#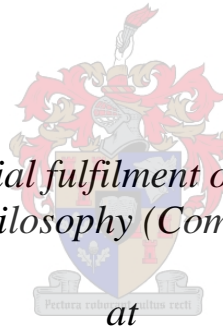 *Exploring the developmental outcomes of service-learning in Higher Education for partner organisations: An exploratory study of two modules at Stellenbosch University*

by

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Community & Development)

at

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: November 1, 2009

Abstract

Amidst debates over the transformation of South African (SA) Higher Education (HE), the core institutional function of community engagement is a possible means of bolstering the developmental role of HE in relation to community needs. The potential for community engagement, and more specifically service-learning, to contribute to community development is yet to be fully explored in the SA context.

Broad policy mandates such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (GNU, 1994) and the White Paper on Transformation of Higher Education (DoE, 1997) have created a policy environment supportive of community engagement as an institutional function of HE advancing the state's developmental agenda. In the course of the national reorganization of the HE system, the Joint Education Trust (JET) / Community-Higher Education- Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative undertook feasibility studies of community engagement in SA HE and consulted widely around community engagement. The main outcome has been service-learning's promotion as an endorsed means of knowledge-based community engagement. Concerted efforts to build the institutional capacities for service-learning nationwide have since been conducted and service-learning is now an increasingly prominent means of community engagement in HE.

The conceptual origins of service-learning suggest that mutual student and community benefits are achieved in the course of service-learning programmes, with significant research substantiating student learning outcomes. However, there is limited research available on community outcomes and a lack of empirical evidence on how the community is engaged in service-learning. Conceptualizations of service-learning partnerships in SA yield the introduction of a third party, the partner organization as the host of the service-learning modules in addition to the university and the community.

The Triad Partnership Model applied at Stellenbosch University (SU) provides an opportunity to explore the experience of the third party, the partner organization, in what is conceptualized as a dyadic relationship between student and community. As a former student, representative of a partner organization and co-facilitator in a service-learning module, the author explores the experiences of representatives of partner organizations of service-learning in HE.

This dissertation presents the experiences of ten site-supervisors from nine partnering organizations of Stellenbosch University as evidence of some of the developmental outcomes of two service-learning modules. The study discusses the various stages in the process of partnership as it pertains to outcomes experienced by the site-supervisors of the partner organizations. These experiences help clarify the developmental implications of the Triad Partnership Model for the partner organizations of the two service-learning modules studied. The dissertation concludes by making recommendations for future areas of study and makes some considerations for prospective service-learning modules at SU.

Opsomming

Die kern institusionele funksie van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid is te midde van die debate oor die transformasie van Suid-Afrikaanse (SA) Hoër Onderwys (HO), 'n moontlike wyse om die ontwikkelingsrol van HO in verhouding tot gemeenskapsbehoeftes te bevorder. Die potensiaal van gemeenskapsontwikkeling, en meer spesifiek diensleer se bydrae tot gemeenskaps-ontwikkeling, is nog nie voldoende in die SA konteks ondersoek nie.

As breë beleidsmandate het die Heropbou en Ontwikkelingsprogram (GNU, 1994) en die Witskrif oor die Transformasie van Hoër Onderwys (DoE, 1997) 'n beleidsomgewing geskep wat ondersteunend is vir gemeenskapsinteraksie as 'n institusionele dryfkrag van HO om die Staat se ontwikkelingsagenda te bevorder. Ten tye van die nasionale herorganisering van die HO stelsel het die Joint Education Trust (JET) / Community-Higher Education- Service Partnerships (CHESP) inisiatief volhoubaarheidstudies van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid in SA HO gedoen en ook gekonsulteer oor verskeie aspekte rondom gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid in die breë. Die belangrikste uitkoms hiervan was die bevordering van diensleer as 'n legitieme wyse van kennisgebaseerde gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid. Doelbewuse pogings is onderneem om die institusionele kapasiteit vir diensleer op nasionale vlak uit te bou, wat vandag 'n toenemende prominente wyse van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid in HO is.

Die konsepsuele oorsprong van diensleer veronderstel dat gemeenskaplike student- en gemeenskapsvoordele deur die verloop van diensleermodules bereik word. Alhoewel daar heelwat navorsing gedoen is wat fokus op leeruitkomste vir studente, is daar weining navorsing beskikbaar oor gemeenskapsuitkomste, sowel as 'n tekort aan empiriese bewyse van hoe die gemeenskap betrokke is by diensleer. Konsepsualisering van diensleer vennootskappe in SA sluit 'n derde party in, die vennootskap-organisasie waar die diensleermodule gehuisves word, bykomend dus tot die universiteit en gemeenskap.

Die Triad Vennootskap Model wat by die Universiteit van Stellenbosch (US) toegepas word, bied die geleentheid om ondersoek in te stel na die ervaring van 'n derde party, die vennootskap-organisasie, oor wat gekonseptualiseer word as 'n diadiese verhouding tussen student en gemeenskap. As 'n vorige student, verteenwoordiger van 'n vennootskap-organisasie en mede-fasiliteerder in 'n diensleermodule, stel die outeur ondersoek in na die ervarings van verteenwoordigers van vennootskap-organisasies van diensleer in HO.

Hierdie verhandeling stel die ervarings van tien supervisors van nege vennootskap-organisasies van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch voor, as bewys van sommige van die potensiële uitkomste van twee diensleer modules. Die ondersoeker bespreek die fases van die proses van vennootskap-vorming soos wat dit verband hou met uitkomste wat supervisors ervaar het. Hierdie ervarings help om die ontwikkeling implikasies van die Triad Vennootskap Model vir die deelnemer-organisasies van die twee diensleermodules wat bestudeer is, te verhelder. Die verhandeling word afgesluit deur aanbevelings te maak vir toekomstige studie-areas en oorweging te skenk vir toekomstige diensleermodules by die US.

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Thank you to a country that never ceases to amaze me. I will never take your opportunity, humility, and truth for granted. You have provided the context for the formative journeys of my adult life.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation in loving memory of Christopher Black Leslie. You are the reason I have strived to achieve. Your ability to embrace and support all those things I did differently showed me what a father should be. Your untimely departure from this life has left a space that weighs heavy on our hearts. Memories of your laugh and uncompromising self-assurance remind us how to enjoy the edge and still get the job done. I am so incredibly proud to be your son.

List of Figures

List of Acronyms

CHE- Council on Higher Education
CHESP- Community- Higher Education- Service Partnerships
DoE- Department of Education
GEAR- Growth Employment and Redistribution
GNU- Government of National Unity
HE- Higher Education
HEI- Higher Education Institution
HEQC- Higher Education Quality Council
IPSU- International Programmes Stellenbosch University
JET- Joint Education Trust
MDGs- Millenium Development Goals
NCHE- National Commission on Higher Education
NGO- Non-Governmental Organization
PBSL- Problem Based Service Learning
RDP- Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA- Republic of South Africa
SA- South Africa
SAQA- South African Qualifications Authority
SAUVCA- South African University Vice-Chancellors Association
SU- Stellenbosch University
UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

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Chapter 1 – Introduction to the study

1.1   Introduction

Since South Africa's democratic transition there has been much discussion around the developmental role of education in rectifying the historical legacies of apartheid and its potential for the transformation of South African society. At the tertiary level, South Africa has undergone significant policy and institutional reform. Post-apartheid consolidation of the South African Higher Education landscape has resulted in a single, nationally coordinated system, with 23 officially recognized institutions of state, each with its own respective mission and vision serving a variety of communities, service areas, market needs, and national agendas. Despite this progress, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) still have fallen short of giving effect to their developmental potential. Calls for improved access across institutions of HE, greater equity in educational beneficiaries, higher throughput rates, inclusive institutional cultures, rectification of capacity constraints, and institutional commitments to quality, have all featured prominently in discussions of the developmental role of education (DoE, 2008; Letseka & Breier, 2008; Southall, 2007). These specific issues are widely recognized across HEIs, and represent barriers to HEIs' efficacy, contributions to societal transformation, and the positioning of HEIs as developmental agents.

The multitude of generalized challenges facing tertiary institutions is further exacerbated by the circumstances unique to each institution, with their varied histories, constituents, and visions. Despite consolidation and reform across the tertiary education sector, institutional standards and outputs still vary considerably as HEIs have exercised much agency in how they have interpreted their respective roles towards contributing to development amidst their own distinct challenges of language, race, gender, resource constraints, etc. These varied responses at South African institutions can be framed between, at times competing, and at times complementing, demands. The disjuncture between policy and practice exists broadly across all levels and institutions of education (Jansen, 2002). However, it is predominantly HEIs that have the educational and academic capacities to critically analyze and interpret these gaps between policy and application. Some HEIs are more inclined, and better positioned, than others to observe national policies and give effect to their democratic mandate as agents of national development (GNU, 1994; DoE, 1997; DoE, 2001).

At some HEIs, these government policies have given impetus to transformation for the development of communities. Calls to make HEIs more inclusive and relevant (Waghid, 2002; Fourie, 2003), while ensuring and deepening academic quality and output (Southall, 2007: 8; Jansen, 2002) have been made. Against this backdrop, discussions over the direction of HE have informed by what Gibbons *et al* (1994) have described as "Mode 2" knowledge production, meaning the creation and dissemination of knowledge set in application in the social or market context (Subotzky, 2000; 65). These discussions have reinvigorated debatess over the classic functions of Universities, and coincided with a renewed focus upon the role of community engagement in imbuing relevance to SA HEIs (CHE, 2007).

The classic, three-fold function of the University is widely acknowledged and evidenced in South Africa, that of teaching and learning, research, and community

engagement (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo, & Bringle, 2008; Lazarus, Erasmus, Hendricks, Nduna, & Slamat, 2008; Lazarus, 2007; Lazarus, 2001; Bender, 2008; HEQC, 2004; Fourie, 2003; DoE, 1997; Perold, 1997). 'Community service' (DoE, 1997) 'knowledge based community service' (HEQC, 2001), 'community engagement' (HEQC, 2004), and now 'community interaction' at Stellenbosch University (SU, 2004) although different terms, refer to essentially the same function at different periods and/or institutions, and with slightly varied interpretations of its evolution across South African HE. Thus, community engagement, under a variety of terms, is a core function of South African HEIs, as described in their mission statements and as evidenced by its inclusion as assessment criteria for institutional audits and programme accreditation (HEQC, 2004a; 2004b). Community engagement serves as the common conceptual mechanism across HEIs to enhance learning and research by giving it context, relevance, and the opportunity for direct application (Lazarus *et al*, 2008). As a core function, community engagement helps give a social and relevant context for education as well as ensure that knowledge production at HEIs is responsive to that context.

A growing trend towards community engagement at HEIs has resulted in tertiary institutions that are not only providing opportunities for the embedded application of acquired skills within communities, but are contributing services, through partner organizations, to groups outside of their primary group of intended beneficiaries, the student body. The expansion and increasing acknowledgement of secondary beneficiaries at HEIs through community engagement has created the opportunity for the achievement of broader developmental outcomes outside the immediate boundaries of the institution and its primary beneficiaries (Lazarus, 2001). An audit of South African universities in 1997 showed that most had been involved, to varying degrees, in rendering services to secondary beneficiaries through some form of institutionalized community engagement for well over a decade (Perold, 1997). Despite some well-established programmes at different institutions; nationally, community engagement has still received limited attention as a core function of HEIs, compared to that of teaching and research. A consensus of Vice-Chancellors across SA HEIs to approach community engagement as an integrated component of teaching and research rather than that of an 'add-on' approach was established nearly a decade ago (JET, 2000), but broad institutional reform to this effect has been limited. The potential relevance and application of knowledge production at HEIs has been restricted as a result of enduring 'add-on' approaches to community engagement, and the potential outcomes for both primary and secondary beneficiaries have been hampered as a result.

The recent report of the Department of Education (2008) on *Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions* has resulted in some long-overdue introspection at SA HEIs. Recent findings suggest it is all the more imperative to take stock of those measures contributing to the transformation of HEIs and build upon those measures to effect a shift in institutional cultures. More specifically, an examination of the efforts to transform HEIs in relation to community needs is warranted. As HEIs move to re-position themselves to address complex social challenges and become more relevant, it is increasingly important to examine and understand the outcomes of existing community engagement initiatives. How HEIs choose to engage with their respective communities, the issues they prioritize, and the areas in which that engagement takes

place certainly play a crucial role in the kind of outcomes that are achieved. Furthermore, since community engagement is a vital function of HE, it is necessary to ensure that this function is carried out in line with the institutional vision, that it is treated as an integrated function, rather than an 'add-on', and that the outcomes achieved are monitored, evaluated, and reported upon. In South African HE, the specific means indentified and promoted for embedding community engagement in HEIs has been that of service-learning (Lazarus *et al*, 2008).

1.2 Background on service learning in SA

Service-learning, or a pedagogy of experiential, credit-bearing coursework directed at meeting specific community needs (HEQC, 2006a: 23-24) is one means of bolstering the developmental role of tertiary institutions and advancing developmental outcomes for secondary beneficiaries through community engagement. In addition to engaging university students with direct experience of the socio-economic challenges facing communities, service-learning contributes to producing civically minded citizens, while also retaining the potential of a high qualitative commitment across the traditional functions of universities: teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. In this context of challenges facing HE, emphasizing sustainable solutions to community needs as a primary component of the coursework is appropriate (Fourie, 2003: 32) and echoes long-standing visions and policy positions with regards to the developmental role of HE (GNU, 1994; DoE, 1997; DoE, 2001). Service-learning is presented as a means of fulfilling the core functions of tertiary institutions while also expanding their developmental outcomes to secondary beneficiaries through academically-informed service-work.

Following the Community-Higher Education-Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative to build service-learning capacity at tertiary institutions by the Joint Education Trust (JET) in 1999, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) has supported the institutionalization of service-learning in South African tertiary institutions as a means of giving effect to the core institutional function of community engagement. The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) has published various resources for HEIs to assist in the curriculum development and institutionalization of service-learning, including *Service-Learning in the Curriculum: A Resource for Higher Education Institutions; A Good Practice Guide and Self-evaluation Instruments for Managing the Quality of Service-Learning;* and *Service-Learning in the disciplines-Lessons from the field* (CHE, 2006a, 2006b, 2008).

Distinct from its North American manifestations, service-learning in the South African context has experienced a "reterritorialization" (Le Grange, 2007) through the CHESP initiative and a conscious community of scholars exploring the possibilities community engagement and service-learning (HEQC, 2007). The Triad Partnership Model of service-learning introduced by the CHESP initiative is one such example as it emphasizes a tri-sector partnership between the HEI, a service agency or partner organization, and the community, in efforts to achieve mutually defined goals. Lazarus (2001; 1) provides a threefold motivation for this partnership model: "(1) community empowerment and development; (2) transformation of the higher education system in relation to community needs; and (3) enhancing service delivery to previously disadvantaged communities". It is this emphasis upon community benefit and a conscious developmental orientation that is a defining characteristic of

service-learning in South Africa. Across contexts, *students and communities* are conceptualized as the primary beneficiaries and the focus is on providing *service* to the community of intended benefit and, equally, to enhance student *learning* (Furco, 1996; HEQC, 2006a: 23). However, service-learning in South Africa has a stronger developmental impetus compared to its North American relative because of gross socio-economic inequalities that define the context in which it operates. Yet, despite this reference to students and communities as primary beneficiaries, the scope of service-learning implementation at HEIs is limited, and evidence to support claims of community benefit even harder to come by (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005:2007).

Although community benefit is expressed clearly as an intended outcome of service-learning courses, the intellectual discourse has focused upon substantiating the extent and quality of learning outcomes for university students, and little research has been done to substantiate the community benefits of integrating academic coursework with community service (Nduna, 2007; Worrall, 2007; Mirion & Moely, 2006; Leiderman, Furco, Zapf, and Goss, 2005). In both their evaluation studies of service-learning courses at five HE institutions and later in their overall evaluation of the CHESP initiative, Mouton and Wildschut (2005:144-145; 2007: 5) reported on the lack of primary data supporting claims of community benefit. This raises the question, to what extent are communities truly secondary beneficiaries in service-learning courses?

At present, Nduna's (2007) article is one of the few peer-reviewed studies of service-learning programmes in South Africa that examines outcomes as perceived by representatives of partner organizations. However, this portrayal of the community voice through the experiences of partner organizations also proves problematic since one cannot substantiate community benefit through the experience of the partner organization alone, as they too have their own agendas and may not necessarily be the manifestation of a legitimate community voice (Fisher, 1997; Atack, 1999). The Triad Partnership Model of service-learning partners the university, community organization, and community together. This partnering strategy presents opportunities for significant benefit for community organizations that serve as the conduit for students to communities, and the potential vehicles of community development. To determine what service-learning students contribute to these organizations and their broader community outcomes, further exploration and analysis is required

Figure 1.1- The Triad Partnership Model (CHESP)
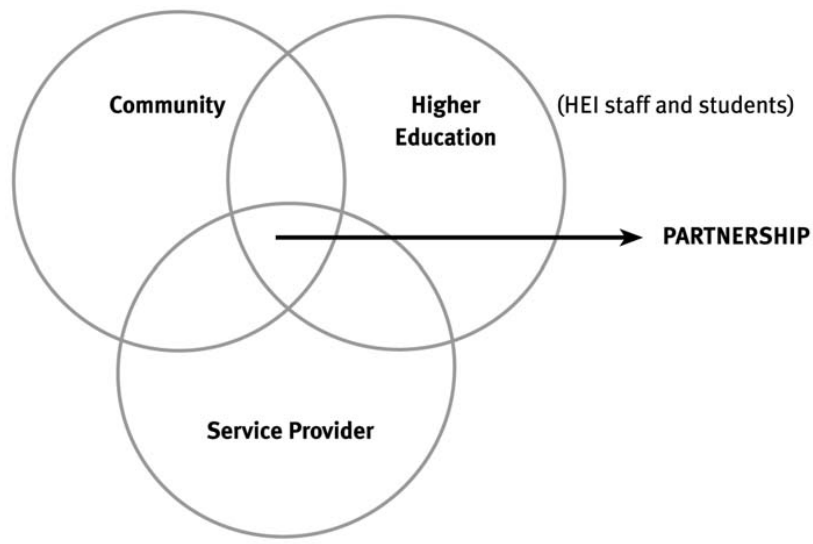
(Lazarus, 2001 in HEQC, 2006; 93)

1.2.1 The local context for service-learning

At SU, the Division for Community Interaction began the institutionalization of service-learning in 2005 with the introduction of capacity building workshops and the implementation of the first official service-learning module, in which the author participated as an undergraduate student. Since that time, there has been an acknowledged institutional shift towards a scholarship of engagement (Boyer, 1990: SU, 2009a) and service-learning modules can now be found across nearly all faculties and departments. The study focuses upon two modules that apply service-learning to the discipline of community development, that of *Sociology 354: Community Development* and *Service-Learning in Community Development*, an International Programmes Stellenbosch University (IPSU) module, and the pilot undergraduate model for service-learning in the field of community development at SU. Both modules combined with over six years of application across sites. As this pedagogy of experiential learning targeting community needs advances from campus into partner organizations and through to communities, there is a need to document the experience of all the stakeholders involved in service-learning interventions to determine the outcomes of this proposed scholarship of engagement (Nduna, 2007: 71).

1.3   Problem statement and objective

Although many existing studies are available on the benefits of institutionalized service-learning in HE (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Furco, 1996; Gelmon, Holland, Seifer, Shinnamon, & Connors, 1998; Hay, 2003; McEwen, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999), there is a shortage of research on the outcomes of service-learning for partner organizations and their communities of intended benefit. The impact of a service-learning module cannot be examined in isolation of the vested interests of both HEIs

and the partnering organizations in the realization of mutually determined goals, and specifically those investments and potential losses of all involved stakeholders.

Osman and Attwood (2007) have raised the issue of power relations between HEIs and groups engaged in service-learning. Their call for further exploration of the practices around the formulation and participation in partnerships poses complex questions with regards to the symmetry of service and learning. How these partnerships are formed, negotiated, maintained, and monitored are important queries that have huge implications for potential beneficiaries in HE (students), the partner organizations (service agencies), and that of the community (the locality or identifiable group targeted by the service provider, see definition in Chapter 2). The existence of embedded power within all educational, political, and social systems has an influence on the manner in which certain practices come into existence, especially considering that service-learning was brought to universities in essentially an asymmetrical manner, based upon academic ways of learning (Osman and Attwood, 2007: 16). How power is applied and used in the course of partnerships between HEIs and partner organizations clearly influences the nature of the outcomes achieved.

Previous affirmations of community benefit and impact are largely unsubstantiated with empirical evidence, and when references to benefit are made, there seems to be little distinction between benefits for the service-providing partner organization and that of the community. This lack of distinction between the community itself and the partner organization is one glaring shortcoming of Nduna's (2007) article on the community voice in service-learning. The perceptions of partner organizations were equated to be the voice of the community itself, which the CHESP model clearly distinguishes as a distinct actor (Lazarus, 2001: HEQC, 2006a). The necessity of such distinctions become all the more important when considering power relations between these role-players as community partners are also motivated by their own politics (Fisher, 1997: Atack, 1999) and cannot simply be equated to that of the community.

Acknowledgement of power-relations and distinctions between the various stakeholders involved in a service-learning programme are vital if social justice is to be an outcome of the service-learning programme (Mitchell & Humphries, 2007). The question as to whether service-learning is simply a glorified form of charity for partner organizations must be addressed and critically engaged with by the partner organizations, academics, and communities of intended benefit. If service-learning is to be more than simply charity exercise of universities, evidence of beneficiaries other than those of privileged university must be produced. If community engagement, through service-learning, does yield significant outcomes for partners as well as HEIs, describing these outcomes and making them explicit for future partnerships becomes valuable information for application. The potential to treat service-learning as more than a charitable addition to partner organizations and to explore the developmental implications are clearly there, but they require acknowledgment and distinguishing the processes, power relations, and interests of the various stakeholders in service-learning partnerships.

By examining the collective experience of a sample of representatives of partnering organizations of the University of Stellenbosch, this study will explore the developmental outcomes of service-learning for community partners and their target beneficiaries, as perceived by the site-supervisors at the various service agencies.

The overall questions guiding this study are as follows:

- What are the origins and policies guiding community engagement in South Africa?

- How is service-learning conceptualized and applied as a type of community engagement?

- What conceptual framework informs community - higher education partnerships?

- How do partnering organizations experience service-learning programmes?

- What are some developmental implications of service-learning for partner organizations?

The overarching research question is: *What are the developmental outcomes of service-learning programmes in HE for partner organizations?*

1.4   Purpose and aim of the study

This study explores and describes some of the outcomes of hosting service-learning interventions for partnering organizations of SU's two undergraduate modules in the discipline of community development. The experiences of partner organizations' representatives are described in terms of a procession of collaborative partnership contributing to the developmental outcomes and risks of the partner organizations. The intentions are to clarify the experience of partnering organizations, explore claims of benefit, and potentially identify partnering conditions or relations that encourage the realization of developmental outcomes. Ideally, this study may better inform and enhance how service-learning partnerships are conceptualized, formed, and maintained, with the potential for some limited lessons for best practice contributing to the broader national and international discourse on service-learning in HEIs.

The research question *"What are the developmental outcomes of service-learning programmes in HE for partner organizations?";* can then be further unpacked to address two distinct facets of this question that will inform the overall structure of this research:

Q1: *How have the representatives of partnering organizations of HE experienced service-learning programmes?*

Q2: *What are the developmental implications of the existing partnership model of service-learning for partner organizations?*

In order to fulfil this purpose and answer these questions, this research aims to:

- Describe the origins and philosophy of community engagement in South Africa;

- Describe the origins and conceptualization of service-learning as a type of community engagement;

- Explore the conceptual framework of the applied partnership model for service-learning;

- Explore and describe the outcomes of service-learning programmes as experienced by site-supervisors of partnering organizations;

- Explore and describe the developmental implications of service-learning for partner organizations.

This study is significant for HEIs, partner organizations, and communities. The evidence of developmental outcomes from such descriptions and explorations of partnerships provide all parties involved with a better understanding of the potentials and pitfalls of service-learning programmes. Furthermore, it is significant because it is one of the only studies in South Africa describing the community partners' experience in hosting service-learning programmes. Research findings will therefore be relevant across all stakeholders, and potentially generalizable to other institutions' approaches to service-learning implementation and the developmental outcomes thereof.

1.5   Research methodology

To investigate the outcomes of service-learning programmes for partner organizations of SU, this case study explores the experience of representatives of community partners in the course of service-learning interventions. By exploring and describing the experience of community partners of two service-learning modules, the author seeks to determine the nature and progression of the existing partnerships, and the outcomes of these modules for the partner organizations and their communities of intended benefit.

Following an extensive review of developmental literature on HE policy, community engagement, and service-learning, a conceptual framework is constructed and models for understanding both community engagement and service-learning critically discussed. This provides a foundation for presenting primary data from partnering organizations, which is fully integrated and synthesized through the research findings and conclusion of the study.

A number of partnering organizations involved with the two aforementioned service-learning modules were identified on a purposive sampling basis, considering established partnerships of one semester or more as they were likely to have had established experience with service-learning students and better explain the impact of these partnerships. Ultimately, the sample was determined by the partnering organization's availability and willingness to participate in such a study, as well as their autonomy from the institution (partner organizations based within the institution were excluded from the research). Based primarily on availability and duration of involvement, the author conducted semi-structured interviews with representatives from nearly all of the partnering organizations of these two modules. Through the collection of qualitative empirical data from the partnering organizations, experiences

throughout the process of hosting service-learning programmes were described and the perceived developmental outcomes of such interventions were explored.

The research for this MPhil thesis submission will begin with a continuation of the literature review, with conceptual foci including HE in South Africa, community engagement, service-learning, and institutional arrangements and policy documents for service-learning at the University of Stellenbosch. This literature review will form the basis for my theoretical analysis of the empirical data I will generate in the process of this case-study.

Although a variety of definitions exist for service-learning, Bringle and Hatcher's (2004: 127) commonly cited definition will provide the basis for this study.

> Service-learning is "a course-based, credit bearing educational experience in which students:
>
>> - participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community goals
>>
>> - reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility."

The two community development modules meet all of the criteria of this definition and have a combined history of over 6 years of partnering with established community organizations. Although there are many more service-learning modules at SU, these two were selected because of their basis in the discipline of community development makes them ideally orientated to explore the developmental outcomes of service-learning programmes. The service-learning programmes of these modules are the intervention subjects of study, with the HEI, partnering organizations, and their communities of intended benefit all important variables in this study.

Consultation with module facilitators and the author's supervisor helped to identify partnering organizations. Existing knowledge of the partnering organizations combined with a brief review of secondary data and available texts on these organizations was carried out to develop an idea of the extent of their activities and their communities of intended benefit.

1.6   Structure of the thesis

The research contained within this MPhil thesis submission progresses accordingly:

Chapter One – Introduction to the study

This chapter introduces the study and provides a developmental context for service-learning in SA HE and its relevance in the face of current transformational challenges. The motivation to undertake this case study was born out of the lack of research available on the outcomes of service-learning programmes for partner organizations and communities, and calls by service-learning researchers to further explore the nature of these partnerships. The objectives of this study are clear and the structure of the thesis outlined.

Chapter Two – Developmental frameworks and HE policy in SA

Beginning with the developmental frameworks available for examining education in SA, this chapter provides an overview of the social exclusion perspective of the human capability approach to development in education. Conceptualization of the key concepts of community and community development are then used as a basis for examining the policy context and inherited legacies from which the current HE system was born. This chapter proceeds through the various state policies initiated with the aim of making HE more relevant and responsive to the developmental needs of SA society.

Chapter Three- Community Engagement in South Africa

Moving from policy to practice, the Community-Higher Education-Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative is identified as the formative community engagement project nationally, and the greatest proponent of the institutionalization of service-learning as a means of embedding community engagement in HE (Lazarus *et al*, 2008). Various conceptual models of community engagement are examined towards an applied model.

Chapter Four – Service-learning and the Triad Partnership Model

This chapter looks at the conceptual frameworks underpinning service-learning and how they have influenced the institutionalization of this practice at South African HEIs. Considering the positions of the different stakeholders involved in the process, this chapter identifies theoretical deficiencies around the Triad partnership model and further substantiates the role of the partner organization.

Chapter Five –Research Design and Methodology

A detailed account of the qualitative research design is provided, along with an outline of the methods employed in the course of the research. The motivations and experiences providing a point of departure for the study are listed and qualitative methods employed for data collection noted. The chapter closes with notes on the limitations of the study and ethical considerations.

Chapter Six – Research findings

The experiences of representatives of the partnering organizations hosting service-learning programmes are explored. Extensive accounts describing the thematic processes of formation, implementation, maintenance, and outcomes (Butterfoss Goodman, & Wandersman, 1993) around partnerships are presented. These experiences are grouped based upon commonalities and the outcomes as experienced by the site-supervisors or the partnering organizations are presented. The developmental implications of the findings are considered applying the social exclusion perspective.

Chapter Seven – Conclusions and recommendations

Here a synthesis of the empirical data generated through this study is provided and research findings related to developmental outcomes for partnering organizations are explored within a broader context. Partner organizations' experiences are integrated into a developmental framework for service-learning and community engagement. The implications of the findings are concluded and the potentials for further research are identified.

1.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an introduction to the research carried out over the course of this study. The HE context and its role with regards to development have been highlighted. Service-learning has been identified as the modus operandi of community engagement in HE. This has prompted a question as to how partner organizations are engaged in the course of a service-learning programme and what evidence exists of partner organization outcomes as a result of service-learning interventions.

The research design and methodology have also been discussed, as has the structure of the thesis and the logical argumentation which the document will follow. This is concluded with a transition into the next chapter, which aims to provide the developmental framework for educational policy at HEIs.

