

CURRENTLY UPGRADED

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE
2011

PRACTICE THEORY AND PRINCIPLES FOR
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT IHE

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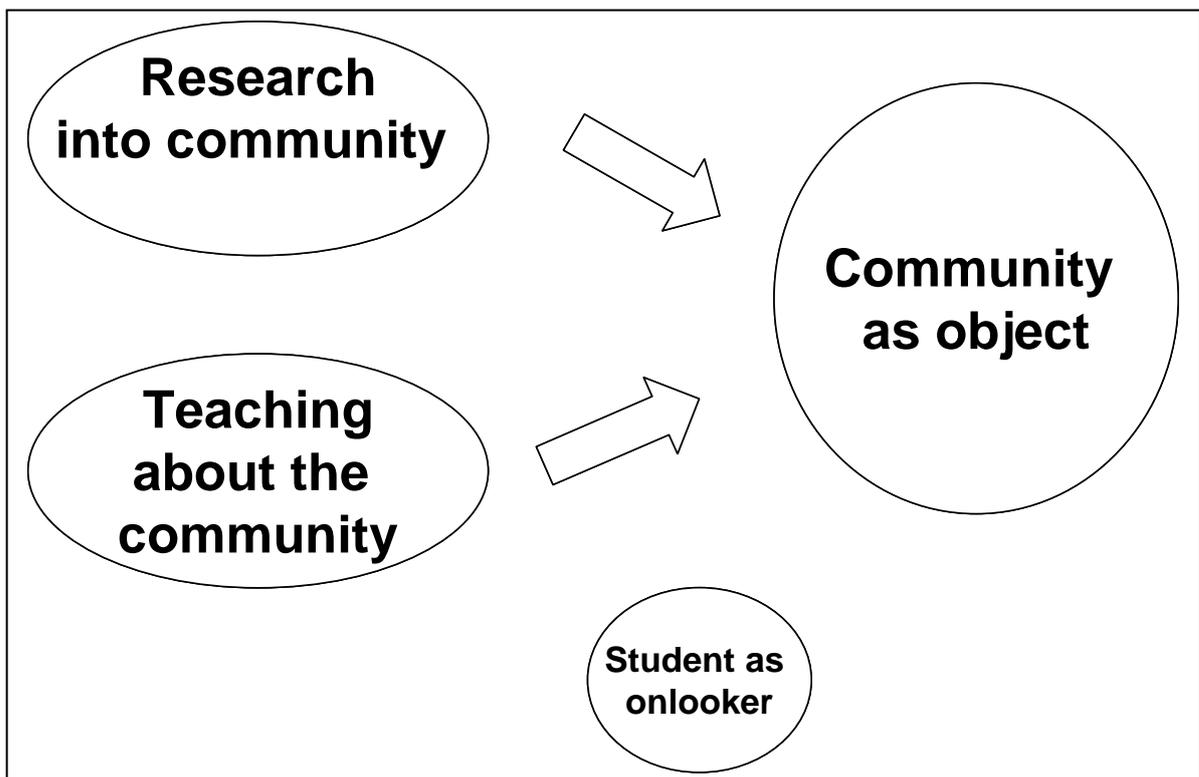
REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND

Legislators and stakeholders all over the world increasingly began to question the social value of Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), beyond the basic tasks of teaching and research.

Community engagement has always been part of IHE, the primary objective on accessing communities however was for the purposes of research and education as illustrated in the picture below.

From this platform academics could learn and benefit from the process without much concern for the needs of the community.



Little attention was given to what communities have to say about the involvement or to the provision of services for the benefit of the communities. No or little consideration was given to what the community might perhaps be able to offer.

Engagement with local communities is central to the agenda of the CHE, which is also the reason for the CBL 420 course.

Community engagement creates opportunities for IHEs to:

- Confront the relevance of some knowledge.
- Stimulate teaching and create new teaching ideas.
- Stimulate the learning process and impacts on academic programmes.
- Open up new fields for research.
- Participate in community development and community building.

However, community service is still seen by many Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) as a way to give something back to society... social responsibility - they still have to discover that there is more to community engagement than just community service.

Some understanding emerged during the 90's about the whole idea of 'community engagement'. Through the establishment of projects based on needs, academics realised they can benefit in gaining experience and knowledge about issues they were ignorant about and had no exposure to. This was when the project eras emerged and every one tried to reinvent the wheel to solve community problems.

Communities also benefited through these "new" community engagement programmes and projects. A process was started by which communities were given advanced access to the knowledge and resources developed at IHE. The process continued in the period after 2000.

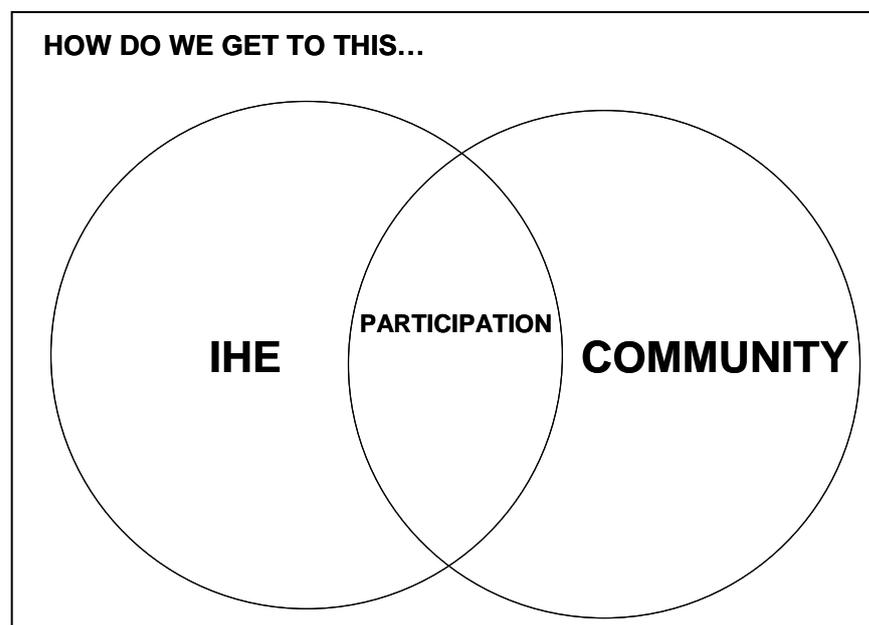
1.2 THE MODEL FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT IHE IS 3-FOLD:

- 1) To achieve common objectives within the IHE's main focus areas of:
 - The creation of knowledge (research).
 - The translation of knowledge (teaching/learning).
 - The application of knowledge (community engagement).

- 2) To establish partnerships, and to support and strengthen community agencies relevant to local priorities in order to impact on community development.
- 3) To integrate teaching and learning, and research with realities in society.

The most important unanswered question in regard to Community Engagement at IHE is still: -

Where do the Community stand in “community” engagement?



What IHE in participation with community agencies can do to close the ‘GAP’ between them:

- Expand the functionality of the community partner (CBO), its existing strengths and its energy (manpower),
- Supplement its assets and respond to engagement opportunities based on needs.
- Contribute in a positive way to community development,
- Contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of people,
- Expand the capacity of the CBOs, NGOs, individuals or groups.

