

Exploring Community Partnership for Service-learning in Creative Arts Education through Participatory Action Research

GM Meyer
23232080

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Supervisor: Prof L Wood

Assistant-Supervisor: Prof D Andrews

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"Loving people. It's very dialectical... I don't know many things, but it's necessary to believe in the people. It's necessary to laugh with the people because if we don't do that, we cannot learn from the people, and in not learning from the people we cannot teach them"

(Freire, 1990:247. We Make the Road by Walking)



Photo: *Corné de Wee*

SUMMARY

In African folklore, there is a Swahili tale which depicts the relationship between a monkey and a shark; a story about the needs of two creatures living in two different worlds. The shark needs the heart of the monkey to give to his king and the monkey agrees to go on the journey to learn and experience new things. Unaware of each other's intentions and goals they fall prey to a relationship of mutual distrust and suspicion.

Many opportunities to use art as a tool for social engagement through service-learning exist in Higher Education. However, good intentions do not always equal good outcomes. The story above illustrates the importance of open communication around goals and motives. My past experiences in community engagement projects have taught me that more harm than good can result when communities are not involved in relationship-building and decision-making processes which affect them. It is therefore imperative that students collaborate with communities in every phase of the engagement process, so that they will learn and benefit from each other in meaningful ways. This qualitative research explores and describes the engagement between Intermediate Phase education students and community youth, the findings of which will be used to design a service-learning module in Creative Arts. The aims of the study were (i) to explore what the students and the community participants can learn from such a process, (ii) to explore what aspects of the engagement process can enhance the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes, and which detract from it, and (iii) based on the findings, to suggest recommendations that can inform the development and design of a future service-learning module in Creative Arts programmes for teacher educators.

A qualitative design situated within a critical theoretical paradigm employing a participatory action research approach to inquiry was utilised to achieve the aims of the study. Availability sampling was used to select participants in the engagement between the campus students from the Creative Arts department in the faculty of Education Sciences at the North West University (NWU) Potchefstroom, and the community youths from a nearby township area. The data generation process consisted of four cycles which embraced seven interactive activities, including visual, oral, art, and text-based techniques that were employed in a participatory process. Semi-structured reflective interviews towards the end concluded the research study. Data documentation was obtained through *verbatim* transcriptions of video

clips, visual diaries, and visual charts. The engagement process was systematically monitored, inductively analysed, and thematically interpreted. Trustworthiness was verified by overlapping and multiple data generation strategies, and maintained by reflective member checking and own critical reflections on the process. Ethical requirements included the approval of the Ethics Committee of the NWU Faculty of Educational Sciences, Potchefstroom campus. Signed consent of participants was obtained in writing before the data generation began. Consent was obtained from the participants for visual material to be used for the research study and the presentations thereof.

Three themes emerged from the data collection. Theme 1: the process allowed participants to gain insight into each other's worlds. Theme 2: the participatory action research (PAR) process shifted power relations. Theme 3: the participants experienced personal and professional development through the interactive process.

My findings on the student-community youth engagement suggest that the participatory (PAR) process is well suited for socially engaged art-based practices in service-learning as it promotes reciprocal learning through interactive activities. The activities unlocked value-laden and meaningful learning between the participants. Working collaboratively and in groups benefitted the participants in several ways. They gained confidence and self-determination, began to understand each other, improved personal and working relations, and increased their level of professional development. Limiting aspects included language barriers, short time frames, and unpredictable community events. The role of the researcher as change agent required shared leadership of collaborative groupwork, and it was necessary to structure topics in service-learning that evoke challenging and critical responses between participants from diverse backgrounds.

These findings have significance for the design and development of a service-learning module for Creative Arts education, provide recommendations for future community partnerships in art-based practices, and for further research in service-learning.

Key concepts: service-learning, community partnerships, participatory action research, socially engaged art-based practices, reciprocal and meaningful engagement

OPSOMMING

Volgens 'n Afrika-volksoorlewering, beeld 'n Swahili verhaal die verhouding tussen 'n aap en 'n haai uit, die storie oor die behoeftes van twee wesens wat in twee verskillende wêreldes lewe. Die haai het die aap se hart nodig wat hy aan sy koning moet gee, en die aap stem in om 'n reis saam met die haai te onderneem, om sodoende nuwe dinge te leer en te ervaar. Onbewus van elkeen se motiewe en doelwitte beland hulle in 'n verhoudingslokval geskoei op wantroue en agterdog.

Alhoewel daar in diensleer in die Hoër Onderwys vele moontlikhede bestaan om kuns as 'n instrument te gebruik vir sosiale betrokkenheid, is goeie voornemens nie altyd gelyk aan goeie uitkomstes nie. Die bogenoemde storie illustreer die belangrikheid om oop kommunikasiekanale tussen deelnemers oor hul doelwitte en motiewe te handhaaf. Uit my ervaring met gemeenskaps-projekte, het ek geleer dat meer skade as goed aangerig kan word wanneer gemeenskappe nie betrokke is in verhoudingsbou- en besluitnemingsprosesse nie. Dus is dit noodsaaklik dat studente in elke fase van die samewerkingsproses met die gemeenskappe saamwerk, sodat hulle op betekenisvolle maniere by mekaar kan leer en voordeel daaruit kan trek. Hierdie kwalitatiewe navorsing eksplorieer en beskryf die betrokkenheid tussen Intermediêre Fase opvoedkunde studente en jeugdiges vanuit die gemeenskap, waarvan die bevindinge gebruik sal word om 'n diensleer-module in die Kreatiewe Kunste te ontwerp. Die doelwitte van die studie is (i) om te eksplorieer wat die studente en gemeenskapsdeelnemers uit so 'n proses leer, (ii) om te eksplorieer watter aspekte van die betrokkenheidsproses wedersydse en voordelige leeruitkomstes bevorder en watter dit inperk, en (iii) gebaseer op die bevindinge, om aanbevelings te maak vir die ontwikkeling en ontwerp van 'n toekomstige diensleer-module in 'n Kreatiewe Kunste program vir onderwys opvoeders.

'n Kwalitatiewe ontwerp, geleë in 'n kritiese teoretiese paradigma wat gebruik maak van 'n deelnemende aksie navorsingsbenadering tot die ondersoek, is gebruik om die doelwitte van die studie te bereik. Die selektering van die deelnemers is geskoei op hul beskikbaarheid in die betrokkenheidsproses tussen die kampusdeelnemers van die Kreatiewe Kunste departement in die Opvoedingswetenskap Fakulteit by die Noord-Wes Universiteit (NWU) Potchefstroom, en die gemeenskapsjeugdige van 'n naby-geleë township area. Die datagenereringsproses bestaan uit vier siklusse met sewe interaktiewe aktiwiteite, insluitende

visuele, mondelinge, kuns- en teks-gebaseerde tegnieke wat gebruik is in die interaktiewe, deelnemende proses (participatory action research PAR) tussen die studente en die gemeenskapsdeelnemers. Semi-gestruktureerde, reflektiewe onderhoude met die deelnemers nader aan die einde van die navorsing, het die ondersoek afgesluit. Data dokumentasie is verkry deur *verbatim* transkribering van gespreksopnames, video opnames, visuele dagboeke en visuele diagramme. Die betrokkenheidsproses is sistematies gemonitor, induktief geanaliseer, en tematies geïnterpreteer. Die betroubaarheid van die studie is bevestig deur oorvleuelende en meervoudige data generasie strategieë, wat onderhou is deur deelnemerbevestiging en eie kritiese refleksies oor die proses. Etiese vereistes sluit die goedkeuring van die Etiese Komitee van die NWU Fakulteit Opvoedingswetenskappe, Potchefstroom kampus in, en getekende skriftelike toestemming van deelnemers is verkry voordat die data generasieproses begin het. Toestemming is ook verkry vir die gebruik van visuele materiaal vir die navorsingstudie en aanbiedinge daarvoor.

Drie temas spruit voort uit die versamelde data: Tema 1: die proses het toegelaat dat deelnemers meer insig verkry oor mekaar se wêreld. Tema 2: die deelnemende aksienavorsing proses het magsverhoudinge verskuif. Tema 3: deelnemers beleef persoonlike- en professionele ontwikkeling deur die interaktiewe proses.

My bevindinge oor die studente- en gemeenskapjeug betrokkenheid stel voor dat die deelnemende aksie navorsing (PAR) proses goed gepas is vir sosiaal-betrokke, kunsgebaseerde praktyke in diensleer, siende dat dit wederkerige leer deur interaktiewe aktiwiteite bevorder. Die aktiwiteite maak waarde-belaaide en betekenisvolle leer tussen deelnemers moontlik. Om gesamentlik en in groepe te werk het die deelnemers op verskeie maniere bevoordeel; hulle vertroue is opgebou, hulle het begin om mekaar beter te verstaan; hulle persoonlike- en werksverhoudinge het verbeter en hulle toon 'n verhoogde vlak van professionele ontwikkeling. Beperkende aspekte sluit taalhinderisse, kort tydraamwerke en onvoorspelbare gemeenskapsgebeure in. Die rol van die navorser as agent van verandering, behoort gedeelde leierskap in gesamentlike groepwerk te bevorder; en ook onderwerpe in diensleer so te struktureer dat meer uitdagende en kritiese reaksies tussen deelnemers van diverse agtergronde ontlok kan word.

Hierdie bevindinge het betekenis vir die ontwerp en ontwikkeling van 'n diensleer-module in Kreatiewe Kunste Opvoedkunde en bied aanbevelings vir toekomstige gemeenskaps-vennootskappe in kuns-gebaseerde praktyke en verdere navorsing in diensleer, aan.

Sleutel konsepte: diensleer, gemeenskaps-vennootskappe, deelnemende aksie navorsing, sosiaal-betrokke kunsgebaseerde praktyke, wederkerige en betekenisvolle betrokkenheid.

KHUTSWAFATSO

Mo dinaaneng tsa Seaforika, tlhamane ya Swahili e tlhagisa kamano fa gare ga tshwene le leruarua, tlhamane ka ga ditlhoko tsa ditshedi tse pedi tse di nnang mo mafatsheng a mabedi a a farologaneng. Leruarua le ne le tlhoka pelo ya tshwene gore le e neele kgosi wa lona mme tshwene yona e ne ya dumela go tsena mo loetong go ithuta le goitemogela dilo tse dintšhwa. Ka go sa lemoge maikaelelo le diphitlhelelo tsa yo mongwe ba ne ba wela mo seraing sa go nna le kamano ya go sa tshepane le go belaelana.

Ditšhono tse dintsi di teng tsa go dirisa botaki jaaka sediriswa sa go nna le seabe ga baagi ka go ithuta go dira mo Thutong e Kgolwane, le fa go ntse jalo, maitlhommo a mantle ga a ke a lekana le maikaelelo a mantle. Kgang e e fa godimo e supa botlhokwa jwa tlhaeletsano e e bulegileng mabapi le maikaelelo le maitlhommo. Maitemogelo a me mo diporojekeng tsa go nn ale seabe mo setšhabeng a nthutile gore tshenyo e ka go diragala go gaisa bontle fa merafe e sa tseye karolo mo go ageng dikamano le ditirego tsa go tsaya ditshweetso. Ka jalo go bolthokwa gore baithuti ba komana le merafe mo kगतong nngwe l nngwe ya tirego ya go nna le seabe gore ba tle ba ithute le go ungwa ka bo bona ka ditsela tse di molemo. Patlisiso e ya boleng e batlisisa le go tlhalosa go nna le seabe mo baithuti ba borutabana ba Kgato ya Magareng le baša ba mo setšhabeng, mme diphitlhelelo tsa yona di tlaa diriswa go tlhama mmojulu wa go ithuta ka gio dira wa Botaki jwa Boitlhamedi. Maikaelelo a patlisiso e ne e le go (i) go batlisisa se batsayakarolo ba baithuti le setšhaba ba se ithutang go tswa mo tiregong; (ii) go batlisisa gore ke dintlha dife tsa tirego ya go nna le seabe tse di tlamelang phitlhelelo ya dipoelo tsa go ithuta tse di molemo matlhakoreng a mabedi mme ke dife tse di sa tsamaisaneng le gona t; le (iii) go ikaegilwe ka diphitlhelelo, go tla ka dikatlenegiso tse di ka dirwang go itsese nonofo le tlhamo ya mmojulu wa isago wa go ithuta ka go dira wa lenaane la Botaki jwa Boitlhamedi la borutabana.

Tlhamo ya boleng, e e leng mo letlhakoreng la teori ya sesitla e e dirisang tlhagiso ya patlisiso ya go tsaya karolo e dirisitswe go fitlhelela maikaelelo a patlisiso. Bokai jwa *Availability* le tlhopho ya batsayakarolo ba baithaopi di dirisitswe mo go tseeng seabe fa gare ga batsayakarolo ba khampase go tswa lefapheng la Botaki jwa Boitlhamedi mo Legorong la Dithuto tsa Bosaense la Yunibesiti ya Bokone-Bophirima (YBB) Potchefstroom, le baša ba setšhaba go tswa fa lefelong la motsesetoropong o o gaufi. Tirego ya go tlhagisa tshedimosetso e ne e na le didiko tse nne ka ditiragatso tse supa tse di lomaganeng, go karetsa

pono, kutlo, botaki le dithekeniki tsa tiriso ya sekwalwa tse di neng tsa diriswa mo tiregong ya go tsaya karolo. Go tshwara ditherisano tse di tshupotshwano tsa popego e e *semi* go ya kwa bokhutlong go khutlisitse thuto ya patlisiso le batsayakarolo. Dikwalo tsa tshedimosetso di bonwe ka video, dibukatsatsi tsa pono le mantswe a a *verbatim*. Tirego ya go nna le seabe e lebeletswe ka thulagano le go sekasekwa ka go rutwa le go ranolwa ka ditlhogo. Boikanyego bo tlhotlhomisitswe ka maano a *overlapping* le koketso ya tshedimosetso e e ntsintsi, e tlhokometswe ke netefatso ya motsayakarolo yo o supatshwano le ditshupotshwano tse mong mo tiregong. Ditlhokego tsa Maitsholo a a siameng di akareditse tumelelo ya lekgotla la Maitsholo a a siameng la Legoro ya Dithuto tsa Bosaense la YBB (khampase ya Potchefstroom), le go saena tumelelo ya batsayakarolo, e e bonweng ka go kwalwa pele ga tlhagiso ya tshedimosetso e simolola. Tumelelo e ne ya bonelwa sediriswa sa pono se se neng se tshwanetse go dirisetswa thuto ya patlisiso le ditlhagiso tsa yona.

Ditlhogo tse tharo di tlhagile go tswa mo kgobokanong ya tshedimosetso. Setlhogo sa 1: tirego e letlile batsayakarolo go itse ka ga lefatshe la yo mongwe. Setlhogo sa 2: tirego ya PAR e sutisitse maatla a dikamano. Setlhogo sa 3: Batsayakarolo ba itemogetse nonofo ya sebele le ya seporofesenale ka tirego ya tomagano.

Diphitlhelelo tsa me tsa go nna le seabe sa setšhaba sa baihuti ba baša e tshitshinya gore tirego ya e tshwanetse sentle ditiro tse di ikaegileng ka botaki tsa go nna le seabe mo loagong mo go ithuteng ka go dira jaaka e tthatlosa go ithutana ka ditiragatso tse di tlhotlheletsanang. Ditiragatso di senotse go nna le boleng jo bo tseneletseng le go ithuta go go nang le bokao fa gare ga batsayakarolo. Go dira mmogo ka ditlhopho go tswetse mosola batsayakarolo mo go oketseng go itshepa le go tshaloganyana, tokafatso ya dikamano tsa sebele le tsa tiro le go sekamela mo go oketseng dikgato tsa iphitlhelelo le kgololosego. Dintlha tse di nnye di akaretsa dikgoreletsi tsa puo, peo ya dinako tse di khutshwane, le ditiragalo tse di sa lebelelwang tsa setšhaba. Mosola wa mmatlisisi jaaka agente ya phetolo o tlhoka go tthatlosa kabelano ya boeteledipele mo tirisano mmogo ka tiro ya setlhopho le go bopa ditlhogo mo go ithuteng ka go dira e e tlaa tsosolosang dikgwetlho le dikarabelo tse di tseneletseng fa gare ga batsayakarolo go tswa lemoragong le le farologaneng.

Diphitlhelelo tse di na le mosola mo go tshameng le nonofisong ya go ithuta ka go dira mo mmojulung wa Botaki jwa Boitlhamedi le abela dikatlenegiso ste di tseneletseng tsa ditirisano tsa setšhaba tsa isago mo ditiragatsong tse di lebileng botaki le tsweliso ya.

Dithogo: go ithuta ka go dira, ditirisano tsa setšhaba, patlisiso ya go tsaya karolo mo loagong, ditiragatso tse di lebileng botaki tsa go tsaya karolo mo loagong, dirana & go nna le seabe go go nang le bokao

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
SUMMARY.....	iii
OPSOMMING.....	v
KHUTSWAFATSO.....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xvii
ADDENDA.....	xvii
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION.....	1
PROLOGUE: A story about hearts.....	1
1.1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE.....	3
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.....	5
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION.....	6
1.5 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS	6
1.5.1 Community partnership.....	6
1.5.2 Service-learning.....	7
1.5.3 Creative Arts education.....	8
1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PARADIGM INFORMING THE STUDY	8
1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY: OVERVIEW	11
1.7.1 Research design	12
1.7.2 Research approach	13
1.7.3 Research context.....	13
1.7.4 Participant selection.....	13

1.7.5	Data generation and analysis	14
1.7.6	Data analysis.....	15
1.8	MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS.....	15
1.9	ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER.....	16
1.10	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	16
1.11	CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS STUDY.....	17
1.12	OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS	17
1.13	SUMMARY	20
CHAPTER TWO	21
	CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN EDUCATION	21
2.1	INTRODUCTION.....	21
2.2	FOUNDATIONS OF SERVICE-LEARNING	22
2.3	FRAMING THE SERVICE-LEARNING FIELD	23
2.4	THEORETICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK.....	25
2.5	MODELS OF SERVICE-LEARNING: MULTIPLE INTERPRETATIONS.....	32
2.6	SUMMARY	40
CHAPTER THREE	42
	ART AS A SOCIALLY ENGAGED PRACTICE IN SERVICE-LEARNING	42
3.1.	INTRODUCTION.....	42
3.2	DEFINING SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART.....	43
3.3	FRAMING SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART PRACTICES	44
3.3.1	Participation.....	46
3.3.2	Collaboration	47
3.3.3	Situational learning and human relationships	48
3.3.4	Conversations	50
3.4	SUMMARY	52

CHAPTER FOUR.....	53
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	53
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	53
4.2 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	55
4.2.1 The nature and purpose of the critical-emancipatory and postmodern paradigm.....	55
4.2.2 The nature and purpose of the participatory action research approach	57
4.2.3 The participatory action research process	59
4.3 RESEARCH METHODS	61
4.3.1 Participant recruitment.....	62
4.3.2 Data generation strategies	63
4.3.3 Data analysis and interpretation	77
4.4 MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS.....	80
4.4.1 Process validity.....	81
4.4.2 Catalytic validity.....	82
4.4.3 Transferability	83
4.4.4 Rhetoric validity	83
4.4.5 Democratic validity.....	84
4.4.6 Construction of new knowledge	84
4.5 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER.....	84
4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	85
4.7 SUMMARY	87
CHAPTER FIVE.....	88
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	88
5.1 INTRODUCTION	88
5.2 BIOGRAPHICAL DETAIL OF PARTICIPANTS.....	89
5.3 DATA ANALYSIS	89

5.4	PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THEMES	90
5.4.1	THEME 1: PROCESS ALLOWED PARTICIPANTS TO START OPENING TO EACH OTHER’S WORLDS	91
5.4.1.2	Sub-theme 1.2: Interaction exposed stereotypical	92
5.4.2	THEME 2: THE PAR PROCESS SHIFTED POWER RELATIONS.....	101
5.4.3	THEME 3: PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCED PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE INTERACTIVE PROCESS....	107
5.5	REFLECTION ON THE PROCESS	116
5.6	CONCLUDING REMARKS	122
CHAPTER SIX	123
	FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS EMERGING FROM THIS STUDY	123
6.1	INTRODUCTION	123
6.2	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	123
6.2.1	Chapter 1: Introduction and orientation to the study	123
6.2.2	Chapter 2: A Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of Service-learning in Education.....	124
6.2.3	Chapter 3: Art as a socially engaged practice in service-learning.....	125
6.2.4	Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology	125
6.2.5	Chapter 5: Discussion of findings.....	126
6.2.5.4	The participatory process benefitted the community’s self-confidence	132
6.2.5.5	Aspects that could detract from the process.....	134
6.3.	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN OF FUTURE SERVICE-LEARNING INITIATIVES IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE OF CREATIVE ARTS.....	135
6.3.1	The PAR methodology is well suited for service-learning in Creative Arts.....	135
6.3.2	Based on findings and my reflections on the process	136

6.3.3	Based on the development of the trust-building activities, my findings indicate that communication skills are essential attributes to the PAR process to establish a platform for other working actions	137
6.3.4	Based on all the interactive activities that occurred during the PAR process, group interactions offer opportunities for dialogue	137
6.3.5	Providing a variety of creative and art-based learning opportunities to all participants, ensures that diverse learning styles are accommodated.....	138
6.3.6	Reflective practices on actions helped to enhance learning	138
6.3.7	The role of the facilitator as researcher plays an important role in the process	139
6.3.8	Language barriers and other hindrances detracting from learning	139
6.4	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES	140
6.5	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	141
6.6	THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	141
6.7	CONCLUDING REMARKS	142
	EPILOGUE: The full circle	143

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH: CREATIVE ARTS	26
FIGURE 2.2 INTERACTIONS BETWEEN TWO ACTIVITY SYSTEMS (BITZER, 2009:248)	28
FIGURE 2.3 THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL MODELLING OF KOLB (1984).....	31
FIGURE 2.4 SCHÖN’S REFLECTIVE IN ACTION AND ON ACTION MODEL (SCHÖN, 1987)	31
FIGURE 3.1 CONVERSATION STRUCTURES: SUBJECT (CONTENT) AND FORMAT (STRUCTURE) (HELGUERA, 2011:45).....	51
FIGURE 4.1 ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS FOLLOWED BY THE PARTICIPANT ACTIONS IN THE CAMPUS-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (ZUBER-SKERRITT, 2011).....	60
FIGURE 4.2 STRINGER’S ACTION RESEARCH INTERACTING SPIRAL (MERTLER, 2012:15).....	60
FIGURE 4.3 THE PAR METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN ADAPTED FROM STRINGER’S ACTION RESEARCH INTERACTING SPIRAL AND ACTIVITIES ADAPTED FROM ZUBER-SKERRITT’S STEP DIAGRAM.....	61
FIGURE 4.4.1 VISUAL MAPPING AND BRAINSTORMING OF WISH LIST FOR VISION BUILDING BY THE CAMPUS-COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS	70
FIGURE 4.4.2 THE VISUAL MAPPING AND DIAGRAMMATIC PLANNING OF THE PARK ARE ILLUSTRATED IN THESE SCHEMATIC PRESENTATIONS	71
FIGURE 4.4.3 INFORMAL GROUP DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE PARTICIPANTS CONVERSING ABOUT THE DESIGN AND LAY-OUT DURING THE PLANNING SESSIONS OF THE PROJECT ...	72
FIGURE 4.4.4 INTERVENTION A: OBSERVATION AND INFORMAL GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON PUBLIC ART INSTALLATIONS AT THE BOTANICAL GARDENS	73
FIGURE 4.4.5 INTERVENTION B: OBSERVATION AND INFORMAL GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON STUDENTS’ PARK MAQUETTES AT THE CAMPUS’ ARTS & CRAFTS STUDIO	73
FIGURE 4.4.6 ARTEFACT PAINTING OF RESOURCES BY THE GROUP ON CAMPUS	74
FIGURE 4.4.7 COMMUNITY PARTICIPANT BUSY SKETCHING IN HIS VISUAL JOURNAL DURING THE INTERVENTION PROCESS	75
FIGURE 4.5 THE DATA-ANALYSIS CODING USED DURING THE PAR PROCESS (ADAPTED FROM CRESWELL 2009, GRIFFIN & MAY, 2012; SMITH & OSBORN, 2008)	78
FIGURE 5.1 PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS FOLLOWED.....	89
FIGURE 6.1 AN OVERVIEW OF THE PAR PROCESS INDICATING THE CYCLES AND ALL THE COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES	136

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 2. 1 BUTIN'S OVERVIEW OF FOUR MODELS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (BUTIN, 2010:135).....	33
TABLE 2. 2 BOYER'S MODEL OF SCHOLARSHIP (NIBERT, 2008).....	36
TABLE 2. 3 SERVICE-LEARNING MODELS COMPILED BY CAMPUS COMPACT (MOUTON, 2005) 38	
TABLE 4. 1 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN	54
TABLE 4. 2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EMANCIPATORY-CRITICAL AND PARTICIPATORY PARADIGM (ADAPTED FROM WEBER, 2004:IV).....	55
TABLE 4. 3 SUMMARY OF BIOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY	63
TABLE 4. 4 DATA GENERATION PROCESS AND DOCUMENTATION	67
TABLE 5. 1 IDENTIFIED MAIN THEMES AND SUB-THEMES	90

ADDENDA

ADDENDUM A: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: COMMUNITY	175
ADDENDUM B: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: STUDENTS.....	177
ADDENDUM C: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS FROM THE CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY.....	179
ADDENDUM D: PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR PAR PROCESS: SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT: IKAGENG	180
ADDENDUM E: EXCERPT OF THE VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT: INTRODUCTION AND REFLECTIVE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW	181
ADDENDUM F (REFER TO DVD)	
CYCLE 1: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	191
ADDENDUM F1: INTRODUCTION	191
ADDENDUM F2: WALK-AND-TALK.....	191
ADDENDUM F3: TURNING POINT (RIVER OF LIFE)	191
CYCLE 2: PLANNING & DESIGN	191
ADDENDUM F4: VISION-BUILDING	191

ADDENDUM F4.1: VISUAL DIAGRAMS (WISH-LIST):	191
ADDENDUM F4.2: VIDEO & PHOTOS	191
ADDENDUM F5: PLANNING AND DESIGNING	191
ADDENDUM F5.1: VISUAL DIAGRAMMES (GOALS)	191
ADDENDUM F5.2: VIDEO & PHOTOS	191
ADDENDUM F5.3: PREPARATION PAINTING	191
CYCLE 3: SKILLS APPLICATION	191
ADDENDUM F6: INTERVENTION AND ACTION.....	191
ADDENDUM F6.1: BOTANICAL GARDENS: VIDEO & PHOTOS	191
ADDENDUM F6.2: ARTS & CRAFTS STUDIO: VIDEO & PHOTOS	191
ADDENDUM F7: ART –BASED SKILLS APPLICATION.....	191
ADDENDUM F7.1: PAINTING OF TYRES: VIDEO & PHOTOS	191
CYCLE 4: REFLECTION AND EVALUATION	191
ADDENDUM F8: REFLECTION & EVALUATION	191
ADDENDUM F8.1: TRANSCRIPTIONS	191
ADDENDUM F8.2: VISUAL DIARIES	191
ADDENDUM G: EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F3 WITH REFERENCE TO “RIVER OF LIFE”	192
ADDENDUM H: EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F4.1 WITH REFERENCE TO “WISH-LIST”	194
ADDENDUM I: EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F5.1 REFERENCE: PLANNING AND “GOALS”	195
ADDENDUM J: EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F8.2 WITH REFERENCE TO “VISUAL DIARIES”	196
ADDENDUM K: REFLECTIONS: FIELD NOTES AND VIDEO RECORDINGS.....	197
ADDENDUM L1: EXCERPT FROM ADDENDUM F8.2 WITH REGARDS TO “PLANNING AND DESIGNING OF PARK”	205
ADDENDUM L2: EXCERPT FROM ADDENDUM 8.2 WITH REGARDS TO PLANNING AND DESIGNING OF PARK.....	206
ADDENDUM M: INTERVENTION PLANNING AND DESIGNING	207

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

PROLOGUE: A story about hearts

In African folklore, a Swahili tale depicts the relationship between a monkey and a shark, a story about the needs of two creatures living in two worlds. The shark needs the heart of the monkey to give to his king, who is ill and so invites the monkey on a journey with the ultimate aim of killing him so that the shark can ensure that his king will live. The monkey agrees to go on the journey because he wants to learn and experience new things. However, the monkey finds out what the shark is planning and tricks him into thinking that he left his heart on land and that they need to return to *terra firma* to fetch it. Of course, as soon as he is on dry land, the monkey escapes from the shark, thus abruptly ending their brief relationship. Neither of them gains what they really wanted from the experience and both end up with a negative perception of the other (Lang, 1910).

In this story, the clandestine motives of one character resulted in both parties going their separate ways with only negative memories of their brief relationship. The discouraging experience increased their distrust of each other and both were disgruntled by the fact that they had not benefitted from the relationship.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Attempts to conduct engaged research in communities often result in similar outcomes due to failure to clarify motives, interests, and the purpose and process of the research. My initial experience of community engagement resonates with the story of the monkey and the shark. It was a harsh learning experience that highlighted the need for authentic collaboration of all partners before embarking on the crafting of a new research vision (Piggot-Irvine & Zuber-Skerritt, 2012).

Being an Art Education lecturer, I was approached by a corporate funder to decorate an inside mural for a newly erected pre-school building; the requirement was that the painted walls should be appropriate for children of that tender age. I involved a group of ten pre-service Creative Arts student-teachers as I thought it would be a good service-learning experience for them; *reaching out* towards the community, making *their* place look better, utilising *our*

creative output, giving *our expert* knowledge as a *token* of our care for their living environment. Painting the walls was a daunting task, considering that 100m² had to be completed in two days with limited prior knowledge of the task, design layout, or mural painting techniques. We also had no real understanding of the community's culture and context and did not think to involve the teachers or learners in the decisions-making processes. We proceeded to decorate the walls with colourful animal scenes; lilac and lime green backgrounds juxtaposed against orange tints expressing supposed child-friendly lions, wide-eyed, long-lashed giraffes and fun loving, playful monkeys swinging from the branches. The pre-service Creative Arts students' positive feedback of the experience added to my sense of accomplishment with the project. However, at the end of the weekend, as we were taking pictures of the mural painting, a few children peered around the entrance wall – it was the first time they dared to come into the grounds. Their curiosity had been roused by the painting of the walls and they were looking around in a shy, but excited way. One of the students wanted to know if the children liked their newly painted playground. Although some older children nodded their heads in affirmation, others were literally hiding behind the bigger children's backs. They were scared...**of the monkeys**¹.

Reflecting on this event aroused a certain amount of cognitive dissonance in me (Festinger, 1962). Everything went so smoothly: the pre-service Creative Arts students cooperated with each other and met all the demands of the creative process, we received positive feedback from the corporate sponsor, the teachers at the school were highly appreciative of our efforts to beautify their kindergarden premises, and the university acknowledged our efforts. I tried to bury the last day's disheartening encounter behind another tick on the checklist, but it was the children's frightened expressions that left visual imprints on my mind: what happened in the area where they were meant to play, surrounded by scary creatures? I realised that we had failed to create a space in which the voices of the children, in this case the end users of

¹ In some rural cultures monkeys are used by parents as a way to discipline children by threatening them when they are naughty e.g. "If you don't behave then the monkeys will come and fetch you". The facial expressions of monkeys often remind people of a mythical figure called the "tokkelosh", a short three legged creature that threatens people's lives at night. Hence, people tend to put bricks under the bases of their beds so that the tokkelosh cannot climb onto the beds and get to them. Children are also scared of monkeys because the character and behaviour of monkeys can be unpredictable: in African rural areas people have encountered that monkeys will come into their houses and steal their food.

our product, were heard during the process. They were not prepared for what was coming; their preferences were not taken into consideration and they were not given the opportunity to express their opinions or possible fears, or to participate in any of the creative processes in this community outreach action. When small children are left alienated after *acts of goodwill* are *bestowed upon* them in an attempt to *improve* their living conditions, then new ways of community engagement need to be explored.

This experience set my service-learning journey onto a new path – from a “philanthropic” (Slamat, 2010:111), “paternalistic” (Butin, 2010:4), one-sided, interventionist approach to a more interpersonal and collaborative approach, underpinned by a “dialogic relationship” (Freire, 1997:99), that encourages communication and discovery, and is indispensable to knowledge and understanding. This study focuses on finding a “dialogical atmosphere” (Freire, 1997:99); for community participants and pre-service Creative Arts student-teachers to engage in art experiences where they can share their respective values, knowledge, and skills in order to learn from and with each other through the establishment of knowledge partnerships (Holland & Gelmon, 1998; Mitchell & Rautenbach, 2005;). It is hoped that immersing art practices in community engagement projects will enable open exchanges of mutual interest and reciprocal visions and counter possible dependant situations where service is given to communities by artists (Helguera, 2011:49).

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Following 21st century demands for a “new global information economy” (Carnoy, 1997:16) and simultaneously “liberating education” (Freire, 1985:125), the revolutionary nature of knowledge has changed the educational landscape from a discipline-orientated institution to a more participative and democratic type of formation which emphasises “conscious critical thinking and knowledge networks” (Carnoy, 1997:19). In this respect, service-learning plays an important role as part of the bigger picture of community engagement as it is by nature a relational partnership between universities and various communities linking students pedagogically with communities to reach educational goals (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011). Students get the opportunity to reflect on their experiences so that their discipline-specific learning as well as their sense of civic responsibilities are enhanced (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002).

In his book, *Pedagogy of the Heart*, Freire (1997:84) recognises the deeper need for progressive men and women engaged in transforming society, to realise that, having completed the stage of democratic transition, they should enter another state, that of democratic intimacy. People should engage in a struggle for deep social transformation, for unity within diversity (Carnoy, 1997:84). Central to the establishment of democratic intimacy for social change is the creation of dialogical relationships with strong overtones of relational experiences and interactive existence (Carnoy, 1997:94). These concepts play a crucial role in the understanding of the nature of service-learning as personally-engaging interactions between participants in establishing partnerships of knowledge. In these times of “rapid social change and turbulence” Zuber-Skerritt proposes strategies of learning which value principles that uphold “non-hierarchical and democratic processes, personal courage and a shared commitment to helping others” (Zuber-Skerritt, 2012:5). Community members should be recognised as invaluable sources of local knowledge, wisdom, and insight, which should be accessed to facilitate learning and problem solving (Zuber-Skerritt, 2012). In this sense, service-learning becomes part of problem-solving knowledge, also referred to as Mode 2 knowledge, which is viewed as intrinsically trans-disciplinary, trans-institutional, and heterogeneous (Kraak, 2000). Engaging with communities prepares a new generation of scholars in service-learning (Erasmus, 2007) and supplements Mode 1 knowledge which is regarded as more pure, disciplinary, homogeneous, expert-led, hierarchical, and almost exclusively university-based research (Gibbons, 2003).

The important role that Higher Education (HE) plays in the promotion of social responsibility and awareness among students places increased responsibility on higher education institutions to produce skilled graduates who are competent in critical, analytical, and general communication skills, who can deal with change and diversity, and display tolerance to opposing views (Department of Education, 1997). HE institutions are therefore challenged to equip their students by putting processes into place that facilitate the production of Mode 2 knowledge. These processes need to be designed to assist graduates in developing the skills they require: to live in a diverse society, to make responsible and informed decisions, and to work collaboratively with the view of contributing to social transformation (Albertyn & Daniels, 2009). Service-learning as a pedagogy can enable graduates to deal with change, embrace diversity, and build tolerance towards communities (O'Meara, 2008). Students who learn to become engaged scholars through their involvement with service-learning and/or

community-based research, simultaneously learn to become integrated professionals who can think holistically and make different connections in their work and towards the outside world (Newmark, 2013).

Service-learning furthermore addresses pertinent community challenges, and adds noticeable value to the lives of community members in empowering them to contribute to the knowledge pool of society, and to serve as co-educators of academic programmes (Van Schalkwyk & Erasmus, 2011). However, the available literature highlights the difficulties that service-learning programmes have in meeting the expectations of communities (Netshandama, 2010; Chimuchekam, 2012), while simultaneously fulfilling Higher Education bureaucratic requirements for the formal assessment of such programmes in the field of art, for instance (Berman, 2009). Despite the institutional status that service-learning has gained in Higher Education during the last decade (Lazarus, Erasmus, Hendricks, Nduna & Slamet, 2008), many pedagogical barriers still need to be addressed, especially if service-learning is premised on crossing borders between categories of “race, ethnicity, class, migrant status, language, and (dis)ability” (Butin, 2006:480). These barriers include theoretical and pragmatic dilemmas between the server/served binary, student/teacher and classroom/community power dynamics which prevent finding mutual reciprocities that benefit all (Butin, 2006). It is vital to overcome the abovementioned obstacles which obstruct fluid interactions between campus and community participants, and prevent continuing and committed engagements. A remark made over two decades ago still resonates today: “The honeymoon period for engagement is over; the difficult task of creating a lasting commitment has begun” (Honnet & Poulsen, 1989) In the following section I will give an overview of how this research study attempts to attain a lasting commitment between academia and community engagements.

In the following section I will give an overview of how this research study attempts to attain a lasting commitment between academia and community engagements.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

From the above discussion, it is evident that there is a gap in the knowledge about how service-learning can be positioned as a bona fide leg of community engagement that involves and promotes the learning of both students and community members from and with each other. Current conceptual models provide some guidance as to how service-learning could be

implemented but fail to address how to embark on reciprocal and relational engagement processes. For this reason, this study explored how a participatory form of action research can be used in Creative Arts, and be integrated as a service-learning module within the discipline. The purpose of this study was to explore how Intermediary Phase pre-service students could engage in a collaborative manner with community participants as a form of service-learning within a Creative Arts Module, LA AE 221 (Davidson & Van Vreden, 2010). Researching such an approach to service-learning has helped to inform the design of service-learning modules for future Creative Arts Education programmes at the North West University, contributing to the current need to develop a “scholarship of engagement” (Boyer, 1996:16) in academia and specifically in art education.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

This study aimed to explore and analyse the interactions between students and community participants in order to answer the following main research question:

How can participatory action research (PAR) be used to integrate a meaningful service-learning experience with the community into a Creative Arts education module?

Sub questions:

- What can the respective partners (students and community participants) learn from the process?
- What aspects of the engagement process enhance the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes and which detract from it?
- What recommendations can be made to inform the development and design of future service-learning initiatives in Intermediate Phase Creative Arts education programmes?

1.5 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.5.1 Community partnership

Community partnership stems from the community engagement concept which represents broad thinking about collaborations between higher education and the community, and intentionally encourages important qualities such as mutual engagement and reciprocity (Driscoll, 2009). Community engagement as a broad concept is defined as “the collaboration

between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity” (Driscoll, 2009:6). Community partnerships are thus “knowledge-based collaborations in which all partners have things to teach each other, things to learn from each other, and things they will learn together” (Holland & Gelmon, 1998:4). Lazarus (2001:8) elaborates: “It is within this partnership, when confronted with the different realities and forms of knowledge that each partner brings, that new realities and new forms of knowledge emerge and it is also within the context of effective partnership that the voice of the community and its reality is actually heard”. For the purpose of this study, the community partnership was negotiated between Intermediate Phase Creative Arts pre-service students and a group of community youths of similar age. Through participatory interactive engagement they established a quality partnership which not only empowered both groups, by addressing developmental needs but also helped to attain mutual learning from and with each other in a shared and unexploitive way.

1.5.2 Service-learning

The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC, 2006) defines service-learning as: “a form of applied learning which is directed at specific community challenges and is integrated into an academic programme and curriculum” and may take place in a work environment. It is also regarded as a pedagogical strategy that links students with communities (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011), in order to attain specific educational and practical goals for both. Furthermore, service-learning is seen as a method for strengthening relationships between campuses and various communities (Bringle & Hatcher, 2005; Thomson *et al.*, 2011). In terms of its integration into a curricular model, the HEQC (2006) defines service-learning as a form of experiential education and a collaborative teaching and learning strategy designed to promote in students academic enhancement, personal growth, and social responsibility. Service-learning is different from volunteer experiences because of the explicit link of course objectives with structured community interactions to meet community-driven needs (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). With regard to this research, the term service-learning will be used to denote collaborative engagement between pre-service Creative Arts students with community youth members in a nearby township area, to explore reciprocal interactions and mutual learning between the students and community participants during a socially engaged art-based project.

1.5.3 Creative Arts Education

Creative Arts as a school subject was established in 2004 and falls within the Life Skills Primary School domain (Department of Basic Education, 2012). It is a programme which includes art, music, drama, and dance for learners during the intermediary schooling phase (Grades 4 – 6). The objective is to equip learners with life skills that will assist them in becoming independent and effective citizens (Department of Basic Education, 2012). Creative Arts is studied in two parallel and complementary streams – Visual Arts and Performing Arts (Dance, Drama, Music). In this study, visual art methods will be used to provide the pre-service students and community participants with opportunities to create “safe and supportive environments in which students and community participants can explore, experience and express thoughts, ideas and concepts within an atmosphere of openness and acceptance” (Department of Basic Education, 2012:10). This study pilots possible themes that are relevant towards a socially engaged, Creative Arts service-learning module for Intermediate phase students.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PARADIGM INFORMING THE STUDY

Academically based community engagement is regarded as a strategy for transformation. The South African policy framework includes the Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997) which gives effect to the goals of the White paper 3. The Higher Education Quality Committee specifically requires that community engagement is integrated with teaching and learning in an accredited and qualitative way (Osman & Petersen, 2013), adding to the core functions of the university, along with research and teaching (DoE, 2001). Service-learning, as a recognized academic pedagogy, fills that role. It is a complex philosophical and pedagogical concept, best served by multiple models and theoretical frameworks (Butin, 2010). It draws on philanthropic and “transformational critical pedagogy” (Butin, 2005:1) which views education as political, positioning itself as a social system that negotiates civic responsibilities in education through a critical, problem-posing and dialogical approach (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). Service-learning is also nested in critical-emancipatory theories which include current post-modern, complexity and social humanist theories as frameworks for service-learning and action research practices (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011; Rogers, Luton, Biggs, R, Biggs, S, Blignaut, Choles, Palmer & Tangwe, 2013). The experiential theories of Dewey, Kolb and

Schön incorporate experiential and reflective practices and these practices form the foundational basis for service-learning practices (Cone & Harris, 1996).