Chapter 2 – Developmental frameworks and HE policy in SA

2.1   Introduction

The relationship between education and development is a crucial one that cannot be understated. Education and development are closely interwoven processes with education serving as a kind of prelateship for the expansion of people's opportunities (Sayed, 2008: 53-54). According to Maile (2008: 159), it is universally acknowledged that education plays a crucial role in ending poverty. With universal primary education one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), education is considered a pillar of development policy and strategy the world over (UNDP, 2003). Universal education serves as a means of equalizing opportunity by affording all people the basic capacity for self-empowerment through knowledge.

The relationship between education and development has often existed at the macro-level in terms of national, and even international, interventions and programmes implemented with the intention of using education as a means of achieving developmental ends. Programmes are often designed with considerations of developmental strategies that are informed by specific theoretical frameworks (Sayed, 2008). More often than not, debate around these frameworks occurs at the national level in terms of governance, policy, and funding allocations of the government. The result being that a national strategy is selected and prescribed from the top down to the local level. Nevertheless, how national education policies, governance, and funding allocations translate into the local experience often leaves much to be desired (Jansen, 2002).

In SA, this relationship takes on increased significance because of the educational legacies of apartheid and the systemic underdevelopment of the national education system for the majority of South Africans. As Maile (2008:162) summarizes this unfortunate educational legacy, "Apartheid has left the country with an education system that is characterized by fragmentation, inequity in provision, a crisis of legitimacy and, in many schools, the demise of a culture of learning as well as resistance to changing the way things have been done in the past." Every level of education has been affected by the divisive and unequal structures and relations of the past, and despite efforts to the contrary, much of these inequalities have endured.

According to Oldfield (2001 cited in Maile, 2008: 163) the legacy of apartheid necessitated that the state act developmentally to reconstruct education for "the benefit of individuals, the community, and collective development." Policy documents suggest that South Africa has attempted to do exactly that, but studies show with limited equitable results from primary to tertiary education (Chisholm, 2004; Southall, 2007; Moleke, 2005; Jansen, 2002). There are no quick fixes for such a situation, and the challenges faced throughout the educational system will not likely disappear soon.

It is within this context that HE policy has given HEIs a mandate to 'act developmentally' through more than research and teaching and learning, but through

community engagement as well. Identifying a developmental framework within which to locate HE policy and its implications for community engagement provides a basis for considering the developmental outcomes of service-learning. Thus, an overview of developmental frameworks as applied to education, clear conceptualizations of community and community development, and the role in HE policy provide a starting point for this study.

2.2 Frameworks of development

In his recent study of education and poverty reduction, Sayed (2008) identifies three developmental frameworks that can be applied to education, and suggests a new perspective for enhancing the most broadly recognized of them, that of human development. He suggests that approaches to educational policy be interpreted through one of the three developmental frameworks: a human capital approach; a human rights approach; or a human capability approach. All of which he suggests have their merits, but require a new perspective to take these approaches from policy to action.

2.2.1 The human capital approach

The human capital approach to education calls for investment in education to build the human capital necessary to drive economic growth, which is considered the primary focus of development. The idea is that a human with increased knowledge enhances his skills, which in turn is applied to increase productivity, and greater output results in economic growth (Sayed, 2008: 54). This emphasis on economic growth as development has dominated neoliberal and western approaches to development and resulted in a distinctly free-market slant to the human capital approach. However, to frustrate this approach, evidence from Saint Paul & Verdier (1993: 406) has shown that democratization and a widening of political rights is strongly correlated to economic growth too, suggesting that education is not the only means by which economic growth can be achieved. Furthermore, economic growth as a target of many third world development policies actually saw an increase in poverty and inequality in many developing countries during the 1980s (Preston, 1996: Green, 2008). Economic growth is not by itself a sufficient qualifier for development. A human capital approach makes a valuable contribution to development theory by stressing the significance of investment in education, but it is limited by its emphasis on economic growth as representative of development, an idea later critiqued by ul Haq (1994) in his promotion of the human development paradigm.

2.2.2 The human rights approach

The human rights approach to education is self-evidently focused upon the notion of the individual's right to access knowledge. It sees education as a fundamental human right which by itself adds value to human life through knowledge as an end in itself (Sayed, 2008: 55). By ensuring that someone has the right to access education, it is implied that education will inevitably result in the knowledgeable accessing of other vital services. In theory, knowledge affords one an understanding of the value of

health or other social services, giving impetus and capacity to address other human needs. The specifics of how this fundamental right is translated into practice, and whether education as a right actually results in the development of auxiliary services that enhance the overall opportunities of all people is a challenge. Questions to this effect are especially relevant given the progressive liberal rights entrenched in the Constitution of South Africa that have yet to materialize equitably.

Amartya Sen (2004) conceded the limits of a rights based approach as a result of criticisms around the imperfect realization of rights in legislation through shortcomings of institutionalization. Feasibility challenges around translating economic and social rights into real opportunities for people are also apparent. However, framing rights outside more than a legal framework, Sen has proposed a theory for development linked to people's freedoms, and a framework for development that has largely informed the human capability approach. Legal tools and institutions are a means of securing and protecting freedoms associated with these notions of development discussed below, but they are not by themselves sufficient means for achieving them (Green, 2008: 26).

2.2.3 The human capability approach

Linked closely to ul Haq's (1994) human development paradigm, the human capability approach frames development in terms of the creation of educational opportunities as part and parcel of a potentially infinite expansion of people's choices. Choices necessitate access to knowledge through education, but informed choices can be part of a personal or collective value attached to education. Economic growth is viewed as a common upshot of the holistic betterment of people, rather than a developmental end of education. To use ul Haq's (1994) summary explanation of the human development paradigm, "The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives". Education is therefore a key condition for growing human capabilities that often have synergistic effects related to opportunity and choice (Maile, 2008: 160).

Within this approach to development, there is an intrinsic value attached to education as a means of enabling a person access to knowledge to inform individual agency and improve his or her life as she sees fit. In his seminal work, *Development as Freedom,* Sen (1999) argues for education from the human capability approach because it increases the freedom of a person to consciously practice the life that he or she has reason to value. This approach views poverty as a capability deprivation related to lack of education, limiting an individual's ability to give meaning and value to his or her life without it (Sayed, 2008: 55-56). Education is seen as both an intrinsic right, but also a condition whereby increased productivity and economic growth are a likely spin-off of this condition, but not inevitable as this is linked to other interrelated freedoms.

Despite the advantages of using a human capability approach to education, Sayed (2008) acknowledges its limitations in terms of informing policy in South Africa. This is because of the unique circumstances under which South Africa's poverty originates, whereby certain geographic areas and groups were purposefully socially engineered to be underdeveloped to provide labour for the benefit of a minority under Apartheid.

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The result has been large groups of people and sections of the population, predominantly rural, excluded from access to a whole range of services and opportunities. Enduring rural poverty thereby contributes to the rapid urbanization of South Africa as people move to cities in search of opportunity. This migration has created a complex experience of social exclusion whereby urban areas also characterized by racial distinctions continue to receive migrants from rural areas, placing further strain on stretched urban infrastructure and services.

2.2.4 A social exclusion perspective

According to Sayed (2008: 56) there are considerable advantages to applying a social exclusion perspective to a human capabilities approach for addressing poverty, especially with regards to education. A social exclusion perspective understands poverty in terms of processes of marginalization and deprivation that have excluded people and groups of the opportunities and freedoms that Sen (1999) equates to development. This exclusion from education on account of enduring underdevelopment, poor quality of teaching, lack of capacity, and mismanagement (Chisholm, 2004) in especially rural areas, carries over to other dimensions of poverty and deprives groups of people the opportunity to expand upon their human capabilities. The interlocking nature of these inequalities frequently results in linked socio-economic effects that are evident in South Africa, especially with regards to the rural to urban migration trend of South Africans seeking opportunity and freedoms in metropolitan centres.

The social exclusion perspective of the human capabilities approach is especially appropriate for South Africa because of its differentiation of those that are included, and those that are excluded from education and therefore, development (Sayed, 2008: 56). The gross disparities in rural South Africa, especially in the areas of land that correspond to the former bantustans or homelands, are direct contributors to the incidence of urban poverty, concentrated in those formerly designated group areas around urban centres or adjacent to metropolitan areas. The areas of the 'included' compared to the 'excluded' are therefore quite easily identifiable along apartheid era localities and still correspond largely in terms of race.

The application of the social exclusion perspective to education is particularly useful because of how it applies group distinctions, in terms of those who are excluded, those who are included, and those who have the opportunities and resources to include. This allows for a group-based differentiation in terms of educational strategy for development and would include approaches to education which identify specific groups and their deprivation of human capabilities and targets appropriately (Sayed, 2008: 56). In South Africa this national developmental framework has not been applied to addressing educational disparities at any level. Although there are certainly existing aspects of the social exclusion perspective which are particularly appropriate across all levels of education, the focus of this research will be upon applying a social exclusion perspective to community engagement in HE through service-learning.

2.3 Notions of community, community development, and processes of inclusion

Before moving into further discussions of education and development, it is necessary to give conceptual clarification to community, and specifically community as it pertains to the social exclusion perspective of the human capability paradigm. This conceptualization of community proves useful throughout this text and provides a basis for understandings of community development which later informs the exploration of developmental outcomes amongst community partners of service-learning.

2.3.1 Defining community

Problems of defining community are not new, as community is a commonly used word that can be applied across contexts, and has developed a distinctly political slant in South Africa. Ironically, the former Mayor of Cape Town, Helen Zille, called upon the attendants of the first Conference on Community Engagement (2007: 15) to interrogate how the word is used politically, and herself used 'community' to make an implicit political point:

> "It is one of the most abused words in South Africa: primarily because two or three people get up in any context, without a mandate, self-appointed, call themselves 'the community', and act as a gatekeeper on any interaction with a particular group of people, in any particular area. So be careful of this concept of 'community' – it is the most abused gate-keeping word in South Africa."

Implicit political assertions aside, this statement provides a great example of how the concept 'community' can be used in any given context to support the assertions of a few. The conceptual pliability of this word is both one of its advantages, and an analytical challenge.

Bhattacharyya (2004: 7-8) provides one of the best explanations of this analytical challenge, noting that community development literature has previously fostered conceptual ambiguity by defining community with multiple and overlapping meanings, selectively applied across literature to suit the needs of the authors. He notes that definitions vary from explanations of community as a defined spatial area, to a local population or neighbourhood, and even a common psychological identification. These varying understandings of community again allow the concept to be used across various contexts as there can be a community of shack-dwellers in Joe Slovo informal settlement, or the community of the Bo-Kaap, or even a community of scholars strewn across HEIs the world over. Such inclusive understandings of community are not necessarily inappropriate; however it is important that community has a standard conceptualization to ensure that there is a common understanding as to what the word is referring to.

Geographical associations of community have been rapidly undermined by technology as well as post-industrial modes of travel and communication across communities. Groups that have no geographical attachments also organize and

mobilize themselves around common values or interests, such as online groups or virtual communities on social networking sites. Nevertheless, from Zille's statement and Bhattacharyya's explanation of the varying applications of community it is clear there are still often made spatial associations with community on the ground. Thus, "a broader concept of community would not prevent us from seeing or developing community where place retains its significance, while freeing us to focus on the widest range of communities" (Bhattacharyya, 2004: 12). Bhattacharyya proposes the encompassing notion of solidarity for such a conceptualization of community, as it distinguishes groups by a shared identity or norms and values, allowing broad application, including spatial identifications, and maintains conceptual coherence.

Understanding community as solidarity gives it a meaning that is distinct from all other forms of social relations, while also freeing its application across areas that share no spatial commonalities. As Bradshaw (2008:13) explains, an important facet of this conceptualization of community is that it becomes an inclusive concept, rather than an "either-or" place-based understanding. By assigning spatial limitations to the definition, the concept is made into an absolute community of which one is either in or out. However, the notion of solidarity expands this understanding to include new and dynamic forms of social relations that allows for recognizing groups based upon degrees of community. In their measure of community, Brown, Xu, Barfield, and King (2000) established that community can be operationalized in terms of how much community one has.

Degrees of community may seem problematic because where any social tie exists the argument can be made that there is some degree of community. Such reasoning makes human beings potentially part of all possibilities of community, ranging from the locally based to the global community. Although this makes community's manifestations seemingly infinite, it is not necessarily problematic. Degrees of community can be measured through community attachments across ever-broadening identifiers or norms depending upon the scope of the perspective, as well as degrees of satisfaction with the community to which one is attached (Brown *et al*, 2000). Thus, this understanding of community lends itself across all contexts while maintaining conceptual coherence.

2.3.2 Defining development and community development

With a clear conceptualization of community, defining community development for this study is a prerequisite for understanding what is meant by developmental outcomes. Furthermore, community development serves an important conceptual base for applying the social exclusion perspective to HE.

Bhattacharyya explains development in terms of agency, or "the capacity of people to order their world, the capacity to create, reproduce, change, and live according to their own meaning systems, to have the powers to define themselves as opposed to being defined by others" (de Certeau, 1986; Giddens, 1984 cited in Bhattacharrya, 2004: 12). This notion is roughly equivalent to Sen's (1999) conceptualization of development as freedom, and aligns itself well to the human capability framework. Agency is essentially the equivalent of the creation and expansion of people's opportunities and capabilities in their lives. By this understanding, any agency-

promoting activity can be understood as a kind of development (Bhattacharyya, 2004: 14).

Community development can thus be understood as the promotion of relations between people that are characterized by increasing levels of solidarity and agency (Bhattacharyya, 2004: 14). Inseparable from this are the principles of self-help, felt needs, and participation. Self-help entails the altering of conditions whereby individuals or groups are enabled enough agency to address their own deprivations. This is closely linked to felt needs, whereby the group involved prioritizes its own needs, so that the agency promoting activities are authentically demand-based in terms of the desires of the target community. Participation integrates these two principles through growing agency around specific demands for change which include the community as equal partners in setting the development agenda (Bhattacharyya, 2004: 14-15). Through these three related principles, individuals, groups, and institutions are able to promote solidarity while expanding collective opportunities for development.

With such an understanding of community development, poverty is understood in terms of a process of exclusion from these relations and choices available to people, or a deprivation from the opportunity to address needs (Sen, 1999). In this sense, community development aligns well to the social exclusion perspective of the human capability approach because community development is a process of inclusion whereby social relations are increased and strengthened while there is concurrent expansion of choices and opportunities as interconnected to these relations. This notion of communities of inclusion is later applied to the local experience of service-learning as community engagement.

2.4 Transforming HE in relation to community needs

One of the greatest challenges of South Africa's democratic transition has been how to transform the existing racialized and fragmented system of education into a single, equitable, nationally coordinated HE system facilitating the national goals of reconstruction and development, as mandated (GNU, 1994: DoE, 1997: DoE, 2001). Such a transformational challenge has been exacerbated by the dysfunction of the inherited educational system, its chronic underdevelopment and capacity shortages, as well as the widespread distrust of state education, amongst others. Combined with additional considerations of the distinct needs of Primary and Secondary educational reform and (re)construction, and their systemic alignment to HE, the transformation of South Africa's collective educational system has proved a near insurmountable task.

Issues of transformation in HE have recently come to national attention as a result of the Reitz Residence scandal at the University of the Free State and the subsequent report on transformation and social cohesion (DoE, 2008). One key function of HE with the transformational potential for reconstruction and development has been noticeably absent in these discussions, that of community engagement. Focus has instead been upon the social experience of HE and the more commonly addressed institutional functions of teaching and learning, and research, where issues of racism, sexism, discrimination, throughput, dropouts, publications, retentions, governance, etc, have received the attention. Sadly, the core function of community engagement,

arguably the function with the greatest developmental and transformational potential both inside of and outside of the institution, has been absent from these discussions. The result is a HE system that has not taken stock of the transformational changes that have taken place with regards to community engagement, nor its impact on local community development.

According to Linda Chisholm (2004: 202), when examining transformation of the collective educational system in South Africa, distinctions need to be made between attempts to rectify imbalances of the past, actual changes in the educational system, and the explanations for the broader emerging pattern. Transformation in HE requires such distinctions, but should not be limited to the implications for only teaching and learning, and research, but community engagement as well. Although the role of community engagement in local development may begin with the institution itself, participants outside of the institution or potential secondary beneficiaries are a pre-requisite.

In order to understand the role of community engagement in attempts to reconcile the imbalances of the past, one must begin with the HE policy documents outlined by the government to provide an outline for rectification and reform down to actions. Policy therefore serves as key area for analysis. The results of these policies for community engagement and the subsequent actions taken are the actual changes experienced in the process of implementing these policies. The outcomes and emerging trends in HE are the intended and unintended outcomes of such educational reform, and are critical to our examination of the role of community engagement in local community development.

2.5   Government policy and transformation in HE

The very complex and ongoing process of transformation of South African HE, has yielded various policy documents that make explicit the intended developmental role of education in the post-apartheid state as a means of rectifying past imbalances. Examination of past and current policy as it pertains to community engagement provides an opportunity for understanding transformation of the education system as it pertains to reconstruction and development. However, policy itself does not necessarily result in compliance, nor the achievement of intended outcomes. Nevertheless, it does provide a starting point for analysis as it is likely to outline the ideal, and provide a base from which to track the progress and challenges of educational reform.

2.5.1   The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

To understand the current state of community engagement in South African HE, one must go back to the first policy documents of the transitional government as they gave direction to all future policy documents and later white papers. The origins of much of post-apartheid education and development policy can be found in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) White Paper of 1994. Although the Reconstruction and Development Programme was not an educational policy document, it provided the policy framework for the Government of National Unity's

(GNU) approach to addressing the socio-economic challenges facing the country and called for a combined and coordinated effort from all sectors of society and state through the RDP as "an integrated and coherent growth and development strategy" (GNU, 1994: 1). This commitment to government-led, people-centred development also provided the policy methodology and strategy for subsequent White Papers.

The breadth of the RDP White Paper was wide as it laid the foundational values and vision for all future state structures. It suggested "the building of a democractic, non-racial, and non-sexist future" was possible through the mobilization of all South Africans and resources towards the eradication of apartheid's remnants and an integrated process of transformation. This was to be done by the development of "strong and stable democratic institutions" characterized by mass participation and representation. A prosperous, non-racial society was to be achieved through "sustainable and environmentally friendly growth" that matched socio-economic vision with a "moral and ethical development of society" (GNU, 1994: 4). Clear values and priorities were identified. However, the RDP had little to offer as to how it would achieve these ideals.

All encompassing in its scope, the RDP White Paper of 1994 made various references to education and the development of human resources as part and parcel of an integrated process of societal transformation. Specifically, "The RDP deals with education from primary to tertiary level and from child care to advanced scientific and technological training", with the notion of "life-long learning" through "a broad view of education and training" across all areas of the society, and with special focus on the need to address past gender and racial inequities. However, education was one of the few areas where the RDP even suggested future techniques and programmes aimed at rectifying past inequities, "with emphasis on affirmative action throughout the RDP, we will unlock boundless energies and creativities suppressed by racism and discrimination" (GNU, 1994: 6). While some general educational programmes were identified, such as the national literacy programme, there was not specific mention of how the RDP would be applied to HE.

A clear moral and social compass for future policy documents, the RDP White Paper of 1994 set out the values and direction of subsequent policy documents on education. The implications for HE were not specified, but it was a definitive precursor to *Education White Paper 3- A programme for Higher Education Transformation.* Although later undermined by the state's neo-liberal economic policy shift towards Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), the RDP's socially-progressive values continue to inform policy (Saul, 2005 in Maile, 2008: 14) and provide the mandate for the transformation of HE.

2.5.2   The National Commission on Higher Education

The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was created in 1994 by presidential proclamation to oversee the transformation of HE in South Africa. Central to the larger government vision of HE, was a National Qualifications Framework recommended by the NCHE, recognizing a single system of certification from pre-primary to tertiary level (Reddy, 2004: 34). After two years, the commission authored *A Framework for Transformation*, a report submitted in 1996 which set out the three policy-pillars of forthcoming legislation and reform: increased participation

to satisfy the need of equity, redress, and development; greater responsiveness to the needs and challenges of the societal context; and increased cooperation and partnerships to promote a consensus based cooperative governance (CHE, 2004: 25). These three policy-pillars closely follow the RDP and made the recommendations necessary for the then newly formed Department of Education to take up responsibility for the creation of a national tertiary education policy framework.

The policy pillars can also be seen as having a formative influence on the budding role of community engagement at HEIs. Of particular interest are the second and third policy pillars of responsiveness and partnerships in governance, referring to the need for HEIs to engage with broader societal issues as well as consult and include external groups and stakeholders. Reddy (2004: 36) explains that this policy position specifically called for engagement with societal problems through HE pedagogy, course content and programmes, to meet the needs of a developing African state aimed at overcoming a period of oppression and racial discrimination. The NCHE called for partnerships specifically, to inform governance and better include "stakeholders" outside of the state and HEIs. In this way, these policy pillars played a crucial role in giving impetus to more engaged and relevant universities.

2.5.3 Education White Paper 3 – A programme for Higher Education

Following the Green Paper on Higher Education (1996), and the Draft White Paper on Higher Education (1997), the transformative policy document of HE, *Education White Paper 3* receives wide recognition for its call for a nationally coordinated HE system to serve a central developmental role in South African society (Lazarus *et al*, 2008; Osman & Attwood, 2007; Lazarus, 2007; Fourie, 2003; Waghid, 2002; Lazarus, 2001). This document provided much of the policy groundwork for the reform and reconstruction of HE and orientated institutions towards broader national civic values and goals in the process.

Then serving Minister of Education, Prof SME Bengu, introduced the *Education White Paper 3- A programme for Higher Education*:

> "The White Paper outlines the framework for change, that is, the higher education system must be planned, governed and funded as a single national co-ordinated system. This will enable us to overcome the fragmentation, inequality and inefficiency which are the legacy of the past, and create a learning society which releases the creative and intellectual energies of all our people towards meeting the goals of reconstruction and development" (DoE, 1997: 3).

Acknowledging the role of HE in rectifying the enduring inequities of Apartheid, the White Paper states, "Higher education equips individuals to make the best use of their talents and of the opportunities offered by society for self-fulfilment. It is thus a key allocator of life chances an important vehicle for achieving equity in the distribution of opportunity and achievement among South African citizens" (DoE, 1997: 7). HE is thereby identified as central to the achievement of equity and distribution of opportunity, a means of societal transformation embedded within this institution of state. The Department of Education (DoE) recognized that HE serves as the highest level of the national educational system with the potential to make the best use of an

individual's natural abilities, and in the process allocate life chances to future generations. This proves critical in the rectification of past imbalances so that inequities are not perpetuated across generations and into the post-apartheid era.

The notion of equity in access through the reconstruction of the HE system so as to reflect the diverse needs and backgrounds of all potential beneficiaries is clearly addressed. The White Paper states its commitment to "ensuring that the composition of the student body progressively reflects the demographic realities of the broader society" (DoE, 1997: 21). This is proposed through a system and educational culture which "accommodate the varying backgrounds, needs, interests and abilities of the student body of the future" (DoE, 1997: 17). But the document does not stop at access, requiring more than just the goal of equity in input, but in expansion and broader development of the HE system to ensure that access results in outcomes. The DoE even proposed that "public funds earmarked for achieving redress and equity must be linked to measurable progress toward improving quality and reducing the high drop-out and repetition rates" (DoE, 1997: 22). Although there have been clear shortcomings with regards to both access and dropout (Letseka & Breier, 2008), the policy makes specific consideration towards outcomes, and not only access.

In line with the RDP policy framework, the White Paper states HE institutions will "contribute to and support the process of societal transformation outlined in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), with its compelling vision of people-driven development leading to the building of a better quality of life for all" (DoE, 1997: 7). It also states, HE will "contribute to the common good of society through the production, acquisition and application of knowledge, the building of human capacity, and the provision of lifelong learning opportunities" (DoE, 1997: 12). These expectations for HE are a clear product and direct reference to the people-centred development framework of the RDP. The White Paper identifies HE as playing a crucial role in the production of a capacitated workforce as it will "enable them to realise their potential, and contribute the necessary range and quality of knowledge, insight, skill and capability to the development and reconstruction of our country" (DoE, 1997: 17). It is clear that HE is one means of achieving those capabilities requisite for the development and reconstruction of South African society and it positions HE clearly as a developmental agent.

The White Paper goes one-step further than stating that it is the responsibility of HE to foster and develop the potential capacities of the nation equitably, it is also the job of HE to instil relevant and socially conscious skills and orientations for the South African society. The White Paper specifically suggests community service programmes for students to foster social responsibility and awareness, while promoting social and economic development (DoE, 1997: 14). Community service is specifically targeted for further feasibility studies and pilot programmes amongst other potential initiatives (DoE, 1997: 24). This provision specifically led to direct support for further community engagement initiatives and capacity-building programmes such as the CHESP initiative (Lazarus, 2007: 91; Lazarus *et al*, 2008), to be discussed at length later.

2.5.4 Higher Education Act of 1997

The Higher Education Act of 1997 gives formal recognition to HEIs of the post-apartheid state through a legislative framework that defines HEIs and sets out the structure of the new tertiary education system. Specifically, the Act put structures in place for the state to oversee the successful functioning of HE in South Africa. 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).

The Act is the document that officially recognized the new South African higher education system. While it did not go any further in expanding the role of HEIs with regards to development as did the White Paper of 1997, the Act states that within the new system of HE it should be desirable to: "…RESTRUCTURE AND TRANSFORM programmes and institutions to respond better to the human resource, economic and development needs of the Republic; REDRESS past discrimination and ensure representivity and equal access…"(RSA, 1997: 2) through the structure and legislative framework of the new HE system. The Act clearly aims for the new system of HE to be conducive to addressing the developmental needs of the state and South African society by addressing enduring social inequalities and exclusion from societal structures enabling the expansion of people's opportunities.

The *Higher Education Act* has subsequently been amended a number of times on almost a yearly basis to reflect the dynamic changes taking place in HEI. Most importantly, the *Higher Education Act* sets out a structural framework for the functioning HE, and is followed with a *National Plan,* which elaborates a set of strategic objectives, benchmarks, and an operational time frame for progress towards transformation (CHE, 2004: 36). Following years of policy documents and discussions around the transformation of HE, the *National Plan* is the first document to set out specific goals and tangible objectives towards transformation.

2.5.5 National Plan for Higher Education of 2001

The National Plan for Higher Education seeks to give effect to the vision of *Education White Paper 3* and the *Higher Education Act* through an implementation framework and necessary interventions for the transformation of HEIs. The document aims to provide achievable goals with deadlines for implementation to make transformation substantially more than just a paper exercise, as it had been previously (Jansen, 2002). The *National Plan* specifically espouses the state's intention to reposition tertiary education as a "key engine driving and contributing to the reconstruction and development of South Africa" (DoE, 2001: 4), a tacit acknowledgement that the

existing course was not in line with the vision of *Education White Paper 3*. Amongst the areas of concern, the document indicates the shortcomings of the early incremental policy approach towards transforming HEIs as there failed to be any regulatory instruments to ensure adherence to the policy frameworks accepted nationally, or monitor transformation. Various institutions had allowed even greater inequities to arise through the positioning and seizure of market opportunities by previously advantaged institutions, while other institutions were unable to respond with successful coping strategies. Those previously advantaged institutions saw African and female student enrolments increase considerably, while previously disadvantaged institutions saw an overall decline (CHE, 2004: 27), necessitating a coordinated response from the state.

Since re-committing itself to the comprehensive reform agenda outlined in the *Education White Paper 3*, government sought to create a document that is the first to create accountable time frames for which to deliver upon. It is a reflection of HE's responsibility and commitment to create real opportunities for social advancement, specifically in the areas of research, teaching and learning, and community service programmes for the economic and social development of South Africa (CHE, 2001; 8). This failure of the previous policy documents to result in any tangible outcomes is a point highlighted by Chisholm (2004) in her overall analyses of the South African educational system.

Some key points and outcomes identified as a result of the document included the following:

- The size and shape of HEIs is addressed, with specific goals set for participation and throughput rates, ratio enrolments across subject areas, with student and staff equity targets;
- the need to expand diversity of institutional mission, and better differentiate programmes in order to ensure relevance and alignment to national priorities;
- the need for a consolidation of HEIs that reduces the number of institutions, but maintains the delivery sites and the creation of National Institutes to facilitate this process in some areas;
- building of research capacity through a new approach to funding and accountability in outputs (CHE, 2004: 28-29).

The *National Plan* is generally well received as it is the first document to outline specific objectives and an implementation plan, complete with time frames (even if overly ambitious). However, the document did raise serious questions with regards to the issue of educational efficiency, as critics claim such an emphasis is taking precedence over expanding participation rates and equity of access, and in the process undermining the quality of HEI in order to emphasize throughput (Lazarus, 2001: 2).

The *National Plan* is further criticized as it exemplifies a heavier-hand on the part of the state, and an intention to make use of regulatory powers in the absence of sufficient institutional transformation (CHE, 2004: 29). Furthermore, the *National Plan* neglects to put forth any tangible strategies or time frames to operationalize community engagement as a developmental function of HEIs. There is no discussion on institutional reform as it pertains to community engagement and specifically

service-learning (Lategan, 2005: 101). With the emphasis primarily upon issues of teaching and learning, and research, the core function is overlooked and the qualitative and transformational potential of community engagement is largely ignored.

2.6 The implications of policy on the state of community engagement

The various policy documents make provision for HE to play an integral role in reconstruction and development. *Education White Paper 3* (DoE, 1997) clearly identifies community engagement (previously in the form of community service) as a function of all HEIs that has the potential to link institutional capacities to national and local development priorities through service programmes outside of the institution. These documents make clear the envisioned role of HEIs as that of developmental agents, based within a responsive local context, linked to national priorities. Transcending the functions of teaching and learning, and research, HEIs are expected to contribute to national development in local communities by making available their capacities and infrastructure through community engagement initiatives (Thomson *et al*, 2008; 11).