What CBOs in participation with IHE can do to close the 'GAP' between them:

- Identify quality community engagement opportunities from all sectors.
- Provide opportunities for reality making and create new knowledge.
- Identify research opportunities.
- Contribute in a positive way to community development.
- Contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of people

2. PRACTICE THEORY

Community engagement at IHE is build on practice theory and principles. Practice theory also serves the purpose of closing the gap between IHE and the COMMUNITY, which is a matter of closing the gap between THEORY and PRACTICE.

Through community engagement and community service IHE enter a world where in some instances different rules apply and in other instances the same rules apply but in different ways.

The traditional way of explaining the relationship between theory and practice is that theory informs practice, and practice refines theory. Traditionally the term "theory" refers to "scientific based theory" as developed within an academic environment related to a specific subject.

Each domain and period of science is defined by theories that set up problems to be solved following specific steps referred to as a scientific method, (the latter being the spine of scientific inquiry) and results have to be tested (and retested). There is no uniform scientific method, which makes the task of finding a single definition that defines science and theory impossible. However everyone seems to understand that science is a process – new things are being discovered and old, long-held theories should be

modified or replaced with better theories as more knowledge is accumulated.

We all have observed that theories that best fit a situation often emerge from practice where knowledge originated from experience and observation, not from academic literature or research conducted at academia. This type of theory is referred to as practice theory.¹

Theory (based on the academic tradition) formulates ideas or principles intended to explain some aspects of a subject. Theory is developed from a hypothesis, and verified, validated and proven through research following a predetermined scientific method, within a specific context at a specific time. This type of theory is primarily interested in the world as an object ("it") with the validity criteria of pro-positional truth.²

Practice theory on the other hand, is based on practical knowledge intended to explain patterns of existence experienced in practice. It emerges through a process of reality making, knowledge creation, consecutive debriefing and reflection, within a specific context at a specific time - up to a point where experience becomes knowledge.³ Practice theory is interested in the world as a common social place ("we"), with the validity criteria of justness and

¹ Theodor Schatzki (2001) distinguishes between practice theorists as:

- Philosophers (such as Wittgenstein, Dreyfus, or Taylor),
- Social theorists (Bourdieu, Giddens),
- Cultural theorists (Foucault, Lyotard) and
- Theorists of science and technology (Latour, Rouse, Pickering).

Theodor Schatzki (2001) distinguishes between two waves of practice theorists:

- The first develop what is known as practice theory.
- The second is testing those theories.

² Ken Wilber. Sex, ecology and spirituality. The spirit of evolution. Shambala. Boston & London. 1995. p 145.

³ Henryk Skolimowski. The participatory mind. Penquin Books Ltd.London. 1994. p. 328 - 329

appropriateness (“values) and the subjective word (“I”), with the validity criteria of truthfulness and sincerity.⁴

After the scientific idea proved unsustainable and the lure of the paradigm started to fade, research became the rallying point for undertaking science (or the philosophy of science). Research however, is cognitive, objective and rational and can address therefore only some of life’s experiences. Researchers in science should be aware of the limitations of the methodology of objectivity. Many researchers obtain their results by identifying with the so-called “ object of inquiry” and “look within”. Furthermore, objectivity, where it does exist, is claimed to be value-free; however objectivity is ‘value-laden’ - the value of objectivity, is the value objectivity serves and propagates. There is no rational value-free answer to why one should think objectively. According to Skolomowski we think it is a good thing to think objectively because “science tells us so”. There is however another very good reason why objectivity is a good thing. “Objectivity” brought about the escape in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from tyrannical religious orthodoxy. Objectivity became the vehicle of liberation and freedom, which makes the desire for objectivity in this historical context clear.⁵

Changes in the social order and the socio-cultural evolution happen within the sway of social practice, where thinking is central to the process. Thinking in turn manifests in many different forms of collective action. Practice is a form of collective action. “The huger the mob, and the greater the apparent anarchy, the more perfect is its sway.”⁶ Academics, collectively over time concluded that the scientific method is the process they should follow. For them, the scientific method is reliable, consistent

⁴ Ken Wilber. *Sex, ecology and spirituality. The spirit of evolution.* Shambala. Boston & London. 1995. p 145.

⁵ Henryk Skolimowski. *The participatory mind.* Penquin Books Ltd.London. 1994. pp 172.

⁶ Ian Stewart. *Does God play dice. The new mathematics of chaos.* Basil Blackwell. 1989. pp 43. (The supreme law of unreason. Francis Galton, *Natural Inheritance.*)

and objective. Followers of the scientific method collectively over time decided to call themselves “scientists”. The latter also happened in the sway of social practice.

The steps of scientific method as used in the academic environment, are regularly used in the practical world to find logical solutions for many problems in many areas of life. Scientific method is a factor of rational thinking, which in turn is a function of the brain. Some practice theory is also generated in much the same way as the theory of academic tradition. The process makes practice theory in a sense more holistic than theory based on the academic tradition. It is a matter of fact that most scientific methods originate from practical experience, which share an equal status with all the other methods used in developing practice theory.

It is also a misconception that the scientific method and research (cumulative and progressive as it is), is practised exclusively at the level of academia or in the academic environment and that it is something that does not happen in daily life or is not used by ordinary people. To use an extreme example, the activities of organised crime are based on research and procedures similar to those scientists would follow - a statement based on many observations and experiments; a well-tested, verified hypothesis that fits existing data and explains how processes or events are expected or thought to occur with a well-defined final objective. Ethics (another measure of value) then becomes the great divide - ethics, just like compassion is something that can be taught, learned and accomplished.

Some theories from academic literature forming part of curricula at academia are in many cases outdated and irrelevant compared to the practice theories that are in use in our communities and in society. The fast changing world seems to have outrun academics in the process of modifying or replacing old theories and creating new theory based on new knowledge. Closing the gap between academically based theory and practice theory is of utmost importance, for neither can save the world on its own. It should not

be a matter of “either-or”, but rather “both-and” in creating solutions in an ever changing and a more complex world.

Curricular community engagement can make an important contribution towards closing this gap between academia and community and between academically based theory and practice theory, if it is implemented in the right way. It must be development orientated and must be applied in full participation with the community.

3. PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATION

3.1. THE METHODOLOGY OF PARTICIPATION

The methodology of participation is a process meant to change our spiral of understanding. The spiral of understanding is our epistemology (the way we understand things) based on attained knowledge or values, assumed by ontology.⁷ Science has to be an integral part of the methodology of participation. The underlying rules and principles for transformation make this possible:

- be aware of deep assumptions,
- be aware of deep values that underlie the structure of your beliefs and thinking,
- become aware how these assumptions and values guide your behaviour and thinking,
- become aware which of these assumptions and values are undesirable,
- observe your own behaviour and identify the cause of the undesirable assumptions and values,
- articulate alternative assumptions and values,
- imagine the behaviour and thinking that would follow the alternative assumptions and values,

⁷ Henryk Skolomowski. The participatory mind. Penguin Books Ltd. London. 1994. pp 71-80.

- implement this behaviour and thinking in your actions, watch the process and repeat it and adjust where necessary⁸.

