

Enabling occupation through service learning: Perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements

by

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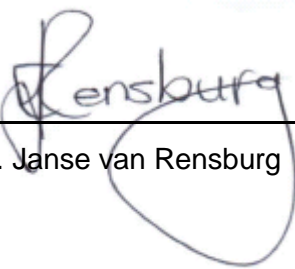
DECLARATION

I, Elize Janse van Rensburg, declare that the Master's Degree research dissertation that I herewith submit for the interdisciplinary Master's Degree qualification in Occupational Therapy (interdisciplinary dissertation with Higher Education Studies) at the University of the Free State is my independent work, and that I have not previously submitted it for a qualification at another institution of higher education.

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E. Janse van Rensburg

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APA	American Psychological Association
CHESP	Community – Higher Education – Service Partnerships
COPM	Canadian Occupational Performance Measure
HPCSA	Health Professions Council of South Africa
JET	Joint Education Trust
NPC	Non Profit Company
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OTPF	Occupational Therapy Practice Framework
SAHECEF	South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SOFAR	Students, Organisations in the community, Faculty, Administrators on the campus, Residents in the community
USA	United States of America
WFOT	World Federation of Occupational Therapists
WHO	World Health Organisation

CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

For the purpose of clarity, some core concepts related to this study are illuminated here. Operational definitions for the purpose of this study are indicated for each concept; however, for some concepts it is necessary to consider conceptual and institutional definitions in order to understand the operational definition in context. Where this was deemed necessary, a conceptual definition from the literature and/or an institutional definition are also provided. Concepts are listed alphabetically and related concepts are cross-referenced as applicable.

Agency (cf. 2.5.4.1)

Operational definition: The capacity of people to act on behalf of themselves, in a way that produces desired social change (Bhattacharyya, 2004, p. 12; Dale, 2013, p. 428).

Collaboration / Collaborative (cf. 4.3.1.2)

Operational definition: “Working with someone to produce something” (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Community (cf. 2.2.2 and 2.5.3)

Conceptual definition: “A group of people united by some common feature or shared interest” and also “the social context in which professional services are provided” (*Stedman’s Medical Dictionary for the Health Professions and Nursing*, 2005, p. 314).

Institutional definition: “‘Communities’ refer to specific, collective interest groups, conjoined in their search for sustainable solutions to development challenges, that participate or could potentially participate as partners in the similarly inclined community service activities of the [university], contributing substantially to the mutual search for sustainable solutions to jointly identified challenges and service needs through the utilisation of the full range of resources at their disposal” (University of the Free State, 2006, p. 7).

Operational definition: The term ‘community’ will be used to refer to groups of people sharing the characteristic of being participants in occupational therapy service learning engagements in a specific community setting.

Community engagement (cf. 2.4.6)

Conceptual and operational definition: “Continuously negotiated collaborations and partnerships between the [university] and the interest groups that it interacts with, aimed at building and exchanging the knowledge, skills, expertise and resources required to develop and sustain society” (University of the Free State, 2006, p. 9).

Community organisation (cf. 2.5.3)

Operational definition: Private, public and non-profit organisations delivering services in a community setting (cf. 'community setting'). Public schools, where direct occupational therapy service delivery is not funded by government, are included in this definition for the purpose of this study.

Community organisation staff (cf. 2.5.3.1)

Operational definition: Staff members who are formally employed by community organisations (cf. 'community organisation').

Community representative (cf. 1.2 and 2.5.3.1)

Operational definition: A member of the community where services are rendered, who by appointment of the community, the community organisation or otherwise, acts as a 'gatekeeper' to the particular community and a collaborator with the university, and represents the community members who are recipients of the services.

Notes: It is already noted here that this does not necessarily mean that the community representative represents the voice of the community as a whole. As members of the communities that they represent, community representatives are able to provide their interpretations of the experiences they have of occupational therapy service learning engagements. Although the assumption is not made that community representatives' perceptions fully represent what is real to the community as a whole, it enables the researcher to do critical inquiry into real issues as perceived by community representatives (Lorenzo, Motau, Van der Merwe, Janse van Rensburg, & Cramm, 2015).

Community setting (cf. 2.2.2)

Operational definition: 'Real life settings' outside of traditional hospital or clinic-based services, where occupational therapy services are not funded by government or private health funding, where a need for social justice and service delivery to under-served communities is an important feature (Dunn, 2011, p. 1; Meyers, 2010, pp. 16–17).

Community site / Service learning site (cf. 3.3.2)

Operational definition: The physical location, usually linked to a specific community-organisation, where service learning activities take place in communities. It should be seen as a concept that also refers to the human resources at such sites (including community representatives and community members) with whom service learning partnerships are negotiated, and with whom service learning activities are performed.

Enablement (cf. 2.2.4)

Conceptual and operational definition: "...[It is the] **processes** of facilitating, guiding, coaching, educating, prompting, listening, reflecting, encouraging, or otherwise collaborating with people so that individuals, groups, agencies or organisations have the means and opportunity to participate in shaping their own lives; enabling is the basis of occupational therapy's client-centered practice and a foundation for client empowerment and justice; enabling is the most appropriate form of helping when the goal is occupational performance" (Townsend, Cockburn, Thibeault & Trentham, 2013, p. 99).

Enabling occupation (cf. 2.2.5)

Operational definition: The process of making it possible for people (individually and collectively) to participate in needed, wanted or required occupations, which promotes health, well-being and occupational justice.

Engagement(s) (noun) (cf. 2.4.6)

Operational definition: Collaborative endeavours ('doing together') between two or more parties (Smith-Tolken, 2010, pp. 46–47) – in the context of this study used to refer to collaborative endeavours between a university and a community or community organisation in the context of service learning.

Occupation (cf. 1.1 and 2.2.3)

Conceptual definitions: "Occupation refers to groups of activities and tasks of everyday life, named, organised, and given value and meaning by individuals and a culture. Occupation is everything people do to occupy themselves, including looking after themselves (self-care), enjoying life (leisure) and contributing to the social and economic fabric of their communities (productivity)" (CAOT in Polatajko et al., 2013, p. 17).

Operational definition: The individually appraised, goal-directed things that people actively do on a daily basis, to satisfy human needs, and that gives purpose and meaning to life. Occupation is viewed as both the primary **means** and the **end** of occupational therapy intervention (operational definition derived by the researcher from definitions by Christiansen & Baum, 2005, p. 548; Pierce, 2003, p. 44; CAOT in Polatajko et al., 2013, p. 17; Yerxa, 1993, p. 5).

Occupational therapy (cf. 2.2)

Conceptual and operational definition: "Occupational therapy is a client-centered health profession concerned with promoting health and well-being through occupation. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational therapists achieve this outcome by working with people and communities to enhance their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their occupational engagement" (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2012, p. 3).

Occupational justice (cf. 2.2.1)

Conceptual and operational definition: "...equitable opportunity and resources to enable people's engagement in meaningful occupations" (Wilcock & Townsend, 2000, p. 84).

Partnership (cf. 1.1 and 2.5.4)

Conceptual definition: A specific type of relationship which is characterised by closeness, equity and integrity (Bringle, Clayton, & Price, 2009, p. 3).

Institutional definition: "A partnership can be defined as a collaborative engagement between two or more parties sharing a similar vision, aimed at reaching a common goal by devising and implementing a mutually agreed to modus operandi while maintaining their respective identities and agendas. ... In the context of community service learning, a partnership entails knowledge-based collaborations between a university, an identified community and the service sector, where all partners contribute to the mutual search for sustainable solutions to challenges and service needs. Such partnerships do not only focus on the intended outcomes but also on the reciprocal teaching and learning, development, knowledge generation and change that occur during the process" (University of the Free State, 2006, p. 26).

Operational definition: The relational context within which service learning is situated. In this dissertation partnership is usually used to refer in general to the relationship between the university (primarily academic staff) and the community (primarily community representatives) due to its use in this context where the study was conducted.

Note: Please note that in agreement with the conceptual definition(s) cited, 'partnership' was not the unit of analysis in this study. Rather, the term 'engagement' was used to denote the construct under study as it allowed for a description of both the relational and non-relational factors impacting on service learning.

Perception(s) (cf. 1.2)

Conceptual definition: "The process by which we interpret and make sense of the things that are presented to our senses" (Jordan, Carlile, & Stack, 2009, p. 260).

Operational definition: People's interpretations of their experiences.

Practice learning (cf. 2.3)

Conceptual and operational definition: "The process of acquiring professional competence by defining the aspirations and addressing the needs of individuals, groups or communities using professional actions with the guidance of a university practice educator and/or site learning facilitator." This definition includes clinical practice, fieldwork and service learning (Lorenzo, Duncan, Buchanan, & Alsop, 2006, pp. 5, 276).

Reciprocity (cf. 2.5.4.1 and 4.3.1.3 c)

Conceptual and operational definition: “Service learning demonstrates reciprocity between the [university] and the community when the service learning is organised to meet both the learning outcomes of the module and the service needs identified by the community” (Bender, Daniels, Lazarus, Naude, & Sattar, 2006, p. 103). In addition, the sharing and co-creation of knowledge is viewed as a pivotal aspect of reciprocity in service learning engagements (University of the Free State, 2006, p. 26).

Service learning (cf. 1.1 and 2.4.4)

Conceptual definition: “...a course or competency-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in mutually identified service activities that benefit the community, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility” (Bringle, Clayton, & Hatcher, 2013, p. 338).

Institutional and operational definition: “An educational approach involving curriculum-based, credit-bearing learning experiences in which students (a) participate in contextualised, well-structured and organised service activities aimed at addressing identified service needs in a community, and (b) reflect on the service experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the linkage between curriculum content and community dynamics, as well as achieve personal growth and a sense of social responsibility” (University of the Free State, 2006, pp. 9–10). In addition to the above, which is generally also stated in North American-based conceptualisations of service learning, the institutional definition emphasises the following: “It requires a collaborative partnership context that enhances mutual, reciprocal teaching and learning among all members of the partnership (lecturers and students, members of the communities and representatives of the service sector)” (University of the Free State, 2006, pp. 9–10).

Service learning coordinator (cf. Preface and 3.3.2)

Operational definition: A specifically appointed lecturer in the occupational therapy department at the university where the study was conducted, who is responsible for the overall planning (including initial and annual contracting with service learning sites) and coordination (including developing student assignments) of service learning activities. Supervision at service learning sites is not necessarily done by the service learning coordinator; service learning supervisors are appointed for this purpose.

Service learning supervisor (cf. 3.3.2)

Operational definition: A qualified occupational therapist employed either by the university or the community organisation where service learning takes place, who is responsible for contracting and collaborating with community representatives together with the service learning coordinator, as well as for direct supervision of student service learning activities (cf. 'site learning facilitator' in the definition of 'practice learning').

Social field (cf. 2.2.1) (e.g. 'occupational therapy in the social field')

Operational definition: An occupational therapy practice field outside of traditional health settings, concerned with social / societal affairs (Creek, 2014, p. 52).

Social responsibility (cf. 2.4.4 and 2.5.1.3)

Conceptual and operational definition: "The desire to work toward making a difference in the civic life of a community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes" (Maloney, Myers, & Bazyk, 2014, p. 147).

PREFACE

Philosophical stance and contextual background

a. Introduction

A scrawny, mangy dog chews steadily on a broken toy, the slimy remnant of a cheap plastic doll. It pauses and pants, oppressed by the heat, then gets up and sniffs the small wooden cross on the grave. ... By my side, in this makeshift graveyard overflowing with corpses, the young North American health officer stands silent. A year ago, despite strong local protest, he lobbied long and hard to have money earmarked for microcredit, sanitary infrastructures and social development moved into his medical budget. He needed some sophisticated diagnostic tool for a non-fatal parasitic infection, and won. Using his influence and status as a doctor, it was child's play to sway the committee. Today, he surveys with me the 25 to 30 graves of internally displaced persons who, over the past year, have died of illnesses directly linked to malnutrition and lack of sanitation. I ask him: "How often have you used your test over the last 12 months, and has it saved lives?" "Seven, maybe eight times." He adds nothing about saving lives or not, and we then ride back to town in silence. He gets off before I do and as he steps out of the Jeep, he turns towards me, choked up: "I want you to know that, when I was in medical school, nobody ever taught me about the big picture" (Thibeault, 2006, p. 159).

Of all the stories, books and articles I have read in the course of this study, this vignette has influenced me most. I had wondered why, and had to reflect on my strong association with it, as I suspected that it may give me more insight into my own philosophical stance. I will attempt to articulate these reflections and their implications on the study from the 'offices' of a human being irrevocably interconnected to others, an educator and an occupational therapist, following which I will outline the philosophical underpinnings that influenced this study. Finally, in concluding this preface, I will present some salient aspects of the contextual background to this study.

b. Reflections on my philosophical stance

On a personal, emotive level my responses to reading the vignette varied between sadness, frustration and anger, projected primarily from the injustice of what this story depicted. Together

with an emotional response, it also elicited in me the need to ‘do something about it’ – to bring about change where injustices occur.

Secondly, in my position as an educator at a university the final sentence quoted in the story caused an enormous sense of accountability in terms of what we teach our students. To what extent does the content that we teach, and more importantly, the way in which we teach, enable students to really come to know the ‘big picture’? I also wondered how often things that we do with good intentions, without considering the big picture, actually caused injustices without us even being aware of it.

Thirdly, as an occupational therapist my concerns with justice in general were particularly steered toward occupational justice. Occupational justice is a concept that developed from the related concept of social justice in the field of occupational science, and refers to the right of individuals to have the means and the opportunity to engage in meaningful occupations (Durocher, Gibson, & Rappolt, 2013; Wilcock & Townsend, 2000).

These reflections on the narration highlighted strong identifications with justice and change and how these concepts relate to the areas of higher education and human occupation. After consulting research literature on the various worldviews or paradigms, I learned that such concerns with justice and change align with the advocacy and participatory worldview as described by Creswell (2009, p. 9), and what Mertens (2010, p. 30) depicts as the transformative paradigm. This philosophical stance informed the initial planning of the research question and methodology and will be discussed in Chapters 1 (cf. 1.2) and 3 (cf. 3.1) respectively.

Although the research question and methodology of this study evolved to take on an alternate form than initially anticipated, and the transformative paradigm from where this study originated is not overt in the final question and methodology, these roots, nonetheless, and perhaps inevitably so, re-emerged in the conclusions and recommendations proposed in the final chapter of this dissertation. The organic evolution of this study brought my original concern full circle and yielded at least some answers to the questions I grappled with in my attempts to understand occupational justice, enablement and the role of service learning engagements herewith.

While consulting literature on worldviews I realised that in addition to strong associations with the transformative paradigm, I also identify with the paradigm of pragmatism. Most prominently, my pragmatic concern with effectiveness – that is, what works and what does not work – and the emphasis on the difference that the research could make (Mertens, 2010, pp. 36–37) were central to the rationale and the development of the final research question (cf. 1.3) of this study.

Although I forged an ontologically strong identification with the basic assumptions of the pragmatic paradigm, the somewhat eclectic epistemology associated with pragmatism did not provide me with sufficient theoretical grounding regarding ‘the way in which knowledge could be generated’. This caused me to investigate research paradigms further in an effort to discover one that could guide methodological decision-making in this study. Conversely, perhaps it was exactly the pragmatic paradigm’s permission to the researcher “to choose the methods (or combination of methods) that work best for answering their research questions” (Mertens, 2010, p. 38), and not the perceived lack of theoretical grounding, that sparked my continued search into other suitable paradigms.

It was perhaps an arduous journey, but one that finally led me to what I, based on my initial questions and some preliminary data, considered the most suitable paradigm in which to delineate the methodological foundation of this study, namely constructivism. The reasoning and motivation for the choice of research paradigm(s) are discussed fully in Chapter 3.

In conclusion then, a combination of three research paradigms informed the positioning, methodological decision-making and recommendations of this study – an occurrence that seems to be in accordance with postmodern research approaches, particularly in qualitative research, which acknowledges the interrelatedness of research paradigms and allows for the use of an amalgamation of complementary paradigms (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a, p. 57). Figure 1 provides a visual summary of the paradigms that informed my philosophical stance and specifically to indicate the way in which each of these paradigms influenced this study as discussed in the preceding paragraphs.

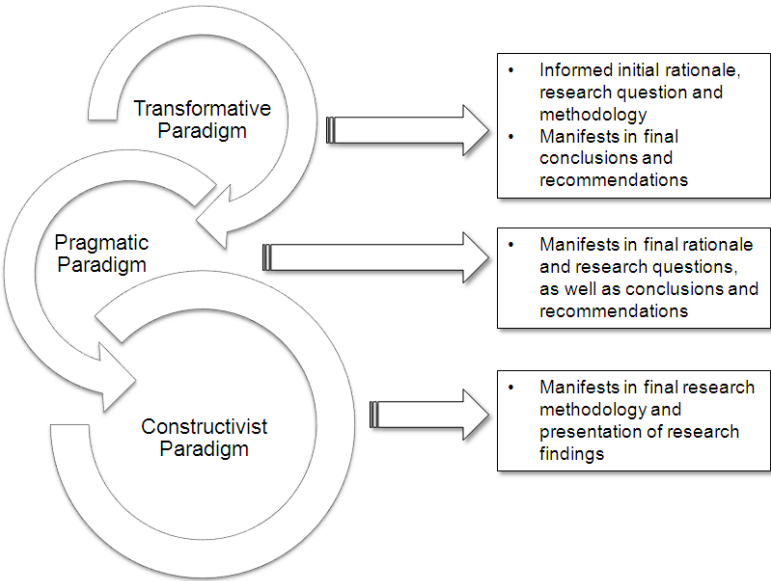


Figure 1: Paradigms informing the researcher’s philosophical stance, and their influence on the study (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg)

c. Contextual background

In addition to providing contextual background regarding my philosophical stance, information regarding my work context, in as far as it influences this study, is deemed essential to provide the milieu in which this study occurred.

I qualified as an occupational therapist in 2007, where after I completed my compulsory community service year in 2008 at a district hospital in one of the largest informal settlements in the country. In 2009 I was appointed as a junior lecturer at the occupational therapy department at the university where this study was executed; also the university from which I graduated. My primary responsibility was to coordinate the service learning activities within the undergraduate occupational therapy programme after the department had implemented service learning as a teaching method for the first time in 2008. In this position I was responsible for liaising with existing community partners, establishing new community partnerships and further developing the service learning component of the curriculum. I completed a credit-bearing semester course on service learning (module code HOS717) to equip me with the background knowledge and skills necessary to coordinate service learning in a way that would be theoretically sound and practically feasible.

I occupied the service learning coordinator position for three years until 2011. It was in my last year as service learning coordinator that this study was first envisaged. As the reflections in the previous section suggest, I was particularly concerned with questions such as the following ('we' referring to the collective involvement of students, lecturers, service learning supervisors and the service learning coordinator at the specific department):

- Are we doing what we should be doing when doing service learning?
- How are we perceived by the community? Are we perceived to make a positive contribution or do communities perceive to be exploited or in some way disadvantaged by our involvement in the community? What are factors that contribute to these perceptions?
- What works and what does not work when doing service learning?

In my quest for answers to these questions, I perceived that evaluating the existing practice of service learning in the department would inform future service learning engagements and from there the initially planned evaluation research (cf. 3.1) commenced. Positioned within the evaluation research design, the planning of this study continued to the point of approaching community partners for permission to execute the study and obtaining ethical approval in 2012. However, in the same year I accepted an alternate position within the same department and my direct involvement in service learning discontinued, although the study proceeded.

My involvement as service learning coordinator prior to the execution of the study implied that I had established working relationships with many of the participants in the study. For some, this

working relationship was fairly superficial, specifically in areas where I acted only as coordinator of the student placements and not as supervisor of student activities. This meant that I was only involved in contracting stages of project implementation and not in the day to day activities throughout the year. At other areas, however, I had been involved as both coordinator and supervisor – resulting in a much deeper, more personal relationship with the participants. In still other, newer areas, I had no previous involvement with the participants. It occurred to me that varying levels of previous involvement could potentially influence the study in different ways. I reflect on these potential influences as well as the ways in which I managed them in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.3.5.1. d).

d. Conclusion

The preface attempted to provide an overview of the philosophical stance of the researcher and illustrated the influence of the transformative, pragmatic and constructivist paradigms on this study. It also reflected briefly on the organic evolution of the study that grew from an initial evaluation research perspective to descriptive research that presents the experiences of the participants as they emerged. Additional contextual information on the various work-related positions of the researcher was also provided. This section provided the contextual framework for the introduction of the research topic, problem statement, rationale and the resulting research questions and objectives in the following chapter, Chapter 1 – *Introduction and Orientation*.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and orientation

1.1 Introduction

Occupational therapists concern themselves with human occupation – that is, the individually experienced and appraised, goal-directed things that people actively do, to satisfy human needs, and that gives purpose and meaning to life (cf. Concept Clarification). Historically, this concern with occupation was imbedded in a medical model with the aim to restore occupational function when lost as a result of illness or disability. However, the profession has broadened its focus to include the promotion of occupation for all people, also embracing a social model for occupational therapy service delivery (M. Duncan & Alsop, 2006, p. 14; Galheigo, 2005, p. 88; Malfitano, Lopes, Magalhaes, & Townsend, 2014, p. 2). This shift has widened the scope of occupational therapy practice to encompass health promotion, prevention, community-based rehabilitation and social development as focus areas for occupation-based interventions (M. Duncan & Alsop, 2006, p. 11), with ever increasing reference to occupational therapists' role in the promotion of social and more specifically, occupational justice (Durocher et al., 2013; Malfitano et al., 2014; Townsend & Marval, 2013). Polatajko (2001, pp. 204–207) summarised the disciplinary evolution of occupational therapy as moving from providing diversional activities through utilising therapeutic activity, to what is succinctly called 'enabling occupation' (see also Townsend and Polatajko, 2007) (cf. 2.2.1).

In keeping with the ongoing evolution of the face of the profession, occupational therapy training curricula are constantly reviewed, refined and expanded. Perhaps contrary to some other disciplines, occupational therapy training institutions have utilised forms of community-based education in curricula from its inception in South Africa. However, service learning as a specific teaching method was only employed from the first decade of the twenty first century in occupational therapy curricula (Flecky, 2011, pp. 10–11), coinciding with the implementation of service learning in South African higher education through the Community – Higher Education – Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, pp. 76–77). In this short time, service learning engagements with occupational therapy academics and students have emerged in many communities across South Africa, and publications on service learning in occupational therapy proliferated (e.g. Alsop, 2007; Du Toit & Wilkinson, 2010; Lorenzo, Duncan, Buchanan, & Alsop, 2006; Pretorius & Bester, 2009).

However, the primary focus of most of these publications was on investigating and establishing service learning as valid pedagogy. As a result, especially the educational effects of service learning on students has been widely researched across disciplines (e.g. Carmichael, 2009;

Naudé, 2011; Osman & Petersen, 2010) as well as within occupational therapy education (e.g. Witchger Hansen et al., 2007; Janse van Rensburg & Du Toit, 2012; Lohman & Aitken, 2002; Pretorius & Bester, 2009) (cf. 2.5.1), bearing mostly positive results. On the other hand, service learning as an educational approach is sometimes criticised for its potentially high resource and time cost, limitations in terms of applicability across disciplines and diverse student groups, and holding a specific ideological position (Butin, 2006, 2010; Jones, Lepeau, & Robbins, 2013) (cf. 2.4.5 & 2.5.1.4).

While the educational benefits and pitfalls of service learning have been well researched, evidence for the impact of occupational therapy service learning engagements in communities, from the perspectives of community partners, is as limited in South Africa (Alsop, Duncan, Lorenzo, & Buchanan, 2006, p. 270) as elsewhere (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010, p. 437; Butin, 2010, pp. 14–15). South African authors such as Nduna (2007, p. 71), Netshandama (2010, p. 71), Smith-Tolken (2010, p. 8) and Van Schalkwyk and Erasmus (2011, p. 62) bemoan the fact that the views and perceptions of communities in service learning engagements remain largely unexamined. In addition, a review of international service learning literature indicates that there are still significant limitations to existing literature on community outcomes of service learning, including that studies are not guided by theory and lack methodological rigour. The authors of the review extrapolated “conclusions about community outcomes of service learning must be viewed as preliminary” (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 402). In this regard, occupational therapy service learning literature mirrors general trends in service learning literature, with very few publications investigating service learning partnerships or the outcomes of service learning from the perspectives of communities (Witchger Hansen, 2010, p. 46).

The Department of Occupational Therapy at the university where this study was executed integrated service learning as a specific educational approach into its core undergraduate curriculum in 2008 (cf. Preface). All first to fourth academic year occupational therapy students participate in service learning as part of their course. The institutional definition of service learning at the time, which is still valid today, was used to guide the establishment of service learning activities (although in many cases full adherence to this definition was the ideal, not the reality). It reads as follows:

Service learning: An educational approach involving curriculum-based, credit-bearing learning experiences in which students (a) participate in contextualised, well-structured and organised service activities aimed at addressing identified service needs in a community, and (b) reflect on the service experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the linkage between curriculum content and community dynamics, as well as achieve personal growth and a sense of social responsibility. It requires a collaborative partnership context that enhances mutual, reciprocal

teaching and learning among all members of the partnership (lecturers and students, members of the communities and representatives of the service sector) (University of the Free State, 2006, pp. 9–10).

Service learning partnerships¹ were established between the occupational therapy department and various community partners. Many of these ‘community partners’ were community organisations such as residential care facilities (‘old age homes’) and day care centres where the occupational therapy department had previously been involved in other forms of community-based education (such as fieldwork). New partnerships were, however, also formed. The most prominent of these was a rural service learning partnership that had been negotiated institutionally by the community engagement office of the university from 2006. A Non Profit Company (NPC)² was consequently established by members of the community to represent the community (consisting of three rural towns in the Free State situated within a 100km radius of one another) in the partnership. The occupational therapy department joined this pre-negotiated partnership with other disciplines (including other allied health professions, nursing and social work) in 2008. One other new partnership was formed in 2009 in response to a community organisation approaching the occupational therapy department to request student involvement with this organisation. The histories and nature of the various service learning partnerships at this university is therefore quite diverse.

Similar to what was found in the perusal of literature, there had been enquiry into occupational therapy students’ experiences of service learning at this university (Janse van Rensburg & Du Toit, 2012), but a significant awareness emerged, perhaps in view of occupational therapy’s core professional value of client-centeredness, to shift an apparent research focus from the students’ perceptions to also include those of the community partners regarding occupational therapy service learning engagements.

1.2 Problem statement

As outlined in the introduction (cf. 1.1) and expanded on in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.2.3, 2.2.4 & 2.2.5), ‘enabling occupation’ encapsulates the occupational therapy profession’s domain of concern, that is, ‘enabling occupation’ specifies ‘what’ and ‘how’ occupational therapists should be doing in order for occupations to be of value for health, well-being, community development and to promote social justice (Wilcock, 1999, p. 10). Bearing this in mind, I argue that in broad terms, occupational therapy service learning engagements should have occupational enablement as the overarching objective.

¹ The use of the term ‘partnership’ is a contentious issue in service learning literature. Please refer to the Concept Clarification, as well as Chapter 2 (2.5.4.1) for conceptual clarification on the use of the term in this dissertation.

² At the time this was known as a Section 21 Company, but in terms of the *Companies Act (Act 71 of 2008)*, these companies were re-registered as Non Profit Companies.

I have pointed out the evident lack of research into communities' perceptions of service learning engagements, also in occupational therapy, and at this university (cf. 1.1). To this date the absence of the community voice from research is a glaring omission that is apparent in a profession (occupational therapy) and a pedagogy (service learning) that so highly values the voices of the people and communities we partner with (Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013, p. 82; Kronenberg & Pollard, 2005, pp. 10–11; Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 389,402). Although it is assumed that by nature service learning will benefit communities through collaborative curriculum design with communities as partners, there is little empirical evidence to support these assumptions (Butin, 2010, p. 10), especially evidence for the effect that service learning has on communities as *perceived* by these communities. Alsop et al. (2006, p. 270) also emphasise the need for research regarding the outcomes of occupational therapy service learning engagements in South Africa – that is, the enablement of occupation through occupational therapy service learning engagements.

Heeding these calls, the problem statement is consequently articulated as follows: **Service learning in occupational therapy should, in a broad sense, be aimed at 'enabling occupation' in communities. However, we do not know how communities perceive this intended occupational enablement, and the mechanisms that are perceived to act as facilitators and barriers to occupational enablement in service learning engagements at this university.**

Without knowing how communities perceive occupational therapy service learning engagements, it is difficult to establish whether these engagements are done in a manner that promotes social and occupational justice, a manner that is effective, a manner that is contextually relevant and ultimately enables occupation in the 'big picture' (cf. Preface). Communities' perceptions of service learning engagements also determine their willingness to sustain current engagements and to establish future engagements to a large extent (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 413), and as such necessitates the attention of occupational therapy service learning practitioners and researchers.

Consequently, it is imperative to investigate the perceptions of communities, community members, or specific persons who could be regarded as their representatives regarding enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements so as to inform current practices and future engagements in occupational therapy service learning endeavours. The contextual nature of this study executed at one South African university predicts that the study would yield results that are specific to the unique characteristics of the service learning engagements that were included in this study (cf. 3.3.1 & 3.3.2). Given the need for contextually relevant occupational therapy practices, this is viewed as a potential strength, rather than a limitation, of this study.

Perceptions are defined as “the process by which we interpret and make sense of the things that are presented to our senses” (Jordan et al., 2009, p. 260). In other words, perceptions are people’s interpretations of their experiences. As members of the communities that they represent, community representatives are able to provide their interpretations of the experiences they have had of occupational therapy service learning engagements. Conceding to the arguments of Bringle and Clayton (2013, p. 540) and Smith-Tolken (2010, p. 8), the assumption is not made that community representatives’ perceptions fully represent what is real to the community as a whole (cf. 2.5.3). However in the occupational therapy service learning engagements under study, community representatives were those community members with the most experiences of both the partnership-side and the service-side of the service learning engagements. This meant that they would be able to share perceptions about the service learning process as a whole – from partnership formation through the implementation and conclusion stages. Owing once again to the lack of research in this regard, a study that could take a holistic view on occupational therapy service learning engagements, including partnership and outcomes perspectives (as opposed to ‘zooming in’ on only one aspect), was deemed most appropriate.

Finally, the use of the term ‘engagements’ warrants brief mention here. With reference to a more comprehensive discussion on this topic in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.4.6) the term ‘engagements’ was preferred over other related terms such as ‘partnership’, as the focus of this study was not (only) on the nature of the relationship(s) between the community and the university. Rather, I wanted to investigate community representatives’ perceptions about what occupational therapy students were doing together with communities (as immersed in a partnership). I viewed this ‘collective doing together’ as what is meant by ‘engagement’ (Smith-Tolken, 2010, p. 48) – hence the use of ‘service learning engagements’ to refer to the subject under study in terms of community participants’ perceptions.

Bearing in mind the problem statement and use of terminology in the problem statement, the main and subsidiary research questions are now identified.

1.3 Research questions

The overarching research question of this study is articulated as follows:

How do community representatives perceive occupational enablement through service learning in occupational therapy service learning engagements at a South African university?

In asking this question, I aimed to investigate the following subsidiary questions at this university:

1. What are the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements?
2. What are the perceived barriers to enabling occupation through service learning?
3. What are the perceived facilitating factors to enabling occupation through service learning?

1.4 Purpose and objectives of the research

Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi and Wright (2010, p. 287) suggest that in a qualitative study, a concise statement of the aim of the study be delineated from the research problem, and stated as a research purpose. Research aims and objectives are not usually stated as is the case in quantitative studies, although the option is given to the researcher to state these as well (Botma et al., 2010, p. 296).

The purpose of this study was to **describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning in communities, as well as the barriers and facilitating factors to this process, at a South African university.**

I have opted to identify specific objectives in addition to the purpose, namely:

1. To describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning.
2. To describe community representatives' perceptions regarding barriers to enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements.
3. To describe community representatives' perceptions regarding facilitating factors to enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

1.5 Research design and methodology

Studies investigating the outcomes of service learning for communities often make use of qualitative research methodology. However, many of these studies are criticised for lacking methodological rigour, and not following guidelines for ensuring trustworthiness (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 402). Nonetheless, qualitative research methodology remains an effective way to investigate diverse and dynamic phenomena such as experiences of and consequent perceptions about service learning engagements (Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 553). In an attempt to access the 'community voice' in occupational therapy service learning engagements to this end, a qualitative approach was followed in this study. Positioned in an **interpretive, constructivist paradigm** (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 31) (cf. 3.2), I employed a **descriptive, qualitative enquiry design** (Botma et al., 2010, p. 194) in order to describe the perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements regarding enabling occupation (cf. 3.3.1).

Before commencing with data collection I obtained approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the university where the study was executed (cf. 3.4). I then negotiated entry into the various community sites in collaboration with the occupational therapy department staff and 'gatekeepers' at service learning sites. I also performed a separate field visit to each of the sites prior to data collection. After obtaining permission from the respective sites and informed consent from prospective participants, I conducted **semi-structured individual interviews** with eight community representatives from seven different occupational therapy service learning community sites (cf. 3.3.5). Utilising non-probability, purposive sampling, all the community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements at this university, who complied with the inclusion criteria (cf. 3.3.3) and consented to participate, were included in the study.

As the primary research instrument I was subjectively and reflexively involved in the research process (Creswell, 2009, p. 177). Following transcription of the recordings of interviews by an independent professional transcriber, I checked the transcriptions against the recordings for accuracy, and de-identified the transcriptions before data analysis commenced (cf. 3.3.6). Two co-coders assisted me with the qualitative content analysis of the transcribed interviews, following an inductive, **systematic content analysis** approach adapted from Creswell (2013, pp. 180–187) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010, p. 153). Data was independently coded by respective coders using descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2009, p. 70), grouped into categories and synthesised into themes (cf. 3.3.7). The interpretive nature of qualitative research was especially evident in this stage of the research process. Findings resulting from data analysis were reported using verbatim quotations and thick, rich descriptions triangulated with literature in order to contribute to the overall trustworthiness of the study (Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 155; Schurink, Fouché, & De Vos, 2011, p. 420) (cf. 3.3.8).

The research paradigm, study design, research context, data collection, data management and data analysis methods and the strategies employed to enhance the trustworthiness and the ethical implementation of the study are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.6 Significance of the research

Building on the initial rationale of the study (cf. Preface) the significance of this study can be summarised into two main endeavours. Firstly, this study attempts to contribute to addressing the relative absence of the community voice in occupational therapy service learning literature. Secondly, the study aims to make a contribution to improving existing service learning practices at the occupational therapy department where this study was implemented. I will argue the relevance of these two endeavours and in concluding this section I will also reflect on the limitations of the study that flow from the arguments on relevance.