These national policies frame community engagement as part of a developmental agenda that is well formulated in terms of the human capability approach. Where these policies provide strategy and direction for institutional functioning, they lack a specific strategy or applied approach for addressing national, or local, forms of poverty, leaving broad room for interpretation at HEIs. As a result, there is a certain degree of free reign that HEIs have in giving effect to these policies through their respective missions and institutional policies. A developmental framework that informs strategy and can be equally applied at the local as well as national level is currently missing. Fortunately, in absence of a national developmental strategy around community engagement, the Joint Education Trust (JET), with the support of external donors, began addressing this absence through a national initiative to bring community engagement and service-learning to the fore nearly a decade ago.

The next chapter discusses the role of community engagement as a core function of HEIs. It reviews the accomplishments of the CHESP initiative and provides a national context for community engagement before discussing models and trends of community engagement in HE.

Chapter 3 – Community engagement in HE

3.1 Introduction

The policy mandate for HE's contribution to reconstruction and development is clear. Yet, one is reminded of Chisholm's (2004) distinctions when examining educational transformation. Policy does not necessarily result in practice, especially in absence of specific strategies to carry them out. The aforementioned policies were put in place stating that HEIs should become more responsive to their socio-economic realities, yet there were no tangible plans or strategies as to how community engagement as a core function might do so. More critically, there was no provision of enabling material support from government to HEIs to foster such responsiveness or to incentivise engagement (Castle & Osman, 2003; Fourie, 2003; Thomson *et al*, 2008). This critical lack of support for community engagement as a core function left a considerable vacuum between government policy and practice at HEIs.

Fortunately, the gap between policy and the practice of community engagement at HEIs was not left vacant. The policy positions of government on community engagement's contribution to reconstruction and development were soon translated into activities with the assistance of international support. Enabled through international funding, international experience was brought to SA to build capacity, linking to a committed and engaged community of SA scholars, and involving the relevant national stakeholders. Over the course of ten years, the combined efforts of the Joint Education Trust (JET) and the Community-Higher Education-Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative were able to make a bridge from policy to practice and fund efforts to build capacity and establish institutional support for community engagement in HE.

3.2   JET / CHESP initiatives

Moving from policy to action by examining the existing state of community engagement initiatives at HEIs, the Community Service in Higher Education Project (not yet CHESP) began in 1997 following a grant from the Ford Foundation to the Joint Education Trust (JET) for completion of an audit of community service in SA HEIs. An expression of the *Education White Paper 3*'s call for pilot programmes in community service, The Community Service in Higher Education Project began with three aims: to promote public debate on community service; to assist different stakeholders to develop their respective policy positions with regard to community service; and to strengthen existing community service projects and stimulate the development of new ones (Perold, 1998: 5).

The audit and work around this initiative was concentrated in two papers by Perold and Omar (1997) and Perold (1998). The main conclusions of these works were later summarized:

- Most HEIs included community service in their mission statements;
- few HEIs had an explicit policy or strategy to operationalize this component of their mission statement;
- most HEIs had a wide range of community service projects;
- generally these projects were initiated by innovative academic staff and students and not as a deliberate institutional strategy and certainly not as a core function of the academy;
- few projects embraced all three core functions of HEIs;
- few projects embraced partnerships with communities or service organizations in their conceptualization and implementation;
- where genuine partnerships had developed in initiatives involving the three core functions of HEIs, benefits to all parties had been significant (JET, 2000: 3).

The audits prompted reflection and more consideration towards community engagement in HEIs and these initial findings encouraged the Ford Foundation to make another grant to the Joint Education Trust, from which came the Community-Higher Education- Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative in 1998 (Lazarus, 2007: 92).

The most significant manifestation of the White Paper of 1997's call for "feasibility studies and pilot programmes which explore the potential of community service" (DoE, 1997: 23), CHESP sought to build on the findings of the previous audits and concept paper. The initiative worked in collaboration with the Department of Education, the South African Qualifications Authority, and later the HE Quality Committee of the CHE upon its inception, consulting and collaborating with the national HE stakeholders wherever possible. Well informed of the national context, CHESP set out specific operational objectives that aimed to embed Community Engagement in South African HE, including: support for pilot programmes in community engagement at HEIs; monitoring, evaluating, and producing research on community engagement programmes; use of research findings to inform policy and practice at all levels (Lazarus *et al*, 2008: 58-59).

These objectives were furthered by complementing operational strategy that better positioned CHESP to promote Community Engagement at HEIs, including grant-making of funds for projects; capacity-building for community engagement at various levels in HEIs; monitoring, evaluation, and research on pilot and existing programmes; advocacy to inform policy and practice; as well as a resource and information service. From these strategies, CHESP could take the lessons learnt from the pilot programmes to inform building capacity nationally. Programmes were specifically designed so that the experience could inform national policies with the expectation that this would contribute to a proliferation in community engagement activities (Lazarus *et al*, 2008; 59). The intended result being that CHESP serve as an initiative fostering community engagement activities and stimulating policies until an environment was created that was conducive to 'growing its own timber' in terms for community engagement.

Nationally, CHESP facilitated important dialogue across various spheres of governance for HEIs. Both the South African Qualitifications Authority (SAQA) and the South African Universities Vice Chancellors Association (SAUVCA) held meetings on the purpose and direction of Community Engagement in South African HEIs in 2000, with SAQA establishing a Task Group and SAUVCA engaged extensively on the issue of it in a meeting of Vice Chancellors. This meeting is of significance as it established the top leadership of South Africa's HEIs position on community service in HE as the following:

- Community service should be part of an education for good citizenship and balance to the tendency towards an education for the marketplace pervasive at many HEIs;
- all HEIs should engage in reconstruction and development as an integral component of the three core functions;
- engagement should be encouraged and supported to the best of an institutions capabilities and be part of an integrated approach rather than an add-on compliance;
- in order to achieve reconstruction and development HEIs need to shift towards a paradigm of a scholarship of engagement;
- the challenges of transformation of HEIs provides an opportunity to reposition service as a core function (JET, 2000: 4-5).

Questions as to how to best integrate into a scholarship paradigm dominated by rewards for teaching and research proved more difficult, but it was determined that a means of promoting, supporting, and rewarding a scholarship of community engagement nationally was imperative to embedding community engagement at HEIs. Despite resource constraints, suggestions including the establishment of guidelines for "good practice", further development of pilot projects, and the convening of a national conference all proved useful to giving direction to community engagement nationally. The support from Vice Chancellors across HEIs proved vital towards advancing community engagement as a national tertiary education priority.

Within a year of the meeting of SAQA and SAUVCA a significant formalization of community engagement at HEIs took place with the official recognition of "knowledge based community service" in the Higher Education Quality Committee founding document (HEQC, 2001: 9). Recognition that:

> "The central objective of the HEQC is to ensure that providers effectively and efficiently deliver education, training, research and community service which are of high quality and which produce socially useful and enriching knowledge as well as a relevant range of graduate skills and competencies necessary for social and economic progress" (HEQC, 2001: 6).

The Vision and Mission statement make explicit that "community service", still a pre-cursor to the notion of community engagement, is a core function of South African HEIs. This was later reinforced by references to community engagement and service-learning specifically in institutional audit and programme accreditation criteria produced by the HEQC in 2004. By identifying service-learning specifically as a recognized academic programme and by evaluating it as part and parcel of an

assessment of community engagement as a core function, HEIs were finally made accountable towards delivering on the White Paper 3's mandate towards the transformation of HEIs in relation to local and national developmental needs. Institutional audit and programme accreditation documents included the following on community engagement and service-learning:

"Criteria for Institutional Audits

CRITERION 7
The administration of academic programmes is conducted within the framework of an effective programme management system. Responsibility and lines of accountability are clearly allocated. Management information systems are used to record and disseminate information about the programme, as well as to facilitate review and improvement. In order to meet this criterion, the following are examples of what would be expected:

In the case of institutions with service learning as part of their mission:

- Service learning programmes which are integrated into institutional and academic planning, as part of the institution's mission and strategic goals;

- Adequate resources and enabling mechanisms (including incentives) to support the implementation of service learning, including staff and student capacity development; and

- Review and monitoring arrangements to gauge the impact and outcomes of service learning programmes on the institution, as well as on other participating constituencies" (HEQC, 2004a: 11).

....

"2.2.3 Community engagement

Where community engagement is discharged through a range of activities, including service learning, quality considerations for institutional engagement with the local and broader community should be formalised within an institution's quality management policies and procedures. These arrangements should be linked to teaching and learning and research, where possible, and given effect through the allocation of adequate resources and institutional recognition.

CRITERION 18

Quality-related arrangements for community engagement are formalised and integrated with those for teaching and learning, where appropriate, and are adequately resourced and monitored.

In order to meet this criterion, the following are examples of what would be expected:

(i) Policies and procedures for the quality management of community engagement.
(ii) Integration of policies and procedures for community engagement with those for teaching and learning and research, where appropriate.
(iii) Adequate resources allocated to facilitate quality delivery in community engagement.
(iv) Regular review of the effectiveness of quality-related arrangements for community engagement" (HEQC, 2004a: 19).

Following the auditing criteria, service-learning is specifically identified within the criteria for programme accreditation listed by the HEQC (2004b):

"3.1.1 Programme design

CRITERION 1

The programme is consonant with the institution's mission, forms part of institutional planning and resource allocation, meets national requirements, the needs of students and other stakeholders, and is intellectually credible. It is designed coherently and articulates well with other relevant programmes, where possible…

In the case of institutions with service learning as part of their mission:

- Service learning programmes are integrated into institutional and academic planning, as part of the institution's mission and strategic goals.

- Enabling mechanisms (which may include incentives) are in place to support the implementation of service learning, including staff and student capacity development" (HEQC, 2004b; 7-8).

The inclusion of community engagement and service-learning throughout key auditing and accreditation documents have ensured that HEIs are consistently assessed upon community engagement, maintain a certain quality of output, and are given feedback at the national level. The CHESP initiative played a vital role in embedding community engagement within these national policy documents that facilitated specific action in this regard, but they are only part of the actions CHESP encouraged on community engagement. The specific achievements that CHESP contributed to or was directly responsible for are identified by Lazarus (2007: 98):

- Three publications including: *Service-Learning in the Curriculum: A Resource for Higher Education Institutions; A Good Practice guide* and *Self-evaluation Instruments for Managing the Quality of Service-Learning;* and *Service-Learning in the disciplines- Lessons from the field* (HEQC, 2006a: 2006b: 2008);

- contributed to a chapter in the CHE's 2001 Annual Report on the State of Higher Education in South Africa on community service and another chapter on community engagement in the 2004 CHE report to Parliament on the *State of Higher Education under Ten Years of Democracy* (CHE, 2004);
- drafted policy guidelines for Community Engagement for the National Department of Education (DoE, 2001);
- co-hosted the first ever national conference on Community Engagement in Higher Education in 2006 (HEQC, 2007);
- delivered service-learning capacity building programmes and regional seminars across the country throughout 2005 (HEQC, 2006b).

Studies of CHESP's contribution to community engagement and service-learning have identified overwhelmingly positive outcomes (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005; Lazarus, 2007; Lazarus *et al*, 2008). In Mouton and Wildschut's (2007) impact assessment of the CHESP initiative, they identified various levels of CHESP's impact and benefit, including at programmatic or course level, at the institutional level, as well as at the level of a national academic community of service-learning scholars. Across each level Mouton and Wildschut detailed extensive benefits for students, staff, and institutions involved in service-learning, while conceding there were certainly some constraining factors. However, of particular relevance is that in the evaluation of CHESP's impact and overall benefit, whereas service-learning provided benefits for academics across six clearly identified areas, and across two beneficial areas for students, Mouton and Wildschut could not find enough data to support conclusions of generalized benefit for the communities involved in the service-learning CHESP projects (2007: 5), nor did they distinguish between benefits for partner organizations or communities. While some examples of anecdotal benefits in the form of increased knowledge, improved work conditions, and access to municipal services were noted, there was yet again a question mark left with regards to community and partner organization benefit, echoing the findings of their previous evaluation of service-learning pilot programmes under the CHESP initiative (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005).

3.3 Community engagement at HEIs

As the policy documents and research has shown, community engagement in HE is a core function of South Africa HEIs, along with teaching and learning, and research, and has empirically supported benefits across SA HEIs. Community engagement has a clear developmental mandate (GNU, 1994; DoE, 1997; RSA, 1997; DoE, 2001) and is closely linked to the transformation of HE, as part and parcel of the national agenda for societal reconstruction and development. Relating local community development priorities to HE through community engagement grounds HEIs within a local context in which national developmental imperatives can be advanced, making tertiary institutions more relevant to the communities in which they are situated. Broad-based recognition of community engagement as a core function of HEIs thereby expands the role of the university to advance national social development and transformation agendas locally.

The Framework for Institutional Audits used to evaluate all South African HEIs defines community engagement as:

> 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) (HEQC, 2006d; 16).

SA HEIs are responsible for giving effect to community engagement as a core function and they are audited to determine if they do so consistent with good practice measures. However, the reality is that all tertiary institutions vary considerably as to how they locate and give effect to community engagement, whether they are informed by a specific reference of mission statement, whether they organize community engagement through a specific administrative division, or whether they are based in a practically-orientated service organization within the institution. There are a variety of approaches to, and means of organizing, community engagement in SA HEIs as a form of knowledge production (Sattar & Badat, 2007; Nduna, 2006).

Following the national conference on Community Engagement in Higher Education (CHE, 2007), Bender (2008) identified three models for community engagement in HE that conceptualize how community engagement is applied as a core function of the tertiary institution. They include: the Silo Model; the Intersecting Model; and the Infusion Model; all of which provide examples of various institutional approaches to community engagement.

Figure 3.1- The Silo Model of community engagement

(Bender, 2008; 88)

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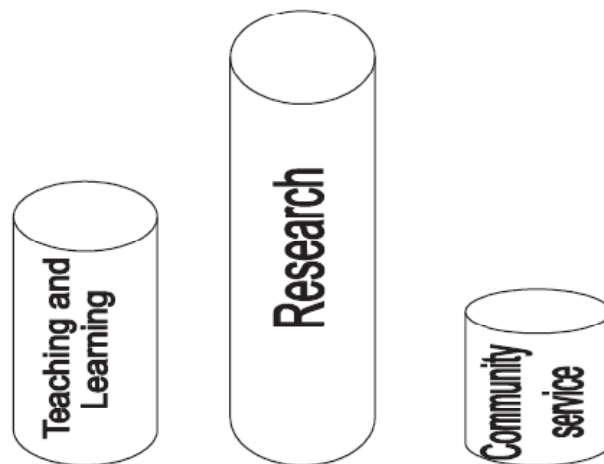
3.3.1 The Silo Model of community engagement

The silo model for community engagement is the original or "traditional" model in which the three core functions of HEIs, teaching and learning, research, and community service are conceptualized. In this model, the differing sizes of the silos represent the institutional priority attached to each of the functions and the functions occupy separate silos as they are organized and implemented independent of each other. It suggests that the core functions operate in institutional isolation of each other and that they are organized around the given institution's priorities. Although this model allows for institutions to themselves determine the priorities of their core functions, the current representation is a generalized one indicating community service as a lesser priority of the core functions, a finding that Burton has claimed is widespread (1998 in Bender, 2008: 87), despite its wide recognition as a core institutional function.

There are important distinctions within this model that are problematic, prompting criticisms and spawning other conceptual models. The phrasing of community service, as opposed to references of 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 these functions are all 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 (Bender, 2008; 87).

Figure 3.2 The Intersecting Model of community engagement

 (Adapted from Bringle, Games, and Malloy, 1999 in Bender, 2008: 89; HEQC, 2006: 12; Lazarus *et al*, 2008: 61)

3.3.2 The Intersecting Model of community engagement

The second model of community engagement identified assumes the three core functions of HEIs all engage in activities outside of the institution. It represents three well established engagements with the "community" and locates specific activities

within these already established functions of teaching and learning, research and service. The distinction of service is still made and engagement only occurs when those core functions are applied in the context of the "community". Despite the ambiguity of "community" in this model, it provides a conceptual grounding for a typology of community engagement at SA HEIs (HEQC, 2006a; Lazarus *et al*, 2008). Claims that various well-established activities that have been widely practiced as core work of the institution (such as scholarly publications, research reports, public forums, etc) are already contributions to broader notions of community are provided for, with more specific recognition of those types of activities deemed to be community engagement (service-learning, volunteerism, community-based research, etc) (Bender, 2008: 88).

The distinguishing feature of this model is that it suggests HEIs have always been, and are continuing to be, involved with communities through existing activities. The implication is that HEIs already integrate various functions in community engagement and they therefore 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 of emphasis in the various functions. However, the conscious efforts to which the CHESP initiative laboured to embed community engagement in HE is evidence that although community service already existed, it did not have institutional strategies to operationalize it (Lazarus, 2007). Perold and Omar's (Perold, 1997; 1998) findings on the prevalence of community service would suggests that some engagement with community was almost always present.

Bender (2008) questions the extent to which social responsibility is consciously embraced and nurtured in this model. She argues that while 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 community as a result of the existence of the university, and does not critically engage with the approach to the existing activities and community involvement, but merely acknowledges and assumes they are there. Such an approach neglects both the implications of power relations (Osman & Attwood, 2007) as well as the potential to effect outcomes of social justice through community engagement (Mitchell & Humphries, 2007). Bender (2008) 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.

3.3.2.1 A shift in the discourse from service to engagement

An overall shift from the terminology of community service (DoE, 1997: HEQC, 2001) to community engagement (HEQC, 2004a: 2004b: 2004c) in policy and governance documents gave impetus for scholars to make the same move, and an *Acta Academia Supplementum* dedicated to service-learning, as a type of community engagement, was released in 2005, contributing to the broader recognition of community engagement amongst academics. Interestingly, this change in South Africa preceded a widespread move in the American model towards community

engagement, rather than community service, as part of institutional mission, culture, and commitment, and was broadly acknowledged following the Carnegie Foundation's classification of community engagement for American HEIs in 2005 (Driscoll, 2008).

Community engagement suggests a more mutual and reciprocal relationship between HEIs and the communities in which they are situated and amongst, and is a shift away from some of the paternalistic relations of the past. In SA, service is a very much contested term with a racialized history that cannot be divorced from the varying manifestations of servitude previously widespread under the codifications of apartheid. Service therefore implies a deeply unequal relationship in the South African context, making it a loaded term that is associated with inequalities of the past. The mutuality of "engagement" is more in line with the developmental intentions of the state for HEIs and reflects broader democratic values as it suggests reciprocity (Thomson *et al*, 2008; 15).

In this sense, the Silo Model represents the "traditional" limited understanding of community engagement that saw service as a unidirectional end in itself, rather than as a mutual means of deepening knowledge production and relating the academy to the complex social issues giving rise to developmental challenges. Whereas the Intersecting Model fails to challenge any already established notions of service, research, or teaching and learning as core functions and instead suggests that it is a matter of locating a typology of activities somewhere on the Venn diagram to determine their implications across the core functions. More importantly, both fail to recognize the potential to fully integrate teaching and learning, research, and community engagement which Bender (2008) proposes with her infusion model of community engagement. In both of the previous models service as a core function has become problematic, necessitating a more appropriate conceptual model of community engagement that can be applied to South African HEIs.

Figure 3.3 The Infusion Model (cross-cutting) of Community Engagement

(Bender, 2008; 90)

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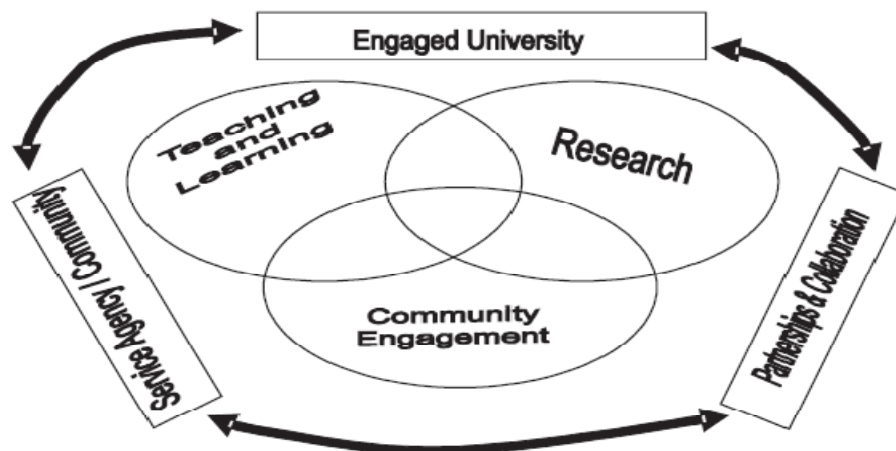
3.3.3 The Infusion Model (cross-cutting) of Community Engagement

In this third model of community engagement constructed by Bender (2008), informed by the HEQC/JET Community Engagement Conference of 2006 (HEQC, 2007), the distinction of service is dropped entirely. The Infusion Model provides for the full integration of these core functions in the centre area of the diagram, identifying the potential of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement to be fully combined, whereas the previous models have not made provision for such integration, allowing for overlap between two functions but never allowing for the integration of all three. Additionally, this model allows for the location of activities constituting community engagement in the form of a typology as discussed with the previous model.

Bender's (2008) Infusion Model for community engagement locates the core functions of HEIs in the context of a broader environment, building upon the established models and adding another level of complexity by including the institution, potential partners and collaborators, as well as service agencies and communities in the model. 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. The Infusion Model makes the important provision for partnerships and collaboration, potentially including both the public sector and private sector in this model, as well as service agencies and respective communities in which direct exposure and confrontations with pressing social issues will take place. The Infusion Model provides a fuller conceptualization 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 as a means of income generation for the institution, amongst others. Such a model identifies the university itself as an actor and suggests that community engagement is more than just a core function, but also a perspective or imperative of the "engaged university", a notion that Boyer (1996) championed in his call for a scholarship of engagement.

3.3.3.1 A scholarship of engagement

In his seminal work *Scholarship Reconsidered,* Boyer (1990) suggests that the modern HEI is in fact moving towards a scholarship of engagement (Boyer, 1996) which integrates the traditional core functions of universities through four forms of scholarship. Boyer (1990: 16-24) identified them as the following:

- The scholarship of discovery- closely related to research, this scholarship calls for the cultivation and strengthening of disciplined, investigative efforts of the academy to create new knowledge.

- The scholarship of integration- calls for a context to inform the production of new knowledge so that it has a perspective and meaning, rather than isolated information.

- The scholarship of application- recognizes that knowledge serves a purpose when it is applied and that application can inform and generate new knowledge as well, suggesting a circular flow rather than a linear flow from discovery, to integration, to application.

- The scholarship of teaching- the transmission of understanding of knowledge from discovery to application amongst individuals and groups involved in collective and re-occurring process of knowledge creation.

This notion of a scholarship of engagement suggests an ideal whereby all core functions are integrated through a synthesized scholarship that encompasses all of the sub-scholarships above. In such a synthesis, the generation of knowledge is contextualized within a broader social context which informs its application through community engagement. The ultimate result is a process whereby all stakeholders are included in a community of learning that discovers, applies, integrates, and teaches interdependently and continuously (HEQC, 2006a). At present, there is not a model for this scholarship of engagement and it is considered to be part of a future or ongoing shift from community engagement as a core function towards the synthesizing of core institutional functions through a unified scholarship (Lazarus *et al*, 2008; Bender, 2008; Thomson *et al*, 2008; Lazarus, 2007; HEQC, 2006a; HEQC, 2006b; Lazarus, 2001; JET, 2000)

3.3.4 Towards an applied model of community engagement

Across the various models of community engagement discussed, important distinctions have been made with regards to the relationship between the core functions of HEIs. Beginning with the Silo Model, the independence of the core functions of HEIs is highlighted and community engagement is understood to mean service, a primarily voluntary and philanthropic exercise of the institution. The Intersecting Model took this traditional conceptualization a step further towards integration and introduces a context for the execution of these functions, recognizing those established activities and proposing a broad contextual understanding of "community". Finally, it is the Infusion Model that has taken HEIs towards an understanding of community engagement as more than just a function, but as a perspective calling for the integration of these core functions within a context of diverse actors engaging the institution, moving in the direction of Boyer's (1996) scholarship of engagement.

Significant to the current study are the implications of the Infusion Model in terms of power flows and the involvement of various actors participating in, taking responsibility for, and contributing to the formulation of community engagement initiatives. All models are in fact "university-centric" as they place emphasis on the core functions of HEIs first and foremost, but the Infusion Model takes into account the role that actors outside of HEIs have on this core function and recognizes that community engagement cannot occur in absence of those stakeholders outside of the institution (Bender, 2008: 91). Such a model is one of the only conceptualizations of community engagement that illustrates relations and recognizes that various actors

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have influence upon community engagement. This implicitly recognizes that there are certain power relations that exist between actors and it does so in a Foucaultian fashion where flows are non-linear and circuitous (Osman and Attwood, 2007; 17), depriving HEIs from having sole authority over not only community engagement. This model moves closer towards integration of scholarship because it also provides for teaching and learning as well as research set within a social context characterized by circuitous and non-linear power flows. By recognizing that external power relations have an influence on all core institutional functions, this model can be interpreted to consider many of the issues at the centre of discussions on community engagement, including debates over education for the marketplace vs. education for good citizenship (JET, 2000). It provides a possible explanation for the emphasis upon teaching and learning and research as core functions, as these functions have established and recognized rewards, incentives, and scrutinized evaluation criteria inside and outside of the institution which community engagement currently lacks (Thomson *et al*, 2008; 15).

Bender (2008; 90) is clear to acknowledge that of the various conceptual models, one should not necessarily afford an ideal or orthodox status to any of them, but that all three represent their own interpretations of how a respective institution conceptualizes its community engagement activities. A HEI's approach to community engagement is not likely to be static, acknowledging the possibility of moving from one model to another over time. But of the various models for community engagement, only the Infusion Model takes into consideration the relation of all core functions to each other and in combination. The priorities institutions assign to these functions both in isolation and towards integration, and the power relations that exist outside of the institutions themselves are recognized, including relations between communities, representative bodies thereof, service-agencies, as well as both public and private collaborators engaging the institution.

The Infusion Model identified by Bender (2008) is particularly useful given that this study aims to explore the developmental outcomes of service-learning for partner organizations, and only the Infusion Model can provide for the outcomes of service-learning as a result of relational flows between the institution, a partnering organization, and the community which is purportedly served as a result. By creating a generic and more holistic model for community engagement, Bender (2008) has helped to clarify how a core institutional function of the institution can be applied through relational actors with broader outcomes.

3.4 A national trend towards engagement

The evolution of policy and governance of HEIs combined with the drive of the JET/CHESP initiative has resulted in considerable national progress towards embedding community engagement in South African HEIs. This has advanced HEIs towards fulfilling their mandate (DoE, 1997; RSA, 1997; DoE, 2001) as national developmental agents. In the process, service-learning has been identified and championed as the nationally recognized means of integrating community engagement with the other core institutional functions (Lazarus *et al*, 2008). Although institutions promote community engagement in different ways, it has become a recognized staple and core function of many SA HEIs.

With the CHESP initiative now completed and SA scholars continuing to engage their international and local counterparts on how to best embrace community engagement (CHE, 2007), three conceptual models for community engagement at HEIs (Bender, 2008) have been proposed for peer review and consideration within the South African context. Although there is still an absence of national funding and a critically vital SA network for community engagement (Badat & Sattar, 2007: 110; Thomson *et al*, 2008), it seems that the respective institutions operationalizing community engagement on a day-to-day basis are continuing to debate how to best give life to their institutional missions through community engagement (SU, 2008) and share information nationally, especially with regards to service-learning (HEQC, 2008). Nevertheless, over its seven year duration, CHESP provided the framework and model for service-learning that was able to support 256 accredited courses, across 39 academic disciplines, benefiting a total of nearly 10,000 students from undergraduate to postgraduate level at a dozen HEIs (Lazarus *et al*, 2008; 62-63), as well as an untold number of communities and partner organizations.

Overall, the trend is towards a scholarship of engagement, as proposed by Boyer (1996) and building upon the recognition from SAUVCA almost a decade ago (JET, 2000). As the core function of community engagement is better integrated through activities like service-learning, so moves the institution towards viewing community engagement as a fundamental perspective (Bender, 2008), taking embedding its role in reconstruction and development throughout all scholarship. Such a move increases content and depth in the notion of a South African university and further entrenches HEIs as developmental agents.

It is from this position of which HEIs currently stand that service-learning is analyzed and interpreted for its role in conceptualizing and engaging secondary beneficiaries of HE in the form of partnering organizations and communities. The outcomes of service-learning for some partner organizations are later explored.

Chapter 4 – Service-learning and the Triad Partnership Model

4.1 Introduction

The impetus given to the institutionalization of the core function of community engagement across the diverse landscape of SA HEIs necessitated a broadly accepted means to give effect to this function. With much evidence of success abroad, and a conceptual conductivity to the strong national research environment, service-learning was identified and promoted early on in the CHESP initiative. The selection of service-learning, along with its various types and interpretations, created the opportunity to match experiential learning with in-depth academic examination of the complexities of contemporary social problems as well as efforts to solve them, and to integrate these through service, as part and parcel of the quest for academic excellence in a complete education.

Service-learning exemplifies how community engagement and the other core functions can be combined for mutual benefit, rather than as competing demands placed upon students, as is often associated with community service. Community engagement, in the form of service-learning, combines good with scholarly work as balanced, interdependent, and potentially integrated components of a quality education (Lazarus *et al*, 2008: 62). The CHESP supported introduction and advocacy, implementation, and normalization of service-learning has resulted in varying degrees of institutionalization across HEIs (Mouton & Wildschut, 2007: 10), creating the opportune environment for exploring the experiences and developmental implications of partnering organizations hosting this type of community engagement.