The development of participatory action research and community-based research in service-learning supports community advocacy and gives greater voice to community partnerships (Reardon, 1998; Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoeker, & Donoghue, 2003). Privilege and power are two aspects which situate service-learning in a socially challenged context (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). In addition to the use of social and cognitive learning models, recent developments in service-learning include the pedagogy of engagement (Lowery, May, Duchane, Coulter-Kern, Bryant & Morris, 2006), the transformational model (Kiely, 2005), and service-learning as a post-modern pedagogy (Butin, 2010). Most practices in service-learning ensure that service promotes substantive learning and should therefore be connected to student experiences and reflections (Duley, 1981a).

Contemporary theoretical frameworks accommodate the process of contextualisation and the notion of gaining a better understanding of the partnership process in service-learning (Mitchell & Rautenbach, 2005; Netshandama, 2010), hence the interest in more dialogical ways encourages ongoing discussions with participants from communities. By exploring relational partnerships with a view towards transformational changes, embracing social responsibilities, and recognising the local knowledge base of communities, more contemporary theoretical frameworks challenge the positivistic approach of past theorists about achieving pre-determined ends to 'how to' actions. In this study both the ends as well as the means are examined in which context, change, and personal understanding become more appropriate in promoting a scholarship of engagement (Boyer, 1996; Shumer, 2000). The move from 'expert help' to fostering a reciprocal knowledge pool with mutual benefits forms an integral part of this research study.

Everybody is part of the process from the start, fusing local with 'expert' knowledge interactively so that new knowledge pools are established with self-reliance as a consequence. Freire's theories of critical consciousness continually "challenge power bases and encourage dialogue" (Thornton, 2013:126). The participants' own positions in power relations in this study were therefore challenged and changed to inform relational understanding during the engagement processes.

By challenging and questioning certain dogmas, the dialogical processes (Freire, 1997; Helguera, 2011), were constantly revisited through reflective actions, diverse standpoints, and an attempt at deeper understanding of each other's cultures and ways of thinking, developing "inspiration, insight and reverie" (Pihl & Armitage, 2011:10). In this sense, strategic actions (getting something done) are replaced with actions that ask questions such as "what are we doing?" and "why are we doing it?" (Reason & Bradbury, 2008:127). According to Reason & Bradbury (2008:127) Habermas stated in 1984 that the notion of "opening communicative spaces" should be placed at the heart of critical participatory action research to emphasise the inclusive, collective, and transformative nature of its aims which serve and transcend the self-interest of individual participants towards a more collaborative and negotiated process. Apart from the power relations that are at play in exploring the way that transformational knowledge is generated, the nature of relational interactions is supported by complexity theory. According to Rogers *et al.*, (2013) interactional outcomes are co-determined by history and spatial contexts, therefore two similar-looking systems with different histories, or in different places, are not the same and can not be equated in the same way. This study therefore acknowledges the rhizomatic base of relational opposites which is non-linear, unpredictable, and open-ended. Complex networks develop and evolve through feedback loops, which lead to self-organising systems (Sweeny, 2008). An enabled and self-organised system is imperative to sustainable development in service-learning programmes. In this study differentiation, interaction, self-organisation, and emergent behaviours (Sweeny, 2008) served as instructionable ways to respond to contemporary network structures between the students and the community members as these aspects represented dynamic networked practices within a creative yet complex partnership realm.

Critical reflection on the process allows participants to explore their individual standpoints from different positions and to acknowledge the essence of each others' cultures and contributions (Thornton, 2013). In this study the impetus given to relational partnerships layered the current experiential service-learning practices in a nuanced and reciprocal way. This opened communicative spaces which allowed for conversation and participatory actions and consequently informed new ways of engagement that could guide future trans-disciplinary partnerships of knowledge theory and operational practices.

1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY: OVERVIEW

Participatory action research (PAR) coined by Orlando Fals-Borda (1997, 2006) is ontologically situated in a transformative and participatory paradigm and proposes a practice that is “interdependent, emancipatory, critical and participatory” (Reason, 2008:11). PAR is ontologically a democratic non-coercive process whereby all participants are involved in examining current action in order to improve or change it (Zuber-Skerritt, 2001). It engages the community, faculty members, and students in projects (Bringle & Hatcher, 2005). It also encourages them to be participants in the development of collaborative research in ways that strengthen their academic learning and social competencies. Contrary to looking *at* or *into* a situation from a single point perspective, PAR participants perceive a situation from “multiple viewpoints and work collaboratively, face-to-face, to define the outcomes of their engagement” (Wilson, 2013:62). Personal and social change is promoted (Schneider, 2012), through inclusive, collaborative learning and inquiry, and a reciprocity exists between theory and practice. With PAR reflection on experience and actions to bring about social change are the keys to deep and sustainable learning (Wilson, 2013).

PAR is therefore a philosophy of engagement in the research process rather than merely a research methodology. In this study the dialogical interaction between the participating students and community members were explored as they collaborated to create art-based works for a specific area in the community. The activities were evaluated not only according to their technical or functional worth, but also according to their impact on participants’ social and emotional lives (Stringer, 2007a). This paradigm formed the basis of the study to inform my service-learning practices, and helped to develop a contextualised and integrated learning experience for the Intermediate Phase Creative Arts pre-service students and community participants.

In order to address the main research question and its subsidiary questions a PAR methodology was followed. This study proceeds from a critical, post-modern framework and the engagement processes are embedded in participatory, dialogical, and creative practices. The interactive engagement design process will briefly be described.

1.7.1 Research design

A qualitative research approach embedded in a PAR design was used. Action research is a systematic inquiry which gathers information about the *how* questions (Mertler, 2012) in practice-based education, and focuses on the actions that need to be taken into account to increase the utility and effectiveness of the practitioner (Parsons & Brown, 2002). The design that is used is recursive and cyclical and does not proceed in a linear fashion (Johnson, 2008). With this multiple loop, cyclical research design, in-depth knowledge about the proposed topic as well as insight into the situation was gained (Fouché, Shurink & De Vos, 2011). PAR is distinct as it is driven by the participants and goes beyond understanding; it strives for action to bring about change (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). Participants became empowered owners of knowledge. Social responsibility was obtained through trust-building partnership development and collaboration, utilisation of community resources, facilitation of community challenges, data generation, interpretation of results, application of results, and dissemination of findings to all partners as owners of their own knowledge production. Stringer's action research interacting spiral (2007b) which consists of looking, thinking, acting, and reflecting (own attribution) was used in my reflection on the process. These actions spiralled into other cycles: 1) relationship-building, 2) planning, 3) skills-application, 4) reflecting and evaluating.

Firstly, *a priori* perceptions of service-learning were explored and the expectations of the community were discussed with students as well as community members. The relationship-building cycle addressed the challenges of the community through an orientational Walk-and-Talk activity on site. Thereafter, a Turning point exercise established a relational platform, followed by a vision-building, planning, and design exercise. During the intervention and action cycle, participants were exposed to examples of art-based projects which they started to use and implement during the interactive skills application cycle. Mutual dialogical and creative processes were constantly practised to assess the learning of the participants. Thereafter a semi-structured independent interview with both groups was done which reflected and evaluated the outcomes of this contextualised service-learning study. The learning outcomes of the two groups from diverse backgrounds thus informed the design of a service-learning module for a pre-service Creative Arts education programme.

1.7.2 Research approach

This study is anchored in a qualitative inductive approach focusing on the interaction between students and community participants to understand whether reciprocal learning and knowledge transformation can be mediated between the respective participants. This was researched by taking both tacit and explicit levels of collaboration within the cyclical processes of PAR into consideration. The quality of the action is an important criterion for judging the success of action research (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Five quality indicators which simultaneously answer to action research goals such as problem-solving, participant satisfaction, contribution to human flourishing, and level of achievement by the participants and the work were used to validate the success of the PAR, (Herr & Anderson, 2005). A literature review controlled the analysis and comparison of emerging themes and categories from the empirical data (Creswell, 2009; Griffen & May, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2008; Yegidis & Weinbach, 2009).

1.7.3 Research context

Three academic faculties are currently involved in the larger project: Urban Planning (Urban Design), Botany (Urban Ecology) and Education (Creative Arts). Supporting departments include the Institutional Office of the NWU, Community Engagement, Marketing and Communication, and the service-learning unit in Education. The faculties and departments gained entrance through the official municipal ward committee who represented the community ward. The specific research site included a street reserve of approximately 1000m², used as an open space and located at the intersection corner of two residential streets. The abovementioned stakeholders all played different roles in the project ranging from cleaning, planning, designing, making (transforming,) and maintenance of the site. The Creative Arts' students' role in the project was to engage with the community and to find common ground for the creation of art-based public works which could be erected in the park to complement the redesigned site by the Urban Planning and Botany faculties.

1.7.4 Participant selection

Research participants included three third-year intermediate phase Creative Arts pre-service student teachers from the faculty of Creative Arts Sciences who were voluntarily recruited according to availability to partner with three community members of similar age (Grinnel &

Unrau, 2010). The criteria for the student and community participants included usable English as the medium of communication, similar age, and non-exposure to prior community engagement or service-learning projects to ensure new and ‘fresh’ approaches to the current research. Neither of the participating parties was to possess specialised visual arts training to eliminate ‘expert’ as a top-down campus initiative. The Intermediate Phase Creative Arts students had no specialised art training and were therefore not specialists in the field. They all stem from white middle-class backgrounds, are Afrikaans speaking, and of mixed gender. The four community participants either work or are still at school and their mother tongue is either Tswana or Sotho. They were recruited by community members in the larger Urban Planning project. All community participants live in close proximity to the research site.

1.7.5 Data generation and analysis

The data were generated over a period of three months in a series of two hour sessions. Working in inductive ways, qualitative evidence was gathered (Creswell, 2009) on the engagement process to understand whether reciprocal learning and knowledge transformation could be mediated between the students and the community members through participatory action research. Various strategies to gather data about the engagement process were employed. These strategies were collectively distributed over the PAR cycles to ensure trustworthiness. Through data crystallisation (Ellingson, 2009) different sources and methods were incorporated. Different data documentation methods captured the evidence, including collaborative and informal group-discussions (Lewin, 1948), visual mind-mapping (Boukobza, 2013; Ebersöhn, Eloff & Ferreira, 2010a), visual journals (Sullivan, 2005; Karlsson, 2007; Wolfe, 2012), art-based artefacts (Emmison, Smith & Mayall, 2012) and a semi-structured reflective interview (Niewenhuis, 2010b) towards the end of the project.

Via these multiple data generation and documentation methods, different experiences and forms of expression served as “agents of insight” (Lewin, 1948:60), capturing the intersubjective and the interactive engagements of the participants (Sebestyén & Varga, 2013). The students and community youths members participated in the same activities throughout the process in a mediating and participatory way (Helguera, 2011). Informal discussion and art-based practices were followed by reflective activities (Sullivan, 2005; Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013) which monitored changes and their impact on the participants. The discussions were captured through audio-visual recordings and the visual data gathered

by means of drawings in visual journals and visual mapping charts (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010). The data were transcribed *verbatim* for analysis (Creswell, 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2008; Griffen & May, 2012).

1.7.6 Data analysis

The qualitative data were systematically analysed by reducing the gathered information by organising it into important themes and sub-themes (Mertler, 2012). This was followed by categorising the main features found in the description and interpretation of the narrative and visual data using inductive analysis, and by integrating the text, drawings, audio and video sources of the generated data. The use of “thick descriptions” of this bottom-up approach informed the particular context (Mertler, 2012:9) and contributed to the trustworthiness of the study.

1.8 MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

The six criteria that I used – action outcomes, process, democratic, catalytic, and dialogic measures (Bailey, 2007; Brooks & Watkins, 1994; Tandon, Kelly & Mock, 2001; Patton, 2002; Herr & Anderson, 2005) as well as the construction of new knowledge (Mash, 2014) are all linked to the goals of PAR. *Action outcomes* were linked to relevant and meaningful learning through experiences, skillful application and were critically reflected upon. *Process* was revisited in decision-making processes in all phases to ensure that everybody could manage all the steps before proceeding to different levels of creating the art-based works. The process was furthermore validated through data crystallisation (Ellingson, 2009), using a variety of methods, for example oral, text and visual data, and a variety of data sources (researcher, student and community participants) (Herr & Anderson, 2005). *Democratic validity* also known as *ecological validity* (Tandon *et al.*, 2001) measured the extent of collaboration between the different stakeholders. In this case it meant checking with all parties that all options were considered in the PAR process and that democratic decisions were made. *Catalytic validity* highlighted the transformational potential of changing settings, and reorientated, focused, and energised the participants through encouragement and continuous change processes - followed by reflective discussions (Herr & Anderson, 2005). The working sites, for instance, changed and were concluded with intervention and skills application activities on campus. The participants visited different sites during the study to energise and encourage action outputs. All the data are traceable to its sources and is

assembled in the explicit narrative of the PAR design. In this study, *dialogic validity* was established by audio and visual recordings of the group interviews, the transcription thereof, and substantiated by the visual and textual data that reflected the participants' outputs. As this sub-project forms part of a bigger umbrella project, my findings were confirmed against the backdrop of the other disciplines and stakeholders involved, namely Urban Planning, Botany, and the municipal ward representatives, which confirmed the *construction of knowledge*. These quality indicators were further substantiated by the “4 R’s” promoted in the service-learning context by Butin (2010): respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection.

1.9 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

My role as researcher was to facilitate both the theoretical and practical applications of the study in an integrated way, focusing on the engagement process between the students and the community. I attempted to show how my theory is grounded in my practice and how it in turn fed into new practices (McNiff, 2006). Throughout the entire research project my role was mainly that of a negotiator (McNiff, 2006); deliberating about the research process, and creating opportunities for dialogical processes and creative practices between the students and the community and a reflective facilitator who ensured shared learning opportunities between the participants. All discussions were recorded with additional observational notes (Mertler, 2012; Niewenhuis, 2010a) by myself, ensuring that all viewpoints were expressed and aligned with the research question. I ensured that institutional ethical standards were met and that sensitive care of creative outputs and respectful conduct of the different cultural groups prevailed.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical clearance was obtained from the North-West University. Three basic considerations were ensured in the ethical clearance process: the people (their rights, well-being and self-respect), the researcher’s right to a safe and respectful environment, and the planned research to protect possible neglected groups in society (Broom, 2006). PAR ethics were followed which include respect in the decisions-making processes, informed and ongoing consent throughout the process, protecting the welfare and privacy of the participants, and justice which requires that people are treated with respect, concern for fairness, and equity (Manzo & Brightbill, 2007; Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). As stated before, I ensured that institutional ethical standards were met and that sensitive care of creative outputs and respectful conduct

of different cultural groups prevailed. Equal opportunities and viewpoints are core elements in this study. Information and findings are stored and disseminated to all stakeholders. Privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality were protected and participants understood their different roles to avoid deception in this art-based study (Emmison, *et al.*, 2012). The campus students together with the community participants participated on a voluntarily basis and worked in groups to ensure a protective environment.

1.11 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS STUDY

Participatory action research was used to explore community-based engagement between student and community youths for a service-learning module in Creative Arts. This study attempts to add to the knowledge pool in higher education in the following ways:

- Adding to the service-learning knowledge pool whereby students and community participants gain more knowledge and skills about reciprocal learning processes in a trans-disciplinary and contextual way. Through art-based practices the students and community participants establish knowledge partnerships that add to the Mode 2 ‘scholarship of engagement’ notion between higher education and communities.
- By introducing a participatory action research design, interactive strategies are used to establish hands-on practices and dialogical processes. The voices of all participants are considered to enable participants from diverse backgrounds to explore service-learning practices that cross language, relationship, decision-making and creative barriers. Researching the engagement process with a new methodology for service-learning informs the development of future service-learning initiatives in Creative Arts education programmes.

1.12 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

PROLOGUE :A story about hearts

This chapter serves as introduction and provides an orientation to the study by referring to past engagement actions. It includes the background to service-learning, the problem

statement, the research question, as well as the objectives of the study. A contextual background and theoretical overview is provided together with a description of the PAR design as methodology of choice. A model of the action research strategies illustrates the different action phases. The data generation and documentation methods used to gather evidence are briefly discussed. The role of the researcher, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations are explained. The chapter concludes with possible contributions and challenges that could be expected from the research study.

CHAPTER TWO

A CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN EDUCATION

This chapter comprises a literature review on service-learning as a conceptual framework for the study. It includes an overview of the different forms of community engagement, both locally and globally. I indicate paradigm shifts that service-learning has gone through to become 'scholarly'. Community engaged programmes and models are included to indicate conceptual shifts in service-learning. This chapter also situates my study in a critical and post-modern philosophical context and in an active, experiential pedagogy. Participatory action research (PAR) is described as the active methodological design most suited for reciprocal engagements.

CHAPTER THREE

ART AS A SOCIALLY ENGAGED PRACTICE IN SERVICE-LEARNING

In this chapter, I discuss critical theory as an umbrella term for service-learning practices with socially engaged art (SEA) propogated by Pablo Helguera, as a foundational theory for art-based practices. I explain the changing functional role of art and how it is used as a mediating tool to enable communication and reciprocal learning. The chapter emphasises the importance of dialogical-practises; participation, collaboration, and structured conversations during a socially engaged art-based practice. Helguera's conversational open-format model is proposed as a working tool for the dialogical processes between the participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents a theoretical justification of the methodological design situated in a critical paradigm. The PAR design, data collection methods, and procedures are discussed as well as ethical issues and the trustworthiness of the study. The chapter comprises visual explanations of the process; tables, models, and visual representations of the actions. The data generations methods are explained in detail including informal group discussions, visual mapping, reflective visual diary writing, and collective art-based practices with concrete visual artefacts, observational field notes, and semi-structured reflective group interviews. These multiple methods are used to investigate the learning process of the participants.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter provides a presentation and discussion of all the data obtained during the study. The emerging themes and sub-themes are identified and coded. The research findings are obtained through *verbatim* quotations from the written and oral responses of the participants. The findings are analysed, discussed in detail, and through critical reflection, the results are interpreted and presented. My learning from the process is discussed. All dialogical and creative art practices are used as data to validate and show how the process supports reciprocal and meaningful learning.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS EMERGING FROM THIS STUDY

This chapter concludes with the significance of my findings for student-community engagements in art-based practices. It provides a summary of the research activities and findings. The relevance and significance of participatory action research (PAR) to be integrated within a service-learning Creative Arts education module is discussed, including the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes for all participants. Possible detractions are mentioned and recommendations for the design of a future service-learning module for Creative Arts are presented. The chapter gives a summary of the study and shows how the research questions were answered.

EPILOGUE: The full circle.

1.13 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the art-based service-learning research study. It began with an introduction and a background to the study as well as a problem statement, and explained the purpose of the study. The research questions of this qualitative research using a participatory approach to inquiry outlined the main concepts relevant to the study. The chapter provided a brief discussion of the research design and methodology, the participant selection methods, the data generation and analysis strategies, and the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness and to meet the ethical requirements. In the next chapter, the study is contextualised and supported with a literature review of past and current trends in service-learning.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF SERVICE-LEARNING IN EDUCATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Demographic shifts, marketisation (Butin, 2010) and the 21st century demands of a “new global information economy” (Carnoy, 1997:16) together with a need for “liberated education” (Freire, 1985:125), has spilled over into an active pedagogy which links service-learning as the standard-bearer for "engaged learning, civic renewal and academic betterment" (Butin, 2010:ivx). Furthermore, the revolutionary nature of knowledge has changed the educational landscape from a discipline-orientated institution to a more participative and democratic programme which emphasises “conscious critical thinking and knowledge networks” (Freire, 1997:19). In this respect, service-learning is seen as a pedagogy and philosophy that links classrooms to the "real world" (Butin, 2010: vix) - an embodiment of what Ernest Boyer (1996:24) coined a "scholarship of engagement”.

Recent literature (Butin, 2010; Bender 2013, Erasmus 2013), indicates that a majority of faculty members believe that creating and sustaining partnerships with local communities is a high priority for their institutions, and that the practice of service-learning is a prominent marker and predictor of students' "deep learning" (Butin 2010:10). For this reason, community engaged programmes have become a core focus of HEIs with teaching and learning models being systematised and research being aligned with community practices (Butin, 2010; Carnegie, 2007; Driscoll, 2009; Holland, 2013; Slamati, 2013). Moving from a service programme to a “scholarship of engagement” (Boyer, 1996:24) practice, increasing emphasis is placed on the modes and means by which it can be embedded across academic disciplines and in institutional policy (Furco, 2003; Hartely, Harkavay & Benson, 2005). This aspect has been amplified in a global call for civic engagement which goes beyond and deeper than service *to* the community (Slamati, 2013). Partnerships based on bottom-up agreements and reciprocal learning are promoted with the emphasis on mutual care and meaningful partnerships (Holland, 2013), in contrast to traditional silo and ‘good deed’ practices by stakeholders to ensure change and leadership in society. The need for engaged

scholarship confirms the academic urgency of embedding service-learning into the curriculum (Holland, 2013; Wilson, 2013).

With this backdrop in mind, the following chapter offers foundational knowledge of service-learning by providing an overview of the discipline's key concepts and defining terms. It also features a discussion of relevant theoretical and pedagogical approaches to global service-learning, referring briefly to the proponents of this multi-dimensional pedagogy (Kendal, 1990; Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). A critical overview of trends and paradigm shifts occurring in the integration for service-learning into higher education teaching and research is explored. This integration includes various forms of service-learning partnerships, models for institutional course development, a scholarship of engagement, and finally the challenges of addressing social transformation and diversity through socially engaged art practices. The chapter explains the conceptual framework used for the study and investigates possible models which could ground service-learning into a Creative Arts education module.

2.2 FOUNDATIONS OF SERVICE-LEARNING

The essence of service-learning rests on a "philosophy of service and learning that occurs in experiences, reflection, and civic engagement within a collaborative relationship involving community partners" (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011:1). What sets service-learning apart from the broad umbrella term 'community engagement' is that it incorporates structured opportunities intentionally designed for students, faculty, and community partners to reflect on their interactions and activities with a focus on both educational outcomes and community challenges. Flecky and Gitlow (2011) explain that the hyphen between *service* and *learning* (service-learning) is purposeful as it denotes a balance between service and learning outcomes resulting from the partnership experience. These definitional terms differentiate service-learning from other forms of active learning, such as collaborative, cooperative, and problem-based education which are strategies that could be employed in a service-learning process (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). Various other defining notions of service-learning emphasise the qualities that empower a community through the service provided, with powerful learning consequences for students, academics and, stakeholders participating in the experience (Bender, 2013; Erasmus, 2011). It is suggested that students who participate in service-learning would learn through experience. Their engagement would involve addressing the community's problems, assisting the students to acquire a deeper

understanding of the situation, and result in them gaining some skills for themselves through a cyclic process of action and reflection (Eyler & Giles, 1999). My study links to this notion of action and reflection based on reciprocal experiences and beneficial value for both campus and community participants. According to Bringle & Hatcher (2002) service-learning ideally results in a deeper understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Setting itself apart from volunteerism, service-learning is defined by World Wise Schools as a teaching method which is both meaningful and reflective; it combines academic instruction, meaningful service, and critical reflection to enhance student learning and civic responsibility (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005).

Although definitional terms emphasise different aspects of service-learning as experiential, developmental, and reflective the needs of the community, students' interest and understanding of community life and academic learning should be emphasised (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005). Measuring the quality of service-learning as a meaningful experience is more difficult in these engagement cases, as both students and the community need to grapple with diversity and social issues. (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Butin (2010) proposes that the "4 R's"; respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection could be used to articulate service-learning; the community's viewpoints, outlooks, and way of life. These aspects should be respected, and reciprocated challenges between campus-community participants should be addressed through mutual agreement. Relevant learning should be encouraged and critically examined, and complex experiences should be reflected upon.

2.3 FRAMING THE SERVICE-LEARNING FIELD

The conceptual foundation of service-learning reflects its ontological complexity and "multiple moniker faces" (Butin 2010:6), portraying the many divergent forms in which it can present itself. Kendall (1990), for example, differentiates between service-learning as pedagogy – in this case a specific methodology used for the delivery of content knowledge – and as a philosophy – a world view that infuses the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of a course. Lisman (1998) suggests that all modes of service-learning are embedded in philosophical orientations that he differentiates as "volunteerism", "consumerism", "social transformation", and "participatory democracy". My study links to social transformation and a participatory approach that provides reciprocal learning opportunities to higher education students and community participants. This research is directed towards change and

emancipatory self-determination (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011) rather than dependant co-existence. How to form a heuristic understanding of the contrasting and often divergent forms of service-learning, and the plurality of concepts found in service-learning, will be discussed starting with its pedagogical significance.

Service-learning is a “pedagogical model that intentionally integrates academic -learning with relevant community service” (Horward, 1998:22). It should not be treated as an add-on to course material (Netshandama, 2010; Flecky & Gitlow, 2011) but as an educational approach which combines authentic community service with integrated academic outcomes (Lategan, 2005). Apart from its pedagogic value as a worthwhile scholarly endeavour, service-learning is linked to a broader national research agenda which involves the theoretical and practical exploration and investigation of social issues through a particular disciplinary lens (Furco, 2003). Service-learning offers two opportunities with campus-community partnerships: the possibility of establishing trans-disciplinary learning communities across the disciplines in a scholarly way, and the emphasis on discipline specific activities for social change (Furco, 2001). I used both. My study was linked to a trans-disciplinary project with urban development and planning, using art-based practices to determine the mutual learning between student- and community participants.

In South Africa which has a 42% unemployment rate and where half of the population are living beneath the poverty line, academics are calling for new ‘terms of engagement’ to be negotiated between higher education and communities to meet the need for knowledge democratisation and knowledge generation (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Erasmus, 2005). In this case, service-learning as a pedagogy, could function as a vehicle for democratic participation and knowledge distribution between higher education and its surrounding communities, decreasing “unequal power-relations” (Erasmus, 2009:9) and creating less hierarchical and more integrated educational experiences. The pedagogic significance of service-learning and the identified gaps to achieve integrated scholarly engagement challenge my present teaching and learning practices in art education. This study attempts to generate new knowledge about the modes and means that could be used in service-learning programmes, and the alignment of equity with democratic knowledge distribution which encourages learning with and from each other. The one-sided role of the stereotypical, middle-class “white knight” riding to save people in the community and to understand how the “underprivileged” live and behave (Butin, 2010:5), has changed towards a more

reciprocal form of community engagement. In line with this development, I have become a change agent in my approach and conduct of community-engaged practices, moving from an interventionalistic, paternalistic, top-down approach to shared power and reciprocal engagement to attain a more meaningful learning experience for all involved. The engagement was structured to provide opportunity to enable a meaningful and empowering reciprocal engagement between the students and the community participants; to assume an interchangeable binary (teacher/students) role; to enter and experience each other's worlds; to engage together during the working process; and the opportunity for all participants to reflect on and evaluate the engagement towards the end of the process (Conner, 2011).

Service-learning is by nature an open, non-elitist, collaborative, and participatory act. It occurs in the world of the community and is not confined to classroom spaces. Content is generated from the mutual experiences of the participants and applied in real terms. Hence, the framework most suited for service-learning should accommodate a plurality of perspectives, positions, and contributions that allow joint, mutual, and reciprocal knowledge production and leadership (Erasmus, 2005; Holland, Stroud, & Smith-Tolken, 2013). Epistemologically, participants are situated in a social world and apply concepts which make sense to them and which promotes self-understanding and reciprocal learning (Erasmus, 2005). In the next section the conceptual framework of service-learning and its many strands will be discussed.

2.4 THEORETICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The current literature includes critical, post-modern, and complexity theories as frameworks for service-learning and action research practices (Rogers, *et al.*, 2013), with experiential education as the pedagogical foundation for service-learning practices (see fig 2.1) (Higher Education Quality Committee, 2006). A strong pragmatist approach as propagated in the experiential theories of John Dewey (1916), Gustav Kolb (1984), and the reflection theories of Donald Schön (1983), which were all used. The neo-pragmatic theories of Habermas (1984), the socially engaged art theory of Helguera (2011), and the activity theory of Engeström (2001), informed the dialogical orientation of this study. Dan Butin's postmodern perspectives (2010) informed some of the service-learning models (see Fig 2.2).

Initially the character of service-learning was founded on the theories of constructivism and rested on the pedagogical pillars of active learning (Chapdelaine, Ruiz, Warchal & Wells,

2005), however exploring relational partnerships with a view to making transformational changes, accepting social responsibilities, and recognising the traditional knowledge base of communities, other more contemporary theoretical frameworks were also absorbed in this study. These contemporary theoretical frameworks focus more on the process of contextualisation and the notion of gaining a better understanding of the partnership process. Most practices in service-learning ensure that service promotes substantive learning and should therefore be connected to student experiences and reflections (1981a). Both Kolb and Dewey's experiential theories (Felten, Gilchrist & Darby, 2006) have been groundbreaking in moving closer to a Mode 2 teaching and learning style, extending the parameters of linear, disciplined-orientated education towards a broader trans-disciplinary context (Wilson, 2013) which encourages dialogical engagement rather than linear either/or prepositions.



Figure 2. 1: Theoretical and conceptual framework of service-learning in participatory action research: Creative Art (designed by the author, 2014)

Critical theory emphasises the political nature of education and involves a critical, dialectical approach to problem-posing, social systems and civic responsibilities (Freire, 1975). This

study drew extensively on the critical theories of Freire (1985, 1994, 1997) as change-orientated and social responsible agenda, opposing in essence, the positivistic approach of past theorists attempting to achieve pre-determined ends of 'how to' actions. In this study both the ends as well as the means were examined in which "context, change, and personal understanding" became more appropriate than producing an end product only (Shumer, 2000:1). The move from 'expert help' to fostering a reciprocal knowledge pool with mutual benefits forms an integral part of the engagement process. In this complex fluidity of conceptual frameworks the doer (who can either be the community member or the student) has a say in what is done, and in validating decisions (Thornton, 2013). In this respect bottom-up contributions to change involve a redistribution of power between the participants; everybody is involved from the start, interactively fusing traditional with 'expert' knowledge. As a result new knowledge pools are established with self-reliance as a consequence. Freire's concept of critical consciousness challenges power bases continually and encourages dialogue (Thornton, 2013). In this study the participants' own positions in power relations were challenged and changed through dialogical processes to inform relational understanding of the engagement process. The notion of democratic intimacy and establishing a dialogical relationship between the participants, contributed to my understanding of service-learning as a pedagogy that promotes social change through relational experiences and interactive existence (Freire, 1997). Partnerships of knowledge should reflect a caring society which can be attained through personally engaging interactions between campus and community participants (Freire, 1997). In this regard, socially engaged art practices espouse the need for dialogic interactions and social awareness and promotes collaboration, participation and communication (Helguera, 2011). Socially engaged art theories (SEA) will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Language is not the only communication system available in this study. In order to expand on traditional conceptions of dialogical processes, the study considers different types of visual images and symbols that can be seen as "social and cultural practices with economic, historical, and political implications" (Gee, 2008:8). Many types of visual literacies have specific significances and multi-modalities (writing, images, sounds, gestures, artifacts) which are all included in the study to communicate distinctive types of meanings (Gee, 2008). Multimodal literacies used as evidence in the study will constantly be revisited through reflective actions to come to a deeper understanding of the participants' cultures,

ways of thinking, and the development of “inspiration, insight and reverie” (Pihl & Armitage, 2011:10). The neo-pragmatism of Jürgen Habermas (1984) places open communicative spaces at the heart of critical participatory action research to emphasise the inclusive, collective, and transformative nature of its aims which serve and transcend the self-interest of individual participants (Reason & Bradbury, 2008:127) towards a more collaborative and negotiated process in decision-making actions (Thornton, 2013).

Service-learning is a pedagogy which is boundary crossing; accommodating social groupings with opposing characteristics, leaning either towards a service-orientated or a module orientated way (Osman & Petersen, 2013). Furthermore, the perception exists among policy makers that the transference of knowledge and integration is an uncomplicated process that “happens naturally” (Bitzer, 2009:248). The opposite is true. Communities and academia are differently structured, have different purposes, and differ in practice. If there are disruptions between two opposing systems, previously held knowledge can be questioned, analysed, and remodelled to satisfy both systems. A new zone of potential knowledge development can then be opened between the two activity systems identifying “potentially shared or jointly constructed objects” (Engeström, 2001:136). The zone of potential development becomes a productive in-between space, or a third space for the development of boundary work (see Fig .2.2).

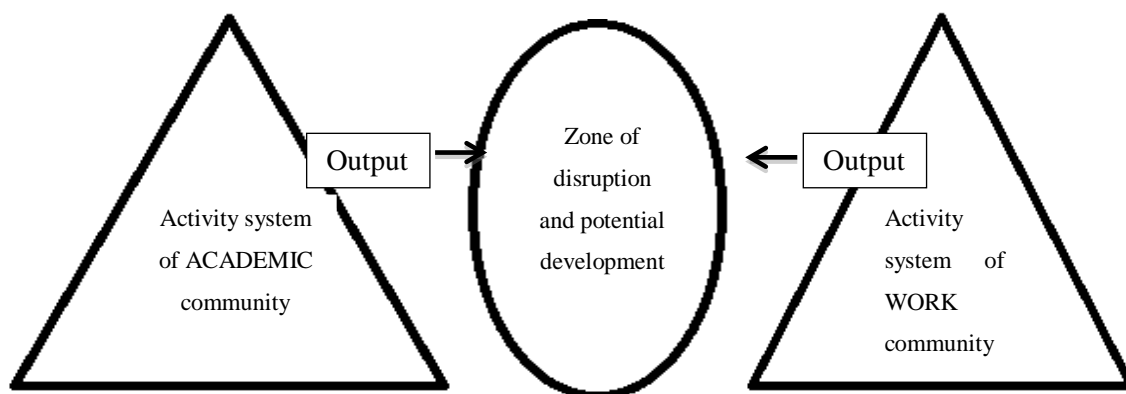


Figure 2: 2 Interactions between two activity systems (Bitzer, 2009:248)

This study refers to unconstrained communication which enables both campus and community participants to be free to decide about the content of their interaction and how the process should unfold to elicit a sense of true emancipation. To accommodate easy

conversation, I used a third or in-between space as a space of potential development between two potential disruptive systems (Engeström, 2001; Konkola, Tuomi-Grohn, Lambert & Ludvigsen, 2007). Free dialogue (conversation), the interaction between the students and the community participants, and the construction of new ideas, are all activities that were accommodated in a space which was open for possible disruption and development. This in-between space not only mediated as a zone for development, but accommodated the division of labour (and power) (Bitzer, 2009) between the two groups as well. Furthermore, academic knowledge was mobilised and solutions were found in the lived experiences of the community by immersing the participants in each other's realities. The strategies that were used to activate the inbetween space will be discussed in Chapter 3, and will also be illustrated within the practical application of the PAR methodology.

The mutual learning that occurred in this study is based on the experience of the campus-community participants. John Dewey's (1916) philosophical and pedagogical work is often cited as the inspiration for experiential, democratic, and civic education which includes service-learning (Giles & Eyre, 1994; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). Dewey, a naturalist philosopher, believed that we reflect and use prior knowledge from experiences to further our growth (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011); in other words, learning by doing. Although Dewey never used the term *service-learning*, his views on mutual learning includes participation in a democratic community which contribute towards social wellbeing and the interdependence of interest, positive opportunities for growth, and social rights (Saltmarsh, 1996). He was a strong proponent of reflective enquiry which he thought would connect and break down the distinction between "thought and action, theory and practice, knowledge and authority, ideas and responsibilities" (Saltmarsh, 1996:18), and simultaneously provide an opportunity for the creation of meaning from associated experience. With reflective enquiry, actions are transformed into experiences, which are in turn transformed into learning (Kolb, 1984). Using reflective enquiry in my research was important as I am interested in the learning processes of the campus-community interactions from and with each other. Lastly, Dewey believed that education is linked to social reconstruction as a primary means of social transformation. In short, the cornerstones of service-learning; experiential learning, a connected view of learning, social problem solving, and education for citizenship, appear to be implicit in Dewey's writings (Giles & Eyre, 1994).

The well-known model of David A Kolb (1984) and his associate, Roger Fry (Kolb & Fry, 1975), remains a central reference for service-learning in higher education. Building on the ideas of Dewey (1916), and Lewin (1951), Kolb and Fry (1975) explored the processes associated with learning from concrete experiences. They regarded experiential learning as a strategy integrating education, personal development, and work. Kolb's (1984) concept of experiential learning explores the cyclical pattern of learning from experience through reflection to conceptualising and action, re-adjusting and returning to further experience. The four stages in the cycle, namely concrete experiences, thoughtful observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active participation are illustrated in Figure 2.3 (Atherton, 2011; Kolb, 1984). *Concrete experience* corresponds with direct practical experiences in a situation. Higher order thinking is stimulated as it grows out of real-life experiences (Zlotkowski, 2001). *Reflective observation* concentrates on what the experience means to the individual. It requires observation, examination, analysis, and interpretation of the impact of a specific concrete experience. Abstract conceptualisation of ideas is tested in practice. Reflecting on concrete experience transforms experiences into knowledge which affect future plans and strategies (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Zuber-Skerritt, 2001). *Abstract conceptualisation* gives meaning to discoveries by relating them to other discoveries or other forms of knowledge. It explains why something happened, lays down certain rules in describing the experience, and applies known concepts. *Active experimentation* implies that the action is taken further and conceptualisations and their consequent implications are tested in different situations. In the context of service-learning, Carmichael (2009) suggests that concrete experience takes place in the community or organisation. The reflection or reviewing process followed by the abstract conceptualisation stages could take place in study groups, self-study, or classrooms where theories and concepts would be discussed in the context of the concrete experiences. The reflection should be structured to lead to deeper learning and to encourage a particular focus or point of view (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999). In my opinion, the evaluation of Kolb's model by Carmichael is aimed mostly at student learning and does not encourage reciprocal engagement and mutual learning of all the participants involved in the research. With this study I underlined the mutual involvement in all the activities of the cycles as I wanted all participants to answer the "Why?" question, and be able to contextualise the problem (Knowles & Holton, 2000). Kolb and Kolb (2005) argue that with experiential learning the primary focus should be on engaging students in a process that enhances their learning throughout the process. My studies emphasised not only this aspect but also focused on the

creation of meaningful and reciprocal learning experiences for *both* campus and community participants.

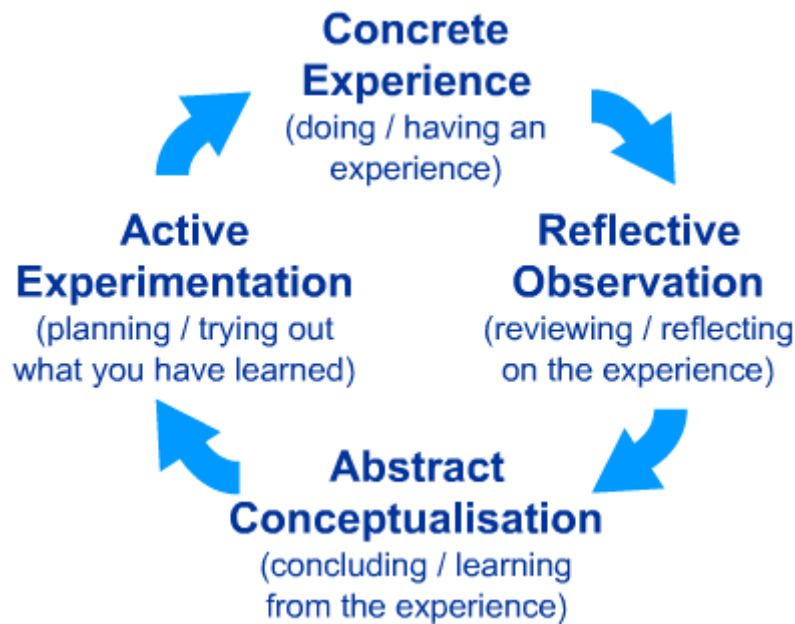


Figure 2.3: *The theoretical and practical modelling of Kolb (1984)*

The theoretical and practical modelling of Kolb (1984) and Schön (1987) on the role of reflective thinking in experiential education have influenced how pedagogy incorporates reflection on engagement processes as integral to service-learning (Cone & Harris, 1996; Eyler, Giles, & Schmiede, 1996). Schön’s practice of reflection in action and his reciprocal reflection teaching and coaching model (Schön, 1983) (see Fig. 2.4) have been used to foster reciprocal and reflective activities among students, faculty, and community partners (Honnet & Poulsen, 1989; Eyler, 2002). Reflecting in- and on- actions were reiterated by myself and the students throughout the study.

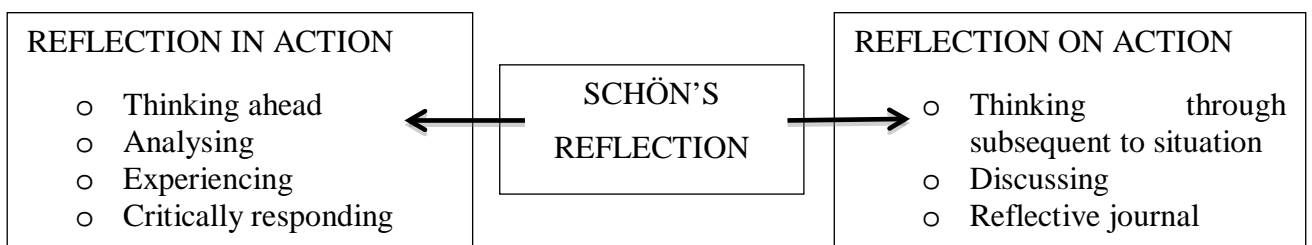


Figure 2.4: *Schön's reflective in action and on action model (Schön, 1987)*

Reflective learning is an important component in the learning process of students. Until the 1970s, the dominant paradigm was based on the delivery of knowledge. In the 1980s this paradigm shifted to a curriculum of competence based on skills, to ensure employment, which was later challenged by the lifelong learning paradigm in the 1990s. Since the late 1990s, lifelong learning has been championed by a curriculum, based on reflective learning (Bourner, 2004). Experiential learning (action and reflection) forms an important component in the service-learning processes that I explored.