1.6.1 The community voice

...studies [that focus on the community voice in relation to service learning] are necessary as they could encourage the involvement of the community in evaluation [of service learning] that could in turn lead to an improvement of [service learning]. (Nduna, 2007, p. 69)

While all conceptualisations of service learning are built on the notion of benefit to both the student and the community, it is impossible to ascertain whether communities actually perceive to benefit from service learning endeavours without accessing and listening to the community voice (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 389). ‘Objective evaluations’ of the impact of service learning activities in communities, however, do not necessarily imply accessing the community voice, as the ‘objective measures’ of impact or success do not necessarily reflect the perceptions of communities. As Walker (1985 in MacPherson & McKie, 2010, p. 456) points out: “Traditional evaluation studies frequently overlook that services may mean different things to different people. In part, this is because the criteria for success employed in evaluation are generally restricted to those held by the sponsors.” While evaluation studies would also be crucial to inform the body of knowledge in occupational therapy and service learning the way in which occupational therapy service learning engagements are perceived by communities is pivotal to guide future occupational therapy service learning engagements.

Butin (2010, p. 11) points out that “service-learning is both potentially transformative and repressive.” Without knowing how communities perceive occupational therapy service learning engagements, the danger exists that much time, resources and effort is spent on an endeavour that, at best, might not be transformative at all, or at worst, be perceived as repressive. Albeit then only as a starting point to uncovering the true nature of the effects of service learning in communities, investigating how communities perceive occupational therapy service learning engagements – listening to the voice of the community in this regard – is imperative.

This study thus aims to contribute to the body of knowledge in occupational therapy service learning with specific emphasis on the community voice as reflected in the perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements. In doing so, I also hope to contribute to showing that the community voice is not only valued in occupational therapy service learning engagements at a South African university, but that it can also inform the practice of service learning in occupational therapy education.

1.6.2 Informing current practice

This study aims to make a contribution to informing and improving existing service learning practices at the occupational therapy department where this study was conducted. By investigating the perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service

learning engagements, with specific emphasis on the core business of occupational therapy, namely 'enabling occupation', the vision is to utilise the findings of the study to inform the ways in which occupational therapy service learning engagements are approached and implemented, to ultimately contribute to more just, more effective and more relevant occupational enablement, relevant to the 'bigger picture' (cf. Preface).

To this end, perceptions regarding 'enabling occupation' as well as factors that are perceived as barriers and facilitators to this process are investigated (cf. 1.4). In keeping with the qualitative nature of this study, the research questions seek answers that are contextually relevant to the occupational therapy service learning engagements at the specific university, and not necessarily answers that are generalisable to all service learning or all occupational therapy service learning endeavours. However, through declaring the research context and providing thick, rich descriptions (Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 155; Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 336; Schurink et al., 2011, p. 420) of research methods and findings, the transferability of the findings of this study to other contexts could be scrutinised and argued. Also, explicating the limitations of the study of which the researcher are aware may assist the reader in this regard.

1.6.3 Limitations to the significance of the study

Limitations of the study are addressed more comprehensively in Chapter 5 (cf. 5.5). However, I deemed it necessary to reflect on the limitations of the study, in light of the arguments presented in favour of its significance, in order to maintain a critical, reflexive stance (Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 30; Creswell, 2013, p. 47). For this reason, I shortly point out some salient limitations here:

- I have argued the relevance of accessing and listening to the 'community voice' in occupational therapy service learning engagements (cf. 1), and indicated that in this study specifically the perceptions of community representatives will be investigated (cf. 1.2). This poses a limitation in the sense that community representatives are not necessarily the so-called 'recipients' of the services rendered in service learning and therefore does not necessarily represent the 'community voice' as a whole (Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 540). However, while acknowledging this as a limitation of the study, I have argued the rationale for including community representatives in this study (cf. 1.2), and in doing so, hope to bring to light a previously neglected perspective in service learning literature.
- Cruz and Giles (2000, p. 29) critique the lack of research into community impact of service learning and point out that much of the evidence in literature is "anecdotal and descriptive". In a more recent review of literature, Reeb and Folger (2013, p. 402) still regard the evidence for community impact of service learning only as "preliminary" (cf. 2.4.3). While acknowledging these authors' calls for more rigorous experimental, evaluative designs and their criticism of "descriptive" studies as a potential limitation of this study, I point the reader

forward to the discussion on the evolution of the study in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.1), and specifically the work of Tomlin and Borgetto (2011, pp. 193–195) cited there, in support of the use of a descriptive approach in this study.

With acknowledgement of both the intended significance and the potential limitations of this study, I will orientate the reader to the dissertation style and outline in the following section.

1.7 Dissertation style and outline

As is customary in qualitative studies in the constructivist paradigm, I frequently and purposively made use of the first person writing style throughout this dissertation. This style communicates the inextricable subjective and reflexive involvement of ‘the researcher’ in the research process, and also conveys the social (co-)construction of knowledge through interactions between participants and ‘the researcher’ (who also interprets the outcomes of the interaction). Additionally I also refer to my personal context where applicable, as I acknowledge this personal context as part of the subjective reality which influenced the interpersonal relationships in the research process, as well as my interpretations and reflections about the research.

Pertaining to referencing, the ‘American Psychological Association’ (APA) style of referencing, as automated by the *Mendeley Cite-O-Matic* plug-in on the *MS Word* program, was used throughout this dissertation. Page numbers are indicated where authors were cited (either directly or paraphrased) in order to give due acknowledgement to authors and ease tracking of literary sources.

The outline of this dissertation is as follows:

In **Chapter 1** I presented a brief overview of the literature related to the concepts investigated in this study as a way of introducing the research problem. Gaps in the existing literature informing the research problem were highlighted, and the research problem formulated. The research question, purpose and objectives were delineated and the methods employed to answer these were outlined briefly. Finally, the significance of the study, as well as limitations in terms of the significance, was argued.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature related to this study. Literary sources from the disciplines of occupational therapy and higher education (particularly in the field of service learning) were scrutinised. Electronic literature searches were performed utilising the *EBSCOhost*[®] electronic databases, including *CINAHL*[®] and *Medline*[®], while *Google Scholar*[®] was also utilised to identify frequently cited sources. Books relevant to this study were obtained from the library holdings of the university where the study was conducted, from study leaders, as well as purchased from funds made available via the NRF grant that partially funded this study.

An effort was made to ensure that sources consulted represent current knowledge in the fields of occupational therapy and service learning. Sources older than five years are indicated as landmark studies, seminal works or legislation; alternatively where sources older than five years were cited these citations either form part of an historical overview, or were also supported (or in some cases contradicted) with more recent literature in order to provide a detailed account of that which was found in the literature. One prominent text published in 2006 was utilised in this study. *Practice and Service Learning in Occupational Therapy – Enhancing Potential in Context* (Lorenzo et al., 2006) is the only book of its kind published within the fields of both occupational therapy and service learning in South Africa, to the knowledge of the researcher. As a contextually relevant publication, this text remains an influential source and in the absence of a more recent publication, chapters from this book were cited despite being older than five years.

Chapter 2 is divided into two main sections, namely occupational therapy and service learning, in alignment with the title of the study. Figure 2 on the second page of Chapter 2 provides an outline of the topics covered in the literature review.

Chapter 3 presents a detailed account of the methodology employed in this study. Firstly the methodological evolution of the study is described, where after the research paradigm informing the methodology is discussed. The method of enquiry is then presented with reference to the study design, the research context, the study population and exploratory research. I then further elaborate on the data collection, data management and data analysis strategies used and conclude the section on method of enquiry by discussing the trustworthiness of the study. Finally, the chapter is concluded by thoroughly discussing the ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 4 contains the presentation and discussion of the findings of this study. The chapter is introduced, and a description of the participants in the study is provided. After that, a detailed account of the themes, categories and codes that emerged through the process of data analysis and interpretation follows. The general contour followed in this chapter was to introduce each theme with a summary of the constituting categories. Each category is introduced with an extract from the summative table of results (Table 6) and prominent connections with literature are made as a contextual introduction to each category. Following the introduction of the category, the codes constituting that category is presented and discussed using verbatim quotations, thick, rich descriptions and triangulating the findings with literature. Each category is closed with a summative paragraph containing preliminary conclusions based on the findings presented in that category. Some reflections on salient issues that arose from the findings are offered before Chapter 4 is concluded by indicating the ways in which the findings answered the main and subsidiary research questions.

Chapter 5 presents the final conclusions drawn based on the findings of the study. In addition to the inductive approach followed during data analysis, the findings of the study are plotted against the theoretical underpinnings informing this study in order to draw the final conclusions. A framework for enabling occupation through service learning is suggested based on the findings of the study, and recommendations for practice are offered. In addition, recommendations for future research emanating from the findings of this study, limitations to and a synopsis of the value of the study is presented in this chapter, before concluding the dissertation with final reflections.

1.8 Summary and concluding remarks

This chapter built on the contextual and philosophical background sketched in the Preface and presented an orientation to the study by means of a brief literature introduction. This introduction served to identify prominent gaps in literature related to the study, the most prominent of which was identified as the lack of the ‘community voice’ in occupational therapy service learning literature. From this introduction, I argued the research problem and presented the research question, purpose and objectives, as well as a synopsis of the research design and methodology employed in this study. However, a more comprehensive investigation of literature is essential to provide a sound theoretical lens through which the rest of the study may be viewed. In the following chapter, Chapter 2 – *Literature review: Occupational therapy and service learning as theoretical underpinnings of the study*, relevant literature related to occupational therapy (with emphasis on the concept(s) of ‘enabling occupation’) and service learning is reviewed.

CHAPTER 2

Literature review: Occupational therapy and service learning as theoretical underpinnings of the study

2.1 Introduction

Qualitative researchers tend to differ in their approaches to reviewing literature. While some argue that qualitative research should be performed on a so-called 'clean slate' with no prior perusal of literature in order to explore phenomena as they present themselves, others contend that an *a priori* cartography of theory and literature is essential to the framing of the study (Delport, Fouché, & Schurink, 2011, pp. 298–299). In this study I opted for the latter – utilising existing theory and literature to provide a basic framework in which the study could be situated in this chapter. I would like to emphasise, however, that I did perform a more in-depth review of literature *after* completing data analysis, particularly because I chose an inductive coding approach (cf. 3.3.7) and wanted to limit the extent to which I would be biased in the coding process by pre-determined ideas from existing literature (Delport et al., 2011, p. 299).

The literature presented in this chapter by no means seeks to be exhaustive. Nevertheless, I found that a systematic charting and presentation of the concomitant theoretical constructs to occupational therapy and service learning is inescapable in view of the descriptive nature of the main purpose of the study (cf. 1.4), and if one wants to serve the purpose of a literature review. In addition, as is customary in qualitative research, much of the literature consulted in this study is integrated into Chapter 4 as a means of literature triangulation.

Therefore, this chapter strives to serve three primary purposes, namely:

- to provide a basic conceptual background of the salient concepts in the study,
- to demonstrate my understanding of the literature related to the study in order to enhance researcher credibility (cf. 3.3.8.1), and
- to support the problem statements (cf. 1.2) and research questions (cf 1.3) by identifying gaps in existing literature (Delport et al., 2011, p. 302).

The literature review in this chapter is divided into two main sections in alignment with the primary conceptual domains manifesting in the title of the study, namely occupational therapy and service learning. A basic representation of this alignment, as well as the subsections of this chapter, is depicted in Figure 2. Finally, I followed a general approach of consulting three domains of literature, namely international literature, South African literature and literature

situated in the disciplinary context of occupational therapy, and integrating these throughout all of the sections in the literature review as and where applicable.

Enabling occupation through service learning: perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements			
Occupational Therapy		Service Learning	
2.2 Occupational therapy: Definitions, concepts and implications	2.3 Occupational therapy in higher education	2.4 Introducing service learning	2.5 Exploring service learning from the perspectives of its role players
2.2.1 Occupational therapy in the health and social fields		2.4.1 Revisiting the origins of service learning	2.5.1 Service learning and the student
2.2.2 Occupational therapy in the community		2.4.2 Service learning in South Africa: A historical perspective	2.5.2 Service learning and the university
2.2.3 Occupation as the domain of concern		2.4.3 Theoretical underpinnings	2.5.3 Service learning and the community
2.2.4 Enablement as the core competency		2.4.4 Towards a definition of service learning	2.5.4 Partnership as the relational context of service learning engagements
2.2.5 Conclusion: Enabling occupation		2.4.5 Approaches to service learning	
		2.4.6 Service learning engagements	
	2.4.7 Conclusion		

Figure 2: Alignment of the literature review with the title of the study (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg)

2.2 Occupational therapy: definitions, concepts and implications

Defining the profession of occupational therapy is notorious for being challenging – evidenced by documents such as the World Federation of Occupational Therapists’ (WFOT) *Definitions of Occupational Therapy from Member Organisations* document containing in excess of forty definitions of occupational therapy (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2013). The World Federation of Occupational Therapists defines occupational therapy as follows (emphasis added to highlight key concepts that are relevant to this study):

*Occupational therapy is a **client-centered health profession** concerned with **promoting health and well-being** through **occupation**. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to **enable** people to **participate** in the **activities of everyday life**. Occupational therapists achieve this outcome by working with **people** and **communities** to **enhance** their ability to **engage in the occupations** they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their **occupational engagement** (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2012, p. 1, 2013, p. 3).*

Britain's College of Occupational Therapists commissioned Jennifer Creek with the project named *Defining Occupational Therapy as a Complex Intervention* in which the definition of occupational therapy is detailed as follows (emphasis added; definition reviewed and affirmed in Creek, 2009):

*An approach to **health and social care** that focuses on the nature, balance, pattern and context of **occupations** and **activities** in the lives of individuals, family groups and **communities**. Occupational therapy is concerned with the **meaning and purpose** that people place on occupations and activities and with the impact of illness, disability, social deprivation or economic deprivation on their ability to carry out those occupations and activities. The main aim of occupational therapy is to maintain, restore, or create a **balance**, beneficial to the individual, between the **abilities of the person**, the **demands of her/his occupations** in the areas of self care, productivity and leisure and the **demands of the environment** (Creek, 2003, p. 56).*

In unpacking these definitions, and drawing on some other prominent definitions of occupational therapy (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014, p. S1; Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa, 2000, p. 1; Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 380) I have attempted to delineate the core features of the occupational therapy profession. Firstly, occupational therapy is primarily situated in the **health** professions, with emerging reference to its relevance in the **social field**. The profession is concerned with the promotion of health and well-being or quality of life. Individuals, groups and **communities** are all potential clients of the profession, whenever there is an existing or potential limitation to the ability to participate in daily activities (**occupations**). Finally, the aim of occupational therapy is to **enable** participation or engagement in these occupations, which is done, among others, through the use of scientifically designed activities or occupational or environmental modification. Occupational engagement, including engagement on a community level, is always contextually bound; that is related to the community's historical context, worldview and culture. Given this normative point of departure

within the theoretical paradigm of the profession and coupled with a realisation within a relatively young occupational therapy profession of its own ontological constraints (Hocking & Whiteford, 2012), the questions of effective, meaningful and socially just occupational engagement in communities within the South African context, remain to be explored and hence gave impetus to the problem statement informing this study (cf. 1.2).

The concepts bolded in the previous paragraph bear specific relevance to this study and will be scrutinised in the following sections of the literature review. I will commence with a discussion on occupational therapy in the health and social fields. Thereafter a brief overview of relevant literature to occupational therapy in the community setting is presented, as service learning, the other primary conceptual domain of this study, per definition takes place in a community setting. Finally, occupation as the domain of concern and enablement as the core competency of occupational therapy will be discussed to further delineate the theoretical parameters of the study.

2.2.1 Occupational therapy in the health and social fields

The profession of occupational therapy is historically situated in the health sciences. Occupational therapy developed during the early 1900s in the fields of mental health and the rehabilitation of soldiers who had fought in the First and Second World Wars (Reed & Sanderson, 1999, pp. 440–449). In the 1940s to 1950s, due to pressure from the medical field to be more ‘scientific’, the profession evolved to embrace a medical model of health – a reductionist paradigm that compromised the holism and occupational focus which characterised the earlier forms of the profession (Duncan, 2011, p. 22; Scaffa, 2001, pp. 24–26). While health remains a primary focus area of the profession of occupational therapy, it has however, always had a humanitarian approach in its dealing with people (Galheigo, 2005, p. 88; Reed & Sanderson, 1999, p. 15). Together with a renewed emphasis on the definition and view of health as “not merely the absence of disease”, but rather a “state of complete physical, mental and social well-being” (World Health Organisation, 1948, p. 1) came a renewed focus on occupation as a complex human construct to be appreciated holistically, as an enabler for health and well-being.

Around the 1970s, occupational therapists gradually became aware of the inability of a medical model to address all the challenges they faced with their clients, and as such, social factors were included as another aspect of concern in occupational therapy (Barros, Ghirardi, & Lopes, 2005, p. 143). Through continued critical enquiry, the importance of the role of occupational therapy in the social field emerged gradually and is now widely acknowledged in literature (Braveman & Suarez-Balcazar, 2009, p. 13; Malfitano et al., 2014, p. 2; Townsend, Cockburn, Thibeault, & Trentham, 2013, p. 155). Yet, though occupational therapy as a profession shifted its primary paradigm in the 1980s from a mechanistic paradigm to a contemporary paradigm

(Duncan, 2011, p. 22) and have made significant marks as a valued health care profession in the social health realm, occupational therapy continues to contest the attenuating forces of a dominant medical model, especially in secondary and tertiary health care settings (Joubert, 2010, p. 26; Watson, 2006, p. 154).

Situating occupational therapy within the social field (cf. Concept Clarification) in defining the profession provides impetus for the profession’s concern with social justice and human rights. Occupational justice is a concept that developed within the profession of occupational therapy in the social field, from the related concept of social justice. Wilcock and Townsend (2000, p. 84) define occupational justice as “...equitable opportunity and resources to enable people’s engagement in meaningful occupations.” These authors suggest that occupational justice as enabling meaningful occupation is at the core of promoting health, well-being and the transformation of people and communities (Wilcock & Townsend, 2000, p. 85). “Occupational justice [is thus] both an embedded value and an implicit outcome of occupational therapy” (Polatajko, Molke, et al., 2013, p. 80).

Expanding on this work, Stadnyk, Townsend and Wilcock (2010 in Durocher, Gibson, & Rappolt, 2013, p. 425) developed a *Framework for Occupational Justice* (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Framework for Occupational Justice (adapted from Stadnyk, Townsend and Wilcock 2010 in Durocher, Gibson, & Rappolt, 2013, p. 425)

In this framework, structural and contextual factors are identified and are depicted to lead to occupational justice or injustice. Examples of structural factors are portrayed as factors leading to occupational outcomes such as occupational rights (namely meaning, participation, choice and balance) or injustices (namely occupational imbalance, marginalisation, deprivation and

alienation). In alignment with the definition of occupational justice, this framework suggests that when structural and contextual factors support occupational rights, occupational justice is enabled so that people can participate in meaningful occupations (Durocher et al., 2013, pp. 424–426). Therefore, both structural and contextual factors may be perceived as facilitating and/or impeding factors by a community in enabling occupation and occupational justice (cf. 1.3).

This conceptualisation of occupational justice highlights the importance of the occupational therapy role in the social field, where ideals such as inclusion, equity, accessibility, fairness and empowerment are at the core of the drive for occupational justice (Galheigo, 2005; Wilcock & Townsend, 2000). Rather than primarily occupying the role of ‘therapist’, occupational therapy in the social field requires occupational therapists to act as ‘social articulators’ for the promotion of inclusion, the facilitation of connectedness and belonging, solidarity and agency through occupation (Galheigo, 2005, p. 96).

There remains, however, a dire need for methodologically sound research into occupational justice and occupational therapy in the social field to stimulate ongoing debate and refinement of the role of the profession situated in this arena (Barros et al., 2005; Durocher et al., 2013). In the context of this study, scientific enquiry is focused on one such an area – the perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements regarding the operationalisation of the role of the profession in communities through service learning (cf. 1.4).

2.2.2 Occupational therapy in the community

The focus of occupational therapy in the social field is typically on communities and populations, rather than individuals or small groups (Creek, 2014, p. 52). The term community is used to encompass both “a group of people united by some common feature or shared interest” and also “the social context in which professional services are provided” (*Stedman’s Medical Dictionary for the Health Professions and Nursing*, 2005, p. 314). Before the institutionalisation of health care in the early twentieth century, health services were indeed provided in communities. However, following the institutionalisation movement in health care, occupational therapists started providing mainly hospital-based services, and that from a medical model, promoting a more reductionist view of clients in the interest of positivistic science (Barros et al., 2005, p. 143; Meyers, 2010, p. 9). Then, between the late 1970s and early 1990s, together with an evolving view of health, including the role of occupational therapy in the health and social fields, occupational therapists also started recognising organisations, communities and populations as their clients (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 96) and forthwith, reinstated practicing in these communities (Meyers, 2010, p. 9). Duncan and Alsop articulate this move in the South African context as follows:

Greater emphasis is being placed on prevention and public health promotion through equity in the distribution of scarce financial and human resources. By making the resources of health professionals more widely available, the health and social development needs of diverse groups of people are being addressed and not primarily the functional and rehabilitation needs of people with impairments, as has been the case in the recent past (Duncan & Alsop, 2006, p. 7).

Working in a community setting, with communities rather than individuals, requires a different focus for occupational therapists than in more traditional settings. Health promotion and community development, advocacy and policy literacy are but some of the additional competencies that occupational therapists need to develop to work successfully in this arena (Creek, 2014, p. 52; Lorenzo, 2015). The growing role of occupational therapists in communities has significant implications for the training of occupational therapy students (cf. 2.3), including the necessity to develop their skills and competencies to be able to work effectively with communities within the domain of concern of occupational therapy; that is occupation, which is explored in the following section. Moreover, since occupational therapists' role in the community is emerging to become a main rather than subsidiary focus in the South African healthcare context, the voices of community representatives would be crucial to hear in order to remain congruent with the idealised participatory and client-centered reasoning in occupational therapy practice *vis-a-viz* a procedural type of reasoning (Alers, 2014, pp. 69–70) (cf. 1.6.1).

2.2.3 Occupation as the domain of concern

If working in the social field implies taking action in a transformative way, understanding occupation ... as human action is crucial for the engagement of occupational therapy and occupational science in this field (Galheigo, 2011, p. 54).

Occupation is the primary domain of concern for occupational therapists (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014, p. S4; Polatajko, Davis, et al., 2013, p. 16). The word 'occupation' generally means "being occupied or employed with" (Reed & Sanderson, 1999, p. 3). In occupational therapy, the term 'occupation' is used to refer to all the activities that people do on a daily basis (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014, p. S6). Central to definitions of occupation in occupational therapy literature are the notions that (a) occupation encompasses actively 'doing' (i.e. engagement in activity), (b) occupation is, or should be, purposeful and meaningful, and (c) it satisfies human needs (Christiansen & Baum, 2005, p. 548; Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014a, p. 235; Polatajko, Davis, et al., 2013, p. 17; Yerxa, 1993, p. 5). The temporal and contextual nature of occupation is also emphasised (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014, p. S6).

Occupational therapist and scientist, Doris Pierce, conceptualises occupation by distinguishing between ‘occupation’ and ‘activity’ based on the subjectivity vs. generalisation of the ‘doing’ – occupation is defined as “a specific individual’s personally constructed, non-repeatable experience” of ‘doing’, while activity is defined as “an idea [of a general class of human actions] held in the minds of persons and their shared cultural language”, that is, the generalised understanding of ‘doing’. In short, she summarises occupation as “experiences of doing” (Pierce, 2003, p. 44).

In a seminal publication on occupation, Wilcock (1999, p. 10) demonstrates that occupation entails more than ‘doing’ – “...in combination, doing, being and becoming ... together ... epitomise occupation.” This author posits these three concepts, doing, being and becoming, as well as a fourth, belonging, relating to occupation; proposing in the renowned equation ($d+b^3 = sh$) that doing, being, becoming and belonging are requirements for survival and health.

Doing encompasses engagement in meaningful and purposeful activity. Doing in itself can be promoting or harmful; doing is essential to health and well-being and provides the means for social interaction and building community (Wilcock, 1999, pp. 3–4). In a critical analysis and review of Wilcock’s theory and the application thereof in occupational therapy literature, Hitch and co-workers (Hitch et al., 2014a, p. 235) point out that the idea of doing as ‘purposeful’ activity is questioned by asking ‘whose purpose?’ – suggesting that doing may be meaningful without necessarily appearing purposeful (Hammell, 2004 in Hitch et al., 2014a, p. 235).

When conceptualising **being**, Wilcock (1999, p. 5) states that “[b]eing is about being true to ourselves, to our nature, to our essence and to what is distinctive about us to bring to others as part of our relationships and to what we do.” The author posits that central to being, is finding meaning; which is linked back to the value of doing; i.e. being through participation in meaningful occupation (doing) (Wilcock, 2006, p. 116). Hitch et al. (2014a, p. 236) further extrapolate overlaps between being and spirituality. These authors also identify individual agency and choice (cf. 2.2.4 and 2.5.4.1) as important contributors to being (Hitch et al., 2014a, p. 236).

Becoming relates to the idea of developing and enhancing the ‘being’ to its full potential, and is linked to concepts such as transformation and self-actualisation (Hitch et al., 2014a, p. 238; Wilcock, 2006, p. 148). Wilcock (2006, p. 149) states that “[b]ecoming is also about what people believe they can contribute to their own growth through doing and what they can offer the community that is a special gift from them, that by its provision alters their place in the societal structure.” Becoming, therefore, relates to striving towards the highest levels of personal development and self-esteem. Becoming is regarded to be a perpetually incomplete process (Wilcock, 2006, pp. 149–150), and a lack of becoming is theorised to be a factor in stress-related illness (Wilcock, 2006, p. 163) and a lack of well-being in general (Hitch et al., 2014a,

p. 238). Hitch et al. (2014a, p. 238) further assimilate from literature that becoming is not purely an individual process, but also occurs through “experiences of becoming through connectedness.” In my interpretation of Wilcock’s work, however, notions of connectedness appear to resonate more strongly with the fourth posited concept of belonging.

Wilcock added the concept of **belonging** as a fourth dimension of occupation in later publications. Belonging relates to the “connectedness of people to each other as they do” (Wilcock, 2007, p. 5). The notion of belonging highlights the importance of relationships in relation to health and well-being (Wilcock, 2007, p. 5) and occupation is viewed as a mechanism through which belonging may be facilitated (Wilcock, 2007, p. 3). The concept of belonging is criticised for being inadequately conceptualised (Hitch et al., 2014a, p. 239; Hitch, Pépin, & Stagnitti, 2014b, p. 256), and has been identified by critical occupational therapy academics as a general ontological omission in most occupational therapy theoretical models (Hammell, 2014, p. 40). Belonging, therefore, may be a cardinal concept for consideration in occupational enablement within the context of South African communities, and hence a potential barrier or facilitator to occupational enablement (cf. 1.3 & 1.4).

Wilcock reiterates that the four dimensions, doing, being, becoming and belonging, are interdependent and interrelated (Hitch et al., 2014b, p. 247; Wilcock, 2006, p. x). Hitch et al. (2014b, p. 248) performed a detailed analysis from literature on the dyadic interactions between the different concepts, and conclude from this analysis that the concepts of becoming and belonging are relatively under-developed in comparison to doing and being, with belonging not having “entered [occupational therapy] consciousness to the same extent as doing, being and becoming” (Hitch et al., 2014b, p. 253). For the sake of the application of Wilcock’s theory to this study, and the understanding of occupation as a core theoretical construct in this study, I propose a perspective on doing, being, becoming and belonging that may differ slightly from previous conceptualisations.

Wilcock cites Frankl’s *Man’s search for Meaning*, arguing:

...central to both quality of life and the human condition is the quest for meaning. If that is so, finding meaning is central to being and will be tied to both biological needs and natural health. Meaning appears to rely on people making use of their inherent capacities and abilities as well as meeting their spiritual needs (Wilcock, 2006, p. 116).

If we were to view doing and being as interrelated and interdependent mechanisms towards becoming and belonging, with becoming and belonging at the same time acting as mechanisms towards further becoming and belonging, which together fulfil the purpose to assist man in the quest to find meaning, we would simultaneously have to ask ‘what is meaningful?’ My

suggestion is that, perhaps, part of the answer may be situated in the dominant worldview of the person, and in the context of this study, the community as a collective.

For example, core constructs mentioned in relation to becoming, such as individual self-actualisation and personal development, predominantly resembles Western, individualist perspectives on life. It stands to reason, then, that for a person or community embracing a predominant Western perspective, meaning may be found in increasingly working towards becoming more – developing the self, or the community as an individual entity, to increasingly pursue its potential. Doing, being and belonging, therefore, become the mechanisms through which becoming may be pursued. At the same time, core constructs associated with belonging, for example, connectedness, predominantly resonates with collectivist worldviews, such as an African worldview of Ubuntu (e.g. Murithi, 2007, p. 281). For individuals and communities predominantly embracing such a worldview, meaning may be situated in increasingly fostering and promoting belonging – enhancing interconnectedness and relationships within the community. Doing, being and becoming, hence, become the mechanisms through which belonging may be pursued.

These perspectives on occupation as the domain of concern for occupational therapists bear particular relevance to enablement for health, well-being and occupational justice. Engaging with the worldview of the client (Zango Martín, Flores Martos, Moruno Millares, & Björklund, 2014, p. 11) (in this case the community) may assist practitioners in delineating approaches to occupational enablement, through doing, being, becoming and belonging, that optimises the power of occupation toward man's quest for meaning.

Occupational therapists use occupation as a **means** to enable becoming and belonging; however, occupational enablement is also the **end** (purpose) of what occupational therapy is about (Dickie, 2009, p. 19). Wilcock summarises the profession's concern with occupation as follows (emphasis added):

*I believe that such a profession would **enable occupation** for personal well-being, for community development, to prevent illness and towards social justice and a sustainable ecology. In order for us to achieve this, we have to appreciate that our profession embraces a unique understanding of occupation that includes all the things that people do, the relationship of what they do with who they are as human beings and that through occupation they are in a constant state of becoming different (Wilcock, 1999, p. 10).*

'Enabling occupation' is therefore argued as the core competence of occupational therapists. An understanding of enablement is, therefore, necessitated to guide a further understanding of this notion.

2.2.4 Enablement as the core competency

The verb 'to enable' is defined as "to give (someone) the authority or means to do something; make it possible for" (Oxford University Press, 2014). Both Creek (2003, p. 36) and Townsend et al. (2013, p. 89) have identified enablement as a core competency of the occupational therapist. However, enablement is not unique to occupational therapy. For example, enablement is also one of the three core strategies of health promotion identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (World Health Organisation, 1986, pp. 1–2) – relating to all health professionals.

In the context of occupational therapy, though, the strategy or competency of enablement is directly related to occupation. Townsend and co-workers express this occupational enablement as follows:

... [It is the] processes of facilitating, guiding, coaching, educating, prompting, listening, reflecting, encouraging, or otherwise collaborating with people so that individuals, groups, agencies or organisations have the means and opportunity to participate in shaping their own lives; enabling is the basis of occupational therapy's client-centered practice and a foundation for client empowerment and justice... (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 99).

The afore-mentioned authors have also described specific enablement foundations, illustrated in Figure 4 (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, pp. 100–101).

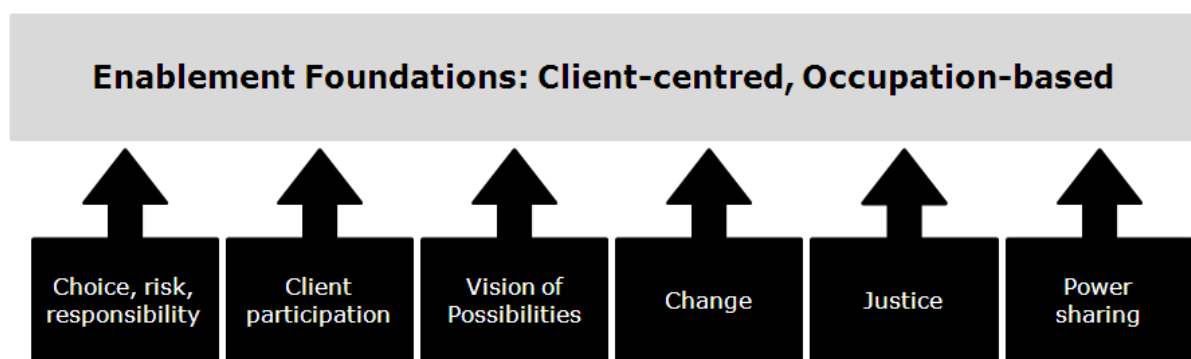


Figure 4: Occupational Therapy Enablement Foundations (Townsend, E.A., Polatajko, H.J. & Craik, J. (2007). In E.A. Townsend and H.J. Polatajko, *Enabling Occupation II: Advancing an Occupational Therapy Vision for Health, Well-Being & Justice through Occupation*. P. 101 Ottawa, On, CAOT Publication ACE) (used with permission from CAOT Publications ACE – cf. Appendix A)

Summatively, these foundations entail that occupational therapists should at all times enter into close, perhaps egalitarian collaboration with clients in decision-making to allow for **choice** and consider issues such as **risk and responsibility**. **Client participation** is thus a key feature of the process and should be promoted as such. A **vision of possibilities**, which will always be

unique to each client, should be sparked by the therapist and may include instilling confidence, hope, trust, resilience, courage, transformation and empowerment. Drawing on a vision of possibilities, **change** will be a process of nearing this vision that should be actively promoted by the occupational therapist. In promoting change towards occupational enablement, issues of **justice** are likely to emerge, as not all occupational difficulties are informed by impairments or disability. Occupational therapists are to confront issues of justice, equity and diversity boldly, within the profession as well as socially, in striving for occupational enablement. Finally, **power sharing** in occupational therapy's client-centered approach – an asset-based approach where all interested parties contribute to the process of enablement – is vital. In my view, these aspects, as depicted in this framework, are perhaps equally crucial to the cultivation of agency of a community in striving toward occupational justice. Hence, the presence or absence of these aspects may normatively be perceived by community members as potential facilitators or barriers during occupational therapy service learning engagements. Thus, when describing the perceptions of community representatives regarding 'enabling occupation' in these engagements (cf. 1.4), their perceptions regarding these enablement foundations are central to answering the research questions (cf. 1.3).

The enablement foundations presented in this section are revisited in the concluding section of this chapter, with specific reference to the possible application thereof in service learning (cf. 2.6). Enabling occupation involves multiple processes, requires multiple skills and is founded on multiple principles or foundations that when blended and applied in a client-centered way is what will constitute occupational enablement. Also, working towards occupational justice as a focus for occupational therapy practice is a fundamental part of enabling occupation.