By examining the theories that have informed the development of service-learning pedagogy and the Triad Partnership Model advanced and promoted in the SA HE by CHESP (HEQC, 2006a), this chapter seeks to track service-learning's conceptualization through to practice and identify the existing theoretical deficiencies informing service-learning in its applied form. Specifically, the role and relations of partner organizations to both the community of intended benefit and HEIs will be critically examined, and focus on the experiences and role of the partnering organizations

4.2 A theoretical and conceptual framework for service-learning

Service-learning is neither an educational theory, nor a theory of community development. Although there is enough literature available to provide a conceptual framework for service-learning as it pertains to this study, it is not itself a coherent theory. It is important to remember what exactly service-learning is: a pedagogy of experiential, credit-bearing coursework directed at meeting specific community needs (HEQC, 2006a: 23-24). Therefore, critically analysing this pedagogy from a community development perspective will require one to examine how service-learning meets those community needs. This necessitates examining its roots in educational philosophy, then moving towards the current model to which it is applied in SA, and more specifically, at SU. As one progresses through the respective layers of the service-learning conceptual framework, community development theory helps

to inform the critique of this analysis and identify the conceptual tools that will be linked to Bender's (2008) Infusion Model of community engagement.

4.2.1 Dewey and the philosophical origins of service-learning

Of the various origins and philosophers that explored the relationship between knowledge production and application, John Dewey stands out for the considerable relevance of his writings with regards to community engagement, but more specifically service-learning. A central theme of Dewey's writings is the developmental role of education in society. He posits the following philosophical question with regards to education: "What attitude should I adopt toward an issue which concerns many persons whom I do not know personally, but whose actions along with mine will determine the conditions under which we all live?" (Dewey, 1908; 319 in Saltmarsh, 1996; 16). Dewey suggests an education for democratic citizenship.

Dewey's philosophy of education is based on the notion that first-hand experience is paramount to learning. Dewey claims that true experiential learning is achieved only when practical experience is followed by reflection, providing the foundation for the development of perspectives on experiential education (HEQC, 2006a: 15). He suggests the following five areas of a new educational paradigm for pedagogy informed by an encompassing, unified objective, democracy: 'linking education to experience; democratic community; social service; reflective enquiry; education for social transformation" (Saltmarsh, 1996: 15-19).

Of particular relevance to this study are the areas of democratic community, social service, and education for social transformation. All three of these areas align well to the policies informing community engagement as a function of HEIs (GNU, 1994; DoE, 1997; DoE, 2001) and suggest that societal development is itself a priority of a democratic education.

Dewey does not specify or suggest activities, groups, or organizations through which education should engage in these areas, but he does stress the importance of dissolving dualisms. He endorses engagement between the educational body and the outside community with the common objective of transcending social divisions, and the creation of relationships that are reciprocal and mutually beneficial (Saltmarsh, 1996: 16-17), a perspective which has clearly informed SA models of community engagement. Otherwise, Dewey fears such engagement could perpetuate inequities, rather than help to improve the social well-being of others for the collective benefit of all. Such engagement is thereby informed by the relation of students as a privileged group within a society to those without a similar educational opportunity, and embraces a sense of social justice (Saltmarsh, 1996: 16-17). Dewey writes in *Ethics*, the aim of service is "general social advance, constructive social reform, not merely doing something kind for individuals who are rendered helpless from sickness or poverty. Its aim is the equity of justice, not the inequality of conferring benefits." (Saltmarsh, 1996: 17)

4.2.2 Kolb's contribution to service-learning

David A. Kolb's contribution to service-learning as an experiential education theorist lies primarily in his experiential learning cycle, or the cyclical process through which he believed all learning occurs (HEQC, 2006a;:18).

Figure 4.1 Kolb's experiential learning cycle

Immediate

Concrete Experience

is the basis for

And followed by

Testing Implications of Concepts in New Situations

which lead to

Observation and Reflection

which are assimilated into the

Formation of Abstract Concepts and Generalisations

from which implications for action are deduced
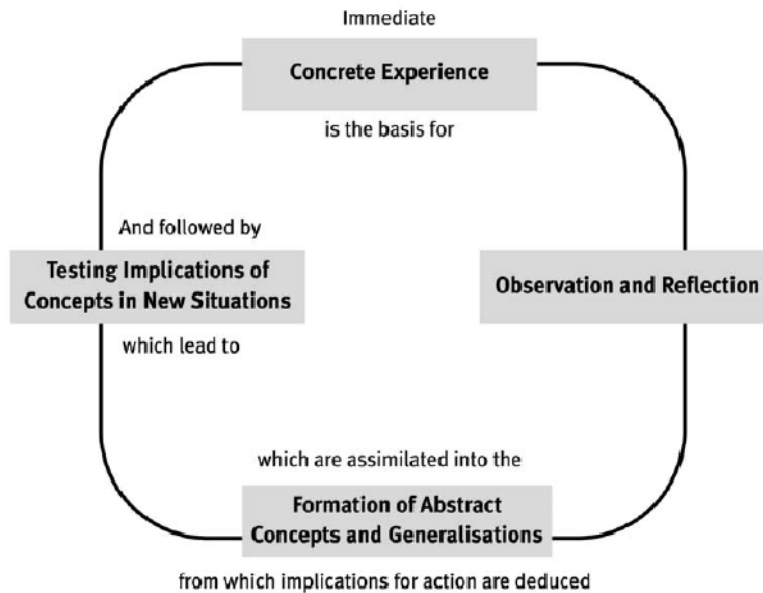
(Kolb, 1984 in HEQC, 2006a; 19)

Kolb's experiential learning cycle provides a theory for learning that is well applied to community engagement as it necessitates the concrete experience of social realities of communities outside of the institution. It outlines a process for interpreting those experience, processing them, and acting. The cycle is particularly useful for service-learning as the service work 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 organization and communities with which the student works.

This experiential learning cycle is relevant to the outcomes for the service agency hosting students because Kolb's cycle represents how students move from direct experience to action at the service agency. It provides one with 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 organization in the interest of the community of intended benefit.

4.2.3 Service-learning and a typology of community engagement

As reported by Perold and Omar (1997) and Perold (1998), community engagement activities at HEIs are well established, even if the current conceptualization is rather recent. As but one form of community engagement, service-learning finds itself amongst a typology of other forms of community-engaged learning and service originating from HEIs. A typology provides a context for activities originating from the institution that have a developmental focus, some of which are identified in what Bender (2008) referred to as the Intersecting Model above. However, these categories are neither discrete nor mutually exclusive, as there may be considerable over-lap or integration between different types of community engagement. A brief overview of these activities include:

Volunteerism- Extracurricular engagement in activities in which the primary goal is to provide a service to the recipient community. Although sometimes organized and supported by university bodies or groups, the activities occur outside of tuition time, are generally unrelated to a student's field of study, and students do not receive credit for participation in such programmes (HEQC, 2006a: 22).

Community outreach- Similar to volunteerism in that the primary goal is to provide a service to a recipient community; such programmes tend to be more structured for potential learning outcomes. The activities are usually initiated from the respective academic department or faculty and have a stronger association with the institution than some voluntary activities. In some cases recognition or credit is given, but this differs significantly from service-learning as the service work is not integrated into the curriculum, but is instead an add-on activity (HEQC, 2006a: 22).

Internships- Another form of community engagement, internships alter the direction of recipients and beneficiaries. Internships have students as the primary beneficiaries and the goal is learning. Internships are a form of practical experience that students undertake in a specific field or area of study. The practical experience is intended to advance learning outcomes of the given subject and equip students with vocational experience. Internships in the South African context are generally integrated into the curriculum and are common in programmes such as Social Work, Psychology, Education, and others (HEQC, 2006a: 22).

Cooperative education- Similar to internships, co-operative education programmes focus upon the student as the primary beneficiary with learning as the ultimate goal. The main difference is that co-operative programmes can be co-curricular and are not necessarily integrated or compulsory, as internships tend to be. The primary purpose is to enhance practical knowledge and experience in a specific area of study. Commonly used at universities of technology, the placements are usually within industry where the desired outcomes are primarily student learning focused (HEQC, 2006a: 22).

Although not always commonly conceptualized as such, *community-based research* and *participatory-action research* are also considered kinds of community engagement (Lazarus *et al*, 2008; 62) based on the conceptual models discussed. Community-based research is undertaken with the understanding that knowledge is socially created, and the embedded involvement of non-scientific researchers and

participants is paramount in the process of understanding and creating new knowledge. The main distinction between this and participatory action research (PAR) is the involvement and participation of the community members in shaping and influencing the research that is undertaken (Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998: 177). PAR aims to involve relevant community members and stakeholders throughout the process of undertaking research, but does so to the extreme with an often explicit commitment to empowerment and improved social conditions for the participants (Mouton, 2008: 151). Such research is undertaken with the intention of taking action with the people through a process in which the knowledge produced is collectively owned by its participants and applied for the benefit of the group (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 63-64).

4.2.3.1 Defining and expanding service-learning

Distinguished from all the previous forms of community engagement, service-learning is a pedagogy that views student learning outcomes and community outcomes as equal priority. It entails the provision of service, as an experiential learning opportunity, to a community based upon an identified need. The service is integrated into the curriculum as structured experiential learning, incorporating reflection upon experience, and aims to link academic theory to practice to inform action in service (HEQC, 2006a; 23). In service-learning however, there are considered to be two primary beneficiaries, that of the students and community, whereas the service-providers, academics, and academic colleagues are conceptualized as secondary or subsidiary beneficiaries (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005: 127). This form of community engagement sees scholarly activity enriched through service to the community and "is entrenched in a discourse that proposes the development and transformation of HE in relation to community needs" (HEQC, 2006a: 23).

Although service-learning is conceptualized with the intention of equal primary benificiaries, Sigmon (1994 in Furco, 1996; 3) made a classification of service-learning that can be used to explain how one aspect of this type of community engagement is sometimes prioritized in favour of service to the community or learning for the student in the actual implementation of service-learning modules. Sigmon distinguishes between SERVICE-learning, in which service outcomes become the primary focus and learning goals secondary; service-LEARNING, in which learning outcomes are the primary focus with service becoming a secondary focus; service-learning, a case in which the learning and service goals are of equal priority but are not fully integrated and isolated from each other; and finally, SERVICE-LEARNING, where goals of service and learning are equally weighted and reinforce each other for the benefit of all participants. Nduna (2006: 491) suggests SERVICE-LEARNING is most appropriate for South Africa, and can be recognized as the pursued ideal for the purpose of this study as "service-learning".

Although this classification has since been criticized for creating the impression that one component of service-learning can or should be prioritized over the other as it suits the interests of the module facilitators, the best practice measures identified by the HEQC (2006a; 24) explain that it is the complex interrelationship and mutuality of service and its equal relationship to learning that generate the kind of knowledge and

service intended from service-learning. This is only possible when both are viewed as equally weighted goals of service-learning. An adaptation of Furco's (1996) distinction among service programmes provides a representation of how service-learning is conceptualized as equally balanced between learning and service, in the context of other means of community engaged learning.

Figure 4.1: Distinctions among community engaged learning
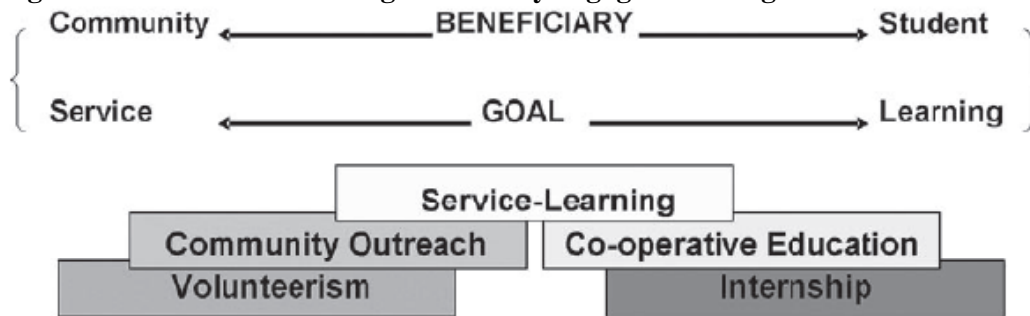
(HEQC, 2006a; Adapted from Furco, 1996)

The description of service-learning as but one of multiple forms of community engagement as well as the visual representation above give a better understanding of this pedagogy, but all of the information provided does not provide one with a concise definition of what constitutes service-learning. Thus, this study will use Bringle and Hatcher's (1995) often referenced definition of service-learning so that it is conceptualized as "a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students:

- Participate in an organised service activity that meets identified community goals;

- 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" (HEQC, 2006a; Mouton & Wildschut, 2005; SU, 2009a).

Of all the various definitions of service-learning, this often cited definition of Bringle & Hatcher's includes the most important elements of service-learning. However, even within course-based, credit bearing service activities requiring reflection, there is a typology of existing service-learning courses that should be acknowledged. Campus Compact (in Mouton & Wildschut, 2005: 120-121) identified the following models of service-learning: pure service-learning (SL), discipline-based SL, problem-based SL, capstone course service-learning, and community-based action research. They are summarized below:

- "*Pure SL*- These are courses that send students out into the community to serve. These courses have as their intellectual core the idea of service to communities by students, volunteers, or engaged citizens.

- *Discipline-based* SL-In this model, 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.

- *Problem-based service learning* (PBSL)- According to this model, students (or teams of students) relate to the community much as "consultants" working for a "client". Students work with community members to understand a particular community problem or need. This model presumes that the students will have some knowledge they can draw upon to make recommendations to the community or develop a solution to the problem.

- *Capstone courses*- These courses are generally designed for majors in the final year of a degree course in a given discipline, and are offered almost exclusively to students in their final year. Capstone courses ask students to draw upon the knowledge they have obtained throughout their course work and combine it with relevant service work in the community.

- *Service internships*- Like traditional internships, these experiences are more intense than typical SL courses, with students working as many as ten to twenty hours a week in a community setting. As in traditional internships, students are generally charged with producing a body of work that is of value to the community or site. However, unlike traditional internships, service internship has regular and on-going reflective opportunities that help students analyse their new experiences using discipline-based theories. Service internships are further distinguished from traditional internships through their focus on reciprocity: the idea that the community and the student benefit equally from the experience.

- *Undergraduate community-based action research*- A relatively new approach that is gaining popularity, community-based action research is similar to an independent study option for the rare student who is highly experienced in community work. Community based action research can also be effective with small classes or groups of students. In this model, students work closely with academics to learn research methodology while serving as advocates for communities" (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005; 120-121).

Of these various models of service-learning, the discipline-based service-learning model is of particular relevance as the purpose of this study is to examine the service-learning outcomes for partner organizations hosting students in the discipline of community development. A further distinction amongst these models can also be made for international service-learning, or a service-learning module set in an international context (Crabtree, 2008). In terms of this study, one of the two service-learning modules with programmes at partner organizations being investigated is an International Programmes Stellenbosch University (IPSU) module. Future references to service-learning programmes refers to the structured, curricular engagement of students at host partner organizations in pursuit of identified community goals, as required by one of the two aforementioned service-learning modules.

4.2.4 The Triad Partnership Model of service-learning

Service-learning is clearly understood within a typology of community engagement, and a working definition for service-learning has been established. Clarity is provided on the discipline based model of the two community development modules (one an international service-learning module in community development) through which service-learning programmes at partner organizations are under investigation. Service-learning is clearly placed within SA HEIs and Lazarus describes three underlying objectives with regards to development: "(1) community empowerment and development; (2) transformation of the higher education system in relation to community needs; and (3) enhancing service delivery to previously disadvantaged communities" (2001: 1). Impressive objectives, but how the community is engaged still requires further examination.

An adaptation of Tennyson and Wilde's (2000) tri-sector partnership for sustainable development, the CHESP Triad Partnership Model proposes a partnership between the HEI, a service provider or partnering organization, and the community to build collaborative relationships based on reciprocity around learning and service. In addition to achieving mutual outcomes of service-learning programmes for students and communities, these partnerships are also intended to foster mutual learning, cooperative development, and processes of change (HEQC, 2006a: 95). At their base, these partnerships are the agreements by which partner organizations host service-learning programmes of HEIs aimed at rendering some form of service to the community.

Despite various objectives, the aim of a service-learning programme is still first and foremost to provide service to the community of intended benefit and, equally, to enhance student learning (Furco, 1996; HEQC, 2006a). Yet, the Triad Partnership Model advanced by CHESP introduces a third entity, the service-provider or partnering organization. It is this combined emphasis upon community beneficiaries outside of HE and the introduction of a third actor in the form or a partner organization, which compels the author to examine and analyze the current conceptualizations around the Triad Partnership Model.

Figure 1.1   Triad Partnership Model (CHESP)
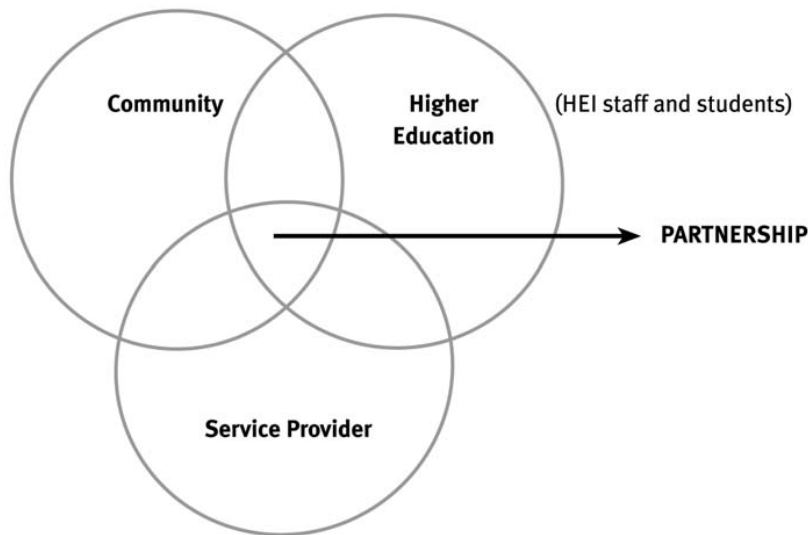
(Lazarus, 2001 in HEQC, 2006; 93)

A clear departure from the dyadic approach to service-learning in the USA, the CHESP initiative has promoted an adapted version of the community-higher education partnership in the form of a triad partnership: HEI-service provider-community (Thomson *et al*, 2008; 21). Justification for CHESP's introduction of the service agency is explained referencing Tennyson and Wilde's (2000) tri-sector partnership, which states that the introduction of a third entity ensures diffusion of power across the partners, mitigating potential power struggles. Interestingly, one justification for this tri-sector partnership was also because it ensures "that economic growth and opportunity are more equitable and sustainable for the partners" (in HEQC, 2006a: 93). Practical considerations around how to partner with an amorphous, dynamically heterogeneous, and constructed entity such as the "community" necessitates a link to some formal organizing body or structure in order to communicate. A service provider, or partner organization for the purpose of this study, is the agency that provides the structure necessitated to access, and render service to, the community.

Marais & Botes (2005: 186) identify the well documented advantages for universities of uneven relations that have historically existed between universities and communities in a dyadic partnership, consistently favouring the university's dominant interests. The literature suggests that the introduction of a partner organization should therefore be seen as advantageous to the overall partnership, while still providing the opportunity to contribute to relevant experiential learning objectives within the South African context including: "students' exposure to the structural conditions in communities; engagement with causative contextual considerations for the manifestation of prevailing social conditions; cross-cultural interaction (this is a significant consideration given the social engineering of the past); and the opportunity to engage in community development initiatives and social change" (Thomson, *et al*, 2008; 20-21).

The Triad Partnership Model advanced in South Africa represents a means of "localizing" service-learning with a practical model for involving students in the community through existing agencies. In the absence of much literature on the actual structure of these partnerships or how they are operationalized (Marais & Botes, 2005:

Lazarus, 2001), the Triad model has been widely accepted despite what Fourie (2003) identifies as a lack of evidence as to how effective these tri-sector partnerships are. Furthermore, Mouton and Wildschut (2005:144-145; 2007: 5) cited a lack of primary data supporting claims of community benefit and there is even less evidence as to what the outcomes are for the partnering organizations that host service-learning programmes.

4.3   Power relations and theoretical deficiencies

In their critical analysis of community service and service-learning from a developmental perspective at the University of Free State (UFS), Marais & Botes (2005; 188) take issue with references of "community-higher education partnerships" when they suggest these partnerships should rather be called "community-service provider-university partnerships" as they are a more true representation of the partnership, a position echoed by Thomson *et al* (2008). These are particularly apt reflections on partnership and draw attention to a disjuncture between the existing conceptualization of service-learning and the manner in which it is applied. The definitions and origins of service-learning suggest it is carried out in terms a dyadic relationship between two beneficiaries, students and the community. However, the applied model in South Africa positions the partnering organization or service agency between the student and the community for reasons identified above. The involvement of a community partner or service agency through which to structure and manage the student's service may seem only like a practical consideration taken in the American tradition of service-learning, but it does not distinguish between the community's interest and the service agency's when conceptualizing partnerships (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). It therefore also neglects to acknowledge what the distinct benefits are to the partnering organization.

Fischer's (1997) examination of the politics and antipolitics of "doing good" argued that the neutrality of developmental agencies cannot be assumed, and should be critically engaged with. In South Africa, and especially in developing countries, developmental agencies, whether they are Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, religious groups, or government agencies, are inseparable from politics, regardless of whether they are partisan or not. As Mitchell and Rautenbauch (2005: 103) stated in their study of a service-learning initiative at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, any community development project in SA will exist within a socio-political context that it cannot be examined in isolation of, having serious implications for the development of a target community.

Partner organizations' relations to the community and HEIs may be far more complex and politically laden than the dyadic continuum of community-student benefit currently conceptualized for service-learning suggests. Although efforts are likely taken to avoid such an instance, it is possible that a service agency has an agenda distinct from the interests of the community it targets, and that it targets that community selectively by imposing values and needs (McBride *et al*, 2006). There is an assumption that those who participate in service agency activities do so freely, that the services available are the result of a peaceful consensus representing the best interests of the target community. Crabtree's (2008: 23) study of international service-learning programmes acknowledges that few NGOs meet the ideals they espouse and

there is reason to doubt that community participation as a developmental principle truly exists in some partner organizations. Power relations and politics within communities constrain and define who gets to participate, and the terms of which they participate. Often times, it is not the most marginalized who participate, but those already in a position of power within communities (Osman& Atwood, 2007: 18).

Power relations between developmental agencies and communities are not uncommon and exist as a kind of politics of development. Service-learning theorists may not have fully interrogated how these power relations are embedded in partner organizations (as in the American partnership conceptualizations of service-learning) and portray service agencies and developmental initiatives as antipolitical to an extent, but they are far from it (Fischer, 1997: 446). Such a representation conceals power relations at the intra-community level as well as at the level of organizational actors (university and service agency). However, this is not uncommon as there is a general failure across civic service programmes to research the power relations and existing inequalities between the participating actors (Bandow, 1990; Cobbs, 1996; Evers, 1990; Mohan, 1994 cited in McBride *et al*, 2006: 309).

As a partner organization, this stakeholder acts as the host of the service-learning programme and has the on-site authority to assign the student tasks and functions that carry out the service-learning objectives towards addressing identified needs. The partner organization can shape this experience and foster perspective by determining the extent to which the student is actually exposed to the community whose needs he/she aims to address. This authority is a form of power and can also be manipulated and exploited. Service organizations, especially in developing countries, do not necessarily act on the democratic will and/or interests of the people with whom they target as beneficiaries (Atack, 1999: 857). Organizations, just as people, do have the capacity to act selfishly in the presence of relational powers, no matter how small. McBride *et al* (2006: 310) specifically identified elitism as one potential risk to service agencies and development organizations as the participants tend to be of a different class and level of education. Although an education and access to material resources are potentially advantageous, this also necessitates considerations of inequality and imposing agendas. It is therefore necessary that agency is also recognized in the service organization, both as the potential expression of a democratic mandate of the community, and potentially as the narrow interests of an influential few, be acknowledged and addressed when providing a theoretical framework for service-learning.

Equating the community's needs to those of the partner organization's is not appropriate. One cannot necessarily assume that the organization's interest is in fact always the community's interest as this suggests either a neutrality of development, or a perfect and prolonged alignment of interests between the community and service agency, which is highly improbable as communities are far more dynamic than organizations. The position advanced by American service-learning partnerships (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002) that does not distinguish between the partner organization and the community needs to be more critically interrogated in the South African context, and considerations of the political and power relations that exist between all partners should be explicitly acknowledged. This can be part of what Le Grange (2007: 9) referred to as "reterritorialization" of service-learning from the American to the South African context, as exemplified to a certain degree by the Triad Partnership

Model. However, this reterritorialization does not necessarily result in a coherent conceptual framework, as arguments around the dyadic representation of community-student benefits have suggested.

A key shortcoming of service-learning's theoretical framework in South Africa is the disjuncture between CHESP's Triad Partnership Model with its conceptual origins in Tennyson and Wilde's (2000) tri-sector partnership and the bi-partner conceptualization of service-learning which dominates the literature. This gap in the conceptual framework gives impetus to the aim of this study as it has left out key considerations that have a profound influence on one of service-learning's two primary beneficiaries, the community. Problematically, the origins of this tri-sector model lie in a proposed partnership between business, the public sector, and civil society, as part of a call for a new paradigm in sustainable development aimed at engaging the three key sectors of society amidst processes of globalization (Tennyson & Wilde, 2000: 7-8). While there are clear advantages of a tri-sector partnership as stated above, the adaptation of this particular model (proposed for international development efforts) to the context of campus-community partnerships is not without question. There are clear misalignments when it comes to the transferability of this particular model to the local context. These include an emphasis on economic growth in the private business sector; the conceptualization of the community as a "sector" comparable to a service agency or higher-education institution (both are structured organizations); and conceptual considerations and complexities associated with community as an actor, partner, and context. Although generalizations about the role and positive-sum outcomes of such a partnership strategy for all actors are reassuring, such a model fails to reconcile issues around equally weighed dyadic outcomes for communities and students.

The lack of conceptual coherence between service-learning's original theoretical framework and this reterritorialization in South Africa necessitates a reconsideration of the conductivity between original conceptualizations of service-learning and the CHESP model. There is a need for reconciliation of misaligned conceptual frameworks that is beyond the scope of this study. However, how this misalignment manifests itself in the experience of partner organizations is an area where some better understanding may be reached. As the purpose of this study is to explore the developmental outcomes of service-learning in HE for partner organizations, the title may have hinted that the dyadic continuum of benefits may be more appropriately applied between the students and partnering organizations, with the community as a contextual actor whom students engage both in and with, but based upon the developmental project as conceived by the partner organization, or community partner.

4.4   Service-learning at SU

Within the context of SU, service-learning evolved out of a prioritization of community engagement beginning with institutional planning and management documents such as *A Strategic Plan for the Turn of the Century and Beyond* (SU, 2000). The document set out a vision for the university in the 21st century while affirming SU's commitment to the three core functions of HE, teaching and learning, research and community engagement. Importantly, this strategic framework suggested

a paradigm shift towards a more inclusive conception of community that sought to make the institution "A university characterized by a vibrant interaction between institution and community to the advantage of both" (SU, 2000: 13). This move towards a reciprocal and mutually beneficial approach to community engagement would soon be embodied by the creation of an administrative division tasked specifically with overseeing the University's community engagement activities, marking the University's reorientation.

Following the report of the Strategic Task Group for Community Interaction (SU, 2004a), the term "community interaction" was coined at SU for its distinct take on community engagement. In the period leading up to this, extensive work was done behind the scenes to get a full picture of the existing community interaction initiatives operating from the institution, and this served to inform this report and the pending formal policy. A Division for Community Interaction was created to oversee the operational leg of this core function as per the recommendation of the task group. A watershed moment for community interaction at SU, June 2004 saw the adoption of the first Community Interaction Policy of the University. It expressed the University's intention to focus upon community partnerships and social responsiveness as a model for engagement (SU, 2004b: 1-2) and to position the university as an inclusive institution committed to both local and national relevance. This document also gave explicit recognition to service-learning as a type of community engagement, hinting at interest in this area, but not making any explicit commitments to it.

From 2004 onwards, participation in CHESP service-learning capacity building seminars helped to develop the skills and knowledge base to begin the process of institutionalizing service-learning at SU. With an Institutional Manager for Service-Learning and the subsequent launch of service-learning pilot programmes, of which this author participated in the first, service-learning began officially as an applied pedagogy at SU in the second semester of 2005. The launch of Stellenbosch's own capacity building course for service-learning coincided with the hosting of an international service-learning symposium that brought wide recognition across the institution. The capacity building course sought to equip a broader composition of scholars with the conceptual and pedagogical tools to implement service-learning in their respective disciplines. The integration of service-learning into existing courses following the completion of this original capacity building programme proved a crucial step forward in the process of institutionalization. So successful were these capacity building programmes, that they were repeated in 2006 & 2007, with 2008 taken off for reorganization and preparation for the delivery of an accredited course for 2009.

At present the Office for Service-Learning has assisted in the institutionalization of over 30 modules across ten faculties. Its vision for "service-learning as a transformative, learner-centered and community-oriented pedagogy in all academic programmes of the SU" (SU, 2009a) has begun to take shape. Service-learning has been adapted within the Stellenbosch context in terms of the University's Community Interaction policy, but also with recognition of SU as a research driven HEI. Conscious efforts to incorporate the university's research imperative into service-learning have further helped SU to distinguish its own brand of service-learning. This is acknowledged in the Office for Service-Learning's mission statement: "To offer support and capacity to staff and students to promote the integration of community

interaction in the curriculum through service-learning, and into research through community-based research methodologies" (SU, 2009a).

In carrying out its mission, the office has applied a fivefold strategy for service-learning:

- "Strategically positioning service-learning, as a learner-centred community oriented pedagogy, and community-based research in the University;

- Fostering enabling internal partnerships;

- Building sustainable external partnerships through which resources can be shared;

- Designing and offering accredited capacity building programmes for faculty, and

- Offering continuous support to faculty to initiate and implement curricular community interaction" (SU, 2009a).