From these discussions, it should be clear to the reader that the diverse theoretical frameworks position service-learning as a complex philosophical and pedagogical educational practice; one which can best be served by multiple models. I selected the most appropriate models that could be used to situate this study in a postmodern and critical realm. In the next section, current and traditional service-learning models will be explained, underlining the renewed interest in embedding service-learning as a scholarship of engagement.

2.5 MODELS OF SERVICE-LEARNING: MULTIPLE INTERPRETATIONS

A review of the service-learning scholarship (Butin, 2010, Langworthy, 2007; Lucas, 2000; Varghese, 2003) reveals a wide range of models depicting how service-learning is understood and implemented in course studies. Although over 100 research studies in South Africa have been published in recent years, indications are that there is no single generally accepted definition of what is constituted by a service-learning course (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005). Defined as a scholarly integration between campus and community, service-learning is also referred to as community service, community development, experiential learning, situated cognition, or workplace learning (Furco, 2003). Furthermore, no two service-learning activities are the same as they have to accommodate different situational needs. For these reasons various service-learning models have been developed.

The most recent postmodern model that addresses the ambiguities found in service-learning literature and the critical questions asked about the value of service-learning as a pedagogical strategy is proposed by Dan Butin (2010). Critical questions are raised around the pedagogical stance on course content, the philosophical perspective on local and global communities, and the function of service-learning as an institutionalised mechanism that fosters students' self-awareness on issues of diversity, volunteerism, and civic responsibility.

Butin (2010) proposes an overview of four service-learning models for community engagement which include technical, cultural, political, and anti-foundational perspectives (see Table 2.1).

Model	Key terms and focus	Possibilities	Limits
1. Technical	Content knowledge	Cognitive success through real-world linkage	Experiential components may overwhelm the content focus
2. Cultural	Civic engagement and cultural competency	Expansion of understanding of self in the local and global community	Complexity of social and cultural realities may be undermined by a “charity” orientation
3. Political	Social and political activism	Fostering of a more equitable and socially just environment for individuals and groups	Ideology may appear partisan, thereby undercutting course content, student buying into community engagement, and achievement of rhetorical goals
4. Antifoundational	Cognitive dissonance	Expansion of epistemological possibilities through questioning of seemingly solid foundations	Lack of formal or conclusive solutions may disenfranchise committed students

Table 2.1: Butin’s overview of four models for community engagement (Butin, 2010:135)

Community engagement from a *technical perspective* is focused on its instrumental effectiveness be it teaching, learning, or research e.g., working with poverty stricken families in the context of an academic course; the *cultural perspective* focuses on overcoming the “town/gown” division, helping students with aspects such as tolerance, diversity and engaged citizenship; the *political perspective* emphasises the empowerment of the voices and

practices of historically disadvantaged groups with a social-justice worldview. Campus is regarded as a change agent. The *anti-foundational stance* is called the “forked road” (Dewey, 1916) which fosters a state of doubt as a prerequisite for thoughtful deliberation. A scholarship of engagement that is anti-foundational with an experiential component serves as an opening for questioning norms, behaviours, and assumptions (Butin, 2010). These different perspectives emphasise that service-learning as a pedagogy is not a singular type of curriculum (Butin, 2010); it necessitates a scholarship of engagement that is “integral to individual and departmental goals” (Butin, 2010:134).

My study is in accord with some of the postmodern models’ focus and possibilities. The political orientation “fosters a more equitable and socially just environment for individuals and groups” (Butin, 2010:10). This study was initiated within a “cultural perspective”, embedding service-learning outcomes in the process itself and linking experiential components to local, national, and international issues (Butin, 2010:10) for example unequal learning opportunities and working in trans-disciplinary ways. I continued to observe power relations between the participants which supported the political slant to my studies, and obtained outcomes that could be interpreted as risky, radical, and pessimistic - supporting in effect the anti-foundational perspective of Butin’s theory.

Furthermore, the proposed limitations in the model (see the last column of Table 2.1), made me aware of the possible risks that I could encounter in my research. I refrained from ‘charity’ partisan orientations to my study by promoting equal opportunities through mutual agreements, encouraging everybody’s voices to be heard, and capturing the process in structured cycles to avoid overwhelming complexities.

The notion of a scholarship of engagement synthesises all the core functions of teaching, research, and service. These aspects form the pillars for engaged scholarship and address the roles of the academic staff members (Wilson, 2013). The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC, 2006) emphasises the essential role of service-learning as a scholarly activity, and its critical importance in shaping students as future citizens to produce knowledge that is most relevant and useful in the South African context. Integrating service-learning with research builds on what is most distinctive about universities, namely scholarship and critical inquiry which pursue knowledge, truth, insight, and understanding (Fourie, 2003). The term *scholarship* as used by Boyer (1990), indicates practices that cut

across the categories of academic scholarship; teaching, learning and research. Similarly, *engagement*, suggests a reciprocal, collaborative relationship but with a public entity (Wilson, 2013). It is suggested that Boyer's "scholarship of engagement" model emphasises a true collaboration between academics and the community (Wilson, 2013). Boyer suggests that modern HEIs are moving towards a "scholarship of engagement" by integrating the traditional core functions of universities with the four forms of scholarship. The functional core of Boyer's model consists of "research, teaching, integration and application scholarships that incorporate reciprocal practices of community engagement into the production of knowledge" (Barker, 2004:124). Briefly, scholars should engage in activities which involve the construction of new ideas/theories (scholarship of discovery), apply insights to real-life problems (scholarship of application), integrate knowledge across disciplines (scholarship of integration), and share insights with students (scholarship of teaching). The following model of Boyer illustrates these ideas (see Table 2.2).

According to this model service-learning is interpreted as a vehicle for the generation of knowledge whereby all stakeholders are included in a community of learning which discovers, applies, integrates, and teaches interdependently and continuously (Wilson, 2013:). MacFarlane (2007) adds to the concept of the scholarship of engagement by stating that it is about connecting and applying the expertise of faculty members to community challenges in order to bring about an *integration* of teaching and research. It tends to be used inclusively to describe practices cutting across disciplinary boundaries in which scholars communicate to, and work for, as well as with, communities.

Recent studies suggest a focal shift towards the scholarship of *integration* as this seems to be an area that has been poorly developed in relation to the other three scholarly domains (Wilson, 2013). Scholarship of integration implies "making connections across disciplines, placing the specialities in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too" (Boyer, 1996:18). Le Grange (2007) states that Boyer's notion of scholarship might also be associated with Gibbon's notion of Mode 2 knowledge, as knowledge production becomes increasingly trans-disciplinary (Wilson, 2013). Boyer and others (Albertyn & Daniels, 2009; Bringle & Hatcher, 2005; HEQC 2006; Lazarus 2001), equate scholarship of engagement with scholarship of integration.

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

Table 2.2: Boyer's model of scholarship (Nibert, 2008)

The orientation of my research to scholarship is both inclusive and integrative - it is problem-driven and pluralistic in its approach and used inclusively, cutting across disciplinary boundaries to become trans-disciplinary by connecting not only with other disciplines but also with the community. Other scholarly practices that are evident in my study include: a public scholarship of engagement where academic work incorporates art practices and addresses community challenges; participatory engagement in the production of academic knowledge, fostering social transformation; the utilisation of resources from the community within the research process; and practising social and art-based competencies to make educated and informed decisions about the work and processes (Mouton, 2005). Boyer's scholarship of integration suggests an alignment between HEI's curriculum development and optimal teaching and learning opportunities incorporating service-learning. It offers a broad curriculum framework for service-learning scholarships that could be implemented in Creative Arts Education although the modes and means of achieving this is not so clear. A more pragmatic approach and application methodology will be explored in order to achieve an integrated and engaged scholarship of learning.

The following models of service-learning originated from the USA under organisations such as Campus Compact (2003) and are incorporated in South Africa in associated fields of interests (community service, community development, experiential learning, situated cognition, and workplace learning) (Mouton & Wildschut 2005) (see Table 2.3).

Community-based action research is aligned with another model (not captured in Table 2.3), namely community-based participatory research (CBPR). Both include equal involvement of researchers and the community on all aspects of the research process. Their core function includes dialogue and the exchange between community representatives or members regarding values, consent, study design, methods, and distribution. These two formats are however, more formal than my study with respect to the drawing up of agreements between the community and researchers regarding the rules of engagement or partnerships. Examples from these two types include community-academic research partnerships and community action boards (Brenner & Manice, 2011).

<p>1. “Pure” service-learning</p> <p>This model is similar to volunteerism. Students are sent out into the community to serve.</p>	<p>2. Discipline-based service-learning</p> <p>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 basis for analysis and understanding.</p>	<p>3. Problem-based service-learning (PBSL)</p> <p>Students work as “consultants” for a “client”. They work with the community members to understand a particular community problem or need. Students are posed as the “experts” in their knowledge field, making recommendations for change</p>
<p>4. Capstone courses</p> <p>These courses are generally designed for majors in their final degree course in a given discipline. 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.</p>	<p>5. Service internship</p> <p>This is more intense, as with traditional internship, students work for a couple of hours per week in a community setting, producing work that is of value to the community. SL internships have regular reflective opportunities that help students to analyse their new experiences using discipline-based theories. Both community and students should benefit through a more reciprocal approach</p>	<p>6. Undergraduate community-based action research (CBAR).</p> <p>With this model, students work closely with academics to learn research methodology while serving as advocates for communities. With CBAR students participate in direct service activities with community partners, building upon strengths and resources within communities and promote a co-learning and empowering process. The research process is reciprocal and methodology oriented.</p>

Table 2.3: Service-learning models compiled by Campus Compact (Mouton, 2005)

Other community engagements may not necessarily be reflected in formally designed service-learning outcomes but are outlined in tasks that students perform, or in their course descriptions (Mouton, 2005). In most cases these activities lean more towards the interpretation of “service provision” and are classified broadly into five categories (Mouton, 2005):

- *Information management* activities include carrying out community needs analysis, undertaking socio-demographic profiles of the community, conducting individual and focus groups interviews in the communities, auditing sporting activities and infra-structures, developing case studies, mapping areas, and conducting evaluation studies.
- *Life skills activities* give students valuable experience through inter-personal negotiations and mediation activities, running clinical psychological consultations, individual and group therapy sessions, hosting conflict resolution sessions, and communication workshops.
- *Project management activities* include organising meetings and workshops, organising public forums, developing a strategic plan and skills matrix for a workplace for the disabled, and developing a capacity planning tool as well as cause and effect diagrams for work improvement.
- *Community improvement and upliftment activities* could involve painting walls, mowing lawns, gardening, building a fence around a vegetable garden, re-organising a school library, and constructing book boxes for a rotating library.
- *Producing goods* could mean making furniture, making a video for use by the community, building a children’s playground.

At present, the Creative Arts educational programme of the NWU provides some informal services to the community: producing goods (for example making soft toys), community improvement (for example mural painting activities) and project management activities (for example art workshops). These projects could be categorised as well-intended community outreach programmes, providing a service to the community to promote “feel-good, positive social values” (Helguera, 2011:10). The activities are conducted on a voluntarily basis, and are not part of a formal Creative Arts curriculum module. My initial attempts at community engagement in a township environment falls in this category, however although well-intended they reinforced the division between community and student participants rather than making

allowance for dialogue and reciprocal learning. I realised through my initial experience that if the aim is to move from outreach programmes to a greater sense of ownership for the community and students, engaged involvement between the students and the community participants needs to be established. Combining art-based practices with life skill activities such as “inter-personal negotiations, mediation, and dialogue could enable students and community participants to become more self-reliant and empowered” (Mouton, 2005:121), and in effect lead to more sustainable service-learning actions. In my current study I explored the possibilities of campus-community interactions as meaningful and emancipatory experiences in order to establish a more formalised process for a service-learning course. Previously *ad hoc* projects informed my vision for the development of more scholarly engagement that could serve as course material for a Creative Arts module.

Another model which is closer to the ontological orientation of my studies is participatory action research (PAR). According to Bringle and Hatcher (2005), participatory action research is conducted when research is executed in and with a community in a manner that engages faculty members, students, and community members in projects. Through this research the community's identified challenges are addressed. PAR encompasses service-learning and allows students to be participants in the development of collaborative research in ways that strengthen their academic learning and social competencies (Wilson, 2013). According to Schneider (2012), the essence of PAR is to involve ordinary community members to generate practical knowledge about issues and problems of concern to them and thereby to promote personal and social change. The PAR model aligns with my approach to service-learning as it is ontologically a participatory process linking service-learning actions with research. The value of this model as my methodology of choice will be explained in Chapter 4.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter provided some evidence that service-learning has changed from vehicles of provision to a core provider for democratic participation and knowledge distribution between higher education and its surrounding communities. Service-learning is locally and globally valued as a core academic strand in higher education that needs to be incorporated across disciplines as a scholarship of engagement. Various service-learning models reflect the plurality of approaches and outcomes as well as the changing ontological and epistemological

perspectives of this type of pedagogy. The models suggested by Butin, Boyer, and Campus Compact provide foundational grounding for the types of service-learning practices that exist, but are limited in providing a working model of modes and means to put these functions into practice. A critical overview of trends and paradigm shifts occurring in service-learning was discussed. It was noted that the character of service-learning is founded on the experiential theories of constructivism and active learning, although working with relational partnerships for social change and recognising the traditional knowledge base of communities, more contemporary theoretical frameworks were absorbed in the study. A critical and post-modern theoretical framework grounds service-learning as a philosophy and pedagogy that encourage democratic dialogical processes and supports strong action research practices.

I also conveyed the changes that occurred in my own approach to service-learning; moving from a one-sided service provided *to* the community towards a more engaged and participatory approach *with* the community. With its strong socially engaged agenda, this study will explore the value of participatory engagement through art-based practices in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

ART AS A SOCIALLY ENGAGED PRACTICE IN SERVICE-LEARNING

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a contextual overview of service-learning in higher education was presented, linking student learning with community engagement. It highlighted the gap in knowledge on how service-learning can be positioned as a bona fide leg of community engagement that involves and promotes the mutual learning of both campus and community participants. The theoretical framework in Chapter Two focused on service-learning as a pedagogy and philosophical orientation to higher education learning practices.

Challenges for incorporating art-based service-learning in formal course programmes would be similar to those experienced by other faculties, students, and their community partners in higher education. These may include limited knowledge or resources to incorporate service-learning in existing courses; resistance within the department to service-learning; logistical difficulties in terms of community scheduling and lack of time needed for communication, collaboration and planning; and limited funding for programming (Holland, 2013). Despite these challenges, embedding service-learning in the areas of research, teaching, and scholarship has the potential to energise faculty members and make it more visible and sustainable, aligning faculty programming with HEI's institutional core business (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011).

The literature from other disciplines in higher education such as the health sciences adds to the abovementioned benefits and challenges of incorporating service-learning as part of the curriculum, or as an interdisciplinary experience (Seale, Wilkinson, & Erasmus, 2005). Studies in these fields indicate that students benefit from opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills working with faculty and community partners in real-life settings. Communities of course also gain from these joint partnerships in terms of services and resources provided to them (Brush, Markert, & Lazarus 2006). From these examples it appears that service-learning is equated with service provided to the community, with less emphasis placed on reciprocal learning and decision-making between campus and community participants. In this regard, the agendas of the universities are amplified against the voices of the communities.

Various service-learning studies place impetus on the equal distribution of power and the importance of community voices in a 'true' partnership engagement (Nduna, 2007; Bringle, Clayton & Price, 2009; Netshandama, 2010, Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013). Similarly, in art education, meaningful ways of conducting community engaged programmes have been researched (Berman, 2009; Constandius, 2012; O'Reary, 2005) but "less was known about the learning processes themselves" (O'Brien, 2005:84). Although great attention in research is paid to relationship- and partnership-building for sustainable campus-community engagement, more attention to mutual and reciprocal learning processes and the input from the community could be addressed. My research revolves around reciprocal learning processes between campus and community participants and in an attempt to ground the partnership I used a participatory approach to address the "how to" question. This was conducted to inform a pre-service module in a Creative Arts B.Ed programme.

Socially engaged art theory (SEA) propagated by Pablo Helguera (2011) serves as an important foundational grounding and starting point for community-based art projects and consequently for my studies. It addresses art-based practices that are conducted in dialogical ways. An overview of this theory and the strategies relevant to this study will be explained in the following sections.

3.2 DEFINING SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART

The defining elements of socially engaged art theory (SEA) include group relationships and the collective experiences of a community through art-based practices (Helguera, 2011). SEA is concerned with interpersonal situations and social exchanges, it seeks a convivial environment to accommodate conversations, it promotes collaboration and participation, and it recognises authorship through documentation to obtain emancipatory engagement (Helguera, 2011).

Incorporating socially engaged art-based practices into community settings is a trend that was already established in the 1960s. Together with the 1970s feminism and identity politics, it became a platform for the participation of others rather than serving as an act of protest by the artist (Helguera, 2011). What makes this particular theory so attractive in relation to this study is that the SEA praxis is staged outside the confines of an art environment - it engages with the public realm and includes non-art communities who are willing to engage in a dialogue with others in order to extract critical and experiential knowledge from each other

(Helguera, 2011). In other words, neither the campus students nor the community participants were required to be experts in the art field; they were willing participants in a project in order to learn and improve particular circumstances. Another attractive feature of the SEA theory is that it opens up avenues to all parties involved to use their abilities and experiences and to start creating with others, and to create a sense of ownership which supports the notion of non-experts becoming empowered by the process itself rather than the production of a final end product. For most part of the engagement process in this study, the students and community participants were occupied with activities that opened up conversation and stimulated new ideas (Kester, 2004). Art-based practices served as a mediating tool (Leontiev, 1978), incorporated in the third space (Engeström, 2001), to enhance unhindered communication through social interactions and practical applications. Helguera (2011:1) adds to the social value of art-based practices and claims that all art invites social interaction and provides a space in which *any* conversation can take place: "...all art, in as much as it is created to be communicated to or experienced by others, is social".

Conversations conducted during the process of creating are for most part intuitive and based on trial and error (Helguera, 2011), relying on spontaneity and natural responses and often espousing unpredictable outcomes; it could open up dialogue and be assimilated into interesting data or lead into a relational nowhere-land. In this study, art was used as a mediating tool to open up conversations and establish relationships. I will therefore inform the reader briefly about the changing nature of art in the last decades - from traditional practices to socially engaged forms of communication; the changing role of the participants engaged with art; and I will indicate how conversations around art-base practices neglect to establish participatory dialogue and mutual interest. The picture I am trying to sketch could serve as a model for future service-learning projects with a dialogical and art-based orientation.

3.3 FRAMING SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART PRACTICES

Although art provokes social interaction it is the process itself – the fabrication of the work – that makes it a socially interactive event (Helguera, 2011). SEA is characterised by the activation of members of the public in roles beyond that of passive receptors. The socially engaged orientation of art-based practices has changed from encouraging participation in works of art in open-ended social environments, to practices that expand the depth of social

relationships. In the latter approach ideas such as civic engagement, empowerment, criticality, and sustainability among participants are promoted (Helguera, 2011).

To understand the character of socially engaged art there is a need to differentiate between the symbolic value of art and actual practice. Participants of socially engaged artworks are interested in creating collective works that affect the public sphere in a deep and meaningful way as a result of their interactions around art. SEA focuses on public relations to attain credible social engagement. It moves away from traditional ways of relying solely on the artwork to project a meaningful experience. The artwork *per se* becomes a means to an end instead of the end itself. The arts are inherently modes of expressing thoughts, feelings, fears, and inadequacies and represent previous or desired experiences (Hayes & Finneran, 2014). Its ability to generate and convey meaning transcends the personal to the social, and mirrors emancipatory intent (Hayes & Finneran, 2014). Socially engaged art then, exists between art and non-art and could be regarded as a hybrid multi-disciplinary activity which depends on the actual process and not on imagined or hypothetical social actions. In this sense, the agenda behind the creative process could outlast its physical form. Social engagement which is relational, dialogical, and participatory becomes part of a hybrid process instead of a once-off final art product. Furthermore, as a community-building mechanism socially engaged art can be, albeit uncomfortably, positioned between conventional art forms and related disciplines such as sociology, politics, languages, anthropology, and environmental design (Helguera, 2011). Situated between disciplines, SEA thus becomes a viable option in the search for a trans-disciplinary scholarship of engagement and reciprocal learning.

This research supports the defining character of socially engaged art theory (SEA) for various reasons: the works created by the participants in this study do not symbolise another reality; they represent a collective amount of work which include conversations, brainstorming, visual diagrams, planning and drawing of designs, writing, and painting. The whole research process resided somewhere between art and non-art, in constant flux, blending different action phases rather than presenting all works as closed and final end products. The study also moves across disciplinary boundaries working closely with urban planning and sociology in hybrid ways. Furthermore, socially engaged art as applied in this research-project, relies on the community for its existence. The relationships which the campus students established with the community participants was important to assist “individual

communities define their own voice[s]” (Jackson, 2011:10), and to promote meaningful learning encounters for the students in turn. These reciprocal actions are in contrast to the already discussed one-sided community outreach actions that provide services to the community. To illustrate this point, I critically reflected on a mural painting (described in Chapter 1, page 1-2) which was completed by students *for* a community in 2010. This project fulfilled its purpose of strengthening the students’ sense of self and service to others, adding to the ‘feel-good’ positive outreach actions, but the lack of engaged participation in deciding on the content and structure of the artwork (*what* would be painted and *how*) resulted in a product (mural painting) that denied the emancipatory social values embedded in socially engaged art. In retrospect, apart from its one-sided “top-down” approach, that particular project was flawed in another way. Decorated designs and simulating pleasant animal creatures were presented to the community children and scared them off. In that sense, the community project could only be valued as a community outreach action, not as a socially engaged art-based practice promoting social change and transformation. It lacked the key pursuits of socially engaged practice, which are “self-reflexive dialogue and an engaged community” (Helguera, 2011:12).

In the present study, the participants worked on art practices that affected the public space in a critical and meaningful way. “Meaningful ways” in community engaged activities are closely linked to participation, engagement, and collaboration (Helguera, 2011:12). These interrelated terms will be clarified and problematised in the following sections.

3.3.1 Participation

Technically, all art is participatory as it requires the presence of a spectator, whether standing in front of an artwork or becoming part of the creative process (Helguera, 2011). The intention of the artwork needs to be established before the actualisation of the work in order to evaluate the community experience. Helguera (2011) identifies four layers of participation in art-related practices: nominal, directed, creative, and collaborative. In *nominal participation* the viewer contemplates the work in a reflective manner (e.g. visits art galleries and looks at static art works); *directed participation* entails the completion of a simple task (e.g. writing a wish and hanging it on a tree); *creative participation* requires the enactment of a part of the artwork (e.g. completing a section of artwork mural); whilst *collaborative participation* involves the sharing of responsibilities for developing the structure and content

of the art project in collaboration and direct dialogue (Lacy, 1995). All layers of participation were at play during my research process; the participants visited public art displays as observers, they completed simple tasks as part of the artwork, and they worked in collaborative and participatory ways, sharing responsibilities, making decisions and working on artefacts and resources together. This was done through negotiated discussions and by activating an open space for conversations between the two groups. In order to construct relationships in which the exchanges between the students and the community participants were mutual, a collaborative approach was followed.

3.3.2 Collaboration

Working in collaborative ways requires modes of communication that recognise the limitations and potential of collective relationships (Helguera, 2011; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). The tone of the collaboration is set by the researcher which means that the differences in “knowledge experiences” (Helguera, 2011:52) need to be recognised and valued to enable true’ collaboration. Both Freire and American educator Horton (1990) do not regard themselves as experts who channel their knowledge down to communities: “[My] expertise is in knowing *not* to be an expert” (Horton, 1990:128). They assist communities to discover their own expertise instead of emphasising that which the participants do not know. In this way the “pattern of dependency” (Helguera, 2011:51) is eliminated, allowing participants to be accountable for their own actions. I absorbed this aspect of equal distribution of knowledge and experience between the two groups in my study by helping them to discover their own potential, instead of pointing to deficiencies in their knowledge and skills. Freire (1994) suggests that intelligence can be connected to the differences in a community’s environments, interests, and access to various opportunities. For instance, a farming community would know as little about Plato as Freire would know about agriculture. In the same way I initiated the research project but refrained from posing as an expert in my field, as I wanted to focus on the interactions and learning of both groups working in collaborative ways. Their collective knowledge and experiences were regarded as valuable to the bigger knowledge pool. Moving from a previously patronising role, I wanted to assist the students and the community participants to decide for themselves what they needed to know, recognising their limitations and potentials, but simultaneously enabling a productive, collaborative, environment.

Different environments, interests, and access to various opportunities are part of the campus-community engagement. With minimally qualified art teachers working in marginalised areas and limited resources available at previously disadvantaged schools (Meintjies, 2004), the community participants experience undeniable disadvantages in experiences and knowledge about creative processes in art. On the other hand, campus-students have little knowledge and experiences of township life, but coming from teaching backgrounds may be more knowledgeable and experienced in teaching and learning strategies around art-based practices. Both groups bring different, unrelated experiences to the table.

The motive of this study was not to create accurate representations of public works of art for the park, but to establish a process of reciprocity and collaborative learning between the two groups, recognising their innate potential, "...it is when we position ourselves in those tentative locations, and when we persist in making them into concrete experiences, that interstices become localities of meaning" (Helguera, 2011:71). Capturing these "in between spaces" (Engeström, 2002), and documenting the event lies at the centre of the SEA approach. In other words the intangible social interactions between the groups became the core element of the artwork which is a move from previously discussed traditional 'symbolic' artworks which exists by their own physical presence and subjective, innate meanings. In order to capture the intangible social interactions different forms of documentation were used, which became part of the end product (Helguera, 2011). This idea derives from the 1970s action-based art which existed only because of the documentation of collaborative actions such as co-production, multiple accounts, and the evolution of project in multiple angles (Helguera, 2011). All of these aspects allowed for multiple interpretations and reflected the social experiences of the participants, giving authorship or 'voice' to them as co-creators of their own concrete experiences.

3.3.3 Situational learning and human relationships

Commencing service-learning through trans-disciplinary eco-art projects in communities necessitates an understanding of the social context in which it will occur and how it will be negotiated with the participants (Butin, 2010; Helguera, 2011). SEA is concerned with situations that lead to a mode of social exchange which include interpersonal situations. When HE education students enter complex and unfamiliar social dynamics expressed through cultural codes, and these are misinterpreted, underestimated, or ignored, things can

unfold in such a way that the participants feel lost or uncertain about how to proceed, and in some cases it can result in very unproductive or negative experiences for all (Helguera, 2011). Behaviours cannot necessarily be predicted but an awareness of how interpersonal relations emerge and how they can be negotiated should be understood when considering the needs and interests of the parties involved (Helguera, 2011). The social exchange theory of Thibault and Kelley (1956) helps us to understand the complex underpinnings of social intercourse, and how outcome interdependence can be negotiated. Aspects such as power and dependence, forming relations, and avoiding conflict (Thibault & Kelley, 1956:111), provide more clarity on what Freire (1997) terms *relational intimacy*. The most typical social situations and how we behave in negotiating them are accounted for in twenty one ways (Kelly, & Holmes, 2003). I will highlight three of these ways which are pertinent to my study:

3.3.3.1 Corresponding vs conflicting interests

Participants may start off having the same goals for a project, for instance the improvement of a community's surroundings. However, the interests of the parties can diverge if interests, skills, and expectations do not correspond. What the students want to do may not be in accordance with the challenges of the community participants and vice versa. The community participants in this study did not know what public art was, so the whole idea of erecting a 'high' art construction for public display was substituted for a more 'low' art product; in actual fact the available resources determined the outcomes of the art process.

3.3.3.2 Exchange problems

Both parties need to initiate a project by offering something in exchange (Helguera, 2011). In this sense, the community pointed out the problems which they had encountered in the area, and admitted that they needed assistance to improve their living conditions through art-based practices. The students on the other hand, wanted to learn more by working in a community-based environment, and started to exchange their knowledge on art-based practices to arrive at a new set of learning experiences.

3.3.3.3 Information conditions

Both parties need to have the same information about the project; otherwise it could affect their motivation (Helguera, 2011). Shared objectives were discussed when the project

commenced (Helguera, 2011). However, the community's ideas of what they would need for their park differed from the ideas of the students. To work from the same knowledge base, the participants visited the site together and identified problems.

The next challenge in the engagement process was the management of different phases once these were identified. A break in communication could result in a project not unfolding the way that it is anticipated to do. Conversation is regarded as the centre of sociality and an integral medium in socially engaged art practices (Helguera, 2011). The way the participants understood each other is discussed in the following section.

3.3.4 Conversations

Conversation is a social act with collective understanding and organisation which allows people to engage with others, create community, learn together, or simply share experiences (Helguera, 2011). It is placed between pedagogy and art, as a key educational tool and as a form of individual enrichment (de Quincey, 1910; Helguera, 2011). The existence and relevance of a dialogical art form follows the line of other previously discussed theorists of dialogic practices such as John Dewey (1956) (pragmatism and experiential learning), Jürgen Habermas (1984) (neo-pragmatism and communication, and Paolo Freire (1994) (liberated pedagogy and relational dialogue). The act of discussion is regarded as a process of emancipation, “a self-determining process of empowerment” (Poulin, 2005:26). All the phases in this study are based on informal conversational discussions.

As stated earlier, all art invites social interaction and provides a space in which *any* conversation can take place. Organised talks allow people to engage with others, create community, learn together, or simply share experiences without going any further (Helguera, 2011). SEA recognises and validates dialogical art, focusing on the dynamics of conversation; what it *does* rather than on what it *is*, in order to arrive at a critical understanding of a project (Helguera, 2011). In effect it is not the actual artwork, the content, or the structure, that is the focus of this study, but the dialogical practice that accompanies it. SEA regards the relationship between the making of the artwork and talking about it as an enriching experience placed between history and pedagogy (Helguera, 2011). In a dialogical art-based project such as this research the conversations amongst the participants took on many forms: speech, talks, chats, negotiations, deliberations, or debates. Focusing on the interactions and conversations of the participants, I sought to analyse the exchanges between

the two groups as well as their respective reflections. Their interactions were based on informal conversational structures and on convivial and open communications. The diagram (Fig. 3.1) below outlines the type of conversations found in art-based practices. The diagram includes two variables found in conversations: the subject (what type of talk), and the format (structure) of the conversation.

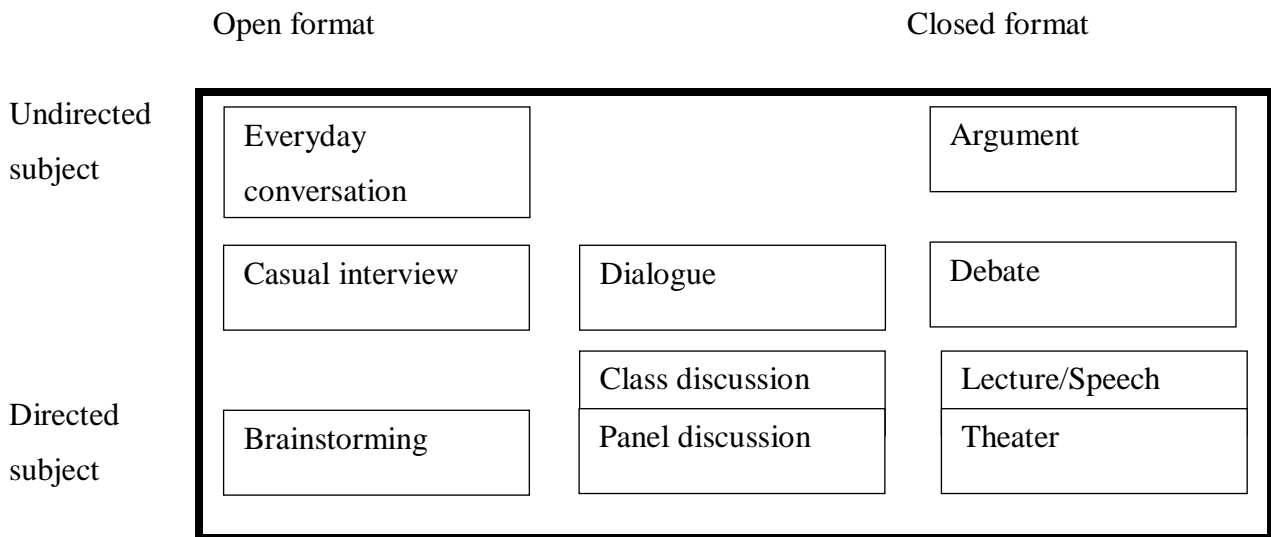


Figure 3.1: Conversation structures: subject (content) and format (structure)
(Helguera, 2011:45)

A speech-act consists of a subject (theme) that is conducted in a certain way (format). If the direction and the restriction of the format become too narrow then the interaction between the participants becomes more passive, for example as in theatre (Helguera, 2011). A brainstorming session is a fairly open format of exchange, usually with an objective (directive), for example coming up with a new idea (Helguera, 2011). The most open format of conversations as in everyday street talk and casual exchanges with people, are fragments of our basic everyday life conversations and forms part of a more undirected approach.

This research study was mostly conducted using an open format structure, incorporating both directed and undirected subject matter in an interrelated way. I attempted to create a space that allowed for both random exchanges and structured conversations. The aim was to arrive at relational understanding and to reach consensus on certain core agreements in the planning and designing of the park-area. A conversational style was maintained throughout the data gathering process in which the participants moved backwards and forwards between an open,

informal format which included everyday casual exchanges and more directed free-form interactions (brainstorming and semi-structured interviews), to solve problems and come up with new ideas.

The conversations that took place between the participants were aimed at arriving at common understandings on given subjects (for example the development of the park), to raise awareness about problems (for example identifying the challenges through casual Walk-and-Talk conversations), to debate a particular issue (for example brainstorming all possible solutions to the challenges) (McKinney, 2011), and to collaborate on a final product (for example on dialogue-related art practices) (Helguera, 2011). In most phases of the process, the conversations between the participants were the centre of the work. The significance of this study was dependent on this engagement process, and the meaningful and mutual knowledge gained by both parties during their interactions.

3.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter I proposed that socially engaged art (SEA) offers an ontological framework for my studies as it addresses all the aspects that are most pertinent in this study: community engagement, relational interactions between participants, and dialogically-based art practices. It also underlines the importance of art as a non-elitist medium that could serve as a platform for social agendas which involve change and emancipation. The strategies proposed in SEA to conduct meaningful interactions include communication, collaboration, and participation. These fit in with the orientation and approach of service-learning in the Creative Arts. Alternating between an open undirected conversational format and a structured and directed one, the SEA model proposes socially constructed art-based practices that are meaningful to all participants. In order to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between the participants, the engagement process, and how the process affects the participants' learning from and with each other. I will explore participatory action research methodologies in the next chapter. Insights into the mutual learning and working relations could inform new ways of approaching service-learning as a course module in a Creative Arts B.Ed. programme.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The epistemological value of socially engaged art theory (SEA) was discussed in Chapter 3. SEA suggests that socially constructed art-based practices could serve as a platform for meaningful community engagements. The objectives of this study were to establish: (a) What do the respective partners (students and community participants) learn from the process? (b) What aspects of the process enhance the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes and which detract from it? and (c) What recommendations can be made to inform the development and design of future service-learning initiatives in the Intermediate Phase of the Creative Arts education programmes? The engagement and subsequent learning process between the campus and community participants are in turn expected to inform a possible design for a service-learning module in Creative Arts.

In order to come to a more nuanced understanding of the experiential learning process between campus and community participants, and to answer the research questions, I will explore how a participatory form of action research can provide a meaningful, engaged learning experience for both groups. In the following sections I describe and discuss the research paradigm and design outlined in Chapter 1. I elaborate on my methodology of choice and explain the value thereof, describing the strategies that were followed to obtain data, as well as the ethical measures that were taken to ensure trustworthiness and validity. This will be supported with models, diagrams, and visual material of the actions performed and processes undertaken during the research.

My study is epistemologically embedded in a critical and post-modern paradigm, following a qualitative and participatory action research (PAR) design. The study is open-ended and “concerned with the interpretation and meaning” of both groups’ experiences constructed in their own social worlds (Morgan & Sklar, 2012:72) and, in relation with each other. My aim was to explore and describe the participants’ learning during a community engagement process. The research design is illustrated in Table 4.1.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY				
PURPOSE: RESEARCH QUESTION				
Exploratory / Descriptive / Contextual type of inquiry How can participatory action research be used to integrate a meaningful service-learning experience with the community into a Creative Arts education module?				
SUB-QUESTIONS				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do the respective partners (students and community participants) learn from the process? • What aspects of the process enhance the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes and which detract from it? • What recommendations can be made to inform the development and design of future service-learning initiatives in the Intermediate Phase Creative Arts education programmes? 				
RESEARCH PARADIGM, APPROACH AND DESIGN				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paradigm: Critical-emancipatory, postmodern, • Approach of inquiry: participatory • Design: qualitative, participatory action research 				
RESEARCH METHODS AND STRATEGIES				
Participant selection:	Availability sampling, 3 pre-service Creative Art education students from the university and 4 community youths of a similar age from a nearby township.			
Data generation activities:	Cycle 1: Relationship-building: (1) Introduction, (2) Walk-and-Talk activity, and (3) Turning point activity; Cycle 2: Planning: (4) Vision-building, (5) planning and designing activities; Standardise use of capitals in this section. Cycle 3 : Action and skills application (6) interventions, (7) art-based skills application activities; Cycle 4: (8) Reflections and evaluation activity			
Data generation strategies:	Observations, informal group discussions, personal narratives, brainstorming, visual mapping and diagrams, semi-structured interviews, art-based practices: drawing and painting, visual and reflective journals			
Data documentation:	Transcripted video and audio recordings, photographs, field note reflections, visual diaries, visual diagrams			
Data analysis technique:	Inductive content analysis, systematic analysis of themes and sub-themes substantiated by literature review			
ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER				
Collaborative and participatory roles facilitating methodological process between participants from diverse backgrounds				
TRUSTWORTHINESS: QUALITY AND VALIDITY CRITERIA				
Process validity	Catalytic validity	Rhetoric validity	Democratic validity	Construction of new knowledge validity
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS				
Protection of confidentiality through adherence to ethical values of respect, beneficence and democratic justice. Informed consent, visual ethics and institutional ethical clearance				

Table 4. 1: Overview of Research Design

4.2 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology in this qualitative research consists of the following components: guiding paradigms, aspects of research design, methods of data collection, and analysis and dissemination of data (Shensul, 2008). The following sections will describe the orientation to the study, the actions that were followed, and the reasons for doing so.

4.2.1 *The nature and purpose of the critical-emancipatory and postmodern paradigm*

A paradigm is a lens that a researcher uses for thinking about research and includes the researcher's interrelated epistemological, ontological and methodological perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). It forms the foundations of the research approach, and the specific philosophical orientations and methods chosen for data generation (Goodson & Phillimore, 2012; Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). The philosophy, practices, and preferences of a paradigm can be encapsulated in a variety of ways: as a key piece of research (exemplar), through communities of networks and collaboration (good practices), or as a higher belief system (ideology) (Denscombe, 2010). The paradigm for this study was framed mainly through good practices. Table 4.2 summarises the characteristics of this research paradigm (adapted version from Weber, 2004: iv):

Meta-theoretical assumptions	Emancipatory-critical and postmodern paradigm
Ontology	Campus and community participants and their mutual learning process are inseparable from each other's lived experiences (perceptions)
Epistemology	Knowledge of the participants learning is intentionally and collectively constituted through emancipatory, meaningful and participatory interactions during the engagement process
Research object	Research purpose is interpreted in light of the pre-service students and community participants' meanings assigned to their mutual learning on personal, social, cognitive, and emancipatory experience levels
Methodological approach	Participatory action research – strategy of inquiry into mutual learning experiences
Theory of Truth	Truth as intentional fulfillment: recognition of changed perceptions, attitudes and behaviour matched with changes in both groups' learning / lived experiences, reflected on and recontextualised with literature

Table 4. 2: *Characteristics of the emancipatory-critical and participatory paradigm (adapted from Weber, 2004: iv)*

Participatory action research (PAR) as a methodology, is embedded in an emancipatory-critical paradigm (ECP) (Markula & Silk, 2011; Mash, 2014). At heart, the ECP is about creating new knowledge by transforming or changing the world in which the research is embedded and reflecting critically on what is learned in the process (Mash, 2014). In Chapter 2, service-learning was established as an active pedagogy, representing good practices, based on a collaborative process of research, learning, and action (Butin, 2010; Kindon; Pain & Kesby, 2007). Participatory action research (PAR) fits with this orientation as it aims to work with participants to generate theory in order to improve practices (Mash, 2014).

In this study the participants' engagement and mutual learning were the ontological focus of the study. They participated in all the action phases of the research process together, complementing the emancipatory-critical paradigm's notion of change and critical reflection on the learning processes. In contrast to positivist and interpretivist views, the participants were not treated as "objects to be researched or subjects that need to be understood" (Mash, 2014:1) they were active participants in the process. New epistemology was generated via dialogical processes whereby participants provided evidence of learning actively through deliberation and discussions, reaching consensus on the various aspects of the activities, and arriving at agreeable solutions to the problems. The participants were also aligned with the problems and found solutions together. Both groups in this study addressed the challenges of developing a neglected municipal area in the community and changing it through mutual decision-making processes. Learning was immediately put into practice as part of the process; for instance mutual learning from the planning exercise was extended and converted into practical designs.

This study also incorporates a postmodern perspective which recognises multiple realities that are socially constructed, and which embrace ambiguity, diversity, and change (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a). In practical terms, the participants discovered and constructed social realities through interactive processes of knowledge creation and became part of a 'working understanding' of their situation (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a). Partially autobiographical and 'personal narratives' were constructed during the informal discussions which reflected the participants particular 'site[s] and voice[s]' in the world (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a:64). This notion of having a 'voice' contributed towards Freire's ideal of democratic intimacy for social change (Freire, 1997) and promoted an ongoing process of understanding and care in

the engagement process (Freire, 1997:94) influencing social change that is ‘empowering and self-determining’ (Poulin, 2005:26). These social humanistic theories are also supported by the socially engaged art theories of Helguera (2011) who suggests communicative and collaborative strategies to emancipate participants engaged in art practices. The objective of exploring the conversations and actions between students and community participants in a participatory way is to come to a critical and nuanced understanding of the relationship between the participants and how this engagement process affects their learning. These issues, in turn, determine whether the engagement is beneficial and meaningful to both groups. Utilising the PAR approach for this study links my paradigmatic beliefs and theoretical orientation to the purpose of this research.