2.2.5 Conclusion: Enabling occupation

In this study the enablement of occupation is viewed as the summative intended objective of occupational therapy interventions (cf. 1.2). Occupational therapy service learning, as a form of occupational therapy intervention performed by students in community settings, should therefore also strive towards this goal. 'Enablement' as the competency or way of doing, and 'occupation' as the means and end of intervention, have been discussed in this section of the literature review, with the view that concepts pointed out here will feature either as evidence for occupational enablement through service learning, or evidence of a lack thereof, in the interpreted perceptions of community representatives.

2.3 Occupational therapy in higher education

The profession of occupational therapy worldwide is almost exclusively taught in higher education institutions and is guided by the *Minimum Standards for the Education of Occupational Therapists* published by WFOT. In South Africa, a qualification in occupational

therapy is presented as a four-year professional bachelor's degree at eight universities. Higher education qualifications in South Africa are recognised and quality-assured by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (Republic of South Africa, 2009, p. 2). The minimum standards for qualifying as an occupational therapist in South Africa are specified by the Health Professions Council of South Africa's (HPCSA) *Professional Board for Occupational Therapy, Medical Orthotics / Prosthetics & Arts Therapy*. Among eleven main exit level outcomes, many of which remain to be bent toward the traditional medical model of practice, the core competence of occupational therapists to be able to work in and with communities is also stated (Professional Board for Occupational Therapy Medical Orthotics/Prosthetics and Arts Therapy, 2006).

Following graduation, all occupational therapists are required to complete a compulsory community service year. For this year, most therapists are placed in community settings where they are required to manage health programmes with individuals, groups and communities (M. Duncan & Alsop, 2006, p. 9). Equipping occupational therapy students with the necessary skills and competencies to master the demands of this year and beyond is vital in the compilation of South African occupational therapy curricula.

Occupational therapy theory and practice are taught following various pedagogies across South African universities, such as outcome-based or problem-based curricula. Integration of theory and practice through what Duncan and Alsop (2006, pp. 14–15) term 'practice learning' is, however, of paramount importance in professions such as occupational therapy. The HPCSA prescribes a minimum of 1000 hours of practice learning for students in occupational therapy before graduation (Health Professions Council of South Africa, 2007, p. 4). Fieldwork or clinical practice at most universities in South Africa involves students being placed in areas such as hospitals, schools, residential care facilities and rural community areas where they are supervised by lecturers and/or clinicians for practical training. In such settings, the emphasis is primarily on the learning outcomes of the student, in a 'real world' context. Service learning, a more recent form of practice learning in occupational therapy curricula, is however distinct from fieldwork or clinical practice in that service goals are developed around the needs and goals of the communities students are serving, as opposed to prioritising primarily student learning outcomes. Thus, a balance between benefit to the student and benefit to the community is sought, and the theoretical underpinnings of service learning are, therefore, consciously and deliberately focused on a client-centered and participatory approach (cf. 2.4.4).

In occupational therapy education, service learning is used to allow occupational therapy students to integrate theory and practice in various fields of the profession. Teaching the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to work in community-based practice settings, and preparation for the community service year, appear to be some of the most prevalent academic outcomes aimed for with occupational therapy service learning in South African universities

(e.g. M. Duncan & Alsop, 2006, p. 9,16; Pretorius & Bester, 2009, pp. 260–261). Service learning is posited as a ‘perfect fit’ for teaching occupational therapy (Hoppes, Bender, & DeGrace, 2005, p. 47), and in South Africa in particular service learning is embraced for its potential in occupational therapy education (Joubert, Galvaan, Lorenzo, & Ramugondo, 2006, p. 48). Service learning is henceforth discussed comprehensively with reference to its history, philosophical and theoretical underpinnings as well as research in the field in the rest of this chapter. Although these following sections draw primarily on service learning literature, an attempt was made throughout to link service learning literature with literature from and implications for occupational therapy education.

2.4 Introducing service learning

Service learning is the second conceptual domain informing this study. Service learning engagements between communities and an occupational therapy department constitute the unit of analysis of this study. Therefore, it was imperative to undertake a thorough perusal of service learning literature to gain a better understanding of the complexities of this concept to inform both the framing of the research problem and the interpretation of the research findings.

To this end, this section provides a brief overview of the origins and history of service learning. It further explores the pedagogical and philosophical underpinnings of service learning, and moves towards a definition of service learning. Finally, different approaches to service learning are considered and applied to this study.

2.4.1 Revisiting the origins of service learning

Service learning originated in the United States of America (USA) in the 1960s and 1970s. Stanton and Erasmus (2013, p. 65) relate that pioneers of service learning in the USA in these early years were spurred on by one or more of the following three questions:

- *What is the purpose of education in a democracy?*
- *How does education serve society?*
- *What is the relationship between service and social change?*

From its earliest days, conceptualisations of service learning were characterised by concerns for social justice and the notion of reciprocity, embedded in curriculums. Stanton and Erasmus summarise it as follows:

Service-learning ... developed a values-oriented character and community development philosophy of reciprocal learning that was integrated with curriculum reform goals and an activist, social change orientation to society (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 66).

The achievement of these ideals of community development, reciprocity, social change and active citizenship through service learning have been critiqued (cf 2.4.5.1 and 2.5.1.3), however they remain the impetus behind engaging in service learning endeavours both locally and globally (Bringle & Hatcher, 2011, p. 3).

Coupled in a sense incidentally with the questions posed by the pioneers of service learning, there were three other 'movements' in the USA that contributed to the development of service learning albeit indirectly. Firstly, in the 1980s academics became concerned about the nature of teaching and learning at universities (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 67). As Butin (2010, p. 11) phrases it, "a didactic 'banking model' of knowledge dissemination and regurgitation" was being questioned, and the traditional hierarchy of 'teacher-as-expert' and 'student-as-passive-recipient' came under scrutiny. Students' active participation in the education process and the co-creation of relevant knowledge was prioritised over previous 'banking models'. These changes in educational perspectives were informed by Dewey's educational theories (Hatcher & Erasmus, 2008, p. 51), and experiential approaches to learning, such as service learning, provided a means for students to become active participants in their own education.

Secondly, a movement of politicians and citizens at the time was concerned about young people's self-centered attitudes and disconnectedness from their social responsibility. Since service learning aimed to foster students' active engagement with experiential learning and develop a sense of social responsibility in students, service learning gained popularity in practice and research (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 67).

Thirdly, the public and scholars such as Boyer (1996, p. 13) in his seminal publication *The Scholarship of Engagement* criticised universities as institutions for being disconnected from the public good. Boyer advocated a 'scholarship of engagement' and service learning provided a vehicle (among others) for universities to become more engaged. As Felten and Clayton (2011, p. 75) phrase: "Service-learning is emerging as a central component of efforts to connect both disciplinary learning and general education with this historic and increasingly salient commitment to public purposes."

These three movements provided momentum for service learning to develop and gain popularity in academic circles in the USA. Although the concerns of these movements are also relevant to the South African higher education context, the history of service learning in South Africa was quite different to its history in the USA (Hatcher & Erasmus, 2008, pp. 49–51; Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, pp. 75, 90). The South African service learning history, therefore, needs further exploration.

2.4.2 Service learning in South Africa: A historical perspective

In South Africa, the history of service learning is embedded in ideals for the transformation of the higher education system in South Africa following the establishment of democracy in 1994. Mirroring the American movements driving service learning, the *Education White Paper 3* posed a call to South African higher education institutions to become more socially responsible, to commit to the common good and to promote social responsibility among students (Education White Paper 3, 1997, pp. 10–11). In addition, community engagement was prioritised as one of the three core functions of universities in the *National Plan on Higher Education* of 2001 (Department of Higher Education & Training, 2013, p. 39). Scholarly community engagement, such as service learning, also became requirements for quality assurance and accreditation of programmes in higher education according to the *Higher Education Quality Committee Criteria for Programme Accreditation* (Higher Education Quality Committee, 2004, p. 8).

A grant made by the Ford Foundation to the Joint Education Trust (JET) to establish the Community – Higher Education – Service Partnerships (CHESP) initiative in 1998, led to service learning being chosen as the primary focus area for community engagement in South African higher education (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 76). Lazarus, Erasmus, Hendricks, Nduna and Slamet (2008, p. 62) refer to service learning as a point of entry for community engagement in South Africa. CHESP was instrumental in empowering universities to develop and implement service learning programmes across South Africa (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 5). A review of the CHESP project revealed that 256 service learning modules had been implemented in 12 South African universities by 2008 (Lazarus et al., 2008, p. 81). In 2009, after the CHESP era ended, the South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF) was established. This forum provides a platform for advocating and debating community engagement and service learning in South Africa (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 5).

Contrary in some ways to the development of service learning in the USA, service learning in South Africa developed as a result of the implementation of policies from government and the involvement of JET. Also, although part of the rationale for the implementation of service learning in South African higher education related to student development, the focus was “primarily on extending university resources to assist previously disadvantaged communities” (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 90).

Over the course of five decades in the USA, and only two in South Africa, service learning has evolved and developed – some view it as pedagogy, others as a philosophy, a movement, a methodology or a strategy, or a combination of these (Butin, 2010, p. 4,6,17; Naudé, 2007, p. 142; Ramsaroop & Ramdhani, 2014, p. 1332). Petersen and Osman (2013, p. 7) put forward convincing arguments for identifying service learning as both a philosophy and a pedagogy. In order to understand the current trends in service learning practice and research it is necessary

to consider the theoretical underpinnings of service learning, and how these have evolved. This will be done in the following section by discussing the theoretical underpinnings of the pedagogy and philosophy of service learning.

2.4.3 Theoretical underpinnings of the pedagogy and philosophy of service learning

The pedagogy of service learning finds its roots in the theories of constructivism and **experiential learning** (Bender et al., 2006, p. 14; Bringle & Hatcher, 2011, p. 5; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 6). Dewey's (1938, 1963) belief in the value of experience to facilitate learning through the learner's active engagement and reflection provides the most fundamental theoretical grounding for the pedagogy of service learning. Expanding on the theories of Dewey, Lewin and Piaget, Kolb (1984) further developed the theory of experiential learning and defined it as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). He also posited an experiential learning cycle (Figure 5).

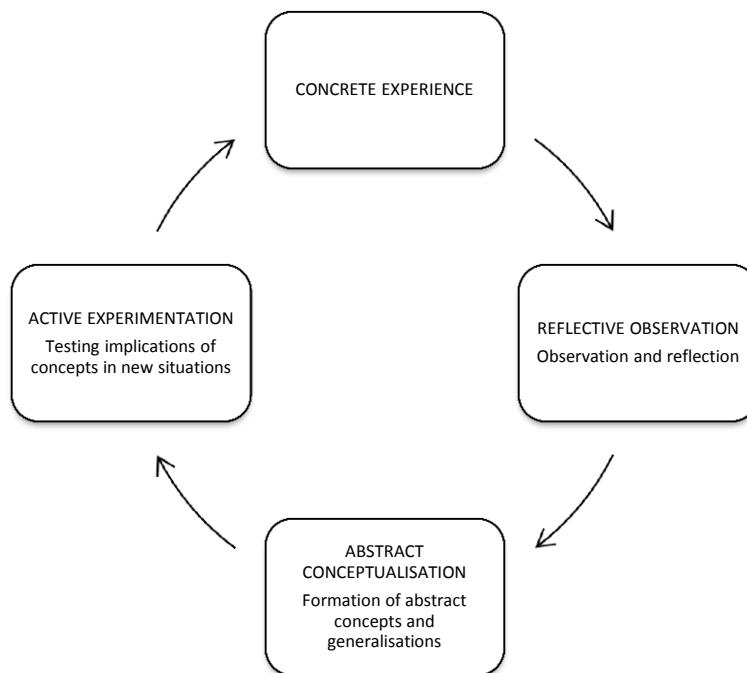


Figure 5: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (adapted from Bender et al., 2006, p. 18; Kolb et al., 2001, p. 229).

In this experiential learning cycle, experience provides the basis for observation and reflection. From this reflective observation, abstract conceptualisations can be assimilated, and active experimentation with concepts in new situations can be generated to guide new experiences (Kolb et al., 2001, p. 227).

Kolb's experiential learning cycle is regarded as the most popular application of experiential learning theory in service learning (Burke & Bush, 2013, p. 58). However, it has also received criticism for, among others, lacking in detail regarding the contextual aspects of experiential learning, the role of the educator, as well as how factors such as emotion and power relations impact on the learning process. Also, the notion of reflection as the 'mechanism' for learning in service learning as a form of experiential learning, is criticised for lacking empirical evidence regarding 'how' learning is enabled through reflection (Butin, 2010, pp. 16–17; Kiely, 2005, p. 6).

In addition to its roots in experiential learning, contemporary conceptualisations of service learning note its potential for **transformative learning** (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 192; Butin, 2010, p. 11; Kiely, 2005, p. 5; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 9). Transformative learning theory originated with the writings of Mezirow in the 1970s and was revised over three decades (Kitchenham, 2012, p. 1659). Mezirow's theory, in short, entails the experience of an event ('disorienting dilemma') which has the potential to elicit a fundamental change in worldview ('transformation') through processes of critical self-reflection, resulting in the construction of new worldviews (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 195; Kitchenham, 2012, pp. 1659–1660). In many ways there are similarities between experiential learning theory and transformative learning theory, such as the exposure to experience, critical reflection and the construction of new meanings. However, where experiential learning theory is criticised for lacking explanatory evidence for change, the emphasis of transformative learning theory is on *how* people construct meaning from experiences, and on the mechanisms which lead to change in the way that they engage with the world (also referred to as 'perspective transformation') (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 195; Kiely, 2005, p. 6).

The application and further development of a transformational learning model for service learning were pioneered by Kiely (2005) in a longitudinal study based on the work of Mezirow. In Kiely's *Transformational Service-Learning Process Model*, five themes are identified, namely contextual border-crossing, dissonance, personalising, processing and connecting. Table 1 provides a summary of these five themes.

Kiely's model provides a conceptual framework for transformational learning in service learning, and addresses limitations in prior models (such as Kolb's experiential learning cycle and Mezirow's theory on the transformational learning process) by explaining "...how different types and levels of dissonance lead to different modes of learning ... [and] identify[ing] a connection between contextual factors and multiple forms of dissonance" (Kiely, 2005, p. 15). Kiely's model as depicted in Table 1 presents transformational learning from students' perspectives. In addition to this view, it may be valuable to conceptualise transformational learning from the perspectives of other role players, such as community members, for the purposes of reciprocal cultivation of agency (cf. 2.5.4.1).

Table 1: Kiely’s Transformational Service-Learning Process Model (abbreviated directly from Kiely, 2005, p. 8-14).

Theme	Meaning & Characteristics
Contextual border-crossing	There are contextual elements, namely personal, structural, historical and programmatic factors ('borders') which intersect to influence and frame the way students experience the process of transformational learning in service learning. When students cross any of these 'borders', they tend to reexamine their own frame of reference.
Dissonance	Dissonance constitutes incongruence between participants' prior frame of reference and aspects of the contextual factors that shape the service learning experience. There is a relationship between dissonance type, intensity, and duration and the nature of learning processes that result.
Personalising	Personalising represents how participants individually respond to and learn from different types of dissonance. It is visceral and emotional, and compels students to assess internal strengths and weaknesses.
Processing	Processing is both an individual reflective learning process and a social, dialogic learning process. Processing is problematising, questioning, analyzing and searching for causes and solutions to problems and issues. It occurs through various reflective and discursive processes.
Connecting	Connecting is learning to effectively understand and empathise through relationships with community members, peers, and lecturers. It is learning through non-reflective modes such as sensing, sharing, feeling, caring, participating, relating and doing.

The roots of service learning as pedagogy are unmistakably evident in experiential and transformative learning theories. However service learning is more than pedagogy – it is also a philosophy (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 7). The philosophical roots of service learning can be traced to critical social theorists like Paulo Freire, who advocated for education as a political activity that should raise and critique social inequalities to ultimately nurture students to become responsible citizens who will promote a more just society (Britt, 2012, p. 85; Carrington & Selva, 2010, p. 46; Naudé, 2007, p. 136). These philosophical roots resonate well with service learning pioneers' questions regarding education and social change (cf. 2.4.1). However, authors such as Butin (2010, pp. 18, 21, 35) and Petersen and Osman (2013, pp. 19–25) caution that a **critical framework** for service learning is often met with resistance from political structures, academics and students. Butin goes further to argue that the problem does not lie with service learning having a critical 'ideological agenda', but that service learning has positioned itself as a liberal agenda under the guise of a "universalistic and thus neutral practice" (Butin, 2010, p. 36) which takes away from service learning's potential transformative power. He calls for a reframing of service learning which he coins 'justice learning' or 'justice education' (Butin, 2010, pp. 21–22).

Contrary in some ways to Butin's arguments, Britt argues:

Service learning is not a singular pedagogical approach, but rather several rather distinctive approaches that share some commonality but also have very varied assumptions about the role of service, the reasons for linking service and learning, and the goals and desired outcomes for students, communities, and social issues (Britt, 2012, p. 81).

She traced the various historical and philosophical roots of service learning and constructed a typology of three approaches to service learning, namely (1) skill-set practice and reflexivity service learning (essentially based on the work of Dewey and Kolb), (2) civic values and critical citizenship service learning pedagogy (drawing on ideas of active citizenship – cf. 2.4.1; and in my own interpretation also on ideas of transformative learning) and (3) social justice activism service learning (based on ideas of Freire and others focusing on political empowerment of marginalised populations). She acknowledges that the boundaries between these approaches may be blurred, but argues that such a typology may assist scholars to position themselves and more accurately investigate these different approaches to service learning and how they contribute to student development (Britt, 2012, pp. 82–87). The typology proposed by Britt distinguishes different approaches to service learning based on their philosophical roots. In addition to this typology, there are other distinctions in approaches to service learning – these are discussed under 2.4.5 – *Approaches to service learning*.

Reflecting on this overview of the theoretical underpinnings of service learning, the conscious engagement of scholars with pedagogical theories in service learning is evident. Perhaps in contrast, in occupational therapy education, at least at the university where the study was conducted, such conscious engagement is not as apparent. Grappling with the pedagogical theories of service learning as a form of practice learning for occupational therapy students may provide an opportunity to consider the interface between service learning and other pedagogies suited to occupational therapy practice education (Joubert et al., 2006, p. 48).

Scholars evidently differ in their interpretations and applications of the theoretical roots of service learning as a philosophy and pedagogy, both outside of and within the discipline of occupational therapy. However, in order to conceptualise service learning for scholarly application, also identifying the common underlying characteristics is vital. The following section attempts to consolidate these common characteristics towards a definition of service learning for the purposes of this study in its focus on community representatives' perceptions of occupational therapy service learning engagements.

2.4.4 Towards a definition of service learning

Although variations in defining service learning exist, the following seem to be common characteristics of conceptualisations of service learning (Bringle et al., 2013, pp. 337–339; Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 76; Petersen & Osman, 2013, pp. 6–7):

- Service learning is a **curricularised** (also called academic, credit-bearing) educational experience.
- It involves integration of academic material with **service activities**.
- Students engage in **critical reflection** on experiences as the catalyst for learning.
- Service activities are structured to address identified **community needs, challenges and goals**.
- Service learning is based on **reciprocal partnerships** between students, lecturers and community members; often also other role players such as service sector partners.
- Service learning enhances **academic learning, personal development** and the development of a sense of **social responsibility**.

The definition of service learning by Bringle and Hatcher (Bringle et al., 2013, p. 338; Bringle, Hatcher, & McIntosh, 2006, p. 12; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, p. 222, 2009, p. 38) is argued to be the most cited operational definition of service learning (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 76). While varying slightly in phrasing, the essence of the definition remains as follows:

...a course or competency-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in mutually identified service activities that benefit the community, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility (Bringle et al., 2013, p. 338).

The definition of service learning at the university where the study was conducted was primarily based on this definition of Bringle and Hatcher (cf. 1.1). In addition, the institutional definition emphasises the nature of the partnership in which the service activities take place as follows:

... It requires a collaborative partnership context that enhances mutual, reciprocal teaching and learning among all members of the partnership (lecturers and students, members of the communities and representatives of the service sector) (University of the Free State, 2006, pp. 9–10).

As the institutional definition of service learning firstly aligns well with older and current literature, and secondly informed the service activities of students within the service learning

engagements in this study, the institutional definition of service learning was utilised as the operational definition in this study (cf. Concept Clarification).

While Bringle and Hatcher's definition of service learning is widely accepted and utilised by service learning scholars, Butin (2010, pp. 6–7) raises two primary critiques related to the 'mainstream' definitions of service learning. Firstly he argues that these definitions of service learning privileges certain modes of service learning (such as 'privileged' students delivering services to 'less privileged' communities) and secondly asserts that service learning is based on the assumption of universal beneficence while there is limited evidence to support this assumption. Incidentally, Butin's critiques of service learning coincides with some of the historical challenges of the occupational therapy profession in South Africa, particularly the profession's origin in Western Eurocentric ideological foundations (Joubert, Galvaan, et al., 2006, p. 37).

Egger (2008, pp. 193–194) goes further to argue that service learning "exploits" students, creates "disdain, not benevolence" towards others and concludes that "service learning does no service to learning." These and other criticisms of the conceptualisations and the practice of service learning are considered in various sections of the literature review to follow (cf. 2.4.5.1, 2.4.5.2 and 2.5.1.4).

This section presented the common characteristics of conceptualisations and definitions of service learning and pointed out some critique against common definitions of service learning. However, although service learning seems to be defined relatively consistently in literature, the approaches to service learning seem to differ extensively. Some of these different approaches are considered in the following section.

2.4.5 Approaches to service learning

In a preceding section, the typology of Britt (2012) which distinguishes between different philosophical orientations to service learning was presented (cf. 2.4.3). This section considers some other distinctions in approaches to service learning and attempts to illuminate the advantages and disadvantages of each. Applications to the study are also highlighted.

2.4.5.1 Service learning as charity vs. service learning for social change

Some scholars argue for a charity towards social change continuum for service learning, while others posit that charity and social change approaches are two distinct paradigms of service learning (Bringle et al., 2006, p. 13; Morton, 1995, pp. 21–24; Petersen & Osman, 2013, pp. 8–9). Analogous to Morton's (1995) influential distinction between charity, project and social change paradigms in service learning, Mahlomaholo and Matobako (2006) also conceptualised three distinct approaches to service learning in South Africa, namely charity, project and

'genuine engagement' approaches. In a more recent South African publication, O'Brien (2012, p. 208) distinguished four 'discourses of engagement' in service learning, namely scholarly, benevolent, democratic and professional engagement discourses. Her descriptions of these discourses overlap with the mentioned approaches to some extent (e.g. 'benevolent' overlapping with 'charity' and 'democratic' overlapping with 'social change / genuine engagement' approaches). However, the depth of analysis in terms of discourse is deeper than distinguishing approaches and will not be discussed comprehensively in this section.

For the purpose of clarity different approaches to service learning will be discussed as distinct paradigms with an emphasis on charity vs. social change paradigms as suggested by Petersen and Osman (2013, p. 8) and also referring to the project approach (Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006; Morton, 1995).

A **charitable** approach to service learning is viewed as an approach where the purpose of service is to 'help' the other by 'giving' towards certain 'needs'. Objections to this approach to service learning relate to the following three issues:

- *Reinforcing privilege and divides*: A charitable approach to service learning reinforces the privilege of the 'giver' over the 'receiver' as charitable service by definition is done on the terms of the 'giver'. Because the power to give or withhold giving (whether it is material giving or service rendering) is situated and maintained only with the giver, the recipient of charitable service is kept in a position of dependence on the giver. For the service learning student such an approach may reinforce notions of privilege or belonging to an 'elite' group; at worst reinforcing a sense of being 'better than' those being served (Morton, 1995, pp. 25–26; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 8; Verjee, 2010, p. 7). It seems that especially a charitable approach to service learning would validate Butin's concern that service learning reinforces a notion that "we can consciously and deliberately bring about betterment (by the more powerful for the less powerful) through a downward benevolence whereby all benefit" (Butin, 2010, p. 7) (cf. 2.4.4).
- *Exclusion of the community voice*: In a charitable approach "...educational institutions usually decide what is best for [the] community or use [the] community as a way of educating their students, rather than serving community development goals" (Verjee, 2010, p. 7). A charitable approach to service learning essentially excludes the community voice from the service being rendered. The argument is not that there is no place in society for charitable service; however, within the pedagogy of service learning where there is much emphasis on reciprocal relationships, a charitable approach is potentially detrimental to fostering reciprocal partnerships (Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006, p. 210; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 8).
- *Incompatibility with academic learning*: Petersen and Osman (2013, p. 8) argue in light of the reinforcement of privilege and divides and the exclusion of the community voice, that

charitable approaches to service learning are incompatible with academic learning. Although Bringle and coworkers' (2006, p. 12) analysis of Morton's (1995) typology, as well as the work of Verjee (2010, pp. 7–8) suggests that some student learning and development does take place within charity frameworks, the nature and depth of learning in the charity paradigm is likely to be quite different to other paradigms. In Verjee's words: "If students, through this charity-based paradigm, serve the homeless and enjoy the rewards of volunteering, but do not study the various systems that create disadvantage, what lessons are they learning?" (Verjee, 2010, p. 8).

It appears as though a charitable approach to service learning exists; Verjee (2010, p. 7) even suggest that it predominates service learning in the USA context. However, such a charitable approach seems to be met with fierce criticism by most contemporary service learning scholars. Particularly in the South African context, where society is characterised by pervasive inequality and societal division, a charitable approach to service learning is discouraged in favour of a social change agenda (Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006, p. 210; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 8; Ramsaroop & Ramdhani, 2014, p. 1332).

A **project approach** to service learning entails some form of partnership with the community and implies that the community does have some form of input into projects. However, in most instances these projects are short-term inputs *to* the community and do not entail doing *with* the community, which keeps reinforcing the divide between the university or students and the community. The primary concern with this approach is that there is limited lasting benefit for the community; hence reciprocity is potentially compromised (Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006, p. 210; Verjee, 2010, p. 8).

Service learning for **social change** is considered the preferred approach to service learning, both internationally (e.g. Verjee, 2010, p. 9) and in South Africa (e.g. (Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006, p. 211; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 9). A social change approach potentially affords students (and academics) the opportunity to question and challenge societal issues and the forces that sustain them, and to work *with* communities for positive societal transformation (Mather & Konkle, 2013, p. 78). Such an approach to service learning also generally fosters truly reciprocal partnerships with communities (cf. 2.5.4.2). However, a social change approach grounded in a critical philosophical framework (cf. 2.4.3) may in some ways be an 'ideal' in a country that still battles pervasive societal challenges in the aftermath of a divisive regime. In addition, a 'corporatised' higher education system that does not make a substantial investment in community engagement and service learning to contribute to meaningful social change, and time-restricted academic programmes where not enough time is spent in communities, further complicate matters (Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006, pp. 214–216). In Stanton and Erasmus's words: "[t]he gap between reality and rhetoric related to service learning and community engagement may never close in South Africa" (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 87). Nonetheless,

this 'ideal' social justice approach to service learning can be sought albeit within certain limitations.

Considering these different approaches to service learning it is necessary to attempt to plot the primary approach of the service learning modules that formed part of this study. Based on my own previous involvement in these modules, conversations with colleagues and scrutiny of module materials (e.g. module guides and contracts) it appears that most of the service learning engagements in this study at the time made use of a project approach. Although there is evidence that these modules strived towards a social change approach, in practice and for various reasons this was not the case – one reason being perhaps that the shadow side of a project-based approach has not been adequately theoretically interrogated, including gaining evidence on how such an approach is perceived in terms of its facilitating and impeding factors. At the time the research was conducted, service learning had only been formally utilised in the undergraduate occupational therapy curriculum for five years. The academic programme in the undergraduate occupational therapy curriculum only allowed for intermittent contact with the community in most cases (the most 'constant' contact being a rural placement of final year students where there was continuous community contact for five to six weeks, four times a year). Consistent with the interpretations of Mahlomaholo and Matobako (2006, pp. 214–215) these factors contribute to limitations to nurturing a social change approach (what they term 'genuine engagement'). Furthermore, the lecturers involved in facilitating service learning at the time were mostly part-time contract appointments who had not had any formal training or experience in service learning pedagogy. This potentially limited the extent to which they could assist students to grapple with a social change approach. As Stanton and Erasmus point out:

Recent literature provides evidence of overt misgivings about whether those who consider service-learning an ideal tool for bridging the gap between higher education and society are fully cognisant of the complexities inherent in such an endeavour (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 86).

In my opinion based on my previous involvement as service learning coordinator, the complexities of a social change approach to service learning indeed proved to be challenging in these relatively 'young' service learning modules.

2.4.5.2 *Content-oriented service learning vs. service-oriented service learning*

Petersen and Osman (2013, pp. 17–18) propose a further distinction pertaining to approaches to or types of service learning, namely content-oriented vs. service-oriented service learning. **Content-oriented** service learning modules are guided primarily by the discipline-specific outcomes that the student should reach upon completion of the module (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 18). Content-oriented service learning corresponds with the "skill-set practice and

reflexivity” service learning in Britt’s (2012, pp. 82–83) typology (cf. 2.4.3), and the focus is primarily on the student’s learning. Petersen and Osman (2013, p. 18) caution against this form of service learning. In their view, content-oriented service learning privileges student learning above long-term benefit to the community and reduces communities to “laboratories in which to practice and apply disciplinary knowledge”. These concerns are also echoed by Ringstad and co-workers (Ringstad, Leyva, Garcia, & Jasek-Rysdahl, 2012, p. 271) who specifically caution that content-oriented service learning may fail to address power inequities between communities and universities and in so doing fail to contribute to social change.

On the other hand, **service-oriented** service learning modules facilitate the co-creation of knowledge by students and communities guided by the service needs of the community. Students are regarded as active contributors to their learning and knowledge in itself is reframed not as a static set of learning outcomes to be attained, but as a potentially dynamic discourse between stakeholders (Hlengwa, 2010, pp. 10–11; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 17). Service-oriented modules are better positioned to foster reciprocal partnerships and to utilise a social change approach. Therefore, in the distinction between content- and service-oriented service learning, service-oriented modules are preferred by those performing service learning within a critical framework (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 17).

The service learning modules involved in this study were primarily structured as content-oriented modules in the time preceding the conduction of interviews with community representatives for this study in 2013. Discipline-specific learning outcomes were specified, and in the years preceding this study the *nature* of service activities in service learning was also predetermined (see Figure 6).

While the actual service activities were negotiated in collaboration with partners, the repertoire of possibilities was limited by the pre-existing framework. This content-oriented structure further limited the possibility of working within a social change approach (cf. 2.4.5.1) in addition to the other factors mentioned. The prescriptive framework depicted in Figure 6 has since been moved away from and service learning in this occupational therapy department is aiming more towards a service-oriented approach (especially in the third and fourth study years since 2013). However, at the time directly preceding the implementation of the study (i.e. 2012 and 2013) the predominant approach was content-oriented guided by this framework. Although the effect of this content-oriented approach on community representatives’ perceptions of enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements was not directly investigated, it is vital to be cognisant of the predominant approach that participants in this study were exposed to, when interpreting and considering the generalisability of the findings of this study.

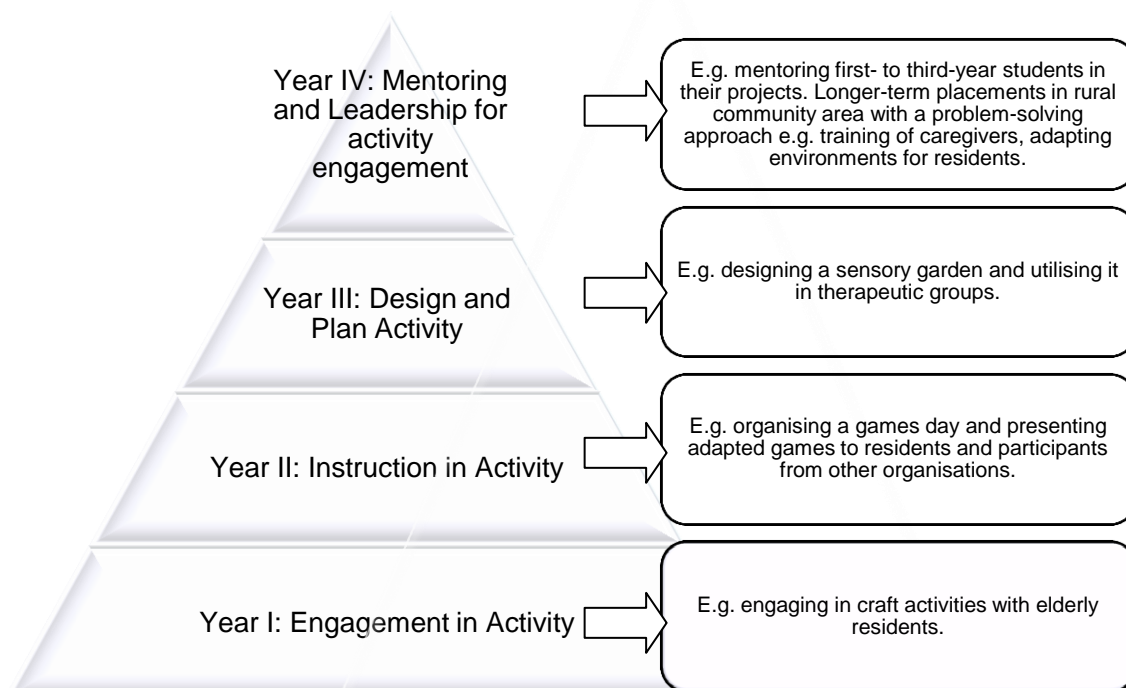


Figure 6: Pre-existing framework representing the predetermined nature of service activities in occupational therapy service learning modules from first to fourth undergraduate study year with examples from a residential care facility service learning site (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg from module guides in the Department of Occupational Therapy)

2.4.6 Service learning engagements

Service learning was identified as the entry point (Lazarus et al., 2008, p. 62) and a primary focus area (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 76) for community engagement in South African higher education (cf. 2.4.2). At the university where this study was conducted, community engagement is defined as follows:

Continuously negotiated collaborations and partnerships between the [university] and the interest groups that it interacts with, aimed at building and exchanging the knowledge, skills, expertise and resources required to develop and sustain society (University of the Free State, 2006, p. 9).

Community engagement can, therefore, take on many different forms, of which service learning is one.

Since the term ‘partnership’ is used by some service learning scholars to refer to a specific type of relationship characterised by equity, closeness and integrity (cf. 2.5.4.1), another collective term for interactions with the community was sought in order to include all types of community interactions in occupational therapy service learning in the study (that is, also those ‘partnerships’ that are not necessarily characterised by equity, closeness and/or integrity). Since

service learning is a form of community engagement, 'service learning engagements' was chosen for the title of this study.