This strategic appeal to university staff and students to advance service-learning as the premier institutional form of community interaction has been largely supported by national policy documents, the efforts of the CHESP initiative, and management directives and frameworks, along with dedicated staff at the institution. Based on the principles of community partnership and social responsiveness, service-learning has been established as a pedagogy, methodology for teaching, and operational method for giving effect to learning outcomes of co-curricular service (Smith-Tolken, 2008: 3).

The product of this history and strategic orientation of service-learning are two modules that the author participated in as part of his undergraduate studies and that place students at partnering organizations with the explicit intentions of both service for community benefit and experience linked to reflection for student learning outcomes. These two discipline based service-learning modules in the field of community development are the *Service-Learning in Community Development* module of the International Programmes Stellenbosch University (IPSU), a module offering designed exclusively for international students, and *Sociology 354-Community Development*, a mainstream module offered at the third-year level by the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. Both of these courses make use of the Triad Partnership Model as a means for engaging students in service-learning programmes, with students based at a partnering organization and overseen by site-supervisor at the respective organization. Between these two modules, over seventy-five students are placed across sixteen partnering service agencies, four of which are institutionally based within the University (and therefore excluded from this study), and two of which are in their first semester of partnership. These service-learning programmes are based in organizations serving seven distinct localities, including Somerset West, Onderpapagaaiberg, Kayamandi, Idas Valley, Macassar Haven, Stellenbosch Winelands and Klapmuts.

At the various partnering organizations hosting service-learning students, site-supervisors oversee the students' involvement in the organization and structure their involvement through an action plan and schedule (Smith-Tolken, 2009: 10) in terms of the organization's service objectives towards its community of intended benefit. From introduction and orientation, through monitoring of attendance and service, and concluding with an evaluation of their service contribution, the site-supervisor of the partnering organization is expected to have the most influence over and knowledge of the students' service activities on site. They are also invited to attend the final semester presentations of all the service-learning students and receive recognition for their role in supporting the achievement of the learning and service outcomes of the course.

4.5 Service-learning in community development for partner organizations

This chapter has set out to provide a conceptual and theoretical framework for the pedagogy of service-learning as the focal point of institutionalizing community engagement as a core function of HE. By critically examining the conceptual origins of service-learning and the reterritorialization of service-learning through the Triad Partnership Model, a key conceptual disjuncture has been identified, and motivation for the exploration of the partner organization's experience and outcomes has been made.

The dyadic continuum of benefits that service-learning is conceptualized as being located upon, between student learning outcomes and community service outcomes, has been challenged in the application of the Triad Partnership Model. This critical analysis made clear the pivotal role of the partnering organization as the hosting agency of service-learning students, regardless of the inappropriate origins of this particular model in application in the SA context. In this instance the partner organization is a potentially representative body of the community, may act as a gateway and access point to the community, and may influence how the community is itself conceptualized.

At SU the practical considerations around these partnerships and the agency exercised by the partner organizations means that students serve as participants in the developmental projects of the respective service agencies in which they are placed. One cannot assume the neutrality of developmental organizations or service agencies within and amongst communities, nor the neutrality of the individuals who make-up or engage on behalf of those organizations (Fischer, 1997; Atack, 1999; McBride *et al*, 2006; Crabtree, 2008). It is therefore imperative to examine these relations as "partnerships both in and with the community" (SU, 2009b: 1) to borrow from the Draft Community Interaction Policy awaiting ratification of Senate. In this context, it means the partners may be considered as representatives of the community, but they may also create a particular conceptualization of community, all the while being located within a geographical area of which an amorphous and dynamic group sharing some common interests provides a context for engagement.

Before proceeding to the next chapter on research design and methodology, it should be acknowledged that while this chapter has provided much conceptual and theoretical depth to service-learning and the Triad Partnership Model, it has been

carried out with specific consideration of only two of the over thirty service-learning modules at the undergraduate level in SU. Different service-learning modules in other disciplines undoubtedly generate different experiences than those of community development, despite having common conceptual and theoretical origins across disciplines. The focus upon the two community development service-learning modules is linked to both an orientation in the service-learning literature towards community development in the localizing of service-learning (Lazarus, 2001) and first-hand experience with service-learning programmes in the field. Therefore, the interpretive framework generated in the course of this analysis is inclined towards the actors outside of the HEI, despite the institutional origins and orientation of service-learning. This is however justified by the dearth of research available on the experience of partner organizations as distinct actors across all disciplines. The next chapter intends to explicate how the research design and methods were determined in light of these considerations.

Chapter 5 – Research Design and Methodology

5.1   Introduction

An exploratory study of the outcomes of service-learning in HE for partner organizations, this research employs a qualitative research design to develop a better understanding of the experience of partner organizations hosting service-learning programmes in the discipline of community development. In absence of substantive research conducted on the community outcomes of service-learning interventions in the South African context (Mitchell & Rautenbauch, 2005; Mouton & Wildschut, 2005; Mouton & Wildschut, 2007; Nduna, 2007), this study hopes to survey the experience of partner organizations and shed light on the benefits and/or risks of such programmes, as experienced by site-supervisors at their respective agencies. The study is therefore intended to enhance and deepen the study of service-learning, and thereby contribute to understandings of community engagement as a core function of HEIs.

The exploration of service-learning as a socio-educational intervention at service agencies has proceeded by describing the policies, origins, philosophy, and conceptual models associated with community engagement in South Africa, and specifically service-learning as one such type. Specific attention was paid to the service-learning partnering model employed nationally and its theoretical deficiencies as this provided further justification for focusing on the outcomes of this intervention for partnering organizations. The aforementioned analysis of existing textual data thereby informed the collection of primary data on the experience of site-supervisors overseeing these interventions at their organizations. The collected data is presented in the coming chapters, and finally analyzed and integrated within the theoretical framework and models outlined. This chapter serves as an overview of the research design and methodology executed for this study.

5.2 Research design

The qualitative research paradigm is an increasingly significant mode of inquiry in the applied discipline of community development (Marshall & Rossman, 2006: 1). However, because this study is not exclusively based in the discipline of community development (itself an interdisciplinary field) this study necessitates a research process that accommodates the complexities of service-learning's origins and application between disciplines. An enduring element of service-learning's conceptualization is its equal prioritization of educational outcomes for the student, and the developmental goals of the community (Furco, 1996; HEQCa, 2006). A traditional qualitative research design for such a complex intervention is therefore not entirely sufficient.

The research design applied integrates a significant literature review with elements of a conceptual study of service-learning into this qualitative research to bridge the theoretical and conceptual gaps between service-learning's origins and its application at SU. Whereas the limited existing research conducted on the outcomes of service-learning for community partners have made use of a solely qualitative approach

(Nduna, 2007; Worrall, 2007; Miron & Moely, 2006), some elements of the conceptual analysis are used to justify this study's focus on the experience of the partner organizations' representatives as evidence of the interventions' outcomes. The research design employed makes a practical consideration of both the community engagement and the partnership models in which service-learning is applied. It firmly relates the national developmental context and community engagement policies in HE to the local experience of service-learning partners at SU in the discipline of community development. This research has required substantive study of policy, practice, and conceptual frameworks before carrying out the field research for the purpose of this qualitative inquiry.

The research design for this study therefore proceeds through the following sequence of research: beginning with the experiences that served as the point of departure for posing this research question, then proceeding through the logic of this study, the research design for this thesis submission is presented prior to clarifying the research methodologies.

5.2.1 Point of departure and problem statement

Interests in this study arose out of the personal experience and involvement of the author in service-learning programmes at SU. The author completed both the pilot service-learning programme (2005) and the mainstream community development module (2006) as an undergraduate and served as a site-supervisor for service-learning students working with a student organization involved in community projects for nearly three years (2007-2009). Additionally, he co-facilitated a service-learning short programme in community development during a winter school in 2008. The first-hand experiences of service-learning left a few unresolved concerns relating to the outcomes for community partners.

As a Students' Representative Council member of SU (2007/8) in the portfolio of community interaction, the author was involved in and engaged across a number of community interaction initiatives. He sat on the managing committees of local development organizations and networks, and liaised extensively with students, academic staff, and community practitioners. Involvement across these bodies and with these different stakeholders fostered an appreciation for the differing experiences around community interaction activities, and specifically student involvement with partnering organizations in community development.

Questions arose as a result of the concurrent study of notions of community and development as part of requirements for this postgraduate programme, amidst a context of critical engagement with the institutional understanding of community interaction and specifically, conceptualizations of community at SU. Participation in the university's first Community Interaction Symposium (2008), an initiative developed in response to the HEQC's Audit Report (2007) of SU, piqued the author's interest in what is meant by "community" and how communities are engaged at the practical level by the institution. The Audit Report made the following statement about the University:

"SU's understanding of community interaction could provide a point of departure for the institution to give effect to its intention of becoming more outward-looking and contributing to the social development of South Africa. However, in order for this to take place, SU needs to engage with what it means by 'community' and what are the purposes of the different type of interactions which the University is proposing to have with different sectors in the Western Cape" (HEQC, 2007: 34).

Various experiences coalesced to motivate the undertaking of this study: The convening of the SU Community Interaction Symposium of 2008; concurrent studies of the theoretical and conceptual understandings of community and development; direct engagement with community organizations and service-learning partners during a term on the Students' Representative Council of Stellenbosch; and first-hand service-learning experience as a partnering organization and stakeholder. All of these experiences provided a multidimensional stimulation of both occupational and academic questions around Higher Education-community partnerships.

Literary research was initially undertaken for this thesis with the intention of conducting a study that explored the developmental outcomes of service-learning for communities. However, preliminary research and practical considerations around the scope of such a study proved beyond the current capacity of this student. Nevertheless, in the course of preliminary research a glaring omission in the literature, and a theoretical deficiency, were identified, the role and experience of the partner organization. This study sets out to provide more clarity on the role and experience of partner organizations by exploring the outcomes of their engagement with service-learning. It intends to contribute to understandings of Higher Education-service agency-community partnerships in the context of service-learning more generally, and specifically in the discipline of community development at the University of Stellenbosch.

Ultimately, the author intends to substantiate the experience and clarify the role of partner organizations hosting service-learning students. The result is the following problem statement: *What are the developmental outcomes of service-learning programmes in HE for partner organizations?*

This question can be further unpacked to address two distinct facets of this question:

Q1: *How have the representatives of partnering organizations of HE experienced service-learning programmes?*

Q2: *What are the developmental implications of the existing partnership model of service-learning for partner organizations?*

5.2.2 Logic of the research

This thesis submission seeks to answer the research question through a successive structure of research aims that are reflected in the chapters and progression of this thesis. Q1 serves as the question driving the collection of the primary data so that Q2

may be answered through the synthesis of supporting research in the conclusion of this thesis. In order to fulfil this purpose, this research aims to:

- Describe the origins and philosophy of community engagement in South Africa;
- describe the origins and conceptualization of service-learning as a type of community engagement;
- explore the conceptual framework of the applied partnership model for service-learning;
- explore and describe the outcomes of service-learning programmes as experienced by site-supervisors of partnering organizations;
- explore and describe the developmental implications of service-learning for partner organizations.

The aims have been partially achieved through research design modes including the previous chapters' analysis of literature, policy, and existing research on the subject within the South African, and local context. At the national level, policy documents identifying HEIs as crucial developmental agents have been presented. Existing research on community engagement and service-learning has provided a theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. Explication of the conceptual origins and models that inform this practice as well as their limitations has justified the exploration of the experience of partner organizations. Descriptions of this experience and exploration of the outcomes achieved are now critical to better understanding service-learning as an intervention with the explicit intention of mutual student-community benefit. The different dimensions of service-learning necessitate multiple means of evidence to substantiate outcomes for the different stakeholders (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995 cited in Nduna, 2007: 71).

The evolution of community interaction and service-learning at SU, as well as the author's personal experience during this period, have provided the context and motivation for conducting research on the experience of partner organizations; not least because the author himself represented a community partner with direct experience throughout this process. Primary data was therefore collected from partner organizations' site-supervisors to describe these experiences and explore the benefits and risks over the course of these partnerships. Trends and commonalities identified at different stages of partnership relations (Butterfoss *et al*, 1993: 319) help to understand the procession of experience that resulted in the outcomes achieved at each service-agency. Benefits and risks as experienced by organizational representatives substantiate these outcomes, and common experiences and observations that are expressed in this process help to identify conditions influencing the aforementioned outcomes.

As an exploratory study that applies a qualitative research design to collecting data from the field, there is a low degree of control in the design (Mouton, 2008: 144). This is attributable to the fact that the study is based primarily on experiences in the field of development at a specific set of site-supervisors hosting service-learning programmes from two modules. Efforts to compensate for this have been made through the logical structure and progression of reasoning supporting the research question, but the low control is surely a concern to be further discussed in the limitations of this study.

5.3 Research methodology

The exploratory nature of this study and the lack of existing research on service-learning community outcomes in the South African context (Mitchell & Rautenbauch, 2005; Mouton & Wildschut, 2005; Mouton & Wildschut, 2007; Nduna, 2007), provided few comparative examples to inform the comprehensive application of research methodologies for this exploratory study. Therefore, this study was primarily undertaken making use of the qualitative methodology of semi-structured interviewing, following from a thorough literature review, which subsequently resulted in an element of critical analysis of the Triad partnership model. The semi-structured interviewing method was selected because it is well adapted to exploring perceptions and experiences of complex processes and allows for queries of clarification. Importantly, it can be applied in a context of varied social conditions while still using a standard interview schedule (Barribal & While, 1994: 330)

Selltiz *et al* (1965 cited in Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 80) suggested three methods for conducting exploratory research that are relevant to this study: a review of relevant literature and research; a survey of people who have experience in the field of study; and an analysis of examples that may stimulate insight. Specific methods include a review of primary and secondary texts related to community engagement and service-learning. The literature review included elements of a critical conceptual analysis of the Triad Partnership Model yielding insights into how partnership relations are formed. Finally, a survey of representatives of the partner organizations was done in the form of semi-structured interviews for the collection of original empirical data.

5.3.1 Literature review and conceptual analysis

The study began with an extensive review of available literature on the topics associated with this study. This literary review can be broken down into a review of primary and secondary literature and research available on service-learning and related topics. The literature review was then integrated and synthesized with elements of a critical conceptual analysis of the Triad partnership model.

Primary data reviewed for the purpose of this study included original government policy documents, government resource guides, conference reports and accounts of their proceedings, institutional policy documents, as well as module frameworks. This component of the literary review helped to identify the structures and overarching developmental objectives associated with community engagement and service learning. The primary source information provided a predominantly policy context, from the national level down to the institutional.

The most substantial part of the literary study focused upon secondary texts on the topics of development and HE in South Africa, community engagement, service-learning, and community development. Of these texts, they can be divided between foreign literature, and domestic or local secondary texts.

The majority of literature focusing on the origins, theory, and philosophy around service-learning was from the United States as that is where the pedagogy originated. There is also vastly more research and literature on service-learning on account of the American HE sector putting considerably more resources into the field of study, and substantive support from organizations and agencies such as Campus Compact and Corporation for National and Community Service (Bringle & Hatcher, 2007: 81).

Although a greater quantity of research on service-learning is produced in the United States, a conscious effort was made to contribute to a growing amount of literature on community engagement and service-learning in the SA context. Priority was given to this literature because there has been a conscious and acknowledged reterritorialization of the concept and models associated with both community engagement and service-learning (Le Grange, 2007). Local research is clearly more relevant as there is a considerable and obvious gulf between the two contexts. South Africa is a developing country facing substantive socio-economic challenges with a relatively small HE sector still grappling with issues of transformation and reform. Whereas the United States is a developed country facing comparably fewer socio-economic challenges and has thousands of HEIs without the national imperative of HE transformation. Furthermore, Lazarus (2001) has presented service-learning with a greater developmental emphasis than its North American origins.

Integration of these various sources of primary and secondary texts occurred throughout the literature and was synthesized in the conceptual analysis of the Triad Partnership Model, with considerations of the role and relations of partner organizations within the field of community development. This critical analysis challenged the existing model by addressing its shortcomings and substantiated the significance of the partner organization in the South African context as a crucial actor in the field of community development and as a host to service-learning programmes.

5.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Site-supervisors were selected on a purposive sampling basis from active service-learning partner organizations. Of the 16 partner organizations currently receiving students in the discipline of community development, four of those organizations are university based or affiliated, thereby creating an ethical dilemma and raising the issue of potential bias. For that reason, those four partner organizations were excluded from the study. An additional two organizations were first-time service-learning recipients and were still in the process of carrying out their first service-learning programme and were therefore also excluded from the study. Of the ten remaining organizations, nine agreed to participate in the study, and in one instance the organization suggested two site-supervisors be interviewed as they were both involved with service-learning students.

Upon completion of the literary study and after consultation with institutional stakeholders and module facilitators, nine interviews were conducted with ten site-supervisors. Of these ten site-supervisors, nine were female and one was male. Only one was originally of the community of intended benefit which the respective agency served, and one was originally from the geographic locality associated with the organization's service.

The semi-structured interviews were designed making use of Kvale's (1998 cited in Mouton, 2000: 290) seven stage interview process. Upon completion of the thorough literature review, a thematizing and conceptual clarification identified key concepts relating to the experience of partner organizations: service-learning, partnership, community need, benefit and risk. From there, a design was planned out for the interview, with the interview broken into the four stages set out by Butterfoss *et al* (1993: 319) in their stages of partnership: formation, implementation, maintenance, outcomes. A series of questions integrating the concepts across the four stages of partnership were then selected, and distributed to the two course-facilitators responsible for both service-learning modules in the discipline of community development. With feedback from the course facilitators involved with the service-learning programmes, the semi-structured interview was finalized and used for all interviews. See Addendum 1 for a copy of the semi-structured interview questions.

Site-supervisors of partner organizations were contacted by phone to arrange interviews at their convenience and were given a briefing on the purpose of the study and the focus of the interviews. All interviews were conducted over the course of a week in the beginning of October 2009. Each interview ranged from approximately 30-45 minutes in length depending upon the participant and his/her experience with service-learning programmes at his/her partner organization. All interviews were conducted in English, with the exception of one interview where the respondent requested to answer in Afrikaans, but intermittently spoke in English. This interview was conducted jointly in Afrikaans and English with the presence of an interpreter, as the respondent moved between both languages as was comfortable.

All interviews were recorded digitally and stored on the hard drive of the author's office computer, with the exception of one interview which was recorded with an analogue cassette tape. Unfortunately, the analogue cassette was of insufficient length, and a small portion of the interview was unfortunately not recorded as a result. Fortunately, extensive notes were taken and the loss was considered minimal. Upon completion of all interviews, they were transcribed and analyzed. Due to confidentiality considerations, all transcriptions have been excluded from this study but are available upon request.

Linking back to Kvale's seven stages of interview research (1998 cited in Mouton, 2000: 290), transcriptions were followed by a stage of analyzing the data and identifying certain commonalities and recurring themes across the various interviews. This was then verified and cross-referenced with the original recordings to ensure the validity of the transcriptions. Finally, the primary data collected is reported in the following chapter and integrated into a theoretical framework in the conclusion of this thesis.

5.4 Ethical considerations

As the subject of this research is the socio-educational intervention of service-learning at partner organizations, the ethical considerations around this research were complex considering the number of actors and stakeholders involved. Given the exploratory nature of this study, the direct experience of the author in the field of study, and the

intention of the author to explore and describe the experience of the partner organization, ethical considerations focused primarily upon the representatives of the partnering organizations.

Across the two service-learning modules in community development there are a number of partnering organizations or bodies based within the institution of which the author is a part of one. Because of the potential bias of these organizational representatives, and the ethical dilemmas and paradox involved in interviewing a university employee about his/her relationship and experience of hosting students as part of a module of the university, all partner organizations based within the institution, four of them, were excluded from this study because of their potential bias and issues related to the validity of their experience as their dual roles of institutional employees and representatives of partner organizations was a potential source of conflict. Such an ethical dilemma can also be considered around the role of this author, and are acknowledged, but were consciously mitigated throughout this process through dialogue with both institutional representatives and community partners in order to remain as objective as possible during the course of the research.

Since semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection method for this study, all participants were contacted in advance and given a telephonic brief of the purpose of the study to arrange for participation. Interviews were mostly held at the partnering organizations at an agreed date and time with notice of digital recordings. An informed consent form was presented to all of the representatives of partner organizations prior to their participation in the interviews. All participants read the document and signed accompanying consent form wilfully agreeing to participate in the study, aware of their options to refuse to answer questions or excuse themselves from the study at any time. All were given copies of this informed consent form. These signed forms have been withheld from this document by the author to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the individuals interviewed. A blank copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix 2.

In order to ensure anonymity of the respondents and confidentiality with regards to their comments, the removal of all possible identifiers associated with the site-supervisors and their organizations was done in presenting the research findings (Mouton, 2008: 244). In this case, any identifying information or titles were replaced with the following [content information] that indicates a specific identifying word was removed so as to ensure that confidentiality is maintained in this study. Where the respondents made specific comments that referred to some group or specific experience {this contextual information} was inserted by the author to provide a reference point for the statements.

As a student and staff member of the University of Stellenbosch, great care and consideration was taken to ensure that this study contributes to understandings of service-learning for community partners. As an acknowledged stakeholder in service-learning programmes, the author conducted this study with the explicit intention of contributing new and relevant information to this area of study and practice. The intention is benevolent and attempts to address any issues or concerns in constructive terms that serve to enhance the quality of the partnership for service agencies hosting university students.

5.5 Limitations of the research

As an exploratory study this research is bound by significant limitations. The focus upon service-learning programmes located across nine organizations, partnering through two modules in the discipline of community development, at SU, means that this study is seriously restricted in terms of generalizability. As exploratory research this study hopes to determine the viability of further research on the role of partnering organizations in service-learning based upon the experiences presented here. The study does not expect to arrive at broadly generalizable conclusions about the outcomes of service-learning modules at partner organizations. Although some aspects of the study may be more broadly interpreted and applied, as in the case of the critical analysis of the Triad Partnership Model, the main findings of the study are largely limited to the immediate context of these two specific community development modules and the partner organizations.

The qualitative research design employed in the course of this exploratory study results in a low degree of control because of the interviewing techniques and emphasis on data from the field that varies considerably across sites. The conceptual framework of the study is structured so as to bridge disciplines and follows deductive reasoning, but this allows for broad interpretation and considerable variations in argument construction. There is an acknowledged focus upon the emic perspective of the partnering organization representatives as the author shares similar experience, contributing to the credibility of the study. This also contributes to an interpretive framework orientated towards the experience of actors outside of the institution, which creates a kind of bias. The findings are significantly influenced by the individuals being hosted at the respective sites and through the immediate site supervisor's dealings with university partners, limiting overall validity of the study as much of the data is the subjective understandings of the various respondents. This in turn contributes to an already rather limited degree of transferability.

The experiences expressed by the site-supervisors of the partner organizations are subjective reflections on the collective history of service-learning at their respective organizations, as known to them. These first hand experiences entail the cumulative experiences of partner organizational representatives working with service-learning students from anywhere between 1-4.5 years, and are presented in such a way as to speak largely for themselves, ensuring a degree of dependability. There was only one case in which more than one representative of the partner organization was present for an interview, meaning that the responses provided are as reliable as the respondents were objective about the service-learning programmes. However, given the shortcomings of the design, the site-supervisors contain the greatest institutional knowledge of service-learning at their organizations and have all been in direct contact with institutional representatives for service-learning and the respective modules.

Additionally, there is the serious consideration of researcher bias. Although efforts have been taken to maintain an objective perspective throughout the course of this study, the author is a representative of a service-learning partner organization based within the institution. A decision was taken not to include representatives of these

organizations in the study purposefully so as to avoid ethical dilemmas and concerns over the validity of their experience from a community partner perspective. While this is certainly a limitation and potential source of error within the study, it can also be construed as a strength of the study. Since the author has had the first-hand experience of being a student, facilitator, and community partner of service-learning programmes, there is a degree of understanding and comprehension of the complex roles and responsibilities that each actor occupies. Occupying these roles therefore has more potential strengths associated with it considering the research design than it does weaknesses.

5.6 Conclusion

The research design and methodologies employed throughout the course of this exploratory study of the developmental outcomes of service-learning programmes for partner organizations has been examined. The qualitative research paradigm has informed the research design and the appropriate methodologies of literature review and a survey have been fully employed, with some elements of a critical conceptual analysis. The ethical considerations related to the study as well as the limitations of the research have been clearly detailed. From here, the study will proceed to present the primary data collected and synthesize this data within the conceptual and theoretical framework devised in previous chapters.

Chapter 6 – Research findings

6.1   Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the experiences of the partnering organizations as perceived by the site-supervisors responsible for overseeing service-learning interventions. The experiences shared by the site-supervisors provide valuable information on the dynamics of the service-learning interventions, ranging from reflections upon the inception of these programmes, through day-to-day responsibilities and challenges, and expressions of some collective risks and benefits experienced over the years. Although the survey group is relatively small, comprised of only ten individuals, it has provided valuable data on how the service-learning programmes are received and achieved at their respective organizations.

Using these research findings, a social exclusion perspective (Sayed, 2008) is applied to examine the implications of these experiences within a developmental framework for service-learning programmes at SU. This human capability approach helps to interpret policy, inform future foci, and suggest possible directions for future service-learning programmes. Most importantly, these findings integrate the macro-educational policies through to the institutional application of service-learning programmes in the discipline of community development, presenting findings specific to the SU context.

The following experiences are presented in terms of a thematic progression across the sites, with efforts taken to group these experiences as representations of the processes around these interventions. Respondents' experiences are organized around identified shared experiences and commonalities across sites at specific stages. Commonalities within the thematic procession across sites are particularly useful for focusing the application of the social exclusion perspective to the experience of site-supervisors at partner organizations of SU.

6.2   Stages of partnership

The research findings are structured upon Butterfoss *et al*'s (1993: 319) partnership stages, and promoted by the CHESP initiative in the HEQC (2006a: 95) resource guide to service-learning in the curriculum. As these are the stages of partnership development that have been advocated nationally to follow in the course of designing service-learning modules, it is only appropriate to structure the data in terms of this logical progression of relations. Additionally, it is noted that these stages of partnership are similar to other identified processes of engagement. Butterfoss *et al's* (1993) four stages of collaborative partnership include: formation, implementation, maintenance, and outcomes. The experiences of partner organizations will therefore be presented in terms of these four thematic stages of partnership development.

Bringle & Hatcher's (2002: 506) terms of engagement for campus-community partnerships identifies an aspect of these interventions between institutions and community that merits mention prior to presenting the data. Bringle & Hatcher's

conceptualization of partnerships as relationships at individual and institutional level helps one to understand the importance of communication and the sensitivities around these partnerships. As relationships between individuals take on deeply personal characteristics, so can some service-learning partnerships. Presenting this data without an acknowledgement of the role these individual relations play in this process would misrepresent these partnerships to a certain extent.

At the same time, the broader institutional processes and symbolic values of such partnerships are constrained by such an individual approach. The bounds for understanding the implications of these partnerships are seriously limited by the relationship approach, especially in terms of developmental outcomes for partner organizations and communities. Yet an understanding that partnerships do at times manifest themselves as relationships between individuals (and often begin as such) is useful in this instance. It is clear from the data that a certain degree of validity in presenting these findings rests with acknowledgement of these relationships, but recognizing that there is a limit to this kind of conceptualization for this study. In line with the ethical considerations, all identifying references across sites have been edited from the text and replaced with brackets [] indicating the author's replacement in editing, whereas {} is inserted by the author as a point of reference for clarity.

6.2.1 Formation

Crucial to the overall experience of service-learning interventions for all parties involved, the formation stage of a partnership is central to establishing the conditions whereby a partnership can flourish. It is this stage where different parties are approached and the possibilities for engagement are explored. A key product of this stage is the identification of a shared mission or purpose for the partnership to exist (Butterfoss *et al*, 1993: 320).

Given the duration of some of the service-learning programmes and partnerships involved (1-4.5 years), the exact origins of the partnership were not always clear across the sites. With the organizations operating in different localities across various spheres and with different goals, there was not one commonly identified experience to initiate the partnership across the sites. Formative experiences ranged from personal conversations to pre-existing relations with the University. All partners did allude to the idea that both organizations could benefit from such a programme, although most did not identify any specific goal driving the relationship.

> Participant (P)1: "It was a request from the University, they came here and asked if we need someone for example when someone is not there or can help us with certain things, if they could bring students here, this was approved by the chairperson and the committee members"

> P2: "I think there was first a round of discussions on practical suitability both in terms of programme and also then in terms of support. I think it has been quite important for service learning, to make sure that we will be able to offer the support to the students, and that they do not become either just volunteers, or then unpaid employees of the organization, so

most probably setting up parameters for expectations, I would say that that was important."

P2 (later response): "In that regard, specifically trying to set up new partnerships we try and put in a lot of time, because currently the structure is we see a need and we know that service learning is there it is not, is sounds very bad if you say that your jumping on the bandwagen, but it is an opportunity that needs to be used, if we don't grasp it somebody else will. But ja, we are actively seeking partnerships."

P4: "I think, our director and [module facilitator] have a good relationship, personal relationship, and I think that that's where it sort of stemmed from, so possibly slightly unusual channels, ja not quite as formal. But ja, just a couple of conversations about it, you know, weighing up pros and cons, benefits having a look at it and how we could work together and just sort of benefit each other. Ja, but that is slightly more informal process than I would imagine is usually gone through."

P6: "I think they, you must remember the initial research to get [community organization] off the ground was done by the [academic department]. So there was sort of, they were aware of us, they asked me whether I will be interested in students. So I said well, we prefer students with [backgrounds in various disciplines] that is a good background for a student to be involved in our case in community development."

P8A: "I attended the workshop at some stage. [module facilitator] arranged the workshop for all the sites, so as site supervisor and we attended the workshop and [module facilitator] gave us a guideline, a written guideline as well, like a manual type of thing. Later on, I think, [module facilitator] edited it, and emailed it to me."

