth over time in order to contribute to knowledge and practice. The scholarship and research should also be public (use procedures that are identifiable and understandable) so that it can be reviewed, evaluated, critiqued and recognised by peers and others (students, service providers, community members). The data from the lecturers furthermore indicated that apparently the practices of community-engaged teaching, research and service are not collectively assessed. To promote a scholarship of engagement, it seems essential to integrate the three components of teaching/learning, research and service.

Brenner and Manice (2011:88) emphasise the importance of the exchange principle in community engagement. Different community engagement models have been identified, which include community-based participatory research, participatory action research and community-based research (Lazarus *et al*. 2008:61). Most of the student participants indicated that they were able to identify their research problems from their involvement in the community. The HEI participants also reported that some of their research was undertaken in the communities in which they were involved.

### 7.3.2 A framework for community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS

In order to overcome the identified problem and based on the findings of the study, the following framework, as illustrated in Figure 7.2, is proposed. This framework proposes an outline for community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, NWU. The framework was developed from the research findings and is demonstrated in the next section.

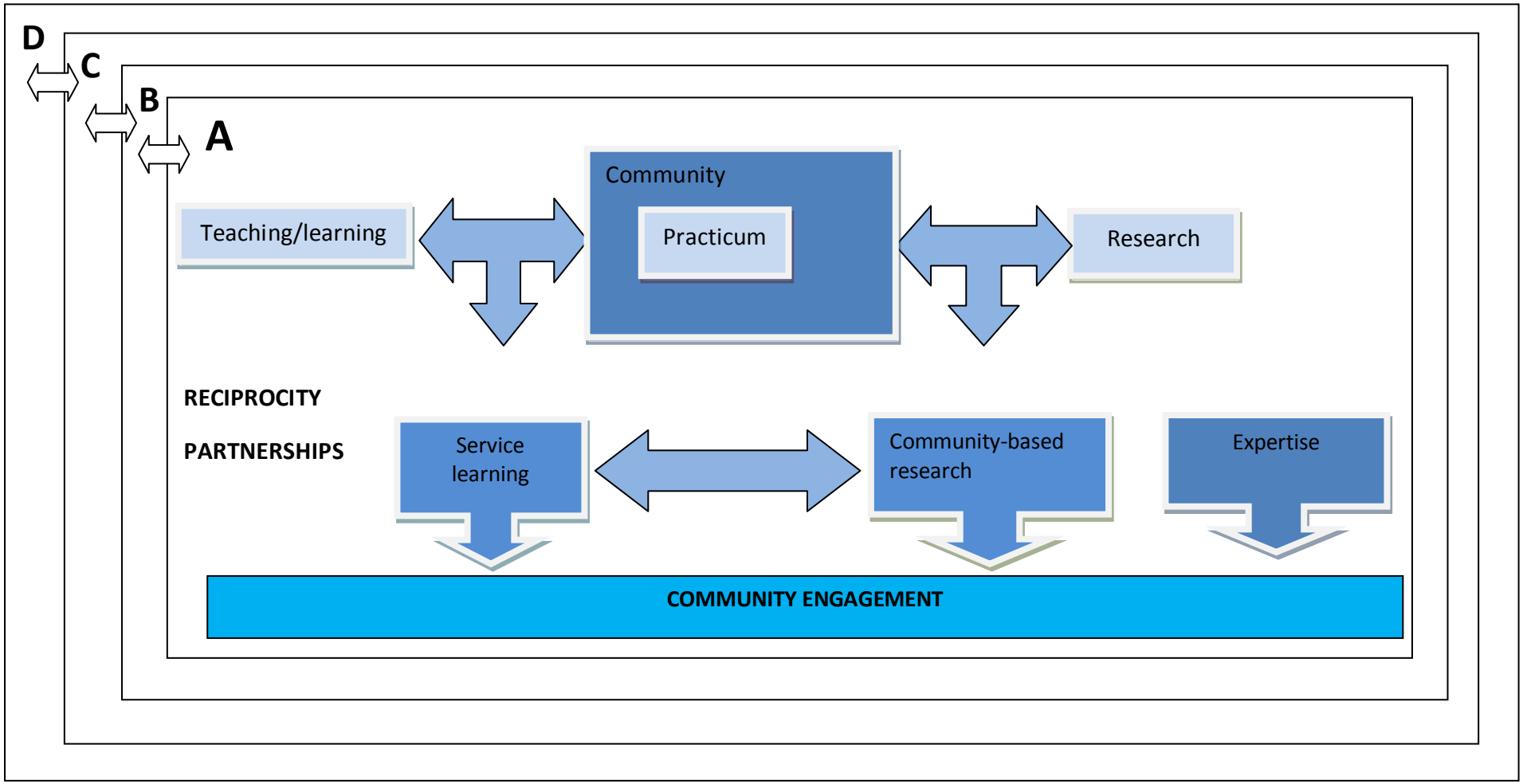


**Figure 7.2: A framework for community engagement for the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS**

Currently teaching/learning, practicum sessions and research represent the three core functions of the CCYFS's postgraduate programme. The practicum is situated in the community and currently represents community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The next level represents the new proposed framework for community engagement for the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The two-way arrows indicate the interlink between the functions.

The teaching/learning component is linked to the community through service-learning. Service learning is a form of engaged learning which includes experiential learning. It provides students with the opportunity to engage in interactive and experiential processes. Reflection is another crucial element in service learning. Service learning furthermore provides opportunities where both the community and the student are the primary beneficiaries and where both service learning and student learning receive equal attention. Reciprocity is a central characteristic of service learning. The use of live case studies is recommended as another way of integrating theory and service.

With service learning students will have the opportunity to be involved in communities from their first year of study. The involvement of the students needs to be structured in accordance to the students' levels of competence and skills. Placements of students need to be appropriate and effective, and should as far as possible be within the partnerships that the CCYFS have established. It is recommended that students are placed at these organisations from their first year of study. Where possible, site supervisors need to be identified within the specific communities. Regular supervision from site supervisors and university supervisors is essential.