4.2.2 The nature and purpose of the participatory action research approach

The research design serves as a guideline for researchers to structure their studies and to guide the collection and analysis of information relevant to answering research questions (Polit & Beck, 2010). The research question is linked to the research purpose in a particular study which can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory (Stebbins, 2008; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The purpose of this study was exploratory and descriptive in nature, gathering information from two small groups of people from diverse backgrounds in order to “gain a better picture of what was going on” (Denscombe, 2010:10) during the learning process in a community-based engagement, in order to inform the integration of a possible service-learning module in an Intermediate Phase, Creative Arts module.

I focused on a socially constructed reality of the participants’ experiences and perceptions of reality, which gives this study a radical functional and humanistic approach (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a). Recognising that knowledge is a powerful tool used by people in power to maintain dominance in society, I consciously steered this study towards a democratic and equitable process, promoting equal interactions between ‘privileged’ and marginalised people as mutual partners in the learning process. Analysing the relational discourses between two small groups, my intention was to disclose the learning that occurred between the two groups and to recognise the elements of power relationships in their social structures. (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a). Furthermore, this study’s intention was not to uncover a pre-existing reality, but leaned towards a post-modern notion of being engaged in an interactive process of knowledge creation (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a), in an attempt to understand “the ways in which

human activity creates meaning” (Denscombe, 2010:132). It was an “iterative process between action and research” (Fisher & Ball, 2003:209) generating more knowledge rather than interpreting existing phenomena.

The actions that were taken during the PAR process put the participants’ learning into practice whilst the research required one to reflect and clarify what one has learned from the experience and to develop new theory and propositional knowledge incorporated into new action (Mash, 2014). Because of its participatory nature PAR always involves working with rather than on people, ensuring that power and hierarchy are addressed in a genuinely respectful, open, and democratic process (Mash, 2014). The qualitative data were collected with the focus on a “working understanding” of reality and life: reflecting the “personal narratives” of a particular “site and voice” with distinctive needs and experiences (Niewenhuis, 2010a:64).

PAR embodies a democratic commitment to break the monopoly on who holds knowledge and for whom social research should be undertaken (Fine, 2007). It supports my views of democratic knowledge sharing and my search for alternatives to top-down approaches often encountered in higher education community engagement programmes. I adopted the PAR design as it challenges mainstream research traditions by recognising the existence of a plurality of knowledge found in a variety of locations (Kendon, Pain & Kesby, 2007). Another important reason why PAR is my preferred methodological approach, is that it becomes an extension of my own teaching and learning practice since it promotes collaborative learning competencies as well as personal and social changes (Schneider, 2012); aspects which I align with my own democratic orientation and practical ethos of creating opportunities with personal and emancipatory outcomes (Kendon, *et al.*, 2007). In this study the participants were not only encouraged to perceive the situation from multiple viewpoints, but also collaborated in a face-to-face manner to come to their own understanding of the situation and the potential changes that could occur (O’Neil, Watkins & Marsick, 2010).

Furthermore, focusing on reciprocal learning and how knowledge transformation could be mediated between campus and community participants, a third space was introduced which accommodated participatory actions and informal talk-in-interaction in an attempt to improve and change the context-bound setting (Ebersöhn, Elof & Ferreira, 2010). At its core, PAR

believes that people can change their realities and create new knowledge through engaging both consciously and systematically with steps of the learning cycle (Mash, 2014). I was interested in the epistemological, practical, and emancipatory knowledge outcomes generated through PAR; the development of new skills and competencies; and practical knowledge which represented personal growth and change which in turn is regarded as experiential knowledge (Mash, 2014). The following design served as a model for my study which translated the PAR process into emancipatory and self-determined actions and formed a knowledge partnership between the campus and community participants.

4.2.3 The participatory action research process

The interactive actions undertaken by the two groups rest broadly on eight steps proposed by Zuber-Skerritt (2011) (see Figure 4.1). I re-grouped the steps into four recursive and spiralling loops which defined the eight participatory activities that took place between the campus and community participants (see Figure 4.3). This cyclical design was supplemented with an intersecting spiralling loop linking my personal observations of the process with the interactions of the participants. These actions included looking, thinking, acting (see Fig 4.2) (Stringer, 2007a, Stringer 2007b) and reflecting (own addition). I employed the spiralling loops in order to understand each activity of the PAR engagement process and to ensure coherence between the different activities. In broad terms, the bottom-up process was divided into four cycles: 1) relationship-building, 2) planning and designing, 3) skills application, and 4) reflection and evaluation - to gain insight into the reciprocal learning of the participants during the development of a community park. The activities were adjusted according to the context and changes that took place during the research process. For instance, the first activity (introduction and orientation) was added to the relationship building cycle to explore the perceptions and expectations of the participants before engagement was introduced, and to note the changed perceptions during the process (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010). The last activity (celebration) was included as a small scale social encounter during the art-based skills application activity. I also included an intervention activity after the planning and designing phase to overcome the conceptual barriers which I observed during the planning and designing phase. Most of the activities overlapped and blended together during the interactive sessions. Working in inductive and bottom-up ways, the participants started with specific activities which developed into various actions. Finding

solutions to actions demanded the participants' full commitment from the beginning of the project until the end (Kinson, *et al.*, 2007).

The participants proceeded from one activity to another after the desired outcomes of the preceding steps were reached (Kinson, *et al.*, 2010). I reviewed the situation during all of these activities, and captured the visual material, conversations, and actions after I reflected on the process with field notes. The participants' behaviour was scrutinised, and changes that took place in the process and with the groups were recognised and noted down (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). Reflecting on and during the process helped me to change the settings so that both groups stayed productive and energised throughout the process.

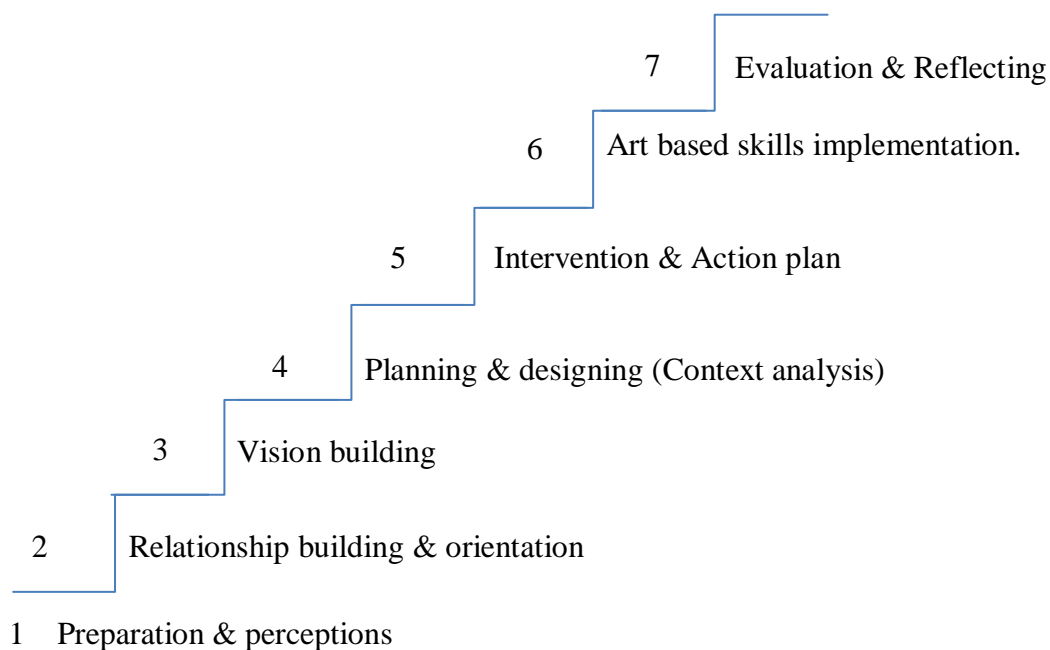


Figure 4. 1: *Action research process followed by the participant actions in the campus-community engagement (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011).*

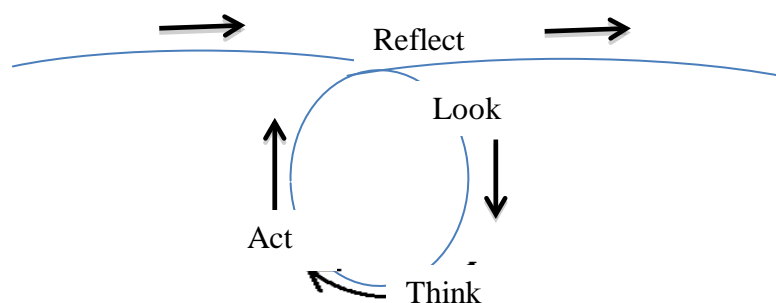


Figure 4. 2: *Stringer's action research interacting spiral (Mertler, 2012:15).*

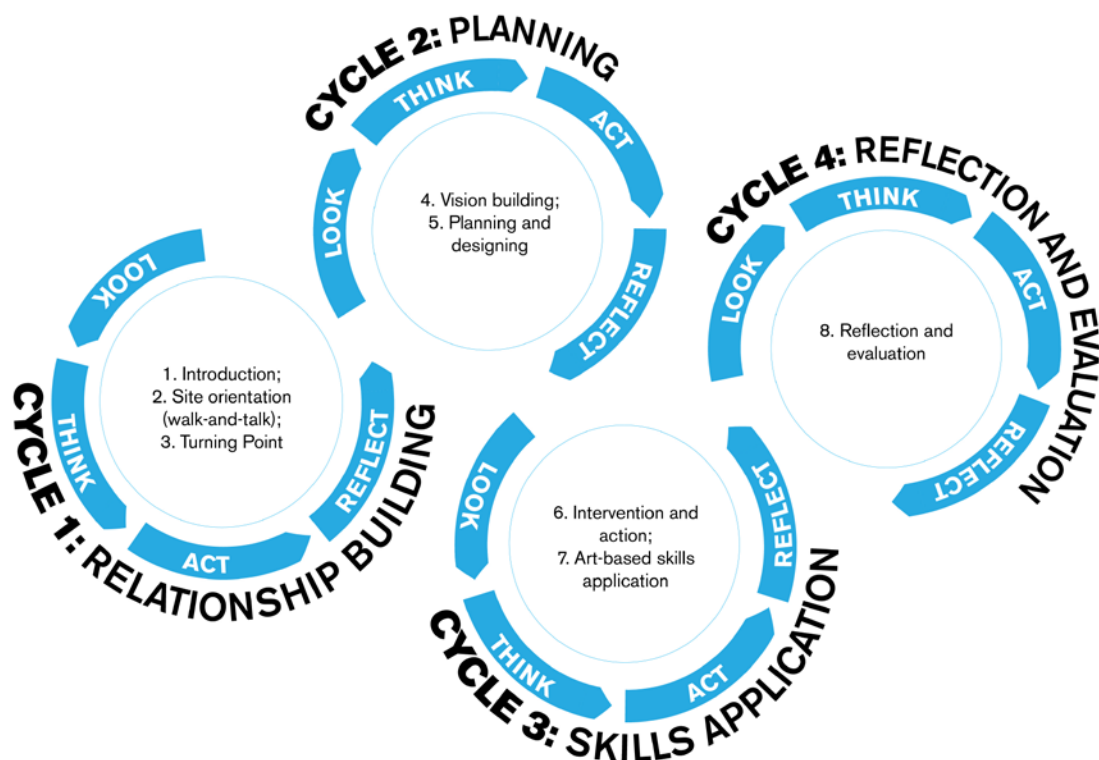


Figure 4. 3: *The PAR methodological design adapted from Stringer’s action research interacting spiral and activities adapted from Zuber-Skerritt’s step diagram*

4.3 RESEARCH METHODS

Research methods are sets of specific techniques for selecting cases, measuring and observing social aspects of life, gathering and refining data, analysing data, and reporting on the results (Neuman, 2006). As an ‘orientation to inquiry’ (Reason, 2004), the PAR process demands methodological innovation to adapt or respond to the needs of specific contexts, research questions, and the relationships between researchers and participants (Kindon *et al.*, 2007). PAR research involves participatory reflection and action (PRA) and relies on concrete, visual, and colourful methods, activities, and materials based on the belief that visualisation promotes participation (Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2010). The techniques that I included did not necessarily depend on the literacy levels of the participants (Gee, 2008), but on the representation of ideas by means of symbols, drawings, or concrete objects (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010). I accommodated these techniques to ensure that everybody participated in all of the hands-on activities, and, on their own terms (Kindon, *et al.*, 2007). I wanted to promote

personal potential in an uninhibited space (Engeström, 2001, Habermas, 1984.), by using an open format conversational method (Helguera, 2011) in combination with various visual methods during the data generation process. These methods were deployed to emphasise shared learning (Stuttaford & Coe, 2007), shared knowledge, flexible yet structured analysis (Cahill & Torre, 2007; Kindon, *et al.*, 2007; Pretty, Guijt, Thompson & Scoones, 1995), and shared skills development. The participant recruitment and data generation methods will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

4.3.1 Participant recruitment

This study explores shared learning processes between a group of Intermediate Phase pre-service Creative Arts students engaging with a group of community youths from a nearby township. Availability sampling (Grinnell & Unrau, 2010) was used to recruit the seven participants of more or less similar age: three white Afrikaans-speaking third-year students and four black community youths whose home language is Setswana or Sesotho. The students were not specifically selected; they were all enrolled in a pre-service Intermediate Phase Creative Arts module; LAE 221, (Davidson & Van Vreden, 2010) which I taught. I asked the students in the class to participate and three volunteered during the last semester of the academic year. The participants from the community were also voluntarily recruited by older community members who were in turn recruited prior to this study, for a larger Urban Planning project. All of them were still school going scholars, except for one who was finishing her matric and had a temporary job. The biographic details indicate their gender, language, and age (see Table 4.4 and Addendum C). The criteria for the participants included the use of English as a medium of communication. This was important as English was not the participants' first language, but a common language understood by all. My data centered on dialogical interactions through informal conversations and hands-on art-based activities to obtain contributions from both groups. To minimise inequality in power relations, the participants selected were more or less the same age. I assumed that unequally aged members (older vs. younger members) would have different life experiences which could influence the dynamics of the group interactions and affect the results of the data. Neither of the participating groups possessed specialised visual art training as I wanted to prevent 'expert' help given to the community by the campus-participants. I steered this study away from a top-down campus initiative because of the participatory ontology of this research. The interaction was aimed at reciprocal learning with non-specialists in the art field sharing

their knowledge and skills with each other. Service-learning has not been included in the formal academic modules of Creative Arts currently, hence the need to establish themes and related working mechanisms to accommodate service-learning as a module. Pedagogical strategies such as group activities and learning outcomes such as relationships of power (Davidson & Van Vreden, 2010) are in the current syllabus but is not contextualized in a service-learning engagement programme. This study proposed that the participants find solutions together in equitable and democratic ways rather than in hierarchical power-related ways.

Student/Community participants			
Participants	Age	Gender	Language preference
Pre-service Creative Arts students	19 – 20	2 females 1 male	Afrikaans speaking
Community participants	18 – 21	1 female 3 males	Setswana and Sesotho speaking

Table 4. 3: Summary of biographic details of pre-service education students and community participants

4.3.2 Data generation strategies

The qualitative data generated from a PAR study is intended to reflect the potential to transform unequal power structures and relationships to research knowledge production (Kindon, *et al.*, 2007). In this study most of the data were generated through a relational interactive process between the participants themselves as well as from my observations and analysis of the process. The generated material was captured through audio-visual recordings and photographs (see Addendum F) field notes, oral transcripts, *verbatim* quotations, and reflections (Creswell, 2009; Griffen & May, 2012; Neuman, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2008).

Highlighting a data crystallisation process (Ellingson, 2009) different sources and methods were incorporated to generate evidence. During the PAR process *observations* of contexts by myself, and the student and community participants were made (Angrosino & Mays de Pérez, 2000). These actions were supported by *informal group discussions* (Lewin, 1948; Sebestyén

& Varga, 2013) gained from a Walk-and-Talk activity (Mayer, Franz & Bruehlman-Senecal, 2009; Ketelle, 2010; Sloane & Stewart, 2013). A Relationship- and Vision-building exercise (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013) were supported by *visual mapping and diagrams* (Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2010; Boukobza, 2013), whilst *visual journal writings* (Sullivan, 2005; Wolfe, 2012) and *collective actions* (learning by doing) such as art-based practices like drawing and design resulted in the painting of *visual and concrete artefacts* (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010; Emmison, Smith & Mayall, 2012) generative methods showed evidence of mutual learning that took place during the PAR process. Two *semi-structured group interviews* (Niewenhuis, 2010b) were held with the two groups separately towards the end of the study to validate and affirm the outcomes of the process. These mediating activities (Helguera, 2011) were supported by my own reflections on the process (Zuber-Skerritt & Teare, 2013) which monitored changes and their impact on the participants.

Practical strategies used during the PAR process were converted into eight activities which are illustrated in Table 4.4, and represent the different activities, purposes, time frames, data generation, and documentation techniques.

Venue of study	Respective community site, art studio and botanical gardens,				
Participants	2 females, 1 male from Campus , 1 female, 3 males from community:				
	Description of data generation strategies	Purpose	Time Frame	Data generation techniques	Data documentation techniques
CYCLE 1: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING Activity 1	INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION Introduction of university students and community participants to each other. Discuss their views and opinions of each other and convey what to expect	Introduction and orientation: Find out what students and community participants perceive as community engaged work. Their views and opinions about each others' presence.	1 hour	Informal group discussions	Verbatim transcriptions Field notes
Activity 2 Activity 3	TRUST & RELATIONSHIP BUILDING . “Walk-and-Talk” activity: ice breaker Walk to the site while talking to each other. Participants establish perceptions of each other and the site Turning point exercise Participants share three life experiences that impacted their lives	Orientation to site and purpose of engagement Phase 1: mapping the problem / area: find out how participants experienced the learning environment, talking about real-life issues in an area. Start to think about challenges and how they can be solved. Reflect on experience Phase 2: building trust and sharing commonalities that appeared in both parties' lifes to establish solid base for working processes.	2 hours	Participatory group discussion Own observations Informal group narrative reporting	Audio and video recordings, field notes Audio and Video recording / verbatim transcrips Visual diagram charts
CYCLE 2 PLANNING Activity 4	VISION BUILDING Interactive vision building activity and wish list. Clarification of themes and needs analysis. How do they	Critical skills development Determine commonalities of thought - which factors can facilitate or hinder the process of	1 hour	Informal group discussions: Participatory wish	Visual mapping and Audio and Video Recordings,

Venue of study	Respective community site, art studio and botanical gardens,				
Participants	2 females, 1 male from Campus , 1 female, 3 males from community:				
	Description of data generation strategies	Purpose	Time Frame	Data generation techniques	Data documentation techniques
	“see” the site in future? Agendas and research purpose are discussed - challenges, expectations and possibilities mentioned.	partnership between the participants? Do they have common goals and similar outcomes? Discuss, reflect and compromise (Maree et. al., 2010:131).		list through visual mapping	Verbatim transcripts
Activity 5	PLANNING AND DESIGNING Interactive visual / conceptual working process Own ideas / planning and combine with existing visual designs of the community. Discuss and analyze designs and cooperate in finding solutions and a mutual platform to start project. Community designs, (pictures, power point aids)	Technical skills development: establish a Working Relationship: Identify own strengths – expectations Regarding each others’ contribution, knowledge sharing, critical thinking, envisage their working relationship. Negotiating process and positions, working relations, Stimulate own ideas and get a broader picture of overall project	1 hour	Informal group discussions; Community designs, research interventions (pictures, power point aids)	Visual diagram charts, Audio and Video recordings, Verbatim Transcripts, Visual / Reflective journals – Drawings and Field notes
CYCLE 3: INTERVENTION AND ACTION Activity 6 A & B	INTERVENTION STRATEGY Observing public and student projects A: Community participants visit the NWU botanical gardens – introduced to public art in the garden ; B: Introduction to NWU arts & craft studio where they observe students’ projects of public sites	Exploring other worlds and professional skills development: Establish deep understanding of each other’s works in sharing knowledge and creating awareness of other possibilities that could be incorporated. Present and share ideas. Accommodate complexity by embracing	2 hours	Observation of artefacts (Public art) and small scale park models. Informal group discussions, demonstrations and	Audio and Video Recording, Transcripts, Photographs, Field notes and observations

Venue of study	Respective community site, art studio and botanical gardens,				
Participants	2 females, 1 male from Campus , 1 female, 3 males from community:				
	Description of data generation strategies	Purpose	Time Frame	Data generation techniques	Data documentation techniques
		different insights from different worlds. Extending knowledge base working in trans-disciplinary working environments.		drawings	
Activity 7	SKILLS APPLICATION PROCESS Interactive teamwork and art-based skills application activity Painting of available resources – e.g. tractor tyres in different colours.	Combining art-based skills in a working relationship: Work collaboratively on a product. Task orientated: who is doing what? Finding roles in painting process. Strengths and weaknesses are identified in the process and with the participants. Complete tasks.	2 hours	Group participation, artefact painting on available resources: tyres	Audio and Video recording of transcripts Painted artefact Photographs Field notes
CYCLE 4: REFLECTION AND EVALUATION Activity 8	REFLECTION AND EVALUATION Both community and students are interviewed on knowledge partnerships and sharing of abilities and skills. Issues such as changing values and future development processes are discussed Interview conducted in two sessions with the two groups.	Reflecting on learning process: To augment the information gained through discussion groups to address each question on establishing partnerships. To determine the value of the engagement between two different communities - what did they learn? How did it benefit them? Vision revisited? Suggestions?	2 hours	Semi-structured separate group interview	Audio Recording, Verbatim Transcripts

Table 4. 4: Data generation process and documentation

4.3.2.1 Observations

Observation is an essential data gathering technique as it holds the possibility of providing insider perspectives of group dynamics (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). In this study I became part of the research process as both participant and observer to gain an insider perspective (emic perspective) of the setting, and worked with the participants in different situations to design and develop interventional strategies (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). I intervened in the dynamics of the situation when participants appeared to struggle with ideas and the conceptual planning of the park project. I made systematic recordings of the behavioural patterns of the participants without communicating with them, gaining a deeper insight and understanding of the situation in order to answer the research question (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). My observations centered on the process; which aspects enhance or detract from mutual learning, what learning took place between the participants, was it beneficial to the participants? I interchanged my role as observant and participant. In most of the activities I wanted to make sense of the social dynamics between the participants during the learning process and avoid influencing the dynamics of the setting (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). As an art educator, perceptual observations impacted my decisions on how my research should progress or change course. Although my observations ran the risk of being subjective or selective (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b), I discussed changes in the process with all the participants and my study advisor before applying catalytic interventions (Herr & Anderson, 2008) aimed at energising the whole process to keep it on course.

The participatory nature of the research allowed the participants to be observants as well. The Walk-and-Talk activity orientated the students to their new surroundings and created spatial and personal awareness of the living and working environments of the community. It also assisted in the observation and definition of problems and issues in the underdeveloped area, in order to start thinking how to improve the conditions of the park (Helguera, 2011). The purpose of the participants' observations was to become aware of each other's worlds and contexts and to explore and observe the challenges involved in changing the site. I wanted to extend the students' views to real-life situations and allowed time to connect with the community participants to gain insights into their living environments (Nieuwenhuis, 2010b). In this way, observation helps to create a sense of self, of place, and of community from both groups and if participants work together towards a common aesthetic goal, they may come to understand and respect each other's similar and different values and sensibilities (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005). The community participants were asked to

narrate some stories about their experiences of the park while interacting with the students. This walking exercise provided an enhanced ability to reflect on life's problems and narrate their stories (Doucette, 2004; Mayer, Frantz, Bruelman-Senecal & Dolliver, 2009; Butler-Kisber, 2010). The participants returned to the church hall where informal feedback and discussions took place. I decided not to record their Walk-and-Talk conversations as I wanted them to converse in an unrestrictive and uninhibited way, maybe even sharing secrets. However, reflecting casually on their perceptions of the problems in the site prepared them for the vision-building activity. I observed and captured the Walk-and-Talk exercise on video, and made anecdotal records of their actions; short descriptions of key phrases and short reflections on own thoughts or ideas about the meaning of what I observed (Niewenhuis, 2010b). These anecdotal observations became part of my field notes (Niewenhuis, 2010b).

The Walk-and-Talk strategy became a profound foundation for negotiating the research process, alternating between informal and formal platforms for discussions and actions to promote communication and trust between the two groups. This open air activity prepared the participants for the next level of their relationship-building process which was more intimate and personal (see Addendum F2-DVD).

4.3.2.2 Narratives and reporting

Trust, respect, and openness to new ideas are prerequisites for good relationships and team spirit within a group (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). I tried to establish these qualities with an activity for building relationships (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). Narratives were shared between the participants to convey their life experiences (Mertler & Charles, 2011).

After the Walk-and-Talk exercise, I introduced a relationship-building exercises using a Turning point strategy (Dick, 1991; 2012; Pope, & Denicolo, 1991) to “elicited significant personal experiences” (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013:35), and to find common ground on personal and social levels between the participants. I was quite sensitive after the monkey incident (see Chapter 1: 1-2) not to use archetypal symbols that could scare the community participants and therefore replaced the snake figure (used by Skerritt, 2013) with a flowing river illustration (see Addendum G) reminiscent of the indigenous San artwork ‘Symbols of Life’ (1967) by the late South African artist, Walter Battiss. I adjusted the horizontal format to a vertical one so that the participants could note down their own experiences in their visual diaries. I requested the two groups to take turns in talking about

three incidents which impacted their lives. The purpose of this activity was to create a trusting and mutually supportive relationship among the participants from the start, and to avoid personal qualities such as dominance and shyness that could potentially fuel tensions later in the action research process (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). The participants shared their individual experiences and reported back by presenting a combined Turning point chart; narrating incidents that impacted their lives (see Addendum F3-DVD and Addendum G). This activity established a platform for discussions and for further collective working processes.

4.3.2.3 Visual mapping and diagramming

In the next activity, namely vision-building (Addendum F4.1-DVD & Addendum I) (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013), the participants were divided into two mixed gender and race groups. They were required to develop a common vision that would carry them through to the activities that followed (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). The activity aimed at working towards a common goal. Firstly, the participants identified the problems that they observed on the site, and drew up two wishing-lists in a brainstorming activity expressing their visions for the park. The data generated from the visual mapping exercises were supported by informal group discussions during the brainstorming activities, and served to gain insight into the meanings represented by the participants (Archer & Cottingham 1996; Chambers, 2003; Shah, 1995). Mapping exercises in social research open up spaces that enable free and open conversations (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010). The participants worked together in teams; both groups looked at the present situation, thought about ways to improve the site, and started to work together by setting their own achievable goals that would change or improve the situation (Buys, 2010). They compiled visual charts to illustrate the needs and challenges facing the community area (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010) (see Figure 4.1)

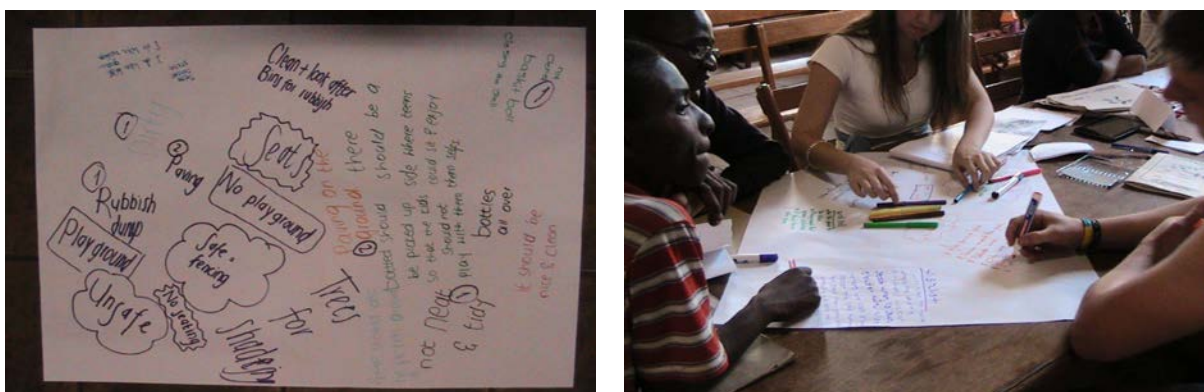


Figure 4.4.1: Visual mapping and brainstorming of wish list for vision-building

The utilisation of resources and the extent to which they were available and accessible to community members were also explored (Ebersöhn, Eloff & Ferreira, 2010). Both groups expressed their views and challenges with regards to changing the park. Participatory analysis, presentations, planning, and monitoring were employed during the collaborative vision-building process (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010). The discussions were recorded by means of audio and visual recordings as well as photographs (see Addenda F4.1 & F5.2). Below is an example of the two mixed gender groups working together during the planning of the design for the park (see Figure 4.4.2).



Figure 4.4.2: *The visual mapping and diagrammatic planning of the park are illustrated in these schematic presentations*

4.3.2.4 Informal group discussions

Visual mapping exercises were supported by informal group discussions (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010) which were used throughout the research but especially during the planning and designing phases when the process was negotiated and working relations established. To ensure the effectiveness of participatory action learning, general principles of conduct in informal group discussions were followed. The participants were encouraged to respect one another, respect other peoples' opinions, take turns to speak, listen to one another, were discouraged to dominate the discussions, and encouraged to treat everybody as equal partners to create a successful dialogue (Birks & Mills, 2011; Kondon, *et al.*, 2007). Dialogue is considered a multi-vocal powerful representation whereby voices and responses can occur in a non-threatening setting (McIntosh, 2010), in this case contributing to the participants' knowledge sharing and personal development. Informal conversations were conducted

in an open format (Helguera, 2011) through group discussions and negotiated ways during the planning and designing phase.



Figure 4.4.3: *Informal group discussion between the participants conversing about the design and lay-out during the planning sessions of the project*

During the context analysis activity (Keats, 2009; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011) (Figure 4.4.3) solutions for the challenges were sought through a planning and design process of what the new park should look like. Realising the limitations of resource materials in the planning process, the students and I provided additional research information on public art to support the community participants with the development of conceptual ideas and plans to improve their own ideas about the park designs. During the process the participants recognised their limitations in the conceptual planning of the products as well as in applying their knowledge to available resources. It was at this point that I decided to introduce an intervention activity (see Figure 4.4.4 & DVD Addendum F6.1) by taking the participants to the botanical gardens of the university which contained public art in the park. The participants also visited the Arts and Crafts studio on campus to have a look at small scale park marquettes (models) in order to gain more knowledge about their art-based designs and products. They observed and reflected on the intervention and started to implement their collective and immediate designs (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011) (see Figure 4.4.5 & DVD Addendum 6.2). Observations and informal group discussions were constantly used in the visit to the botanical gardens during the intervention and action application cycle.



Figure 4.4.4: *Intervention A: observation and informal group discussions on public art installations at the botanical gardens*



Figure 4.4.5: *Intervention B: observation and informal group discussions on students' park maquettes at the campus' Arts & Crafts studio*

4.3.2.5 Planning and creation of visual and concrete artefacts

A 'visual artefact' is defined as a human-created visual representational object or entity such as a painting, sketch, map, doodle, photograph, video, or film (Singh, 2011). It can be used in research as a 'boundary object' (Star & Griesemer, 1989:393), which can be adapted to local challenges and

serve as an entity whose meaning and use is negotiated, or as a mediating tool that facilitates collaboration amongst participants in a research process. Such objects may be abstract or concrete and may have different meanings in different social worlds, but their structure is common enough to function in more than one world and be recognisable as a means of translation. Two types of visual artefacts were produced during the research: hand-drawn visual designs in their diaries, and local resources such as tyres, to paint. The participants drew the designs in a diagrammatic way to illustrate the art objects that they would like to see in the park. They were provided with pencils, coloured pens, and visual diaries. They decided on the colour schemes, and the pictographic and drawing elements that they wanted to use in their plans. It was communicated that all ideas for the park could be drawn. A total of four drawings were created. At this point I realised that they needed additional resources and that the creative process of producing new original artefacts would not be accomplished during the implementation phase of the project. The creative process became more important than creating new and innovative ideas (Helguera, 2011). Physical and local resources were painted (see Figure 4.4.6). This step was accompanied by a small scale social encounter to acknowledge the progress and growth of the participants on completion of the first four cycles of the project. The skills application activity was captured on video and photographs were taken.



Figure 4.4.6: *Artefact painting of resources by the group on campus*

4.2.3.6 Reflective journals /visual diaries

The participants were encouraged to reflect on their experiences of the different activities in their visual journals during each cycle. A journal serves as a means of making participants aware of some deeper processes through which they can make meaning in their practice (Msila, 2013; Patton, 2002).

Reflective writing serves as a tool to monitor observations and practices (Birks & Mills, 2011) by writing and analysing implemented activities. It can be used as evidence of research decisions, a record of thoughts, feelings, and impressions - and is regarded as a document which reflects the increased understanding that accompanies the action research process (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Visual diaries are often used in art-based practices not only for reflections on the process but also as a source book for planning, and to provide evidence of preparation work prior to the production of the final artwork (Department of Basic Education, 2012). In this case, the visual impressions of ideas were captured in the participants' visual diaries supported by pictures and text in preparation for the final work. The participants were all issued with visual diaries (blank pages) to record the visual planning of their ideas and to reflect on the process after each session (see Figure 4.4.7). I observed the entries made by the participants' in their visual diaries throughout the research to determine what they have learned.



Figure 4.4.7: *Community participant busy sketching in his visual journal during the intervention process*

4.3.2.7 Semi-structured group interviews

Final reflective session (Addendum K) captured the insights and learning gained during the PAR process by the participants. The action plan process was evaluated through two semi-structured interviews with the campus and community participants respectively, in order to reflect on the impact and the changes that occurred during the engagement process (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011).

Conducting interviews is a powerful technique to allow participants to voice true opinions regarding their situations (Tomal, 2010). In the semi-structured interviews several ‘base’ questions were asked with follow-up questions built on the participants’ responses (Mertler, 2012). This was followed by clarifying questions which I tried to keep brief, clear, and expressed in simple language (Johnson, 2008). At the end of the four cycles of my research (relationship building, planning, skills application, and reflection), I needed to confirm the participants’ learning and asked questions to obtain verbal responses (Conrad & Serlin, 2011; Tomal, 2010). From the reflective notes and video recordings, I compiled a few questions (see Addendum E) related to the participants’ past interactions. The students and community participants were interviewed separately. The questions of my study focused on the research questions, namely how the participants’ changed their perceptions of each other and the process, and what they learned during the engagement process, and the insights they gathered that gave meaning to their interactions. This was done to validate my research question(s) and to determine if it was a beneficial learning process for both groups from diverse backgrounds.

4.3.2.8 Field notes

I substantiated the above information with field notes that I wrote down when I noticed or realised something during the interactions between the two groups. Field notes provide a record of what the researcher “hears, sees, experiences and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting” on the data generation process (Groenewald, 2004:13). My strategy for recording the process included the use of observational and reflective notes with brief references to theoretical and methodological notes (Groenewald, 2004, Newbury, 2001). I included my feelings and thoughts during the data generation process and reverted to a salience hierarchy when I wrote notes on “whatever observation as the most interesting or telling” (Wolfinger, 2002:89). My observations of the different activities, described “what happened” (Groenewald, 2004:15), including the body language of the participants as well as the way the participants responded to situations during the interactive process. Using my theoretical

notes, I referred to the meaning and the main research questions constantly, also checking that the methodological notes recorded my participatory action approach and helped me to reflect on the effectiveness and appropriateness of the design methods. Field notes were especially utilised during cycle 1 activity 2 (observation of Walk-and-Talk activity), cycle 2 activity 3 (Vision-building exercises) and cycle 3 activity 4 (Intervention exercise), as these activities focused on the learning and working processes and helped me to look and think about gaps that occurred during the research and helped me to make the most appropriate interventions to improve the learning process. At the start of each session I would share my observations for validation and discuss and deliberate further strategies that hindered the students' progress in the project. In this way a collaborative approach was followed in which everybody was involved in the resolution of a collective problem (Oliver, 2010). Working in a reflective way helped me to become aware of the ethical decisions made throughout the research process and their consequences for myself and the participants (Herr & Anderson, 2005). The field notes used during the data analysis process are included in Chapter 5 (see Addendum K).

4.3.3 Data analysis and interpretation

The participants' perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, values, feelings, and experiences were analysed in an attempt to understand the meaning that they assigned to the PAR process (Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2010). This was best achieved through a systematic process of inductive analysis of the qualitative data where the main purpose was to allow the research findings to emerge from frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in the raw data (Niewenhuis, 2010c:99). I used content analysis as an inductive and iterative process, looking for similarities and differences in the text that challenged or confirmed my theory (Niewenhuis, 2010c:101). The data was perceived from different angles to identify key elements in the text which would confirm the theory of the study, including the use of different types of content (visual, written, and spoken) material. The data generated during the process, namely the observation and field notes, records of informal group discussions, visual diagramming, art-based practices (planning, designing, and artefact painting), reflective journals, and semi-structured reflective group interviews were all analysed to answer the original questions (Terreblanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2010). Conversational analysis or talk-in-interaction, which describes the orderliness, structure, and patterns of interactions between the different groups, was analysed (Niewenhuis, 2010c:102) to establish how participants construct meaning of their contexts. I analysed the activities in a reflective way to understand their impact on the lived experiences and

learning of the participants. Aspects of grounded theory methods enabled me to simultaneously be involved in the data generation and analysis phases of the research, creating a model of the procedures and methods which were used during the PAR process (Mertler & Charles, 2011) (see Figure 4.4.5).

The following guidelines were used to assign significance to the data generated in the study. I started off in a critical and systematic way and narrowed my themes down to answer the research questions. I was interested in the learning that occurred between the participants, the benefits they gained from the process, and their changed perceptions of each other. My data therefore centered on the initial perceptions during the introductory discussions and the changed attitudes and behaviours in the PAR process which was captured during the last semi-structured reflective interview conducted with both groups separately. I added my observations and reflections on the PAR process. My systematic data analysis is broadly based on a combination of Creswell’s (2009) explanation of the coding process and procedures used in IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis) by Griffin and May (2012), which I adapted to my research requirements (see Figure 4.5).

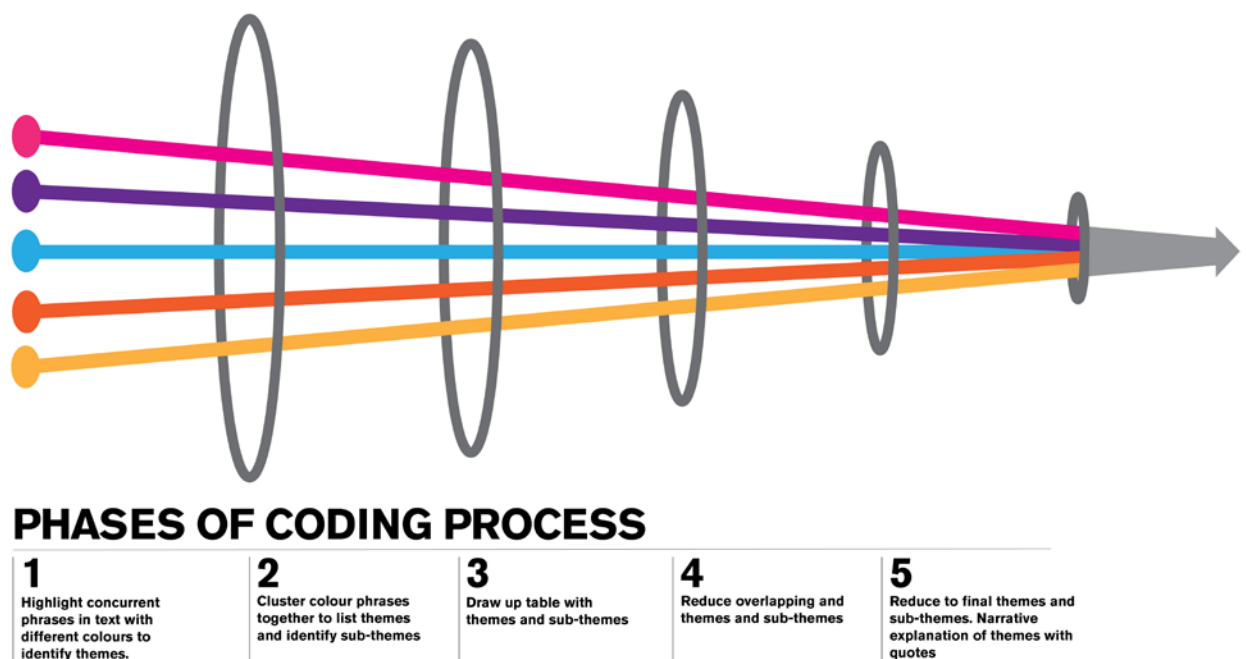


Figure 4. 5: The data-analysis coding used during the PAR process
(Adapted from Creswell 2009, Griffin & May, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2008)

During the first stage I began with an initial reading of the text and looked for recurrent phrases which I colour-coded according to the concurrency thereof. I highlighted the *verbatim* texts in specific colours, writing down the initial thoughts gathered from the reflective notes of the participants' experience of the engagement process in the right hand margin. I then double-checked the phrases and correlated these with emergent themes. After the themes were identified in the transcriptions I started to connect them to the questions (See Table 5.1 for the themes). As the process was conducted in an interactive way and in groups, I checked that the responses represented each member of the group, as I wanted all voices to be heard.

During the second stage I listed the identified themes on a template and started to connect them to the emerging sub-themes. I also start to cluster the coloured phrases together. I then identified the sub-themes in some of the main themes which I also checked against the *verbatim* transcripts. I identified various sub-themes in the different action steps, some of which overlapped; certain relevant sub-themes were kept and then grouped under the three main themes. The process of segmenting or categorising the data meant that I started with single incidents and developed progressively more abstract conceptual categories to synthesise and understand the data and to identify patterned relationships (Charmaz, 2007). I started to link different phrases with the colour codes and also with the research questions, bearing in mind how each transcript and theme would answer my research question.