Some responses around questions of formation of the partnership suggested that there was an element of compliance to a request, rather than a true mutuality of agreement upon a common purpose. Osman and Attwood (2007: 16) explained that these power relations must be acknowledged because of the asymmetrical manner in which service-learning came into being. Interestingly, these power relations are present both between the University and partner organization, as well as clearly within the organizations. These intra-organization relations have more significant implications later when it comes to communication around the partnerships.

P3: "No, they approached me and I was, I gave my cooperation immediately, so we started to put it in practice immediately."

P5: "I didn't really come to know about it, it was kind of forced up on me by the [intra-organization position]. They didn't really want students at the [division of organization], so they asked me to accommodate and I didn't realize that it was actually only for the first group, but subsequently it just kind of continued so ja.... There was someone who was actually running the programme as far as I know and gives class to the students, that person came to contact me here and came to see me afterwards."

P9: "I heard somewhere about [module facilitator] talking about it, and the whole story about the whole University doing it, and in the end everybody will have to do it."

P9 (later comment): "I know that [module facilitator] and [intra-organization person] they talk, I don't know what, it is actually funny if you think about it that [module facilitator] talk to [intra-organization person] without asking where does [intra-organization person] fit in the bigger structure. I suppose [intra-organization person] let [module facilitator] understand [intra-organization person] is the boss, because thats what kind of the stage [intra-organization person] was in."

However, even where power relations were present, there was a sense of mutual purpose across all of the organizations. Most of the organizations stated explicitly that the idea of a service-learning partnership with the university clearly entailed mutual benefit, and a degree of reciprocity.

P2: "Well, it basically means that I am not just a recipient, it's supposed to, I think {there}is a reciprocal process taking place and that we can offer something but we can also receive something, it's kind of a give and take."

P3: "That means I co-operate with them, to create an opportunity for the students to do a project and, also, eventually for the good of the community, the people that benefit from the project, and also our organization also benefits from that."

P8A[1]: "We see it as an opportunity for the students to get involved on the ground level with service, with rendering of services, that they can get in touch, that they can see what it means, how is South Africa, how is children of South Africa, how do we work, that is what I think."

P9: "Well, I suppose that we actually accommodate the students, that we give them a chance to do what they are supposed to do, to learn from us but also to give something back."

Although it is difficult to identify commonalities of formation across all the sites over a period of years and changes of site-supervisors, it seems that the formation stage of the partnership has occurred largely at the university's request. Mutual purpose for the programmes does not always seem to have been organic, but that may be more of a testament to the paternalism of the university in the past, than a critique of the formation of the partnerships. If the organizations had never experienced the university through a genuine process of collaboration in the past, one would not necessarily expect to organically initiate one. These experiences of formation have clear implications for the next phase of the partnership, that of implementation.

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[1] P8A and P8B refer to two participating site-supervisors at one site interviewed together.

6.2.2 Implementation

Central to the implementation stage of service-learning programmes is the need identification and formalization of the partnership in terms of practical expectations and responsibilities (Butterfoss *et al,* 1993: 321; HEQC, 2006a: 96). Given the various contexts and goals of the respective organizations, the needs to which the service-learning interventions are addressed are quite diverse.

Not all site-supervisors were able to provide a concrete explanation of the specific need that was identified, but all sites confirmed there was a need of some kind that was addressed. As to how needs were assessed, there was also a lack of clarity. Most site-supervisors listed specific roles or tasks to which the students were applied that they had identified. Some of the partners noted that they have had to learn themselves by trial and error how to make use of the service-learning students effectively at different times, and some were still in the process of formulating how best to apply service-learning students at their organizations. A certain level of flexibility was common across all sites.

> P2: "It started out as experiential learning and as we grew we realized what the benefits could be of service-learning. So now it is more a question of us finding a need, or identifying a need, and then approaching at present the relevant parties."

> P2 (later response): "It is a [organization] so sometimes you need to fill in wherever there is a gap. But we try to limit it to whatever they were approached to do for in the beginning. We also, in general, try and follow a structure where there is a lot of independence in various aspects of the programme."

> P4: "They {students} are still learning how to build reports and things like that. They are still very uncertain and very unsure of themselves, so you know, you sort of find a space for them. Which is kind of what we do at the moment, they are working as tutors and then finding out why teenagers are resisting coming to the [organization], but the reality of how much information we can actually gain from it is relatively minimal."

> P5: "When I spoke to the coordinator it was kind of, [module facilitator] kind of gave me free reign. I said what would you like the students to have, get out of it? And I know they have a very strong feeling that the students need to give something back to the [organization], but I think for this set up it is very difficult. You know that the [organization] or the [community] actually benefit, because a lot of training goes into getting them to be able to do what needs to be done."

> P5(later response): "I will tell them where I think the need is and they {students} will try and accommodate and that was something....They do give something back in that sense, and that is what it says it is always focused on the [community group], something that the [community group], will benefit from. So ja, definitely."

P6: "In our case, certain times of the year, especially the last 6 months normally, we have an overload of [organizational programmes] and people that actually then they really start thinking of, what must I do to find a job next year? So if we can offer them, you know then they realize they must be part of our [organizational programmes]. So the students literally help us with the registration and assessment process. And that, and normally this is also the time of the year that we are busy..... so we have a lot of pressure on our limited resources so they offer actually time for us, that is a big resource time and people's skills. So they really are a resource to us, especially during the last six months of the year when we have a lot of pressure."

P7: "Yes, I think if you look at responsibilities, at the end of the day you want the project to be a success. So, you have a goal at the end that you want them to do whatever the project is, lets take for example when you look at a healthy life style. You want them to do something in the spectrum of a healthy life style that when the student leave, that you either have [community] that want to do that or is in a programme to do that or realizes it is good for them to do that. So you want that as an end goal. I don't want a student that's , when that student arrives here, I don't know what is their talent so maybe they can be somebody that is good in music for example, then I don't want them to go for walks with the student. I take the student, what the student brings with him or her into consideration and try to blend it in to what we want. And then at the end of the day that the student have a positive experience as well as we as the organization gain something. I don't want something to be fixed in concrete that this is what you need to do and that is it. I want to move in the direction from this is what we want, but yes the student is coming with some talents or whatever that we can use at the end of the day into the, that we and the student can gain, best interests of everybody."

P8A: "It developed over time in the beginning, ja as we grew it developed. In the beginning we just used them in general like our other volunteers, help where there is a need, if a child is crying pick up the baby, help feeding and so on. And then as we went on with the programme, [module facilitator] and I discussed it, that they really need to be specifically involved with something. Otherwise, with the presentation they would feel, but the others had all kinds of projects and they were just helping out. We tried by trial and error, we came to this that they are involved with this group and the [organizational activity] and it is working well. They feel that they are really worthwhile, they are really doing something constructive and we benefit from it as well and it works. Because we can't have somebody coming in, and starting a whole new project, like they do at some of the other places, it is not working. We have got our routine we have got our whole programme already set out. So we had to fit them in a place that they could feel they are still making a difference and can, during the presentation can show results."

The service component of service-learning is clearly conceptualized as an intervention that is structured around a community goal or need (Furco, 1996; Bringle & Hatcher,

2005; HEQC, 2006a). Most organizations have identified needs for service-learning programmes to address, but need orientations for service-learning seem to be short term, as that is the availability of the students. The acknowledged limitations of the time frames varied across the sites, and are sometimes considered complementary to the site's operations. A simple quote encompasses this experience, "With service learning, the timeslot that they are here is actually short, and it can be a problem but it can also be positive" (P7). However, in some instances it does seem that the needs being served in the short term are not necessarily determined by the organizations or the community, but that the students themselves set the agenda.

P3: "Maybe they must just decided before hand the area on which they{students} are going to focus and not to leave it entirely up to them to decide on what area they are going to focus"

P3 (later response): "They follow a programme, they do the same things in all the [organization's sites] with the [community]. So, it is up to them to decide, once they have observed the conditions, because they do differ from, you know, place to place obviously, it is up to them to decide that in this [site] we can improve this area, you see. So, it differs from place to place and I think it is good that they can, you know, take that initiative, because obviously we can't be everywhere all the time. So, ja, they get to know the [site personnel] and the [community] and the conditions and then they can decide, okay, we can improve on this or this can change".

P4: "Honestly, it depends on what the students need to do, it is not so much about what we need. And that is kind of, that's the reality that we are talking about, that we sort of want to help out more than anything. There is quite a lot of extra work actually from our side, more than beneficial."

P5: "So very often what I do is when the students start, I ask them what they would like to get out of it. And I think if we have reached that goal that is probably sufficient, you know."

P5 (later response):"...that is why I always tell them this goes as far as you want it to go, it is what you expect and make of it, if you are not really interested , I am not going to force you and I have said that to the University as well that is not what I feel I am here for, in any case I am not a trainer as part of my job, I am doing it because I was asked to and it is kind of a favour."

P9: "Ja, I suppose they {students} must do their studies you know. It is actually quite complicated if you actually think about it. It is not a process that is being properly work-shopped, it is kind of wobbly, here they are......And so I actually asked them, just explain to me again, who are you? Because they want to do things in between, you know. So they have ideas, and I have, but they never speak to me. Now they are nearly finished. So I still think, when we do it again next year, we must have a proper induction programme, we stride now with these two [students] that has been there. The [module] students, I never, I told them now, [module

facilitator] said they must do whatever we tell them to do. But now they are doing their own thing also, they are looking at the administrative problems of [the organization], pulling you out of the air you know, it is like duuuuh. "

Formalization of the programmes is something that seems to have occurred to varying degrees across the sites. The formal responsibilities that the module facilitators set for the students, such as the logistical planning, tracking hours, and presentations seems to have secured a degree of formality between the students and site-supervisors. Furthermore, site-supervisors generally seem aware of their responsibilities towards the students' expectations as outlined in module frameworks (Smith-Tolken, 2009). Many sites make a conscious effort to prepare the students upon their arrival and almost all have a specific orientation established, although the extent of these orientations is not well captured in the data:

P1: "Ja, say the first day I show them what is done here. It is the second time that it will go smoother and then I talk about the organization, I tell them what service we give here for the [community]."

P5: "It is actually quite a big responsibility I think, because I feel personally I need to make sure that those students get some [organizational] background that that's what they are here for. And that is a lot of training involved, they are not really in the [organizational] field as such where they come from."

P6: "What we do is, we actually give them literally an overview with the supervisor. Then I make available to them also our annual report so that they can see what it is about."

The formalization of the student involvement is linked to the identification of the needs. Many of the organizations have identified their or the community's needs in the short term, accommodating the service-learning students within their organizations. This seems to have an effect on the degree of formality experienced.

P2: "I think, on the other hand, most of the service learning involvement are fairly structured and time limited. There is always a component of knowing, okay, this person is going to be with us for this amount of time, which has an interesting dynamic to it. There is always, a kind of a conscious knowledge that you need to finish and stuff, it needs to be a limited brief with specific outcomes, whereas volunteers are usually there to fill gaps with not so many specific interventions or outcomes expected."

P4: "I mean, it is quite specific, you have only got them for certain times and they are only available at certain times, you have got a certain amount of hours to fill in a matter for weeks. So, you know like, for us personally, our programme is pretty rigid and pretty structured, you know, you have the [organization activities] from 4 till 6 in the afternoon [at the locality] that they are placed on or 3 till 5 just depending. Then in [organization activities] you have got, you know, support [staff] that come in, all sort of

different things happening on a pretty routine basis so a space needs to be made for when it is possible for them. And then once you know when they can come, when it is possible for them to come then you decide where to place them. So it is more adhoc."

P7: "There is a beginning and an end. With other volunteers there is a beginning, and you don't know when is the end. Or the end is, with service learning students it is short, it is 10 weeks and then it is over, other students will be here for a year. There is a difference, and that you will take into consideration with the group of people that you are working with."

P9: "With the [module] students I only today kind of realized what they were supposed to do. It is a pity I didn't speak to them beforehand, because we could have done such a nice study in terms of, [academic discipline] and later things, so we must just talk next year..... you know it wasn't what is happening how it does work. And then email email, and who says I read what is on the email, because who really reads all the attachments. If you ask me to read it, I will rather I don't need the students, so we will have to get the middle ground."

Mutual formalization has the potential to result in a regular "reorientation to the purposes, goals, roles and procedures of collaboration" on which the interventions are conceptualized (Croan and Lees, 1979 cited in Butterfoss *et al*, 1993: 321). Where the need identification is not mutually acknowledged, it may detract from the degree of formality experienced with the service-learning programme. Once a given programme starts, there is a consistency that is acknowledged at almost all sites. But as the needs change or shift from semester to semester or group to group, so seems to be some of the formalities on site. One explanation could also be that this is partially the result of experiential learning and the dynamic developmental processes occurring on site (HEQC, 2006a: 95).

6.2.3 Maintenance

As many of these partnerships have existed over extended periods of time, efforts to maintain and continue relations have transpired. This kind of monitoring and awareness throughout the relationship serves to entrench and fulfil both parties' commitments to service-learning outcomes (HEQC, 2006a: 97). Such communication and engagements may also contribute to a degree of formalization that was not necessarily captured in the previous section. At some sites, this communication and engagement was sufficient, at others, it was identified as lacking.

P1: "They organize sessions where all the sites come together and then we discuss if there are problems, or if there is a need or for example they cannot send that many anymore they have just too little of certain students, they can't always give us what we want....And they will take us out, as recently at the Protea Hotel, where we talked about where they want to move towards. There is enough communication and for instance, [module facilitator] phones and listens, asks how things are, [module

facilitator] usually phones and we also have all the phone numbers if problems occur. It hasn't been necessary to phone anybody to say the student has done this, I am happy. We are very happy."

P3: "Well, they communicate with us, they want feedback from us and they invite us every year to the presentation, when the students do their presentation, so there is good communication".

P6: "The thing is, during the week the feedback is right through the period with the department, I will say literally on a weekly basis. But that is when you have a good supervisor [module facilitator] is interested and [assistant] is interested. It depends on your supervisor as such. Initially, [module facilitator] did it on its own, but now [module facilitator] has got [assistant] in addition. As far as I am concerned there is good communication. [Assistant] will just walk in at any given time, not on appointment and [module facilitator] is very available for them to talk to, it is not just the communication to my side. [Assistant] is available for the students. That is actually how it should work, you know, feedback from both sides".

P7: "Honestly, I think both parties have to take responsibility. So if I have a problem, I have to communicate it to the University and vice versa also. I think out of problems, if you want to call that, that we have experienced, I realize that you have to do it sooner than later. Don't wait until the end of the practicals to discuss if you have a problem, do it immediately. Normally I didn't have a problem, but because of my busy schedule and also the University's busy schedule, you sometimes didn't get to each other, and then you didn't realize you have a problem, before it is maybe a problem that could have been sorted out earlier if you realized it earlier or you get to each other earlier. So I think feedback from my side on that is, I think, we need more feedback from the University.

P8B: "I haven't had very much communication, besides [assistant] phoning to find out if they are here, really logistical kind of things, there is not much".
P8A: "From time to time we would email, I would get an email from [module facilitator] asking or mentioning something, or I would email [module facilitator] about something, But is wasn't very often, but it was enough, you didn't need anything more. There was open door policy from both sides, so we could communicate if we needed to".

All the sites recognized that some communication and maintenance procedures did exist, and most sites acknowledged the presentations. However, as far as consistent communication mechanisms that regularly provide information about the experience of the partnership (Sebastion, Skelton and West, 2000: 57), this was perceived as absent at some service agencies.

P2: "I would say that most probably is something that is lacking at present, I don't know if it is a time constraint or I don't know if it is a, or whether it is just that I don't see the workings behind the scenes, but there

is fairly little contact between lecturers for instance and the site. Some ja, for instance, the one partnership there is no, no, interaction, the other one, I am fostering an own relationship because I am trying to get more participation for next year. But I would hope that, you know, at least the students liaise again with their lecturers afterwards, which I obviously don't see but that would be a hope."

P2 (later response): "Also {the partner organization communicates}very infrequently, so ja, most probably I can't put the blame on them, then. Ja...."

P4: "I don't know, I actually, to be honest, I don't know. I suppose, you know, also our concerns have not been communicated because obviously there is that personal relationship and that also makes things complicated. But ja, reservations I don't think have been communicated."

P4 (later response): "Pretty much only {communication} in the beginning and then, I think, when they have to do their research, although that is a new component, but that's pretty much be the only interaction."

P5: "That is a difficult one, because in all honesty, the only time I really see them {module facilitators} is when they come to drop the students off and kind of introduce them, give me a bit of background and then you don't really hear again from them until the time that they leave. Obviously you're supposed to let them know if there are problems and so on. But I mean, I have never really had problems that had to be discussed, you know. I feel that is kind of their department, we are just here to help them during their time here."

P7: "Honestly, sometimes in, it will be once in the whole 10 weeks that you have a student here. So sometimes I get the feeling it is only when there is a problem that you get feedback."

P9: "The day [module facilitator] came with them there, it was [module facilitator] just saying okay there you are now bye, I thought all of us would sit down together and at least talk. [Module facilitator] went, and that was the last that I saw of [module facilitator] and these [students] are nearly finished".

P9 (later response): "I just think it would be good if we are going to have a little bit of a better, with the adults in the back, you know, with the lecturers, if we can just have somewhere in between also at the next show. And just say where do they think we are, and the students are.... It is just a little bit of a connection, not all the time please, but just say once, just in the middle of the six months again, that will help. But I have the feeling with, especially with [course facilitator], that they are also trying this side that side, that's okay. Nobody really knows the exact things."

Issues of communication require acknowledgement that at some sites there are multiple lines of communication and what is communicated to the partner organization

and the site supervisor is not always absorbed across the organization, or even gets to the site-supervisor. In order to draw any conclusions about this experience, all communicating parties would need to be surveyed, whereas this study takes only the limited sample of the site-supervisors into account. The experience around communication varies considerably across sites. There are certainly different possible explanations for this, but it is clear that some site-supervisors experience more open and direct means of communication between the institution and organization than others. Furthermore, some site-supervisors are also more aware of their roles in communicating back to the institution than others. More robust communication channels and strategies can only serve to better convey experiences between partners. Such information can only help to better inform all parties towards the goal of mutual benefit.

6.2.4 Outcomes

The outcomes stage of the service-learning partnerships consists of the impact of the programmes for the HEIs, service agency, or community. As other studies have shown that the student learning outcomes are well-supported (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Furco, 1996; Gelmon, *et al*, 1998; Hay, 2003; McEwen, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999), this study focuses on outcomes for service-learning partner organizations, and their communities of intended benefit to a lesser extent. These findings do not claim to be an impact assessment of the various service-learning interventions, but rather an exploration of how the service-learning site-supervisors perceive the cumulative benefits and risks they have experienced at their respective organizations.

Clark and Wilson's (1961: 134-135) 'trimotivational' typology of organizational incentives identifies three groupings of potential outcomes that can be applied to collaborative partnerships: material, purposive, and solidarity[2]. Material outcomes include any type of monetary or physical capital outcome. Purposive outcomes include those needs or goals that were identified from the outset of the collaboration, and that were intentional outcomes of the involvement. Solidarity outcomes refer to those benefits that are derived from sharing identities or norms and values between groups or individuals. This concept obviously lends itself well to community development and will be explored more extensively in the final chapter. Additionally, there are the added considerations of the risks or potential losses as a result of these students. Obviously not an intended outcome; nevertheless, there are clear risks involved in hosting service-learning programmes that site-supervisors have experienced.

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[2] Clark & Wilson (1961:134-135) refer to "solidary" outcomes. "They derive in the main from the act of associating and include such rewards as socializing, congeniality, the sense of group membership and identification, the status resulting from membership, fun and conviviality, the maintenance of social distinctions, and so on." These "solidary" outcomes are essentially an earlier conceptualization of solidarity and they are equated to be solidarity as collaborative outcomes in both Butterfoss et al (1993) and HEQC (2006a).

6.2.4.1 Material

Substantial material outcomes are not amongst the intended benefits for partner organizations as a result of the service-learning programmes. The sensitive nature of the relationships and the lack of resources available to both parties to support the programmes mean the scarce resources available are usually invested in logistical arrangements. Furthermore, creating the expectation of material outcomes as a result of service-learning programmes lends itself to a co-option of the process whereby service-learning programmes become a means to a material ends for the partner organizations. As the emphasis is upon the learning and service outcomes, any material outcomes are usually unanticipated additional benefits. At least one organization had experienced material benefits as a result of hosting international service-learning students:

> P1: "And you know that these things here, come from service learning students, from the Netherlands. A lady sent me a letter last week, and when they come and she is going to donate some money for the children to buy them stuff that they needed and this is the third time that has happened here."

> P1 (later response): "I will show you, I have received lots of books, this comes from America. [Student], her father was a principal, a headmaster, and he came and bring us two trollies of books and crayons. We actually was, we have improved a lot since we have service-learners, honestly, that, that is why I think we benefit enormously from each other."

Since service-learning programmes occur at service-agencies that tend to operate in resource deprived environments, any material outcomes received as a result of the partnership are often recognized by the partnering organizations as benefits. Although only one respondent explicitly acknowledged this as a benefit of the service-learning programme, others alluded to the fact that they had received donations or sponsorships and accessed additional material support as a secondary benefit of hosting the service-learning students, particularly international service-learning students that seem to have enhanced organizational access to international networks of donors and sponsorships in some cases.

6.2.4.2 Purposive

Purposive outcomes include those identified benefits which the partner organizations have experienced as a result of service-learning programmes. In this instance, the outcomes across the sites varied considerably. Almost all organizations have identified the valuable asset of additional manpower which they intended to receive, echoing the finding of Nduna (2007).

> P5: "Yeah, in the [organization] itself, I must say, there have been days where the [organizational staff] is not here, and they are very willing to jump in and try to help there with the [community] specifically so that helps a big deal.

P5(later response): "In the [organization], I think we have covered that you know the fact that they can step in, if they are able to and actually provide that service whether it is for that morning or whatever time there here."

P7: "It's more hands, it is always good to have more people with ideas, younger people that can do something with the [community]."

Many of the organizations cited communication between distinct groups and cultural interactions as a benefit of hosting the service-learning students. They experienced this often as an intended benefit for both the organizations and the communities of intended benefit.

P1: "Yes, definitely. See, the children are more, a lot of the children don't ever see other people, and especially not white people. They are used to guests and it is good that is sort of makes your child mature, communicate with mature people, it is a benefit if he goes to the teacher at the school, that he speaks with other people so he feels more free. Often people come and we get to know them and learn from them. It builds the child's self esteem. And with regards to the school, we get a better child because you know that you have service learners around you and then you try yourself also to do better."

P2: "Skills, manpower, and this whole thing of which, which ultimately is most probably more important than any of the previous ones, is this thing of crossing boundaries, crossing cultural divides, where we have got an opportunity to interact across cultures and really get to know each other".

P4: "I think possibly what is good is for the kids to be exposed to different people, does give them level of exposure to a world that they don't usually know. I think that, you know, [the community] can be quite insular, so it is good when the kids are challenged with having to get to know different people, especially when you get the international service learning students that usually just sort of take that opportunity to just to expand their world, give them a concept of what is out there. I suppose they could possibly be an inspiration to the kids, although I wouldn't know, but, I mean, that is a possibility".

One common benefit experienced by the organizations were the new ideas or innovations brought into their organizations by the service-learning students. These innovations and contributions were especially valuable to many service agencies as they operate in dynamic environments with programmes that are constantly in a process of building capacity and reform.

P3: "Well for instance, they, if they focus on something that hasn't been done before or something that we have not had time to do, we all benefit from that, for instance this guidelines for volunteers. It is something very useful, we can give it now to all our volunteers. So it's very useful if they, and for instance, assessing the [community], we have never had a staff member that could do that, because you are always limited with your staff

members and volunteers. So it makes, they can make a big contribution if they focus on something that has not been done before."

P4: "Sometimes towards the end, like right at the end when its sort of too late for anything, then a couple will come up with new ideas or something exciting. But ja, generally that takes quite a while to come out and that sense of independence and ownership I guess..."

P7: "And then the new ideas, there is always an idea that is coming through that is something that work[s] and that we can include in our programme. For example the walking, it started as an activity, happened in a 3 hour period that we have to do something then we have decided okay they don't want to do activities, so let's go for a fun walk at the end of the day. And now it is part of their programme, they want to go for a walk. And at the end of the day it is part of having an healthy lifestyle. So if that can be a small example, at the end of the day, the benefit for us was that with every group that we have, something that they have left behind worked, or we can include that in whether it is our day programme or even the next group of students can go and work on those ideas as well".

The specific skills set that some site-supervisors viewed the students as possessing is indicated in the benefits they cite as providing the organizations. While some organizations just viewed the students as being "professional", others went so far as to call them "specialists" of a sort.

P2: "I think it has a lot of benefits if you come into an organization and you can offer services that are specialized, kind of specialized. I think one of the drawbacks that we did find previously, is that sometimes they were a bit hesitant, actually, both from the formal service-learning modules, the service learning courseware, but also from their ordinary, from faculty side, where they felt, that ja, it is not their place to kind of interfere in a sense, where as we wanted them to interfere. So it is always kind of an interesting play to give them enough room, to bring in their expertise without being insensitive to cultural stuff and so on."

P6: "Okay, you don't want me to say the manpower just, you know. But it is literally the manpower with their theoretical background, that is how I see it. Manpower as such is useless but manpower with a theoretical background. In our case, we need skilled people here, because if you are not working with a skilled person in our organization you can literally harm the client. Because they can get very confused."

P7 (later response): "At the organization you have a need sometimes for somebody that is coming from the outside and look at the objective, in an objective way of what you are doing. I know for example the year that they have started here, they brought a [student] here, that did a study on the, yes it was a [academic discipline] student, so she did a study on [organization], the way that we conduct our business, from management level down, and then also down the different communication levels, if you can call it that. If you look at something like that, that is not something

that will happen normally at the organization. I think it was good to look at on an outsider's opinion, and also the outsider did gain experience of what is going on in the organization. So it is not only somebody coming in for a day or two, observe, ask questions, and then move out again, it was within working in the organization. So I thought you can take it seriously when you get feedback. Yes it is only a student, but whatever, it is conducted out of a professional view".

At some of the sites, the various benefits the partner organizations received were associated with specific individuals or semester groups that left a marked impression on the organizational staff. This distinction of individuals and the contributions they made is in line with Bringle and Hatcher's (2002) analogy of partnerships as relationships, and is supported by findings around the quality of individual relationships between partners of DePaul University's Service-Learning Centre (Worrall, 2007: 11).

> P5: "But we had a specific group here, who just excelled at it. I mean they left here and they could do absolutely everything. I even took it to a stage where I showed them how to [engage community] and taught them to listen to what is normal and what is abnormal. But you cannot get to that stage, if you cannot do the basics even, you know what I mean. So it is absolutely individualized, and that is why I always tell them this goes as far as you want it to go, it is what you expect and make of it..."

> P9: "I think it is better than nothing without them, all of them really contributed something. Some more than others. Last year for instance, there were from the international students really one or two that were brilliant, you know, that did new things, while some just surf."

Many site-supervisors identified the flexibility of the service-learning students to complete tasks or activities arising around organizational or administrative needs as particularly valuable. This list of comments shows how specific organizational tasks and activities completed by service-learning students were particularly beneficial for the organizations.

> P1: "Yes, for example, I have asked two people. They have to design a form where parents have to sign in and sign out for their children. So they are now busy with that. These two have also made application forms for the children, so they made copies of that in English and Afrikaans, because I don't have the time for that. So, they made forty of each language. They saved me a lot of time, you see, than I can do something else. So their work is not the same every week and every time."

> P3: "For instance, two of the service learning students compiled this handbook for us, which we can use now for all our volunteers. Two, the other two before them, they focused on one [organization site] and they did a project in that [organization site]. The ones that are busy now, they are going to focus on testing or evaluating the [community]."

P5: "But at the end, and let me just say, it is not with all of them, but for example if you go inside and look at the posters, those, they have to do an assignment at the end of their time with us and that is normally something that they have to give back not to the [organization], but something that will be advantageous to the [community]. And if you look, inside at the posters, the second group never brought them, us theirs, but that is specially designed for the [community] to make it easier. And this whole thing, and we are the only [organization type] who does it, we have this [service], and I had this idea about [community participation in the process]. Instead of us doing it, because we did not have the manpower to do it, and that is why I said to you that is a big thing where they help with that, because it frees someone else's out to do it. And then I kind of said okay let's get the [community] to do it themselves, and and if you look inside, because we do have a lot of illiterate [community members]. We have posters up with the different [instructions], and then we have an example and we have the box.... And that, it might not sound like a lot, but it was a big help for both the staff at the [organization] and the [community]. So that was very beneficial....They do give something back in that sense, and that is why I say it is always focused on the [community], something that the [community] will benefit from. So ja, definitely."

P8B: "Yes, they focusing, this group is focusing specifically on [organization activities] of what we call like group two [community] so it would be those that are going out of [one organizational classification to another], to make sure that they get individual attention in terms of [organization] activities to help with their development".
P8A"And the emotional as well, that is actually part of the individual attention. I remember, we had a [kind] student here, who was not very into the [organization activities] thing, but she could sit with one child on her lap for two hours and just be happy with that child. The child, the children enjoyed it so much. And I told her afterwards, and she felt a bit guilty but that she didn't do enough other things, but that is actually what these children need desperately".

At some organizations the site-supervisors did not distinguish between the community and the organization, seeing their organization as a pure manifestation of community interests. At others, there was a clear distinction and specific recognition by staff was given to the students' contribution to the community, more than just the organization. It is worthwhile to note it is this community benefit that is the original conceptualized outcome of service-learning (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996), which in the past has not been distinguished between partner organization benefit and that of the community. Nevertheless, many respondents acknowledged the direct benefit of the community as a result of the service-learning programmes.