Research is linked to the community through community-based research. This link can promote a scholarship of engagement. Scholarship provides an opportunity to build bridges between theory and practice, to communicate one's knowledge effectively to students, and to address the needs of the community. This will also promote the lecturers' involvement in the communities and contribute to both theoretical understanding as well as practical solutions to societal problems. The research is also linked to teaching and learning as research needs to inform curriculum (teaching/learning), and it needs to be integrated into the teaching/learning component from the first year of study. This will enhance the research mindedness of the students,

their critical thinking abilities and their academic writing skills. Research support for students in the research process is important. It is recommended that research supervisors are assigned to students in their first year of study. Possibilities of support groups need to be explored.

Community engagement will therefore consist of service learning, community-based research as well as the rendering of expertise to communities.

These activities are situated within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS**,** represented as (A) in Figure 7.2. The next frame represents the institutional environment (B). Curriculum activities such as curriculum development and design are represented by the next frame (C). These activities were determined by the literature review. The last frame on the outside is the contextual role players (D), namely legislation, regulations and the providers of education. This includes the international and national trends that impact the programme and curriculum. The two-way arrows indicate the integration as well as the reciprocal function.

**Programme development (A)**

Programmes have aims or goals that need to be met, and educators have professional and ethical obligations to meet the needs of their learners. A logical, systematic approach to curriculum development will assist in the achievement of these ends. As this is only a curriculum framework, it is recommended that in order to implement the proposed curriculum framework in the CCYFS's postgraduate programme, additional steps need to be taken which include the following: revise the current overall goals and specific measurable objectives of the curriculum, including the cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudinal) or psychomotor (skills and performance) objectives; revise the educational strategies and implement the curriculum; assess the performance of the individuals as well as the curriculum and provide feedback.

**Institutional environment (B)**

The study confirmed the need for a curriculum framework for community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS. The CCYFS forms part of the institutional environment of the NWU. It is essential that community engagement at the CCYFS is structured within this institutional environment and that it is linked to the

NWU's community engagement office in order to promote community engagement within the CCYFS and raise awareness of the community engagement activities of the CCYFS. Enabling environments needs to be created to make it possible for students and lecturers to utilise community engagement as a mechanism to open up the system of knowledge generation and application. Furthermore, it is recommended that faculty incentives are promoted for lecturers involved in community engagement and that lecturers are rewarded for community engaged research and scholarship.