In stage three, I drew up a table with identified themes and sub-themes and represented each theme and sub-theme by different colours which were then linked to the transcripts (see Addendum E). At this stage it became clear that some sub-themes would be dropped, "those which neither fit well in the emerging structure nor are very rich in evidence within the transcripts" (Smith & Osborn, 2008:72). Starting off with five main themes, I dropped two which were later absorbed in the recommendations in Chapter 6.

During the fourth stage, I started to explain the themes with literature. The table of themes forms a basis to account for the participants' responses, and is substantiated by the narrative argument interspersed with *verbatim* extracts from the transcripts to support each case (Smith & Osborn, 2008). I used the quotations of the participants together with my own interpretations to ensure the validity of the account in my analysis (Griffin & May, 2012). The following actions underlined the analysis of the transcripts: spatial awareness and orientation, relationship-building, working processes, and final

reflections on the whole process. I contextualised the themes taking the perceptions of dominantly Afrikaans university students engaged with a marginalised black community, into account together with their historical backgrounds, stereotypical views, and perspectives (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Interrelated meanings instead of individual meanings were analysed in relation to each other (Åkerlind, 2005) as I wanted to determine the changes and the nature of the learning process during the participants' interactions with each other. Although the data was collected mostly from informal group discussions, all the visual data were looked at as a collective whole, and a holistic approach was followed to portray the whole as well as the parts simultaneously "in a single outcome space of variation" (Åkerland, 2005:8). With my final conclusions I attempted to verify these interactions as meaningful experiences. The themes that emerged from the process were determined by my literature review in Chapter 2 and 3, and were compared with the emerging themes and categories from the empirical data described in Chapter 4 (Creswell, 2009; Yegidis & Weinbach, 2009). This was done in detail to allow the reader to evaluate the accuracy of the analysis (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2006).

4.4. MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

This qualitative study was approached in a rigorous way to ensure that the results are reliable and that my strategies will enhance the trustworthiness of this participatory engagement. The criteria that I used linked to PAR goals and validated the outcome of the process which is dialogically centered with a catalytic (changing) orientation (Herr & Anderson, 2005). The following quality indicators were used as criteria to assess the trustworthiness of my research: process validity (Brooks & Watkins, 1995), transferability, catalytic validity, rhetoric validity, democratic validity (Bailey, 2007; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Patton, 2002; Stringer 2007b; Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2007), and the construction of new knowledge validity (Mash, 2014). These were further substantiated by the "4 R's" propogated in the service-learning context by Butin (2010): respect, reciprocity, relevance, and reflection. It implies that respect was shown towards the community's viewpoints, outlooks, and way of life; that reciprocated challenges between campus-community participants through mutual agreement were addressed; and that relevant learning and complex experiences were critically reflected upon. The seven C's were used to weigh the value of the learning process: communication, critical reflection, commitment, collaboration, compromise, competence, and coaching (Wood & Zuber-Skerritt, 2013).

4.4.1 Process validity

To ensure process validity, data crystallisation (Ellingson, 2009) allows for an infinite variety of shapes, substance, transmutations, dimensions, and angles to a research approach (Niewenhuis, 2010b). It provides a deeper understanding of the situation and describes findings using a variety of methods and data sources (Herr & Anderson, 2005) to present multiple viewpoints during the research process. I incorporated three types of methods centered around written, spoken, and visual methodologies (visual journals, visual mapping and diagramming, group discussions and interviews, collective art-based practices, and reflections) and incorporated a variety of data sources (researcher, students, and community participants). The participants were engaged in interactions throughout the process and agreed and reflected on the situation which ensured the quality of the process and on-going learning among them (Herr & Anderson, 2005; May & Perry, 2011, Neuman, 2011). I ensured that the data sources were shared as I wanted to represent the participants' ideas, perspectives, and experiences accurately (Stringer, 2007a; Mertler, 2012). This study was a consistent engagement with the community and we spent time in the field to get familiar with the context (Mertler, 2012). In this way we developed trust and got to know the community participants, learned the culture of their setting, and observed patterns of behaviour (Glesne, 2006; Mertler, 2012). The participatory nature of this research and the interaction between the two different parties required consciously recorded events and activities in a specific context over a period of time. I did not conduct, as in the past, a weekend intervention to create change, but involved the participants from the start and spread the engagement process over a longer timeline. All the gathered data, including the observational notes and the audio and video recordings, chronologically reflected the date, time, and the place where the actions took place (Neuman, 2011).

Process validity also measures the outcome and examines the extent to which problems are framed and solved in a manner that permits on-going learning of the people in the research (Herr & Anderson, 2005). The student's outcomes which centered around mutual learning were obtained during the seven different activities of the project. If the process was superficial or flawed, for instance, the outcomes reflected it. Process validity deals with a much debated problem of what counts as evidence to sustain assertions, as well as with the quality of the relationship that are developed with participants (Herr & Anderson, 2005). In both instances, I used as much evidence as possible in a prolonged way and attempted to establish sustainable relationships between the students

and the community. This study is part of an ongoing community project and builds on what has been accomplished. It could be revisited as it develops through different phases.

4.4.2 Catalytic validity

Catalytic validity is the degree to which the research process reorientates, focuses, and energises participants towards knowing their own realities in order to change it (Herr & Anderson, 2005). It highlights the transformational potential of changing settings through reflective discussions that could have an effect on the stability of the data over the research time (Herr & Anderson, 2005). In a PAR context all the participants undergo epistemological and ontological transformation in knowing their reality and reorientating their views of reality and their changing roles (Bailey, 2007; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Millican & Bourner, 2011). This contributes to a deeper understanding of the social reality in both the researcher and the participants lives (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

The visual mapping and research journals which I linked to my field notes helped in my research to provide evidence of changed perceptions, attitudes, practices, and reactions (Birks & Mills, 2011; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Msila, 2013;). These reflections were not only used for the results analysis, but also during the course of the process development which contributed to self-understanding and collaboration in the planning of the project and in determining what changes needed to happen to transform the situation (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010).

Other evidence of catalytic validity and reorientation was gained by the physical exchanges of working spaces during the research process. This intervention revitalised the participants' understanding of their changing roles in the research process. The working process was redirected when it appeared that there was a gap in the knowledge base of the participants during the planning and designing processes. In an attempt to gain a better understanding of public art and how it could be implemented in a park, the participants visited the geographic site of the campus' botanical gardens, as well as the Arts and Crafts studio, which enabled them to expand their understanding of the park project to new contexts and to gain some insights and information on other environmental art-based processes in the public art domain. A better understanding of how own skills could be transferred were formulated in new contexts. The community participants applied some of their newly gained knowledge to their own resources and painted the artefacts together with the students.

4.4.3 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree of similarity between different sites and the possibility of applying the outcomes of the study to other contexts (Herr & Anderson, 2005; Lodico, *et al.*, 2010; Stringer, 2007b). It is assessed by the reader through looking at the richness of the descriptions included in the study as well as the amount of detail provided about the context within which the study occurred (Lodico, *et al.*, 2010). This study is site- and context-specific with qualitative results emanating from the available participants. Readers who are interested in undertaking similar actions should understand that this study is not a sample of predicted outcomes but a contextual account of how the processes occurred at a particular research site (Lodico, *et al.*, 2010). The complexity of the specific community in which the research is embedded makes it difficult to assume that the application of what has been learnt will work automatically in other contexts (Mash, 2014). Readers can decide which findings can be transferred to their own contexts and to what extent their own contexts are similar or different to this study's findings (Mash, 2014). Rich descriptions of the student-community engagement process could enlighten future engagement actions, specifically the participatory methods used during the design process. The extent to which these processes were meaningful and beneficial to the participants can guide similar service-learning actions in other contexts.

4.4.4 Rhetoric validity

The rhetoric validity (Herr & Anderson, 2005) refers to how genuine and trustworthy the research report is. All evidence of the procedures described in the study should be confirmed (Stringer, 2007a) and kept safe for some time. The generated data includes instruments like observational field notes, video and audio recordings, software, and all the materials used for data collection and data analysis (Kelly, 2006). Such materials can be used for auditing the research results of the study and will count as rhetoric validity for the research. An audit trail of all my raw data to examine the processes and products of the study was provided (Conrad & Serlin, 2011). It included the video and audio recordings of the participatory processes, informal group discussions and conversations, observational field notes, semi-structured group interviews, visual diagramming, artefact paintings, reflections, and the products of data reduction and analysis (Conrad & Serlin, 2011). These materials supported the rhetoric validity and are regarded as genuine and believable for the research report.

4.4.5 Democratic validity

Democratic validity, also known as *ecological validity* (Tandon, *et al.*, 2001) refers to the extent of the collaboration between different stakeholders in a specific context. In this case all the parties involved were joint decision-makers of the park project. Everybody had designated roles to play, focusing specifically on their strengths. As this sub-project forms part of a bigger umbrella project, my findings were also confirmed against the backdrop of the other academic disciplines and stakeholders involved, namely Urban Planning, Botany, and the municipal ward representatives. Ongoing and continued deliberation carried on during the course of the research and was confirmed at the end by distributing the findings to all the participants involved. The underdeveloped site of the park has been transformed into a liveable space and is presently utilised by all living in the vicinity.

4.4.6 Construction of new knowledge

The purpose of cooperative work is to construct new knowledge through a cycle of action and reflection (Mash, 2014). One way of judging the quality of a research study is in the practical usefulness of the knowledge derived from the actions of a group and the practical implementation thereof. The way that the final consensus of learning is constructed also reflects on the quality of the inquiry (Mash, 2014). Most of the actions in this study resulted in learning from and with each other and this knowledge was applied in practical exercises. Practical usefulness can be observed in the different steps completed during this project through a process of learning in action. The emancipatory, contextual, and personal knowledge gained during the mutual learning process could be used in the the design of future service-learning modules for an Intermediate Phase Creative Arts programme.

4.5 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

As a qualitative researcher I immersed myself in a changing, real-world situation recording a real-life context involving campus-community participants (Niewenhuis, 2010b). I entered into a collaborative partnership with the participants who generated the data to understand the learning process between two groups of young people from diverse backgrounds. I helped to establish a trans-disciplinary project with different stakeholders, including three academic disciplines, namely Urban Planning, Botany, and Creative Arts Education, together with the official municipal ward committee who represented the township. The specific research site was located in a residential area with

different roles assigned to the different stakeholders, ranging from cleaning, planning, designing, developing, and maintaining of the site. The students' roles in the project were to engage with the community and to find common ground for the creation of art-based works in a park area. As an observer and reflexive participant my role was less directional and more facilitating, negotiating, and deliberating with the participants in various decision-making and action-based processes, staying focused on their interactions and learning from and with each other (McNiff, 2006).

My roles included the overseeing of the complete PAR process, ensuring that the data-generation process including all eight activities, were carried out in a structured way; I interviewed the participants, explained to them what their rights were, and analysed the data towards the end (Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010). I was involved in a rigorous experience with the participants and aware of the potential biases and different values that the participants may have, coming from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds which may have shaped their interpretations of a situation (Creswell, 2009; Ebersöhn, *et al.*, 2010). In this regard, I ensured that the core ethical principles of respect, beneficence, and democratic justice (Kindon *et al.*, 2007) were adhered to in a flexible and accommodating way (Chevalier & Buckels, 2013; Kindon, *et al.*, 2007). From past experience with a community outreach project, I did not want to proceed in a top-down manner with the community participants but in a more participatory way to gain a better understanding of the reciprocal learning experiences of both groups.

I refrained from intervening during group discussions, and from imposing either specialised knowledge or preconceived ideas on them. I intervened when aspects of the process had to be clarified. Sensitive care was taken of the students outputs, be they creative ideas, product planning and making, visual diagramming, journal writing, and producing art-based work. The PAR methodology complements my working ethos which tends to be hybrid, interdisciplinary, pragmatic, and concerned with the achievement of real-life outcomes (Kindon, *et al.*, 2007). It also echoes my artistic approach to teaching and learning which could be described as flexible and tolerant towards paradoxes and chaos, whilst simultaneously sensing the beauty and humour in these contexts (Kindon, *et al.*, 2007).

4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study was conducted in a participatory way and is by nature contextual, relational, and dynamic. As a result of the collaborative nature of my studies, I recognised the 'voice' of the 'other'

throughout the research and the process, and attempted to create a safe and respectful environment to protect possibly neglected groups (Kendon, *et al.*, 2007). I also had to ensure that roles were clarified and that responsibilities and decision-making processes were reiterative and fair by getting ongoing consent (verbal and written) throughout the process, protecting the welfare and privacy of the participants in a just way to ensure respect, concern for fairness, and equity (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). To avoid deception (Emmison, Smith & Mayall, 2012), the campus students were not expected to perform acts of goodwill or submit to passing down superior knowledge to the community participants.

As an advocate of PAR, I was not only accountable to our institutional review board at the North West University Committee, but also to all stakeholders involved in the project, including other NWU faculties and the community and municipality members. This research received formal ethical clearance as a standard procedure from the North-West University as a sub-project under an existing research programme. Three basic considerations were ensured with the ethical clearance process - meeting institutional ethical standards; taking sensitive care of verbal, written and creative outputs; and ensuring respectful conduct in the different cultural groups. These aspects were supplemented by providing adequate information about the nature of the research, how the information would be used and reported on, its benefits, as well as the potential harm that could arise from the research (Arthur, *et al.*, 2012).

For this study the participants were given consent forms which invited them to participate on a voluntary basis. The form clearly indicated the purpose of the research, the procedures and requirements, the confidentiality of information, and the way that it would be disseminated (see Addendum A & B). The benefits of the research, the participants' right to withdraw at any time, were also explained (Bailey, 2007). Working in groups helped to ensure a protective physical environment. The emotional safety of the participants were considered, especially with 'up close and personal' activities such as the relation building and Turning point activities.

Written notes and electronic voice recorders were used to capture the data. The information was copied onto a computer and an additional copy was stored on DVD as a backup. As per requirement of the North West University Ethics Committee, the information will be erased five years after the submission date of this study. All the interviews were conducted in a protected environment; the community church hall and my classroom studio. The privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of all

the participants were protected. Information was disseminated to all the participants as co-partners and owners of the study during and at the end of the project. The PAR process is flexible, socially responsive, and an emergent research process, so questions and issues that required ethical decision-making materialised as the collaboration between the participants and researcher progressed (Kindon, *et al.*, 2007). In this respect, nobody was favoured or singled out; everyone's dignity and human rights were considered throughout the process.

4.7 SUMMARY

I have discussed the research methodology in this chapter. A participatory action research design was chosen for this qualitative approach to my service-learning study. I used emancipatory-critical and postmodern theories grounded in PAR methodologies in a combination of predetermined and emerging themes. The different sections explained the participatory methods used to generate data for analysis between the student and community interactions, and also provided strategies for reciprocal learning from and with each other. In the next chapter the data generated and collected from the engagement process will be presented. I will critically reflect on the emergent learning that took place between the two groups and refer to some of the insights that I have gathered during the research process. An exploration of the informal group discussions, visual mapping and diagrams, reflective visual journals, collective art-based practices, observational and reflective field notes, and semi-structured group interviews will support my perspective on the mutual learning processes. The evidence gained during the engagement will be utilised as a prelude to the design of a new B.Ed service-learning module for the Intermediate phase in Creative Arts.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Four, I described the participatory paradigm and methodological choices, and explained how they inform this study. I then elaborated on my research design and how I generated data throughout my investigation. I also discussed the measures I took to ensure the validity of the research. Thereafter, I explained the ethical issues which I considered relevant and significant for this study.

In this chapter, I present my research findings of the four action cycles, namely 1) relationship building, 2) planning and designing, 3) intervention and skills application, and 4) reflection and evaluation of the process with eight activities altogether (see Figure 5.1). I then discuss the themes that emerged from the data. I support my interpretation of the data by *verbatim* quotations from written and oral responses of the participants as well as visual images, and control these findings against relevant literature sources. I also incorporate extracts from my reflective field notes to support my discussion of the themes. I then discuss my learning and reflections from the four cycles of the research study.

I identified the research problem by investigating the existing gap in knowledge about reciprocal learning in service-learning, specifically in Creative Arts.

All four cycles of the research process consisted of reciprocal interactions between university and community participants. The aim of the study was to explore and describe how a participatory form of action research can be used to integrate a service-learning experience into a Creative Arts education module. I attempted to move away from a previously top-down, one-sided intervention in a community engagement action to a more participatory process to achieve a meaningful and scholarly engagement between two groups of young people from diverse backgrounds. The initial perceptions of the participants were weighed throughout the engagement process against their changed perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour.

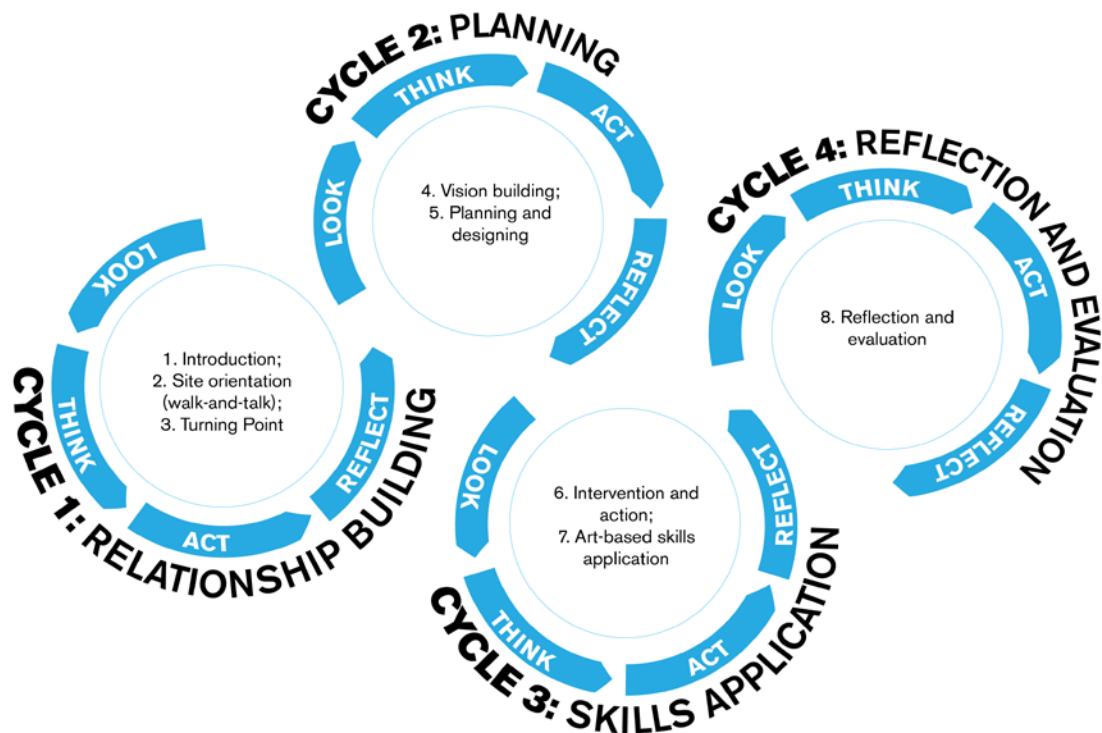


Figure 5. 1: *Participatory action research process followed (Designed by the author, 2014)*

5.2 BIOGRAPHICAL DETAIL OF PARTICIPANTS

As indicated in Chapter Four, I employed different methods in each cycle to encourage mutual understanding between participants from diverse backgrounds (see Addendum C for biographic details). Data was generated through written texts, visual diagrams, drawings, oral group discussions, and artefact painting. The seven volunteers who participated consisted of three Afrikaans speaking pre-service Creative Arts students and four Setswana or Sesotho speaking community youth members. We conducted the research in English. Some parts were translated by a community participant to improve their understanding of the process.

5.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis was conducted using open coding and thematic inductive data analysis methods (see Figure 4.5). In the following discussion I deconstruct and interpret the voices of the students and the community participants to answer the first two research questions: What did the respective partners (student and community participants) learn from the process?

- What aspects of the engagement process enhance the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes and which detract from it?

5.4 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THEMES

I identified three main themes with four interwoven sub-themes, presented in Table 5.1. I then discuss each theme and sub theme, giving evidence in the form of *verbatim* quotations, and control the findings to literature. The identifying codes² used in the discussion are indicated.

Themes		Sub-themes
1	Process allowed participants to gain insight into each others' worlds	1.1 Interaction exposed stereotypical thinking and tendency to other
		1.2 Interaction increased empathy and desire to learn from each other
2	The PAR process shifted power relations	
3	Participants experienced personal and professional development through the interactive process	3.1 Students' professional development
		3.2 Increase in self-esteem of community participants

Table 5.1: Identified main themes and sub-themes

²C1= community participant one

C2 = community participant two of *verbatim* transcriptions

S1 = Student participant one

S2:163 = Student participant two of *verbatim* transcriptions and page number

I = (Research) Interviewer

F3: act 1 = Addendum F3: DVD: (includes video and still photo examples of 1 - 7 activities)

Addendum A – M ,

The research required that participants use participatory research to create artworks to beautify a park in a township area. The project was structured so that the two groups would establish areas of change and work together towards the creation of the art works. I investigated the mutual learning that took place between the two groups. The first encounter was an informal group discussion about their respective expectations, and the last semi-structured interview reflected their views on the whole learning process. Most comments focused on the interactions and informal discussions that took place between the two groups in which new insights were gained resulting in changed and improved practices (Harrison, 2011).

5.4.1 THEME 1: PROCESS ALLOWED PARTICIPANTS TO START OPENING TO EACH OTHER’S WORLDS

5.4.1.1 Sub-theme1.1: *Interaction exposed stereotypical thinking and tendency to ‘other’*

In the beginning, the two groups’ initial discourse emphasised their stereotypical perceptions of each other; their own perceived roles as well as the roles of the other participants. The community participants initially perceived the students as ‘helpers’ that would teach them everything, positioning themselves as non-experts who needed to learn and had little to offer to the process:

“It will be nice...because they are too smart” (C1:1) and “...everything they coming with [bringing along] it’s fine” (C4:2). “Then we can help each other. Like maybe, one of them could help with mistake [s we make]...” (C3:3).

The university students also saw themselves in the role of the ‘helper’ of another culture, regarding the community’s culture as distant:

“...I also want to learn about their cultures” (S2:2), and “I also want to learn stuff about myself...What I can do and what I can’t do. And to help them. Yes [laughs]” (S1:2).

Both groups moved out of their comfort zones to participate in the engagement process, they had different perceptions of each other and viewed the ‘other’ as either more “influential and knowledgeable” (Osman & Petersen, 2013:13), or as ‘helpers’ in the project. Both groups started their interaction in a borderland (Anzaldúa, 1987, Giroux, 1993) which challenged their way of thinking and learning. Participants were prompted to view learning in the community-borderlands differently; not relying on transferring existing knowledge to a new setting, but to “redefine who the

‘servers’ are in relation to the ‘served’ and how boundaries continue to keep these two groups apart” (Hayes & Cuban, 1997:76). With the first sub-theme the stereotypical perceptions that emerged from the data will be discussed.

5.4.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: *Interaction exposed stereotypical thinking and tendency to ‘other’*

With the first sub-theme, stereotypical perceptions of each other emerged. The initial stereotypical tendency to refer to the ‘other’, as ‘they’ and ‘them’ surfaced. The university students initially saw themselves in the role of ‘helpers’, and the community participants who positioned themselves as non-experts needed to learn and had little to offer to the process. The university students saw themselves in the role of ‘helpers’, but also recognised the fact that the two cultures are very different:

“...I thought I was going to learn uhm, about how the community works. How does, how does the community work there...” (S3:23).

Both groups moved out of their comfort zones to participate in the engagement process and learned together by sharing their experiences. The initial perceptions of the community participants were that the university students were knowledgeable and could teach them everything. The community participants positioned themselves as inferior knowledge bearers by assuming that they would make mistakes, and that the students, perceived as ‘masters of the trade’, would help them to overcome their mistakes. The students contributed to this stereotypical disposition of the community participants in the beginning by adopting a helping attitude towards the community participants. The social roles and shared qualities initially found in one group influenced the emotional reactions towards the other group (Dovidio, Hewstone, Glick & Esses, 2010). In this way, certain expectations about the other group’s anticipated behaviour were projected in a new situation, for instance, the students readily accepted their role as helpers. Although learning was a priority from the start, the way that the participants approached the process was based on a helping/needing paradigm which situated the community participants as ‘the other’. It could also be argued that the participants used stereotypical discourse in the beginning because they had to process a rather complex situation - different racial groups presented as diverse knowledge bearers, working in opposing environments. Recent research emphasises the functional and dynamic aspects of stereotypes as “simplifying a complex environment, instead of stressing the inflexible aspects thereof”, as a “cognitive schema used by social perceivers to process information” (Dovidio *et al.*, 2010:7); the participants’ initial

perceptions were based on stereotypical views which changed during the course of the engagement process towards more accommodating behaviour patterns.

During the research process the ‘*otherness*’ and the exclusionary discourse “*they*” and “*them*” became less pronounced. Students started to become more aware of how they were perceived by the community participants and started to rethink this role and see the need to offer support with the aim of assisting community participants to become proficient themselves:

“I think I realised that we weren’t necessarily there to help them, but just to support them in the things they want to do...So that they can help themselves (themselves)” (S3:23).

Perhaps they learned that we are not so different from them as they thought in the beginning. Because they thought we were smarter than them” (S3:35).

Through their interactions with the community participants, the students started to gain developmental experience and social cognitive insights into their changing roles (Killen, Cameron, Richardson, & Kelly, 2010). ‘Helping attitudes’ were substituted for “*supporting*” and “*guiding*” roles. They transformed their condescending and ‘helper-cast’ mould for a more supportive one and became more emphatic in their behaviour towards the community participants’ initial perceptions during the process. Towards the end of the research, during the reflective semi-structured interview, the students admitted that they had used “othering” discourse because they did not know how to address the community participants:

“We don’t know how to say the other, to say the children or the students or the people from the Ikageng, that is why we said the other people” (S1:35).

The different discourses indicated that the students were uncomfortable since they did not know how to address the community participants. This was an important learning for me, since, as facilitator of the process, I should have been able to address this issue at the beginning of the interaction and found ways to make the various participants feel more comfortable. The university participants attributed their limitation of “*finding the right words*” to their youth, and their limited exposure to cultural groups different from their own:

“...we all said “other people”, because we don’t know how to address them. Because we are still youth ourselves...” (S1:35).

The views of the two groups about each other were not necessarily negative. Rather, it appeared that their views included more subtle, patronising, and also ‘positive’ views of the community participants (Killen *et. al.*, 2010). The ‘helping attitude’ has a deep rooted history which can be linked with this country’s colonial past. On reflection, I realised that my own views border on similarly positive yet patronising attitudes:

“Do you understand? I will help you with the paint, you must just find the things that we can put in the park. Oraait?” (I:52).

A close examination of my motives and prejudices are important before I design a service-learning module which addresses these issues. I am admittedly also a product of an unequal and privileged past which is undeniably transferred to students that I teach. A critical look at my own personal and socio-political commitments and personified actions “in all its complexities and contradictions” should be considered (Apple, 2010) to ensure that the experience stays valuable and meaningful to all without personal biased views.

However, I have learnt that perceptions and attitudes of ‘the other’ can be more effectively adjusted by practical community engagements. Discussing stereotypical behaviour with students on a theoretical level is abstract and does little to help them confront their own possible prejudices. Irwin (2003) argues that theory and practice are both equally valued, but theory without practice could be abstract, lacking meaning and implication, whereas practice without theory could be dynamic and applicable. My learning from the study has led me to recognise the importance of incorporating the praxis path whereby theoretical, stereotypical concepts become contextual when applied in a real-world setting. In this sense, the students are sensitised to their own stereotypical terminologies and perceptions of the “other” in real-life contexts, through their exposure to service-learning engagements.

An unequal distribution of privileges was noticed by the students in their observations of the community’s living conditions which they compared to their own. In the beginning they assumed that the community’s lifestyle was unsafe and that alcohol abuse was rife. Specific stereotypical remarks underline their initial perceptions:

“There is not really, the parents must create a safe place at their home, so that uhm, I just think that our parents are more protective, I can be wrong, over [about] us, because I don’t

know why. But uhm, in our culture or my culture, we are not afraid to say something is wrong, like alcohol abuse or whatever. But to them it is quite normal; alcohol abuse, it's every second person" (S2:33).

During the course of the process the students' stereotypical perceptions of the community's living environment changed. They became more understanding of the community youths' circumstances and even expressed admiration:

"I think the youth there grow up long before we are grown. They must be adults when they are actually still children, because they must se [sic], because they must take care of themselves or a younger brother or sister" (S3:33).

The students started to engage critically with the community participants and compared their comfortable lifestyles with the living conditions of the other group, which unlocked value-laden comparisons between 'us and them'. It opened their eyes to their own privileged positions since childhood. They became aware of the young in the community who had to deal with adult responsibilities; they witnessed social negligence and limited moral care and recognised the violation of children rights as voiceless citizens against social ills such as alcohol abuse.

The students' stereotypical perceptions about community townships being dangerous territory also changed. A sort of envious tone started to emerge and the students began to experience the community participants' life as free and enjoyable and not completely unsafe:

"...I always thought it was the unsafest place, uhm, but it's just how they live. It, is not that unsafe as we people think it is, it's just...there is a stereotype over there, there is a stereotype about townships, well specific that area" (S3:22).

"...I think we make it more than a issue than it is. They live like day to day and they enjoy their lives every day, but I think we do, because we plan everything in our lives (S2:22).

"Everything [in our lives] is planned...", and "This must happen and this happens and their lives they take it as it come, but they enjoy every day and they live full-out every day" (S2:22).

People are products of individual cultures moulded from the values and morals inculcated by families, friends, communities, educational institutions, and religious affiliations, among others (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). The students compared their 'planned' lives to the community

participants' 'freer' lifestyles and gained insight in the *joie de vivre* which is evident in the daily lives of the community. By comparing different lifestyles the students started to engage critically in reflexive discourses regarding social values and behaviour. In order to decrease stereotypical thinking research studies suggest that more opportunities should be created for belonging and group membership to address the wrongfulness of prejudicial attitudes and the use of stereotypical expectations (Killen, *et al.*, 2010). The emerging active voices of the participants indicated that stereotypical perceptions about 'us and them' started to change, affecting the attitudes and behaviour towards each other.

In the next sub-theme the learning process between the participants will be discussed. As the process unfolded the previous dominant, patronising roles adopted by the students began to change into more collaborative behaviour between the two groups.

5.4.1.3 Sub-theme 2: *Interaction increased empathy and desire to learn from each other*

During the process, the participants began to understand each other's realities and to realise that they could learn from each other. Empathy stems from the Greek word *empathia* (from *em-* 'in' + *pathos* 'feeling') and means 'the ability to understand and appreciate deeply the thoughts and feelings of another person' Empathy differs from sympathy as it does not show feelings of pity and sorrow for someone's misfortune (Oxford Dictionaries, 2010).

In the beginning the students participated in relationship-building activities which formed the basis for affective engagement. They gained some insights into the community participants' feelings and lives and built relationships of trust needed for a collaborative working process. The students understood the importance of establishing a rapport with the community participants:

"...we had to get to know each other more, and that, that, I think that makes (sic) it easier"

(S3:30). "We had to understand what they feel, how they feel and how we feel"(S3:30).

The community participants reiterated the students' perceptions:

"I wouldn't normally tell anyone about my feelings, but it came to an end that I had to express my feelings too. I was like trusting them, I had, I had this trust in them..." (C3:40).

Killen *et al.*, in Dovidio (2010) argue that a lack of empathy contributes to feelings of exclusion from opportunities and social rejection. The evidence indicates that the students started to show increasing empathy towards the community group. A patronising expression of pity was replaced by a desire to be really engaged, which was initiated by the Turning point exercise (see Addendum F3 - DVD). The participants started to show empathy by “putting themselves in the other’s shoes” (Rimmerman, 2011:13). Positive feedback about the relationship-building exercise indicated the value of sharing emotive issues, resulting in trusting feelings towards each other. During the course of the relationship-building activities, I had some doubts about the effectiveness of the PAR process. I asked myself what experiences could the participants share coming from such diverse backgrounds? Would they really be interested in each other’s lives, what would they learn from each other and how would it benefit both groups? (see Addendum K act 1 section 6 – concerns). The level of empathy displayed by the students, however, surprised me. They began to compare their privileged lives to the harsher realities of the community participants. This insight allowed them to become more caring and understanding, and gave community members more space to express themselves (see Addendum F3 – DVD). I tried to distance myself from my own internal “well-meaning white person” attitude (Santas, 2000:349) in order to avoid the “white as knowledgeable and black as needy” concept (Biko, 2004:23).

The collaboration between the two groups was further extended through art-based working processes and the students’ recognition of the community participants’ strengths:

“...when we actually painted, because then we started to speak about each other’s personal lives as well” (S2:30).

“They were always willing to, willing to do something” ... “Because they showed up for every meeting, they were on time for the garden when we went there and they were open minded about everything” (S1:30).

“They want to get involved” (S, S3, simultaneously:24).

“They want to make a change in their life” (S1:24).

The students started to appraise the community’s behaviour which indicated respect for their fellow partners in the process (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). The art-based activities played a mediating role of social exchange (Helguera, 2011:30) in strengthening personal relationships, contributing to

the building of trust, and opening up spaces for meaningful conversations. The community participants took the opportunity to escape out of their passive receiver mould to work together with the students on the planning and design of the final art product.

Changing the hierarchical ways of our colonial past, the helper/needful paradigm, inevitably, caused some discomfort.

“We also realised that they must help themselves, because ...[laughing] they, were more open when they did what they wanted to do, and we were just standing there and, so perhaps that, perhaps when...but when we gave ideas, everything was fine, yes, they said yes to everything” (S2:23).

“But once they did their own thing...they told us this is what they want to do and they don’t want to do that, so then they were more comfortable” (S2:24).

Freire refers to a ‘critical consciousness’ which means “not accepting an undesirable condition as fate or unchangeable, understanding the structure of causes that brought it about, and then evolving strategies to mitigate them” (Freire, 1975:142). In this sense, a ‘critical consciousness’ (Freire, 1975:142) was developed in the participants regarding their perceptions of each other. Both groups were exposed to open dialogue and discussions through art-based activities which enabled them to gain mutual understanding of, and care for each other. Patronising ‘helping’ behaviours began to give way to more collaborative approaches which allowed the agency of the community participants to flourish.

Towards the end, the participants started to acknowledge the value of opening up to each other’s worlds and working in collaborative ways. Differences were no longer important as long as good things happened.

“They teach me that if you are a people, you can do things, even with cultures, you can make one group of people and discuss things, making good things” (C4:41).

“I was walking with the white people and the black people, we are just tell them about this park, this park, they are to, it will be nice, and our communities will be watching their park, ...see that people can walk together there, white and black” (C1:44).

In coming full circle (Duncan & Brooks Taylor 2013:110), the students also expressed their need to welcome the community participants on campus to strengthen their collaborative relationship:

“[It was good] having them here, [be]cause they saw where we come from” (S1:30).

In this way, the learning that occurred between the participants and their different environments became a transactional relationship between social and personal knowledge (Stuttaford & Coe, 2007). The more privileged group started to appreciate communal values:

“I think all the youth experience the same situations, because it doesn’t matter what your colour is, or your gender or something. Everyone has to deal with drugs, and alcohol, and death (S1:27), Relationships (S3:168)...and divorce. So I think it is the same everywhere (S1:27).

“They (the youth) have more responsibilities” (S3:27).

“...most of them have to go and work while they are still in school, just to support the family as well” (S2:27).

Becoming part of a group has potentially adaptive dimensions in terms of nurturing an individual and forming a caring society (Killen *et al.*, 2010). The participatory process established strong relational partnerships between the students and community participants; they learned to trust and to work in open and collaborative ways despite their differences. They became aware of similar and different life experiences at different times of their young lives. Their hidden fears and longing memories were exposed; family loss, educational and circumstantial interferences that influenced their personal lives. Listening to each other’s reports on their lives gave the participants some insights in and understanding of the others’ circumstances. Both groups started to listen empathetically and became more self-reflexive. Evidence pointed to active listening and voicing skills amongst the participants (see F3 & Addendum G). The evidence gained from the Turning point activity pointed to PAR values that both groups started to manifest; trust, respect, and building of supportive relationships (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). Learning in reciprocal ways from and with each other started to emerge. The PAR process appears to have beneficial value as participants bridged the gap between previously discussed ‘us and them’ and started sharing more than just future visions for the park. The Turning point exercise added to the Walk-and-Talk activity as it focused not only on the circumstances of each individual but also on the emotional and personal experiences which they shared during the

process. It is an activity that builds relationships as everybody got the chance to talk openly about their private feelings and getting to know the people “pretty fast and respect them for what they are” (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013:36). Trust, respect, and openness to new ideas are prerequisites for good relationships and team spirit within a group organisation (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013).

The mutual involvement with each others’ territories gave them a sense of belonging and enhanced their need to reach out. The students started to give their views on sameness and differences between personal beliefs, shared experiential learning, and cultural forms of expression. Their increased resilience and empathy enabled them to work in collaborative ways with the community participants:

“I think it was better to work with the youth, because our mind-set are [sic] more or less the same. And like they, uhm, related to the music that D listen to ...because we grow up, we and the youth grew up in the same time, same area [or era]?” (S2:23).

“Yes, but...also I think, more community members would want to participate, because that one day when we were there, others came and they wanted to paint as well” (S1:23). “But with the practical, it, is [there are] also colours involved, so we could show them which colour could go where and they can show us which colour can go where as well. So it wasn’t necessary to speak to each other, we could show each other by using the colours” (S3:30).

Experiential learning decreases the boundaries between the academy and the community and provides a meaningful approach to building partnerships in which both students and community participants benefit (Duley, 1981b; Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). The students learned to incorporate everybody’s practical experiences; they established relationships of collaboration “*show them which colour could go where and they can show us which colour can go where*” (S3:30) and recognised willingness to participate. The young people’s increased empathy gained through participatory interactions helped to give them insight into each other’s diverse learning styles, for instance the community participants’ preference for practical work and specifically painting. Based on the principles of lifelong action learning (LAL) the practice of community-based education is inclusive, flexible, and process-orientated (Zuber Skerritt, 2013:228-229), qualities which complement diversity and life-long learning. The students were exposed to learning processes which elicit learning through concrete experiences in collaborative ways; important criteria for 21st century educational graduates (Greenstein, 2012).

The PAR process is regarded as a form of power that can enrich scholarship (Kindon, Pain, & Kesby, 2007; Kesby, Kindon & Pain, 2010) or unsettle power hierarchies experienced by participants through shared experiences (McFarlane & Hansen, 2007). The following theme illustrates how power relations started to shift during the process; moving from dominating to more accommodating behaviour.

5.4.2 THEME 2: THE PAR PROCESS SHIFTED POWER RELATIONS

During the research process I noticed a shift in the power balance between the participants. At first the students were more dominant in most of the actions, leading the conversations, and making decisions during the working processes. Obedient behaviour patterns were initially observed in the community participants who then changed into more enabling attitudes and mutual decision-making actions. The community participants “*came out of their shells*” (C3:54) and started to share responsibilities and participate in the decisions-making processes. In the following sections, changes in the power relations will be discussed. Experiencing the process together enabled the participants to become aware of leadership qualities, decision-making skills, and the importance of group organisation during a working process.

The students associated leadership with confidence and regarded these two qualities as important attributes to the interactive process with the community participants. The evidence indicated that they were pleased that the initial quietness of the community participants as “passive acceptors of domination” (Freire, 1985:xix) changed during the process and that the community participants started to voice their opinions and become more “*talkative*”:

“They were afraid to tell their ideas, because they didn’t know if it was wrong or right...they thought automatically that we must always be right and they wrong” (S2:35)

“...but that is not the case...think it was a case of being shy”. (S3: 35)

“Maybe they don’t have that, uhm, leadership qualities” (S3:35)

“Confidence...the confidence yet, uhm, but as we worked on, they were, they, they, their quietness improved, they were more talkative” (S1:34).

In analysing the data it became clear that the initial mind-sets of the community participants focused on the hierarchical order of students as more knowledgeable and ‘*always right*’. The students

thought they had better ideas and the community participants automatically assumed that their ideas would be ‘wrong’. The PAR process aims to promote a more liberated orientation which is non-hierarchical and emphasises dialogic conversations during the working process. It invites engagement and moves away from a closed society where power is maintained by silencing the masses and withholding knowledge from the marginalised (Freire, 1985). This happened on a micro-level between students and community members, as the students began to do less and listen more, giving the community youth more space to display their knowledge and skills.

Power exists in relationships and can change as relationships change (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). The students started to question the value of legitimate and expert power (2013) as options for leadership during the process. They started to show preference for a leadership style that is democratic with more equitable participation and for decision-making processes:

“...everybody gets a chance to talk...everybody decides what this person must do and he must also decide...” (S3:37).

A more democratic process for leadership was suggested by the students; choices were negotiated and steered towards collaborative leadership:

“Maybe in a group you must, uhm, not necessarily have a group leader, but everybody gets a chance to uh, to talk and then everybody decides what this person must do and he must also uhm, decide if he wants to do it. Everybody...hulle moet almal ooreenstem wat die persoon moet doen en hy moet ook...”[they must all agree what the person must do and he should also] (S3:37).

The students started to value the collaborative working process as a means to overcome shyness and silence, a pragmatic solution to voicing opinions, and to become active role-players in the engagement process. The accommodating attitude of the students reflected their willingness to listen and encourage talk; much needed qualities in building social capital and forming negotiated positions (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). They acknowledged their own potential and expressed it honestly. To ensure the effectiveness of participatory action learning, the students discouraged dominant positions, treating everybody as equal partners (Birks & Mills, 2011; Kindon, *et al.*, 2007). They tried to create a positive interactive experience and allowed everybody’s input, moving away from unequal power relations. They effectively moved closer to skills and power sharing which if

nurtured correctly, lead to shared leadership (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). The students learned to negotiate their positions instead of taking dominant positions and forcing their viewpoints on the other participants. The risk-taking process “making the road while walking” (Freire, 1990:3), moved closer to sustainable engagement as both groups were prepared to negotiate their positions through the process. Recognising their strengths and gifts as being of equal value is an important channel for opening reciprocity (Conner, 2011).