Congruent with this rationale, Smith-Tolken (2010, p. 48) proposes the use of the term 'engagement' when referring to 'doing together with' communities in general. Conceptualising engagements in this way left scope to investigate service learning engagements as a whole, that is, both relational ('partnership') and non-relational factors (e.g. external contextual factors) that influence the enablement of occupation through service learning, as perceived by community representatives.

2.4.7 Conclusion

The pioneers of service learning set ambitious objectives for this pedagogy – a pedagogy that was relatively unknown in South Africa until around 2000. The higher education context in the USA is different in many respects to that of South Africa. However, the philosophical roots of service learning in a critical framework, prioritising positive social change, renders it an exceptionally suitable educational approach against the background of South Africa's divisive history and the consequent efforts to transform the higher education system in South Africa.

Service learning seems to be relatively consistently defined internationally and locally as a curricularised learning experience based on student participation in structured service activities that address community needs, on which the student reflects with the aim to enhance academic, personal and civic growth. Despite consistent definitions, there seem to be several distinct approaches to service learning. Although service-oriented and social change approaches appear to align the best with the history and philosophy of service learning from a theoretical perspective, there are many practical challenges that impair the implementation of these approaches in practice. A project-based, content-oriented approach was identified as the predominant approach to service learning modules that formed part of this study at the time. Given this theoretical background, I will attempt further to explore the characteristics, potential and criticism of service learning engagements using the lenses of the various role players involved in service learning in the following section.

2.5 Exploring service learning from the perspectives of its role players

Service learning by its very nature brings together a wide variety of role players, each influencing the other in varying degrees. I have constructed a model based on the SOFAR conceptual model of Bringle and co-workers (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 5; Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 541), the conceptual framework for service learning of Ash and Clayton (2009b in Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 78) and the CHESP Model (Bender et al., 2006, p. 93) that all depict the

interrelatedness of role players and relationships in service learning engagements, to serve as a framework to organise this section of the literature review (Figure 7). This model depicts three clusters of role players (indicated by the large circles), namely students, university staff and community members. These clusters are then subdivided to highlight five constituencies (depicted as the smaller circles), namely students, academic staff and administrators, community organisations and community residents. Arrows point out the interrelated, reciprocal relationships between these constituencies. Finally, the model is positioned within the relational context of partnership (depicted by the shaded quadrangle), which describes the nature of the relationships between different role players in service learning engagements.

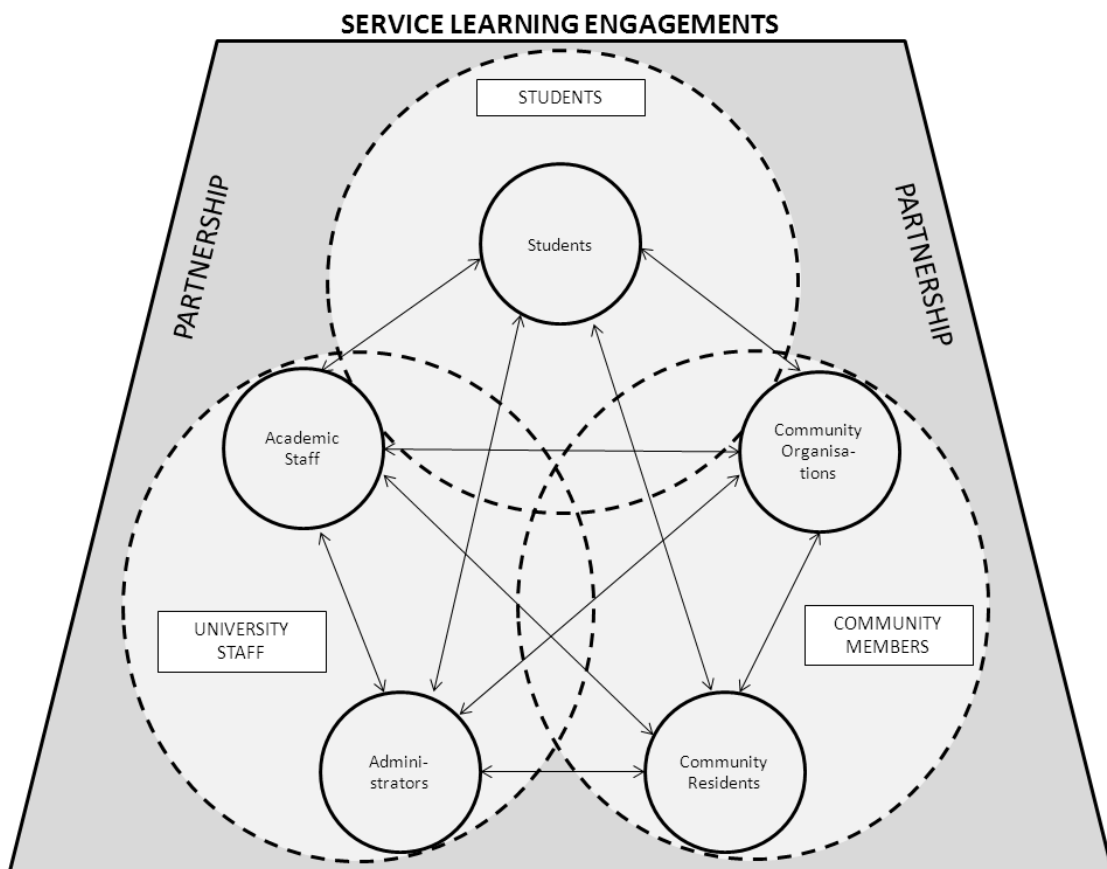


Figure 7: Role players in partnerships in service learning engagements (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg from Bender et al., 2006, p. 93; Bringle et al., 2009, p. 5; Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 541; Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 78)

Based on this model, the following sections of the literature review will explore service learning from the perspectives of the three main groupings of role players (students, university staff and community members), and conclude with a discussion on partnership as the relational context of service learning engagements.

2.5.1 Service learning and the student

Research in service learning has investigated the effects of service learning on students extensively (cf. 1.1 for contextual reasoning). As a result, there is a vast body of knowledge that

relates to service learning and the student, both in general and occupational therapy service learning literature, as the length of this section attests to. Although this section may not, on face value, relate directly to the research question, which seeks to investigate service learning from the perspectives of communities (cf. 1.4), research on students as pivotal role players in service learning provides invaluable insights into the dynamics of the complex service learning endeavour. As Figure 7 illustrates, all the role players in service learning engagements influence one another in many and varying ways and, thus, the dynamics surrounding students in service learning affect all other role players. Arguments regarding facilitators and barriers to occupational enablement through service learning are, consequently, influenced by the literature presented in this section, as will become evident in the discussion of results in Chapter 4. Therefore, in order to interpret research findings against a more comprehensive literary backdrop, literature on service learning and the student was explored at relative length utilising the general approach to consulting literature as indicated in the introduction to this chapter (cf. 2.1).

As suggested in the definition of service learning presented earlier (cf. 2.4.4) literature refers to three overarching objectives pertaining to student learning, namely deeper academic learning, enhanced personal growth and a greater sense of civic responsibility. There is a vast and growing body of knowledge which evidences that these objectives are fairly consistently attained through service learning (Eyler, 2010, p. 225). Evidence regarding the attainment of these objectives will be considered briefly from international and local service learning literature, health sciences education literature and occupational therapy education literature.

2.5.1.1 Academic learning and intellectual development

There are some challenges in service learning research pertaining to measuring academic learning through service learning; specifically, comparing academic learning through service learning to learning through other pedagogies is challenging, as assessment measures typically differ significantly (Eyler, 2010, p. 226). Owing to this challenge, student intellectual development (such as higher order thinking skills, e.g. problem-solving and critical thinking) is often investigated as a measure of academic learning in addition to the mastery of academic content (Eyler, 2010, p. 227; Felten & Clayton, 2011, pp. 79–80).

Felten and Clayton (2011, pp. 79–80) reviewed several studies related to student outcomes of service learning. They report that various studies yielded no evidence that mastering academic content differs in service learning and non-service learning modules. However, several studies included in their review indicated that critical thinking and other higher order thinking skills are enhanced significantly through participation in service learning. A review of literature by Bringle and Steinberg (2010, p. 431) yielded similar findings with regard to superior development of higher order thinking skills through service learning. However, their review yielded contrasting

results to that of Felten and Clayton (2011, pp. 79–80). They cite various rigorous studies that provided empirical evidence for superior academic outcomes for students participating in service learning compared to other modes of knowledge dissemination.

Two review articles were traced that investigate the evidence for outcomes of service learning in health sciences education. The review of Mc Menamin, Mc Grath, Cantillon and Mac Farlane (2014, p. 303) highlighted several studies that suggest that service learning leads to enhanced understanding of course content and critical thinking skills. They also cite ample evidence that suggests enhanced inter-professional learning among health sciences students through service learning – a very important learning domain in a sector that relies heavily on inter-disciplinary teamwork. In a single module quasi-experimental study (pre-test post-test design) Seif, Coker-Bolt, Kraft, Gonsalves, Simpson and Johnson (2014, pp. 561–562) also found that health sciences students demonstrated significant enhancement of their self-reported clinical reasoning and inter-professional behaviour. An earlier review by J. B. Hunt, Bonham and Jones (2011, p. 248) which was only performed on medical student education service learning literature did not focus extensively on student academic outcomes of service learning. However, these authors do mention that medical students seem to “develop new insights and a greater understanding” in community-based experiences (J. B. Hunt et al., 2011, p. 248). Their review noted some worrying issues with conceptualisations of service learning in the cited articles, such as no evidence of collaboration in community-based settings, a lack of distinction between service learning and other community-based educational strategies, and a lack of clarity regarding *how* learning was facilitated (e.g. through reflection or other means). From a theoretical perspective on service learning, this could have a confounding influence on the attainment of student outcomes.

Studies among occupational therapy students illustrate positive student academic outcomes in terms of self-reported and measured knowledge and skills, as well as increased confidence in their own professional skills following a service learning module (Horowitz, Wong, & Dechello, 2010, pp. 85, 87; Maloney et al., 2014, p. 153; Schindler, 2014, p. 77). Contrasting evidence is also present in occupational therapy service learning literature. In a study conducted by Lohman and Aitken (2002, pp. 159–160) occupational therapy students did not report an increased understanding of course content or inter-professional cooperation – the latter because they felt they already knew about this prior to participation in service learning. The authors of this older study highlighted some logistic challenges in the module itself (e.g. scheduling conflicts) that could have impacted negatively on the students’ learning in that particular module. On the other hand, Maloney et al. (2014, p. 147) highlight several other studies that did indicate enhanced inter-professional cooperation. In addition, they also provide evidence for improved professional skills such as therapeutic use of self, group facilitation and ‘doing occupations’ among occupational therapy students through service learning.

Jameson and co-workers aptly summarise the potential of service learning for academic learning and intellectual development, based on the current body of knowledge, as follows:

Although service learning can and should promote student learning of basic content-linked knowledge and skills, perhaps its fullest potential is tapped when it is understood, designed, and implemented so as to also nurture ... higher level learning, thinking from disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary perspectives and critical thinking (Jameson, Clayton, & Ash, 2013, p. 107).

This is especially relevant to occupational therapy students, as ‘higher level’ learning and critical thinking forms an indispensable basis for clinical reasoning as a therapist.

2.5.1.2 *Personal growth*

There is a strong emphasis on personal growth through service learning, and it seems as though a large weight of uncontested evidence in terms of positive student outcomes of service learning lies within this category. This is particularly evident in the addition of “an enhanced sense of personal values” to the definition of service learning by Bringle et al. (2006, p. 12) as a result of this weight of evidence (cf. 2.4.4). The following aspects of personal growth as a result of participation in service learning are common among various service learning sources (including systematic reviews of service learning literature): enhanced self-efficacy (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010; Felten & Clayton, 2011), identity formation and personal transformation (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 199; Brandenberger, 2013, p. 138; Felten & Clayton, 2011, pp. 80–81), leadership (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81), spirituality (Brandenberger, 2013, p. 140) and a greater openness to diversity (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81).

The systematic review of research on service learning in health sciences education by Mc Menamin et al. (2014, p. 302) yielded similar findings. Specifically, the development of leadership skills and an increased openness to diversity were overlapping findings, while these authors also highlight development of self-awareness (comparable to identity formation and personal transformation mentioned before) and communication skills as significant personal development areas as a result of participation in service learning.

Literature on personal development through service learning among occupational therapy students is also consistent with general service learning and health sciences service learning literature. Service learning was shown to increase the following areas of personal development among occupational therapy students: self-awareness and leadership skills (Maloney et al., 2014, p. 150) and more positive attitudes towards various diversity groupings, including the elderly (Horowitz et al., 2010, p. 87; Lohman & Aitken, 2002, p. 163), homeless people (Maloney et al., 2014, p. 151) and individuals with mental health difficulties (Schindler, 2014,

p. 77). Studies among South African occupational therapy students also provide evidence for enhanced self-awareness and personal empowerment on various levels as a result of participation in service learning (Janse van Rensburg & Du Toit, 2012; Lorenzo & Buchanan, 2006).

While the evidence of personal growth through service learning in a sense preceded the active pursuing thereof as an intended outcome of service learning (Bringle et al., 2006, p. 12) there are growing concerns with the emphasis on student personal development. For example, Osman and Petersen (2010, p. 411) argue that focusing on the individual, personal development of the student in service learning may prevent the student from actively engaging with and questioning societal inequalities. Brandenberger (2013, p. 147) follows the same line of argumentation and asks “Who is served – Justice or Just Us?”, cautioning that an emphasis on reciprocity and social justice in service learning is non-negotiable.

2.5.1.3 *Social responsibility*

Social responsibility was a major focus area of service learning from its inception in both the USA and South Africa (cf. 2.4.1 and 2.4.2). The potential of service learning to enhance students’ sense of social responsibility is encapsulated in transformative learning theory and critical framework philosophy (cf. 2.4.3), and is prioritised in a social change approach to service learning (cf. 2.4.5.1). Research on the development of social responsibility among students is widespread, and Felten and Clayton (2011, p. 80) describe the evidence as ‘compelling’ and ‘conclusive’.

Different terms are used, seemingly interchangeably, in connection with this aimed category of student development through service learning. Some of these include social responsiveness, social responsibility, social accountability, civic engagement, civic responsibility, public engagement and active citizenship (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 80; Maloney et al., 2014, p. 147; Mc Menamin et al., 2014, p. 302; Osman & Petersen, 2010, p. 412; Witchger Hansen et al., 2007, pp. 32–33). In order to maintain alignment with the operational definition of service learning in this study (cf. 1.1 and Concept Clarification) the term ‘social responsibility’ will be used to refer to the following:

The desire to work toward making a difference in the civic life of a community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes (Maloney et al., 2014, p. 147).

Thus, when perusing the evidence regarding social responsibility, the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and processes that could contribute to (or impede) making a difference in a community

are considered. The following five areas of development that relate to social responsibility were prevalent in the literature consulted:

- *Cultural competence*: Several studies investigated the effect of service learning on students' cultural competence, which is an area of development that impacts on both social responsibility and professional skills, particularly for occupational therapy students in the diverse South African context. South African studies (Naudé, 2007, p. 265) and studies among health sciences students (Amerson, 2010, p. 21; Chen, McAdams-Jones, Tay, & Packer, 2012, p. 71; Housman, Meaney, Wilcox, & Cavazos, 2012, p. 275; Mc Menamin et al., 2014, p. 302), noted a positive impact of service learning on aspects of cultural competence among students.
- *Perspective transformation*: Borrowing from Mc Menamin et al. (2014, p. 301) the term 'perspective transformation' relates to the different ways in which students' views of the world, stereotypes and social complexities change as a result of participation in service learning. It is suggested that transformative learning experiences such as contextual border-crossing and dissonance play an important role (cf. 2.4.3), particularly in facilitating transformation in areas such as cultural competence and perspective transformation (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 196; Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81). Naudé (2011b, p. 490) also emphasises the role of critical, interactive reflection in this process.
- *Interconnectedness*: Several studies have indicated a deeper sense of interconnectedness with the community as an important area of development of social responsibility through service learning, as highlighted in reviews of service learning literature by Eyler (2010, p. 227) and Mc Menamin et al. (2014, p. 303) (the latter in health sciences education). Another local study by Naudé (2011a, p. 81) also evidenced the development of a deeper sense of connectedness, again with an emphasis on interactive reflection as the catalysing process.
- *Political involvement*: Eyler's (2010, p. 227) review also presents evidence for enhanced political interest and participation following participation in service learning in the USA context. Bamber and Hankin (2011, p. 197) report on 'political transformation' in their study on transformative learning through service learning. They purport that education students in their United Kingdom-based study underwent political transformation on local and global levels.
- *Community involvement*: Increases in actual time spent being involved in the community, as well as future intent to be involved in the community have been reported as outcomes of service learning (Eyler, 2010, p. 227; Naudé, 2007, p. 265). Horowitz et al. (2010, p. 87) noted that the majority of occupational therapy students in their study wanted more opportunities to engage with the community following exposure to service learning.

Studies among occupational therapy students indicate that service learning provides students with an enhanced awareness of social issues (Horowitz et al., 2010, p. 87; Maloney et al., 2014, p. 152). Although an enhanced awareness of social issues does not necessarily result in acting upon a greater sense of social responsibility (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 200) (cf. 2.5.1.4), awareness precedes action and is thus one of the crucial first steps in developing social responsibility among students.

Another interesting finding in two studies on service learning among occupational therapy students was that participation in service learning resulted in students developing a more 'realistic view' of communities and occupational therapy practice (Lohman & Aitken, 2002, p. 163; Schindler, 2014, p. 77). Where this 'realistic view' was opposed to a previous idealistic view, authors argued that it will better prepare students for practice (Lohman & Aitken, 2002, p. 163). Where the 'realistic view' was in contrast to a preceding negative view, authors suggest that it may contribute to greater willingness among occupational therapy students to pursue employment in such settings as those where the service learning experience unfolded (Horowitz et al., 2010, p. 88).

Witchger Hansen et al. (2007, p. 46) conclude their study on service learning among occupational therapy students with the following words: "...service learning develops life-long commitment to civic engagement and social responsibility." However, while evidence presented in this section support their statement, there are also pervasive concerns about unintended outcomes of student learning in service learning that could be detrimental to the development of social responsibility. Some of these concerns are explored in the following section.

2.5.1.4 *Concerns about student outcomes of service learning*

Taking a more critical perspective on student outcomes of service learning, several authors have pointed out concerns regarding 'unintended' outcomes that result from service learning. Utilising methodologies such as critical discourse analysis, these researchers studied artifacts such as reflection journals to identify these worrying outcomes (Endres & Gould, 2009, p. 420; Jones et al., 2013, p. 220; Osman & Petersen, 2010, p. 414), including reinforcing stereotypical assumptions, pathologising and 'othering', separating emotionally and an 'action gap'.

- *Reinforcing stereotypical assumptions*: the reinforcement of stereotypical assumptions during the course of service learning is a major concern. While the rationale behind service learning assumes that students will start to question social inequities through exposure to unsettling experiences, research indicates that often this is not the case (Bamber & Hankin, 2011, p. 200; Jones et al., 2013, p. 231). Instead, students seem to focus on 'evidence' that supports their previously held assumptions (such as prejudicial assumptions about people living with HIV/AIDS).

- *Pathologising and 'othering'*: 'Othering' is defined as "the process of asserting positive identity by stigmatising what is different or 'other'" (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 13) and is based on the inference of superiority of the self above the 'other'. It seems as though 'othering' is a way for students to attempt to make sense of unsettling experiences in service learning (Osman & Petersen, 2010, p. 415), but it does not contribute in any positive way to fostering social responsibility in students. For example, instead of leading students to question underlying societal contributors to the 'otherness' of the 'other' (e.g. poverty, illness or race) the self-imposed position of social superiority to the 'other' causes a separateness from where the student can remain unaffected (Osman & Petersen, 2010, p. 416). When pathologising, students tend to focus on the negative aspects of a disease (such as HIV/AIDS) or a condition (such as poverty), zooming in on what the 'other' does not have or cannot do (Jones et al., 2013, p. 231; Osman & Petersen, 2010, p. 415). This also reduces community members to 'less privileged' recipients of service, rather than active and reciprocating partners in a mutually beneficial relationship. It stands in direct contrast to intended positive outcomes such as a sense of interconnectedness (cf. 2.5.1.3). Jones et al. (2013, p. 230) point out the role of family members and friends in the reinforcement of stereotypes, arguing that students may cling more strongly to the discourses they are exposed to in their personal lives than those they are exposed to in a limited service learning experience.
- *Separating emotionally*: Students were found to create an emotional distance between themselves and community members, which in a similar way to 'othering' leaves them at a safe distance that does not necessitate critical engagement (Jones et al., 2013, p. 231; Osman & Petersen, 2010, p. 416). In a study among South African occupational therapy students, Lorenzo and Buchanan (Lorenzo & Buchanan, 2006) provide a slightly different view on the notion of separating emotionally. They reason that it is an issue of grappling with and setting boundaries between the student's personal and professional life that is necessitated by the often unsettling and complex needs of communities. They continue that it is necessary for occupational therapy students to develop this skill to protect themselves from burn-out.
- *The action gap*: The study of Bamber and Hankin (2011, p. 201) indicated that there is a definite divide between transformed views and social action. Thus, despite the 'compelling and conclusive' evidence (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 80) for the positive effects of service learning on aspects such as perspective transformation (cf. 2.5.1.3) there seems to be evidence suggesting that this does not necessarily lead to a change in students' socially oriented actions.

South African authors Osman and Petersen (2010, p. 417) conclude: "Students have had tremendous difficulty in finding their footing in the transformative discourse associated with public engagement and service learning. They have found it difficult to relocate epistemically." It

is important to note that their conclusion was despite an active integration of a service-oriented, social change approach to service learning in the module included in their study. For service learning lecturers, it is imperative to take cognisance of these concerns with service learning and actively search for ways in which to curb these – for both themselves and students. They should also employ strategies to assist students to reposition themselves in such a way as to truly attain a greater sense of social connectedness and responsibility. One such a strategy may lie in engaging students as partners in service learning.

2.5.1.5 Students as partners in service learning

“Service learning’s potential is maximised when it positions students, faculty, and community members as co-learners, co-educators, and co-generators of knowledge” (Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 82). Students are not traditionally thought of in these roles – particularly not in the roles of co-educators and co-generators of knowledge. Petersen and Osman (2013, p. 21) suggest that service learning has the potential to shift traditional educational boundaries, and makes it possible for students to make a contribution to the curriculum and service development as partners in service learning.

Lorenzo and Alsop (2006, p. 146) identify five ways in which occupational therapy students in particular can act as partners in service development, namely (1) students as a knowledge resource, (2) students as a marketing resource, (3) students as a service resource, (4) students as a team-building resource and (5) students as a professional development resource. If students are adequately mentored and facilitated (including through reflective exercises) they can make invaluable contributions as partners, which can potentially also enhance their engagement with service learning, as well as the learning that results from it (Jacoby, 2013, p. 601; Lorenzo & Alsop, 2006, p. 153).

2.5.1.6 Conclusion

The literature consulted in this section yielded a significant amount of evidence for the benefits of service learning to students. However, there is also evidence contrasting this. Firstly there are studies that indicate that service learning does not necessarily contribute to greater academic or personal or social responsibility development compared to other teaching strategies. Secondly there are studies that have identified unintended outcomes of service learning that are detrimental to intended outcomes such as social responsibility.

Perhaps some answers to contrasting evidence in literature may lie in the variations in the ways that service learning is implemented across countries, institutions, disciplines and lecturers. The variables related to these variations influence the outcomes of service learning for students. The following are examples of variables that have been identified as influential in service learning

literature (Du Toit & Wilkinson, 2010, p. 403; Horowitz et al., 2010, p. 88; Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006, p. 215; Naudé, 2007, p. 256; Osman & Petersen, 2010, p. 411):

- the type of approach (e.g. charity vs. social change approach or a content-oriented vs. service oriented approach),
- the roles and commitment of different role players,
- the nature of collaboration with the community,
- time spent in the community,
- supervision and mentorship of students, and
- the nature of reflection that students are exposed to.

The review of the literature presented in this section suggests that under the right circumstances, with adequate resources (particularly time) and support, students can reap substantial benefits from service learning. These benefits can be further enhanced by incorporating students as partners, and not only participants, in service learning (Jacoby, 2013, p. 600).

The circumstances and resources that are required for service learning to benefit students necessarily and reciprocally impact on the communities where service learning takes place. Also, students themselves, as partners in service learning, directly influence the 'service' to the community, as well as the partnership with the community (cf. 2.5.4). This section thus provides crucial information against which findings related to community representatives' perceptions of occupational enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements should be interpreted.

2.5.2 Service learning and the university

Within the university, both academic staff and administrators play different but important roles in service learning. This section will briefly outline research in service learning related to academic staff and administrators in academic institutions, as well as provide some contextual background regarding the status quo at the university where the study was conducted. These contextual perspectives are of particular relevance to the study, as factors relating to both academic staff and administrators influence the nature and potential impact of service learning engagements. Some of these factors could potentially be perceived as barriers or facilitators to occupational enablement by community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements. Thus, some salient issues regarding both academic staff and administrators are discussed.

2.5.2.1 *Service learning and academic staff*

Service learning is a resource-intensive endeavour that requires additional funding as well as much time, effort and commitment, particularly on the part of the service learning practitioner in order for it to be a transformative approach that contributes to social change (cf. 2.4.5.1 and 2.5.1.6) (Erasmus, 2011, p. 361). In a competitive academic environment where there is much pressure on academic staff to produce high-level academic and research outputs, service learning is sometimes met with skepticism due to its potentially high demand on lecturers' resources such as time (O'Meara, 2013, p. 226). This may be why much of the research on service learning, especially in its earlier years, was focused on proving service learning as valid and effective pedagogy that is worth the effort (Bringle et al., 2013, pp. 3–4; Cruz & Giles, 2000, p. 28).

Amidst the considerable commitment that service learning requires (Braveman, Otr, Helfrich, & Fisher, 2001, p. 124), practitioners employ service learning as pedagogy for varying reasons. Academic staff who believe that service learning contributes positively to student learning, and those who find it useful in conveying specific disciplinary knowledge (such as in health sciences) tend to participate more regularly in service learning, while there is higher support of service learning among female, early career academics, and those with prior exposure to community engagement (Erasmus, 2007, p. 117; O'Meara, 2013, pp. 224–225). In the South African service learning context, the empowerment of these service learning practitioners (and other partners) through formal training was prioritised from the onset through the CHESP initiative (cf. 2.4.2) (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 81). At the institution where the study was conducted a formal module on service learning (module code HOS717) is presented at master's level as part of a master's degree in higher education studies and also as occasional studies. Lecturers involved in service learning modules are encouraged to complete this module, which I had done in 2009 when I was appointed as service learning coordinator of the occupational therapy department (cf. Preface).

In the disciplinary context of occupational therapy, service learning is regarded as an effective way to convey disciplinary knowledge (Hoppes et al., 2005, p. 47; Joubert et al., 2006, p. 48). Despite the fact that service learning seems to be a valued approach, there is still limited investment in terms of resources (particularly staff) at the occupational therapy department where this study was executed. Congruent with the postulations of Butin (2010, pp. 149–150), this occupational therapy department primarily makes use of early career, part-time, contract appointments to act as supervisors of service learning. These contract appointments are done on a year-to-year basis and are funded by the institutional service learning budget (i.e. separately from other departmental activities that are funded from the departmental budget).

This poses some serious challenges in that (1) these supervisors are not necessarily knowledgeable on the pedagogy of service learning, (2) due to the part-time nature of these appointments supervisors are often only employed for one year (sometimes less) which has a detrimental impact on building reciprocal, long-term partnerships in the community and consequently on the enablement of occupation through service learning in communities, and (3) although service learning is viewed as part of the core curriculum, the non-involvement of some service learning supervisors in the rest of the curriculum limits the extent to which curricular content can truly be integrated into, for example, reflective activities. Considering the shift in traditional educational practices which service learning requires, including that of the lecturer becoming a 'co-learner' rather than the 'expert' (Clayton, Hess, Jaeger, Jameson, & McGuire, 2013, p. 246), service learning may pose a considerable challenge to both established lecturers (which may negatively impact on their willingness to participate in service learning) as well as novice educators. Careful negotiation of the involvement of academic staff in service learning therefore seems to be an important consideration for the overall effectiveness of service learning, not the least of which, the enablement of occupation through occupational therapy service learning engagements.

At the same time, however, the potential of service learning to contribute to the growth of the lecturer should not be underestimated (Clayton et al., 2013, p. 246; Ramsaroop & Ramdhani, 2014, p. 1336). In addition to opportunities for personal and professional growth of academic staff, service learning provides a myriad of research opportunities that can contribute to lecturers' publishing portfolios. For example, Schindler (2014, pp. 77–78) reports that her own participation in service learning in occupational therapy has resulted in a number of peer-reviewed publications and presentations, which has contributed positively to her promotion and scholarship goals. The right institutional support can contribute positively to lecturers' commitment to service learning (O'Meara, 2013, p. 229). Administrators, therefore, play a vital role in making ideal (or at least good) conditions for service learning possible, that will enable the most positive outcomes for students, staff and communities alike.

2.5.2.2 *Service learning and university administrators*

Funding of service learning and equitable performance rewards for faculty who participate in service learning are two major considerations in the institutionalisation of service learning from an administrative perspective. Each of these considerations will be discussed briefly.

a. Funding of service learning

In South Africa, service learning at universities was initially funded by an external grant from JET. Although it was envisioned that either universities or the government "would eventually pick up the bill" (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 77) for funding service learning and community engagement, in many cases this has not happened. This resulted in a major barrier to the

development of service learning in South Africa, bearing in mind the additional expenditure that service learning often poses (e.g. in terms of additional staff requirements, transport costs and investment in service activities to name but a few).

At the university where this study was executed there is a central, separate service learning budget that is distributed to departments via faculty administrators. Although this does provide an incentive for departments to be involved in service learning, I have experienced that this separate funding of service learning in a sense also hampers commitment to, and true 'institutionalisation' of service learning on departmental level. For example, the department in which this study was conducted contracted with communities on an annual basis under the condition that the department receives external service learning funding. Commitment to communities is therefore only made to the extent that funding is received. While on a pragmatic level this is understandable, it is potentially detrimental to building relationships and reciprocity, as the 'power' to continue services (based on funding received) remains with the university. This may prove to be detrimental to the enablement of occupation through service learning.

The funding model described here has since changed to a fixed annual amount that is allocated to departments. Therefore, the budget is now known in advance (as opposed to being applied for annually with no indication of the amount that would be available), and contracting with communities can now be done accordingly. The effects of this adapted funding model on occupational enablement in communities would need to be reinvestigated following this study.

b. Equitable performance rewards

Funding of service learning can provide incentives to departments to utilise service learning in their curricula. Similarly, equitable performance rewards for academic staff who invest in service learning have been shown to contribute to the willingness of staff to tackle this demanding endeavour (O'Meara, 2013, p. 225; Schindler, 2014, p. 78). At the university where the study took place, "Scholarship of Engagement" is indicated as one of the three areas of assessment in the *Academic Appointment and Promotions Policy* (University of the Free State, 2011, p. 4) and 'service to the community' is indicated as one of the five roles for the performance appraisal of academic personnel (University of the Free State, n.d.-b, p. 4). "New/Improved methods of Engagement and Learning" is stipulated as an award category in the annual *Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards* (University of the Free State, n.d.-a). A *Vice-Rector's Award for Community Engagement* is also awarded to an academic staff member who displays outstanding service, commitment and excellence in the field of community engagement. These incentives may serve as motivators for staff involvement in service learning at this university, and enhance the institutionalisation of service learning, in the long run.

2.5.2.3 *Conclusion*

University academic staff and administrators are vital role players in service learning. Although administrators may not be directly involved in service learning and the community, the decisions that they make and the policies that they implement have a vast influence on the rest of the relationships in service learning (cf. 2.5, Figure 7).

2.5.3 Service learning and the community

As depicted in Figure 7 (cf. 2.5), Bringle and Clayton (2013, p. 540) differentiate the community into community organisations and community members. Their rationale for this distinction primarily entails that community organisation staff may have their own interests that may not necessarily be representative of those of community members. As service learning engagements in South Africa are most often negotiated via community organisations (Alperstein, 2007, p. 61) this distinction is particularly relevant. In this study, the perceptions of community representatives (i.e. mostly community organisation staff) were studied. The rationale for this decision is discussed in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.2 and 1.6.3). However, the literature consulted on the community outcomes of service learning does not always distinguish the source of data collection (e.g. community organisation staff, community members or even inferences by university staff or students).

Therefore, no attempt will be made at separating the literature into these two domains when considering research on the community impact of service learning. Rather, this section of the literature review will cover two topics, namely the community representative in service learning, and research on the outcomes of service learning in the community. The relative brevity of this section in relation to the section on service learning and students mirrors the density of available literature to lend towards research on students. The section that follows the discussion on service learning and the community, namely partnership as the relational context of service learning engagements (cf. 2.5.4), contains a review of literature pertaining particularly to partnerships, in which some of the literature on service learning and communities is also integrated.

2.5.3.1 *The community representative in service learning*

Generally, community representatives may be members of the community or may be community organisation staff (cf. Concept Clarification). In this study, all of the community representatives were members of the community as well as staff of the community organisation (e.g. non-profit organisation or school) through which service learning was organised. Community representatives act as 'gatekeepers' through whom the service learning relationship between the community or community-based institution and the university can be negotiated. Community representatives, as formal or informal gatekeepers, have official or inferred power to grant or

deny access to the community (Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013, p. 75). Collaboration with community representatives enables the university to tailor service activities to the needs and goals of the community (Lorenzo et al., 2015) and acts as a cornerstone for further relationship building in the community.

2.5.3.2 *Research on the outcomes of service learning in the community*

Both the necessity of the community voice in service learning, and the continued need for inquiry into the outcomes of service learning for communities have been explicated in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.1 and 1.6.1). This study aims to investigate the perceptions of community representatives regarding, among others, the intended outcome of occupational therapy service learning, that is enabling occupation (cf. 1.4). Therefore, this section is pivotal in framing the existing body of knowledge relating to outcomes of service learning for communities. Studies conducted on the community outcomes of service learning tend to focus either on the way in which service learning contributes to quality of life in communities, or on the relationships between the community and other stakeholders (or both) (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010). The former will be the focus of this subsection of the literature review while partnership as the relational context of service learning is perused in the following section.

Reeb and Folger (2013, pp. 397–402) reviewed studies investigating the community outcomes of service learning. Their review yielded similar results to earlier studies, which identified three areas of benefit to communities through service learning, namely (1) satisfaction with service learning students and their work, (2) experiencing student services as helpful, and (3) facilitation of partnerships between communities and universities through service learning projects. In particular, the fact that the benefits drawn from student involvement outweigh the costs (such as time and resources invested in students) is highlighted by several studies (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010; Reeb & Folger, 2013). Some challenges are also identified, such as difficulties with student schedules, a lack of communication between stakeholders, and short-term projects as opposed to long-term commitments (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 402).