P1: "Because this [organization], it is located within a good area, but we accommodate less privileged [community] that come from different 'swak huis toestande' where there is violence and abuse from alcohol and usually drugs. Therefore the [community] have a great backlash in comparison to the [other communities in better environments]. So they

fulfil that role for the [community], for example with the second language, they help the [organizational activities], they offer programmes to develop the [physical abilities], they [engage community and help with organizational activities]."

P4: "I think there is possibly more benefits for the community, just in terms of the [community's] level of exposure, I really do think that that is beneficial."

P5: "Our fist group, we at some stage had, what we call [community] advocates, so it is not really, people who have had formal training but they are assigned to specific [community members] and go and do home visits etc. And then we started this computer system that we have here. And then you are faced with the fact that we have some people in the [community] who don't have any computer experience. And I remember well, our first group they literally taught these people how to use the computer, and that was a big thing. You know those people were able to come use it. Because the things we take for granted, we just assume everyone knows how to use. But I mean, people still grow up with schools where they don't have, you know, this at their facilities. So that for me was a very big thing, that was our first group we had and they did it effortlessly, I don't even think, I said to them afterwards, do you realize you have literally trained these people for free to be computer literate. So that in itself was a big thing for me, ja definitely."

P7: "I think the benefits for the community lies in that it is somebody new, somebody with something new that they bring and work with them, so it is a new face, it is a new activity and because it is short term it is also that they can be excited about and then they go, they have more a direct benefit."

P8B: "I think {it would be the} benefit for the [community], getting that additional individual contact, it is extremely difficult for our staff to give that to them. I know with the previous ones that we saw a tremendous difference in the [community] after the programme, so".
P8A: "No, the only benefit could be that the staff, when they are working with the [community], the staff can work with other [community members]. But, I think the main benefit is to the individual [community members] themselves. But that is what we are here for, if they benefit the [community] we achieve our goals".

P8A(later response): ... "And as I said before, the emotional side and the individual attention is very very very important. Although they could perhaps not think it is that important to [involve in organizational activities] for two hours with one or two [community members], but these [community members] are all deprived of [external support], and they are in a group with a lot of staff all the time. And being separate with one person that only give attention to me and I am important, I am only, only I am important to that person for the next hour or half an hour. Is, it contributes towards the [community]'s development, the emotional

development, but also physical, and intellectual and developmental development. So they actually, by just doing that they are doing a very big job".

P9: "Well, i think, for a start for the [community] it broadened, you know for the [community] it showed them that there is other people also interested in them, that there is people outside, the whole role model thing. And also, bringing new ideas and other parts, or showing were they come from, that the world is bigger and it helped us in terms of manpower. And that is where you know, if we structure ourselves better, because now if there is manpower we can actually divide ourselves into smaller groups, the [community] into smaller groups, because you know that they will come, you don't have to have a plan B all the time. I think that will also help".

Across the various sites all site-supervisors are able to identify clear contributions the service-learning students are making both to their organizations and to the community. For different site-supervisors, there are different priorities in their different contexts, but generally speaking all organizations believe there to be some degree of benefit for both the organization and their community of intended benefit. However, as the next section shows, these benefits did not come without their share of risks for the hosting organization.

6.2.4.3 Solidarity

Solidarity can be considered part of the broader developmental outcomes associated with collaborative organizational programmes (Clark & Wilson, 1961; HEQC, 2006a). Because the formation of a shared identity, values, and norms takes place through a much more gradual process, these outcomes are not as easily expressed by way of action as purposive or material outcomes. They are not always explicit statements of solidarity, but are manifest in statements that suggest the organizations and community of intended benefit have increased a mutually determined goal or degree of association over a period of time. This is also linked to the sense that there are increased opportunities available to the organization and its community of intended benefit as a result of participating in an inclusive process. The following statements express elements of these solidarity outcomes:

P2: "But, there is a very very negative perception of the University in this specific community, for various reasons, you can just name them and it is there and I think service learning really offers a structured approach for getting more people involved, even if it's not a voluntary involvement, but at least you get people. You get interaction, which I believe dispels a lot of myths and a lot of assumptions and a lot of all the previously pre-conceived ideas that we have got about each other. So in that sense, I find it extremely good that we have got service learning. And obviously it offers me an opportunity to get specialists in the field, or in whatever fields, to come and make sure that whatever I am doing is the best possible for the community again."

In this example, the respondent claims that the University's structured involvement with the community through the partner organization is helping to dispel misconceptions about both groups. In the process, the site-supervisor also identifies the special skills of university students as contributions that enhance the delivery of his organization. As a result, there is an implied sense of shared goals and interests through service-learning that provides evidence of solidarity at the institutional level, whereby both the university and the partner organization come to be more closely associated with the interests of the group.

> P4: "You know, there is also the possibility of individuals in the service learning group, seeing something that they have really enjoyed wanting to come back and volunteer as individuals privately. I think just having their horizons broadened, there is always the possibility for future relationship and impact, definitely."

This statement is slightly more superficial, but it suggests that there is an idea of self-conception of the service-learning student being expanded through the programme. The broadening of horizons and possibility for future impact are also part of the possibility of growing solidarity between individuals previously associated with distinct groups whose interests may have aligned. The most telling component of this comment though is that it is still a "possibility" and not necessarily a reality.

> P9: "I actually think that the University is doing a good job, you know the whole shift, in trying to {engage with community}, so I think it is a good thing....To get deeper into the world of the [community] you know, if it is the [community] they work with. So I think the University, the shift, I have lots of things, the passionate part of it, the really making a difference is good, the theory behind the thing is cool, the philosophy behind it."

> P9 (later response): "Ja, I think in terms of opening doors to the University thinking, to getting the University nearer to a place like that. We see the red roofs, but it is still very far. But now the students are actually there.....that bridge building to me is very good."

These two comments from one participant provide an excellent example of how the site-supervisor has picked up on a change in the approach of the university towards community engagement. The respondent is not quite clear how to articulate it, but there is a clear notion of a shift, that the university has changed the philosophy behind its interaction with the community and that this is a good thing. When coupled with the statement that there is a degree of bridge-building going on, through a visual signifier of the red roofs of the university as seen in the distance of the community, there is a notion that some form of access or reciprocity between the "red roofs" group and group viewing "very far" is being created through the involvement of the students. This is a powerful statement as to how interactions through service-learning programmes are helping to forge relations between previously removed groups.

Ranging from experiences transforming the university's relationship to and engagement with the community, to the idea that the students that make up the university may sustain involvement with a group, there is a sense that at some partner organizations service-learning is having a broader impact than just short-term service

related benefits. However, it is worth reminding one of the limits of these experiences as shared by a small sample of individuals from a small sample of service-learning programmes. Fortunately, it does provide evidence to better understand how these partnerships manifest themselves across a diverse group of service agencies.

6.2.4.4 Risks

Although service-learning programmes are conceived to be mutually beneficial interventions for both students and community partners, it is clear that partner organizations incur some basic degree of risk by hosting service-learning students at their organizations. Although all organizations tried to mitigate the risk to a certain extent by briefing the service-learning students, it was clear that most organizations were cognisant of a degree of risk they incurred as a result.

> P3: "I think, the risks could be, if they are irresponsible. But there is a mutual trust that University won't send students, you know, that are irresponsible or, you know, it has never been a problem, but I suppose it could be a problem. But I think there is that mutual trust that they are screened and they won't send someone here for instance that will make racialistic, you know, what's the word, yeah that would say things that they shouldn't or that would treat the people with disrespect. They are all very compassionate and very very, they get so fond of the [community], so we haven't had a problem but I suppose there could be, it could be a risk. But I think it is the responsibility of the University to, to send people that are mature and responsible."

> P4: "...As an organization it is a lot of time and a lot of effort. You know you get phone calls at eight o'clock at night because they can't come the next morning and then you have to find a new place to place them and sort out their hours and sort out things that, you know, because there is just such a hesitancy and such a lack of responsibility and ownership of the process that the responsibility falls in your hands. And then just also risk, there is high risk, not always aware of the impact of questions, of needing to make appointments, just all those kind of things. So, it is an interesting partnership, like, and it is, like, a dynamic for us that we are still working with, do we want to continue with this kind of relationship or do we actually only want to say look, this is, you know maybe we need to actually step up and start setting out our own boundaries and just say look we will take it if it is this but otherwise we can't, we don't have the space, we don't have the time and the manpower for it. You know realities of an NPO you have a minimal staff doing a mass loads of work and then the students become a lot of extra work when it is not always a good time. And I think they don't always realize that they are not the only ones with deadlines and pressing engagements."

> P6: "Because the students are working under our supervision, I would rather offer the opportunity to the students. Because I think we do have the ability to deal with the risks for the community. Because I see, we are both [organizational staff] here to deal with the [community] if they are

very confused afterwards. The risk will never be too big for us to deal with . I think the students can rather benefit from it. So I actually go through the registration forms and if I find that there is something funny, I will call the [community] back and start the discussion over again. I would rather offer the opportunity to the students because they can really benefit from it. Because you must look at it over the long term, if we can deal with the student to do his practical work more effectively, he can take that to the real work situation. The integration of that and theory is to me actually more important, or not more important, is less of a risk, it is actually you prevent risks if you take the risk. Here they are working under the my supervision and the University's supervision and we can deal with it and the [community] I can call back and deal with it, if they are very confused, we will deal with it in a respectful way."

P7: "Yes I think so, in an organization you have staff, and the view of the staff is not always, you do not have professional people all the way down. You will have people that is involved or that the students get an opportunity to work with, they don't understand why the students are here. It does not mean that we did not explain to them what the student is doing here. Their viewpoint of what the student must do, can be different than of mine, that is the service-learning site supervisor. So then when the student gets involved with the staff member, and do what the staff member wants instead of listening to what the site-supervisor says, there is the risk that at the end of the day you will not get what is the aim of the student and the organization. So I think it is important that, I will tell the students now, I am the site supervisor, so check with me before you do something. I will not exclude the rest of the people that they can't talk to them because that is definitely not what I want, because they need to have the total experience of the organization, but just check with me before you do something. So yes it is a risk but at the end of the day I think we have sorted that out as well."

P9: "I think the big thing also is in terms of the [community organizations] if, I saw that when I started from the older people I heard that, that you know the fedup factor is also there. I can now experience it for me. At a certain point you realize, no I am not getting my work done, because I am trying to be, cover things at every level. All of us will have to rethink this, this time of year everybody is fed up so perhaps in January I feel better."

P9 (later response): "Ja, I think for the organization there can be more risks, because of the fact that a place like [locality] it is like really all the relationships are very fragile. Especially in terms of [community organizations]. Because there is lots of concepts about money, capacity and resources, and things being hidden. So, if you don't actually understand those things, we don't even always. Then you can actually have a risk for the organization, but I don't think for the community."

The complexities and sensitivities associated with service-learning programmes should not be understated. There are many dimensions to service-learning

programmes both on the university's side as well as on the side of the partnering organization. Not all partner organizations distinguished between their risks and the risks to the community from the involvement of service-learning students.

> P4: "I think risks, once again, can come in the form of interviews and questions that are asked or probing that is done during the time, things that are being said without quite the awareness of what you are saying, I mean, just even judgements, without realizing how you are judging, so like that is a risk for the community as well, sure, that can go so bad, thankfully we haven't had anything like that."

> P6: "The risk is actually if you confuse them {the community}. To confuse them and to actually let them walk out here under the impression that they came to certain things that they are not up to yet, that they need more steps.... So they don't know then, if they confuse the [community], the client doesn't know what the [organizational activity] is about and what the real [context] is. If we do community development, we must try not confuse them but to sort of guide them to get on track."

> P8A: "If they come when they sick, then the [community] get sick. Their immune systems are low so they get sick very easily. That is quite a big risk."

> P9: "Risk, I don't think a lot. Because of the fact, they, because the risk that volunteers bring, is the fact that they drop the [community], you know, they come and then they don't come. But that at least it is not in that. Because that is the only thing, I always tell volunteers, if you start forming a relationship you must actually keep it up. Okay these, because the fact they leave after six months, perhaps it is a little bit of that. But I don't think there is lots of risks."

There is also a risk for the communities themselves as a result of engaging with the university students. While this clearly varies from organization to organization, it seems that the consensus across the various sites is that if the organization itself has planned and structured the involvement of the service-learning students, the risks posed to the community are significantly lessened. Fortunately, most risks acknowledge by site-supervisors are potentialities rather than first-hand experiences. Nevertheless, the challenges around the issue of risk are clearly present.

6.3 A developmental framework for service-learning in HE for partner organizations

Encouraged by national policy measures that have elevated the role of HE in the state's developmental project (GNU, 1994; DoE, 1997; RSA, 1997; DoE, 2001), community engagement as a core function of HEIs has found a common incarnation in the form of service-learning programmes. The widespread application of the Triad Partnership Model of the CHESP initiative (HEQC, 2006a; Lazarus, 2007) has placed partner organizations at the centre of these initiatives and raised questions about the experience of these organizations in the process. The data collected from the site-

supervisors presented above helps to better understand the role of the partner organization through the experience of site-supervisors in the service-learning programmes. A social exclusion perspective of the human capability approach (Sayed, 2008) now provides a useful developmental framework for examining the implications of service-learning in HE for partner organizations against this backdrop of first-hand experience at SU.

6.3.1 The developmental implications of the Triad Partnership Model of service-learning for partner organizations

Applying the social exclusion perspective to the service-learning programmes at partner organizations, this developmental framework allows one to understand service-learning programmes as interventions that form part of a concerted effort by the institution to contribute to the altering of processes perpetuating the exclusion and deprivation of groups existing outside of the institution. In the CHESP model (HEQC, 2006a; Lazarus), service-learning programmes are constructed institutional interventions through partner organizations, based within and amongst communities, seeking to contribute to the breaking down of exclusionary barriers that prevent groups from accessing development opportunities. This perspective provides a useful approach for translating the institutional policy on community interaction for service-learning into practice. Such a perspective can inform the mutual purpose of a service-learning partnership as well as provide guidance in unclear territories or contested issues of service-learning (Sayed, 2008: 57).

The service-learning programmes of SU are informed by the institution's existing, and will soon likely to be its new, Community Interaction Policy (SU, 2004b: 1; SU, 2009b). The policy is an institutional "acknowledgement of its contribution to the injustices of the past and its commitment to appropriate redress and development initiatives", a statement made in both documents. Amongst other things, the policy is a clear recognition of the institution's role as a perpetrating agent of the injustices of the past, and those enduring inequalities which it seeks to address. It is open recognition in policy of the institution as an "excluder" of the past, with an intention to "include" the now "excluded" through the mechanism of community interaction. The Community Interaction Policy informs service-learning partnerships with an institutionally embraced social justice point of departure that complements the social exclusion perspective applied here. Realizing social justice through community interaction as a means of inclusion, acknowledgement, and equality amongst stakeholders, the social exclusion perspective prompts targeting of those deprived groups that the institution claims a historical responsibility towards. The partner organizations provide the actual structure through which the university engages in these processes of development and inclusion. The small scale and educational nature of service-learning interventions have a limited capacity for substantive redress, a key component of social justice, but the position these programmes afford to engage the "excluded" through developmentally orientated programmes matches well in policy to the social exclusion perspective.

SU's slogan of "building sustainable knowledge partnerships with and in the community" applied in the heading of the draft policy and on the Division for Community Interaction's website (SU, 2009: 1; SU, 2009a) provides a good

indication that human capability deprivations are to be addressed by building knowledge generating partnerships for reciprocal benefit through mechanisms such as service-learning. Specifically, the institution conceptualizes the mutual beneficiaries and stakeholders in community interaction as community, or "a social grouping of society involved in an interaction at any given moment. Community refers to groups of people united by a common location, or to groups of people that are linked intellectually, professionally, and/or politically; that is, geographic communities, communities of interest and communities of practice" (SU, 2009b: 3). The policy aligns well to conceptualizations of community in this research (Bhattacharyya, 2004; Bradshaw, 2008; Brown *et al*, 2000) as it recognizes traditional notions of locality based communities, and both the post-place communities of interest as well as degrees of linkages existing within and amongst communities. From this perspective, the policy gives impetus to service-learning programmes that interact with communities distinguished by conditions of deprivation and an inability to access vital opportunities of development.

The rationale of this policy is an institutional commitment to "an environment where student learning is enriched and research relevance is enhanced" through "reciprocity, redress, development and transformation" (SU, 2009b: 2). Although not originally formulated for the service-learning programmes currently under examination, this new policy captures an important consideration of the social exclusion perspective to development. These commitments can be both complementary and paradoxical, as reciprocity can certainly be at odds with redress, but both can contribute in equal measure to development and transformation. Thus, how community interaction programmes such as service-learning manifest themselves across the global, national, and institutional contexts of the institution, are also likely to be characterized by these at times conflicting, and potentially complementing rationales in their address of communities of exclusion.

Applying the existing Community Interaction Policy to the current service-learning programmes, it is clear that these interventions were informed by guidelines that prioritize community partnerships that "are relevant to local, regional and national priorities, as well as the focus areas of the University that aim to achieve mutually shared objectives" (SU, 2004: 1). These partnerships are intended to be "socially responsive" to those realities of human capability deprivation and poverty that thwart development in communities in and around Stellenbosch. In the case of the existing programmes under study, it can therefore be assumed that these partnerships were conceptualized as such, but may not have been infused by the same rationale as what new partnerships are expected to be (SU, 2009b). Regardless, a social exclusion approach sees these partnerships as targeted to service agencies that are acting with groups that are constrained by interlocking processes of poverty. The emphasis in the service-learning programme is therefore on the targeted community, but managed through the goals and activities of the partner organization.

Practically addressing social exclusion to fulfil the ideals of the institutional policy through service-learning programmes means constantly revisiting the complex social realities and challenges encountered in service-learning partnerships as regular opportunities for reflection, examination of power relations, and engaging with embedded knowledge. In order to achieve a just and mutually beneficial relationship with communities and partner organizations outside of the institution, awareness of

these complexities and the paradoxes that exist between intentions, relations, and actions must be acknowledged and dealt with (Mitchell & Humphries, 2007: 48). The power relations addressed by some of the site-supervisors previously allude to a situation whereby a degree of unequal terms of partnership for the partnering agency has maintained, with unknown, but unlikely to be positive, implications for the target community. These unequal power relations are an inevitability given the institution's history, the national developmental context, and the asymmetrical origins of service-learning (Osman & Attwood, 2007: 16). The original involvement of the service agencies as third actors between HEIs and communities was at least partially motivated by their ability to act as a buffer to diffuse and mitigate power imbalances between HEIs and communities (HEQC, 2006a: 93). Thus, even where power imbalances remain, there are opportunities to use these experiences to engage the issues and inform alternative practices through mutually agreed responses (Osman & Attwood, 2007: 16).

As the partners which effectively act as the conduits for the university to engage various communities through service-learning, the manner in which service-learning partnerships are grown, from formation through to outcomes, has clear implications for the kind of developmental outcomes achieved as a result of these service-learning interventions. As the experiences of site-supervisors documented provide evidence, these programmes seem to have largely positive outcomes for all of the partnering organizations and almost all site-supervisors have expressed recognition of some specific benefits they have attributed to service-learning partnerships. However, they have also been characterized by some growing pains and miscommunications as the organizations seem to have identified specific needs and tasks on a short-term or ad hoc basis, seemingly a relation to the duration of student involvement. In some instances, the identified tasks and activities seem to have been influenced by existing power relations and preconceptions of the university. Specific references to the allocation of valuable staff time, setting of agendas, and the additional efforts of partner organizations put into supporting students that did not engage reciprocally raise concern.

Nevertheless, as an institution that has been privileged and historically "included", SU has been afforded the opportunity to invest some of the developing professionals in its student population, its academic expertise, and a component of its teaching and learning and research functions to the study, understanding, and alleviation of these experiences of poverty and human capability deprivation. The potential for service-learning programmes to contribute to community development is contingent upon the form of the intervention with the service agency. Based on the existing conceptualization of service-learning, the partner organization thereby takes on facilitating responsibilities when engaged by an "included" organization like the university through structured involvement with an "excluded" group. In this respect, SU is reliant upon service agencies outside[3] of the institution to carry out these co-curricular community interaction programmes. SU can only carry out its policy mandates of "reciprocity, redress, development, and transformation" (SU, 2009b: 1)

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[3] Except for the service agencies based within the institution that were excluded from this study, including: The Office for Institutional HIV Coordination, The Watergarden Project of the Department of Psychology, the University of Stellenbosch Art Museum, and the International Office's ISOS-Kayamandi Project.

to the extent that partnering organizations and community interaction programmes have a mutually aligned vision and purpose.

Recognizing that partner organizations have their own degree of agency distinct from their target communities (Atack, 1999; Fischer, 1997; McBride *et al*, 2006) and that no developmental initiative can be divorced from its socio-political environment (Mitchell & Rauthenbauch, 2005), means that working with partner organizations can be problematic for the HEI, particularly from a social exclusion perspective. Applying this approach to target communities through partner organizations has a number of possible implications: 1) the partner organization and institutional programme share similar approaches to development that can be aligned to addressing a target community or group through service-learning; 2) the partner organization applies a different approach that does not align well to the institutional approach to community interaction and the outcomes for the community and partner organization suffer as a result; 3) the service-learning programme adopts the approach of the partner organization in the name of practicality; 4) the partner organization and institution are able to negotiate a mutually agreed approach for service-learning despite differing approaches in order to address a specific developmental task. The experiences of the site-supervisors suggest the existing service-learning programmes covered elements of all of these possibilities, but that the third implication was the most common. This was reflected by the site-supervisors' responses that often the responsibilities of the service-learning students were adapted on site by the respective agencies based-upon how the service-learning programme and students' interests fit into the organization's existing activities.

The applied partnership model for these two modules subjects a proposed social exclusion perspective of the institution to the discretion of the partnering organization, and is reliant on their existing activities. This can stand to enhance service-learning programmes when the institutional approach or proposed activity is inappropriate for a targeted community or has not been formulated with the embedded knowledge of the community possessed by a partnering agency. In such instances, this partnership model can diffuse power relations and help direct the institution towards a more legitimate developmental project, contingent upon a mutual understanding and appreciation of the partnering organization's perspective (HEQC, 2006a; 93-94). However, where a partnering organization itself does not align with the existing approach of the institution either conceptually or practically in the course of the service-learning programme, or where the partner organization itself lacks claims of legitimacy in the communities which it targets, there is the potential for the institution to subject its programmes to the whims of reactionary charity, rather than towards upholding the rationale of community interaction stated explicitly in its pending policy (SU, 2009b).

In the context of the two service-learning modules in community development at SU, the service-learning programmes are only as developmental and inclusive of a community as is the partner organization through which it engages, placing the partner organization in a position of potential benefit before the community. A social exclusion perspective therefore focuses upon the collaborative formulation of intended service-learning module outcomes during the formation stage of the partnership, and the integral role of communication throughout the process and across the dynamics of the respective stakeholders. If programmes are to become more

mutually beneficial for partner organizations and the communities involved through these service-learning modules, collaboration can be enhanced with all parties during the formation stage and sustained through robust communication. Understanding the experience of service-learning course facilitators currently absent from this study will prove requisite for any collaborative efforts, but has been excluded in part because of the already skewed power relations of service-learning programmes.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter presents the research findings of this study. The experiences of partner organizations' site-supervisors have revealed the extent to which these organizations are distinct actors in service-learning programmes. Marais & Botes (2005) acknowledgement of these "community-service provider- university partnerships" has certainly been reflected in the valuable information provided by the site-supervisors across their nine respective service-agencies. Whereas previously the role of the partner organization as the third actor in the Triad Partnership Model was acknowledged (HEQC, 2006a), the research findings presented here demonstrate that these organizations are key stakeholders in the process and that there is a distinction between the partner organization and the community itself. This distinction should be acknowledged and considered when initiating future partnerships.

From the formation stage of partnership through to the outcomes, most service agency representatives believe their partnerships with the university to be worthwhile experiences whereby both the organizations and their target communities benefit. Although there are some issues around formation and the need identification across the various sites of the service-learning programmes, this seems to be linked at least partially to issues of communication, vital to the maintenance of these partnerships. The service-learning interventions studied require regular and consistent consultation with the partner organization, as well as an awareness of the position of power from which the university operates. As these relations require sustained maintenance, it seems that the partner organizations also have ideas as to how this can be achieved. Further consultation from the process of formation of the programme through to the presenting of outcomes may prove beneficial to all partners. Despite some risks, the service-learning experience for partner organizations interviewed seems to be overall a positive one, with the majority of partner organizations acknowledging various means of benefit from service-learning programmes.

A social exclusion perspective helps to better understand the complex developmental experience of the site-supervisors hosting service-learning students at partner organizations. Their reflections on the process of hosting students and the collective benefits and risks of the service-learning experience at their organizations exemplify their facilitation roles for contributing to the fostering of broader inclusive communities. Recognizing and engaging with the partner organizations' own agencies is both a challenge to, and a potential benefit for, service-learning modules reliant on partnering organizations. Fostering a robust and reciprocal partnership from formation through to outcomes requires engagement with the respective partners' approaches to the service-learning intervention as well as practical considerations around all stakeholders' availability and commitment to the given developmental project.

Thus, both research questions have been addressed and serve as the basis for drawing conclusions from this exploration of service-learning programmes for partner organizations in the next chapter. Recommendations for future service-learning modules and potential research are made before the consideration of a potential applied model for service-learning. The study concludes with recognition of the developmental outcomes service-learning programmes as they contribute to a broader process of inclusion.

Chapter 7 – Conclusions and recommendations

7.1   Introduction

This study explores the question: *What are the developmental outcomes of service-learning in Higher Education for partner organizations?* This exploratory study examines the national policy context which gave rise to the emphasis upon the developmental role of community engagement as a core function of SA HEIs. The dissertation tracks the progression of the JET/CHESP initiative as it has contributed to embedding community engagement in HE, and identifies various conceptual models of community engagement. The Infusion Model (2008) explicated by Bender provides a model for locating the application of service-learning adopted in South Africa. Through a critical analysis of the Triad Partnership Model (HEQC, 2006a), the conceptual shortcomings of this model are identified and a renewed emphasis is placed upon the experience of the partner organization in service-learning programmes. An explanation of the research design and methods for this study presents the experience of representatives of partner organizations collected through semi-structured interviews with site-supervisors. From this data, the collective experience of service-learning programmes from across nine partnering organizations is explored and described, presented through the progressive stages of collaborative partnerships experienced in the process of service-learning programmes. The developmental implications of the applied partnership model are discussed before the application of a social exclusion perspective is applied to inform these experiences within a developmental framework.

7.2 Conclusions of research findings

The first question this study set out to answer: Q1- *How have the representatives of partnering organizations of HE experienced service-learning programmes?* This question has been clearly answered in section 6.2 of this dissertation.

The second question has also been answered through the running narrative of this thesis and synthesized in section 6.3 of the previous chapter: Q2- *What are the developmental implications of the existing partnership model of service-learning for partner organizations?*

A summary of these research findings are provided below.

7.2.1 Research findings for Q1

From formation through to outcomes, the service agencies investigated in this study have been a part of a process of collaborative partnering (Butterfoss *et al*, 1993) with SU through service-learning programmes for up to 4.5 years in some cases. Data collected from site-supervisors reflecting on the collective processes of partnership suggests that some degrees of mutuality are present, while in some cases the nature of the relations has not been as equal partners. Throughout these partnerships efforts to maintain and refine these programmes occurred at various partner organizations.

Despite the challenges and imbalances in the course of these partnerships, all site-supervisors report some kind of benefit to their organizations and their target communities.

With regards to outcomes, all partnering organizations experience some degree of at least one of the following benefits: material, purposive, and solidarity outcomes (Clark & Wilson, 1961: 134-135). Many also experience risks and it is noted that partner organizations often bear the brunt of burden when it comes to mitigating target community risk. Of the three outcomes mentioned, material outcomes are the least common and mostly an unintended spin-off. Where outcomes are most common, are around those purposive outcomes and tasks that the organizations assigned or crafted through experience. Of these purposive outcomes, the benefits can be grouped into the following categories: manpower, specific skills, innovations, and intercultural exchange, in addition to the unique contributions of individuals. Across these categories, partner organizations benefit to some degree from the presence and involvement of service-learning programmes.

Finally, the last outcome associated with Clark and Wilson's (1961: 134-135) 'trimotivational' categories of benefit is the outcome of solidarity. Solidarity has clear implications for community development and evidence of this outcome has been presented. Responses of some site-supervisors suggest a process of shifting identification with the university, as an institution engaging with the identified needs of the partnering organizations and their target communities. As this quote from P9 (2009) states, "Ja, I think in terms of opening doors to the University thinking, to getting the University nearer to a place like that. We see the red roofs, but it is still very far. But now the students are actually there.....that bridge building to me is very good." This statement conveys that the experience of service-learning is fostering relations and shared interests across diverse groups outside of the institution. It also suggests that as part of the three original objectives of the CHESP initiative outlined by Lazarus (2001) service-learning can contribute to a process of transforming HE in relation to community needs.

7.2.2 Research findings for Q2

The social exclusion perspective of the human capability framework outlined by Sayed (2008) provides a useful approach for examining the developmental implications of the Triad Partnership Model of service-learning for partner organizations. Applying such an approach to the university's existing and proposed Community Interaction Policy yields a deeper understanding of how service-learning programmes can contribute to the social justice orientations of the institution. Furthermore, it provides a framework for understanding how SU can use its privileged position to engage groups excluded from the freedoms of development (Sen, 1999) through a specific strategy targeting groups defined by their conditions of depravity. This potential approach for service-learning appears promising, if not for certain limitations around its practical application in a partnership between three distinct stakeholders.

In practice, the original conceptualizations of service-learning are applied in a much more complicated experienced than originally conceived. Instead of an intervention

involving a dyadic partnership between universities and communities (Furco, 1996; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996) service-learning programmes are carried out in much more complicated tri-partnerships (HEQC, 2006a), replete with their own conceptual shortcomings and deficiencies. The result is that whereas a dyadic partnership between university and community would makes for an easier strategy for the identification of a potential community partner, the role and agency of the partner organization in the process necessitates a deeper understanding of how this approach translates through to application in the form of a service-learning programmes based at partner organizations.