3.2. THE 8 GOLDEN RULES OF EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

Skolimowski list the following characteristics of effective participation:

1. The art of empathy.
2. The art of close association with the object of enquiry.
3. The art of learning and to use each other's language.
4. The art of using each other's language.
5. The art of engaging with the object of inquiry (academia with community and via versus).
6. The art of intentionally understand each other's world or "spiral of understanding".
7. The art to make meaning out of the each other.
8. The art of imaginative hypothesis which leads to the art of identification, which is the art transforming our awareness of the each other.⁹

3.3. WHAT IS MEANT BY 'PARTICIPATION'

According to Skolomowski (1994) the idea of participation is one of the most beautiful and most complex concepts of life and means to reach out and to reach beyond, which is the core of social life. Participation means empathy and implies responsibility. Participation without responsibility is disengagement. Alienation is caused by our inability to participate, either because of internal blocks or through the rigid design of our institutions. Contextual connections and relations determine participation. The depth of the context determines the depth of participation. For instance the more advanced levels of participation occur when people participate through

⁸ Henryk Skolimowski. *The participatory mind*. Penquin Books Ltd.London. 1994. p 140-141

⁹ Henryk Skolimowski. *The participatory mind*. Penquin Books Ltd.London. 1994. pp 159-163

complex structures according to predetermined rules, which everyone knows and understands without any hidden agendas, such as in rugby or soccer.

- Pseudo-participation occurs when we are led to believe there is room for creative intervention, while there is none. This happens when there are hidden agendas and rules, which only some know about and through which they manipulate things to their own advantage. We give our silent consent to the power game of others.
- Co-creative or full participation occurs when we are allowed to follow the rules, but also help make the rules to co-create the kind of structure we want. This kind of participation brings joy and fulfilment.¹⁰

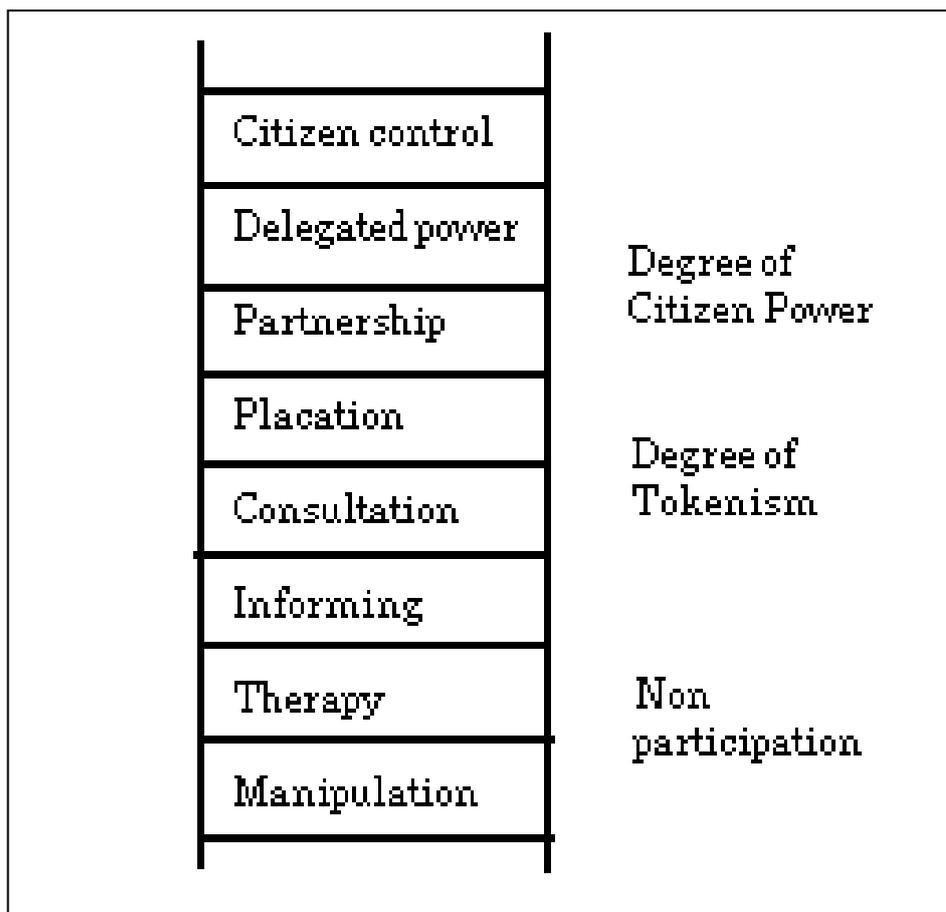
3.4. FULL PARTICIPATION AS ILLUSTRATED BY ARNSTEIN'S LADDER OF PARTICIPATION

According to Sherry Arnstein¹¹ (1969) participation is a categorical term, and highlights the importance of distinguishing between merely engaging in a superficial act of participation and full participation. Full participation impacts positively on outcomes. To illustrate the importance of distinguishing between nonparticipation and various types of participation, Arnstein developed a participation typology in the form of a ladder.

Each rung of the ladder is comprised of one of eight levels of participation and highlights the factors that influence participation. The first two rungs of the ladder represent nonparticipation, the next three indicate degrees of tokenism, the last three levels illustrate degrees of full participation.

¹⁰ Henryk Skolomowski. *The participatory mind*. Penguin Books Ltd. London. 1994. pp151-152

¹¹ Sherry R. Arnstein. A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, vol. 35 (i). 1969. p 216-224



1. Manipulation.

Non participative.

The aim is to influence people (for example: by threatening them directly or indirectly), to change their opinion; to do something they do not agree to; or to get them to accept a plan they do not agree with.

2. Therapy (three kinds of usage). Non participative.

Scenario 1: The aim of therapy is to cure or educate participants.

Scenario 2: Power holders involve participants through therapy to accept a proposed plan decided upon by someone else.

Scenario 3: Power holders involve participants with the focus on curing them of their "pathology" instead of changing the social structures that create their "pathologies".

3. Informing.

A most important first step to legitimate participation.

But too frequently the emphasis is on a one-way flow of information. No channel for feedback.

4. Consultation.

Again a legitimate step.

But this is just a window dressing ritual.

5. Placation.

For example, collect opinions from hand-picked 'worthies'.

It allows participants to advise or plan ad infinitum but retains for one or a few power holders the right to judge the legitimacy or feasibility of the advice.

6. Partnership.

Illustrates a degree of participation - power is redistributed in regard to planning responsibilities. Power is in fact redistributed through negotiation between participants and power holders, in that planning responsibilities are shared.

7. Delegated power.

Illustrates a degree of participation - in that participants' opinions form part of the decision making process. Nobody is treated like a sub-citizen anymore and everyone whose interest is at stake holds power to have an opinion as part of the decision making process.

8. Delegated control.

Illustrates a degree of participation - in that each participant tests his/her opinions to that of others and makes his/her own decisions. Each participant now has the power to take responsible steps to test their opinion to that of others, but stay accountable for the program decided on.

4. COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS.

The practice of community-based learning can be effective in many different ways. Quality partnerships provide quality community engagement opportunities which in turn provide quality community engagement activities for students.

The time for community service projects is over - it is not sustainable. The idea to have a project for every kind of community service required by Faculties or Departments to cover the whole spectrum of subjects intended by an IHE is not practical, cost a lot of money and is doomed to fail.