South African studies on service learning from the perspective of community partners yielded similar evidence to international studies, such as positive perceptions regarding student work (Nduna, 2007, p. 73; Van Schalkwyk & Erasmus, 2011, p. 75) and increased knowledge and skills perceived by community members (Van Schalkwyk & Erasmus, 2011, p. 73). Similar challenges were also identified, such as a lack of understanding of the purpose of service learning activities (Nduna, 2007, p. 75; Van Schalkwyk & Erasmus, 2011, p. 74), poor communication with community members (Van Schalkwyk & Erasmus, 2011, p. 75) and timeframe and planning challenges (Nduna, 2007, p. 75)

In occupational therapy service learning literature there are a number of studies that report on, at least as part of a larger study, the impact of specific service learning programmes on different

clients or community groups. Measures such as the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM) (Marken, Moxley, & Fraley, 2010, p. 507; Schindler, 2014, p. 77), self-report scales (Horowitz et al., 2010, p. 84; Olivier, Oosthuizen, & Casteleijn, 2007, p. 66) and analysis of course documents such as community partner feedback forms, e-mails and interviews (Witchger Hansen, 2010, p. 95) have been used to evaluate community outcomes. Furthermore, some studies reporting on community outcomes make use of student or lecturer evaluations of community outcomes (Olivier et al., 2007, p. 77). Congruent with literature in other fields, these studies generally report satisfaction with student service and positive outcomes for community members (e.g. improved satisfaction scores on the COPM – Schindler, 2014, p. 77).

However, there remains an apparent lack of prospective studies into the outcomes of service learning in occupational therapy from the perspectives of communities, as well as into the mechanisms that support or hamper the attainment of positive outcomes for communities. Service learning literature in occupational therapy, similar to service learning literature in other disciplinary fields, still seems limited in terms of methodological rigour and theoretical grounding (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 402). Rigorous qualitative enquiry into community perceptions of occupational therapy service learning engagements may, therefore, contribute to addressing this gap. In addition though, there seems to remain a dire need for long-term impact studies to more fully understand the effect occupational therapy service learning activities have in communities.

2.5.4 Partnership as the relational context for service learning engagements

Partnership refers to the relationship context within which service learning as a form of engagement is immersed. Literature on service learning is in agreement that partnerships are at the core of service learning. However, there appears to be differences in the understanding and application of the term partnership (Bringle & Clayton, 2013, pp. 539–540). For the sake of clarity, in addition to the Concept Clarification, the use of the terms partnership and relationship in this study will be explicated here, and reference will also be made to the use of the term reciprocity in the context of service learning engagements. The reader is also pointed to a previous section where the use of the term ‘engagement’ (as in service learning engagement) is explained (cf. 2.4.6). Following the clarification of terms, some theories on typologies of partnerships are considered. Partnership development in service learning is discussed briefly, and finally, research on partnerships in service learning is examined.

2.5.4.1 Partnership, relationship and reciprocity

In general use, the term **partnership** denotes the idea of taking part or doing with others and is often used synonymously with words such as collaboration (Oxford University Press, 2014). In

service learning literature the term partnership seems to be used either to refer to a **relationship** in a broader sense, or to denote a specific type of relationship characterised by certain features (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 3; Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 542). Bringle and co-workers posit that a service learning relationship becomes a partnership when it is characterised by the features of closeness, equity and integrity (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 3; Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 542), as well as interdependence (Bowen, 2005, p. 74).

At the department where this study was conducted the term 'partnership' is used in the general relationship sense of the word; therefore, the term featured prominently in the interviews (both in interview questions posed by the researcher and in answers given by participants) with reference to service learning engagements. In the description of the methodology in Chapter 3, the verbatim quotations and the descriptions in Chapter 4, the term partnership is therefore used without claiming that the nature of these 'partnerships' were indeed that as proposed by Bringle and co-workers (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 3; Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 542).

Reciprocity is expressed as a defining characteristic of service learning engagements (Bringle et al., 2013, p. 338; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 7; Smith-Tolken, 2010, p. 45; University of the Free State, 2006); yet it remains an elusive concept on both definitional and operational levels (Erasmus, 2011, p. 356; Jacoby, 2009, p. 97; Smith-Tolken, 2010, p. 46). A deconstruction of some of the applications of reciprocity yields an idea of mutual benefit to communities (Brower, 2011, p. 63), such as expressed by Bender et al. (2006, p. 103): "Service learning demonstrates reciprocity between the [university] and the community when the service learning is organised to meet both the learning outcomes of the module and the service needs identified by the community." Another application of reciprocity has a stronger focus on an interconnected relationship. Jacoby (2009, pp. 96–97) questions whether this conceptualisation of reciprocity is attainable in the context of service learning, citing Saltmarsh's definition of 'true reciprocity' which refers to a reciprocal relationship as one in which "what affects me affects the wider community, and what affects the wider community affects me. The consequences are indistinguishable" (Saltmarsh 1998 in Jacoby, 2009, p. 97). The way in which reciprocity is defined will necessarily impact on the operationalisation thereof in service learning, and the resulting occupational enablement, or lack thereof, which may flow from service learning engagements. The use of the term in this study, therefore, needs some clarification, and the way in which the term is used in the institutional definition of service learning was given preference (cf. Concept Clarification) – that is, using reciprocity to refer to mutual benefit to the university and the community where mutual learning takes place within the service learning engagement (University of the Free State, 2006, pp. 9–10).

Conner (2010, pp. 4–5) puts forward an insightful argument for the cultivation of reciprocity in service learning engagements, which is also congruent with occupational therapy and community development theory. The aforementioned author theorises that the purposive

promotion of agency among all role players, fosters and evidences the degree of reciprocity that may be present in service learning engagements. Agency is depicted in Conner's theorisation as the equitable distribution of power in three areas, namely (1) the power to design the service learning engagement to ensure that own needs are met, (2) the power to act, that is, to learn and to serve, and (3) the power to evaluate the service learning engagement. The promotion of human agency is a core principle that underscores most of the enablement foundations in occupational therapy (cf. 2.2.4) and is viewed as a principle strategy for community development (Bhattacharyya, 2004, p. 12). The extent to which agency is embraced and cultivated in service learning engagements is, therefore, a probable predictor of the extent to which occupational enablement occurs through service learning engagements. Community representatives' perceptions regarding agency in partnerships in service learning engagements would, therefore, assist to answer the research questions (cf. 1.3).

2.5.4.2 *Theories and typologies of partnership in service learning*

Smith-Tolken (2010, p. 48) contends that the way in which partnerships are conceptualised in service learning literature is, in many cases, an ideal far removed from what happens in practice. Therefore, a dualistic perspective of service learning relationships as either 'qualifying' as partnerships or not based on certain characteristics is not helpful. Rather, continuums of the nature of relationships can provide insight into how loosely formed engagements may be developed towards 'true' partnerships. Perusal of literature on partnerships in community engagement and service learning yielded different typologies or continuums of partnerships.

Figure 8 was compiled to depict the similarities in these typologies as I was able to interpret from literature, and will be discussed systematically from left to right. Bringle, Clayton and Price (2009, p. 4) present a relationships continuum that varies from unawareness to transformational relationships. They suggest that these types of relationships may all have different levels of closeness, integrity and equity, but argue that transformational relationships will always have high levels of all three characteristics (hence the gradually shaded arrow on the far left of the figure). As mentioned previously, the aforementioned authors view relationships characterised by closeness, integrity and equity as 'partnerships'.

Bowen (2005, p. 74) proposes that community interactions vary from cooperation, through collaboration to partnership. He defines cooperation as interactions where parties do not get in each other's way and interact up to a level of sharing information. In his interpretation collaboration refers to acting together towards shared visions and goals, while partnership would represent interdependence between partners. In my interpretation, the shaded arrow to the right depicts that the higher the level of interdependence and reciprocity in the relationship, the closer it moves to a 'partnership'. Shading was used to suggest that cooperation,

collaboration and partnership can overlap in varying degrees with the other typologies (i.e. no definite 'cut-offs' are proposed).

Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq and Morrison (2010, pp. 7–8) suggest a slightly different typology to that of Bowen. They start their typology on a relational level of exploitation. They argue that some relationships are unilateral, where one party benefits at the cost of the other, or benefit is inequitable in the relationship (whether intentional or unintentional). The next type of relationship is described as transactional – usually short-term engagements designed to achieve a common goal (similar to collaboration as suggested by Bowen). Finally, transformational relationships, at the backdrop of historically asymmetrical power relations, are described as long-term commitments in which both parties grow and change over time. There is also a strong emphasis on being receptive and open to changing goals as the partnership grows. In alignment with the relationship continuum of Bringle and co-workers, exploitative relationships lack equity, closeness and integrity, while transformational relationships have high degrees of all three (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 7). Shading was used again to suggest possible areas of overlap without creating definite boundaries. For example, transactional relationships share most similarity with collaboration as defined by Bowen; however, there may be instances where collaborative relationships could lead to transformational outcomes.

The nature of relationships was also compared to approaches to service learning as discussed earlier (cf. 2.4.5) to show some inferred similarities. A charitable approach to service learning may be at danger of being exploitative, although it could also be cooperative and may have the potential to be transactional and collaborative. A project-approach to service learning was described earlier as short-term commitments that work toward some common goals; however, is in danger of lacking in reciprocity. For this reason project approaches share some danger of being exploitative, although greater overlaps with cooperation, collaboration and transactional relationships are observable in theory. In some instances, there may even be potential for limited transformational relationships depending on the nature of the project. Finally, a social change approach to service learning per definition seeks to be transformational and requires interdependent, reciprocal partnerships.

The bracket to the right illustrates that the term 'engagement' is used whenever there is 'doing together with' the community (cf. 2.4.6. and Concept Clarification).

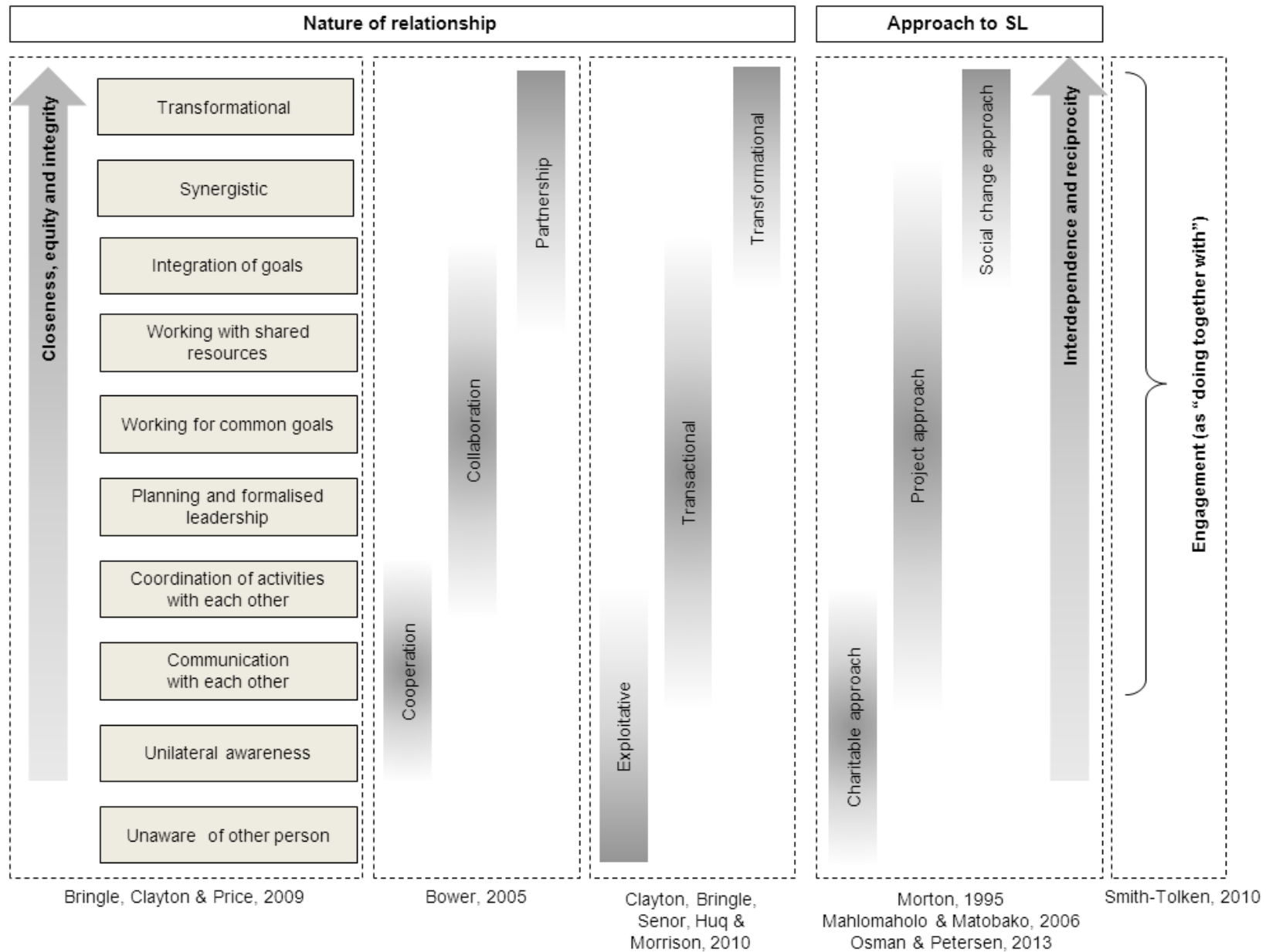


Figure 8: Juxtaposing typologies of partnership and collaboration with approaches to service learning as a form of engagement (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg from authors as cited on the figure)

2.5.4.3 Partnership development in service learning

The development of partnerships in service learning engagements sets the tone for the future of the engagement – not only in terms of the relationships between role players, but also in terms of the outcomes to be attained through the joint endeavour. Literature on partnership development in service learning, therefore, informs this study by providing a theory-based background against which the development of partnerships in the study, as an important aspect of the service learning engagements, may be viewed when investigating community representatives' perceptions in this regard. Various aspects of partnership development could act as facilitators or barriers to occupational enablement, which further demonstrates the importance of this area of literature in relation to the research questions (cf. 1.3).

Theory on partnership development may be derived from a multitude of disciplines. However, because the resource *Service Learning in the Curriculum A Resource for Higher Education Institutions* by Bender et al. (2006) was the primary source used in the development of 'partnerships' in the service learning modules included in this study, the information contained therein is used as the primary guiding source to provide a realistic background regarding partnership development for this study.

Bender et al. (2006, p. 95) suggest that partnership development takes place in four stages, namely formation, implementation, maintenance and outcome stages. These stages, the activities constituting each stage as well as the inferred preconditions for each to be successful are depicted in Figure 9. The figure was constructed primarily from Bender et al. (2006, pp. 95–98), however good alignment between their work and the work of Suarez-Balcazar et al. (2005) and Witchger Hansen (2010) in the disciplinary context of occupational therapy was found. Consequently, additional information from these two sources was integrated into the representation of partnership development.

The layout of the figure indicates the stages of partnership development in the white blocks at the top of the figure. Below the white blocks, the shaded blocks indicate the typical activities associated with the stage. Behind these shaded blocks, lighter shaded boxes represent the relational attributes that are inferred as preconditions for each stage. The dashed lines of these blocks were used purposively to suggest that the boundaries are permeable, and in fact these preconditions relate to all four stages of partnership development.

Following the figure on the next page is a brief textural description thereof. Please refer to the figure itself for more comprehensive information.

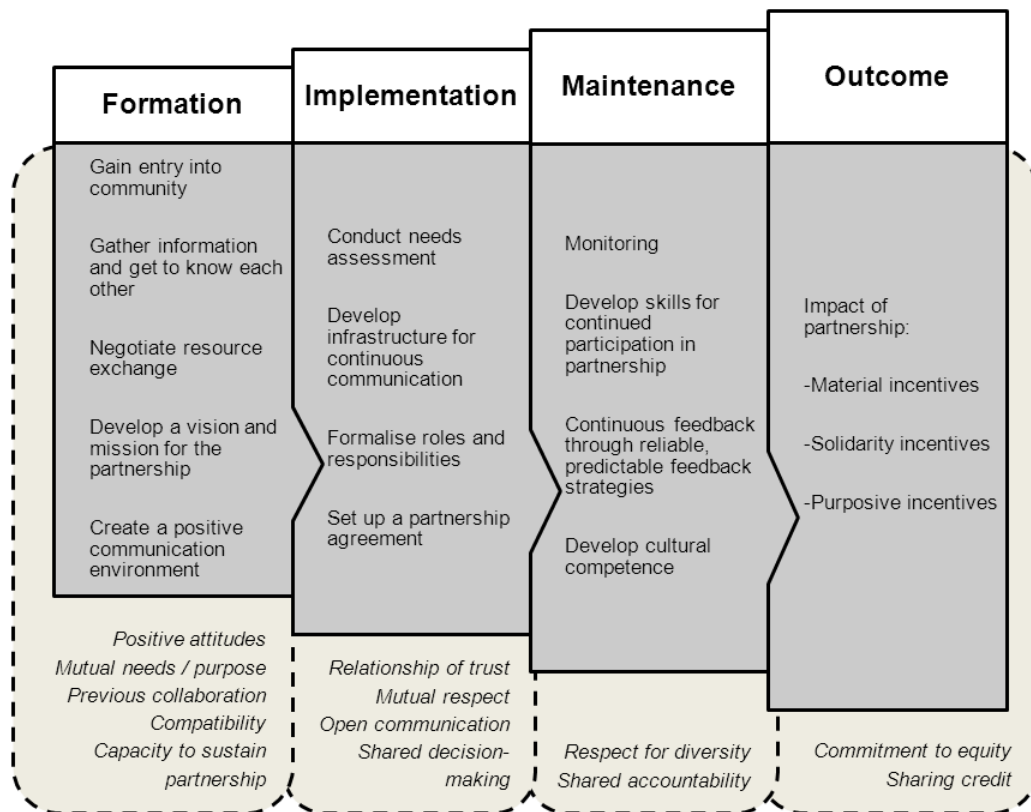


Figure 9: Stages of partnership development in service learning (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg from Bender et al., 2006; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2005 and Witchger Hansen, 2010)

In the **formation** stage activities such as negotiating resource exchange and developing a vision and mission for the partnership are supported by relational preconditions such as positive attitudes and compatibility of needs and ideas. The **implementation** stage typically entails activities such as conducting a needs assessment and setting up a partnership agreement, for which trust, respect, open communication and shared decision-making are crucial pre-conditions.

During the **maintenance** stage, regular feedback and development of skills necessary for sustaining the partnership (e.g. cultural competence) are supported by respect for diversity and shared accountability. Finally the **outcomes** stage necessitates that outcomes of the partnership, whether in the form of material products (e.g. physical resources), solidarity (e.g. group identification) or purposive (e.g. derived from achieving important goals of the partnership), are realised and equitably shared.

In a sense, the description of the stages of partnership development presented here also represents an ‘ideal’ rather than the practical reality in many instances, similar to the conceptualisations of ‘partnership’ (cf. 2.5.4.1). However, having the ideal in mind assists us in working towards closer, more equitable and sustainable relationships (i.e. partnerships) in service learning. It also provides a temporal framework for doing research on partnerships, in addition to the theories of partnerships presented earlier (cf. 2.5.4.2).

2.5.4.4 *Research on partnerships in service learning engagements*

Bringle and Clayton (2013, p. 549) critiques existing literature on partnerships in service learning for lacking theoretical grounding and conflating community outcomes with analyses of partnerships. While I am fully in support of their argument that there is a need for critical inquiry specifically into partnerships in service learning, I also argue that any investigation into outcomes of a service learning engagement would be limited if issues relating to partnership *per se* are not included in the investigation. Therefore, in this study, participants were encouraged to voice both perceptions of specific outcomes of service learning engagements and perceptions relating to the partnership itself.

That being said, this section of the literature review will focus on research that relates explicitly to partnerships in service learning. Of particular relevance is a South African study conducted by Netshandama (2010) in which she investigated community stakeholders' views on what constitutes 'quality partnerships'. Four important requirements of a partnership to be of a high quality arose from her data, namely (1) balance the partnership objectives with both parties, (2) ensure an unexploitative partnership, (3) share power and control in the partnership, and (4) maintain and monitor the partnership (Netshandama, 2010, p. 71). The fact that these 'principles' for service learning partnerships arose from community stakeholders' views is significant, as it highlights those aspects of partnerships that are particularly important to the community.

Witchger Hansen (2010) conducted a study in the USA on community partners' perspectives of service learning partnerships within occupational therapy. She focused particularly on the community – university aspect of partnership (cf. Figure 7). Her study yielded both satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the partnership. Positive relationships with students and staff, effective communication and adequate time spent in the community were primary drivers of satisfaction with partnerships (Witchger Hansen, 2010, pp. 147–154). Dissatisfaction was informed by a lack of communication, insufficient time invested in the partnership on the part of lecturers (e.g. to supervise students or to stick to pre-determined meeting times), and when the intended outcomes of the partnership were not realised (Witchger Hansen, 2010, pp. 108–109).

Both these studies highlight some important implications for the development of partnerships in occupational therapy service learning in South Africa. Literature triangulation of many of the findings in this study will relate back to these two studies (cf. Chapter 4).

Finally, a "promising development" in the South African service learning body of knowledge (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 85) is the study of Smith-Tolken (2010) in which the nature of scholarly-based service-related processes at another South African university was investigated using a grounded theory inquiry approach. From this study Smith-Tolken developed a theoretical framework for scholarly service processes, which provides insight into various

dimensions of these processes. Although the scope of Smith-Tolken's investigation went well beyond only 'service learning' and 'partnerships' as is the scope of this section of the literature review, this author's thematic analysis and resulting theoretical framework provides invaluable insights for service learning partnerships. For example, agreement-based relationships is identified as one of the four interrelated concepts that inform 'cyclical interchange' within scholarly service processes (of which service learning could be an example). Smith-Tolken suggests a typology of relationship similar to the continuums of partnership presented earlier (cf. 2.5.4.2). However, the author demonstrates that the nature of relationships is not linear, but that it fluctuates in the meaning-giving context in which the cyclical interchange takes place (Smith-Tolken, 2010, p. 158). These and other lessons are important to inform service learning practice as a form of scholarly service processes in the South African context.

2.6 Conclusion: Enabling occupation through service learning – drawing some lines together

In this chapter, I sought to provide a basic conceptual background to the study, as well as to scrutinise the existing bodies of knowledge in relevant occupational therapy and service learning literature. I have done this by dividing the literature review into two main sections, namely occupational therapy and service learning. In the first section I provided a brief overview of definitions of occupational therapy, from where I delineated some concepts to be further explored, such as occupational therapy in the health and social fields and occupational therapy in the community setting. Occupation as the domain of concern and enablement as the core competency of the occupational therapist were then discussed, emphasising the enablement foundations that underlie occupational enablement.

In the second section, I explored the history, theoretical underpinnings, definitions of and approaches to service learning, and discussed the notion of service learning engagements. I further elaborated on service learning by exploring it from the perspectives of the different role players, broadly divided into the student, the university and the community. I argued that service learning takes place in the relational context of partnership and ended this section with a theoretical and empirical overview of partnerships in service learning engagements.

In order to conclude this chapter with a synthesis of information reviewed, I would like to present an argument for the application of enablement foundations (from occupational therapy literature; cf. 2.2.4) within service learning (with emphasis on partnerships in service learning engagements; cf. 2.5.4) as follows:

- **Choice, risk, responsibility:** Careful negotiation of choice, risk and responsibility in a service learning partnership is vital to ensuring a mutually enabling endeavour for all stakeholders. The importance of community choice when negotiating the nature of

collaborative activities is reiterated by authors such as Hall (2010, p. 25) and Bender et al. (2006, p. 96). Also, careful consideration of risks and clarification of responsibilities of stakeholders in advance mitigates potential misunderstandings and negative outcomes from the onset (Bender et al., 2006, p. 114).

- **Client participation:** Closely related to the notion of choice, client participation (that in the service learning context is probably more aptly named ‘community participation’ – the term that will henceforth be used) is of utmost importance for enablement. An enabling engagement with the community requires active participation from all stakeholders (Du Plessis & Van Dyk 2013:82). Not only does active participation in decision-making and problem-solving enhance stakeholders’ sense of ownership in the partnership, but also “exerts individual human agency” (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 101). Facilitating the necessary knowledge and skills for participation in decision-making and problem-solving should therefore be a priority in mutually enabling engagements as is also suggested by Bender et al. (2006, p. 97) in the maintenance stage of partnership development (cf. 2.5). Collaboration based on mutual respect and open, honest communication ensures the best possible environment for community participation (cf. Figure 9).
- **Vision of possibilities:** A vision of possibilities as a foundation for enablement refers broadly to the mutual cultivation of hope, readiness and confidence through the nature of the service learning partnership. In such partnerships, a vision of possibilities may spark ideas and dreams of things previously unimagined, especially as the partnership grows and contributes to the attainment of goals. It requires of partners to approach one another with optimism and positive regard, believing in the potential of the other to transform and grow. A vision of possibilities fuels the momentum for mutual enablement and often provides the impetus for renewed choices (for things not previously thought possible), a willingness to take risks or greater responsibility and enhanced participation (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, pp. 102–103).
- **Change:** Service learning partnerships are built on the assumption that change, or transformation, is necessary and mutually desirable. Moreover, mutual commitment to change is stated as a ‘key indicator’ for the formation of successful – that is, enabling – service learning partnerships (Bender et al., 2006, p. 95). What is important as far as enablement is concerned, is that change should be negotiated mutually based on a vision of possibilities (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 104). Sincere belief in people’s ability to be active agents of change is necessary to promote agency. Agency, in turn, is argued by Conner (2010, pp. 4–5) as pivotal to partnerships in service learning in order to ensure equitable power relations and reciprocity in service learning engagements.
- **Justice:** For service learning endeavours to be enabling there needs to be sincere concern for issues of social, occupational and individual justice (cf. 2.4.5.1). Critical engagement with encountered injustices and proactive questioning of assumptions that may limit agency,

promote justice and enablement (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 105). Opportunities for critical engagement with issues of justice arise when working with people and communities who are, or have been, marginalised or otherwise 'disabled' whether by official structures or personal prejudice. Additionally, beyond engaging with these issues, active promotion of a more just society will not only be enabling, but will also contribute to the intended purpose of community engagement to advance responsible citizenship and social justice (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 2).

- **Power sharing:** Much of the criticism of service learning and community engagement, and frequently the reason for experiences of failure in such engagements, has related to the power being situated with one of the parties, instead of the sharing of power (Butin, 2010, p. 7). For engagement to be mutually enabling, inequality in power needs to be reviewed critically. Appreciation of the different forms and application of knowledge assets offered by all stakeholders is vital in catalysing power sharing towards enablement through service learning (Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013, p. 82).

Service learning in occupational therapy has the potential to enable occupation in communities. It also has the potential to contribute to occupational justice and social change. However, as noted in various sections of this chapter, many of the 'ideals' of service learning might remain just that – ideals. We need to investigate what is happening in practice in order to learn how to change that which does not work, and build on that which does work, in order for service learning engagements in occupational therapy education to move ever closer to its intended outcomes and potential for social change. This study aims to make some contribution to investigating what is happening in service learning practice at one occupational therapy department, in order to inform practice there, and to hopefully also contribute to the wider body of knowledge on the community voice in occupational therapy service learning literature. Chapter 3 – *Research methodology* provides a discussion on the methodology utilised to these ends.

CHAPTER 3

Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1 the rationale and aim of the study were discussed, while Chapter 2 provided a theoretical perspective from literature on the most prominent concepts related to this study. In this chapter, the methods employed to answer the research question are presented.

As alluded to in Chapter 1, this study was executed within the qualitative research paradigm. The qualitative research process, by nature, is emergent (Creswell, 2009, p. 4) – that is, research questions and methods tend to emerge and evolve as the research progresses. To enhance rigorous reporting, I will introduce this chapter on research methodology by firstly describing the evolution of the methodology of this study. The primary changes made are summarised in Table 2 and discussed comprehensively following the table.

Table 2: Summary of the evolution of methodological components of the study

Element	Initial research proposal	Final revised research proposal
Research paradigm	Transformative paradigm	Constructivist paradigm
Purpose	To evaluate the extent to which occupational therapy service learning engagements enable occupation by describing community representatives' perceptions in this regard	To describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning
Study design	Evaluative research (qualitative)	Qualitative descriptive enquiry
Study population	Service learning documents e.g. service learning agreements Community representatives	Occupational therapy service learning community representatives
Methods of data collection	Document study Semi-structured interviews Second round individual or focus group interviews	Semi-structured interviews

This study developed from an advocacy and participatory worldview (cf. Preface). The assumptions and beliefs associated with this world view motivated and inspired the research question (cf. 1.3). In line with this worldview, the study was originally positioned in the transformative paradigm and was envisioned to assume a critical, evaluative format primarily. The purpose of the study would have been to “evaluate the extent to which occupational therapy service learning engagements enable occupation by describing community representatives' perceptions in this regard” (Janse van Rensburg, 2012) and an evaluation research study (also called ‘programme evaluation’ by MacPherson & McKie, 2010, p. 454) was

planned. A document study of occupational therapy service learning documents (such as agreements between the occupational therapy department and service learning sites) was planned so as to draw up an 'evaluation framework' and semi-structured interviews in two rounds were planned with community representatives in order to perform an evaluation of occupational therapy service learning engagements.

However, in the process of developing and implementing these research methods the nature of the research problem called for a different emphasis than originally envisaged. Firstly, the preliminary document study did not yield sufficient information to compose an accurate framework against which occupational therapy service learning engagements, especially the 'extent' to which occupation is enabled through these engagements at that particular point in time, could be measured. Secondly, and more importantly, when commencing the interviews with participants, the information shared by participants was not evaluative in nature despite prompts in this regard. Participants displayed a desire to share their stories – perceptions formed based on their experiences – rather than standing in critical or evaluative shoes. The pressing need of the participants to describe their perceptions; to tell their stories *before* affording a critical view, incidentally, corresponds handsomely with Tomlin and Borgetto's (2011, pp. 193–195) pyramid of occupational therapy research where they argue that the descriptions of persons' experiences precede the meta-reflexive position thereof.

As a result, I realised that approaching the research problem from another paradigm, and adapting the research questions would more truthfully reflect the orientations of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements. This attempt at greater inclusivity in terms of participants' voices reflected the influence of both the transformative and pragmatic orientations in this study (cf. Preface); the former for obvious reasons and the latter in line with Brookfield's (2001, p. 19) argument that the pragmatic paradigm strives for inclusiveness by virtue of the pragmatic paradigm's openness for reformulation in the face of unforeseen eventualities.

The following amendments were then made to the research protocol after the interviews had been conducted, and submitted for approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the university where the study was performed:

- **Change in formulation of the research purpose, question and aims:** This was done following qualitative data collection and analysis in collaboration with study leaders and co-coders as the information collected in the research process did not yield evaluative results. Participants were rather inclined to *share their stories*, not *evaluate their experiences*. In order to stay true to their stories, the purpose of the study was consequently amended to *describe* their experiences (cf. 1.4).

- **Change in the primary research paradigm:** The primary research paradigm was changed from the transformative paradigm to a constructivist paradigm. In line with changes in the purpose and study design, the research paradigm had to be revisited and aligned with the purpose and study design. This is discussed comprehensively in the following section (cf. 3.2).
- **Change in the research design:** The research design was changed from an evaluative research study to a descriptive qualitative enquiry. For reasons as mentioned, the evaluative nature of the study was removed from the study design, and the (also originally included) qualitative descriptive design components became the primary focus.
- **Change in the methods of data collection:** The document study and second round interviews were omitted from the study. The study comprises only of semi-structured interviews with participants. The document study was omitted for two reasons: the purpose of the document study was to provide an evaluation framework for an evaluative study. Because the study ceased to be evaluative, there is no need for an evaluative framework. Secondly, when first embarking on the proposed study, I discovered that the document study would not provide sufficient information for an evaluative framework, as the documents contained planned *activities* for service learning rather than planned *outcomes* which would serve to provide an evaluative framework. Second round interviews were omitted following in-depth consultation with study leaders and co-coders as sufficient saturation of data had been obtained during the first round interviews, thus yielding a second round redundant in answering the amended research question in this study.

The final amended research paradigm in which this study was positioned, the method of enquiry and the ethical considerations involved in the final study, will henceforth be presented and argued.

3.2 Research paradigm

The research paradigm refers to the fundamental set of beliefs that informs practice and due to their influence on decisions throughout the research process, should be stated explicitly (Creswell, 2009, pp. 5-6). In this section I will position the study within a specific research paradigm and identify the ontology, epistemology and axiology that informed the final decision-making in this study.

Scrutiny of relevant literature reveals differences regarding the organisation of various qualitative research paradigms. Denzin and Lincoln (2008, p. 31) argue that *all* qualitative research is interpretive, and distinguish various 'interpretive paradigms' of which constructivism is one. In contrast, authors such as Fouché and Schurink (2011, p. 310-311) and Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2010, p. 6) distinguish interpretive and constructivist paradigms as two separate

epitomes. Creswell (2009, p. 8) states that the constructivist paradigm is often used in combination with interpretivism. Given these apparent contradictions, an interpretation and evaluation of the standpoints in the literature had to be made. This study is consequently primarily positioned in the **constructivist paradigm** which reiterates the contextual, social construction of knowledge as a transactional process, while acknowledging that interpretivism informs especially the analysis of data in line with the argument of Denzin and Lincoln (2008, p. 31) stated above. The ontology, epistemology and axiology of the constructivist paradigm are consequently discussed.

Ontology refers to the way we view reality (Mertens, 2010, p. 3). In the constructivist paradigm, reality is viewed as the socially constructed representations of the experiences of people (Fouché & Schurink, 2011, p. 311; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2010, p. 6). Constructivists acknowledge the existence of multiple experiences or beliefs about reality. These 'multiple realities' are also not meant to represent a 'real world' or 'real truth'. Rather, reality is seen as relative and not absolute (Guba & Lincoln, 2008, p. 257). The purpose of this study was to investigate these so-called 'multiple realities' perceived by community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements. Through getting to 'know' these realities, the aim is to make a positive contribution to these realities by informing occupational therapy service learning practice.

Epistemology refers to the way in which we view the generation of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the to-be-known (Mertens, 2010, p. 3). In the constructivist paradigm, knowledge is generated through transactional interaction between the researcher and the research participant (Guba & Lincoln, 2008, p. 257). Due acknowledgement is given to the subjectivity of the researcher as part of the creation of knowledge (rather than the researcher as an objective outsider trying to uncover a universal truth) (Nieuwenhuis, 2010, p. 64). I therefore acknowledge that the construction of a representation of the 'realities' of the research participants in this study is a product of both their perceptions and my own interpretations thereof (which in turn is influenced by my own assumptions and perceptions). I will not attempt to claim objectivity or to limit my own involvement in the construction of meaning, however, I will strive to ensure trustworthiness as the indicator of rigour (Guba & Lincoln, 2008, p. 261-263; Mertens, 2010, p. 18) (cf. 3.3.8).