**Curriculum development (C)**

Curriculum development and curriculum design are linked to the description of developmental learning outcomes, assessment and quality assurance procedures. Therefore, these outcomes, assessments and quality assurance procedures should be supported by literature and policy concerns, as indicated in Chapter 4.

**Contextual role players (D)**

The curriculum is shaped by its context and therefore the context or setting is important when changes to the curriculum become necessary. Chapter 3 provided a conceptual as well as contextual overview of the legislative changes and changing structures within higher education. The needs and requirements of the most important role players on this level, namely the DoE, SAQA and HEQC, should be taken into account. National as well as international trends with regard to CE must be taken into cognisance, and the mission, vision and programmes of HEIs need to be aligned with the above in order to stay relevant. The legislative changes within HE as well as the requirements of SAQA need to be taken into account before the curriculum development can be considered.

**Community engagement (CE)**

From the study, it was apparent that community engagement within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS needs to be defined. It is recommended that the definition of the HEQC (2006a:11) is used as foundation when defining community engagement in the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS but that it is revised for the specific context. It could be defined as: community engagement is the combination and integration of teaching/learning (service learning), professional community service by academic staff

(expertise to communities) and community-based research applied simultaneously to identified community development priorities.

#### *7.3.2.1 The application of the curriculum framework within the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS*

It is essential that community engagement is seen by both academic staff and students as an integral and important component of the curriculum. Curriculum development is regarded as an ongoing process in which structure and systematic planning methods figure strongly from design to evaluation. The development of a curriculum framework therefore takes place within this process of curriculum development and in terms of the curriculum development principles. Different phases in curriculum development is indicated and for the framework to be integrated into the curriculum it is essential that these phases need to be followed to ensure effectiveness. Next, the aspects of the curriculum design phase will be discussed.

This study was based on a problem that was identified, and although some needs of the students were identified this was not the focus of the study. Therefore, a more comprehensive needs analysis of the students' needs in terms of the curriculum needs to be done. The current critical, learning and specific outcomes need to be reformulated. Critical outcomes such as critical thinking and social responsibility were accentuated. The specific outcomes that are required in the programme, which refer to the skills and competencies determined by the specific field, in this case, play therapy, needs to be formulated. Another specific outcome that was highlighted is the ability to reflect. It is recommended that experiential learning be used as teaching strategy. Reflective learning needs to form part of the teaching strategy as well as the research process. Reflection will enable students to link the social context and their experiences in their practicum sessions or in the classroom. The assessment tasks and criteria need to be determined. Summative and formal assessment should form an integral part of the curriculum design. Continuous and collective assessment is recommended. This needs to be applied and integrated throughout the duration of the course and a portfolio of evidence needs to be compiled.

In the curriculum implementation phase, it is important to disseminate information about the curriculum to the lecturers at the CCYFS in order to prepare them for the intended

implementation. This can be done through the distribution or publication of information, ideas and notions. This will assist those involved to prepare and obtain information about the proposed curriculum. In this process, it is recommended that the lecturers within the CCYFS programme are given an opportunity to expand their knowledge with regard to CE, and the integration of teaching, research and services. This can be done through interactive workshops and consultation with lecturers throughout the curriculum implementation phase, which will be next step. During curriculum implementation, the relevant design is applied in practice. Curriculum evaluation is the phase during which the success and effectiveness of the curriculum is evaluated. This evaluation also covers the effect of the curriculum on the learners. The last step would be the evaluation and feedback of the performance assessment of the individuals as well as the curriculum.

### 7.3.3 The enhancement of relationships with the communities and community partnerships

The importance of relationships with community partners was emphasised in this study. It was identified through the study that the CCYFS needs to form community partnerships as there is a strong focus on the collaboration between higher education institutions and the community for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. Within these partnerships, communities also need to be educated on the role and function of practicum placements and research. Students need to be more involved in community-engaged opportunities.