As universities move towards giving effect to the third core function of the institution through service-learning, they do so in partnerships that provides both benefits and limitations to their engagement with communities. These partnerships limit SU's ability to strategically target groups characterized by conditions of social exclusion based on the findings of this study. The formulation of the service-learning programmes currently employed is reliant upon the institution's need to find a partner organization through which to act first and foremost, not necessarily a community or group. In this respect, the social justice orientation of the draft Community Interaction Policy (SU, 2009b) is realized through service-learning only to the extent which a service agency or organization embraces this orientation towards a community of intended benefit. The degree to which this organization is a representation of the community interest is also questioned.

In terms of the transformative potential of the two service-learning modules explored in this study and their contribution to expanding SU's developmental role, further collaboration during the formation stage of the CHESP partnership model and sustained communication through the partnership process may contribute to strengthening mutually identified goals that advance stronger notions of solidarity. Despite the conceptual shortcomings of the Triad Partnership Model, its practical application does seem to help reduce the risk of HEIs to potentially marginalize a group or community by engaging inappropriately, inconsistently, unsustainably, or through an abuse of power.

7.3 Conclusions- Some evidence of developmental outcomes of service-learning at SU for partner organizations

From the broad policy mandate given to HEIs to "contribute to and support the process of societal transformation outlined in the RDP" (DoE, 1997) through the core function of community engagement, service-learning has gone from a pilot programme and feasibility study of the CHESP initiative, to an institutionalized mechanism for transforming HE in relation to community needs (Lazarus, 2001). In the process of evolving from national policy to an available course offering across faculties, service-learning has been taken from an abstract North American pedagogy with an orientation towards charity, to a prominent means of community engagement of SA HEIs with the potential of contributing to national social justice imperatives (Mitchell & Humphries, 2007) and development. A reterritorialization of service-learning has taken place in South Africa (Le Grange, 2007) with a new and dynamic educational and developmental context within which to adapt.

HEIs have begun shifting their community engagement activities from an add-on function contributing asymmetrical flow of services to communities (HEQC, 2007), towards an integrated function of an engaged HEI (Boyer, 1996). As a result, service-learning's developmental potential has been considered for its means of relating teaching and learning, as well as research, to the most challenging social questions of the day. This transition towards the ideal of an engaged institution is best represented in Bender's (2008) Infusion Model of community engagement. It is in this context, located within the flows of power relations, agendas, and potential benefits, that community engagement moves closer to realizing its developmental potential. As a HE begins a shift from giving effect to community engagement as a distinct core function, to viewing community engagement as both a function and embedded perspective of the engaged institution, HEIs moves closer to the developmental agenda envisioned by the RDP (GNU, 1994) and the White Paper on Transformation in HE (DoE, 1997). With service-learning as the chosen means of embedding this perspective (Lazarus, 2007; Lazarus *et al*, 2008), Bender's conceptual model has provided a visual representation for locating service-learning within a nationally recognized function of HEIs.

Figure 7.1 The Infusion Model of community engagement (adapted)
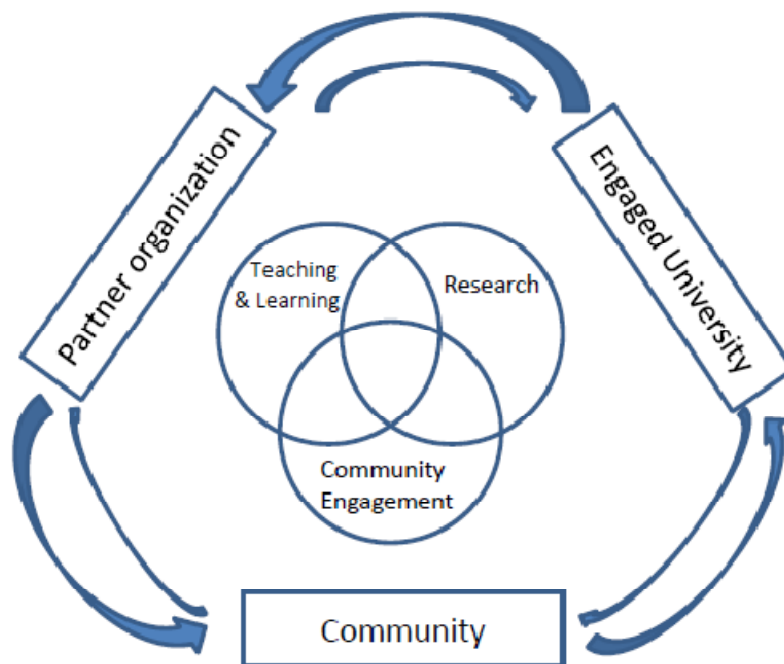

(adapted from Bender, 2008; 90)

From this conceptual model of community engagement, it is easily recognizable how the Triad Partnership Model, as a means of structuring community engagement through service-learning initiatives (HEQC, 2006a), has been applied nationally, albeit with its share of difficulties (Lazarus, 2007: 104). The practical application of service-learning has brought institutions, staff, and students into direct partnerships with local development organizations and diverse service agencies, as a means of engaging communities indirectly. As a result, the Triad Partnership Model (see below)

conceptualized as a localization of service-learning, has in actuality complicated the dyadic beneficiary relationship of the original conceptualizations of service-learning (Furco, 1996; Bringle & Hatcher, 1995). Despite this critical disjuncture between the conceptualization of service-learning and its actual application between the three distinct groups, this model still has its merits. As Marais & Botes (2005) acknowledged these "community- service provider - university partnerships", the partnering organization linking the university to the community has come to play a pivotal role in service-learning programmes with considerable developmental implications for the organization's themselves. The research conducted in the course of this dissertation has substantiated some claims of the developmental outcomes of service-learning in HE for partnering organizations of two SU undergraduate modules in community development.

Figure 1.1 Triad Partnership Model (CHESP)
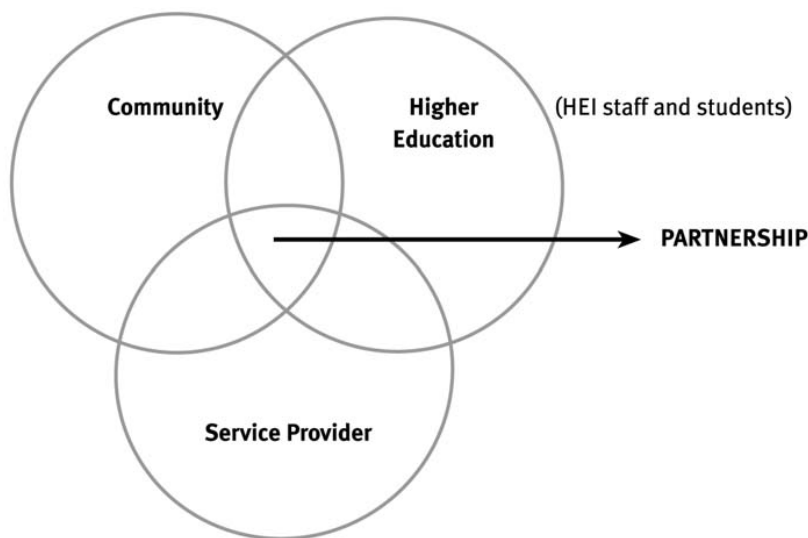
(Lazarus, 2001; HEQC, 2006a)

7.3.1 Developmental outcomes as experienced by site-supervisors

The developmental outcomes of service-learning programmes at partner organizations of the two community development modules explored in this study can be understood in terms of those four stages of collaborative partnership aforementioned (Butterfoss *et al*, 1993). At the formation stage the experience of some site-supervisors suggests that there is a lack of mutual purpose motivating the inception of the partnerships. In some instances respondents implied a degree of obedience came with the institutional request for partnership (P3), while another noted the request as representing access to scarce resources (P2), suggesting power relations influenced the involvement of partnering organizations initially. A lack of equal participation in terms of mutual purpose at inception for these two partnerships can be interpreted as initially limiting the participation of the service agency, and thereby the community. These experiences can be at least partially attributed to the asymmetrical origins of service-learning as an educational pedagogy within HE (Mitchell & Rautenbauch, 2005), as well as part of the uncertainties around the pioneering of such relations. Nevertheless, this lack of participation in the initial formation of the partnerships seems to have only occurred

to a limited extent, whereas some organizations (P1, P6, and P8) participated with mutual interests from inception.

The implementation stage is characterized by the identification of needs and establishing the terms of the service-learning programmes (HEQC, 2006a: 95). It is at this stage that the principles of participation, self-help, and felt needs informing community development begin to manifest within the partnership. These principles are evidenced by the experiences of site-supervisors around identification of their organizational needs and assigning responsibilities for the service-learning programmes to address. At this stage, there are clearly varying degrees of participation, but a good example of these principles is evidenced with the experience of respondent P8A who was able to formulate a service-learning intervention that met the distinct need for the development of the motor skills of the community of intended benefit (felt needs), freeing staff to do other tasks while the community developed physical capacities (self-help), with negotiation of the terms and durations of these interventions best suited to the community of intended benefit (participation). Such an experience suggests that this partnership had from early on a strong developmental orientation. This may also be related to the site-supervisor being one of the few to cite participation in initial workshops around service-learning.

In other instances, this implementation stage was also slightly undefined as the needs and responsibilities identified at different sites seemed to be unspecified or reactionary (P4, P5, and P9) rather than part of a mutually agreed programme to address a specified felt-need. Instead, the need identification and establishing of responsibilities at the site of P4 seemed to have become a burden as the site-supervisor struggled to apply the service-learning students due to participant inconsistencies and the risks they personified. The lack of mutuality at this site may have precluded the establishment of those key community development principles in the partnership and could be part of the explanation as to why P4 states the partner organization is reconsidering the terms on which it hosts service-learning programmes.

Experiences of the next stage of collaborative partnerships, the maintenance stage, evoked fewer responses than at other stages. P2, P4, P5, P7, and P9 all reported communication deficiencies during the course of the service-learning programmes, whereas P1, P3, and P6 reported sufficient or good levels of communication, with P8A+B in between. There are many factors that contribute to communication challenges, but where communication is lacking, a critical component of any partnership, a degree of participation is inevitably lost as all parties lack the information needed to engage each other in full confidence. But P2's acknowledgement of the partner organization's own failure to communicate affirms that communication is a mutual responsibility that some partners may also be neglecting. Overall, this stage of the partnership is characterized by both encouraging and discouraging comments from the respondents. Interestingly, of the three respondents that were pleased with the degree of communication throughout the partnership, P1 and P2 also reported diverse and substantive outcomes.

The final stage of the service-learning partner's experience explored in this study is the outcomes. Responses by site-supervisors provide substance to the claims of developmental outcomes for partner organizations, however limited or subjective

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these individual perspectives are in their scope. Their experiences provide indications of outcomes that can be distinguished between material, purposive, and solidarity outcomes (Clark & Wilson, 1961: 134-135), as well as risks associated with service-learning programmes. Of the first kind of outcome, material benefit was achieved primarily for P1 who experienced the material outcome across multiples semesters. Additionally, the materials created by service-learning students at P3's site can also be considered a material outcome to a lesser extent since the products were referenced as reusable materials that have since endured in application at the site.

The purposive outcomes across the sites are mostly positive. Only respondents P4, P5, and P9 raised any concerns about benefit, but even these three sites identified at least two of the following five purposive outcomes: manpower, specific skills, innovation, intercultural exposure, and significant individual contribution. Almost all sites with the exception of P4 cited manpower as a purposive outcome, whereas P1, P2, P6, and P7, all identified specific skills the service-learning students possessed as a benefit at their sites. The contribution of service-learning programmes towards the introduction of innovative ideas at partner organizations cited by P2, P3, and P7 also provides evidence of purposive outcomes. Intercultural exposure is also a widespread benefit of service-learning programmes with only P5 not expressing intercultural exposure as a benefit at the site. Similarly, all sites acknowledged that the individual plays a significant role in terms of the partnership and subsequent benefits at the service-agency (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Miron & Morely, 2006). Most respondents' references to individuals were made in the context of exceeded expectations.

These beneficial purposive outcomes identified by site-supervisors, with the exception of manpower and individual contributions to a lesser extent, can be interpreted as building evidence of service-learning programmes' contributions to a condition supportive of the expansion of human capabilities through interaction and engagement. Furthermore, the broad citing of purposive benefits for the partner organizations suggest that these partner organizations, and to a lesser extent, their target communities, experience some portion of their needs as being addressed through service-learning programmes. Some site-supervisors are comfortable with the service-learning programmes and have experimented with different ways and means of applying service-learning programmes at their sites (P2, P6, and P8A+B) around these outcomes. The structures partner organizations create to host service-learning programmes is also evidence of a degree of agency and fuller participation.

As for the risks partner organizations experienced, only P4 and P9 cited specific experiences regarding how service-learning programmes jeopardized the workings of their respective service agencies, whereas P2 identified an isolated experience presenting a risk to the organization, specifically with regards to its relations with the community. Most other site-supervisors could imagine on some level how they could incur risks by hosting service-learning students, but few claimed to have experienced serious risk firsthand. P6 noted that it was the organization's responsibility to mitigate any risk the students bring to the organization or community, whereas P3 indicated that it trusted SU not to send "risk" students. In all instances where there were firsthand experiences of risk, the partner organizations suggested that these experiences had made them reconsider the merits of these programmes, thus threatening the developmental outcomes achieved in the process.

Solidarity, the last outcome of collaborative partnerships, is also one means of conceptualizing community (Bhattacharyya, 2004), boding well for developmental outcomes. No site-supervisor made an explicit acknowledgement of feeling solidarity with the institution or the students, but comments providing undertones of an ongoing process of inclusion were recognizable. Despite P9's many reservations about the implementation of service-learning programmes at that organization, it noted that the change in approach of the institution was "cool", recognizing that there was a deeper philosophy behind service-learning that sought to bring the university to the community. Furthermore, P9 used the key word of "bridging" to indicate a link between previously divided groups, and with obvious identifications with the notion of social capital. Similarly, P3 expressed a "trust" in the university to mitigate risks and make a substantial contribute to the organization through service-learning programmes, of which P3 requested more of. P2 acknowledged how the university's perception in the community stands to benefit through the course of these activities, broadening its interests and understanding of a community it previously abused for its own narrow academic pursuits. Another participant was experienced as a former participant of a service-learning programme (although not at that site), and suggested that the experience in the programme helped one to better understand the various stakeholders involved and created shared interests and relationships, closely associated to solidarity.

Overall, the experiences of the site-supervisors suggest that from formation through to outcomes, an ongoing and subtle process of community development is occurring amongst service agencies and SU, as well as with some communities to a lesser degree. Service-learning is not claimed to be the sole reason for this, but it is one particular form of community engagement of which evidence of developmental outcomes is beginning to be collected. While testimonies to outcomes do provide evidence, these are by no means conclusive outcomes, or a balanced impact assessment. The experiences of site-supervisors provide substance to claims of partner organization benefit as well as their communities of intended benefit. In this sense, the experiences of site-supervisors have indicates that the majority experience service-learning programmes as interventions facilitating a process of inclusion for their organizations, expanding the opportunities available to the partner organizations and its constituents.

7.3.2   The developmental implications of the applied partnership model for partner organizations

As evidenced through the previous research findings and conclusion, the existing partnership model shifts service-learning programmes from an emphasis upon the community to an emphasis on the partner organization. Where service-learning programmes exist at partnering organizations there is evidence of the achievement of short term purposive benefits across every organization to some degree. The implications of this are that partner organizations may tend towards these short term tasks or responsibilities in their needs identification for a given service-learning programme so that the mutuality of accomplishment can be felt by the end of the semester. These short term benefits are cumulatively substantial and contribute to broader processes of community development, but lack a unifying guiding approach across organizations at present.

The applied partnership model combined with the tendency towards short term outcomes may constrain the institution from effectively engaging socially excluded groups in society in a strategic way that can contribute to altering more substantial and entrenched processes of depravity. It may create a condition whereby the institution's service-learning programmes lose considerable long-term transformative potential, in favour of semester outcomes with the partner organizations through which they engage, and the communities which they target. However, this short term approach may also serve to build trust and norms of engagement for partners, building towards more substantial collaborations in the future. Although it seems that partner organizations have been disproportionally responsive to the interests of the university, semester engagements may also provide the regular reflective opportunity for experiential learning at the sites as a means of balancing these interests for mutual benefit.

HEIs, in partnering with service agencies, are able to learn from, support, and inform existing developmental projects being conducted by the partner organization hosting service-learning programmes. Through this collaboration, HEIs have the potential to integrate teaching & learning, research, and community engagement through structured programmes or projects that work within an organization's existing mandate. Service-learning programmes that are formed, implemented, maintained, and assessed for outcomes with the consultation and engagement of community partners, and target an identifiable and assessed community need or goal, are opportunities for HEIs to contribute to the community development outcomes of these partner organizations, as well as broader community outcomes. In such instances, the service-learning programmes are but one opportunity available for students and some academic staff to better understand the needs and goals of a specific organization and their community of intended benefit.

When service-learning programmes are carried out with consultation and mutual commitment across the various stakeholders, the entire initiative is itself part of a process of community development. If the community, partner organization, and HEI share a commonly identified goal aimed at expanding the opportunities of all parties involved, then the experience is a process of building both solidarity and agency jointly. Students and academic staff learn and produce knowledge about the given human capability deprivation in efforts to foster development, while partnering organizations have the opportunity to receive the manpower, skills, innovation, and intercultural exchange to make their programmes and activities more appealing and effective. Communities can be encouraged to access these service-learning programmes and partnering organizations' activities that provide human capability expanding services. The entire process is itself an exercise in community development as the institution is engaged in a process of creating an inclusive encompassing community whereby all parties are able to expand their opportunities and choices through participation and engagement in programmes such as service-learning.

However, this explorative study suggests these potential community development outcomes are contingent upon the formation of partnerships that are based on a degree of mutuality. The experiences of partnership through the two community development modules at SU identify potential challenges and successes. Existing power relations that are often unspoken realities of these partnerships may allow a university to dominate these partnerships by determining the rules of engagement (Osman &

Attwood, 2007), and partnership models themselves. Furthermore, social injustice and historical inequalities may also have a considerable influence on the relationships between stakeholders as various perceptions and socio-historical factors contribute to how engaging with HEIs is perceived (Mitchell & Humphries, 2007). From setting the time frames available for community engagement, to inadvertently dominating the terms and agendas of these partnerships, HEIs can bring risks into service agencies, and the partner organizations may bear the brunt of burden accommodating HEIs. However, they also stand to benefit considerably in terms of purposive and solidarity outcomes if there is a true mutuality to the partnership. Mutuality is expressed as an ideal, rather than a de facto reality of partnerships, but it thus provides a goal to continue to work towards.

7.4 Recommendations

As this is an exploratory study, the intention is not to arrive at any groundbreaking epistemological truths, but to rather help illuminate an area of study where there is ample room for more research. The recommendations are therefore to further explore the describe outcomes of service-learning programmes for both partner organizations and communities. An acknowledged shortcoming of this study, feeding into a recommendation, is that it explores service-learning from the experience of a partner organization representative without surveying course facilitators or target community members, or other organizational representatives (possibly a party to some of the communication challenges aforementioned) in the same process. Any study in the South African context that conducts a full impact assessment for all of the stakeholders involved in a service-learning programme will help to provide vital understanding of the dynamics of service-learning partnerships with regards to the distribution of substantive outcomes.

An area where research is still lacking includes the perceptions of communities of exclusion as to how they experience the various developmental efforts which seek to be of benefit to them. How do communities broadly experience HEIs involved in community engagement? How do they perceive other developmental agents such as NGOs, faith-based organizations, local government and the state? When it is understood as to how the excluded distinguish between these more established developmental agents, then perceptions of more specific developmental interventions such as service-learning might be explored amongst communities.

What are some alternatives to the existing partnership model? Are there any examples of the dyadic partnerships originally conceptualized for service-learning, positioned directly between the community and the students, rather than through a medium organization? What is the likelihood of any constraining factors around service-learning modules (dates, periods of availability, lack of resources, lack of institutional rewards, etc) being altered in order to enable longer term and higher quality placements? How far away is South Africa from establishing a national organization for community engagement and service-learning? The list of questions in the area of service-learning in South Africa is near limitless.

A recommendation to result from this research is the consideration of new or more accurate partnership models for service-learning programmes. In pursuit of reciprocity

and those principles of community development, the potential to engage in a collaborative model building exercise in a specific discipline involving various stakeholders of a given service-learning programme may increase the quality of engagement of partnering organizations and communities from the formation stage. Such a truly collaborative activity from the outset of a programme might help to contribute towards better understandings of how all stakeholders perceive and believe to engage the HEI as well.

Figure 7.2 A recommended model for service-learning in community interaction

Community of inclusion

Service agency

Service-learning

Higher Education Institution

Target community
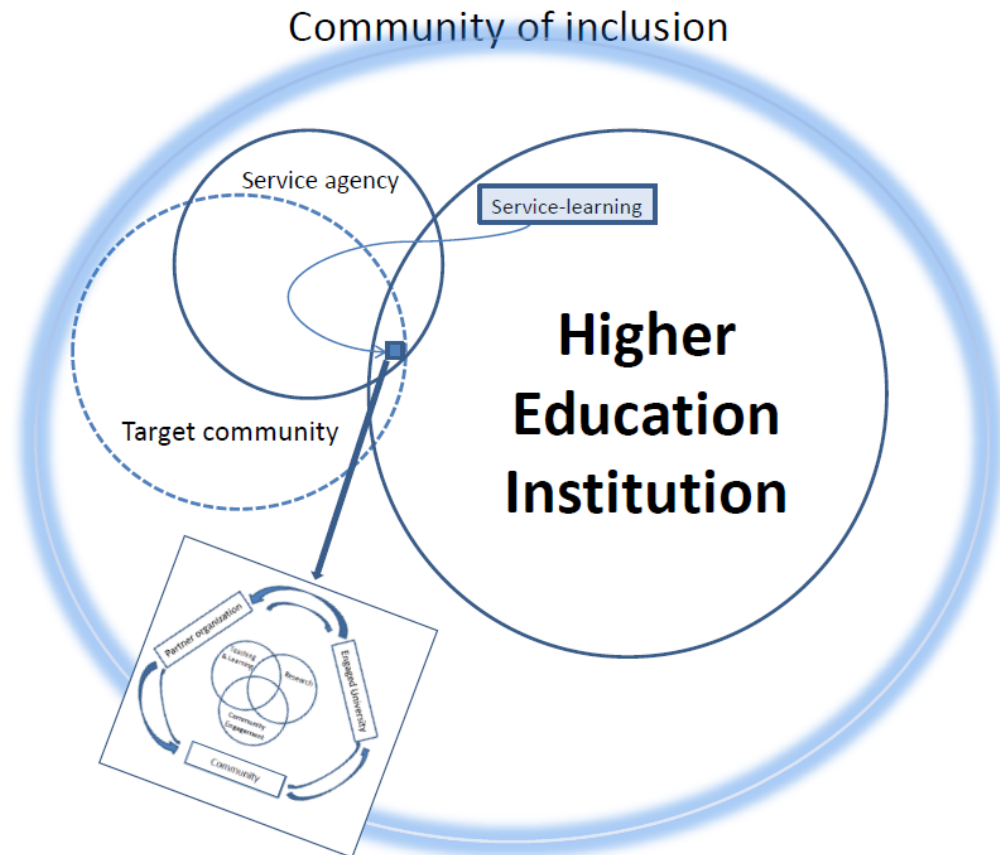
(Author's hybrid model, 2009)

In absence of a collaborative partnership building session in the near future, the author suggests for consideration the hybrid partnership model of service-learning (above) as a representation of how service-learning programmes explored in this study are applied in partnership. The model incorporates an adapted version of the Triad Partnership Model (HEQC, 2006a) as the applied model of service-learning partnerships. Notice the size of the various stakeholders in relation to each other. This is a representation of the potential power relations and flows between stakeholders. Furthermore, the target community's boundaries are not totally defined as this community is not likely to be static or bound by place. As in this study, service-learning is located as a mechanism within the institution that moves from its institutional home through a partner organization where a service-learning programme is formulated before ending at a nexus of the HEI, partner organization, and community. This nexus is where service-learning programmes ideally take place, in a space where Bender's (2008) Infusion Model of community engagement can integrate

the core functions of HEIs with a community engagement perspective while operating in that context of power flows and relations between the three existing partners. Ideally, if the partnerships are mutually beneficial and conducted based on the principles of community development, the process may contribute towards a broader inclusive community identity.

Based on the research findings of this explorative study of service-learning in two community development modules at SU the concluding recommendations are made: 1) Gain more substantial buy-in and involvement at organizations in the formation stage of service-learning partnerships; 2) Encourage objective needs identification and collaboration towards explicitly known mutual benefits from the implementation stage of partnership; 3) Maintain clear and regular communication between stakeholders; 4) Consider the long-term goals for specific partnerships between HEIs, partner organizations, and communities and facilitate multiple integrated interventions to support them.

7.5 Conclusion

Based on the experience of the representatives of partner organizations hosting service-learning programmes of SU, there is evidence that these programmes are contributing to community development outcomes for partnering organizations. The potential to contribute to fostering the notion of a broader community of inclusion comprised of all stakeholders exists. However, this situation is contingent upon the practical considerations of service-learning programmes aligning themselves to the various stakeholders working symbiotically together in the process. The extent to which this is currently happening cannot accurately be assessed based on the experiences of ten site-supervisors partnering with two service-learning modules. Fortunately, elements of their responses suggest that service-learning programmes contribute to solidarity building processes currently at work in and around SU.

Evolving further developmental initiatives involving all three stakeholders, such as service-learning, may provide an opportunity whereby all parties can contribute to a broader experience of community-building that creates the conditions whereby specific groups trapped in a cycle of human capability deprivation are able to access valuable social services to improve their well-being and overall quality of life. Through this process of integrating the core functions of the university through structured educational experiences that advance the developmental goals of a local service agency and expand the opportunities of nearby target communities, SU can progress towards a scholarship of engagement.

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Addendum 1

Semi-structured interview questions for: Exploring the developmental outcomes of service-learning in Higher Education for partner organizations

The interview questions for partnering organizations are structured based upon the four stages of partnership development identified by Butterfoss, Goodman, and Wandersman (1993):

Formation-
How did you come to learn about service-learning?
If the University refers to you as a service-learning partner, what does that mean to you?
What steps were taken to initiate the service-learning partnership?
Prior to the involvement of service-learning students, what was your organization's relationship to the University?

Implementation-
At your organization, what need was identified for the service-learning students to fulfil?
How was this need identified?
How did students respond to this need and what responsibilities for students evolved from this need identification?
Do students have any other responsibilities at the partner organization?
How are service-learning students distinguished from other individuals at the organization (how do they differ from staff or volunteers)?

Maintenance-
How have you experienced this partnership throughout the involvement of service-learning students?
What efforts have been made by university to ensure that service-learning is mutually beneficial?
What efforts has your organization made to ensure that service-learning student outcomes are achieved?
How often do you communicate with the institution? How often do you meet?
Has your view of the institution changed over the period you've been involved with service-learning? How so?

Outcomes-
What benefits do service-learning students bring to your organizations?
What risks do service-learning students present to your organizations?
What benefits do service-learning students bring to the community?
What risks do they bring to the community?
How do service-learning students contribute to an identified community need addressed by the partnering organization?

Additional consultative discussions conducted with: J du Plessis and A Smith-Tolken

Addendum 2

"Exploring the developmental outcomes of service-learning in Higher Education for partner organizations" a study by Mike Leslie in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Philosophy (Community & Development).

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are asked to participate in research conducted by Mike Leslie, BA Humanities, a student at Stellenbosch University. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your participation as a site-supervisor in a service-learning module.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To explore the developmental outcomes of service-learning in Higher Education for partner organizations.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

- Participate in one semi-structured interview conducted in English (Afrikaans interpretation available upon request).
- Agree to an audio recording of the interview.
- Participate for up to 45 minutes at a site most convenient to you.
- Be available for contact in order to provide clarity or for a follow-up session, should the need arise.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Should you be asked any questions that make you uncomfortable, or for which you do not feel comfortable answering, you are welcome to decline to comment at any time. Otherwise, there are no immediate risks to this study.

The participants of this study will remain confidential. There will not be any risk of your participation directly influencing you or your organization's relationship with the University of Stellenbosch, the Division for Community Interaction, the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, the service-learning module presenters, their assistants, or the students placed at your site.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

This study hopes to explore the outcomes of hosting service-learning students for your organization and its target community. This includes describing the strengths and weaknesses of existing partnerships constructively and objectively. This study hopes to better substantiate any benefits for partnering organizations and communities hosting service-learning students, and describe any risks or challenges. Conclusions have the potential to be applied to mitigate for risks and/or improve outcomes for the future.

This study identifies a gap in South African literature regarding research on service-learning outcomes for partner organizations, and will hopefully prove relevant institutionally, as well as nationally.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of assigning an arbitrary number to you as a participant in the research. Original audio recordings will only be accessible to the researcher, interpreter as necessary, or assistant supporting this study. All original recordings will be kept at the residence of Mike Leslie.

If you would like to review the audiotapes following the interview you have the right to. You are welcome to access the tapes at any time following the interview. Otherwise, the tapes will not be released to anyone not immediately involved in this study, and will be erased upon completion and review of my thesis.

6. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

7. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Mike Leslie 076 912 4767- mikeleslie@sun.ac.za or his supervisor Jacob du Plessis- 082 901 2987 jmjdp@sun.ac.za

8. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Unit for Research Development at 021 808 4914.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to _____ by _____ in _____ and _____ is in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to him/her. _____ was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to his/her satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of Subject/Participant

_____   _____

Signature of Subject   **Date**

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____

and/or his/her representative _____. He/she was encouraged and given

ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in _____

and interpreted in _____ by _____.

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   **Date**