Axiology refers to the ethical and moral principles or values that inform the research process in the given paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 2008, p. 264; Mertens, 2010, p. 3). Guba and Lincoln (2008, p. 262) describe the axiology of the constructivist paradigm as follows: "Propositional, transactional knowing is instrumentally valuable as a means to social emancipation, which is an end in itself..." Thus the axiological stance of this study is rooted in the notion that getting to 'know' service learning representatives' perceptions regarding enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements can be intrinsically valuable and can make

a positive contribution towards justice through informing occupational therapy service learning practice.

The research paradigm serves as a pivotal guide to making methodological decisions. As will be illustrated in the following sections of this chapter, the premises that the constructivist perspective of reality constitutes a socially constructed phenomenon and that transactional knowledge generation can be a means for social emancipation and seeking justice, provided the backdrop for designing the methods employed in this study.

3.3 Method of enquiry

The method of enquiry employed in this study is discussed with reference to the study design, research context, research population, exploratory research, data collection, data management, data analysis and trustworthiness.

3.3.1 Study design

Durrheim (2010, p. 37) urges researchers to consider four dimensions when making decisions regarding the study design. These dimensions are the research purpose, the paradigm informing the research, the context of the research and the research techniques. No linearity in the process is proposed, researchers are rather encouraged to consider carefully and interweave these dimensions in the process of designing the research.

The purpose of the proposed study and the research paradigm have already been discussed (cf. 1.4 and 3.2). The purpose of the study – to describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning – lends itself to a qualitative research design – a design that allows research participants to voice the unique meanings they ascribe to experiences and phenomena (Creswell, 2009, p. 4).

Burns and Grove (2009, p. 51) identify three key assumptions that qualitative research is based on: “(1) there is not a single reality; (2) reality is based on perceptions, is different for each person and changes over time; and (3) what we know has meaning only within a given situation or context.” These assumptions align directly with the ontology and epistemology of the constructivist paradigm. Creswell (2009, p. 16-17) states that qualitative approaches are typically employed when working within the constructivist paradigm. Therefore, both the purpose and paradigm dimensions steered the study toward a **qualitative research design**.

Babbie (2010, pp. 19, 92-94) refers to three overarching research purposes: exploration, description and explanation. According to Burns and Grove (2009, p. 696) descriptive research designs are used to “provide a picture of situations as they naturally happen.” Broad research aims may include describing existing affairs, discovering new meaning and categorising

information. Stemming from the constructivist paradigm, this study aimed to provide a picture of the perceptions of community representatives as experienced and voiced by them (and interpreted by the researcher). I have not attempted to explore new phenomena or to explain reasons or relationships. My aim was simply to provide a picture – to give an account of – what participants voiced. Thus, this study employed a **descriptive, qualitative enquiry** design, which is indicated by Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi and Wright (2010, p. 194) as the apt study design for the stated purpose. Finally, this study is **contextual** in nature, as it is valid within the specific context that the research is executed without making claims to universality of findings (Botma et al., 2010, p. 289). Hence, the context in which this study was executed will be described before continuing to discuss the study population, participants and data collection.

3.3.2 Research context

This study was executed at a university that offers a professional degree in occupational therapy with the permission of the Vice-Rector (Academic), the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences as well as the Head of the Department of Occupational Therapy. Service learning is used as a teaching and learning method in the occupational therapy core curriculum in each study year. The service learning component of the occupational therapy core curriculum complies with the operational definition of a service learning module as presented previously (cf. 1.1) in the following ways:

- the modules are credit-bearing;
- service activities take place in a community setting that, taking guidance from Dunn (2011, p. 1) and Meyers (2010, pp. 16-17) for the purpose of this study, was defined as ‘real life settings’ outside of traditional hospital or clinic-based services, where occupational therapy services are not funded by government or private health funding, and where a need for social justice and service delivery to under-served communities is an important feature;
- service activities are aimed at addressing identified community goals within the scope of occupational therapy; and
- student learning (i.e. specific learning outcomes) is aligned with the Exit Level Outcomes for occupational therapy students as well as identified community goals.

All occupational therapy service learning activities are planned and coordinated by a service learning coordinator – a specifically appointed lecturer within the occupational therapy department at the university. Students are supervised at all the service learning sites by a service learning supervisor – a qualified occupational therapist employed either by the university or the institution where the service learning takes place. Both the service learning coordinator and the service learning supervisor are responsible for contracting and collaboration with community representatives at the various service learning sites. Direct interaction between the

community representative and the service learning supervisor occurs at least once per semester, although at most sites more frequently.

At the time of conducting the study, the occupational therapy department at the university had active service learning partnerships with eleven service learning sites in community settings. The service learning coordinator at the time provided the researcher with the contextual information as well as the details of each of the relevant community representatives as depicted in Table 3.

Table 3: Service learning partnerships community sites

Site	Rural / Urban	Type of organisation	Student year group involved in service learning at time of study	Duration of service learning partnership	Participation
1	Urban	Residential Care Facility	2 nd (previously and currently also a 3 rd & 4 th -year clinical area)	5 years	Included in study
2	Urban	Residential Care Facility	1 st (currently also a 2 nd -year clinical area)	4 years	No eligible community representative to participate
3	Urban	Residential Care Facility	1 st	2 years	Included in study
4	Urban	Child Day Care Centre	1 st (previously a 3 rd -year clinical area)	5 years	Included in study
5	Urban	Child Day Care Centre	2 nd	2 years	Included in study
6	Urban	Youth Centre	2 nd	1 year	Duration of partnership did not allow inclusion – included in the exploratory investigation
7	Urban	Residential Care Facility	1 st & 2 nd	5 years	Did not consent to participate
8	Rural	Public High School	3 rd & 4 th	5 years	Included in study
9	Rural	Public Primary School	3 rd & 4 th	5 years	No eligible community representative to participate
10	Rural	Residential Care Facility	3 rd & 4 th	5 years	Included in study
11	Rural	Public Intermediate School	3 rd & 4 th	5 years	Included in study (two participants)

Seven of the service learning sites were in urban communities while five sites were in rural communities. There were four residential care facilities, two child day care centres, one youth centre, and three public schools. Public schools were included in the definition of a community setting as defined in this section, as occupational therapy services are not funded by

government in these schools and as a result these schools are under-served in terms of possible occupational therapy service delivery.

Table 3 also indicates the student year groups involved at the respective sites. In the process of data collection I realised that, to use a positivistic term, this was a 'variable' that influenced the experiences and perceptions of community representatives. Comparing the instances where primarily senior students (third and fourth-year) performed service learning to those where primarily junior students (first and second-year) performed service learning, different patterns arose. It could therefore potentially influence the aspect of dependability of trustworthiness (cf. 3.3.8.3). This observation is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 (cf. 4.4.1).

The duration of the partnerships with these institutions varied between one and five years; five years being the longest because service learning as a teaching and learning method was only formally introduced five years prior to execution of the study. However, as noted in Table 3, some of the sites served as sites for clinical training (cf. 2.3 for conceptual clarification) of occupational therapy students previously while some currently serve as both service learning and clinical training sites. During the course of data collection it became apparent that clinical training in addition to service learning activities was a source of possible distortion of the trustworthiness of data, as community representatives often found it hard to distinguish which activities formed part of clinical training and which were part of service learning (cf. 3.3.8.3). I attempted to manage this problem in two ways: firstly by discussing the nature of student activities as part of the interview process so as to assist the community representative in making the distinction; and secondly, by indicating on interviews during data analysis, using field notes, where participants' comments appeared to relate to clinical activities rather than service learning activities (in which case all coders excluded that section of the interview from data analysis).

To ensure that participants had had sufficient experience of occupational therapy service learning engagements in order to articulate their perceptions in this regard, only sites where the partnership had been established for two years or longer were considered for inclusion in the study. The one site, where the partnership had only been established for one year, was subsequently excluded from the study. However, the community representative from this site participated in the exploratory investigation. The data collected during the exploratory investigation was not included in the results of the study (cf. 3.3.4).

The remaining ten eligible sites were approached for inclusion in the study in collaboration with the service learning coordinator and/or service learning supervisor from the occupational therapy department at the university. Acquiring access to the service learning sites in this way, I sought to enhance the trust relationship between myself and the participants by being transparent not only about the nature of the research but also about the occupational therapy department's knowledge and support of the research (cf. 3.4). This also allowed me to make

direct contact with the key collaborators, or so-called 'gatekeepers', at each service learning site, through whom the appropriate permission could be sought for conducting the study (Creswell, 2009, p. 178; Mertens, 2010, p. 251). Examples of these gatekeepers were principals of schools or managers of residential care facilities. Nine of these sites consented to be included in the research.

3.3.3 Study population and sampling

The research context from which the study population was derived was discussed in the preceding section. Utilising non-probability, purposive sampling (Strydom & Delport, 2011, p. 392), community representatives were approached at the nine service learning sites that consented to be included in the research, and those community representatives that complied with criteria for inclusion as indicated below, were asked for their consent to participate in the study.

3.3.3.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Community representatives had to comply with the following criteria for inclusion in the study:

- The community representative had to be a member of the community in which the service learning site is situated. This criterion was set to enhance the extent to which the community representative's perceptions could be indicative of the experiences and consequent perceptions of the community members themselves.
- The community representative must have been involved with the occupational therapy service learning partnership for a minimum of two years, and must have had contact with the service learning coordinator, service learning supervisor and/or occupational therapy students on a regular basis (at least once per semester) so as to ensure that they have a certain level of insight into student activities as well as the partnership itself (such as the goals of the partnership).
- Community representatives of all cultural and language groups were included in the study. A trained interpreter was offered to all participants who were not English or Afrikaans first language speakers if they preferred to conduct the interviews in another language.

Community representatives were excluded from the study if they were formally employed by the university as this could have caused a conflict of interest and compromised the trustworthiness of the data.

3.3.3.2 Research participants

The criteria for inclusion were implemented as follows to yield the final sample of research participants:

- Community representatives from all nine service learning sites were members of their respective communities.
- Community representatives at two of the eligible service learning sites had not been involved with service learning in the preceding two years as previous community representatives had resigned from the service learning site. This resulted in community representatives from seven service learning sites being included in the study.
- One of the sites had two community representatives that complied with criteria for inclusion and expressed their interest in participation in the study. As they fulfilled different roles in the partnership, one being the representative for the specific organisation where service learning takes place and the other one representing the broader community where students delivered services, both were included in the study population.
- All eight eligible community representatives consented to participate in the study, hence the final sample of research participants consisted of eight community representatives.
- Due to the nature of their involvement as community representatives with staff of the university, most community representatives were able to communicate comfortably in English or Afrikaans. One participant requested the presence of the trained interpreter (cf. 3.4).

The 'sample size' in qualitative research is based on criteria rather than numbers as is the case in quantitative research (Botma et al., 2010, p. 200), although some 'rules of thumb' exist regarding sufficient numbers of participants (Mertens, 2010, p. 332). Numbers from six up to 25 participants are mentioned as sufficient sample sizes to obtain trustworthy results in descriptive qualitative studies like this one (Mertens, 2010, p. 332; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007, p. 289).

Sufficiency and **saturation** are two criteria that are widely regarded as vital indicators of an adequate sample size (Botma et al., 2010, p. 200; Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 80; Greeff, 2011, p. 350). The number of participants (eight) warrants that criteria for adequate participant numbers should be considered in this study.

Sufficiency refers to whether the participants included in the study reflect the variation present in the entire population (Greeff, 2011, p. 350). In this study this was the case as all members of the population under study that complied with the criteria for inclusion were included; therefore, the sample in this study is considered to be sufficient.

Saturation in qualitative data collection is attained when no new information is generated and the information collected thus far forms a coherent whole (Botma et al., 2010, p. 200; Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 80). Although qualitative researchers are discouraged to claim saturation when interaction with participants was limited to only a small proportion of the population under study, or limited to only one interaction, the coders involved in this study were convinced that sufficient saturation had been achieved to answer the research question in a trustworthy manner.

To ensure that credible (otherwise known as ‘accurate’) data was obtained from the relatively small number of participants in this study, an exploratory investigation was carried out before embarking on formal data collection.

3.3.4 Exploratory research

The overarching purpose of an exploratory investigation is to determine whether the desired information can be obtained from participants in order to answer the research question. In the exploratory research the suitability and clarity of interview questions can be tested, while logistical considerations such as the duration of the interview, which also impacts on costs such as transcription costs, can be piloted (Strydom & Delpont, 2011, p. 394-395).

An exploratory investigation was performed with one community representative that did not comply with all the criteria for inclusion in the study. This was done as the available number of participants who did comply with criteria for inclusion was limited, and I did not want to risk methodological changes following the exploratory investigation to result in exclusion of the data collected from an eligible participant. At the same time, however, although the participant in the exploratory investigation did not comply with all the inclusion criteria, he was largely representative of the other participants that would participate in the study and could assist me in testing the suitability and clarity of the questions as well as the logistical considerations related to the interviews.

Prior to conducting the exploratory investigation, the participant was informed of his role as a participant in the exploratory investigation and he gave voluntary informed consent to participate. The exploratory interview was conducted at a time and place convenient for the participant, and the procedures as described in the section on data collection (cf. 3.3.5) were followed. In addition to these procedures, the participant gave feedback to me after the interview regarding the clarity of the questions and any other matters that arose during the course of the interview.

No methodological changes resulted from the exploratory investigation. The data collected was not included in the results of the main study due to the participant’s non-compliance with the inclusion criteria. The exploratory investigation provided valuable practical information such as the expected amount of time to schedule for interviews, as well as affording me with the opportunity to receive feedback from the participant and to reflect on my own interviewing skills (cf. 3.3.5.1).

3.3.5 Data collection

Data collection methods should be determined by the purpose of the study (Greeff, 2011, p. 341). In this descriptive study, the aim of data collection was to obtain a rich description of

participants' perceptions regarding enabling occupation through service learning. To serve this purpose, methods of data collection had to be open-ended, affording participants the opportunity to articulate their perceptions with as much control over the content of the information shared as possible. Through doing so, the 'multiple realities' voiced by participants were sought in alignment with the constructivist paradigm.

Therefore, limiting data collection methods where the researcher has primary control over the content of data collected, such as questionnaires, structured interviews and to a certain extent nominal group techniques, although each has its advantages, would not serve the purpose of rich descriptive data collection in this qualitative study. Unstructured and semi-structured interviews are interactional in nature, and both the researcher and the participant contribute to the content of and the meaning derived from interviews (Greeff, 2011, p. 342). However, the abstract nature of the topic and its relative tendency for academic jargon, made it difficult to obtain information regarding specific perceptions of 'enabling occupation' without some topic guidance, rendering pure, unstructured interviews impractical. In addition, the relative wide spread of service learning sites rendered group interviews (such as focus groups) unfeasible. This study therefore utilised individual semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection. The semi-structured interview is viewed in literature as an appropriate method when a participant's perceptions about a certain topic is investigated (Botma et al., 2010, p. 208; Greeff, 2011, p. 351). Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to 'have a say' in interpreting what they are sharing about their experiences with occupational therapy service learning engagements while simultaneously allowing me, the researcher, to gather information pertaining to specific perceptions regarding 'enabling occupation'.

I will now set out to discuss the data collection procedures along three sections, namely: *The researcher as a research instrument*, *The interview process* and *The interview*.

3.3.5.1 *The researcher as a research instrument*

In qualitative research, the researcher is most often the primary research instrument. Rather than striving for objectivity, the researcher is subjectively and reflexively involved in the research process, declaring and reflecting on personal biases, involvement with research participants and the researcher's influence on the data collection process (Botma et al., 2010, p. 203; Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 29; Creswell, 2009, p. 177; Nieuwenhuis, 2010b, p. 79). I have declared my background, assumptions and involvement with both the university and the research participants in this study in the Preface. In this section I will describe my involvement in the research and with research participants in detail, taking guidance from Creswell (2009, p. 177) and Botma et al. (2010, p. 203) regarding the aspects that should be covered and using Figure 10 on the following page as framework. Reflections pertaining to the influence of the researcher on the data collection process, particularly as it could influence participants'

responses and therefore the trustworthiness of the data, will be elaborated on in the section on trustworthiness (cf. 3.3.8).

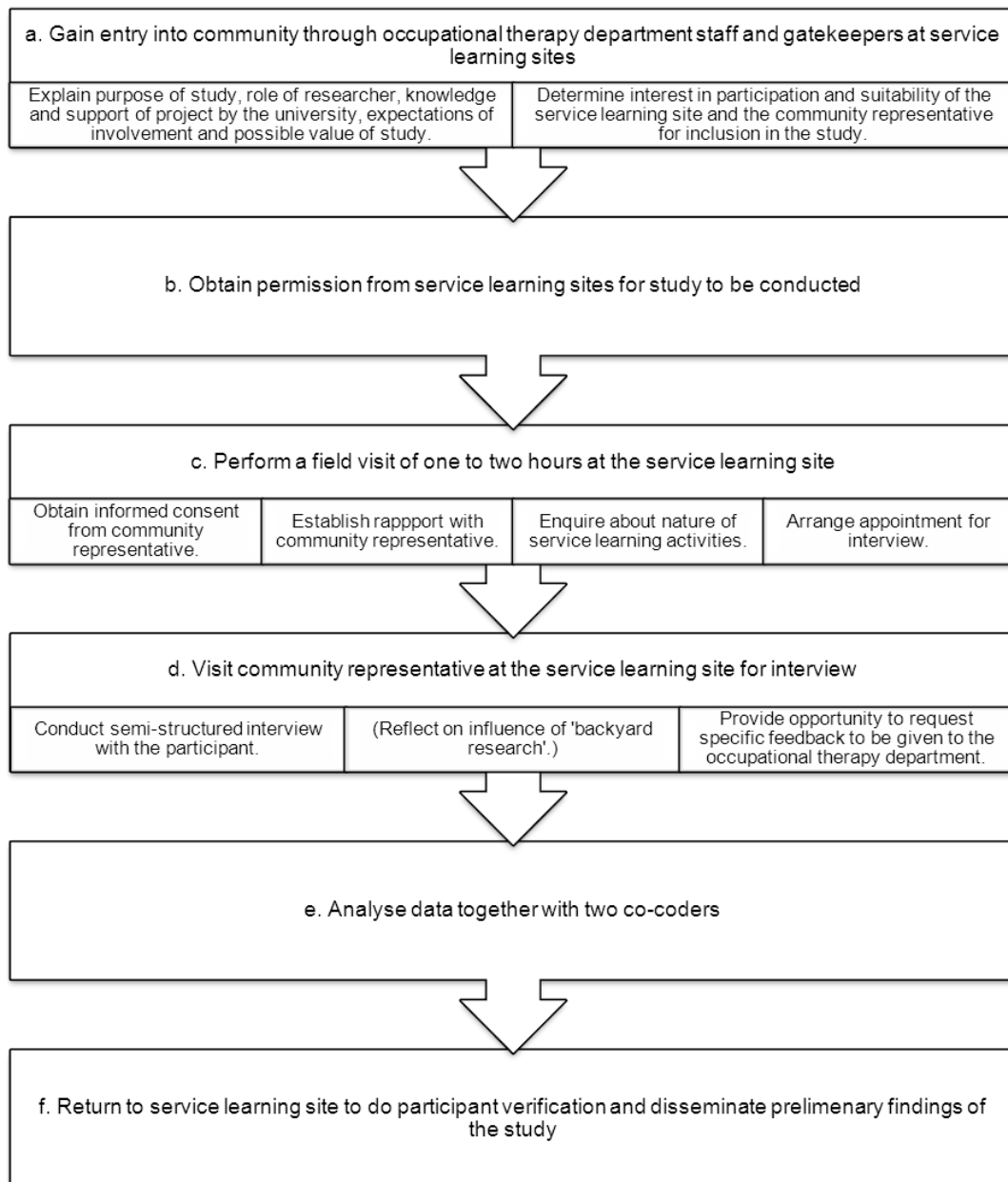


Figure 10: Roles and actions of the researcher as a research instrument (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg)

a. Gain entry into the community through occupational therapy department staff and gatekeepers at service learning sites

As mentioned earlier in this chapter (cf. 3.3.2) entry into respective service learning sites was gained via staff of the occupational therapy department (either the service learning coordinator or service learning supervisor). During this first contact with the service learning site, gatekeepers of the respective organisations were approached, and the proposed study introduced to them. I explained my role as researcher to them as follows:

- I was conducting the research in my personal capacity in the fulfilment of the requirements in respect of a master's degree.
- The university and specifically the occupational therapy department carried full knowledge of the research and supported the research.

I also explained the following aspects of the study to them in detail:

- Expectations in terms of involvement, namely that the community representative would be requested to participate in a semi-structured, one-on-one interview of approximately one hour, that would be digitally recorded, transcribed and analysed.
- Data that was gathered would at all times be treated confidentially and would only be reported on as a cohort – i.e. no individual person or organisation would be linked to any specific finding.
- The intent of the research is to gain an understanding of community representatives' perceptions of occupational therapy service learning engagements so as to inform future practice of service learning in occupational therapy. Therefore although there would be no direct immediate benefit to the service learning site or community representative as research participant, it was hoped that the findings of the study would contribute positively to the practice of service learning with the respective service learning sites in the future.

b. Obtain permission from service learning sites for the study to be conducted

Following this initial introduction, the appropriate authorities at the ten eligible service learning sites were approached with the formal information letter (Appendix B) and written permission was obtained from nine of the sites. However, as mentioned previously, two of the sites did not have community representatives that complied with the inclusion criteria and consequently only seven sites were included in the study.

c. Perform a field visit of one to two hours at the service learning site

Once written permission was obtained, a site visit of between one and two hours was done at each of the seven sites. For areas located outside of the municipal boundaries of the area where the study was conducted, this visit was combined with the first visit in order to limit expenses. During this visit I approached the community representatives for participation in the study, again explaining my role as researcher and the purpose of the proposed study in detail (Mertens, 2010, p. 242). I provided community representatives with an information document and obtained their written informed consent to participate in the study (Appendix C). During the visit, I also attempted to familiarise myself with the nature of the current service learning activities that the occupational therapy students were involved in and established rapport with the community representative who would participate in the research. Finally, I arranged an appointment for the interview at a time convenient for the participant.

d. Visit community representative at the service learning site for the interview

On the third visit to the community, I conducted the interview with the community representative(s), as explained in detail in the following section (cf. 3.3.5.2). In my role as both researcher and interviewer, careful consideration was given to my skill in conducting interviews, as well as the influence of my relationship with participants on the generation of data.

Greff (2011, p. 343) singles out the researcher's **skill in conducting interviews** as the most influential factor regarding the quality of the data collected. Researcher credibility is also a prominent factor that contributes to the trustworthiness of a study (cf. 3.3.8.1). Being an inexperienced researcher, particularly in qualitative research, I had to ensure that a sufficient level of competence in conducting interviews could be established. As an occupational therapist, I received training in conducting interviews in undergraduate studies and have also gained experience in conducting interviews in various clinical settings. I have also attended workshops in qualitative research where interviewing skills were among the topics covered. The exploratory investigation allowed me to reflect critically on my own interviewing skills, while I also submitted the transcriptions of my first two interviews for peer review to a more experienced qualitative researcher and interviewer to further sharpen my interviewing skills.

Burns and Grove (2011, p. 84) urges qualitative researchers to consider and report on the nature of the **relationship** between the researcher and participants and the potential influence thereof on data collection. While the researcher – participant relationship is regarded as a crucial element in the transactional creation of knowledge in qualitative research, issues such as power imbalances may discourage participants' honest participation (Burns & Grove, 2011; S. E. Kelly, 2010). In my role as researcher and interviewer I anticipated that my previous involvement as service learning coordinator with many of the service learning sites and continued employment as a member of staff at the occupational therapy department, could potentially jeopardise participants' inclination to share their perceptions about the service learning engagements honestly during the interview. I have well-established relationships with many of the participants stemming from my previous involvement as service learning coordinator; hence to a certain extent this study could be critiqued as so-called 'backyard research'. Backyard research is research carried out in the researcher's own work setting or among the researcher's acquaintances and poses the danger of eliciting difficult power issues (Creswell, 2009, p. 177). However, I attempted to manage this danger by illuminating the purpose of the research, my own role in the research, the confidential management of information and the responsible communication of results to the participants as discussed earlier (cf. 3.3.5.1 a). Further, I specifically requested all participants to voice their perceptions regarding the service learning engagement as they experienced it specifically in the two years preceding the interview (when I no longer fulfilled the service learning coordinator role) so as to

not place them in a difficult position where they might feel that they are critiquing the researcher personally.

When interviewing participants with whom I had not had previous working relationships as service learning coordinator I anticipated that they may have felt insecure about the possible outcomes if they should provide 'negative' responses to questions (such as for example impacting negatively on their working relationship with the occupational therapy department or having an influence on the continuation of service learning at the specific site). I attempted to manage this by accessing the service learning site with a representative from the occupational therapy department and by clearly articulating the purpose and process of the research, especially emphasising confidentiality of the information shared.

While confidentiality was guaranteed to all participants, I anticipated that there may have been certain issues or requests that participants would have wanted to communicate to the occupational therapy department directly. To allow for this without compromising the confidentiality of the research data, I developed a form to be filled in after the interview, where participants could indicate which information (if any) they wanted to communicate directly with the occupational therapy department (Appendix D). I, therefore, incorporated into my role as researcher also the responsibility to communicate certain aspects of the research directly to the occupational therapy department.

e. Analyse data together with two co-coders

Following completion of the interviews and transcription by an independent transcriber (cf. 3.3.6), data was analysed independently by the researcher and two co-coders using descriptive coding, following which collaboration took place in order to collate independently generated codes, categories and themes (cf. 3.3.7).

f. Return to service learning site to do participant verification and disseminate preliminary findings of the study

Finally, I returned to the service learning sites with each participant's transcribed interview and a summary of preliminary findings in order to do participant verification (cf. 3.3.8.1). During this visit, amendments to the protocol were also communicated with participants.

3.3.5.2 *The interview process*

This section outlines the logistical and practical procedures that were involved in conducting the interviews while the next section will deal with the interview itself.

a. Preparing the participants for the interview

Participants were informed of the study verbally and in writing and their consent was obtained prior to conducting the interview. An appointment for the interview was arranged during the site

visit prior to the interview. Participants were reminded of the appointment for the interview telephonically one day before the interviews took place.

b. Location of interview

Gleaning from the constructivist notion that knowledge is *created in the real world* (as opposed to *discovered from outside*), data collection in qualitative studies typically takes place in the participant's natural setting (Nieuwenhuis, 2010a, p. 54). This is also a strategy to reduce perceived power imbalances by interviewing the participant in a setting that he/she is comfortable in (S. E. Kelly, 2010). The first step in the interview process was thus to establish a time and place suitable for the interview in the participant's natural setting (which was typically the service learning site). Participants were requested to suggest a place for the interview that would be private and provide minimal distractions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p. 149). Refreshments (water and cool drinks) were available during the interview.

c. Duration of interview

Participants were requested to schedule approximately ninety minutes for the interview. Most interviews were completed in about forty minutes, with the shortest interview lasting twenty minutes, and the longest 55 minutes. This corresponds well with Kelly's estimation that qualitative interviews typically last between twenty and ninety minutes (K. Kelly, 2010, p. 300).

d. Recording of the interview

Recording of interviews is strongly recommended in the literature as this provides the most reliable verbatim record of the interview and is not subject to the researcher's reconstructions and memory (S. E. Kelly, 2010). All participants consented to the use of the recorders both in writing based on the information document (cf. Appendix C) and again verbally before commencement of the interview (K. Kelly, 2010). Interviews were recorded on two digital voice recorders, one placed closer to the participant and one closer to the researcher so as to have backup recordings as well as to enhance the quality of the recording of both the interviewer and interviewee.

3.3.5.3 *The interview*

Prior to conducting the interview, an interview schedule was compiled with semi-structured questions as well as possible prompts. The complete interview schedule is included in Appendix E, indicating the alignment of interview questions with research aims, as well as theoretical concepts.

On the day of the interview participants were again reminded of the purpose of the interview and assured of the confidentiality of the information shared (K. Kelly, 2010, p. 299; Mertens, 2010, p. 242). I also explained again that the recordings of the interviews would be transcribed

and de-identified prior to data analysis and that at no point individual interview information would be communicated unless explicitly requested by the participant.

In order to allow community representatives as many opportunities for guiding the conversation as possible, interviews were conducted using the same open-ended introductory question (Greeff, 2011, p. 344; K. Kelly, 2010, p. 299). The question was phrased according to the preceding orientation discussion, asking the participant the following:

Tell me about your experience of the service learning partnership with the occupational therapy department at the [institution name].

The introductory question was then followed by subsequent questions and probes guided by the interview schedule in order to ensure consistent coverage of the various topics related to the study (cf. Appendix E). I kept a printed interview schedule with me at each interview and also used it to make field notes while conducting the interviews. The aim was to record specific observations, nuances and non-verbal cues from the participant (these field notes were completed or supplemented after the interview so as not to interrupt the interview process) (Greeff, 2011, p. 359).

The participants determined the direction of the interview, addition of other 'topics' not stipulated in the interview schedule, and the amount of time spent on each topic. The following interviewing techniques were utilised to enhance the quality of the interview (Greeff, 2011, pp. 345–346; K. Kelly, 2010, p. 299; Mertens, 2010, pp. 242–244):

- *Using open-ended questions:* The interview schedule was compiled to consist of open-ended questions so as to elicit responses that would communicate participants' perceptions regarding their experiences.
- *Follow-up:* Due to the semi-structured nature of the interview I was able to follow up on topics raised by the participants immediately as they emerged in the interview. For example, if a participant mentioned the lack of continuity of services (cf. 4.3.2.1. a) in the answer to the introductory question I would follow that up immediately with the next question.
- *Paraphrasing:* I often repeated participants' answers to them in different words, in order to encourage participants to elaborate further.
- *Clarification:* In cases where participants' answers were not clear I would ask participants to clarify what they meant by what was said.
- *Reflection:* Reflection was frequently used as a means to determine whether a certain topic was discussed as comprehensively as the participant wanted to. I would reflect back on their answers regarding a certain topic, and ask if there was anything that they wished to add.
- *Using silence:* By refraining from commenting, or asking the next question, the resulting silence was utilised to encourage participants to elaborate further on their answers.

- *Asking for examples:* Participants were encouraged to give examples that illustrate their perceptions or experiences, especially when the participant was inclined to make impersonal, unspecific statements.
- *Encouraging:* Participants occasionally displayed a need for approval or validation of their answers especially when talking about challenges experienced. I encouraged them by validating their statements and repeating the rationale of the study and assurance of confidentiality when these situations occurred.

Upon concluding the interview, a short summative reflection of the interview was presented to participants and participants were invited to share anything else that they felt they would like to add. When participants indicated that they were done, I thanked them for their participation and again explained the processes of data analysis and reporting that lay ahead. Finally participants were encouraged to make contact with the researcher should they at any time feel that there was something that they wanted to add to what they had said during the interview (although no participants did make contact again after the interviews).

Although changes to the initially proposed research question and study design took place after conducting the interviews (cf. 3.1), the researcher in collaboration with study leaders and co-coders were convinced that the data generated by the interviews did not require retrospective alteration of the interview schedule, neither did it necessitate a second round of interviews due to the depth of data generated.

3.3.6 Data management

Recordings of interviews were transferred to an external hard drive and a password protected computer immediately after each interview, and deleted from the digital voice recorders. The hard drive was kept on the researcher's person or locked away in a private filing cabinet at all times and only the researcher had access to the password protected computer. Two locations for the information were deemed necessary to minimise the risk of losing the data.

Field notes made during the interviews, were marked only with a participant number (the record of which was kept only on the external hard drive and password protected computer) and filed.

Transcriptions of recordings were done as soon as each interview was completed. Due to the extensive time involved in transcribing interviews, transcriptions were done by an independent professional transcriber. Recordings of interviews were e-mailed to the transcriber who did verbatim transcriptions of the recordings and e-mailed these transcriptions back to me. Both the researcher's and the transcriber's e-mail addresses were password protected and the sent documents were deleted from respective electronic mailboxes as soon as the e-mailed documents had been stored by the recipient. Upon receipt of transcriptions, I checked the content of the transcriptions by reading through each transcription while listening to the

recording and making corrections where necessary. The transcriptions were then also stored on the external hard drive and password protected computer.

Transcriptions were then de-identified by removing all names of persons and institutions from transcriptions and substituting these with [PERSON] or [INSTITUTION]; and field notes that would be relevant for data analysis was added to the electronic transcription documents by using the 'Comment' function in the *MS Word* program.

Participant verification of the actual content of interviews was postponed until data analysis was done, so as to verify both the *content* of each interview as well as the researcher's *interpretation* of the data when visiting participants for participant verification (cf. 3.3.8.1). This was deemed necessary as not all participants had access to e-mail (so that transcriptions of interviews could be e-mailed immediately after transcription for content verification) and the location of participants was wide-spread (which had significant cost implications for multiple visits). It was thus decided to postpone the verification of the content of interviews by participants (as sufficient evidence was available in the form of the recorded interviews to verify the content independently from the participant) and rather return once interpretation of the data could be verified following data analysis.

Consequently once all eight interviews were completed, the de-identified transcriptions of each interview were e-mailed to co-coders for data analysis.

3.3.7 Data analysis

The researcher and two co-coders independently performed manual qualitative content analysis of the interviews as a way of investigator triangulation (cf. 3.3.8.1). Both co-coders were qualified occupational therapists with postgraduate qualifications, working at a university and with experience in qualitative data analysis.

When coding qualitative data during content analysis, a choice is usually made between inductive coding and deductive coding. Inductive coding, also known as data-driven or open coding, is used when codes are created from the data. Deductive coding, also known as theoretical or *a-priori* coding, is performed by applying a pre-existing theoretical framework to the data, particularly when looking to confirm (or contradict) existing theory (Fade & Swift, 2011, p. 108; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 83). I chose to make use of inductive coding in this study, as it would allow me to describe participants' perceptions as they conveyed it, rather than trying to fit their perceptions into an existing framework.

A coding guideline was compiled based on the following information and provided to the co-coders to use during their coding, in order to ensure uniformity in the coding process (Appendix F).