As a participatory researcher, I readjusted my role as directional facilitator to a more negotiated position. I changed my predetermined vision of the learning process by allowing the Socratic “meandering exchanges to reach a somewhat satisfactory consensus” (Helguera 2011:40). I noticed during the PAR process how the dynamics between the groups were changing; crediting each other’s strengths, making decisions, and democratically distributing tasks amongst themselves:

“The students were more dominant in taking the lead but helped the community participants when they struggled to write something down. Later on one of the students remarked that it was not a problem as the same things in the area bothered them, they (the students) could write things down more quickly (see Addendum F4-DVD & Addendum K, act 4, section A).

Although the students agreed that most decisions were made cooperatively their decisions related directly to growing confidence in their own abilities. The participants were not required to “remember or recall forgotten knowledge” (Freire, 1985:55) as in the ‘banking system’ whereby knowledge is traditionally deposit and later released. They were engaged in an active learning process, the “constant problematizing of their own existential situations” (Freire, 1985:56), which enabled them to identify problems in the park area and make collaborative decisions on how the park could be beautified.

I observed how decisions about the planning and art-based activities were made together (see Addendum F4 & F5 -DVD). The students thought they were stronger in providing ideas and even suggested the type of resources that should be used, such as the tyres, whereas, the community participants grasped the application of practical skills quickly and were capable of applying these skills without deliberating:

”... [we all] made decisions at a point. Like we gave the idea of the tyres, because they didn’t think of ideas, or they didn’t know what to use, but when we had to do the things, they knew what they wanted to do and they did it straight away, without even thinking about it” (S3:30).

The possibility of discerning, comparing, choosing, programming, performing, evaluating, committing, and taking risks makes us beings of decision and thus ethical beings (Freire, 1997). The hands-on participatory process enabled the participants to choose between different activities, to compare their skills with each other, to evaluate the quality of their work, to commit to their designated tasks, to make decisions about their planning and design applications - and opened up a process of reciprocal engagement. They shaped their decisions through actions and reflections and maintained a dialectic movement between theory (such as the vision-building exercise) and praxis, “both inseparable moments of the process by which we can reach critical understanding” (Freire, 1985:124). They grasped the decision-making process during activities such as the vision-building, and designing and planning phases through a dialogical process of ideas and practical skills application. They functioned as a group and dealt with power and skill imbalances in a negotiated way. Both groups’ ideas were captured in visual diagrams and showed similarities in identifying their goals and plans for the park area (see Addendum I & F 5.1-DVD).

More specifically, the vision-building of the park area included generating ideas and brainstorming which was conducted in a reciprocal and collaborative way; they shared ideas and came to agreeable solutions:

“Ja,[Yes] they agreed with the ideas, so then we just went on with it (S3:29).

“We also agreed with the posters and wrote what they wanted and the goals, how to do it...wish-lists yes” (S2:29).

The grassroots engagement of both groups from the beginning ensured that the whole group could reach their desired and shared objectives which were captured in their wish lists (see Addendum H). The collaboration in the working process created more power which emancipated and empowered both groups. For instance, the ‘agreeability’ and willingness to participate in all the activities and the staying power that resulted from the various exercises ensured organisational discipline and strengthened the group dynamics (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013).

As the decisions-making was agreed upon, the distribution of tasks fitted the participants' preferences. Some students regarded the planning process and providing as important, whereas others preferred the painting process as the most emancipating activity. Positions were constantly negotiated:

"...it was, in the planning it was mostly us giving the ideas, and they adding to the ideas, but with...the practical where we painted,...they took over" (S3:29).

Focusing on their strengths, the student participants started to produce work which contributed to the final product, yet they allowed each member to participate and were prepared to stand back and watch, for instance, during the painting process (see Addendum F7.1-DVD). The students' style of conducting interactions changed; they became less directive and recognised the development of potentials in others. Although not one person assumed a leadership position in the respective groups, strengths were assimilated in a positive way during the process.

During the vision-building process the participants were asked to claim certain roles for themselves in the art-making process. I noticed their reluctance to assume specific roles; they could not decide who should do what. To ensure progression in the process, they decided together that joint decisions would be made relying on the strengths of each participant. In this way, the participants showed respect for each other's wishes, listened to reasons; and in doing so discouraged dominant opinions, treating everybody as equal partners (Birks & Mills, 2011; Kindon *et al.*, 2010).

In the execution of the final tasks they all wanted to participate. In this sense, they wanted to participate on an equal footing. Engaging in participatory ways, the community participants became more interactively involved; they became "reactivated and opened themselves to new transitional changes in the process" (Freire, 1985:81). The distribution of power through the participatory process ensured contributions from both groups and created closer bonds between them:

"I think we are used to do, used to doing planning and they like to do things just the practical part. Like they wanted to paint and get it over with, they didn't like drawing or planning the things before" (S2:28).

"Ja, [Yes] they agreed with the ideas" (S2:28) and "We also agreed with the poster and wrote what they wanted, and the goals, how to do it" (S2:28).

The participants started to become more “interchangeable” (Dovidio, Hewstone, Click & Esses, 2010:13); they took on many roles and did not assume singular tasks only - which had a positive effect on the process. They accommodated each other’s strengths, their social skills became more pronounced, and active listening skills were evident. The students began to show respect for each other’s preferences and to identify strengths within each other when they worked in collaborative ways. They shared their knowledge of group and planning skills, they assisted with the writing and drawing, and listened while the community participants made suggestions about the park. They acknowledged their own potential and expressed it honestly, *“I am better with painting”* (C2:51).

For community participants working together and sharing responsibilities such as ideas formulation and the utilisation of resources, enabled them to become more knowledgeable and confident in forming their own opinions and expressing them without fear of rejection. The community participants wished for the return of the students to work together and made suggestions on approaches to future service-learning projects:

“I would tell them to be open to the students and discuss anything they have. They should, they shouldn’t be shy like them (looking at some of the fellow community participants), they should express their feelings how they want, because it is their area. So, they should express what they do they want and listen to the students what they also want in the park” (C3:48).

Towards the end of the process the community participants were confident enough to admit their limited of artistic skills; they voiced their own limitations and in the process made emancipatory decisions to change their status from voiceless pacifists to active participants:

“Most of the things they do I don’t know...I don’t, I totally don’t have experience in doing art” (C3:43).

The emancipation that started to surface in the community group who changed from passive and quiet ‘receivers’, indicated that they were moving into a paradigm of hope and empowerment (Freire, 1997). Expressing (voicing) and listening became important communication skills in negotiating positions and sharing power as leaders and decision-makers. These actions forebode the possibility of the community participants taking ownership of the park and enabled empowerment by increasing their knowledge and confidence through the deliberating and ‘talking’ processes evident in PAR (Hume-Cook, Curtis, Woods, Potaka, Wagner & Kindon, 2007).

Incorporating service-learning in the curriculum is important to enhance personal and social transformation. I discussed the power shifting relations between the community and student participants through shared leadership roles, decision-making, and group dynamics. In the following section the effect of the participatory interactive process will be discussed to illustrate the personal and professional development of the students during the process.

5.4.3 THEME 3: PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCED PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE INTERACTIVE PROCESS

During this study, the students and community participants became engaged in all aspects of the community engagement project; they learned to share their life experiences and their visions of the park, and they engaged in learning through a variety of interactive activities. The aim was to create meaningful engagement with beneficial value for all. Meaningful service provides a sense of purpose, connection, relevance, and usefulness, which requires time and effort from all and includes everybody's voices in the planning, implementation, and evaluating phases (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). The participatory methodology enabled participants to work collaboratively in groups, acquiring oral and written communication skills, and opened up leadership possibilities which contributed to their personal and professional development. Notably, the student participants experienced professional development through the interactive process.

5.4.3.1 Sub-theme: 3.1. *Student professional development*

With this study students gained insight into the community participants' worlds by addressing pre-determined assumptions and stereotypical views which unlocked their prejudices and perceptions. They gained compassion and empathy for the community's living conditions (see Theme 1). Apart from becoming self-aware "...*I want to learn stuff about myself... What I can do and what I can't do*" (S1:2), the students became involved in active learning, and gained insight into various communication skills including brainstorming and visual communication (see Addendum F4 – DVD & Addendum H). They also recognised various challenges such as language barriers, time management, and risk taking, and commented on working in real-life environments:

"And they taught me, uh, cause [because] I saw how they are, their living, and uhm, they learned [teach] me to be more appreciative of what I have today and not complain so much" (S3:32).

Towards the end of the process when they reflected on self-growth, personal changes were recognised:

“...it felt enriching. So I felt more, uhm, it felt, it felt good helping others...” (S3:33).

“We had to understand what they feel, how they feel and how we feel” (S2:33)

All of the above are essential experiences for students to become effective teachers. In defining 21st century skills, competencies such as citizenship, life skills, and personal responsibility are necessary for living in the world (Binkley, Erstad, Herman, Raizen, Ripley & Rumble, 2010). Through the research process 21st century working competencies such as communication and collaboration were also established (Greenstein, 2012). If students want to make an impact on their environment they need to experience a sense of purpose, connection, relevance, and usefulness, including being actively engaged and having active voices (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). The students started to understand personal feelings that they shared between themselves as well as gaining intrapersonal skills. They emphasised virtuous qualities such as patience, a much needed quality in teaching. When dealing with day-to-day encounters in a classroom and working with different learning styles of young children in diverse circumstances, patience is vital to attain healthy, inclusive and well-performing work (Thomas, 1992:306-318).

The students affirmed that the research process challenged them to become more tolerant and aware of the importance of understanding diversity:

“(an important aspect that was learned) patience, because when we try to explain something to them like the idea of the tyres, they don’t understand on the spot” (S1:39).

“I think we also learned from them, how to interact with different cultures and how to approach a project like this. How to share” (S2:41).

One of the qualities akin to patience is tolerance. Tolerance requires excessive self-evaluation, especially in relation to others who may be regarded as inferior in class, race, groups, sex, and nation (Freire, 1997). Freire furthermore argues that tolerance cannot exist where there is a lack of humility. We cannot regard ourselves as humble if we consider others around us as inferior. We also cannot pass on bureaucratic favours by entering relationships where we underestimate others or overestimate ourselves. Using a participatory process enabled the participants to share tasks on equal ground. The

service-learning project helped them to understand that while they were on the outside level striving towards the beautification of a park, they were liberating their pre-conceived perceptions and prejudices through comparisons between lifestyles and choices, commitment to time frames, taking risks, and making decisions that impact their immediate environment (Freire, 1997).

The students agreed that language was one of the communication barriers they had to cross during the process. This is a challenge they will encounter in the multicultural classroom and therefore could appreciate the learning from this project as they struggled to communicate with the community participants:

“You can, in a class room, and with them as well, you can use somebody that understands both languages quite well. Their language and English and Afrikaans, doesn’t matter, so that they can translate it to them or to you” (S3:37), “And visuals...” (S1:37) and (S2:37). “Posters or pictures about the things you want to show them (S3:37).

Visual material and physical examples such as the park maquettes (models) helped to clarify the concepts:

“I think, uhm, they got a better understanding when they saw the pictures and the uh, projects, this miniature sculptures [maquette]) that we made. I think they then only realised, or they got a better, uhm understand[ing] of what, what we are trying to do (S3:37).

Language is a powerful tool which can create or decimate, empower or oppress (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). One of the community participant’s poor command of English necessitated constant translations by another community member. It appeared that the participant understood most of the language but struggled to speak it. The students made good suggestions to overcome these barriers such as the use of an interpreter who explained problems and ensured that all the participants could participate despite their language limitations. They also emphasised the value of using multi-modal methods (Gee, 2008), for instance to demonstrate a concept for a design, such as visual diagrams and clay maquettes (see Addendum F6.2-DVD & Fig. 4.4.5), during the intervention phase. The art process helped to overcome language barriers. The students recognised the value of practical applications to complete tasks and perceptual abilities were utilised as substitutes for spoken words, echoing the saying, “a pictures speaks louder than a thousand words”. Colours were shown without speaking to each other: (*“...it wasn’t necessary to speak to each other, we could show each other by*

using the colours” (S2:42). All of these methods provided mediating possibilities towards a better understanding of the concepts and specific problems which in turn enabled reciprocal ways to complete the tasks.

This study also exposed the students to many other sources and aids that could be applied in their future classroom teaching. The collaborative brainstorming during the vision-building exercise proved to be the most engaged activity (see Addendum F4.1-DVD & Fig.4.4.3) and involved a number of communication skills: talking, listening, writing, looking, and drawing. The students did not just hear but listened intently (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013), while they wrote down suggestions made by the groups during the vision-building discussions. Their bodies leaned forward, they showed signs of agreement (nodding and saying yes), and interacted by asking questions and confirming answers using eye contact. What was noticeable during the sessions was that everybody would write down suggestions for the vision-building exercise; hence the writing on the diagrams from all angles (see Addendum I & Addendum F 4.1-DVD). The community participants recommended that the students write on the charts as they wrote more quickly. Allowing students with stronger writing skills to write, enabled the others to talk and think about possible solutions and to start distributing knowledge on their visions more equally (see Addendum F5.1 & F5.2-DVD). Working in small groups, the students acted as resources for one another and supported each other to solve problems during the activities (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). Drawing pictures and using different coloured text enhanced the community participants’ understanding of the concepts. The students showed appreciation for the community participants’ skills in the process “*Hulle weet hoe om [die ontwerpe] te sny met die verf*” (S3) (they know how to cut the edges [of the designs] when they paint.) Thus, the pre-service teachers learned first-hand how to teach in diverse contexts.

For professional purposes pre-service teachers need to consider the importance of presentation as a central skill; strategies that allow students to develop these skills in a structured and supported way should be accommodated, and progress should be monitored (Lawson, 2013). The students learned to use their presentation skills during the maquette intervention at the Arts and Crafts Studio on campus by explaining to the community participants their concepts of converting their 2-D concepts to 3-D models (see Addendum F6.2-DVD & Chapter 4, fig. 4.4.6). The students gave an overview of the process of creating the maquettes. This intervention supported the students to develop their professional skills and practise some demonstrating and critical teaching skills.

They explained and compared the different models and presented the community participants with some choices, enabling them to form their own ideas:

“I think a lot of times they just agreed. When we said something, they said yes, or perhaps they, some of the things they said “no” it won’t work, and they gave their reasons...like with the tyres and they just gave basic ideas, but when we showed them this with the alligators, demons (laughing) I don’t know what that is...then they thought of more things, and they said perhaps that would work and they would like a fence with tyres and their thought (thinking) become better” (S1:42).

The students also gained a better understanding of time management:

“Because you need a lot of time on a project like this, so, and everybody just have that much time in a day. So, you must know what is most important to do first, get it done and this is the time you have for it. So you must be efficient in the time you have” (S2:42).

Time management is an essential aspect to consider when working in or facilitating groups in the classroom. It shows consideration, respect, and discipline (Duncan & Brook Taylor, 2013). If structured and used effectively, participants can learn from one another and apply time management in other projects. Students gained insight in time management and realised that they had to apply themselves strategically during the engagement process. They showed respect for each other by recognising their limited time together. The project also created an awareness to prioritise tasks, an essential quality in a teaching career. They realised that time cannot be wasted and a professional teacher should be well-organised and capable.

Students acknowledged the value of participatory work processes in which everybody gets involved from the start. They encouraged the community to take risks and to work in real-life environments. Their perceptions changed and they realised that their initial fears of township areas were worse than their personal encounters:

“I think it also helps to realise that one day when we work, we must, uhm, “betrek” (involve) the community and how to approach a project like this. So if we, as teachers, want to do something like this in the community, we must be able to go and not be afraid en die leeders gerus te stel, want ons weet dis veilig dis nie so erg nie” (S2:34) (and put the learners at ease, because we know it’s safe and it is not so bad).

“And go and examine the area that you might want to, to rebuild or build there or whatever, I think that is a very important part of your planning, because you can’t do that, you can’t plan if you don’t know how the space look like” (S3:34).

The students started to move closer to the ideal of democratic citizenship. They set aside their fears of becoming involved with a marginalised group of people. They allowed themselves to become facilitators who are willing to improve the lives around them and create opportunities for learning, “it is believed that, through what they [the students] experience, they construct their own understanding of the world around them, which is when they learn most (Billig & Eyler, 2003:27). Gaining experience in the community engagement process and projecting an alignment with the community’s needs “*go and examine the area that you might want to rebuild*” (S3:34), leads to reciprocity between the community and the students which benefit both parties and helps to create a symbiotic relationship between a university and local community (Vickers, Harris, & McCarthy, 2004; Billig & Eyler, 2003), an aspect that HE students suggested for their future careers.

The students learned to handle variables and showed willingness to compromise; becoming flexible in unforeseen circumstances. They also became empowered and independent role-players free to voice their opinions in a critical and reflexive way. They cared about the relationships that they established with the community and started to question the role of other stakeholders involved in the process:

“... I would start the project if the park was finished, like the municipality were finished with the things they wanted to do...because now we are doing our side, and the municipality can take a year or two years, so the community members think that we forgot about it, or we came in and made promises that we don’t keep” (S1:47).

The student participants learnt many skills and gained much insight that could be applied to their teaching. Towards the end of the PAR process the students and the community participants reached out towards each other. The students learnt to respect and admire the community participants, and began to show personal interest in the meaning of the community participants’ names. Engaging in a meaningful and personal way is vital to effective teaching and learning, and contributed to the professional development of the students. The students made some transitional changes, they started started sharing and exchanging personal meanings of names, moving closer to Freire’s (1990) ideal.

The initial unequal relationship between the participants changed to a working and personally engaged relationship, placing learning from the people on a par with personal engagement. As Freire (1990:247) remarks:

Loving people. It's very dialectical. I had no other door but to love people – that is loving people, believing in the people, but not in a naive way. I don't know many things, but it's necessary to believe in the people. It's necessary to laugh with the people because if we don't do that, we cannot learn from the people, and in not learning from the people we cannot teach them.

In placing emphasis on the personal, the pre-service teachers were challenged to think beyond rigid subject definitions and barriers and to consider the place of creativity and the creative processes involved in all areas of knowledge and skills development, not just those traditionally labelled as 'arts' or 'creative subjects' (Craft, 2001). Working together enhanced good interactions and indicated that the participants were in agreement with each other (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013).

5.4.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: *Community participants benefitted on a personal level*

The students stimulated the creativity and project management skills of the community participants by getting them involved in art-based activities. The community participants started to get involved in problem-solving activities and recognised the value of project planning:

“Ja, (yes) I've learned, me I've learned that before we do a park, we must come up with a plan first, before doing everything” (C1:39).

“...if you are going to make a park, you must make sure that you've got nice plans, that tomorrow that people looking at that park can feel joy” (C2:40).

The learning helped to build self-confidence, bringing the participants closer to the Maslowian ideal of self-actualisation (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). The community participants started to express themselves in spontaneous and creative ways; they became engaged in problem-solving activities such as the planning and designing activities of the park, and started to discover their own potential and talents. They also started to exercise some choices in the planning of the artwork which implies that they were venturing out of their private world and comfort zones to search for meaning not only in their own lives but also with others (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013):

“...he says that the project changed him in drawing, he didn’t know how to draw or paint. So now he was amazed that he can do little things of art” (C3 translating C2:43).

The process presented opportunities for all the participants to demonstrate their creativity and their artistic skills. The word ‘creativity’ has increasingly come to the fore in discussions about learning. Creativity is not only concerned with highly creative acts, but also pertains to how we live our lives. It relates to how we identify and actively initiate or respond to the challenges and context in which we find ourselves, how we innovate, make choices, or effect changes in the process (Dymoke, 2013). The community participants started to gain confidence in their own abilities and on a small scale started to develop their talents. Various creative characteristics were noticed in their interaction with art; they started to become curious (Greenstein, 2012) noting all the different types of public art (see Addendum F6.1-DVD, Chapter 4, Fig. 4.4.4), and they started to elaborate on their ideas, paying attention to detail (Greenstein, 2012:76), and started to make drawings of their observations (see Addendum J, C1). From my observations, I noted that I encouraged the community participants to become aware of their own (hidden) talents and gave reasons in the field notes why I didn’t expose them from the start to artistic examples:

“...they had to discover that for themselves, by exposing them to the many possibilities”, “I wanted them to discover their own resources (talents) within themselves before they were exposed to public art models or other people’s ideas, in order to prevent them from feeling intimidated and overwhelmed by other peoples’ ideas and originality” (see Addendum K, act 5 section 3).

In stating this, I discovered that the community participants could not draw or ‘come up’ with their own ideas although they did engage enthusiastically (see Addendum F6.2-DVD) with the maquettes around them, and started copying the students’ 3-D park models (see Addendum J, C1). I was concerned about this aspect as I noticed that the community participants made limited sketches in their visual diaries and did not act on creative triggers (De la Harpe, 2010) , such as the a priori design layouts (see Addendum M). They were more engaged in copying existing models and painting local resources such as the tyres, than creating works from their own resources. In their defence the participants’ artistic abilities were not the focus with this project; the emphasis was on socially engaged art-practices with a focus on “meaningful interactions and social engagements” (Helguera, 2011:2). The ability to “create through imaginative skills, to make or bring into existence

something new” (Greenstein, 2012:75), was not my main aim; my focus with regards to skills development was to enable the community participants to apply creative skills even if it meant re-inventing the old. The engagement process challenged the community participants to stretch themselves, to take small steps in discovering their own hidden potential, and to become less naive and more critical and dialogical in their thinking (Freire, 1995).

Painting the tyres together during the last activity was another group exercise which benefitted the community participants. It resulted in sociable interactions, mixing work with play and enabling independent self-determination (see Addendum F7.1-DVD). The students started to move more into the background, allowing the community participants to take over and do the painting work. With this slight behavioural change, I noticed that the students were allowing the community participants to empower themselves by giving them a chance to work on their own with the paint and brushes. Both groups recognised each other’s strengths and applied themselves in collaborative ways to complete the tasks. Some painted, others mixed and stirred the coloured paints. They were talking, listening to music, and joking. This last painting exercise was also described by a few as the most enjoyable activity during the PAR process:

“I love the tyre painting, (laughing). That was the most fun” (S3:30).

“...when we actually painted, because then we started to speak about each other’s personal lives as well” (S2:30).

“He says that he is going to tell the others that it is all about designing and making art, so they should enjoy it” and “He says that he is going to tell the others...they talk a lot, they interact with other students, with the students” (C3:48 translated C1:48 experience).

The painting activity was interactive and the technical skills that started to surface indicated that the participants could express themselves visually; they simplified complex ideas into ones that were practical and do-able. They improved their confidence levels and felt less intimidated by ‘high art’ application skills. Through dialogue their voices and responses occurred in a non-threatening setting, demonstrating their technical abilities and their power to contribute (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). I realised in order to become emancipated and self-reliant; participants had to build up confidence first with art-based practices that are familiar, and do-able, before venturing into complicated, original works of art.

5.5 REFLECTION ON THE PROCESS

In service-learning reciprocity can be achieved through reflections on experience, “moving towards a contextual level and eventually to a dialectical level” (Taggart & Wilson, 1998:84). Reflecting on experience involves that service-learning relationships are viewed differently; own personal prejudices and world-views are confronted and the full circumstances of a situations are examined and pedagogical practices are questioned. Reflecting in a dialogical way questions one’s own stance with regards to PAR values such as ‘equality, emancipation and caring’ (Taggart & Wilson, 1998:85). These reflections affect the planning and implementation of curricula and service-learning activities. I based my reflections on the LAL approach using the visual narratives that I gathered from my documentation process and considered the context in a critical and dialogical way (Lemon, 2006). Taking field notes was a crucial part of the data generation process. In qualitative research, field notes are used to “record in-depth descriptive details of people, places, things, and events, as well as reflections on data patterns, and the process of the research” (Brodsky, 2008:22). “There are no rules as to how research diaries or field notes should be compiled” (Newbury, 2001:4). In this case, field notes were taken throughout each of the four cycles of the data generation phases. The memo notes consisted of my observations and methodological processes as well as reflective and theoretical notes on the research process (Newbury, 2001). As this research study was a learning curve for me, I decided to use Richard Teare’s Global University of Lifelong Learning (GULL) Diary Format (DF) reflection template, which is used in many community-based lifelong programmes aimed at self-directed learning (see gullonline.org/affiliate/). I found this outline most appropriate for my reflections; it focuses on positives, negatives, improvement in the learning process, lessons learned, and possible outcomes of the learning outcomes (Zuber-Skerritt, 2013). In the next section my observations, challenges, and reflections on the process are discussed.

During the initial meeting and throughout the cyclical phases of the data generation process, I did *in situ* observations and clustered the observational with the methodological notes together. In the beginning organising the participants to partner with each other was a time-consuming process. Many stakeholders were involved and communication was problematic; the community participants were not easily accessible partially due to a lack of mobile phone access. However, the community participants were mostly available in the times organised for the research. The campus students joined voluntarily, but the research was conducted during a busy time of the year and service-learning is not formalised as an academic module in Creative Arts yet which accounted for the small

numbers of participants. Synchronising the students' calendar with the community was also challenging. I assumed that everybody was going to be available at the site, but one of the community participants accepted a temporary job in another area and special arrangements had to be made to ensure the community member's continuing presence during the research. Both groups wished to spend more time together, as time constraints limited their learning from each other. One student could not single out anything as a bad experience during the research process except the limited of time spent together, "*I just think if we had more time, perhaps*" (S2:41).

Another important challenge which was not considered beforehand was the implementation of the process in the allocated timeframe. Transforming a community-based project such as a park takes time. The participants were not always aware of the time lapse between the different phases. The planning of the project was completed by the Urban Planning and Creative Arts faculties together with the community, but due to unforeseen circumstances such as the availability of resource materials and a budget for the pavements, the physical implementation of the planning and design phase was postponed.

I observed the development of the partnership between the students and community participants. My aim was to create a partnership that was built on trust and mutual learning following the key characteristics of the PAR process (Kindon, Pain & Kesby, 2007). I revisited my own observations and reflections of the process. I noticed that all the phases not only helped to unlock relational aspects, but also supported the exploration of the emancipatory potential of the individuals themselves.

During the first activity partnerships were established by means of relational exercises. The **introduction and orientation activity** was informal and helped to establish good rapport between the groups, (see Addendum F1- DVD & Addendum K, activity 1 section 2). Although the participants were friendly towards each other, PAR values, such as trust and equity still had to be established. I decided after observing the community participants shyness and the students' unfamiliarity with the demographics of the area, to switch the Walk-and-Talk and Turning point activities around.

The first structured experiential exercise, the **Walk-and-Talk activity**, orientated the participants to the site and assisted the students to identify and report on the area and the community's need (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). Good feedback was received after the activity. One diary entry from a student

mentioned the participant's commitment to the process and the educational value of developing a park area: "*I am committed to the project. I would like to see something that can give them joy and exercise...*" (see Addendum J, S3) . As a facilitator of the process, I became aware of unpredicted behaviour with activities in an outside and unprotected space. An older outsider to the research process was walking past the research participants and voiced his anger. One of the students relayed his frustration "*...some of them are bitter, because they are tired of lies. They say people always come to them and promise them all sorts of things and never deliver. I can understand their anger*" (see Addendum J, S3). The community participants, however, laid the fears of the students to rest: "*...they were protective of us*" (S2:36). Despite this one incident with an activity 'in the open', I observed a relaxed behaviour pattern between the participants. They appeared comfortable with each other's company and showed a willingness to build on the previous hands-on activities.

The third activity, **Turning point** (see Addendum F3-DVD & Addendum K activity 3, section 2), turned out to be a successful trust- and relationship-building exercise. I was concerned that it might be too 'close up and personal', but the participants were positive about sharing their life experiences. Zuber-Skerritt (2013:34) is of the opinion that relationship-building activities are essential for successful action learning programmes: "team members are likely to experience all sorts of problems that can arise from shyness, dominance by some and silence by others and other personal qualities that can fuel tension". I agree with this view since, as already mentioned, I am familiar with the consequences of engaging with the community in a top-down manner without establishing relationships with them beforehand. Sharing life-changing events during the process unlocked mutual understanding and care. I thought that it formed a good base-platform for the next vision-building, planning, and design activities, as they started to work together in groups during the Turning point exercise; rotating and giving each participant an equal opportunity to voice their experiences (see Addendum K, activity 3, section 3). Sharing diverse experiences helped to enrich the research process and underlined the values of the PAR process. I witnessed positive interactive attitudes, and enhanced "empathic listening skills" (Poulin, 2005:89) during the Turning Point activity (see Addendum F3-DVD).

The fourth activity, **Vision-building**, was another opportunity to collaborate in generating knowledge. The participants brainstormed their ideas and visions for the park (see Addendum F4-DVD). In action, I observed that they were not familiar with the word 'vision'. I thought of bringing concepts closer to the youths' understanding of a future vision. I changed the word to 'wish-list'.

My prompt was: *what would they wish to see happening in the park?* It was a more concrete and tangible concept which was understood by the young participants. During the brainstorming session (see Addendum F 4 & Addendum I), I observed similarities in the participants wish-list for the park; safety, shading and play apparatus, all positive contributions to their vision. The Vision-building exercises showed how ideas were shared and collaboratively supported by multi-modal methods such as visual diagrams and diary entries (see Addendum F4.1-DVD). I also noticed how well the participants started to work together in groups.

During the **Planning and Designing cycle**, solutions for the new park were investigated. After looking through the visual diaries of the participants I realised that the students were able to make some good pre-planning sketches (see Addendum L1, S2), but the community participants' pictures reflected playground apparatus and not necessarily new designs (see Addendum L2, 2). I attributed the participants' limited ideas and content in their visual diaries to little time, and to a lack of research resources as well as a lack of confidence in their own research and concept development abilities. I noticed a marked difference between the community participants and the students' entries in their visual diaries. The community participants needed more guidance. It became clear that the brief on ideas and planning was not adhered to and limited work was done. I critically examined my approach to these tasks. Did I make sure that they understood what I was asking them to do for the planning and designing activity? We worked together in a communal room where all the participants cooperated and made collective decisions about the park, but as soon as work had to be completed at home or outside the group limited feedback were received at the follow-up session. I tried to put myself in the participants' shoes; they were novices on the art terrain and had no experience in community engagement projects. Were my expectations and standards too high? The community participants appeared to look agreeable, but the lack of resources for research (magazines, books, and the Internet) could also have affected their contributions to the process. I realised that both groups needed more guidance, clearer goals, and structure (Flecky & Gitlow, 2011). I also realised that working together in groups individually and together is more productive than working on their own at home. At this point, I became fully aware of the limited input of both groups towards resources, including 3-D sculptural material for public art, would hinder the process. We started to discuss other options for materials to be used for the project and decided to use available resources which could encourage other creative activities later on.

During the **Planning session**, the participants decided on using the tyres as a start-off point; they stopped planning and wanted to practise their painting skills. As soon as we started to paint the actual objects the involvement was much greater; they enjoyed working in groups and motivated each other while doing the job (see Addendum F7.1). This indicated that both groups, especially the community participants were more willing to do practical hands-on work than to write or complete conceptual designs. Reflecting on action, I realised that ideas/vision and planning should be aligned with the available resources. Instead of giving *carte blanche* to the former, certain boundaries needed to be communicated beforehand, such as the use and availability of resources and the level of participant skills.

My own pre-conceived ideas of the project changed. Gaining more insight from my observation and visual pictures, I realised that engaging in art-based projects with the community is a socially engaged process; it cannot be regarded as a 'high art' endeavour. My personal paradigm shifted, getting closer to what the community *needed* versus what the university *wanted to offer*. I was in the process of changing the picture (Mitchel, 2011). I had to weigh, with the participants, the practicality of integrating local resources such as tyres instead of using material such as steel or concrete as art materials in an area where children play. Artefacts such as the tyres served as mediating tool (Helguera, 2011), enabling social interaction and establishing new dialogical and group dynamics during the creative process. The participants engaged enthusiastically during the group contact, and produced some patterned designs and limited explanations of their concepts.

During the **visits** to the botanical gardens and Arts and Crafts Studio, I noted the value of exposure to new concepts and artefacts. I became aware during the planning process that the participants were rather limited in their visualisation of a park which would incorporate public art products. The participants observed the works in the botanical gardens, touched them, and questioned the materials they were made off. Funny anecdotes and jokes confirmed their enjoyment and their insight of the utility value of the material, "*Going to the botanical gardens...Everybody came out of their shell [shells]...*" (S3:30). Using straw to build sculptures, the following opinion was given: "*it won't work, they will burn it*" (C4:49) (see Addendum F6.1-DVD & Chapter 4, Figure 4.4.4). I witnessed the animated behaviour of the community participants; they adopted sociable and playful behaviour patterns which underline the PAR process as hybrid, optimistic, and engaged (Kinson, Pain & Kesby, 2007). The visit to the Arts and Craft Studio stimulated the community participants' ideas to such an

extent that they started to become more pro-active in copying the 3-D student maquette models of their own accord into their visual diaries without being asked to (see Addendum J, C2).

I realised that the creative process was not a once-off problem-solving project. Complex sculptural skills cannot not be accomplished within a couple of weeks. The participants identified things that the children could play with in the park. Tyres were more readily available and could be utilised. I also knew from my previous art experience and in working with layman artists that making sophisticated art products without any artistic background, could result in a hopeless and apathetic attitude which would counter my objectives for the project, namely to build confidence and increase self-esteem during the process. I realised that a participatory art-based project with the community is an involved process in trying to move closer to 21st century project skills, such as knowledge building, research skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, meta-cognition, and the application of creativity in multi-modal literacies (Greenstein, 2012).

As a participatory researcher, I became aware of my own position and role as leader and facilitator. In order to empower students to take responsibility for their own learning and to start directing or facilitating the process, requires leadership. As power broker or change agent, leadership qualities change in service-learning (Duncan & Brooks Taylor, 2013). In this regard, my leadership changed during the PAR process. Although I initiated the process in a transactional, task orientated and visionary way, the PAR process introduced me to power sharing with the participants through group work, decision-making, and practical applications such as drawing and painting. In striving towards shared leadership I admittedly did not involve the participants with the organisation of the process itself from the start, and thereby prevented them from gaining insight into the procedural processes and affecting the prolonged continuation of the service-learning process. However, the research process exposed the participants to shared group work, interactive communications skills, and decision-making processes.

I attempted to adhere to the PAR process in most instances, valuing respect, shared power, and collaborative work. The aim was to challenge the students and community participants to learn through the participatory engagement process. I made sure that the necessary actions were conducted during the phases before moving to the next, clarifying ideas, and making sure everybody understood the working processes. In retrospect, I could have ensured quality learning by introducing more reflective actions. Furthermore, in planning the design of a future service-learning module, I became

aware of various variables. I mentioned a few which we have encountered during the study such as time frames, language barriers, managing creative skills to fit in with achievable outcomes, and keeping the interest in the park project on a sustained level. The most pertinent challenge in a new service-learning module is to ensure that the service-learning outcomes promote a critical and transformative community partnership.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Most of the educational outcomes were adhered to during the PAR process, addressing critical, creative, and applied thinking skills. For instance, the participants made comparisons during group work, they analysed the problems in the park and, evaluated their choices for socially engaged artworks. Creative thinking skills were applied in the re-interpretation of the old, making it new, and reinventing the use of resources. Practical thinking was applied in the decisions-making processes and other problem solving activities, such as planning and design. I integrated PAR values such as respect and reciprocal benefits to all throughout the research process.

I have analysed and discussed the three themes and three sub-themes with evidence which support my arguments. Changes in stereotypical perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour were noticed during the participatory action research processes. Theme 1 described how the process allowed the students to recognise prejudices and the ‘otherness’ of the students entering a community. Theme 2 described the shift in power relations that occurred during the process. Theme 3 described the personal and professional development of the students and the personal changes and emancipation observed in the community participants. I concluded with my own critical reflections on the PAR process during the different activities. I have attempted to show that gaining insight into each other’s worlds helped to establish mutual feelings of empathy and trusting relationships between the participants. I have shown that the PAR process began to level unequal power relations through interactive discourse and multi-modal methods. The many challenges were also recorded.

In the last chapter, I discuss the conclusions of the findings, reflect on the research questions, make recommendations for further research, and offer suggestions to overcome limitations. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of this research for our present knowledge on service-learning in Creative Arts.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS EMERGING FROM THIS STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

My main aim in this critical, qualitative study was to explore how a participatory form of action research could be used for mutual learning between pre-service students and community participants, for the purpose of understanding how service-learning could be integrated as a meaningful experience into a Creative Arts module. The study was situated in a community area with intervening visits to the university campus. In the previous chapter, I discussed the findings and described how the process enhanced the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes, as well as pointing out some possible distractions. I also reflected critically on the different phases of the research process to inform my inquiry.

In this chapter I provide an overview of the research and discuss the main findings that emerged from the study. To answer question one, I highlight the findings on the participants' learning from the PAR process. I then discuss the aspects that enhanced mutual learning and benefitted the students and the community participants to answer question two. I then present my critical reflections on the process, and conclude with informed contributions and recommendations for the design of a service-learning module in Creative Arts, to answer question three. Recommendations for further studies and limiting factors of the study are also provided.

6.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

6.2.1 Chapter 1: Introduction and orientation to the study

This chapter orientated the reader to the research problem. It outlined the problem experienced with current conceptual models of service learning and how this study intended to investigate a more reciprocal and relational engagement process. It stated the research questions :

what did the respective partners (students and community participants) learn from the process, what aspects of the engagement process enhanced the attainment of mutually beneficial learning outcomes, and which detracted from it - to inform the design of a service-learning module? A contextual

background and theoretical overview of the research problem were provided, together with an overview of the methodology used for the study. I situated this research as a qualitative study using a participatory approach focusing on the interactions between students and community participants. The data analysis, validity criteria, and trustworthiness were also outlined. Ethical considerations of respect, fairness, and equity through informed consent were explained. The chapter also indicated the possible contribution of the research study to the current debate of integrating service-learning in Higher Education in South Africa, with a focus on a Creative Arts module. An overview of the different chapters was provided.

6.2.2 Chapter 2: A Conceptual and Theoretical Framework of Service-learning in Education

This chapter comprised a literature review on service-learning as conceptual framework for the study. I included an overview of the knowledge gaps in community engagement, both locally and globally, and explained the call for a scholarship of engagement which includes the integration of teaching and community engagements through meaningful partnerships. Chapter 2 situated my study in a service-learning philosophy and pedagogy realm which encourages democratic, dialogical processes, and supports strong experiential learning practices. The critical and post-modern theoretical paradigm of service-learning was discussed in this chapter.

The critical theories of Paulo Freire enlightened the educational aspects of learning, knowledge, and social humanism which were important aspects that informed my analysis of power relations, self-determination, and working-relations between the campus and community participants. The post-modern service-learning theories of Butin situated my studies in a cultural and political realm, rather than in an anti-foundational activist domain. Boyer's 'scholarship of engagement' model suggests the integration of teaching with research and community engagement. I will also discuss the community engaged practices in the arts and life skill fields in South Africa. The learning models of Dewey, Kolb, Stringer, and Schön underlined the experiential, action, and reflection methodologies that I employed during this hands-on approach to service-learning. My own reflective field notes indicated that the cyclical loops based on Stringer's looking, thinking, acting, and reflecting as well as on his "reflecting-in-action" gave insights to the process as a whole. Zuber-Skerritt's step diagram supported the various activities employed in different cycles. Multi-modal research methods supported by Gee gave additional insight in the visual methodologies used during the PAR process. The communications space propagated by Engenström and Habermas was used during the art-based

practices and used as a mediating space for interactive activities, improving understanding, and collaborative working practices such as decision-making and groupwork. Since the study was art-based another literature chapter dealt with socially engaged art as mediating tool in the engagement process.

6.2.3 Chapter 3: Art as a socially engaged practice in service-learning

In this chapter I discussed critical theory as a blanket framework covering service-learning aspects, whilst I explained the socially engaged art theories (SEA) proposed by Pablo Helguera, as a socially engaged practice in my art-based study. I discussed the value of SEA as a practice which potentially delivers beneficial and meaningful experiences to all participants and explained how art is used as a mediating tool to enable dialogue and reciprocal learning. The dialogical practices (participation, collaboration, and structured conversations) were discussed. Helguera's conversational open-format model was used in the dialogical processes and in the informal conversations between the participants.

I explained the role that SEA praxis played in this instance, as it included non-art communities who were willing to engage in a dialogue with others to gain critical and experiential knowledge from each other. I discussed how the students and the community participants were non-experts in the art-field; how they utilised their abilities and experiences together and started recreating with each other through a process of collaboration and communication. In this sense, Helguera's notion of non-experts becoming more empowered by the process itself rather than by the final work of art, supports my orientation. Furthermore, socially engaged art as used in this service-learning project, relied on the community for its existence. I discussed the value of conversation as a social act with collective understanding and organisation which allowed the participants to engage with others, to learn together, and to share experiences. The importance of socially engaged art theory served as a foundational basis and starting point for community-based art projects and consequently for my studies.

6.2.4 Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter presented a theoretical justification of my participatory design situated in a emancipatory-critical paradigm. The value of the PAR study design was discussed, as well as the data generation and collection methods followed. Ethical issues, validity and trustworthiness, as well

as the limitations of the study were discussed in relation to how these considerations were applied used in the study. The following data generation methods were explained and justified: informal group discussions, visual mapping and diagrams, reflective visual diary writing, collective art-based practices with concrete visual artefacts, observational field notes, and semi-structured reflective group interviews. The data obtained from the four cycles and eight different activities, served as data for mutual learning in the community-based study. The activities were explained in detail. The relationship-building activities which comprised Walk-and-Talk and Turning point activities; the planning activities which comprised vision-building, planning, and design activities; and the skills application activities which comprised intervention action and skills application activities, culminated in the last reflective and evaluative activity. The PAR design was used to enable the participants to generate data through action and reflection in multiple ways and to ensure that the different groups could engage in the process in personal, social, working, and skills developmental ways.

6.2.5 Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

In Chapter 5, I presented a critical discussion of the research study's findings. Based on the findings, I answered the main research questions and came to the conclusions that I present below.