Academic staff simply does not have the time to be project managers too. A common example of the consequences of the introduction of projects for community service purposes at IHE is the dysfunctional dependency on the institution as a result of the expectation that the institution or lecturers can provide the necessary skills or resources required to make the project work.

The era of community service events is also over. Once-off events (<20 hours) do not contribute to development and do not provide what is needed for a quality experience, knowledge creation, and the creation of reality.

The most successful way community engagement can be carried out is in partnership with a community and its CBOs, in the context of community development. Community development is an ongoing process.

- Trans-disciplinary community engagement at IHEs impacts on development and makes community development possible that otherwise would not have happened.
 - All of the components necessary for community development are present at an IHE like UP. Unfortunately, a single component is too often mistaken as an "outcome" in itself. The result is one-dimensional efforts that seldom achieve much in the long term. For example, a single focus on developing health care resources without simultaneously addressing the ekistic relation in the settlement and individual beliefs and cultural values about the relationship between men and women for instance, will usually fail in the medium and long term.

4.1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES CAN INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Expanding the capacity of CBOs, NGOs, individuals or groups in a community.
- Improving the quality of life of the recipient or beneficiary.
- Contributing towards the development of the community.
- Expanding the functionality of the CBO or NGO, its existing strengths, its energy (manpower), assets and ability to respond to challenges the community faces (needs).

(Impact assessment starts with community engagement activities, however to locate the path of development of the recipients of the services, and to understand the implications of the point it has reached, is not a process of quantitative measurement.)

4.2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Community development through the community, by the Community for the Community.

In most instances very little outside help and support is available to communities to sustain their development efforts. Therefore all potential resources within the community have to be optimised and all individuals in the community are needed to build the capacity of the community towards its collective vision.

Community building starts with relationships. Most communities are fragmented and have to be supported in developing a sense of group-efficacy to take co-responsibility for their own future. Thus, healing becomes part of the process of building a community before constructive community development will be achieved.

A sustainable impact in regard to community development at large can only be made if every one participates and works physically together in a

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coordinated program in a given community. All members of the community must optimise their functions and utilize those components needed for a true holistic community development program, and must follow a “ whole-system” approach towards development.

The change process includes both the development of people and the transformation of society. This development must occur both internally and externally with respect to strengthening the individual on the one hand, and the development of the group internally and externally on the other, which is also scientifically verifiable. Understanding the cognitive development process of people is just as essential as understanding the cultural dynamics created through differences in value systems.

The practical side of community building starts with a socio-environmental analysis that is scientifically done by the community through participatory research, which will eventually reflect the unique variety of community capital present in the community. A proper community development program can then be put together.

A socio-environmental analysis would involve the following:

- Assessment of so-called needs.
 - The symptomatic nature and intensity of “needs” or problems will always change because of the changing environmental factors and personal values or paradigms of thinking of the people involved.
- Auditing or analysing of skills and knowledge (in any community a lot of skills are not utilised).
- Auditing or analysing of the resources, institutions, and infrastructure that exist in the community (it is important that the utilization of all resources must be optimised).
- Determine the different ways or projects, which the community has identified to address the problems.

Participation becomes both the learning and the change process, which is an ongoing process owned and controlled by the community. Through continuous participatory research the community development program, unique to each community, is monitored and sustained and turns community development into a self-organizing system.

This means that the community development process will not be over-controlled or forced. Whilst the whole system will be activated there will be no myth of symptomatic problem solving, but real development will occur.

Communities are chaotic dynamic self-organizing systems that manifest their potential to move forward to higher levels of civilization, becoming more complex in the process. Projects identified by the community are the vehicles that will drive the development program.

While many initiatives to develop highly effective community building and community development leadership training programs have been attempted before, what has been lacking is the focus by teaching facilitators, developers and students on how to integrate and align and form synergies, utilizing a wide variety of disciplines.

One of the most basic models that are used in trying to understand the process of development of individuals and communities was independently identified and described by Dr. Clare Graves, Skolimowski, Ken Wilber, Gernia van Niekerk.

Their approach centres on the development of the individual as part of a group / community, where environmental factors are regarded as playing an important role in the development and transformation process.

5. THEORY AND PRACTICE OF CAMPUS-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

5.1. TYPES OF CAMPUS-COMMUNITY PARTNERS.

- The profile of one - time engagement with a community agency is characterised by distinct objectives - but at the center is what the IHE can do for the community agency and what they will get out of the experience.
- The profile of a potential partner is characterised by shared goals - but at the centre is what the community agency can do for the IHE.
- The profile of a partnership in becoming is characterised by a focus on how the community agency can provide a quality community engagement experience - an experience of knowledge creation.
- The profile of a full partnership is characterised by transformational learning - community agency provides a quality experience, which leads to knowledge creation and the creation of reality, which includes CBL for the student and community learning.

Note: the type and quality of opportunity provided by the community agency and activity identified by the lecturer at each stage of the process of becoming full campus-community partners is different.

5.2. FUNDAMENTALS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE PARTNERSHIPS

- Relationship is foundational to the partnership.
 - When a relationship has to be saved, rather than regulated by a MoU or MoA it is better to analyse the risk and terminate the partnership.
 - Elements of a healthy relationship: empathy, compassion, ethics and openness (reflection), which lead to healthy partnerships.
 - The collaborative design of community engagement activities stem from a good relationship.

- Attend to and nurture the relationship.
- A mutual beneficial agenda.
 - The relationship goes beyond specific community engagement activities. (Combine CCR with curricular related community engagement, this helps with the following.)
- Consider the capacity of all partners and their responsiveness to expectations and needs (especially community agencies).
 - In developing countries, needs are as important as assets would be, in first world countries.)
 - Understand the availability of resources of all partners (especially IHE).
- Understand partner-perspectives.
 - Ensure quality community engagement opportunities identified by community partner.
 - This way both the student and the community will benefit from the activity that is taking place.
- Form community forums and consortiums and integrate involvement in such a way to make community outcomes possible and to create community opportunities that otherwise would not have been possible.
- General elements:
 - Open respectful communication.
 - Honesty.
 - Clear roles and responsibilities.
- Provide training and orientation when and where needed.
- Floating leadership and control according to the nature of the community engagement activity.
- Leadership and control is treated as a role, not a position or a responsibility.
- Accountability is a principle not a responsibility.

5.3. PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Coordination and integration of all the resources (different kinds of services) available for the initiative.
- Identification of a suitable community as partner community.
- Development of a community development plan.
- Implement the development plan.
- Development of partnerships and participative systems within the community and the IHE.
- Identification of projects, ventures and enterprises to drive the development plan.
- Establish a community development committee to ensure that the community takes ownership of the development process.

5.4. GOOD PRACTICE IN PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY AGENCIES (CBOs and NGOs)

- The partnership.
 - Assess the suitability of the potential partnership for the specific community engagement programmes of Faculties or Departments (for instance a clinic for Medical students etc).
 - Take occupational regulations and legislation into consideration.
 - Seek quality partner relationships through a joint sense of intend, meaning and purpose.
- The site.
 - Assess the potential of the site (what infrastructure exist (or not), safety, accessibility etc
 - Do site visits during real working times to see how the CBO function.