The four-step data analysis process suggested by Creswell (2013, pp. 180–187) and Leedy and Ormrod (2010, p. 153) was utilised, while guidance was also taken from Saldaña (2009, pp. 12–13) in this regard. The process as applied in this study proceeded as follows:

- *Organisation:* Interviews were transcribed, and field notes organised electronically as discussed in the preceding section (cf. 3.3.6). All three coders printed the de-identified transcripts containing the relevant field notes and filed these in the order that the interviews were conducted to proceed with coding.
- *Perusal:* All three coders then read through the interviews independently, in order to gain an overall idea of what the data yielded. During this ‘perusal’ stage coders also started to identify and highlight sections of text that related specifically to the research questions, namely text relating to enabling occupation (or enablement and occupation as separate concepts), as well as text relating to barriers or facilitators to enablement.
- *Classification:* In this stage coders started to interpret the data by coding significant statements relating to the research question. Descriptive coding as described by Saldaña was used as the primary coding method:

Descriptive coding summarises in a word or short phrase – most often as a noun – the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data ... it is important that these codes are identifications of the topic, not abbreviations of the content. The topic is what is talked ... about. The content is the substance of the message (Saldaña, 2009, p. 70).

Codes were then grouped into meaning units, namely categories, by each of the respective coders. Categories are considered to be a description of the explicit meaning of the data (Rossman & Rallis 2003 in Saldaña, 2009, p. 13) as interpreted by the researcher(s).

- *Synthesis:* Categories were finally synthesised into themes. Themes represent a summative description of the tacit meanings presented by the data on a conceptual/theoretical level and are generated as an outcome of coding, categorisation and analytic reflection (Saldaña, 2009, p. 13). Codes, categories and themes were then presented visually by means of diagrams, and finally organised in table format (cf. 4.3). Broadly the analysis of data and synthesis thereof into the findings of the study are thus organised as presented in Figure 11.

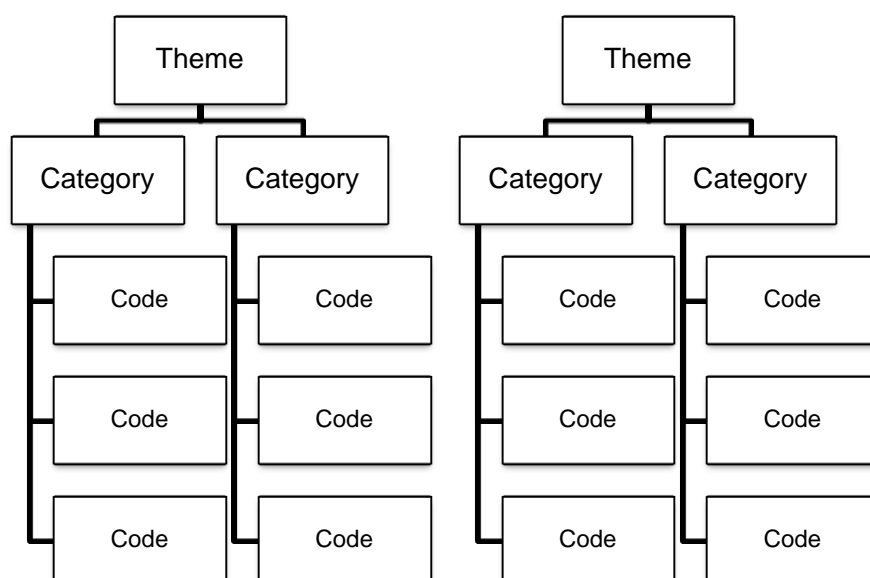


Figure 11: Theoretical organisation of data in the study (adapted from Saldaña 2009, p. 12)

Following independent coding to enhance trustworthiness by means of investigator triangulation (cf. 3.3.8.1) coders met to present and discuss their findings. Each coder presented their codes, categories and suggested themes independently where after coders collaboratively discussed similarities and discrepancies in interpretations. In this study, codes were very similar across all three coders while minor discrepancies lay primarily in the organisation of data into categories and themes. A collective synthesis of data into categories and themes was then done based on the independent analyses of all three coders. Examples of working documents of coders are included in Appendix G.

Qualitative data analysis is the process through which the researcher makes sense of the data and involves many processes, most of which are not linear, such as reflection, asking questions and making interpretations (Creswell, 2009, p. 183-184). Therefore, although data analysis is presented in this section as a relatively linear process, there were many back and forth movements between the various steps outlined. It is in the data analysis stage that the researcher's involvement becomes an inextricable part of the research and where the *interpretive* nature of qualitative research is most prominent. While critics of qualitative research critique this so-called 'subjectivity' in qualitative research, rigour is obtained by adhering to what Creswell (2009, p. 182) calls a 'general contour' of data analysis in qualitative research, and reporting on data analysis procedures accurately. This section outlined the data analysis procedures followed in this study in this way while the following section elaborates on these and other methods utilised to ensure rigour and trustworthiness in this study.

3.3.8 Trustworthiness

The quality of qualitative research is conceptualised in different ways by various authors. Terms such as rigour (Botma et al., 2010, p. 230), validity and reliability (Creswell, 2009, p. 190) are used; however, the most commonly used term to describe the soundness of the research process in the qualitative paradigm is 'trustworthiness' (Lincoln and Guba 1985 as cited by various authors including Botma et al., 2010, p. 232; Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 149; Schurink, Fouché, & De Vos, 2011, p. 419). Considered to be the 'gold standard' for ensuring the quality of qualitative data, these authors suggest four specific strategies to ensure trustworthiness, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The implementation of these strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of this study will henceforth be discussed under each of the four headings.

3.3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the degree to which the findings of the research can be trusted to be true (Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 149) and alludes to ensuring the accuracy with which the research question is answered (Schurink et al., 2011, p. 420). The following criteria for enhancing credibility were utilised in this study:

- *Prolonged engagement and persistent observation*: The idea of prolonged engagement, or spending sufficient time with research participants, is to increase the probability of collecting credible data, collecting sufficient data and gaining a better understanding of contextual factors that influence participants' responses (Polit & Beck, 2006, pp. 332–333). In this study, prolonged engagement was attempted through conducting field visits before commencement of the study (cf. 3.3.5.1c.) and following data collection, returning for participant verification. This resulted in three visits to each community site, allowing for more time and more persistent observation (observing relevant aspects to the study), in order to contribute to the credibility of the study. The limitation of this attempted prolonged engagement is acknowledged as the scattered visits to participants did not fully adhere to the notion of prolonged engagement, potentially resulting in contextual contributors to participant's responses not being recognised by the researcher. On the other hand though, I had previously been involved at many of the sites as service learning coordinator and/or supervisor, which served to enhance my engagement and contextual understanding of participant's responses.
- *Investigator triangulation*: Triangulation refers to the use of various referents in order to make inferences about a phenomenon. The purpose of triangulation is to control for bias that results from only one investigator, method and/or applied theory and to look for consistency across multiple sources to contribute to credibility (Mertens, 2010, p. 258; Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 333). Triangulation of data sources, investigators, methods and theories

are identified as possible strategies (Creswell, 2013, p. 251; Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 333). In this study, investigator triangulation was utilised as triangulation strategy in the data analysis stage by making use of two co-coders in addition to the researcher (cf. 3.3.7). As qualitative data analysis relies heavily on the interpretation of the data by the coder(s), I perceived this step in the research process as greatly susceptible to bias owing to my previous involvement at some of the sites. Therefore, investigator triangulation during data analysis was deemed essential to enhance the credibility of the study.

- *Participant verification*: Also referred to as ‘member checking’, participant verification involves verifying the research findings with participants. Although some regard the review of interview transcripts as part of participant verification (e.g. Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 153) others argue this not to be sufficient and emphasise the importance of taking back at least the preliminary findings of the study for participants to scrutinise for accuracy (Creswell, 2009, p. 191; Mertens, 2010, p. 257) (cf. 3.3.6). In this study, I returned to participants with the results of data analysis and discussed these findings with them in depth, utilising resources such as an explanatory thematic analysis sheet (Appendix H) and an infographic poster (Appendix I) summarising a combination of the findings and implications of the findings of the study. I specifically asked participants to comment on three aspects relating to data analysis, in addition to any other comments they wished to make. These three aspects were (1) whether the findings resonated with their experiences within occupational therapy service learning engagements, (2) whether they agreed with the formulation of the findings, and (3) whether there was anything that they felt was missing from the interpreted findings, that they wished to add. Comments or additions made by participants during participant verification are discussed together with the applicable results in Chapter 4.
- *Researcher credibility*: Owing to the intricate involvement of the researcher in qualitative research, the credibility of the researcher is considered to be a contributing factor to the overall credibility of the study. Both the researcher’s credentials and involvement in the study should be declared (Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 335). I have attempted to declare my position and involvement in this study throughout this dissertation (cf. Preface and 3.3.5.1). Despite my relative inexperience in conducting qualitative research, the following measures were taken to contribute to the credibility of this study:
 - Involvement of the study-leader and co-study leader who are both experienced researchers and experts in the fields related to this study (namely occupational therapy and service learning) guided the study.
 - The research proposal was submitted for evaluation and approval to the Expert Committee of the Department of Occupational Therapy, the Evaluation Committee of the School of Allied Health Professions and the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the university where this dissertation was undertaken.

3.3.8.2 *Transferability*

Transferability refers to the ability to demonstrate the applicability of one set of findings to another context (Schurink et al., 2011, p. 420). This may be problematic in qualitative research as generalisability of data is more dependent on the person wishing to make the transfer than the researcher (Speziale & Carpenter, 2007, p. 50). Transferability as a criterion for trustworthiness in qualitative research has been criticised for originating from positivism and consequently many qualitative researchers have departed from this measure of trustworthiness in favour of criteria that are more suited to qualitative research (Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 157; Schurink et al., 2011, p. 421). Furthermore, Smaling (2003 in Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 157) emphasises that it is not necessary to aim for generalisability in all qualitative research studies, especially if generalisability does not fit with the rationale of the study.

As described earlier (cf. 1.2) the rationale of this study was, firstly, to obtain a description of community representatives' perceptions regarding occupational therapy service learning engagements in order to inform current and future practices at the specific university. The study was designed to obtain specific contextual information regarding experiences and consequent perceptions of community representatives; therefore, generalisable results (i.e. transferability) were not envisioned as a major purpose of the study. Nevertheless, providing 'thick, rich descriptions' was employed as a strategy to enhance the transferability of this qualitative study, by providing a thorough description of the research context, methodology and findings (Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 155; Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 336; Schurink et al., 2011, p. 420). By providing these thick, rich descriptions it should enable those wishing to make the transfer to another setting to evaluate the transferability of the study.

In addition to thick, rich descriptions of the various elements of the research process, Botma et al. (2010, p. 234) point out that saturation of data is also a factor that can contribute to the transferability of the findings. As mentioned previously (cf. 3.1 and 3.3.3.2) all the coders involved in the study were satisfied that sufficient data saturation had been achieved (which was one of the factors that also informed the methodological evolution of the study). Therefore, the presence of data saturation can contribute to the transferability of the findings of this study.

3.3.8.3 *Dependability*

Dependability refers to the stability of data over time and conditions and likens to reliability in the positivist paradigm (Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 334; Schurink et al., 2011, p. 420). From a constructivist perspective it is expected that conditions will change over time, implying that dependability does not endeavour to ensure that conditions and methods remain stable, but rather attempts to document and present factors informing change meticulously (Mertens, 2010, p. 259). As Schurink et al. (2011, p. 420) articulate: dependability demonstrates how the

researcher “account[s] for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study, as well as changes in the design created by an increasingly refined understanding of the setting.”

In this study, dependability was sought through the following strategies:

- Providing a thick description of the methodology and methodological evolution of the study (cf. 3.1 to 3.3.7) (Botma et al., 2010, p. 234) and specifically noting those aspects that seemed to impact on dependability based on the researcher’s increasingly refined understanding (cf. 3.3.2, specifically references to student year groups and sites also used for clinical training).
- Keeping an audit trail of evidence (including field notes, interview recordings, interview transcripts, documents of data analysis by all three coders including notes and discussions and correspondence with study leaders) and communicating the decision trail of the study in the discussion of the evolution of the study (cf. 3.1) (Carpenter & Suto, 2008, p. 152; Mertens, 2010, p. 259).
- Making use of co-coders as an investigator triangulation strategy (cf. 3.3.8.1) (Botma et al., 2010, p. 2010).
- Comparing the findings from the data with literature throughout the discussion of the results (cf. 4.3).

3.3.8.4 *Confirmability*

Trustworthiness can finally be enhanced by seeking confirmability in the study. Confirmability demonstrates objectivity; or at least that another investigator would be able to reach the same conclusions under the same circumstances (Mertens, 2010, p. 260; Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 336). As with the case of transferability, confirmability appears to contradict the epistemological stance of constructivism. In the constructivist paradigm knowledge generation is viewed as a transactional process between researcher and participant, making the researcher a contributor to the research findings (as opposed to an objective observer) (cf. 3.2). Subjectivity is therefore accepted as inherent to qualitative research, leaving the researcher with the option to either limit, control or manage subjectivity (Morrow, 2005, p. 254).

Rather than seeking to demonstrate objectivity in the positivist sense of the word, control of confirmability can be demonstrated through thorough documentation of decisions and processes leading to the final results. The strategies discussed under dependability, namely providing a thick, rich description, keeping an audit trail, making use of co-coders and doing a literature control, therefore, also contributed to the confirmability of this study (cf. 3.3.8.3) (Botma et al., 2010, p. 235; Mertens, 2010, p. 260; Polit & Beck, 2006, p. 336).

Another strategy mentioned by some authors to enhance confirmability is making use of peer review (sometimes called peer debriefing) (Creswell, 2009, p. 192, 2013, p. 251; Mertens, 2010,

p. 260). The role of the peer reviewer is to take an objective (or at least 'outsider') critical stance on the study and holds the researcher accountable to the data, to ensure that the findings of the study can speak to a wider audience than only those involved in the study (Creswell, 2009, p. 192, 2013, p. 251). The co-study leader of this study acted as a peer reviewer to some extent. Although she was involved in the planning of the research in her capacity of co-study leader, she maintained a relatively objective stance and was not involved in the data analysis process. Also, she is not an occupational therapist, but holds expertise in the field of service learning. She consequently had background information on the study but was able to review the results of the study objectively from an outside perspective, contributing to the confirmability of the study.

In concluding this section on trustworthiness, I would like to reflect on the most pervasive factor that potentially could influence the overall trustworthiness of the study, namely the issue of potential asymmetrical power relations between me, as the researcher, and the participants. The occupational therapy service learning engagements in the study are, among others, aimed at contributing to service delivery in traditionally under-served communities. Although reciprocity in occupational therapy service learning engagements is strived for, there remains an element of appreciation, and to a certain extent a 'need' (without resorting to a 'deficit approach'), for continuation of occupational therapy service learning engagements among community members and representatives. This has the potential to place persons from the university in a position of 'reward power' (a form of power related to the ability to withhold or provide 'privileges') over members and representatives of the community. McMillan (2013, pp. 35–36) urges service learning practitioners specifically to be mindful of potential asymmetrical power relations between universities and communities. Uncertainty about the perceived power that the researcher may potentially exert over, relating, for example, to the continuation of services in the community, may have an influence on participants' responses to interview questions.

It was of utmost importance to ameliorate potential power issues from the onset of the research. I strived to do this by emphasising the purpose of the research as well as the confidentiality of information throughout the contracting and data collection stages of the research (cf. 3.3.5.1). I also reiterated that findings of the research would not influence the delivery of services through occupational therapy service learning engagements in those communities. Finally, given the emerging nature of qualitative research, the research purpose, objectives and the communication of research results were shaped according to the information provided by participants (cf. 3.1) in order to stay true to what participants shared, rather than imposing the pre-conceived purposes of the researcher on the data.

Throughout the data collection and participant verification stages of this study, participants portrayed open and comfortable interaction with the researcher. I perceived the strategies that I employed to defuse power imbalances to be at least partially successful as evidenced by

participants' willingness to share both positive and negative perceptions about the occupational therapy service learning engagements. While I still acknowledge that the potential influence of perceived power inequality between researcher and participant particularly on participants' elaboration on negative perceptions, the relationship between participants and both the researcher and the university was experienced to be maintained in a positive way. Adherence to the ethical principles of research also contributed positively in this regard, as is discussed in the following section.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Ensuring the trustworthiness of a study is regarded as an important ethical obligation of research, while adhering to ethical principles of research reciprocally contributes to trustworthiness. The concept of research ethics developed as a result of many contraventions of what is today regarded as basic ethical principles and primarily aims to ensure the welfare of research participants. In addition, considerations such as plagiarism and ethical academic conduct are considered as part of research ethics (Wassenaar, 2010, p. 61).

The South African *National Health Act* (No. 61 of 2003, p. 76) requires all research conducted in South Africa with human participants to be approved by an ethics committee. This study was submitted to and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the university where the study was executed (ECUFS no. 213/2012). Universal ethical principles, as well as principles of ethical research guided by documents such as the Declaration of Helsinki and national research ethics guidelines, guide the ethical approval of studies (Research Ethics Committee, 2013). These principles, as well as their application to the various stages of this study, are indicated in Table 4. The table format was chosen to provide the reader with a logical visual scheme of the different ethical considerations at various stages in the research.

Table 4: Ethical considerations applied to the study (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg from Carpenter & Suto, 2008, pp. 50–54; Creswell, 2009, pp. 88–93, 2013, pp. 58–59; Polit & Beck, 2006, pp. 87–98; Wassenaar, 2010, pp. 113–129 unless specified otherwise. Acknowledgement is specifically given to Creswell, 2013, pp. 58-59 for informing the structure of this table.)

UNIVERSAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES		
Autonomy and respect	Justice	Beneficence
RESEARCH ETHICS		
Informed consent	Voluntary participation	Avoidance of harm
SPECIFIC STRATEGIES EMPLOYED IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS		
<i>Research stage</i>	<i>Ethical principle</i>	<i>Strategy to ensure adherence</i>
Planning the study	Obtain approval from a Research Ethics Committee	Approval for the study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the university where the study was executed (ECUFS no. 213/2012) (cf. Appendix J).
	Get permission for execution of the study from authorities of organisations involved in the study	Permission was obtained from the Vice-Rector: Academic, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Head of the School of Allied Health Professions and the Head of the Department of Occupational Therapy at the university where the study was conducted. Permission was obtained from the applicable authorities at all the sites where the research was executed. These permission letters were submitted to the Research Ethics Committee before final approval for the study was granted.
	Negotiate authorship between persons involved in the study	Authorship was negotiated with study leaders in the postgraduate supervision contract for the student to be the first author and the study leader and co-study leader to be co-authors on publication of the research findings. As per departmental policy, the student will lose the right to first authorship if findings are not submitted in a publishable draft format within 12 months of completion of the study.
Before the commencement of the study	Negotiating entry into the community	Entry into communities was obtained via the university and the service learning coordinator / supervisor as described (cf. 3.3.5.1. a).
	Disclosing the purpose of the research	The purpose of the study was explained verbally on various occasions (on the site visit, when obtaining informed consent, before, during and after the interview) and a written information document stating the purpose of the study was given to each participant before obtaining their consent to participate in the study (cf. Appendix C).
	Voluntary participation	Participation in the study was voluntary and participants could withdraw from participation at any time. Participation was not coerced by means of remuneration or reward.
	Informed consent	Informed consent was obtained by means of an informed consent form (cf. Appendix C) which was available in Afrikaans and English according to the language preference of the participant. The participant who opted to make use of an interpreter during the interview confirmed her understanding and satisfaction with an Afrikaans information document and informed consent form despite being offered to receive a translated version in her language of preference before giving informed consent.

(Table 4: Ethical considerations applied to the study – continued)

Research stage	Ethical principle	Strategy to ensure adherence
(Before the commencement of the study – continued)	Actively include participants in ethical discussions (Geissler & Pool, 2006, p. 981)	Informed consent was obtained from participants on a separate visit prior to requesting an appointment for the interview so that participants would not feel coerced into participation. During this visit, the ethical considerations in the study were highlighted, especially those relating to the purpose of the study, voluntary participation and confidential management of information. Changes in the study purpose and design were also communicated to participants on the visit for participant verification.
	Be sensitive to the needs of vulnerable populations and respect potential power imbalances	Addressing potential power issues is regarded as a salient strategy to comply with this ethical principle. The ways in which this was addressed is outlined in the conclusion to the section on Trustworthiness (cf. 3.3.8).
Data collection	Respect the site and limit disruptions	Participants were visited at the respective service learning sites to limit disruptions in their daily programme. The appointments for all visits were arranged prior to each visit at a time convenient for the participant, which would cause as little disruption as possible for them personally and for the site.
	Respect the privacy of the participant and ensure confidentiality of the information	Because interviews were carried out at the service learning sites, participants were requested to arrange a venue that would be private and ensure that the information that they shared would remain confidential. Control over this principle thus rested with the participants. All interviews were conducted in private rooms with closed doors. When interruptions occurred such as other persons entering the venue to obtain something, the interview was stopped until that person left the room and privacy could be ensured.
	Respect participant preferences (e.g. language preferences)	All participants were given the option to conduct the interview either in English or Afrikaans, and to have a trained interpreter present if neither of the language options was their first language. Only one participant opted to have a trained interpreter present, and the researcher arranged this.
	Avoid exploiting participants; do not use participants without giving something back	Participants were included in the interpretation of findings and as an outcome of the study were given an infographic poster summarising the research findings and implications for future service learning partnerships (Appendix I). I also authored a chapter in a book based on preliminary deductive content analysis of the first six interviews of this study, which was to be published a few weeks after participant verification. I gave a draft copy of this book chapter to research participants, to also communicate those findings with them and share with them some of the tangible outcomes of their participation in the study.
Data management	Ensure confidentiality of information	Methods employed to ensure the confidentiality and protection of participant information were described under Data Management (cf. 3.3.6).

(Table 4: Ethical considerations applied to the study – continued)

Research stage	Ethical principle	Strategy to ensure adherence
Data analysis and interpretation	Ensure accuracy of information	Various strategies, as outlined under trustworthiness (cf. 3.3.8), were taken to ensure the accuracy of the findings of the study. From an ethical perspective the most prominent measures were making use of co-coders and performing participant verification of both transcripts and interpretations of findings.
	Authenticity: disclose positive and negative results	Care was taken to not only report on positive results or results that would put either the service learning site, community representative or university in a positive light, but to also include results that contained a more critical or negative slant. Moreover, identifying barriers to enablement was identified as an explicit objective in the study.
Writing and disseminating research	Report findings to all stakeholders in an accessible manner	Preliminary findings were reported to participants during participant verification, and a useful infographic poster with a summary of the implications of the study for participants' future use was given to them, also as a way of disseminating the information in an accessible manner (cf. Appendix I). Final findings of the study will be disseminated using accessible forums for all stakeholders, namely publishing results in an accredited academic journal (accessible to all university staff and students involved in service learning or occupational therapy service learning in any way), presenting results at academic forums (such as the Faculty Research Forum and occupational therapy and/or service learning conferences) (accessible to practitioners in the fields of Health Science Education, occupational therapy and service learning) and presenting the results of the study at the annual occupational therapy departmental service learning day at the university where the study was executed, which is attended by occupational therapy staff and students as well as all service learning partners (i.e. accessible to participants as well).
	Avoid sharing findings that could harm participants	Interview transcripts and verbatim quotes used in reporting on research findings were de-identified to protect participants' identity and any potential negative consequences that could arise from identifying specific perceptions with specific participants. Participants were given the option to indicate in written form any information that they specifically wanted to be communicated back to the university that could be associated with their identity. Findings were reported on sensitively.
	Using sensitive language	In this study the term participant was used to refer to 'research subjects' in order to communicate the interactive knowledge generation process and the stance of the participant in the study as co-creator of knowledge which stems from the constructivist paradigm.
	Avoid plagiarism	All sources that were consulted in the writing of this dissertation were acknowledged in full, using the American Psychological Association (APA) style of referencing as automated by the <i>Mendeley Cite-O-Matic</i> feature downloaded to the <i>MS Word</i> program that this dissertation was prepared in. Where information was cited directly it was indicated as such. Otherwise, strategies such as summarising and paraphrasing were used to communicate the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the work of the cited author. To further combat possible plagiarism page references were indicated throughout the dissertation. Permission was obtained from copyright holders to use

(Table 4: Ethical considerations applied to the study – continued)

Research stage	Ethical principle	Strategy to ensure adherence
(Writing and disseminating research – continued)	(Avoid plagiarism – continued)	figures published in other sources in this dissertation (cf. Appendix A), and this figure were labelled “used with permission”. In adherence to the university policy, a plagiarism declaration is also included in this dissertation (University of the Free State, 2010).
	Do not falsify information	All information was reported on accurately, and an audit trail of research data (interview recordings, interview transcripts, field notes, data analysis notes, etc.) was kept. A declaration of the authenticity of the information is also included in this dissertation.
	Store data following completion of the study	Interview transcripts and the audit trail of the study will be stored for at least five years following completion of the study at the university where this study was executed.
	Revisit principle of confidentiality of information in light of the principles of giving due credit, not exploiting participants and not using participants without giving something back.	<p>As part of the confidential management of information, individual research participants are usually not identified. As stated in the information document to this study: “Research results may be submitted to a scientific journal for publication and/or presented at research congresses, which may lead to identification of the group, but not of individual participants” (cf. Appendix C).</p> <p>However, during the participant verification stage of this study, during which results were shared with participants in the form of a poster and a draft book chapter, I sensed that, on the one hand, participants were proud of their contribution to the project, but on the other hand, were disappointed that they were not individually acknowledged (cf. Appendix I: “Acknowledgements: Participants in the study ‘<i>Enabling occupation through service learning: Perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements</i>’ – thank you for the lessons we could learn from you”). In an attempt to avoid concerns expressed by communities that they often felt exploited by universities that do research but then just leave without giving acknowledgement to communities (e.g. Netshandama, 2010, p. 80), I felt ethically obliged at least to give participants the <i>choice</i>, after having seen the results, whether they would like to be individually acknowledged as contributors to the study. This would also align more closely with the notion of ‘ethicising’ – “the process in which decisions about what constitutes ethical practices are made by all participants collaboratively” (Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013, p. 63), which is favoured above prescriptive ethics in service learning.</p> <p>I submitted a revision to the protocol of the study to the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the university where the study was conducted, and obtained approval for this change to give participants a choice of being individually acknowledged (cf. Appendix J). Participants were provided with a form to complete in this regard (Appendix K), and those who opted to be identified, were individually acknowledged in this dissertation, and will also be acknowledged in future dissemination of these results (e.g. at conference presentations or publication in scientific journals).</p>

3.5 Conclusion

It is imperative for researchers working in the constructivist paradigm with qualitative research methodology to provide a detailed description of not only the methods used to answer the research question, but also the rationale behind their methodological decisions. In this chapter the reasoning behind the methods, as well as the methods themselves that were employed to conduct this descriptive qualitative enquiry, were discussed comprehensively. This discussion included details on the research context, the research participants, the use of semi-structured interviews as data collection method, data management and data analysis. The strategies employed to ensure that results were generated in a trustworthy and ethical manner were also presented. In doing so, I have strived to provide the methodological background against which the results of the study can now be presented and discussed in Chapter 4 – *Presentation and discussion of findings*.

CHAPTER 4

Presentation and discussion of findings

4.1 Introduction

Rigorous qualitative methodology as discussed in the preceding chapter was used to investigate the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning in communities, as well as the barriers and facilitating factors to this process at a South African university. In this chapter, these perceptions are described by presenting and discussing the results of the study as voiced by the participants, analysed by coders, interpreted by the researcher and compared with literature. Prior to the presentation of the results, a brief description of the participants in the study is provided.

4.2 Description of participants

The selection of participants in the study was described in detail in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.3.3). In summary, of the eleven active service learning partnerships at the time of the study, seven sites had both consented to participate and had community representatives that complied with all the criteria for inclusion in the study. At one site, there were two community representatives who were eligible to participate, yielding a final number of eight participants.

Table 5 presents a summary of the participants with regard to gender, race, first language and the language of the interview. Note that interview numbers refer to the sequence in which interviews were performed, and that these numbers have no relation to site numbers as presented in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.3.2 Table 3) in order to protect the identity of the participants.

Two male and six female participants participated in the study, with the majority of participants being white and Afrikaans speaking. Most interviews were therefore conducted in Afrikaans, while the two Sesotho speaking participants were given the option to have an interpreter present. One Sesotho speaking participant was comfortable to speak English and preferred to conduct the interview without an interpreter, while the other Sesotho speaking participant requested the presence of an interpreter.

Table 5: Gender, race and language preferences of participants in the study

Interview number	Gender	Race	Frist Language	Interview Language
1	Female	White	Afrikaans	Afrikaans
2	Female	White	Afrikaans	Afrikaans
3	Male	Coloured	Afrikaans	Afrikaans
4	Male	Black	Sesotho	English (preferred no interpreter)
5	Female	White	Afrikaans	Afrikaans
6	Female	White	Afrikaans	Afrikaans
7	Female	White	Afrikaans	Afrikaans
8	Female	Black	Sesotho	Afrikaans (with a Sesotho interpreter)

4.3 Presentation and interpretation of data

The process of data analysis was discussed comprehensively in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.3.7). This section will seek to take the reader on a journey through the findings yielded by the data analysis process. Findings will be presented as an interwoven lattice of the voices of participants and the interpretations of the researcher, grounded in the literature. The voices of participants will be presented in the form of verbatim quotations and paraphrased statements. Verbatim quotations were translated and are presented in both Afrikaans and English. The original language of the quotation is presented on the left, with the translated version to the right. Translation were done literally as far as possible, that is word-for-word and sentence by sentence as not to obscure the informal conversational style of the participants with all the false starts, interjections, idiomatic expressions and even ungrammatical utterances. This, to my mind, not only reflects the truthfulness and honesty of the participants, but also the reliability of their feedback that served as the basis for analysis and interpretation.

The way I interpreted the data will become evident in both the organisation of data into codes, categories and themes, as well as the discussion of these results utilising thick, rich descriptions (also as a contributor to trustworthiness – cf. 3.3.8.2 & 3.3.8.3) (Creswell, 2009, pp. 191, 193–194). Literature relating to the findings is incorporated throughout to serve as both an interpretive lens as well as to enhance the trustworthiness of the data (cf. 3.3.8.3). As a further contributor to trustworthiness, verbatim quotations are cited with participant numbers (e.g. ‘P3’ referring to ‘participant 3’) to evidence the distribution of quotations used across participants. Table 6 provides a summary of the themes, categories and codes that emerged from the analysis of the data. The reader is advised to refer to this table continuously for contextual orientation to the data when reading through this chapter.

Table 6: Themes, categories and codes emerging from data analysis

Themes	Categories	Codes
4.3.1 ENABLING OCCUPATION	4.3.1.1 Effective communication strategies	a. Formalised communication structure b. Clarity, transparency and feedback c. Community representatives as communication mediators
	4.3.1.2 Collaborative planning and project selection	a. Collaborative goal-setting and decision-making b. Ensuring stakeholder buy-in c. Addressing real needs d. Connecting with the existing
	4.3.1.3 Interdependence	a. Fostering relationships b. Working together c. Reciprocity
	4.3.1.4 Meeting tacit needs	a. Providing something new b. Being present and showing interest c. Making memories
	4.3.1.5 Positive student attributes	a. Student commitment and professionalism b. Quality of student service
	4.3.1.6 Enabling service activities	a. Training strategies b. Involving the wider community c. Delivering tangible products d. Infrastructure development
	4.3.1.7 Successful outcomes	a. Attitudinal change leading to practice reform b. Enhancing confidence and dignity c. Enhancing occupational participation d. Promoting students' social responsibility
4.3.2 DISENABLING OCCUPATION	4.3.2.1 Intermittent contact	a. Lack of continuity b. Goals not realised
	4.3.2.2 Managerial challenges	a. Initiator power b. Enthusiasm vs. planning c. Management of logistics d. Linking with government structures
	4.3.2.3 Barriers to sustainability	a. Discrepancies between expectations and capabilities b. Poor follow-up c. Staff shortage and staff turnover d. Ontological barriers
	4.3.2.4 Risks to students	a. Risk to personal safety b. Unpreparedness for realities of community c. Project failure

Two primary themes emerged from the data, namely (1) enabling occupation and (2) disabling occupation. As these two opposing themes suggest, many of the categories and codes yielded in the study could essentially be presented as binary concepts; that is, although categories have been grouped as either 'enabling' or 'disabling' occupation, the *absence* of 'enabling' concepts could be regarded as 'disabling' (and *vice versa*). For example, 'effective communication strategies' is presented as a category related to the theme of 'enabling occupation', thus the *presence* of effective communication strategies was perceived as contributing to enablement. However, it flows logically from the argument that the *absence* of effective communication strategies may lead to disabling endeavours. In order to present the data as efficiently as possible within the realm of thick qualitative descriptions I decided to group these binary concepts in only one of the themes based on the way in which these categories manifested most pervasively in the data. However, in order to remain true to the perceptions voiced by participants, where enabling factors were perceived by some participants as disabling, these contrasting nuances will be pointed out in the discussions, albeit within the theme of enabling occupation (and *vice versa* for disabling factors perceived as enabling).

With reference to Bringle and Clayton's (2013, p. 549) critique that research in service learning tends to conflate community outcomes with analyses of partnerships (cf. 2.5.4.4), I would like to reiterate that it was the explicit purpose of this study to investigate community representatives' perceptions regarding the enablement of occupation through service learning, including all factors that are perceived as barriers or facilitators to the process of occupational enablement. Service learning literature is replete with evidence that enabling partnerships are pivotal to achieving successful outcomes (cf. 2.5.3.2 and 2.5.4.4). Further, as I have illustrated in the conclusion to Chapter 2 (cf. 2.6), the enablement foundations that are used as one of the theoretical lenses in this study overlap significantly with issues relating to partnerships in service learning. Therefore, I did not purposively attempt to make a distinction between factors relating to outcomes and those relating to partnerships, as both would have a pervasive effect on the enablement of occupation through service learning, and warrant due consideration. Consequently, the presentation of data will attempt to present a holistic picture of the perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements that pertain to occupational enablement in whichever way. Some codes relate only to 'enablement' without a direct link to occupation while others speak more directly to 'enabling occupation' as a combined construct. Both are, however, relevant to answering the research question, as enablement speaks to the 'how' (core competency) and occupation to the 'what' (domain of concern) of occupational therapy (cf. 2.2), also within the context of service learning.

4.3.1 Enabling occupation

The theme of 'enabling occupation' was characterised by participants' perceptions relating to factors that, as a whole, contributed to successful, enabling partnerships and positive outcomes that were enabling, or specifically enabled occupation, in some way. Seven categories emerged during data analysis to constitute this theme, namely effective communication strategies, collaborative planning and project selection, interdependence, meeting tacit needs, positive student attributes, enabling service activities and successful outcomes. Each category is presented by introducing the category as a whole, and then presenting and discussing the codes that constituted each category.