QUESTION 1: WHAT DID THE RESPECTIVE PARTNERS (STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS) LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?

6.2.5.1 Student learning and personal benefit

The students underwent a paradigm shift; they started to critically question their condescending helper attitudes, and adopted supportive and guiding roles. Initially they regarded themselves as more powerful and influential than the community participants, but their exposure to community living conditions and relational interactions changed these perceptions. They became aware of their own stereotypical pre-conceptions of 'othering' people from marginalised communities, and admitted that they needed to learn how to work with people from diverse backgrounds. Their initial limited terminology on diversity aspects that emerged from their reference to 'the other', 'they' and 'them', could partially be relayed to the educational system they are studying in, which is very mono-cultural. The students' stereotypical perceptions about the community environment changed, and they became more understanding and appreciative of the community's circumstances. They also changed their negative perceptions of safety in township areas and through the group interactions

(such as the Walk-and-Talk activity), started to engage critically in reflexive discourses comparing their 'planned' lifestyles to the relatively spontaneous way of life of the community participants.

The interaction process increased mutual understanding and empathy between the groups towards each other and created a desire to learn from each other. Sharing life experiences gave the students insight into the community participants' lives; they became self-reflexive, listened empathically, and started to change their stereotypical perceptions of community life. Their increasing empathy towards the community participants' reality taught them to become more tolerant of community problems and enabled them to adapt to a working style that is considerate, patient, and tolerant. They gained insight into the community participants' circumstances and living conditions by sharing emotional and personal experiences with the community participants, learning to become more understanding and showing humility towards the community group during the relationship building and working processes. The students acknowledged the community's changing behaviour and became more sensitive towards the community participants' growing and enabling qualities, their openness to new situations, and their increasingly confident behaviour.

The PAR process benefitted both groups of participants as it helped to shift the power relationships between the students and the community participants. Dominant and subservient behaviour patterns changed during the working processes. Through the non-hierarchical engagement process, the students began to listen more and gave the community participants more space to display their knowledge and skills through active participation. The students learned to negotiate their own positions and roles in group activities. They discouraged dominant positions and promoted collaborative leadership through strength-based working processes rather than through instructive leadership. The students admitted that their 'open' attitude during the process encouraged community participants to talk while they listened "*everybody gets a chance to talk*".

The students started to make collaborative decisions together with the community participants based on each participant's strengths; they learned to identify people's skills and used that to everybody's advantage in the process. The hands-on participatory process enabled the participants to choose between the different activities and to evaluate the quality of their work. The students learned to work collaboratively; they for instance made decisions together with the community participants during the planning and design of the project, and started to initiate the project together with the community participants. They decided to distribute the tasks amongst themselves by negotiating and

reaching consensus. The students learned to tap into the strengths of the community participants and encouraged them to work independently during the skills application processes. Furthermore, the students showed understanding of the different learning styles that started to surface during the PAR process. They demonstrated compassion and a sense of responsibility in helping the community participants to overcome their writing and drawing barriers: sharing their knowledge and applying their communication skills in the process. They learned not to emphasise the challenges that the community participants faced but to focus on their strengths in an attempt to overcome the communication and creative barriers and in finding solutions to the challenges.

The students learned to be considerate, they regarded each one's position in the group, they made mutual decisions about the different tasks through creative activities such as brainstorming and visual planning activities, and they generated solutions to the problems in the park area in collaboration with the community participants. They shared their knowledge by participating in mutual planning skills during the group interactions. They learned to listen to other suggestions, to deliberate, and to reach consensus on decisions during the process. By sharing responsibilities they empowered the community participants to such an extent that they, (the students), were invited back by the community participants to collaborate and participate in future projects.

The students valued time management as a prerequisite for efficient engagement. They gained insight into time scheduling and realised that the lack thereof could detract from the process, and should be applied strategically. They learned to prioritise tasks, and to avoid wasting time; each activity was handled within a specific timeframe. The process helped them to be well-organised and prepared them for their own professional development. All of these qualities are attributes that will increase their efficacy as teachers in their future careers. The students learned to value time spent with the community as important for development and personal growth. They became aware of deeper learning that could be enhanced by stretching the process over longer periods of time.

6.2.5.2 Community learning and personal benefit

Similar to the student experiences, the community participants also became more self-confident during the process, valued the trust-building relationships, and learned to care for the students' well-being in the community area. They moved from the Maslowian dependency attitude towards a more empowering behaviour. When the students appeared to be in trouble, the community participants showed protective and caring behaviour patterns. They also became socially apt and hospitable, as

they wanted the students to feel at home and welcomed in the community. In other words, a sense of ownership started to emerge which indicated the community participants' growing self-reliance in the process. Furthermore, the PAR process allowed the community participants to experience personal growth and express their feelings and opinions in an open and free way. They started to trust the students and their motives and valued the opportunity to express their personal feelings freely during the process. They felt that it was the first opportunity in their lives to open up towards people and talk about their lives and circumstances. As with the students, the process allowed the community participants to establish a relational platform to build learning partnerships. The process also establish a foundational base for the community participants to engage in a socially and collaborative way, using various art-based activities.

Although the community participants recognised the differences between themselves and the students, they preferred to work in collaborative ways with the students. They started to become aware of the positive effects of collaborative engagement and the impact it has on them as a team and also on the community as a whole. The community participants started to gain more self-confidence during their exposure to the art-based processes. They learned to express themselves in creative ways. They tapped into their own potential and started to explore artistic opportunities such as drawing and painting independently, working by themselves, and relying on their own strenghts and creative abilities.

QUESTION 2: WHAT ASPECTS OF THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS ENHANCE THE ATTAINMENT OF MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES AND WHICH DETRACT FROM IT?

6.2.5.3 The interactive activities were beneficial in enhancing student participant learning

Findings indicate that each interactive activity used during the PAR process contributed to the learning of participants.

In the first cycle, relationship-building and **orientation activity, the Walk-and-Talk exercise** which exposed the students to the realities of the community's living conditions, moved the students from having stereotypical perceptions about people from diverse backgrounds- to one of compassion, empathy, and understanding. The Walk-and-Talk exercise enabled the students to become active participants who engaged with real-life issues, opening dialogical conversations while walking through a community area that needed transformation. They valued the Walk-and-Talk activity for

their future careers as they realised they may be teaching children from similar areas. The students recommended this exercise for future community-based projects with schoolchildren as it enables people to come to terms with unsettling feelings about working in marginalised areas. The value of this PAR activity helped them to physically view and establish a common agenda for the project with the community participants.

The following **relationship-building activity, Turning point**, challenged the students to establish a relationship of trust and understanding. They became more aware of the community participants' life experiences and started to gain emotional insight and in and compassion towards the community participants' lives as it reminded them of similar happenings in their own lives. The comparisons between their lives opened them up to each others' circumstances, sharing mutual character-forming incidents. The insight that the students gained with the Turning point activity enabled them to appreciate their own circumstances and privileged positions. It furthermore contributed to the students' professional and emotional development as they showed empathy and humility towards the community participants' disadvantaged life experiences. Reciprocal engagement ensured that the Turning point activity became a solid platform to build mutually trusting relationships amongst the groups, and formed a good basis for working with others. The students gained increased insight, trust, and became more open for good relationships and team spirit by sharing life experiences.

The planning and designing cycle included a **Vision-building activity** which contributed in numerous ways towards the students' professional development. They started working collaboratively using a variety of multi-media tools, using brainstorming techniques to identify challenges, and setting some goals for further planning and design. The students drew their visions and participated actively in communication skills, allowed the voices of the community participants to be heard, and accommodated poor writing and language skills through listening and other non-verbal means. During the interactions, verbal and text-based communication was substituted for visual pictures and drawings. The students learned to work in teams and stayed focused and motivated.

The **Planning and Design** activities helped the students to gather information, do research, and analyse the data that was gathered. The community participants especially realised the value of planning for action and learned to make decisions together with the community participants. The students learned to make mutual decisions; for instance, choosing appropriate resources such as tyres

that are locally sourced for the art-based process. They improved their professional development by learning to work in participatory ways and in groups. They continued to engage in communications through talking, listening, looking, and drawing. They planned their actions together; looked at examples of park designs and started to practice painting skills on one of the resources, and gained a better understanding of the process in preparation for the final art work.

During the third intervention and action cycle, the **site visit** to the botanical gardens and the Arts and Craft Studio on campus, enabled the students to guide the community participants through the gardens, explain some of the public art works, and enabled the students to present their demonstration and presentation skills thereby transferring meaningful information to the community participants, for example, when they explained the methods used in creating maquettes (models) for the park. The site visits also helped the students to demonstrate that they could make critical comparisons between the different models and other public art forms. The exposure to other works of art outside of the project's scope inspired the participants with more ideas and assist in promoting the various applications of creative skills. The students' amiable attitude and willingness to accommodate the community participants on campus was triggered by their own need of recognition, "*to see where we come from*". They in turn became socially aware of their own educational spaces and expressed a sense of belonging and ownership in their own environment.

The **Skills application activity** challenged the students to apply their painting skills. They started to act as facilitators, enabling the community participants to practise their own skills. The students moved more into the background and ensured independent working processes on available resources by the community participants. The PAR working process enabled the students to be flexible, to work collaboratively, to help create a space for the development of their own creative skills, and to allow others to work independently to become more emancipated. The PAR process with art as a mediating tool encouraged interactive and social engagement and enhanced personal interest; for instance, both groups started to show social interest in each others' names, inquiring about the symbolic meanings thereof. In short, the PAR process affirmed a positive working relationship between the two groups, empowering the community participants, and simultaneously enhancing the professional development of the students.

Reflecting on and evaluating the completed PAR process towards the end, assisted the students to affirm their learning, the knowledge gained, and the experience gained from the process. The

reflective interview emphasised the importance of contextual reflection-on-action during the PAR process. New insights gained during the process affirmed the students' changed perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours which transformed them into socially aware and tolerant pre-service students. It also enlightened the community participants' views and experience of having the students in their living area, establishing personal and trusting relationships and valuing creative input. Both groups expressed that they had gained new insights towards their own personal and professional development.

6.2.5.4 The participatory process benefitted the community's self-confidence

The community participants gained self-confidence during the process and learned to rely on their own creative abilities to do "*little things in art*". Through their exposure to **art interventions** the PAR process opened the community participants' eyes to their own creative potential; they started to show signs of enjoyment, painting tyres and drawing pictures. Their active participation means that they shared on many different levels not only their ideas, but also the practical application of their skills in their own community setting. They became co-constructors of valid knowledge and through their increasingly emancipatory artistic skills, they interactively participated in the variety of art-based opportunities that the process offered, such as visual diagramming, observation of artefacts in public areas, drawing, and painting. The transformative potential of the community participants' growth during the process can be noticed in their increased confidence and expressive, personal appreciation of the process. The process ignited joy and pleasure in the community participants to such an extent that they wanted to "*tell the others*" in the community, and effectively impact the community at large. The community participants became more empowered, contributing to the different layers of the process and through the stimulating interventions and dialogical conversations they started to participate actively towards the whole process.

Through the **dialogical processes** the community participants' voices and responses became stronger and they started to articulate their multiple voices, as decision-makers they engaged in problem-solving activities such as the **planning and design** of the artwork and they discovered the importance of planning prior to starting a project which they learnt from the students. They started to change from passive receptors to active participants through various choice-making decisions, they helped to establish mutual goals for the process, they decided together with the students on the type of resources that they should use, and they established timeframes for collaboration on the project.

The community participants became more emancipated regardless of their own and admitted 'weaknesses' and limited abilities such as little experience in art and not speaking the language fluently. Their timid and shy behaviour was a temporary condition which changed when they became more active and started to engage with the **working processes**. They started to get involved on personal, social, and creative levels, feeling less intimidated and overwhelmed by the process, and they started to copy the students' maquettes (models) to improve their own skills and to benefit their own learning and creative growth.

The **collaborative groupwork** enabled the community participants to become progressively emancipated as they realised the importance of planning, the challenges involved in finding the right designs for the project, and the risks involved in working on recycled resources in a community area. Towards the end of the process the community participants wanted to participate on equal footing. They became energised and opened themselves to new transitional changes in the process, for instance, they started to exchange roles; instead of waiting for directions they started to take initiative in the painting exercises. In this way, the redistribution of power through the participatory process ensured that both groups created closer bonds between themselves. They interchanged roles and learned from and with each other during the process.

Some of the activities were very prominent in establishing self-esteem and enhancing emancipatory behaviour. During the **Walk-and-Talk activity** the community participants experienced a sense of ownership as they were showing the students around. They were prepared to defend the students against anything that had a negative impact on the group. In this way, they became self-reliant and expressed feelings of concern.

The community participants experienced the **Turning point** exercise as a beneficial activity since it opened up their personal lives to the students. It released some tensions as the community participants felt that they could share personal issues openly, engaging in trusting relationships, "*I totally trust them*", and sharing life changing events.

The **Vision-building** exercise challenged the community participants to work collaboratively, contributing to the vision for the park. They were cooperative, they shared their views of the park area as well as the needs and challenges, and they made suggestions on how it should be developed. They expressed their views in an open and active way, giving voice to their expectations of the process. Although the community participants engaged in the planning and design activity, their

output on research and visual diary entries were limited. They did not have the resources such as the Internet or visual materials such as magazines to substantiate their drawings and preparation. It emerged that group and hands-on actions in the presence of the students were more positively received. Working on their own and separate from the group produced limited output.

The community participants' **visits** to the botanical gardens and the Arts and Crafts Studio on campus encouraged social engagement and reciprocal actions. They gained insight into the creative process and started to internalise the knowledge gained. They started to distinguish between different forms of art and their evaluative choices indicated that they were busy developing a sense of preference and choice; some started to copy 3-D maquettes in their visual diaries, others preferred to paint. These examples indicated their individual and emancipated progress.

Mutually beneficial outcomes were attained in all of the processes of the research. The process fostered the community participants' self-esteem and confidence. Meaningful creative and working engagement between the students and the community participants with hands-on skills application processes ensured an enhanced personal, social, and working engagement between the two groups coming from diverse backgrounds.

6.2.5.5 Aspects that could detract from the process

A few aspects threatened to detract from the positive experience during the engagement process, but also gave opportunities for the participants to develop their problem-solving skills. Language barriers such as a poor command of English as a means of communication during the process resulted in the students initially regarding the community participants as "*quiet and shy*". The community participants understood the language but one of them struggled to speak it. The students crossed the language barriers by using a translator from the community to explain the problems and to ensure that all the participants understood what was asked. The students also suggested that multi-modal methods such as drawings and posters could serve as aiding tools to overcome speaking and writing barriers. These suggestions made by the students indicated that they started to find solutions to problems in action, and learned to adapt to challenging situations.

The students valued time management as a prerequisite for efficient engagement. They gained insight into time management and realised that a lack thereof could be a hindrance and should be applied strategically during the engagement process. They learned to prioritise tasks and to avoid

wasting time, negotiated timeframes with the community participants, and set up suitable engagement time frames for the research.

Working with the community could be risky. It was regarded as a hindrance for learning as students initially regarded the community area as 'unsafe'. However, the students gained some insight during the process and changed their prejudiced opinions. They started to become critically aware of the value of working in a real-life environment and suggested that if this type of project was to be extended in schools, pre-visitation to an area before the actual engagement process is crucial to put future learners at ease.

6.3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN OF FUTURE SERVICE-LEARNING INITIATIVES IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE OF CREATIVE ARTS

This next section will answer the last question:

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE MADE TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN OF FUTURE SERVICE-LEARNING INITIATIVES IN THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE CREATIVE ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAMMES?

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are suggested:

6.3.1 The PAR methodology is well suited for service-learning in Creative Arts

I therefore recommend:

- Incorporating all four cycles of the activities indicated in Figure. 6.1. This model is especially suited to unlock personal and power relations and to establish reciprocal and engaged learning processes between participants from diverse backgrounds.
- The infusion of PAR values in the process: respect, shared power, collaborative working processes, and a change agency - to foster engaged knowledge partnerships.

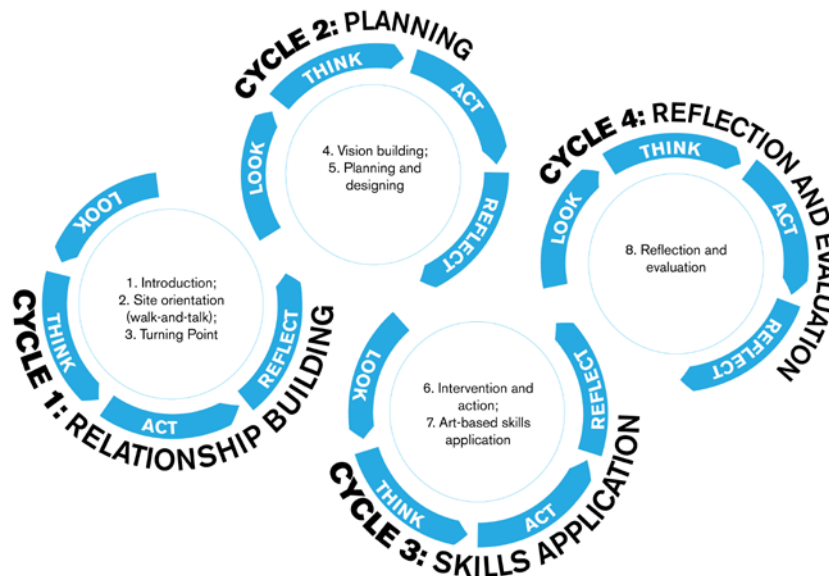


Figure 6. 1: An overview of the PAR process indicating the cycles and all the collaborative activities

6.3.2 Based on findings and my reflections on the process

I recommend that the following aspects could enhance student learning in a service-learning project in Creative Arts:

- Sensitizing students prior to service-learning of their stereotypical perceptions of communities outside the higher education domain, e.g., how to address communities with less opportunities and from diverse backgrounds without sounding condescending.
- Introducing terminology associated with stereotypical perceptions and behaviour prior to the engagement e.g., power relations, empowering relationships, disadvantaged living conditions, and educational opportunities, diversity, addressing marginalised people, children rights, and diverse cultural background,
- Initiating critical discourse beforehand in order to motivate the value of service-learning in HE and giving reasons for integrating service-learning to the Higher Education curricula, for example why does HE engage with service-learning practices?

6.3.3 Based on the development of the trust-building activities, my findings indicate that communication skills are essential attributes to the PAR process to establish a platform for other working actions

It is therefore recommended that:

- Strong relationship building platforms such as Walk-and-Talk and Turning point activities should be used in the beginning of the community-based engagement to establish the service-learning agenda, to unlock personal potential, and to allow participants to get out of their comfort zones and explore spatial and personal territories in order to gain insight into each others' lives.
- An informal open format dialogue process within a democratical dialogical atmosphere be established between the participants to enhance and develop their emotional intelligence and their social skills such as communication, participation and collaboration. This open informal approach develops other communication skills such as looking, listening, talking, and responding to the challenges of the community.

6.3.4 Based on all the interactive activities that occurred during the PAR process, group interactions offer opportunities for dialogue

I therefore recommend:

- Groupwork as a forum for communication, negotiation, deliberation, and reaching consensus between participants. It also encourages non-hierarchical, non-expert, and equitable participation in the process. Dominance found in more privileged groups can be avoided and substituted for negotiated and strength-based positions in the decision-making process.
- Using groupwork as a reciprocal and collaborative knowledge sharing process to ensure the equal distribution of power, decision-making, and skills distribution amongst the participants. It also serves as a pragmatic solution to give all the participants a voice in the process, to overcome shyness, and to ensure active role-playing during conceptual and practical activities.

6.3.5 Providing a variety of creative and art-based learning opportunities to all participants, ensures that diverse learning styles are accommodated

I therefore recommend:

- Encouraging socially engaged art-based projects that allow participants to engage with art processes: ideas formation, planning, design, making, and reflecting.
- Creating an awareness of art as a mediating tool which encourage the dissemination and development of social, personal, cognitive, and power relational skills.
- Utilising local and available materials from the immediate areas to create an awareness of own resources and to implement these assets in environmental contexts in order to contribute to an awareness of recycling and the cultural value of local resources.
- Providing various choices for art-based practices and artforms so that participants can choose between the different activities and apply their own artistic abilities to various activities which can range from observing and appreciating to drawing, painting, making, or assembling.
- Encouraging the open and flexible character of the creative process to promote change and transformation. The art-based process should not be approached rigidly, but should be flexible and adjustable according to the needs of the participants and their levels of understanding. The process should determine the end-product which could be different from the initial ideas and planning at the beginning of an arts-based service-learning engagement.
- Accommodating a variety of hands-on activities to improve the participants' creative skills and engagement. Participants learn to compare their skills with each other and to commit to their designated tasks, based on their own strenghts which benefits the development of the working process.
- Encouraging respectful conduct and establishing proper working processes to ensure assessment and quality control of the work produced during the process.

6.3.6 Reflective practices on actions helped to enhance learning

The following is therefore recommended:

- Different reflective processes incorporated during the process, including reflecting before, during, and towards the end of the engagement process. In this way student and community participants will be able to make adjustments to enhance mutually beneficial outcomes.

- Differentiating between contextual and dialogical reflection on experiences in order to promote reciprocity. This will allow participants (and the researcher) to address personal prejudices in contexts, and explore assumptions on teaching and learning practices.
- Encouraging regular entries into diaries to ensure the capturing of rich data and affirming the learning of students and community participants.

6.3.7 The role of the facilitator as researcher plays an important role in the process

It is therefore recommended that the facilitator should be able to:

- Work within structured and supportive campus programmes that address community engagement in an organised way.
- Accommodate collaborative groupwork, decisions-making, and practical skills application.
- Monitor stereotypical behaviours, perceptions, and attitudes.
- Promote the sharing of responsibilities and professional development of the students in the process.
- Ensure that the process is aimed at the empowerment and emancipation of both parties.
- Take responsibility for the process and allow sustainable community engagement.
- Be aware of own biases and develop intercultural competence during the engagement process, acquiring skills of debate, conflict resolutions, reflection and promote engagement as a true form of interconnectedness.
- Adapt to multi-dimensional positions as organizer, facilitator and leader of the process, including formations such as: change agent, power broker, cooperative decision-maker, planner and designer, emphatic listener, interventionalist, visionary, caring coordinator, subject specialist and taking a negotiated leadership role.

6.3.8 Language barriers and other hindrances detracting from learning

It is therefore recommended that:

- Language barriers such as a poor command of English as means of communication, should be overcome by using local community translators to ensure understanding amongst participants of a service-learning project.

- Non-verbal communication methods, such as visual material, drawings, visual diagram, and creating artefacts should be used as alternatives for verbal and text-based communication and expression.
- Reflective notes of participants with limited writing skills should be substituted by oral feedback within the group, with the local translator relaying the messages.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Trafford & Leshem (2008) suggest that the secondary findings in a study may highlight other areas that could be usefully explored in further research. I therefore recommend the following for further research in this field:

- The methods tested in this study, including all the participatory methods and other trends, could be researched and adapted for development in other service-learning practices, and should not be restricted to art-based practices.
- Ensuring a sustainable community engagement programme, which is structured and supported by campus authorities and other stakeholders, including municipal and community wards.
- Working through organizations (especially non-profit organizations or institutions (schools and colleges) who already offer programmes for young people, to avoid raising hopes for future employment during the service-learning engagement.
- A research study on different types of interventional workshops can be conducted to ascertain what type of art-based skills would be most applicable in collaborative and socially engaged studies to enable best practices.
- Research on leadership and its different strands e.g., shared, task-orientated, and hierarchical leadership in community-based projects, is a field that could be explored especially if unequal power relations are evident in community-engaged programmes.
- If this study is moved beyond the first four cycles, other studies could be conducted as follow-up research, focusing on aspects such as maintenance and co-implementation phases which promote and establish sustainable outcomes between campus and community stakeholders.
- Although this study was conducted on a micro-level a more intensive meso-level transdisciplinary research study could be considered in future.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Firstly, although the data were multi-modal and many possibilities of data generation methods were absorbed in the study, the limited number of students and community participants possibly inhibited the representational value of the process for future service-learning research. It affected the generalisation and application to other community-based research projects.

Secondly, the study is context-bound and demographically site-specific. Employing participatory action research to similar community engagement projects is possible and in my opinion viable, but variable aspects such as the different challenges facing a community and the lack of local resources would have to be considered for future studies.

6.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Taking the findings and conclusions into consideration, this study attempted to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on service-learning and art-based community engagement projects in the following ways:

- This research added to the service-learning knowledge pool by attempting to attain a 'scholarship of engagement' through reciprocal learning processes whereby both students and community participants gained personal understanding, social awareness, cognitive insight, and art-based skills on a trans-disciplinary level.
- Through creative practices the Creative Arts pre-service students and the community participants were introduced to dialogical and art-based processes, moving away from campus-based classrooms to include more contextual learning, which is purposeful, meaningful, and responsive to community-based challenges.
- Providing a working methodology, using participatory action research (PAR), to address the lack of strategies in service-learning practices, that could be utilized in other areas of studies when implementing service-learning within communities.
- Based on hands-on practices and dialogue, the voices of all the participants were considered, enabling empowering actions and emancipated attitudes to surface, and establishing a sense of ownership amongst the campus and community participants.
- Based on my own experience of the PAR process, new insights were gained regarding the roles and multi-level positions that are required of a facilitator of a service-learning process.

- Utilising the research findings with the PAR methodology and interactive experiential learning processes, this study could inform the development of future service-learning initiatives in Creative Arts education programmes in which the borders of academic disciplines and geographic seams are blended into a transformational 21st century educational landscape.

6.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

With this study the community and campus participants shared their life stories, their knowledge, and their skills. Their hearts did not always beat in sync, but they acknowledged each others' perceptions, prejudices, and power plays which brought about personal, social, cognitive, and creative changes. Their purpose was clear; they learned and experienced new things together in meaningful ways. Both groups gained understanding, empathy, care, and tolerance for each other's worlds and living conditions. Some challenges were addressed on unfamiliar terrain, and by working together they started to create relationships and working processes that enhanced their self-confidence, emancipation, and engagement with each other. Responsive partnerships of trust, cultural awareness, and mutual learning opportunities were established which benefitted all.

In order to adhere to the call for service-learning to become a 'scholarship of engagement' and the growing need to build reciprocity and social capital with our neighbouring communities, it is essential that service-learning outcomes are aimed at emancipation and integration in a pre-service teacher education module such as Creative Arts.

When small children are left alienated after *acts of goodwill* are bestowed upon them in an attempt to *improve* their living conditions, then new ways of approaching community engagement need to be explored. This study attempted to do that.

EPILOGUE: The full circle

The research came with benefits for everyone. As a result of the awareness of Tlokwe Municipality and the Kenneth Kaunda District Education Office, the Faculty of Education Sciences of the NWU devoted more than guideline '67 minutes' to the community and its children on Mandela Day, the 18th of July 2014. Children participated in jumping castle and art-based activities, whilst community members together with university lecturers bolted tyres together in an attempt to make the park more child-friendly. Everybody worked in a collaborative and participatory way; two worlds engaging as one. Both groups gained what they really wanted and ended up with positive experiences of each other. This is a far cry from the initial Swahili story of the monkey and the shark who, after their engagement, went their separate ways...empty handed. In this case the local resources were recycled into a colourful playground area. The burning tyres of the past have become a symbolic binding medium for transformational changes, initiating opportunities for reconciliation, reciprocity, and hope...nobody left the campus-community engagement empty-handed. We all benefitted from the experience.



Photo: *Corné de Wee*

The Dean of Educational Sciences at the North West University (NWU), Robert Balfour, in front of a painting by Mrs Rachel van der Westhuizen together with a resident and children from the area.



Photos: *Corné de Wee*



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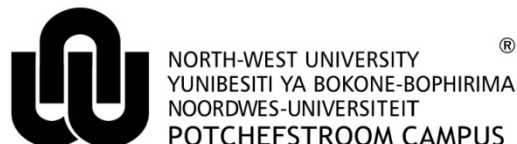
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ADDENDUM A



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa, 2520

Prof. L Wood
Faculty of Education Science: Research
Tel: 018 299 4770
E-mail: lesley.wood@nwu.ac.za

Merna Meyer
Educational Sciences: Creative Arts
Tel: (018) 299 1060
E-mail: merna.meyer@nwu.ac.za

2 October 2013

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: COMMUNITY

Researcher: Merna Meyer

PROJECT TITLE: EXPLORING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR SERVICE-LEARNING THROUGH CREATIVE ARTS EDUCATION

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study whose purpose is to explore the interaction between university students and community youth members in order to gain a better understanding of the engagement process for a Service-learning programme. Working along with other disciplines: Urban and Regional planning and Botany from the North-West University, it is our intention to research a participatory engagement process in order to understand the knowledge gained by both parties in the designing and planning of a public park in the municipal area of Ikageng. In order to assist with this research you will be required to participate in the following ways:

- the completion of a participation profile with your age, gender, and contact details.
- taking part in collaborative activities: informal group discussions, drawing and design activities, individual and group reflections using visual diaries and feedback charts in which the engagement process e.g., ideas for the site, planning and design for the area and reflections on the process will be discussed;
- Be involved in possible follow-up discussions about the implementation, maintenance and celebration events in the Ikageng area.

As co-owners of this study you should be aware that the results may be published but the information obtained from this study will be kept confidential, and your name or identity will not be revealed without prior permission. The results will also be made available to you as co-owners of the knowledge created. The North-West University will maintain confidentiality of all records, drawings, materials and voice recordings. Visual materials may be used for academic purposes, such as conferences and academic presentations but with your prior knowledge.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts if you agree to participate in the study. The possible benefits of your participation in these activities and follow-up discussions are the sharing of knowledge between universities and local communities, to learn to work in collaborative ways, to share your ideas and creative abilities with others in transforming living places and to gain some insight on traditional and local knowledge.

You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. No compensation will be granted for participating. Any questions that you may have concerning this research study or your participation in it before and after your consent will be answered by the researchers of this study. In signing this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.

Should you wish at any time to discuss your participation in the study or have any concerns, you are welcome to contact the study leader, Prof Wood, at the above contact details.

Kind regards

M Meyer

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I, the undersigned, _____(full names), have read the above information and by signing this form indicate that I will participate in the research voluntarily.

Participant's signature

Date

Researcher's signature

Date

ADDENDUM B



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa, 2520

Prof. L Wood
Faculty of Education Science: Research
Tel: 018 299 4770
E-mail: lesley.wood@nwu.ac.za

Merna Meyer
Educational Sciences: Creative Arts
Tel: (018) 299 1060
E-mail: merna.meyer@nwu.ac.za

2 October 2013

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: STUDENTS

Researcher: Merna Meyer

PROJECT TITLE: EXPLORING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR SERVICE-LEARNING THROUGH CREATIVE ARTS EDUCATION

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study whose purpose is to explore the interaction between university students and community youth members in order to gain a better understanding of the engagement process for a service-learning programme. Working along with other disciplines: Urban and Regional planning and Botany from the North-West University, it is our intention to research a participatory engagement process in order to understand the knowledge gained by both parties in the designing and planning of a public park in the municipal area of Ikageng. In order to assist with this research you will be required to participate in the following ways:

- the completion of a **participation profile** with your age, gender, and contact details.
- taking part in **collaborative activities: informal group discussions, drawing and design activities, individual and group reflections** using visual diaries and feedback charts in which the engagement

process e.g., ideas for the site, planning and design for the area and reflections on the process will be discussed;

- Be involved in possible **follow-up discussions** about the implementation, maintenance and celebration events in the Ikageng area.

Your decision to participate will not interfere with any other assessments or current or future relationships with your facilitator. As co-owners of this study you should be aware that the results may be published but the information obtained from this study will be kept confidential, and your name or identity will not be revealed without prior permission. The results will also be made available to you as co-owners of the knowledge created. The North-West University will maintain confidentiality of all records, drawings, materials and voice recordings. Visual materials may be used for academic purposes, such as conferences and academic presentations but with your prior knowledge.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts if you agree to participate in the study. The possible benefits of your participation in these activities and follow-up discussions are the sharing of knowledge between universities and local communities, to learn to work in collaborative ways, to share your ideas and creative abilities with others in transforming living places and to gain some insight on indigenous and local knowledge.

You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. No compensation will be granted for participating. Any questions that you may have concerning this research study or your participation in it before and after your consent will be answered by the researchers of this study. In signing this consent form, you are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies.

Should you wish at any time to discuss your participation in the study or have any concerns, you are welcome to contact the study leader, Prof Wood, at the above contact details.

Kind regards,

M Meyer

I, the undersigned, _____(full names), have read the above information and by signing this form indicate that I will participate in the research voluntarily.

Participant's signature

Date

Researcher's signature

Date

ADDENDUM C

BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS FROM THE CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY

Student/Community participants				
Participants	Age	Gender	Race/Culture	Affiliation
S1	21	Female	Afrikaans	Pre-service Creative Arts student
S2	20	Female	Afrikaans	Pre-service Creative Arts student
S3	21	Male	Afrikaans	Pre-service Creative Arts student
C1	21	Female	Setswana	Ikageng community
C2	21	Male	Sesotho	Ikageng community
C3	19	Male	Setswana	Ikageng community
C4	18	Male	Setswana	Ikageng community

ADDENDUM D

PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR PAR PROCESS: SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT: IKAGENG

Cycle 1			Possible dates
Week 1 Action	Introduction and Walk-and-Talk activity	Session 1	8, 9 Oct 2013
	Turning point activity		
	Establish vision for the site	Session 2	
Cycle 2			
Week 2 Action	Planning of new designs	Session 3	15, 16 Oct
	Establish roles and working programme	Session 4	
Cycle 3			
Week 3 Action	Intervention A and B	Session 5	18,19 Oct
	Creating and applying skills	Session 6	
Cycle 4			
Week 4 Action	Small scale celebration and conclusion	Session 7	22. 23 Oct
	Reflection and evaluation of complete process	Session 8	

ADDENDUM E

EXCERPT OF THE VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT: INTRODUCTION AND REFLECTIVE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Participants	Cycle 1 1: 8 October 2013: First interview and introduction	
<p>Semi- structured questions to guide interview with community participants</p> <p>I: What did you think you would learn from each other? What do you get from each other?</p> <p>I: How do you feel about this process? You now getting involved with the students?</p> <p>I: How did you feel working with them? Partner, is it good to work with somebody from another community?</p> <p>I: What do you think you can teach each other?</p> <p>I: Why are you here?</p>		
I	<p>I: Okay, alright, do you want to quickly talk to me about what do you think you going to get with the students coming to visit you?</p> <p>C1: It will be nice.</p> <p>I: It will be nice. Why?</p> <p>C1: [Inaudible] Because they are too smart</p> <p>I: Wha-</p> <p>C1: They are too smart.</p> <p>I: You think they are too smart? [Laughter] Are they too smart? And wha-wh-... If they are very smart, what then? ... What is smart? They know a lot. Do you think they know a lot? Okay, right. Do they think they know a lot? [Laughter] I don't know. Okay, I don't know. What do you think? Why do you think the students- Do you think it's nice of the students to come? Or must the older people like me?</p> <p>I: You want to find out with what they can help. If they can help you, alright? Uhm, an- and you, C1? Wha- what do you expect, what do you, what do you, what do you see it?</p> <p>C4: [Inaudible] Nice things.</p> <p>I: Nice things?</p> <p>C4: Ja.</p> <p>I: Such as what?</p> <p>C4: Uhm, see when we [inaudible] It's fine, that we can teach them, then we can teach us. Teach one another.</p> <p>I: You can teach one another. What? What do you want to... what do you want to learn from them?</p> <p>C4: [inaudible]... everything they coming with it's fine.</p> <p>I: Okay, so you think they learn a lot at University?</p> <p>I: Okay. You think it's valuable to them. What do you say S1? What do you want to learn? What do, do, do- go[inaudible]</p> <p>S1: About their culture.</p>	<p>Power relations (unequal / stereotypical: perceptions of knowledge)</p> <p>Stereotypical views. We, them, one another</p>

	<p>I Okay.</p> <p>S1 Yes... and I don't know [laughs] Ja</p> <p>I So, why, why are you here? What do you want to do?</p> <p>S1 I also want to learn stuff about myself... What I can do and what I can't do. And to help them. Yes. [laughs]</p> <p>I Okay, and Lamonné?</p> <p>S2 ... I also want to learn about their cultures, but, I think... In this process, we will learn how much we can help each other if we work together.</p> <p>I Okay, alright, that's important, that together. You can work on your own as well, hey. It's nice to work on your own. Don't you think?... C3... Or is it nice to work together?</p> <p>C3 Together with others.</p> <p>I Why do you say that?</p> <p>C3 Then we can help each other.[inaudible] Like maybe, one of them could help with mistake...</p> <p>I Okay, help with mistakes, and so on. Everybody makes mistakes, né? So it's the so- it's not a mistake we fix it or we do something about it.</p>	<p>Helping attitude and need for personal development</p> <p>C:Stereotypical view of self: - making mistakes</p>
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Student Participants	Cycle 4: 22, 23 October 2013: Semi-Structured Interview with students and community participants	
<p>Semi- structured questions to guide interview with students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you went into the community, what did you think you would learn? • How did you feel about the whole process at that point? • How did you feel about partnering with community youth? • How has your thinking changed now that process is complete? e.g. did you have any preconceived ideas that have changed? • What did you learn about yourself? The life experiences of the community youth? • What similarities did you find between you and the community youth? What differences? • Did you experience the process as collaborative? Who made the decisions? How did you make the decisions? • What was easy/ difficult about working in the community? • What did you enjoy most about the experience? • What did you enjoy least? • What would you do differently if you were to do it again? • What would you say to students who are embarking on a similar process? 		
Interviewer Student S1-4: Student 1-4 I: Interviewer	<p>I : Welcome, and today's session is basically just to cut to everything we have done so far, and to make sure that we are on the same page, we are ending off on the same page...I want to make sure and I want to find out how your experience was with the community.</p> <p>Oraait, how was this experience working with the community, working with the youth in the community, oraait? What is the first</p>	