- Community engagement opportunities.
 - Identify community opportunities (usually based on needs) that will provide quality community engagement activities.
 - Assess opportunities (determine what level of skills, knowledge is necessary). Potential community engagement opportunities should match the community engagement programmes of Faculties and Departments.

- The partnership.
 - Introduce the potential partner to the Faculty representative or lecturer.
 - Confirm or reject partnership.
 - Establish the partnership and build a kind of relationship according to the needs of each Faculty or Department's community engagement programs.
 - Foster the partnership relationship and get to know each other, especially when the partnership is still in the beginning phase.
 - Collaboration and teamwork is of utmost importance.
 - Don't initiate a full-scale partnership from the start. Begin with some thing such as after-school homework projects, or the building of a jungle-gym, and then add components in the following year such as the transfer of skills to encourage development. Arrange for joint orientation and training opportunities for community members or site managers of CBO where necessary.

- Support.
 - Make a community engagement officer available as a one-stop service.
 - Invite CBO to meet other partners and Faculty members involved in community engagement to assess for themselves if their expectations will be met through community forums. At the

- community forum Community members and Faculty members can reflect, share their experiences and learn from each other. This helps also to prevent later misunderstandings and misconceptions.
- Integrate community service to optimise the impact. Together you can accomplish what can't be accomplish separately.
- When a partnership is confirmed:
 - Both sides of the partnership must agree on a time of engagement that suits both parties and the students involve.
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities.
 - The community partner should take on the leadership position. By its nature IHEs can be very intimidating to CBOs and the community.
 - The IHE plays a supportive role in the partnership.
 - The lecturer takes responsibility for the learning process, the learner for the learning and knowledge creation (through reflection) and the CBO for the reality making.
 - Involve parents or caretakers as partners when children are the beneficiaries and get the buy-in of the children - especially when the program is after school (Mamelodi).

5.5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES IN PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES OR COMMUNITY AGENCIES

- The potential partner can either approach the IHE or be approached by the IHE through the Community Engagement Office or directly by the Faculty or Department involved to form a partnership for community engagement purposes.
- Know your community and get to know and understand the informal leadership of the community - they hold the power on the long-run.
- Check the track record of the potential partner (history, role, responsibility.)

- Understand what the CBO or NGO you are interested in to develop a partnership relationship with, is about.
- Be honest about what community engagement is about and what would be expected from the partnership relationship.
- Respect is the key word. The only reason for partnerships is because the project approach is the other option.
- Plan together from the start.
 - Lecturer or community engagement officer and community partner plan the community engagement activity/activities together from the planning phase right through to assessment of impact.

5.6. PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN IHE AND ORGANISATIONS - CONSORTIUMS.

In instances when a serious problem exists in a community that threatens the quality of life of the whole community, and a trans-disciplinary approach is needed to address the problem.

6. FUNDAMENTALS OF RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP.

Fundamentals of community engagement foster citizenship, which is one part of the coin of which responsibility is the other. Community engagement form an awareness of the following¹²:

- The sharpening of instincts for survival and creating of an awareness of every one in the community's needs.
- A sense of belonging and protectiveness, to create healthy and safe family and community constellations.
- A healthy self-esteem to take charge of one's own life.

¹² The emergence of complex MINDSETS (awareness). Gernia van Niekerk 1998. (Slide 10 training doc.) An interpretation of the theories developed by Clare Graves; Ken Wilber; Don Beck.

- Living in the right way, become ethical to have a meaningful life. Values and beliefs with traditional-cultural, historical, political or religious roots should be put in the right context in trying to make sense of the world.
- A sense of continuous striving for improvement of one's own life... 'As any (organisation or) individual contribute through service to the common good, he/she becomes one of the community's resources.' (Source unknown.)
- Making a difference by improving the way things are done and be more humane and environmental sensitive in creating solutions. Re-instoring the ekistic balance in communities and develop a sense of social responsibility and co-existence (i am because you are...).
- Develop a sense for flexibility and flow, which allow for transformation and to accommodate complexity. Follow a development oriented and not service oriented approach in community engagement.
- Develop a sense for harmony in creating meta-solutions for development and transformation and encouraging people to create solutions in a future sensitive way. This implies not to solve current problems in a way that fosters the creation of more problems in the future.

7. PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PROGRAMMES.

7.1. INTRODUCTION.

Participatory research is the beginning of closing the gap between academia and community and academically based theory and practice theory.

Context is important in participatory research and there are minimum terms implicated, which involve a transition from objective to compassion. The communication of the research and an acceptable validation of it will occur when it is endorsed collectively and create compassion as a vehicle of the

new participatory science. Rationality and empathy should be used as aspects of each other.¹³

I believe people are inherent compassionate but even if a person's personality or mind is not compassionate, that person can become compassionate. However, the development of this capacity is a demanding process of transformation.

Traditional 'Action Research' originates from the work of Kurt Lewin (1946). Action Research as "a comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action and research leading to social action", following a process of "a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the action".¹⁴

Participatory Action Research (Freire, 1987) builds on action research and is the best methodology or tool to use for community development intervention and is a participatory method to test new ideas and implement action for change. It involves direct participation in a research process, is used to monitor and to evaluate the effects of the actions taken or planned to take with the aim of improving the status quo. Action research involves utilizing a systematic cyclical method of planning, taking action, observing, evaluating (including self-evaluation) and critical reflecting prior to planning the next cycle that forms a spiral of understanding.¹⁵

Participatory action research is not just research, which is hoped that will be followed by action. It is action, which is researched, changed and re-researched, within the research process by participants. Nor is it simply an exotic variant of consultation. Instead, it aims to be active co-research, by and for those to be helped. Nor can it be used by one group of people to get

¹³ Henryk Skolimowski. *The participatory mind*. Penguin Books Ltd. London. 1994. p 163- 168

¹⁴ Kurt Lewin. *Action research and minority problems*. *Journal of Social Issues* 2 (1946). P34-46.

¹⁵ 24 Henryk Skolimowski. *The participatory mind*. Penguin Books Ltd. London. 1994. p 19

another group of people to do what is thought best for them - whether that is to implement a central policy or an organisational or service change. Instead it tries to be a genuinely democratic or non-coercive process whereby those to be helped, determine the purposes and outcomes of their own inquiry." (Wadsworth1998)¹⁶

7.2. PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AS USED IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

It is miraculous to experience the difference that participatory action research can make to the genuine empowerment of a community. Participatory action research can be used as a tool in community development. In this context participatory action research is a way of bringing some understanding of what is going on in a community, where the gaps are and what interventions are needed, and how it is going to be done, by who. It involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current action (which they experience as problematic) in order to change and improve it. Participatory action research (PAR) is empowering for it gives a community the opportunity to research (do a fact finding exercise) into themselves as individuals and a community, their inner and external strength and weakness. They do this by critically reflecting on the following:

- PAR as used in community development revolves around 4 domains:
 - the inner and external individual and
 - the inner and external group.
- PAR centres around eight sets of relations, that between the inner and external individual, the inner and external group, the inner individual and inner group, the external individual and external group, the inner individual and external group, the external individual and inner group as influenced by their physical environment.

¹⁶ Wadsworth Y. What is Participatory Action Research. 1989.