The importance of reciprocity needs to highlighted. In order for reciprocity to happen, the relationships with the communities need to be promoted and partnerships formed and maintained.

The community partners need to be appropriate for the integration of community engagement and, where possible, these communities (schools, hospitals, etc.) must have approved site supervisors.

## 7.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THIS STUDY

This study contributes to the current debate on community engagement in South Africa as it provides an integrated framework for community engagement.

The integrated framework provide HEIs in South Africa a method to engage with communities and contribute to the solution of societal problems at local, regional and national levels. With specific reference to the NWU as well as the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, it provides them an opportunity to strengthen their commitment to society and bridge the gap between the HEI and the society. This can lead to the forming of reciprocal partnerships.

The proposed curriculum framework may also be useful in other HEI - not only to benefit the institution, academic staff and students, but also the government's initiative to promote community engagement within HE.

The implementation of this curriculum framework provides an opportunity for the academics in the postgraduate programme to become engaged scholars. The involvement of academics may also increase promotion processes at departmental level as well as rewards for community-engaged research and scholarship within the CCYFS as it seems from the data that academics are apparently not rewarded for community-engaged research and scholarship.

The importance of reshaping the definition of CE to fit the university context, culture and function of scholarship was highlighted throughout the study. Currently, within the postgraduate programme CE is not defined and this study will provide the opportunity for a debate on how CE can be defined within this specific postgraduate programme.

Currently no studies with a focus on community engagement within the field of Play Therapy exist. This study can therefore also enhance the field of Play Therapy.

This curriculum framework can also be duplicated in other HEIs, and adopted to suit different contexts.

Students are provided with well-rounded education and they are exposed to the skills they need to live in a diverse society.

## 7.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Only one case, namely the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, was used in this case study approach. The results therefore have limited generalisability as the recommendations are context-bound to the CCYFS and the NWU. If this study were to be repeated at a later stage, the results may vary due to the changes that were made to the programme after the phasing in of the CCYFS at NWU.

Although several emails were sent to HEIs to request their participation in the study, only a small portion replied and was willing to participate. Even though the participants, lecturers from different HEIs, were experienced in their field, and even though their input and knowledge was highly valuable, a larger sample group of participants would have been valuable. A bigger sample of students may also add value.

The HEI participants who took part in the semi-structured interviews are all involved in full-time programmes. No similar part-time programmes, where lecturers are willing to participate, are currently available.

First-year students were excluded from the study as they lacked the required knowledge and insight in the HE context and curriculum framework requirements. Hence, their responses may have reflected this in an interview situation.

It would have been useful to move this study beyond the curriculum design phase to include curriculum implementation. The scope of the study was narrowed down to fit pre-determined parameters. The outcome was only to develop the curriculum framework and provide suggestions for implementation.

## 7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The aim of curricular research is to ensure that teaching stays relevant to the needs of the society, and that the methods used are best adapted to transfer knowledge and mould future practitioners.

Once the proposed framework for community-engaged teaching, research and service has been implemented in the curriculum of the CCYFS, it should be evaluated. This should verify the viability of the initial framework.

The methods tested in this study and some of the trends revealed might be further researched and adapted for curriculum development in other disciplines.

The questionnaire that was utilized was developed by Prof Kevin Kecskes of Portland State University. This questionnaire is developed to determine the state of CE in institutions, faculties and departments. As this questionnaire was developed in the United States it will be valuable to adapt this questionnaire, in co-operation with Prof Kecskes, to fit the South African context.

## 7.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In order to adhere to societal needs and its growing challenges, it is essential that the postgraduate programme of the CCYFS, as part of HE, becomes more engaged with community needs through community engagement. It is also crucial for this programme to pursue a scholarship of engagement through the new proposed curriculum framework.

The study endeavoured to produce new knowledge that may be utilised to address the problems experienced within the higher education sector regarding the integration of teaching, learning and service. The study identified a significant need for a framework to integrate the three components of teaching, learning and service, and concluded with a curriculum framework that could be useful to other HEIs. It is anticipated that the research results and the discussions that followed will shed some light on community engagement and that it can be integrated into a postgraduate programme.

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