	<p>words basically S3 that came to...</p> <p>S3 : Enrichment.</p> <p>I : Ja, enrichment, why, why was it enriching?</p> <p>S3 : Enriching for yourself, for your, uh, for your personality...</p> <p>I : Ja, in what way?</p> <p>(laughing)</p> <p>I : Ja nee, you can say. What do you think he means by that?</p> <p>S1 : We learned about the dif, the different cultures and how to work with them, because we wouldn't work with them like we...do with each other, we must...</p> <p>I : Work in a different way.</p> <p>S1 : ...approach them in a different way.</p> <p>S2 : Also the language barriers, you learn how to work with people that speaks different languages than you, because that is how we are going to work in classrooms. You must be able to work with people that speak different languages and that have different backgrounds.</p> <p>I : OK. So in that way it is quite enriching?</p> <p>S3 : Yes.</p> <p>I : Does that answer your enrichment thing?</p> <p>S3 : Yes, yes it does, but it, it takes a while to uhm, to understand what they are saying because you have to spend more time with them and the more time I'll spend with them, the more you understand them, what they are trying to say, cause you learn them know...you, you...</p> <p>I : Ja, because everybody mentioned that the language was a barrier.</p> <p>S3 : Yes.</p> <p>I : OK, how can one overcome that?...</p> <p>S2 : You can, in a class room, and with them as well, you can use somebody that understands both languages quite well. Their language and English or Afrikaans, doesn't matter, so that they can translate it to them or to you.</p> <p>S1 : And visuals...</p> <p>(all three students mentions "visuals" simultaneously)</p> <p>I : Visuals, like what for instance?</p> <p>S1 : Posters or pictures about the things you want to show them.</p> <p>I : OK, did the pictures and the designs that you used, do you think that helped?</p> <p>S3 : Yes, very much, because I think uhm, they got a better understanding when they saw the pictures and the uh, projects, this miniature sculptures that we made. I think they then only realised, or they got a better, uhm understand of what, what we are trying to do.</p> <p>I : OK. When you went into the community, what did you think you would learn? What, what did you then when, after</p>	<p>Personal development</p> <p>Stereotypical thinking "them"</p> <p>Professional development: Language barriers</p> <p>Communication: better understanding</p> <p>Personal insight & Professional Development: language barriers</p> <p>Communication: better understanding</p>
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	<p>watching that video as well? What, what did you think you would learn? Are you going to learn something from the, from the community? We asked the community “are you going to learn something from the students, students?”. What did you think you would learn? Why did you do it?</p> <p>S2 : Perhaps to...get to know how to work with other cultures and people speaking other languages, but as I said, because we are going to, you are going to, to use that in your class room...so you need to know...how to approach a situation.</p> <p>I : OK, but, and the theme, working with the park? What did you think you are going to learn of that? Did you think you are going to or was it specifically just you open up and you are going to sit down with the people and you are going to learn something from them?</p> <p>S1 : No, because in one of our subjects we must...use the environment and everything, so we must also make the children in our class...</p> <p>I : Ja, say?</p> <p>(Laughing)</p> <p>S1 : Ons moet hulle bewus maak van die omgewing om hulle en hoe om dit te hanteer.</p> <p>I : OK.</p> <p>S1 : Om na die omgewing te kyk...</p> <p>S3 : I would say that when I went into this project I thought I was going to learn uhm, about how that community works. How does, how does the community work there...</p> <p>I : OK...</p> <p>S3 : like how do they approach things and ...</p> <p>I : And did you?</p> <p>S3 : Yes, I did, I did. When we were talking with them and uh, walking to the park I learned a lot of how the community works and by, by them saying to me.</p> <p>I : OK, so that walk in the park was quite a...</p> <p>S2,3.4 : Hmm, Ja (simultaneously)</p> <p>I : ...good activity as a start off point?</p> <p>S2 : Yes.</p> <p>I : OK, what did you learn from that experience?</p> <p>S3 : I learned uhm, I always thought it was the unsafest place, uhm, but it's just how they live. It, it's not that unsafe as we people think it is, it's just...</p> <p>S2 : I think...</p> <p>S3 : ...there is a stereotype over the, there is a stereotype about townships, well specific that area.</p> <p>S2 : I think we make it more of an issue than it is. They live like</p>	<p>Stereotypical thinking: “there”</p> <p>Interactive process: Personal understanding & development:</p> <p>Changed stereotypical thinking, compare lifestyles</p> <p>Interactive process Understanding own personal growth</p> <p>Changed stereotypical views Compare life styles</p>
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	<p>day to day and they enjoy their lives every day, but I think we do, because we plan everything and everything (inaudible) in our lives. Everything...</p> <p>I : Everything is planned in their lives?</p> <p>S2 : No, in our lives, everything is planned.</p> <p>I : OK.</p> <p>S2 : This must happen and this happens and in their lives they take it as it come, but they enjoy every day and they live full-out every day.</p> <p>S1 : ...give them guidance.</p> <p>I : Give them guidance?</p> <p>S3 : So they can help themselves.</p> <p>I : OK, so, but did you realise that or is it because I mentioned it? (laughing).</p> <p>S2 : We also realised it, because... (laughing) they, they were more open when they did what they wanted to do, and we were just standing there and, so perhaps that, perhaps when...but when we gave ideas, everything was fine and yes, they said yes to everything.</p> <p>I : OK, ja.</p> <p>S2 : But once they did their own thing...they told us this is what they want to do and they don't want to do that, so then they were more comfortable.</p> <p>I : OK, oraait, and what other similarities do you find between them and you?</p> <p>S1 : I think all the youth experience the same situations, because it doesn't matter what your colour is, or your gender or something. Everyone has to deal with drugs, and alcohol, and death...</p> <p>S3 : Relationships...</p> <p>S1 : ...and divorce. So I think that is the same everywhere.</p> <p>I : OK, and in a way it can bind, it can be find in common grounds...</p> <p>S1 : Yes, we can relate to those situations.</p> <p>S3 : Yes.</p> <p>I : OK, and differences? How do you find, what differences be, do you find between yourself and the community?</p> <p>S2 : I think the youth there grow up long before we are grown. They must be adults when they are actually still children, because they must se, because they must take care of themselves or a younger brother or sister.</p> <p>S3 : They have more responsibilities.</p> <p>S2 : And they have more responsibilities, where we, or I, are not like that, both my parents still life, and I am on, in University now and I am still a child, because I don't work for my money, my parents still,</p>	<p>Personal growth</p> <p>Changed Power relations and roles</p> <p>Interactive process / communication</p> <p>Changed power relations and Personal awareness</p> <p>Changed stereotypical thinking, compare lifestyles</p>
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	<p>will give me money every month and my car gets paid, my housing gets paid, and most of them have to go and work while they are still in school, just to support the family as well.</p> <p>I : OK, that is quite a major difference nê? Life experience and life expectancies and so on. OK, what other difference can you think of? The way that you work on the project?</p> <p>S2 : I think we are used to do, used to doing planning and they like to do things just the practical part. Like they wanted to paint and get it over with, they didn't like drawing or planning the things before.</p> <p>I : How do you know that they didn't like drawing or planning?</p> <p>S2 : Because they didn't really do it (laughing)</p> <p>S3 : And they asked when are we going to paint and...?</p> <p>S2 : Yes, the whole time they wanted to do it.</p> <p>I : OK, so they, they are not so interested in planning and in uhm, organising. Oraait, so their strong point would you say, what would you say is their sort of their strong point?</p> <p>S2 : Doing the work itself. They are good painters most of them, better than I am, and they are good doing things with their hands.</p> <p>I : OK, uhm, in, what, what aspect of it did you find more collaborative than the other?</p> <p>S3 : In the planning, uhm, it was, in the planning it was mostly us giving the ideas, and they adding to the ideas, but with the uhm, with the practical where we painted, uhm, they took over, so ja, that, ja.</p> <p>I : OK, and who made the decisions?</p> <p>S2 : I think we all...</p> <p>I : Made decisions...</p> <p>S2 : ...made decisions at a point. Like we gave the idea of the tyres, because they didn't really think of ideas, or they didn't know what to use, but when we had to do the things, they knew what they wanted to do and they did it straight away, without even thinking about it.</p>	<p>Changed stereotypical views Compare life styles</p> <p>Empathy: understanding and personal awareness</p> <p>Changed power relations</p>
<p>Interviewer</p> <p>23 October 2014</p> <p><i>C1-4: Community participants 1-4</i></p> <p><i>I: Interviewer</i></p>	<p>I : Now when the students come to you, nê? What did you think would you learn from them?</p> <p>C4 : I don't understand...</p> <p>I : You understand?</p> <p>C4 : Ja, I've learned, me I've learned that before we do a park, we must come with a plans first, before doing everything.</p> <p>I : Before everything?</p> <p>C4 : Ja.</p> <p>I : Before you go and make the park you must plan first.</p> <p>C4 : We must plan first.</p> <p>I : OK, oraait. So what did you think you were going to learn from the students?</p> <p>C4 : I think I am going to learn many things that uh, I didn't know. Like...</p>	<p>Understanding own personal growth</p>

	<p>I : You didn't know... C4 : ...like drawing, and the collecting... I : Huh? C4 : The collecting, things like at the, at park.</p> <p>I : Oraait, what did you think C4? When you saw these students what did you think you were going to learn? C1 : Something that is to learn. I : Huh? C1 : Something. (talking in native tongue) C3 : The things that he says that...</p> <p>I : Speak up nê? C3 : OK, he said that he learned more about the things that we are gonna do at the park from the students, but more or less have to do with each other. I : Interacting with each other? OK, so he is going to learn more about the park. OK, so now you must really speak up, because it's running. OK, how do you feel about this process? You know getting involved with the students? C3 : I think that I feel much better about getting to know people who...</p> <p>I : To know people who (inaudible). OK. C3 : If it wasn't about this park, I wouldn't have expressed my feelings the time that we were doing game, the, interacting with feelings, telling the, the game... I : The game, the Turning point? C3 : The Turning point yes, cause normally I wouldn't tell anyone about my feelings, but it came to an end that I had to express my feelings too. I was like trusting them, I had, I had this trust in them that...</p> <p>I : What, what made it, was it that game that make you trust them? I : OK. Uhm, and so how did you feel working with them? Partner, is it good to work with somebody from another community? C3 : Yes. I : Because they are from the university. C3 : And they have lot, more experience than us. I : Do you think they have more experience? C3 : Yes, I think so. I : Why? C3 : You can see a person. I'm not, I'm not saying that I judge or something, but I can see a person, that this person and the way, the way they talk that these people are more mature and they have experience, a lot of experience that we can learn from them. I : Experience or knowledge? C3 : Knowledge with experience.</p> <p>I : That's good. That's good, and did you get some...OK, I will get to you, so it made you change inside... C3 : Inside.</p>	<p>Personal skills development</p> <p>Relationship building: awareness of personal roles</p> <p>Relationship building and personal growth</p> <p>Stereotypical views</p>
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	<p>I : ...so you can open up.</p> <p>C3 : I can open up and any people I trust.</p> <p>I : OK, oraaait. As long as they can also share their feelings?</p> <p>C3 : Yes.</p> <p>I : Oraait, OK. Uh, C4?</p> <p>C4 : They teach me that if you are a people, you can do things, even with their cultures, you can make one group of people and discuss things, making good things.</p> <p>I : Making good things?</p> <p>C4 : Yes.</p> <p>I : So, uh, in a group you can work together with other communities but in one group?</p> <p>C4 : Yes.</p> <p>I : OK. So how, did that change? Did you think it was possible before?</p> <p>C4 : It changed me cause, even when I was not having a time (inaudible)</p> <p>I : When you weren't what?</p> <p>C4 : When I don't have a something to do, I am just walking around with friends like, you know, C1. Now, I've got a chance of like paining, I'm coming here half past three then you can go there and paint. We've got the time to go there and do something at that time.</p> <p>I : OK, so you would like to have activities in your community, is that what you are saying? To keep you busy?</p> <p>C4 : Yes.</p> <p>I : Ja, ja. Right, what did you enjoy most of everything that we did together? With the students, what did you enjoy most? If you think?</p> <p>C3 : Walking around with them, with those three ladies. Walking around with them and telling them how, how do you want the park, how the park must be and sharing ideas that, OK, maybe here we'll put that one, the one, that we discussed or the other ones, the drawings that we had.</p> <p>I : OK, so to you that walking in the park was a good, was very nice.</p> <p>C3 : Was a good thing and sharing experiences to each other.</p> <p>I : OK.</p> <p>C3 : That was a good thing.</p> <p>I : OK. Uhm, if, if for instance uhm, we do this again, another park or we carry on making another park in your area and so on, what advice would you give to the people that start up with a park like this? What would you tell them what to do?</p> <p>C3 : I would tell them to be af, open to the students and discuss anything they have. They should, they should be shy like them, they should express their feelings how they want, because it is their area. So, they should express what do they want and listen to the students what do they also want in the park. And ...</p> <p>I : What they want in the park? OK. What would you say to the students? To the people in the community when the students</p>	<p>Interactions awareness of cultures</p> <p>Relationships: Personal growth</p> <p>Power relations: Growing emancipation</p> <p>Communication: Mutual</p>
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	<p>want to come and work there? C1 : I tell them to, uh, (native tongue)...</p> <p>I : OK C1, you must tell us, that we can hear. Nothing?</p> <p>C3 : (native tongue). He says that he is going to tell others that it's all about designing and making art, so they should enjoy it.</p> <p>I : OK. Oraait, good. But they also, you started work together, and listen to music together and paint the tyres and so on, ne? Uh, C4, and you?</p> <p>C4 : Taught them that if you are going to make a park, you must make sure that you've got a nice plans, that tomorrow that people looking at that park can feel joy, even without going there.</p> <p>I : It can be colourful if you have colourful tyres or so, OK. But what else can art do? Do you think it's necessary to have art in the park? C1 you like art?</p> <p>C1 : Yes, I like art.</p> <p>I : OK, so do you think we must try put art in the park?</p> <p>C1 : The art, the art is, you want to put the art in the park, because the art is, we do it the things, if it is nice.</p> <p>I : If it's nice?</p>	<p>understanding</p> <p>Awareness of personal skills development</p> <p>Interactive process Skills development</p>
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Coding of verbatim transcriptions

Colour coding of transcriptions and themes identified

Colour	Themes	Sub- themes
Pink	Relationship-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction increased empathy and start to learning from each other, lapsed into yellow: changed perceptions
Yellow	Stereotypical views of the “other”, “them” and “they”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction exposed initial stereotypical thinking and perceptions of the “other”
Green	Communication: understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased understanding and communication – lapsed with blue
Red	Power relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changed perceptions of unequal knowledge, skills and attitude
Blue	Personal and professional development	<p>Student professional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language barriers Skills development

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insight into working with diverse backgrounds Community development • Skills development • Personal growth and emancipation
	PAR interactive process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to changed knowledge, skills and attitude – linked to researcher’s reflections lapsed with blue.

ADDENDUM F (REFER TO DVD)

CYCLE 1: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

ADDENDUM F1: INTRODUCTION

ADDENDUM F2: WALK-AND-TALK

ADDENDUM F3: TURNING POINT (River of life)

CYCLE 2: PLANNING

ADDENDUM F4: VISION-BUILDING

ADDENDUM F4.1: VISUAL DIAGRAMS (Wish-list):

ADDENDUM F4.2: VIDEO & PHOTOS

ADDENDUM F5: PLANNING AND DESIGNING

ADDENDUM F5.1: VISUAL DIAGRAMMES (Goals) ADDENDUM

F5.2: VIDEO & PHOTOS

ADDENDUM F5.3 PREPARATION PAINTING

CYCLE 3: SKILLS APPLICATION

ADDENDUM F6: INTERVENTION AND ACTION ADDENDUM

F6.1: BOTANICAL GARDENS: VIDEO & PHOTOS ADDENDUM

F6.2: ARTS & CRAFTS STUDIO: VIDEO & PHOTOS ADDENDUM

F7: ART –BASED SKILLS APPLICATION ADDENDUM F7.1:

PAINTING OF TYRES: VIDEO & PHOTOS **CYCLE 4:**

REFLECTION AND EVALUATION

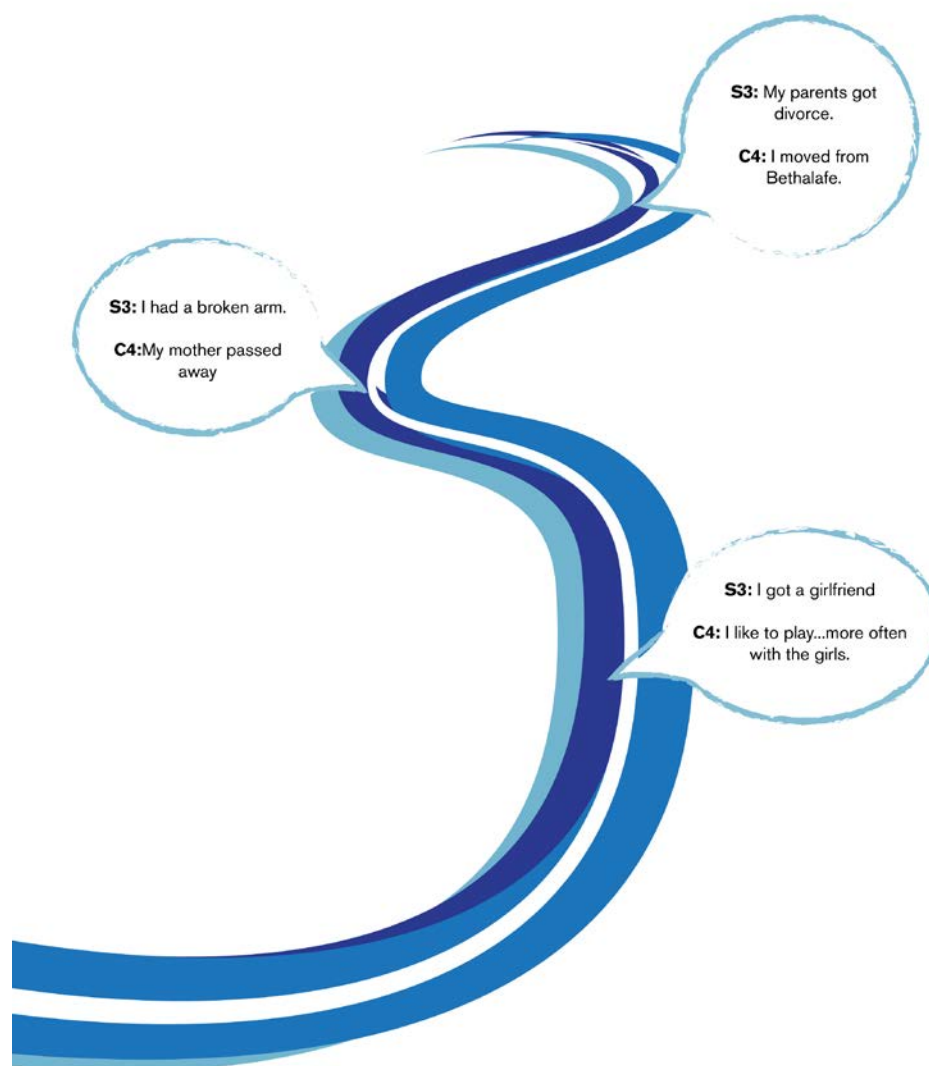
ADDENDUM F8: REFLECTION & EVALUATION ADDENDUM

F8.1: TRANSCRIPTIONS

ADDENDUM F8.2: VISUAL DIARIES

ADDENDUM G

EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F3 WITH REFERENCE TO “RIVER OF LIFE”



Representation of a community and campus participants' river diagram

FIRST point: S3: My first point is, when I was ten, my parents got divorce. And uhm, that made me, at that time a weaker person. But as time grew, I got stronger...Because I learned to do things on my own. Okay?

C4: I did not live in Ikageng, I moved from Bethalafe

SECOND point: S3: I had a broken arm, then I had to go and sleep in the hospital. I used to play rough with the other kids.

C4: My second point. The time that I was a young person. The age of ten. My mother passed away but, I think...When he [she] was passed away, I said it's fine, its time to go, to rest. But he [she] teach me lot of things that I know from him [her].

THIRD point: S3: My third point is, hum, hehe, you're gonna laugh at this one. When I got a girlfriend, the girlfriend that I have new, now. That she, she made me more uhm, she made me ah, to think, to think of others and not just myself. She made me want to think of others and just not myself. So she, she's good uhm,ah, influence on me. That was also a Turning Point in my life.

C4: I wasn't have a lot of friends [I didn't have a lot of friends]. I was liking to play with the girls. Then come the boys for me, [the boys approached me], telling me they want to be a friend [friends] with me. Taking me from the girls. Then I told them, I like to play...more often with the girls. Not boys. Cause [because] boys, they are making trouble things a lot [they cause trouble].

ADDENDUM H

EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F4.1 WITH REFERENCE TO "WISH-LIST"

Problems

- + Dirty
- + Rocks
- + Open Fire
- + Walk path
- + Public exposing
- + Small area
- + Electricity Box
- + Gangsters
- + No play area.
- + Unsafe for young Children
- + Rubish dump

Wish list

- + Fence around area
- + Seats for older children and eldets in the community.
- + Playground (Swing) for children
- + Clean area to relax in

Love
Dream
Believe

Joy
Hope

Wish list

- * Walls against the walls.
- * Play-fort like swings, jungle gym
- * Only one opening
- * Rubbish bins.
- * Fence around the park
- * Mini soccer field

wishlist

I will like to have where me and my girl friend we can seat when is sun Cloud or rain also where we can play Soccer not like runing ten step then you are already at the polls

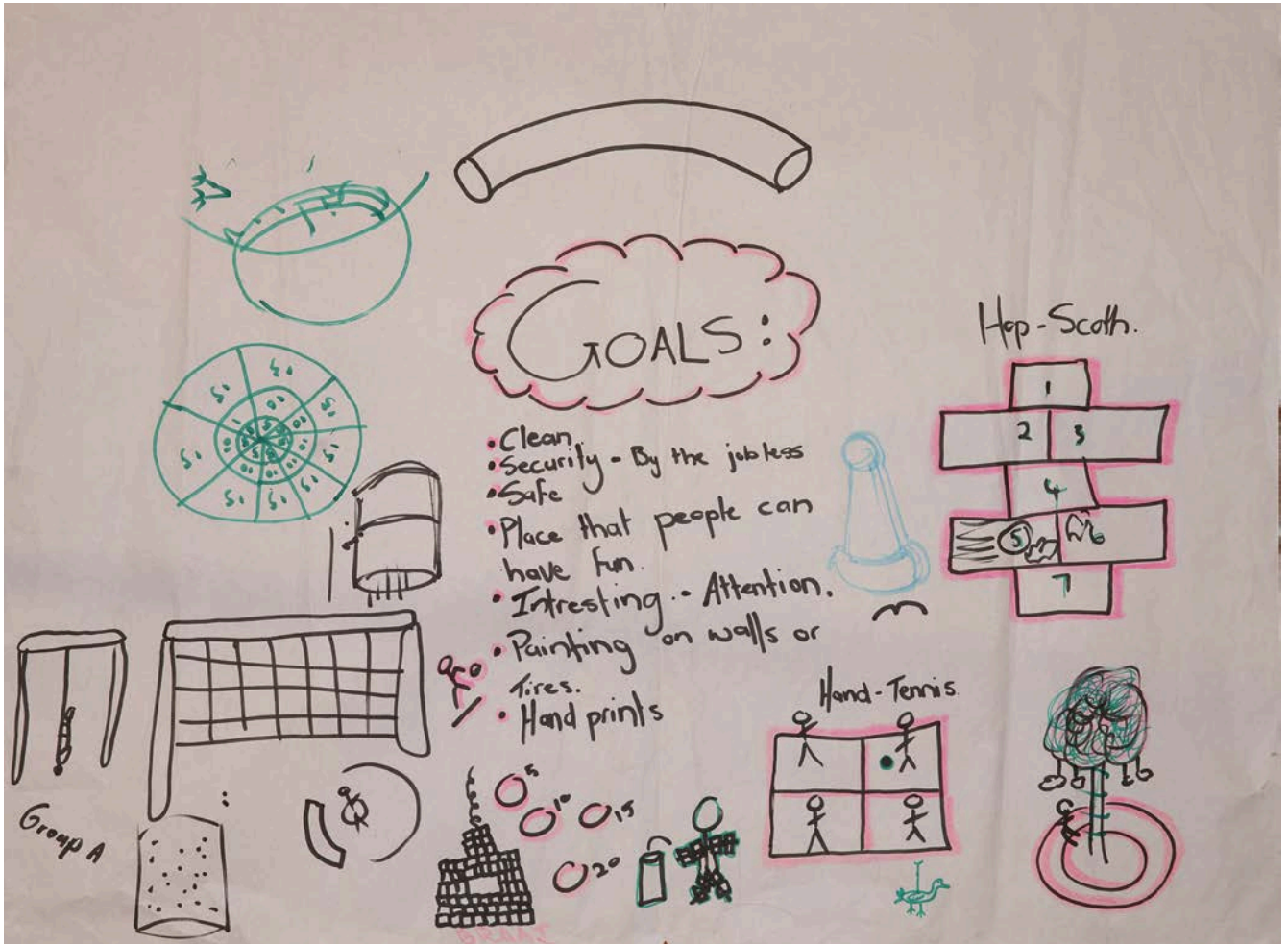
wish list

- * For the place to be clean.
- * Playground for young children.
- * It should be a safe place

to Safe area
+ Seats
+ Clean
+ Rubish bins
+ Playground
+ Swings ext
+ Rock climbing
+ Fence

ADDENDUM I

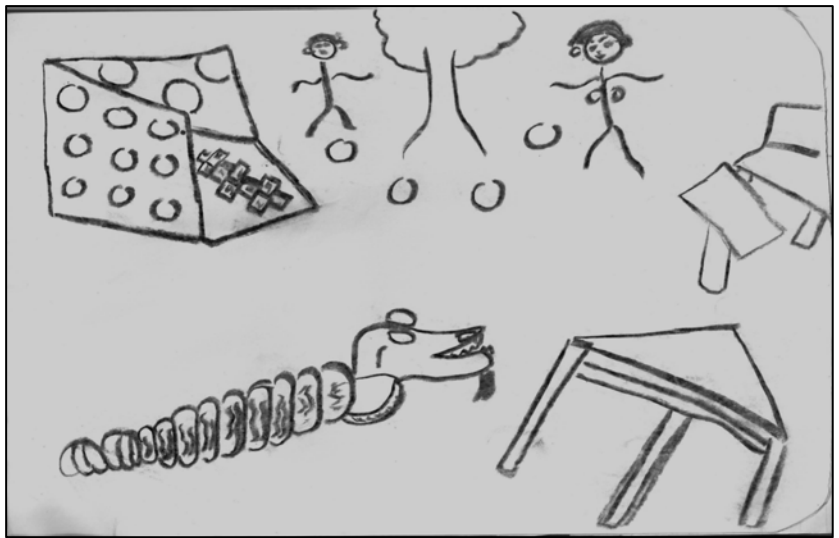
EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F5.1 WITH REFERENCE TO PLANNING AND "GOALS"



ADDENDUM J EXCERPT OF ADDENDUM F8.2 REFER TO “VISUAL DIARIES”

The people in that area seems very happy to live there. I think it is because they don't know anything else and some of them have never been outside the North-West province or Potchefstroom. The people that we are working with are very happy that we are going to work together on this project. They also think its going to be a beter place once we are done, but some of them are a bit bitter, because they are tired of lies. They say people always come to them and promise them all sorts of things and never deliver. I can understand their anger. I am committed to this project. I would like to see something there that they can enjoy and use for a very long time. They want to see something that can give them joy and exercise, like a soccer or basket ball field. I would like to see something build there that can be educational and good for their health, maby like a maze or a colourfull soccer field, with a wall covered with their murals.

S1



C1

ADDENDUM K

REFLECTIONS FROM FIELD NOTES AND VIDEO RECORDINGS

Using Springer's (2009) look, think and act reflective activities, I observed the participants while I was conducting the informal group discussion. I reflected in action (Shön, 1996) and summarised the procedures by listing the activities, describing what went well, what didn't go well and what could I have done differently (Teare, 2013:35). I also mentioned my concerns of the learning process and changes that I applied in the activity processes.

Activity 1

Students meet with community participants in church conference room.

I introduced the different groups to each other and convey the reason for being there – helping to upgrade a local park together.

My pertinent question was. “What do they think they could learn from each other?”

Everybody took turns to give their points of view.

What went well and why?

What I observed in the first discussion was a good rapport between the participants which was reassuring because from my previous community outreach experience the community was not even present, so I didn't know what to expect. The community participants were slightly shy, but answered the questions in a friendly and honest way. Using the word “nice” quite a few times. The same could be said about the students – although I sensed a bit of a predictable answer “we want to learn more about their culture”.

When I watched the videos again, I saw that there was quite a lot of chuckling going on between the two groups. There appeared to be a youthful playfulness with young people which I appreciate - I get great pleasure if people that I work with enjoy themselves. I thought that it was a good base to start off and get to know each other. Meeting each other beforehand and posing just one question was a good start and did not confuse the participants. I tried to set a humorous tone during the first meeting so that the participants felt relaxed and open to new experiences. I thought that joking about my age could make them feel less threatened by our age difference.

This activity was a good starting point as the students were introduced to the community participants. They started off hearing what they could gain from each other and expressed their own expectations. I proposed that we want to develop the park, but decided that I wanted the process to evolve through mutual decision-making and dialogue processes. I therefore refrained from starting off with big

creative plans for the park, as I thought it could be too overwhelming at entrance level engagement.

What didn't go well and why?

Although the first meeting went well, I had my own inner voices talking. I was a bit concerned about the students and community members who didn't "show up". I expected more participants and was disappointed that not everybody whom I approached at the university was able to commit themselves. I wanted to work with a bigger group. I realised that it was not all their fault, I should have given them more time in advance to prepare themselves for a community project like this, which demanded working outside the stipulated class contact hours. The project was not an examinable module and was therefore probably regarded as less serious. However, once the participants filled in the consent forms and read through the description of the research project they started to "see" the bigger picture. I felt that the consent letter also orientated them to their important roles in this process.

I regretted not probing a bit more on certain answers that they have given, for instance, what their understanding of culture was (students) and what their understanding of nice was (community participants). Some of the answers were rather stereotyped such as "learn from them" or "they can help us". One student remarked that she wanted to learn more about herself, which I found more self-defined and a good start. I should have complimented her on that.

What would I have done differently and how?

Prepare students well in advance and make sure that the number of students are more or less equal in relation to the community numbers. In this case the numbers were equal but less than the anticipated numbers of participants.

Listen to answers and probe further talk – working from generalizations to more specific and detailed conversations.

Concerns on the learning process

It bothered me a bit when I realised that we were not focusing on a learning process which involved serious subject knowledge content. What will these two groups really learn from each other? The one group was marginalized with limited command of English (Belinda had to translate some of the questions). What could the students learn from people who could not really talk to them?

Changes in the activity process

I saw that this first encounter was opening up conversations which I thought to follow-up with another relaxed activity. As I expected more students the next day I decided to switch the two following activities around – the Turning point with the Walk-and-Talk activity. I did not want to start off with the more intimate relationship building exercise (Turning point) straight away, if more people were going to arrive the next day. I thought it would be a good idea to walk to the area and observe what the problem was by both groups. By swopping the two activities around, I learned that as a researcher I needed to be fluid, adaptable and compromising to accommodate people in the process of building trusting and working relationships.

Activity 2:

Walk-and-Talk reflection: Observations

My brief was: Walk to the park area, observe what needs to be done and let the community participants talk about their lives in the area.

I took a video of the students walking with the community participants to the site. I thought it was a good idea to have the Walk-and-Talk activity as the students could get a glimpse of the living conditions of the people that they were going to work with and also get a first hand knowledge of the environment that needs to be changed. The community participants guided them via a shebeen and some houses in the area. There was a truck downloading liquor on their way and at the site. The split up in boy and girls groups walking and talking on the site.

What went well and why?

I observed that there was a natural gender choice happening - the girls walked with the girls and the boys with each other. One male student chose his partner (I remarked that his partner may not necessarily have chosen him). I observed quite a dominant orientation with the male student, wanting to choose with whom he wanted to walk. There was a lot of talking and gestures and the body language of both groups appeared to be relaxed and non-threatening e.g. the boys had their hands in their pockets, strolling along. The girls were using gestures such as pointing and hand movements in their conversations. Community children were dancing and playing around. I sensed real communal life and friendly energies in the atmosphere which was reassuring as I didn't want to expose the students unnecessarily to threatening situations.

I think this exercise went well as the students were not apprehensive and scared. The community

participants were quite welcoming and wanted to show them around. It was out in the open, they didn't just focus on the problem but were able to see the problem in context of the whole area.

What didn't go well? Changes?

A small incident occurred when an older community member living in the area was having an angry shout-out at the boys. D told me later that this man was angry because the white people just come into their area for a short while and then take "their ideas" back.

I realised that I needed to have some other safety measures in place if the students were going to be walking in unprotected areas and apprehended by community people in the area. Alcohol abuse is part of the social dilemmas in the area and working after hours exposed the students to this issue.

Outcomes?

The feedback from the Walk-and-Talk exercise indicated that the boys' wish for the area was for a more sport orientated area, whereas the girls wanted something which catered for the children in the area (maybe as M remarked it was also because the one girl B was a nurse trainee). The students accommodated the community's ideas. This activity enabled the students to establish the interests of the community. I thought that both groups could see what the need was and could discuss it in the follow-up vision-building exercise. "You need to see what is wrong before you can make it right".

Concerns on the learning process

Could the students gain any insight from the talking and were the community participants able to express themselves? I reassured myself that one could also learn by looking and observing what was wrong with the area. Some things do not need to be spelt out.

Process changes

My final request for the day was that all participants had to prepare for the next day by bringing their personal choices of designs along. They received the layout-design that was created prior to this engagement with the community members and the urban department. I decided to challenge the participants as I wanted to see what they could come up with in the following session. I wanted to combine the Turning point with the vision building exercise, while the problem of the area was still fresh in their minds.

Activity 3:

Turning Point exercise for relationship building and trust

As the participants aimed to work towards the same vision I decided to use this exercise to form a trusting relationship in sharing life experiences which could help to improve their understanding of each other (where do they come from and do they really differ in terms of life experiences?). *I asked them to talk about three life changing events that happened in their lives which affected their character.*

I limited the process to just three Turning points instead of five as I didn't want this to be a long drawn out process and the youths have probably less life experiences than adults. The community participants appeared to be a bit shy to talk about their life conditions. They had to report back in groups on their 3 Turning points. It was captured in their visual diaries and reported back verbally.

What went well and why?

All reflected on incidents that were quite personal, for instance, D reflected how the loss of his father affected him after his parents got divorced. E and T both lost their mothers and had to grow up without them. D remarked that though his father and mother were separate he can, at least, still see his father, whereas, T and E could not see their mother again (he realised that he was quite privileged in comparison to the other two C members). Group B also list loss of family as Turning points. The boys also seem to focus on physical injuries when they were playing sport e.g. soccer. The girls on relationships or friends that they have lost.

I thought that this activity went well as the participants started to open up towards each other sharing life experiences. It was quite heart-rendering as they started to understand each other's circumstances a little bit better. Some of them had similar experiences and could therefore empathize with each other. I thought that it connected the participants in a subconscious way as they realised that life happens to everybody in different ways. They were quite keen to write how they feel about this exercise. Their reflections are written in the visual diaries which I checked.

Doubts about this exercise and recommendations

My personal doubts centered around my concerns whether I was sufficiently trained to handle very serious issues if there was a psychological breakdown of a participant. I therefore asked a psychology colleague to be on stand by if anything occurred. I was relieved that the young people could talk so readily about very serious life crisis's in this case.

Visionbuilding

A. I asked them to talk about what they would envision for the park. What they don't like in the area and how it could be changed to a better place. Groups were given a big A2 sheet to brainstorm ideas and write down what they don't like. They used visual mapping and wrote in different colours. M suggested that they write down a word and rotate the pen until they have a list of things that they don't like. L started to write everything down that the other groups said. I observed that if writing is involved it takes the community a bit longer to complete tasks, as they try to try and write in their best handwriting not just in a quick and fleeting way.

They then reported back what the biggest problems on the site was – rubbish dump (bottles all over), unsafe, no seating, gangsters, no play area, electricity box

I then asked them to make a wishing list of the things that they would like to see happening on the site. They mentioned things like safe fencing, playground, bins for rubbish, paving, shading, safe area for children, seat for older people, clean area to relax, mini soccer field, play things like swings.

I explained that we cannot make things for the playground – e.g. swings, slides (that will have to come from the municipality). All participants were responsible for making it more beautiful with works of art or resources that were available in the area.

B. After the vision building exercise they were presented with community drawings – does these drawings correlate with their ideas for the park? They agreed that it was more or less the same. I explained that we need to make the place more beautiful with resources that we have. They identified 2 types of resources that were available – tyres (C) and water drain pipes (S). Each group will bring something along next time to paint and work on.

C. I wanted to establish what roles they could play in the working process and asked them about their own skills – what can they bring to the table? They all agreed that they could do something: D would cut the tyres, make things, T would paint on the tyres, E would paint on the tyres, Dd would draw (a scene of somebody looking towards the city / skyline) , O also want to paint, B wanted to paint flowers, M would draw and paint, L would make things.

We also talked about food – what foods do they like with their sessions. C would like Kentucky and T like Pizzas. They chatted (laughed) and shared some stories about chicken runaways, chicken curries and tripe. The day was closed with people feeling good (I think – but will see what they write in their diaries). I probed them to start thinking what will be happening during the following weeks' sessions. They agreed that they would bring the drawings of their ideas for the one session and some examples of what they wanted to paint on, e.g. tyres and granite blocks, along.

Good why?

They all seemed keen to participate – there was a willingness to help developing an area. The visual mapping process was good as they could share their ideas and collaborate in writing down and talking about their ideas. The pre-service teacher students were more dominant in taking the lead but helped the community participants when they struggled to write something down. Later one of the students remarked that she learned to become more patient in the process. I thought it prepared the students well for future teaching practices, working with learners who struggle to write. The participants could also see that the same things bothered them - unsafe areas to play for the children, e.g. rubbish and broken glasses.

B. They were enthusiastic to do something about the situation but didn't know how to apply their ideas. I realised that at this stage other interventional processes should be reverted to enable more iknowledge on the subject.

C. Asking what they are good at is less intimidating than designating specific roles to them. Who made the decisions of who did what anyway? I didn't know what art works were going to be created so I couldn't give roles and responsibilities if there was no specific duties identified.

Didn't go well why?

A. Community participants relied mostly on the writing and input of the students. But their input was written down and students helped them to get the charts filled up with text and pictures.

B. It appeared that most of the community members had the idea that they need to change the area into a playground. (did I not explain clearly enough what public art was – did I need to change my idea of what I wanted for the park?) However I still pursued the public art idea although I started to realise that their concept of public art was rather limited. I thought it would be good to introduce them to public art via ppoint slides. I asked them to do some research on the concept of public art.

C. They were not good at designating specific roles to themselves – so in this phase I reverted to their inner talents – what are you good at – what can they bring to the table?

Both realise and realize are correct but byou have to standardise.

Process

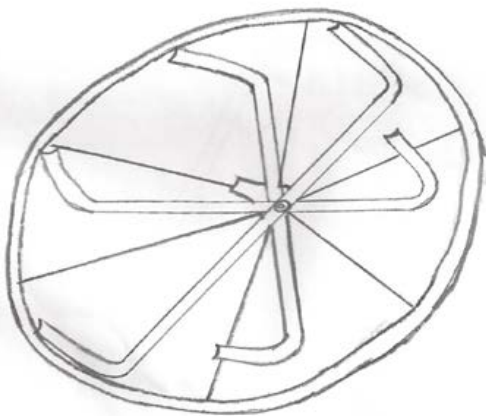
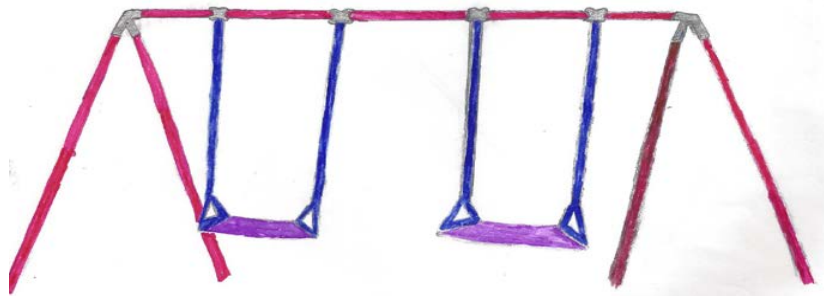
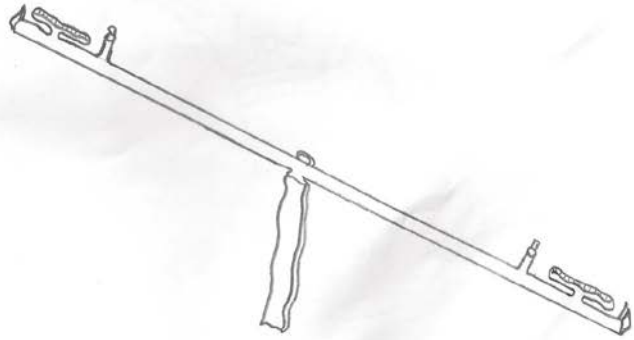
A. Visual mapping is a good group acitivity – it helps people to converse about the same things and the collaborative efforts are a necessity for 21st century learning skills.

B. I had to start intervening with visuals and other resource material if I wanted the community participants to participate on a more equal level with the students.

C. It was important to build self-esteem and make them aware of their own (hidden) talents. But they had to discover that for themselves, by allowing them to express to wish and to try. The roles and responsibilities would be established later and hopefully amongst themselves. The reason why I didn't start with roles and responsibilities is because I wanted them to find their own resources within themselves before they were exposed to model public art or other people's ideas – why? To prevent them feeling intimidated and overwhelmed. Another point that I didn't explore was – do I show examples of public art and then asked them to do their own thing or do I ask them to come up with their own ideas and then show them other examples? Tis was a question I sometimes struggled with in my art class as well, especially if I want to promote original and new ideas.

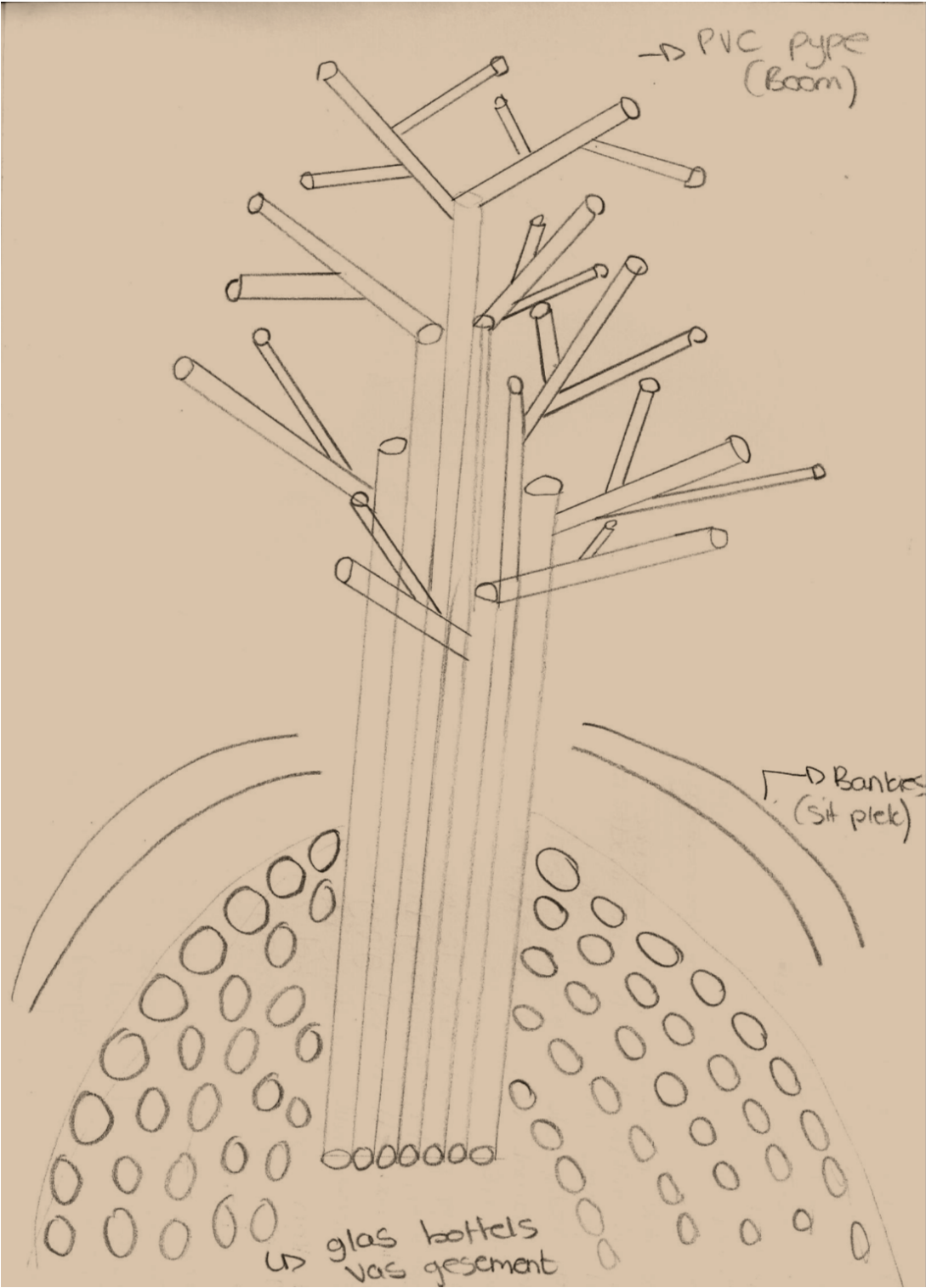
ADDENDUM L1

EXCERPT FROM ADDENDUM F8.2 WITH REGARDS TO “PLANNING AND DESIGNING OF PARK” (C2)



ADDENDUM L2

EXCERPT FROM ADDENDUM 8.2 WITH REGARDS TO “PLANNING AND DESIGNING OF PARK” (S2)



ADDENDUM M : INTERVENTION PLANNING AND DESIGNING