- PAR gives a community the opportunity to analyse its so-called needs (which is only symptoms of what is wrong) and to find that what lies beyond these needs or is the reason why these needs exist. (A highly optimised, highly functional community's needs would be addressed, all aspects of life would align and there would be a balance between all domains of life.)
- PAR furthermore gives a community the opportunity to identify the skills and intellectual capital that is present in the community and to ensure them being utilized.
- PAR provide an understanding of what resources exist in the community and what social systems and institutions are still relevant, which ones still have a functional role and which ones have to go.
- Lastly, PAR provides an opportunity to the community to do a self-assessment about the way they solve problems.

7.3. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

- PAR is extremely effective in bypassing pathologies created by politics in society such as racial / gender / sexual power relations.
- PAR should be done by the community for the community, to address specific challenges and problems identified by the community.
- PAR proceeds through repetitive cycles, building on each other like in a spiral. Change agents or practitioners, together with the community start with the identification of major issues, concerns and problems in 4Q's, identify potential, achievable action (project / ventures etc), implement the action, assess the action, continuously reflect on their learning from the actions and proceed to initiate new actions in a new action cycle in the spiral.
- Outcomes for each transformational cycle are difficult to predict from the onset.

- Continuous PAR creates and sustains a process of continuous transformation.
- Success depends on the commitment of all the participants.

7.4. CRITICAL RISK FACTORS OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

- PAR is not the methodology to use and has not the validity as in standard academic research.
- PAR or not - you still find stronger persons want to change things for other people who are perceived to be weaker.
- PAR or not - you still do get communities that prefer handouts and charities to development (the latter which demand taking responsibility for their own future.)

8. PHASES OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Community engagement is a pragmatic process that consists of nine phases. All initiatives have to happen in participation with the members of the community from planning and delivery through to impact assessment and feeding back into the next round.

Involvement of community members in phases 1 and 2 is crucial in highlighting beneficiary perspectives.

Phase 1 - Identify the suitable partner.

- Assess the suitability of the potential partnership for the specific community engagement program intended (for instance a clinic for Medical students etc).
 - Take occupational regulations and legislation into consideration.
 - Seek quality partner relationships through a joint sense of intend, meaning and purpose.

- Assess the site (what infrastructure exist (or not), safety, accessibility etc
 - Do site visits during real working times to see how the CBO function.

Phase 2 - Identify community engagement opportunities based on needs (priorities).

- Use information from community members (where appropriate by means of a process called participatory action research) to identify the priorities for change (community engagement opportunities based on community needs).
- In cases of community development as a whole, ensure that all relevant sectors are supportive of the need for improvement.
- The specific choices about what is a priority must be a local decision taken by members of the communities, lectures and students.
- Identify and set common goals.

Phase 3 - Put together an involvement plan where trans-disciplinary intervention is necessary.

- Put an involvement plan together to ensure that the right people get on board.
- Ensure that the involvement plan fit the priorities identified in phase 2.
- The involvement plan is driven by targets such as to identify roleplayers, identify and assess the needs of the OVCs, move them to the centre, plan their visits to the clinic for treatment etc.

Phase 4 - Develop outcomes (objectives) and put a strategic plan together.

- Developing outcome-based targets guided by the involvement plan in phase 3 is the first step towards delivering impact assessment. These targets interpret the broad priorities in the involvement plan and put the outcomes/objectives into more manageable chunks.

- Decide and record specific outcomes/objectives for improvement in the different areas of the community identified as needs. These outcomes/objectives should be designed to deliver the broad priorities for change that the involvement plan sets out in phases 2 and 3.
- Students should use negotiation to decide on outcomes in putting their strategic plan together.
- Members of the community and students should use evidence available to them about the communities' needs to agree on objectives/outcomes with an order of priority.
- Consider specific techniques you might have to follow in identifying objectives/outcomes.
- Outcomes targets start with a verb: improve, increase, reduce, create etc.

Phase 5 - Develop a time-scaled activity or action plan

- In seeking to deliver your objectives consider which activities are likely to deliver/produce the change (outcomes).
- Consider practicable ways of involving people are most likely to deliver the desired change.
- Consider what order things should happen in. For example, if a consortium of CBOs and NGOs should be convened to consider options, then this needs to be preceded by the setting up of the group.
- Identify which activities will help you to monitor the change needed to achieve the objectives.

Phase 6 - This is where you can start to think about the way you are going to measure the impact of your work.

- Decide what evidence you will look for and how you will collect it (in other words decide and agree on the measures) - this is your baseline to work from.

- Use surveys or community forums to collect the information (also referred to as participative action research), **which will form the baseline of the impact assessment.**
- Think of both quantitative (number-based) measures and qualitative (feeling-based) measures. Effective measures include both.
 - Some examples are:
 - positive change to indicators in surveys (quantitative);
 - evidence from individuals (qualitative);
 - expression of satisfaction from community members (qualitative);
 - photos (qualitative)

Phases 2, 3, 4 and 5 are critical and involvement is very important to create a framework for the assessment of impact later on.

Phase 7 - Implementation / Deliver the action plan.

- At this point the work that was agreed on have to be done. Implementation takes up most of the time. Everyone involved should leave enough time to keep on top of recording and collating the evidence that is coming in.
- Deliver the activities you have planned, collect and record evidence continuously as you go on.
- Look out for and record evidence of unexpected changes.
- If during this phase you identify new activities that was not planned for to deliver positive impact, amend the action plan.

Phase 8 - Assess and communicate impact. (This phase is called 'impact assessment'.)

- At this point the importance of evaluation cannot be overstated. Evaluation helps to make decisions about what to leave out - what not to do - as well as what to put in.
- Participative impact assessment is a form of evaluation. You must involve key stakeholders (people who have a strong interest with

the initiative), with the assessment process to get an unbiased view of how effective you have been.

- Review the evidence in phase 7 to determine how effective activities in phase 5 was at creating the change.
- Record and disseminate the beneficial aspects of the changes.

Phase 9 - Examine the changes/results.

- Make sure that the results are supported by evidence and that results are reasonably argued.
- Consider questions such as the following and provide evidence:
 - What has changed?
 - What impact did the initiative make on the intended outcomes?
 - What unintended outcomes were impacted on?
 - Could the impact have happened without participation and community involvement?
 - What has affected the outcome positively and negatively?
 - Consider whether this area of work should continue. Is this area of work still a priority?
 - What was done well / could be done better / could be done in a different way?

In answering these questions it is important not to be too concerned about measuring and assessing that what is not measurable, such as changes in the environment. It is the intention to make an impact assessment based on the available evidence and practitioners' experience in this area.

Experienced practitioners skip phase 4 moving directly to planning the activities, based on experience, which will deliver the strategic outcomes. Outcomes or objectives do NOT demonstrate whether initiatives have achieved anything. In doing this effective alternatives can be missed which can result into focusing on the outputs of activities not the intended change.

Expect unexpected outcomes that are not directly related to the outcome that was intended to achieve. For example, work that is primarily about improving the health of vulnerable children, may also improve the self-esteem of the children. In these cases make an effort to assess the impact of these other benefits too.

The University and students involve in communities, must be full partners in agreeing on priorities for change as well as the methods for achieving and measuring the success of any involvement.

9. ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

The notion that there is a single method to assess the impact of all community engagement activity is questionable.

Each community engagement activity, from each and every teaching and learning domain and academic field require different methods for doing so. Community engagement is a diverse and not a unified collection of practices and there is no uniform assessment method common to all paradigms, which makes the task of finding a single method to assess the impact, seems impossible.

9.1. IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

Planning activities and measure their impact allow community members, practitioners and students to see how their input and commitment can change things for the better.

Standard impact assessments exist of the following elements:

- Identification of the thing/s that are wanted or expected to happen (goal/s).
- Resources needed to undertake activities (inputs).
- The activities to be undertaken.

- The way in which activities will be undertaken and the order in which they will happen (processes).
- The structures given to the processes.
- The results achieved by activities (outputs).
- The things that change as a result of the activities (outcomes (objectives)).
- The effect/s of the outcomes (this is the impact).

Then also:

- The way of assessing and the process and the conclusions drawn from it.
- The involvement plan and strategy to achieve the outcome/s.

Assessment must always be appropriate to the outcome it is measuring and goals should be matched with the assessment process.

Various impact assessments tool exist. The main purpose of assessment is to identify some sort of change or the effect of change.

Impact assessment, when it comes to community engagement is about finding out whether activities (outputs) and initiatives (processes) actually improved people's lives. This means that the focus must be on what was achieved and changed as a result of the activities, not what has been done. Impact assessment can be necessary to identify potential negative or positive effects across a range of areas.

9.2. PARTICIPATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Community members and students want to know how their commitment and input in working together has changed things for the better. In order to demonstrate this, we need an approach in which devising impact assessments and disseminating results are integral to the planning and delivering of community engagement initiatives.

Participation in discussion and negotiation is vital to successful any community involvement work and community members must have influence on decisions taken at each phase of the community engagement process.

Community participation is vital to effective impact assessments as it enables to identify and target what is most important.

Outcomes that can be delivered by community participation through participatory action research (PAR) and participatory impact assessment (PIA):

- Result in more responsive community members.
- Increase transparency of decision-making.
- Community performance is more effective.
- Increase the capacity, confidence and skills among people who are involved.
- Bring community members together.
- Increase the community's influence over quality of life.
- Build a stronger community.
- Members take more ownership of the initiative and create a balanced human settlement.
- Members of the community take control of their future as a community.

It is essential for all involve in community engagement to do an impact assessment and to document the outcomes that are achieved through all forms of activities and initiatives. Community participation in impact assessment provides a certain depth to the broad framework for impact assessment.

The importance of community participation in impact assessments lies in the fact that there is a tendency to focus on the student and outputs rather than what was achieved by or through community engagement activities and

initiatives. For instance, the number of students involved in community engagement, involvement in a particular community, the number of curricular related community engagement modules or the kind of initiatives that exist may be considered as an indication of the success of the University in regard to community engagement, rather than assessing how successful these initiatives have been in achieving desired goals. The latter approach is followed mainly because of the assumption that what cannot be measured (numbered) is not worth mentioning. This approach however can be effective in ensuring that there are a good number of initiatives undertaken by students involved in community engagement, but it is unlikely to indicate whether the University is directing its efforts to those issues, which are most needed in communities.

Furthermore, if community members can say: “we participate in the impact assessment and the improvement of the quality of life in our community is because of our involvement...” then it may be hard to persuade skeptics that community participation with regard to impact assessment is worthwhile.

In all community issues, participatory impact assessments plays a crucial role because it sets out the changes that community members aspire to, then it measure and report back on what change has occurred and subsequently guide the way forward.

10. A PRACTICE PERSPECTIVE ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE CURRICULAR RELATED COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

10.1. THE LEARNING PROCESS.

Community engagement opportunities and activities should be a quality engagement experience that can be transformed into the creation of knowledge and the creation of reality.

Characteristics of a quality community engagement experience:

- Significance (must relate to the skills, level of skills, maturity of student.)
- A condensed snapshot of society in a specific context.
- Communicable (understood).
- Futuristic oriented (contributive).

In the process of the reality making, the experience is transformed through co-creation and participation, and knowledge is created through reflection.

The reflection process should include the following:

- The relation of reality to existing knowledge.
- The relation of reality to experience.
- The relation of experience to knowledge.
- How new knowledge is possible,
- How new knowledge arises from experience,
- How new knowledge in turn shapes and moulds experience.
- The role of new insights in replacing previous knowledge.
- How new knowledge creates new reality.

Why reflection is so important in CBL.

Reflection = Transformational learning.

Transformational learning has two layers that at times seem to be in conflict:

- the cognitive, rational, and objective
- and the intuitive, imaginative, and subjective.

Two sides of the same coin - the inner and external side of the individual.

Although the emphasis has been on transformational learning as a rational process, we need to consider how to help students use feelings and

emotions both in 'critical reflection' and 'as a means of reflection' to turn development into transformation.

To explain the concept 'development' is difficult because the word is being used in many different ways. Nevertheless, development is an innate and natural process that occurs in all living systems. A development agent cannot bring about change or development as is often spoken of. Development agents intervene into a development process that already exists. The intervention can be into the life of an individual, or a community.

The challenge is to understand the development process in which intervention takes place - who is developing who to become what and why.

Any individual or community is on its own path of development and should be respected as such. It is coming from somewhere, has changed (got stuck etc) along the way and what the next development challenge is likely to be is up to itself.

Individuals, communities or societies that are in process of development do not constantly progress along a smooth incremental line but progress along cyclical phases at their own pace, forming an upward or downward (entropy) spiral. Moving towards a more profound, fundamental and complex form which requires the breaking of the old in order to adopt a new form of existence to settle for a while on a more complex level of existence (in cases of progressive change) in response to a radical change in function - this is when transformation has occurred.

Development often implies progression towards a pre-fixed goal or outcome such as developing an economic system such as can be found in 'highly-developed' western countries.

Transformation, does not imply any predetermined outcome, nor that the process is essentially a positive one. However, the development process is an integral part of transformation, whereby positive development leads to transformation (eventually) from a more simple form towards a more complex form.

Check for transformation - If living conditions have changed it is usually a sign that transformation has occurred (for better or worse that is...)

10.2. PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE CURRICULAR RELATED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

The principles for effective curricular related community engagement can best be described through Dewey's elements of experiential learning brought together in a highly educative form: interaction, reflection and interest in community and democracy. (Dewey 1919-1933)¹⁷. Add to this the internalising of what you've learned in terms of intent and meaning and you have a good recipe for transformational learning.

Practical community service and engagement for at least 40 hours. Students should also be allowed to learn from any segment of the community and to choose their own service activities. Students and lecturers should collaborate together with communities to identify engagement opportunities and they should agree on how to address these engagement opportunities. Direct contact with community, CBO and beneficiaries, working together from planning phase right through to impact assessment (this include pre-planning of the curriculum.)

The experience should be an experiential learning exercise where students and community members learn what they want to learn with an equal importance on benefiting the community and providing valuable learning

¹⁷ Dewey. J. Essays in Experimental Logic (1916) compiled in book 'Logic: The Theory of Inquiry. Democracy and Education (1916), How We Think (1910; revised ed. 1933).

experience to students. Both have the same prospect to make the most out of the situation and to gain knowledge, skills and personal growth. In this context co-creative or full participation occurs (the learners and the community are allowed to follow the rules, help make the rules and so co-create the kind of outcome they want).

The community engagement activities should be:

- Purposeful, based on real life situations.
- About the creation of solutions.
- Support existing causes.
- Creation of new causes.

In preparation and planning:

- Collaborate with a suitable community partner.
- Provide a safe environment to learn, and accept the risk of making mistakes where success is possible.
- Identify an opportunity that can be incorporated through community service as an extension of the curriculum.
- Students should draw from their own skills and knowledge to develop a plan that also mirrors their responsibility.

When implementing:

- Provide meaningful service by using own skills and experience, and obtain academic knowledge.
- All learning experiences have real consequences.
- Give feedback and report to peers, lecturers and community members.

In regard to reflection:

- Debriefing is the beginning of the reflection phase where the experience is placed in to a larger context.
- Reflection can include written responses or discussion.
- Reflection is about solution-focusing as opposed to problem-solving.

- It is often difficult to encourage deep and honest reflection among the learners. However, encouraging written responses can accomplish much more because it allows more time between thinking and reflecting.
- Learners are more willing to reflect when a trusting relationship exists between the learner and the lecturer.
- Try to locate values or beliefs with cultural-historic, religious, or political roots in framing problems and in arriving at solutions during reflection
- There must be an openness not only to frame and reframe complex or unclear problems. Consider and reconsider different interpretations thereof, but also try to understand it in terms of intention and meaning.
- Develop a willingness to look back upon actions after they have taken place and to modify future actions consequently.

10.3. TEACHING METHODS FOR CURRICULAR RELATED COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Curricular related community service can be a module or component of a module, as part of an academic course. However a specific kind of teaching method for community service as part of a formal academic course or curriculum is necessary, opposed to the traditional formal models of education where all learning objectives are explicitly stated and lecturers stand in front of the classroom and pass on information to students to memorise as passive learners.

The appropriate teaching method would be an experiential learning process - learning by doing combined with reflection and internalising the intent and meaning thereof. (Implement this behaviour and thinking in your actions, watch the process and repeat it and adjust where necessary.) Doing or an experience does not necessarily result in learning. Learning is the result of reflecting on an action or an experience and internalising what you have

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learned. Experiential learning is a learning process first described by John Dewey¹⁸.

Dewey described the process of experiential learning as a process that comprises of stating the problem, plan how to solve it, test the plan and reflect upon the results.¹⁹ "Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends, constitutes reflective thought". (Dewey 1993.)²⁰ Through reflection, a person becomes aware of his or her own understanding. When aware of your own understanding you can monitor or regulate your knowledge accordingly, which in the context of what curricular related community set out to achieve, which should contribute towards creating solutions in a more sensitive way.

Reflection in the context of curricular related community service is the process of thinking for a period of time in order to develop higher order solution-creating skills to be able to identify deeper fundamentals, differentiate and integrate these fundamentals from which a more complex mental picture can evolve that consists of a variety of possible solutions and then ultimately choose the best one in a future context. Dewey saw reflection as a form of problem solving that links several ideas together, and look beyond the problem and to link each problem or idea with it's root to resolve issues. Through my experience the typical so-called 'needs analyses' done prior to an intended intervention in a community is a good example in this instance. Look beyond the 'need' and find the roots of the problem and then address the real issue. Needs are merely symptoms or a symptomatic indication that something far more serious is wrong somewhere in the

¹⁸ John Dewey. *Essays in Experiential Logic*. 1961.

¹⁹ John Dewey. *Reflective thought is consecutive, not sequential*. (How we think. pp 4.)

²⁰ John Dewey. *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1993.

system that needs to be addressed through an integrated holistic community development program. (Gernia van Niekerk, 1998)²¹.

Whatever the teaching method used in curricular related community service is called, it should be deep-seated in the belief that all people are intellectuals of unique worth and have something to offer to one another to live in harmony in this world. People learn and develop understanding and complex knowledge through lived experience. Lived experience can further be extended to the belief that all people have the right to their own understanding and to act on their own learning experience. According to Dewey education should be active and practical and students should learn in order to help them at home, in their communities, and prepare them for the future (Dewey, 1952).

Facilitation (to make things easier) is a key component in effective curricular related community service as opposed to conventional teaching, training or educating skills. 'Facilitation is the process of producing change by applying reflection, integration and continuation techniques before, during, or after a learning experience' (Priest, Gass & Gillis p 149. 2000).²² The lecturers' main responsibilities are to advance the learning process and facilitating skills can achieve this.

Various teaching methods exist such as 'Community-based learning' which is a module, as part of an academic course or curriculum that gives students the opportunity to develop their own knowledge from life experiences and apply that knowledge to address challenges or problems in the community or in society.

²¹ The emergence of complex MINDSETS (awareness). Gernia van Niekerk 1998. (Slide 10 training doc.) An interpretation of the theories developed by Clare Graves; Ken Wilber; Don Beck.

²² Simon Priest et al. The essential elements of facilitation. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company. 2000. pp 149.

'Academic Service Learning' is another teaching method used in community engagement in higher education for curricular related community service and is based on the principles of 'action learning' (Reg Revans, 1950)²³. Action learning encourages individual- and group learning through small teams that address real issues and learn from their attempts to solve problems. In action learning, learners first learn about the problem and how to solve it. Secondly, learners learn about themselves, their approach to problem solving, and the way they respond to their peers. Thirdly, learners learn about learning itself.

Action learning is about the learning of the learner. Community appears nowhere in the equation. Action learning serves the purpose of organizational development and teachers' development much better. Action learning can also be a module in its own right as part of an academic program than a teaching method used in community engagement for the purpose of curricular related community service.

11. A PRACTICE PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The merits why an IHE should establish a Department for Community Engagement are endless, but this is my understanding of the situation. All of the components necessary for holistic integrated community development exist within academia such as the UP with all its different subjects in different faculties, schools or departments. The coordination and integration thereof can be done by the office for community engagement and should be their responsibility in order to optimise the impact of the community service done by the Institution.

²³ Reg Revans. ABC of action learning. Kent, England. Chartwell-Bratt Ltd. 1983.

Typically, all over the world, respective disciplines define problems in their own language. Political science sees the world as a power struggle, so solutions tend to be framed in terms of power relationships. Psychologists focus on behaviour and the unconscious. How one defines a problem influences the kind of solutions you look for. Thus economists will say that economic growth is the solution to development, while health care professionals will rather suggest public health and immunization as more appropriate solutions.

These single disciplined solutions each on their own are not effective in regard to community development. Different disciplines must realize that they can only provide part of the solution and the ultimate lies in integrating and synthesizing the contributions of single disciplines into a comprehensive and functional mesh of ideas. There are parallels with individual and community development too. Both are ongoing processes and in both the “internal” psychological development and the “external” community development must be involved simultaneously.

By scientifically integrating the systematic processes of “human” and “community” development harmony can be found between different existing dynamics. This is achieved through alignment and synergy without complicating the whole matter further. External developments without the internal ownership of the process by all the participants will not result in successful development.

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