4.3.1.1 *Effective communication strategies*

Theme	Category	Codes
Enabling occupation	4.3.1.1 Effective communication strategies	a. Formalised communication structure b. Clarity, transparency and feedback c. Community representatives as communication mediators

Participants perceived effective communication strategies as a major factor that contributed to enablement within service learning engagements. Participants' emphasis on the importance of effective communication strategies aligns well with literature relating to partnerships in service learning, in which effective communication is fore fronted as a vital catalyst for establishing and maintaining positive relationships (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 8; Nduna, 2007, p. 74; Witchger Hansen, 2010, p. 39). Du Plessis and Van Dyk (2013, p. 66) extrapolate the importance of this category by stating that "...communication is the most important factor in facilitating any form of transformation or change in a society." Furthermore, in the context of enablement foundations (cf. 2.2.4), foundations such as community participation and power sharing can only be facilitated through effective communication as a means to truly collaborate with the occupational therapy client in a client-centered manner (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, pp. 101–102, 107–108).

Three codes contributed to this category, namely (a) formalised communication structure, (b) clarity, transparency and feedback, and (c) community representatives as communication mediators.

a. Formalised communication structure

Participants perceived a formalised communication structure to be essential to enabling service learning engagements. Regular and open communication was identified as a crucial strategy that prevents misunderstandings, and contributes to building positive relationships and attaining successful outcomes. Participants articulated their perceptions of open communication as follows:

As daar iets was, het ek dit aangespreek, dadelik. En as julle getwyfel het oor iets, het julle dit met my gekommunikeer. So, daar was nooit foute wat kon plaasvind nie omdat ons kommunikasie so oop was en goed was (P2).

If there was something, I addressed it immediately. And if you were uncertain about something, you communicated it with me. So, mistakes were always eliminated because our communication was so open and so good (P2).

So, ons sien mekaar gereeld en as sy [dosent] iets wil doen, dan kom vra sy soort van toestemming of as sy geld nodig het, kom vra sy, en as sy idees het, dan praat ons daaroor. Ek en sy kommunikeer baie. ... Ek dink hoe meer kommunikasie daar is, hoe meer gaan jy suksesvol wees. Hoe minder frustrasies gaan jy veroorsaak (P6).

So, we see each other regularly and if she [lecturer] wants to do something, then she comes and sort of requests permission or if she needs money, she comes and asks, and if she has ideas, then we discuss it. She and I communicate a lot. ... I think the more communication there is, the more you will be successful. The less frustration you will cause (P6).

While many participants in this study experienced communication in the occupational therapy service learning engagements positively, the opposite was also reported, and there were some participants who perceived a lack of communication as detrimental to these engagements. One participant stated her perception by saying:

So, ek dink die spanning wat daar was en die negatiewiteit was maar wedersyds. As gevolg van nie 'n ordentlike struktuur en gaan sit en gesels soos wat [PERSOON] nou hierdie keer dit beplan het nie (P5).

So, I think the tension and the negativity between us were mutual. As a result of not a proper structure and sitting down and talking in the manner that [PERSON] has now planned it this time (P5).

Findings of Witchger Hansen's (2010, pp. 108, 120–122) study of occupational therapy service learning in the USA also yielded ineffective communication strategies and a lack of a formalised communication structure as detrimental factors in service learning engagements with which communities were dissatisfied.

The description of this code, namely a 'formalised' communication structure, emerged from various comments by participants who articulated the necessity for identifying (i.e. formalising) a communication structure that is best suited to the unique circumstances of each service learning partnership. Some participants stressed the importance of face to face communication while others indicated that the use of technology as part of regular communication (such as text messages and e-mails) was indeed helpful. The following examples of comments by participants illustrate these sentiments:

... oop kommunikasie. Baie belangrike, goeie kommunikasie tussen die twee vennote is baie belangrik. Fisiese kontak. Bedoelende dat dit nie net telefonies geskied nie maar dat die partye mekaar leer ken en verstaan wat die een se bedoeling is met die ander (P2).

... open communication. Very important, good communication between the two partners is very important. Physical contact. Meaning that it should not only happen telephonically but that the parties should get to know each other and understand what the one's intention is with the other (P2).

... want selfs al word daar ... met sms'e gekommunikeer of, [DOSENT] het by ons kom sit in die klas en ons het die raamwerk bespreek en sy't weer teruggekome en op die ou einde het die studente ook met haar gepraat en dan het ons die hele prentjie bymekaar gekry. So ek dink dit was goed (P7).

... because even if ... you communicate with sms's or, [LECTURER] came to sit with us in the class and we discussed the framework and she would come back and in the end the students also spoke with her and then we put the whole picture together. So I think it was good (P7).

The notion of face-to-face communication between stakeholders is supported by Bender et al. (2006, p. 99), who argue that face-to-face communication with community partners, in the community, provides valid and observable proof of commitment to the partnership.

However, it seems that face-to-face communication can successfully be augmented by other forms of communication, such as e-mail and telephonic discussions. This prospect was confirmed by participants during participant verification when some participants who did not mention alternative communication strategies initially, elaborated on the value of e-mail and other communication media in their partnerships. The findings of this study supporting the successful use of alternative forms of communication is particularly encouraging considering that service learning sites are often spread out over a wide geographical area, making face-to-face contact dependent on the availability of already limited resources. In their partnership model for occupational therapy service learning engagements, Suarez-Balcazar et al. (2005, p. 53) confirm the value of alternative communication media, and state that modes of communication should be negotiated based on what will work best in each setting. In addition, these authors reiterate the importance of regular scheduled communication in order to maintain positive relationships and monitor progress towards mutual goals.

The operationalisation of communication structures was another emergent aspect of this code. In some cases, where the existing communication structure was perceived as unsatisfactory, the data revealed core considerations that must be clarified during the operationalisation of the communication process. As the following interview excerpts exemplify, it is vital to establish a formal structure of *how*, *where* and *when* communication should take place, in addition to knowing *who* is responsible.

<i>Ek dink, kommunikasie. En ek dink ons moet regtig: sê, op 'n gestruktureerde basis, op 'n Maandag, agtuur, het ons vergadering. Dan's die studente hier, die toesighouer is hier, my suster is daar, ek is daar, die personeel is daar. En ons praat (P6).</i>	<i>I think, communication. And I think we must really: say, on a structured basis, on a Monday, eight o'clock, we have a meeting. Then the students are here, the supervisor is here, my sister is there, I am there, the staff are there. And we talk (P6).</i>
<i>Navorsers: As daar iets sou verkeerd gaan met wanneer die studente hier is, het jy geweet met wie jy kan praat daarvoor?</i>	<i>Researcher: If something should go wrong when the students were here, did you know whom you could talk to about it?</i>
<i>Deelnemer: Nee, ek het nie geweet nie (P8).</i>	<i>Participant: No, I did not know (P8).</i>
<i>Navorsers: Sou jy graag meer wou daai kommunikasie ook hê?</i>	<i>Researcher: Would you have liked more of that type of communication, too?</i>
<i>Deelnemer: Ja, ek sal. Ja, ja (P8).</i>	<i>Participant: Yes, I will. Yes, yes (P8).</i>

Clarification on the operational aspects of communication processes is a matter that is strongly supported in service learning literature. Studies by South African authors Nduna (2007, p. 76) and Van Schalkwyk and Erasmus (2011, p. 77) concluded that there is much room for improvement in the way that communication structures are operationalised in service learning engagements. Witchger Hansen (2010, pp. 108, 120–122) also reiterates the importance of incorporating all role players (cf. 2.5) into an effective, formalised communication structure.

In summary, participants in this study had both positive and negative experiences in terms of a formalised communication structure. However, regardless of whether their perceptions of the existing communication structure was positive or negative, all the participants in the study stressed that an effective, formalised communication structure is vital in order to create a partnership that has the potential to enable occupation in a transformative way. The findings also showed that core considerations such as how, when, where and who, need to be clarified in order to ensure successful operationalisation of such a communication structure.

b. Clarity, transparency and feedback

In addition to formalising a communication structure, participants perceived clarity and transparency in communication and feedback as other important considerations within occupational therapy service learning engagements. Clarity and transparency pertaining to purpose and schedules was viewed as an enabling part of service learning engagements, and participants also valued good feedback. The following statements from participants reflect these sentiments:

<i>Hulle kom nooit en ons het nie 'n idee wat aangaan nie. Ons weet. Ons ... is deeglik bewus van ... waaroor dit gaan (P7).</i>	<i>They never come and we don't have an idea what is going on. We know. We ... are thoroughly aware of ... what it is about (P7).</i>
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Ons het presies geweet wanneer kom die studente. Ons het presies geweet watter dae is hulle hier ... Hulle het saam met haar [dosent] ingekom en hulle het kom reëlings tref oor hoe dit gaan werk. So ek dink ons was heeltemal op hoogte oor hoe dit gaan werk. En ek dink die studente het presies geweet ... So ja, nee ek dink ons was heeltemal op hoogte (P1).

We knew exactly when the students come. We knew exactly which days they are here ... They came in with her [lecturer] and made the arrangements about how it would work. So I think we were completely up to date with how it would work. And I think the students knew exactly... So yes, no I think we were all entirely up to date (P1).

Maar ek moet sê, vandat julle so ernstig aan boord gekom het, is daar baie goeie terugvoering ... die terugvoering is eintlik vir my 'n baie goeie pluspunt as ek dit ook kan byvoeg by die pluspunte (P2).

But I must say, since you came on board so intensively, there is very good feedback ... the feedback really is a very good positive aspect for me if I could add it to the assets (P2).

Clarifying the purpose of engagements and the roles of respective stakeholders is an essential part of partnership formation and implementation (cf. 2.5.4.3). According to Netshandama (2010, p. 80), clarity regarding schedules is equally important, and contributes to portraying a respectful, trustworthy attitude towards communities, especially on the part of university staff (e.g. lecturers) (cf. 4.3.2.2. c). In addition, clear, regular feedback regarding all facets of the engagement is vital throughout all the stages of partnership development, but is highlighted particularly in the maintenance stage (Mather & Konkle, 2013, p. 85) (cf. 2.5.4.3 and Figure 9) to ensure that all stakeholders are informed and can participate in all stages of the partnership.

The threat to service learning partnerships resulting from a lack of clarity, transparency and feedback, was also revealed during interviews with the participants in this study. One participant in particular articulated a lack of role clarification and a lack of proper feedback as a concern when attempting to foster an enabling service learning partnership:

Dis die eerste keer wat ek ook met studente, jong kinders relatief, in kontak mee gekom het en ook nie regtig geweet het wat is my rol nie (P5).

This is the first time that I have come into contact with students also, young children relatively, and I did not really know what my role is (P5).

So, ek dink, meer gereelde terugvoer aan my dalk. Ja, want ... daar's net vir my bietjie van 'n onsekerheid wie moet nou wat doen (P5).

So, I think, more frequent feedback to me, perhaps. Yes, because ... there is just a little bit of an uncertainty for me regarding who has to do what (P5).

Perceptions of a lack of role clarification in service learning were also expressed by participants in the study of Nduna (2007, p. 75). Participants in the study of Netshandama (2010, p. 83) lamented the lack of feedback they had experienced in partnerships with universities, and furthermore, directly related a lack of feedback to a lack of accountability to the community. This relation seems to be a reasonable deduction when one considers that reciprocal feedback is, in fact, the mechanism that makes it possible for all stakeholders to adjust joint ventures towards

greater enablement. Considering the resounding evidence indicating the importance of clarity, transparency and feedback, it is not surprising that Alperstein (2007, p. 65) cautions service learning practitioners in health sciences to clearly define roles and expectations when attempting to foster enabling relationships.

It seems, therefore, that uncertainty regarding roles and expectations acts as a disabling force, while clear and transparent communication and feedback has the potential to catalyse enablement, and particularly occupational enablement, in the context of occupational therapy service learning engagements.

c. Community representatives as communication mediators

In Chapter 2, community representatives were identified as ‘gatekeepers’ in their communities, and their value in building relationships with communities was explained from theory (cf. 2.5.3.1). Results of this study support the notion of community representatives as gatekeepers, and particularly in the role of communication mediators. This finding is reflected in the following excerpts from participant interviews, providing some examples of how this gatekeeping function manifests:

<p><i>Klein, hier en daar probleempies, maar dan het ons net vir die student ... mooi met die oom en die tannie gaan praat en sê: maar die student is hier om jou te help (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>Tiny, here and there little problems, but then on behalf of the student ... we spoke nicely to the uncle and the auntie and said: but the student is here to help you (P1).</i></p>
<p><i>Maar as die studente halfagt in die oggend na my toe kom as hulle hier kom en ek bel die verpleegster en ek sê: vandag doen jy die arbeidsterapie groep, dan sorg sy dat sy halftien beskikbaar is. En van sy agtuur begin ontbyt gee en soos wat sy met die mense kommunikeer en in die kamers ingaan, sê sy: ek kom haal jou daai tyd. Sorg dat jy reg is. Ons gaan dit doen vandag. So, dis 'n groot deel van motivering (P6).</i></p>	<p><i>But if the students come to me at half past seven in the morning when they arrive and I call the nurse and I say: today you do the occupational therapy group, then she makes sure that she is available at half past nine. And as she starts from eight o'clock giving breakfast and as she communicates with the people and goes into the rooms, she says: I will come and collect you at that time. Make sure that you are ready. We are going to do this today. So, that is a large part of the motivation (P6).</i></p>
<p><i>En nou wil hulle [Skoolbeheerraad] altyd weet: wat maak die mense hier? Wat is die mense se agenda? Nou moet jy eers sit met hulle en vir hulle die pad wys hoe lank kom hierdie vennootskap aan. En hulle oortuig dat daar's niks wat ons armer maak met hulle se teenwoordigheid nie (P3).</i></p>	<p><i>And now they [School Governing Body] always want to know: what do the people do here? What is their agenda? Now you first have to sit down with them and enlighten them about how long this partnership has lasted. And convince them that there is nothing about their presence that makes us poorer (P3).</i></p>

Community representatives acted as communication mediators between students and community members (e.g. residents in a residential care facility), students and community

organisation staff (e.g. nursing staff) as well as between the university and the wider community. This seems to have created enabling environments in which students could, for example, contribute more effectively to occupational enablement.

The SOFAR model proposed by Bringle and co-authors (2009, p. 16) differentiates the community into community members and community organisation staff (cf. 2.5). The aforementioned authors motivate this differentiation by arguing that the perspectives and agendas of community organisation staff may be different to those of community members. Perhaps in light of the findings of this study, it would be valuable to make a further differentiation by classifying community representative(s) as a third distinct group in the community with specific functions and roles. The findings of this study suggest that, at least, the role of communication mediator between the university (i.e. staff and students) and the community (i.e. community members and community organisation staff) is a vital role of the community representative. Other distinct functions and roles of the community representative would need to be explored further, as community representatives evidently contribute meaningfully towards more enabling partnerships.

d. Summary: Effective communication strategies

The findings presented in this category offer encouraging insights into how effective communication strategies can contribute towards enabling partnerships. Findings of this study concur with the literature stating that formalised communication structures should utilise the modes of communication that are best suited to each community. It was also found that face-to-face communication can successfully be augmented with other communication media. Furthermore, findings indicated that the when, how and where of communication should be clearly defined within service learning partnerships. The importance of clarity, transparency and feedback was reiterated by the findings of this study, and the pivotal role of community representatives as communication mediators was elucidated. Effective communication strategies such as these were thus perceived as vital contributors to enabling service learning engagements.

4.3.1.2 *Collaborative planning and project selection*

Theme	Category	Codes
Enabling occupation	4.3.1.2 Collaborative planning and project selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Collaborative goal-setting and decision-making b. Ensuring stakeholder buy-in c. Addressing real needs d. Connecting with the existing

The word collaboration is used in various contexts in the literature related to occupational therapy, enablement and service learning. “Collaboration between practitioner and client” is depicted in the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework (OTPF)* as the central feature of the occupational therapy process (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014, p. S10). The

definition of enablement (cf. 2.2.4) refers to various processes, including “collaborating with people” (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 99), as a means for enhancing occupational performance. In service learning literature, collaboration is most commonly used to refer to a pivotal feature of successful partnerships (e.g. Bender et al., 2006, p. 99; Felten & Clayton, 2011, p. 81; Jordaan, 2012, p. 238; Village, 2006, p. 11). In the interpretation and discussion of the results of this study, *collaboration* is used as verb and *collaborative* as an adverb that denotes the idea of “working with someone to produce something” (Oxford University Press, 2014). It is thus used to refer to a way of doing which characterises the service learning engagement.

In this study, the notion of collaboration emerged most prominently in relation to the implementation stage of partnership development (cf. 2.5.4.3). Collaboration was specifically mentioned with reference to the planning and selection of projects in service learning engagements. Four codes comprise this category, namely (a) collaborative goal-setting and decision-making, (b) ensuring stakeholder buy-in, (c) addressing real needs and (d) connecting with the existing.

a. Collaborative goal-setting and decision-making

Participants in this study greatly valued collaborative goal-setting and decision-making as an enabling force in service learning engagements. One participant even attributed the success of the entire engagement to collaborative planning:

<i>En ons het gaan sit by die kantoor... En dan het sy [dosent] en ek en die hoof ... saam gepraat en amper 'n program saam uitgewerk. Ek het gesê wat is die behoeftes van die skool, [SKOOLHOOF] het saamgepraat en die arbeidsterapeute het gesê wat hulle kan doen. En so het ons saam 'n program [saamgestel] – en ek dink dis die sukses van hierdie hele ding (P2).</i>	<i>We went to sit at the office... and then she [lecturer] and I and the principal ... spoke together and almost worked out a programme together. I told them what the needs of the school were, [PRINCIPAL] joined in with us and the occupational therapists said what they could do. And so we jointly [compiled] a programme – and I think that is the success of this whole thing (P2).</i>
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Involvement in goal-setting and decision-making processes, afforded community members the opportunity to make *choices* and to *participate* as active agents within these service learning engagements as is evidenced in the comment of one participant below:

<i>Want daar was samewerking en almal was entoesiasties en almal het insae gehad. ... So, dit dink ek is 'n sukses storie, met die feit dat ons saam gesit het en saam beplan het (P2).</i>	<i>Because there was cooperation and everyone was enthusiastic and everyone related to it. ... So, this I think is a success story, the fact that we sat together and planned together (P2).</i>
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Choice and community participation are enablement foundations that strongly depend on collaboration (cf. 2.2.4), and are judiciously linked to the facilitation of human agency (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 101).

Facilitating human agency seems to be a universal drive within community development, and is also an inferred objective of occupational therapy intervention (Bhattacharyya, 2004, p. 12; Dale, 2013, p. 428; Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 101; Wilcock, 2006, p. 229). Agency refers to the capacity of people to act on behalf of themselves, in a way that produces desired social change (Bhattacharyya, 2004, p. 12; Dale, 2013, p. 428). Active participation in identifying goals, as well as making decisions about how such goals should be addressed, are prerequisites for affirming agency (Bhattacharyya, 2004, pp. 22–24).

While none of the participants in this study specifically articulated a perceived lack of collaborative goal-setting and decision-making, some participants did mention it as a possible area of improvement in future engagements, especially with regard to the planning phase of the service learning engagement. One participant phrased it as follows:

Navorsers: As ons iets moet leer of kan vat uit die ondervindings wat julle gehad het met die studente hier, vir die toekoms, wat sou die belangrikste goed wees wat jy sou dink?

Deelnemer: Ek dink 'n mens moet sit en beplan. Jy moet beplan. Ek dink jy moet die arbeidsterapeut wat in jou span is³, moet jy benut. Want ek dink sy's die belangrikste link tussen Bestuur en die studente. So, ek dink die beplanning fase is vir my belangrik (P5).

Researcher: If we must learn something or can take something from the experiences that you had with the students here, for the future, what would be the most important things would you think?

Participant: I think one should sit down and plan. You have to plan. I think you must utilise the occupational therapist in your team.³ Because I think she is the most important link between the Management and the students. So, I think for me the planning phase is important (P5).

Alperstein (2007, p. 65) similarly found that greater input into decision-making was an area for improvement in the service learning engagements included in her study, while participants in Netshandama's (2010, p. 82) study perceived that they had had no input into goal-setting at all. Du Plessis and Van Dyk (2013, p. 70) caution that when the power of community members to make their own decisions is taken away, it disempowers communities by essentially dismissing their agency.

In conclusion of this code, the findings and related literature show that in order for service learning engagements to contribute towards social change, it is imperative for agency to be promoted within the community. Agency can only be facilitated in the ambit of collaborative

³ Coding note: This service learning site employed a qualified occupational therapist who acted as the service learning supervisor for students – hence the reference to the 'occupational therapist in the team'.

goal-setting and decision-making, which affords communities equal ownership of both the processes and the products of the service learning engagement.

b. Ensuring stakeholder buy-in

In this category, named collaborative planning and project selection, ensuring stakeholder buy-in emerged as a code in relation to participants' perceptions of ensuring that projects that have been selected, have the best possible chance of succeeding. Participants described the importance of buy-in from a variety of stakeholders, such as community members themselves (e.g. learners in a school) (P6, P7), community organisation staff (e.g. nursing staff in a residential care facility) (P1, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8) and authorities (e.g. school governing bodies and school principals) (P3, P7). The following quotations demonstrate this finding:

<p><i>Tot wanneer hulle inkoop in die program of die teenwoordigheid van die studente self. As [die Beheerraad] ingekoop het en hulle het hulle se seël daarop geplaas ... dan neem ek dit na die personeel toe. Ons bespreek dit daar. Die Beheerraad het dit aanvaar. Nou dat die Beheerraad verstaan wat die studente hier kom doen ... die tyd hoe lank hulle hier gaan wees – nou neem ons dit na die personeel toe (P3).</i></p>	<p><i>Until they buy into the program or the presence of the students themselves. If [the School Governing Body] bought in and they put their stamp on it ... then I take it to the staff. We discuss it there. The Governing Body had accepted it. Now that the Governing Body realise why the students are ... how long they will be here – now we take it to the staff (P3).</i></p>
<p><i>... as die studente alleen die stoel oefeninge aanbied, dan's daar vier of vyf mense. En as ons nou die verpleegsters betrek, dan het ons vyf-en-twintig, dertig mense. Want hulle bring net eenvoudig almal aan. En dit maak nogal 'n verskil. (P6).</i></p>	<p><i>... if the students present the chair exercises alone, then there are four or five people. And if we involve the nurses, then we have twenty-five, thirty people. Because they simply bring everyone along. And that makes quite a difference (P6).</i></p>
<p><i>... my personeel moet, jy weet, jy moet met hulle praat. Jy moet die ding aan hulle verkoop. Jy moet sê hoekom wil jy dit doen, wat die uiteinde gaan wees wat jy wil bereik... (P6).</i></p>	<p><i>... my staff have to, you know, you must talk to them. You have to sell the thing to them. You must say why you want to do it, what you ultimately want to achieve... (P6).</i></p>

Collaborative goal-setting and decision-making in a community context, as discussed in the previous code, will often occur only between certain stakeholders, such as lecturers, students and community representatives. For pragmatic reasons such as time limitations and the logistical constraints of consulting widely, other stakeholders such as community members and community organisation staff are at times inadvertently excluded from goal-setting and decision-making. These findings suggest that the limitation of community representatives not necessarily representing the views of community members (cf. 1.2 and 2.5.3) may be mitigated by ensuring buy-in from other stakeholders into planned goals and activities, even if this occurs after initial planning has been done.

Therefore, it is essential to ensure project buy-in from all participating stakeholders by accessing existing communication structures and key communication mediators (cf. 4.3.1.1 c). This measure may enhance stakeholders' perceptions of ownership of service learning projects (Netshandama, 2010, p. 79), and in so doing contribute to the potential enabling nature of the partnership.

c. Addressing real needs

When students' service activities were structured around addressing real needs in the community, participants perceived the service learning engagement as enabling in nature. Various examples of the value of student activities that addressed real needs in the community were shared by participants:

Aag, dit was eintlik baie goed gewees. Die belangrikste van alles, jy weet, ek kom nou nie uit om die ... kinders te toets nie omdat ek maar 'n groot werk hier het. En ek het dit nodig om te weet, jy weet, watter kind sukkel met wat...(P8).

Oh, it was really very good. The most important of all, you know, I don't get down to ... testing the children because I have a rather big job here. And I need to know, you know, which child struggles with what ... (P8).

En ek dink nogal dit het vir hulle baie beteken. Veral hoe om bejaardes te verplaas van een, van 'n stoel na die bed toe. Ja. Ons het swaar bejaardes en die studente het rêrig daarmee baie gehelp. Met die regte manier hoe om hulle te voer en al sulke goeters. Praktiese dinge, het hulle hulle mee gehelp (P1).

And I think it really meant a lot to them. Especially how to transfer the elderly from one, from a chair to a bed. Yes. We have heavy elderly residents and the students really helped a lot with that. With the right way to feed them and all such things. Practical things, they helped them with (P1).

Bhattacharyya (2004, p. 22) uses the term 'felt needs' to describe the community development principle that development projects should address the needs of people as they view them. Meeting 'felt needs' fosters agency by recognising that communities can indeed identify their own problems, challenges and goals. It also ensures that service activities are relevant to the community, which may serve to enhance buy-in from stakeholders (cf. 4.3.1.2 b) and promote community participation. Furthermore, Brower (2011, p. 60) and Tucker et al. (2013, p. 55) both make a direct positive relation between addressing the real needs of communities with the sustainability of such service learning endeavours. Emulating the findings of this study, Witchger Hansen's (2010, p. 155) study found that participants were satisfied with service learning partnerships when service learning projects addressed previously unmet needs.

Concluding this code, findings in this study have supported literature arguing that successful implementation and sustainability of service learning projects are largely dependent on the propensity of the project to meet the real needs of communities. Where such endeavours were successful, this facet proved to be an enabler of community occupation.

d. Connecting with the existing

Participants in this study articulated that connecting student projects with existing activities in the community enhanced the value of these projects for the community. In a school setting, for example, this connection was made between student activities and the school curriculum:

<i>... en die kurrikulum was geïntegreer met dit wat hulle doen. ... Met die ander klassies was daar meer speelsgewys ook goed gedoen wat kinders bietjie – hulle gehelp het met wat ons moet doen met die kurrikulum – het julle net aangevul (P2).</i>	<i>... and the curriculum was integrated with what they did. ... With the other classes things also were done more playfully which helped the children too – with what we must do with the curriculum – you just came and supplemented (P2).</i>
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When students supplemented what was already relevant to the community, it enhanced the potential for community ownership over service learning projects, as existing community structures then informed service learning (and not the other way around).

However, where projects are seen as additional work to an already understaffed, over encumbered organisation – especially where real needs are not met (cf. 4.3.1.2 c) – stakeholder buy-in (cf. 4.3.2.1 b) flounders and directly threatens the success and sustainability of projects. This cautionary note can be inferred from the comment of one of the participants, elucidating the manifestation of this phenomenon:

<i>Deelnemer: En ek sien hierdie projek as, nie suksesvol nie. Tensy ons 'n plan B nou in werking stel, soos ek jou gesê het en saadjies – nie saadjie saai nie maar plantjies gaan plant (P5).</i>	<i>Participant: And I see this project as unsuccessful. Unless we put a plan B in action now, as I told you and seeds – not sow seeds but plant seedlings (P5).</i>
<i>Navorser: Tot hoe 'n mate was die studente aanvullend tot wat [julle] doen ...?</i>	<i>Researcher: To what extent were the students complementary to what [you] do ...?</i>
<i>Deelnemer: Nee, ek dink nie hulle was vreeslik aanvullend hierdie keer nie. Soos ek sê, die Eden Filosofie sê die natuur moet deel wees, en kinders en plante. Maar ek dink nie hierdie keer was dit vreeslik aanvullend nie, nee (P5).</i>	<i>Participant: No, I don't think they were very complementary this time. As I said, the Eden Philosophy says that nature must be part, and children and plants. But I don't think this time it was very complementary, no (P5).</i>

The emergence of this code was particularly valuable as it provides some reference to a practical strategy for the planning and development of projects. If, for example, 'connecting with the existing' were to be utilised as a strategy in collaborative service learning project selection, it may assist students and lecturers to move closer towards a service-oriented approach to service learning by prioritising existing structures in the community as the focal point for the sharing and co-creation of knowledge (rather than the imposition of existing knowledge) (Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 17) (cf. 2.4.5.2). Further, it may also diffuse initiator power (cf. 4.3.2.2 a), that is, the implicit power of the 'university as the expert'. Viewed from an

enablement perspective, connecting with the existing can, therefore, contribute to power sharing as an enablement foundation (cf. 2.2.4).

e. Summary: Collaborative planning and project selection

The findings of this study, presented in this category, have shown that collaborative goal-setting and decision-making, ensuring stakeholder buy-in, addressing real needs and connecting with existing community structures or activities, are strategies that are perceived to contribute to enabling engagements. Literature supports a common theme among these strategies, which is their contribution to an enhanced sense of ownership and agency for community members. For service learning engagements to be truly enabling in nature, ownership and agency are crucial to ensure that these engagements contribute to sustainable social change. In the context of occupational therapy, such social change would be geared towards enablement of occupational participation and occupational justice that relate to addressing the real needs of communities.

4.3.1.3 *Interdependence*

Theme	Category	Codes
Enabling occupation	4.3.1.3 Interdependence	a. Fostering relationships b. Working together c. Reciprocity

Bowen (2005, p. 74) describes a partnership as an interdependent relationship. Bringle et al. (2009, p. 13) identify interdependency as one of three contributors to closeness within a relationship (cf. 2.5.4.1 and 2.5.4.2). All of these authors concur that interdependence enhances the transformative potential of a relationship.

In this study, the category of interdependence emerged from three related codes, namely (a) fostering relationships, (b) working together and (c) reciprocity.

a. Fostering relationships

Fostering relationships emerged as a prevalent theme across interviews. Most participants shared positive experiences of fostering relationships with different role players, which seemed to contribute to creating interdependent, enabling ‘spaces’, as so eloquently phrased by the following participant:

<p><i>Weet jy, dit was altyd [’n verhouding] van: there is no big brother. ... die toesighouers van die universiteit, van hierdie studente, het nooit gekom met die houding van: ons weet alles en julle weet glad niks. So, daar was nie ’n big brother in hierdie verhouding nie. Die absolute respek waarmee hulle al hulle rolspelers behandel het, inklusief myself, dit was vir my... [die] grootste bydraende faktor</i></p>	<p><i>You know, it was always [a relationship] of: there is no big brother. ... the supervisors from the university, of these students, never came with the attitude of: we know everything and you know nothing. So, there was no big brother in this relationship. The absolute respect with which they treated all their role players, including myself, that was ... [the] biggest contributing factor for me – because</i></p>
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<p>– want ewe skielik is ons hier – ek wil nou praat van the space of action – nou’s ek hier met mense, my gelykes (P3).</p>	<p>all of the sudden here we are – I want to talk about the space of action – now I am here with people, my equals (P3).</p>
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Various nuances manifested within this citation, which were also articulated by other participants. Positive, equitable relationships, relationships characterised by trust and respect, as well as the importance of relationships with all stakeholders, emerged as varied yet interrelated impressions of interdependent relationships in these service learning engagements. Each of these nuances will be discussed briefly.

Participants’ experiences of positive, equitable relationships between community and university role players, as the first nuance, were expressed as follows:

<p>Omdat ek so nou met julle gewerk het en julle regtig persoonlik leer ken het en ‘n verhouding met julle gesmee het, voel ‘n mens, mens het so gemaklik gepraat... omdat ons dit so positief benader het en jy weet, julle gesindhede van die universiteit se kant af – ‘n mens wou julle amper nie teleurstel nie. Of ons sou die ekstra myl met julle stap omdat julle so positief ingestel is vir ons gemeenskap (P2).</p>	<p>Because I worked so closely with you and really got to know you personally and formed a relationship with you, one feels, one spoke so easily ... because we approached it so positively and you know, your attitudes from the university’s side – one almost did not want to disappoint you. Or we would have walked the extra mile with you because you were so positively inclined towards our community (P2).</p>
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This quotation in particular reminds of Bringle et al.’s (2009, p. 13) concept of ‘closeness’ – one of the features of what these authors view as true partnership (cf. 2.5.4.1). These authors further posit that closer relationships result in increased ‘social bonding’ and have greater transformative potential. Along a similar line of argumentation, Bhattacharyya (2004, p. 11) suggests that the promotion of ‘solidarity’ (a shared identity and norms) is a prerequisite for community development (in addition to agency which was referred to in preceding codes – cf. 4.3.1.2). Wilcock’s notion of ‘belonging’, emphasising the importance of relationships and connectedness for health and well-being also comes to mind (cf. 2.2.3). It can thus be extrapolated from these theories in service learning, community development and occupational therapy that fostering closer social connections based on an enhanced sense of commonality provides an optimal platform for transformation. Findings of this study, which indicate that fostering relationships meaningfully contributed to enablement, therefore, align well with these theories.

Bender et al. (2006, p. 103) propose that “equity in partnerships requires that partners have sufficient respect for, and trust in, one another to confront the varied expectations of each partner, with openness and sensitivity.” This link between equitable partnerships and trust and respect, also emerged from interviews as a second nuance, as is exemplified in the following statements by a participant:

So dit was vir my regtigwaar 'n vennootskap van wedersydse respek, begrip vir mekaar en 'n pad wat ons definitief kan saamstap (P3).

So it was truly a partnership of mutual respect, appreciation for one another and a road that we could definitely walk together (P3).

... die vertroue wat ons mee begin het toe ons die verhouding gestap het – toe hulle die studente kom bekendstel het – van daai dag af het ek daai verantwoordelikheid geneem en dat die toesighouers van hierdie studente sal my nie in die steek laat of ... halfpad ... loop en dan uitvind nee – want dit het nog nooit gebeur nie (P3).

... the trust with which we started when we walked into the relationship – when they came to introduce the students – from that day I took that responsibility and realised that the supervisors of these students would not let me down or ... walk out half-way and then found out no – because that has never happened (P3).

In contrast to these findings, Netshandama (2010, pp. 70, 82) found that university-community partnerships have seldom been characterised by trust and respect in the past, with detrimental effects on relationships between the university and the community. The nature of relationships between stakeholders from the community and the university has a pervasive impact on the nature of joint activities, and the resulting outcome of the partnership (Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013, p. 76). Trusting and respectful relationships set a positive tone for relationships within which communities can, for example, participate in collaborative decision-making (Brower, 2011, p. 60) (cf. 4.3.1.2. a).

As a third nuance, participants in this study identified various stakeholders with whom relationships are important.

So, die twee rigting vertrouensverhouding wat gebou was tussen die studente, myself, die toesighouers, myself, die onderwysers en myself, die Beheerraad en myself, dit was nog altyd een wat ek regtigwaar met die grootste vrymoedigheid gedra het (P3).

So, this two-way trust relationship that was built between the students, myself, the supervisors, myself, the teachers and myself, the Governing Body and myself, that has always been one that I really carried with the greatest boldness (P3).

Relationships between community representatives and students, lecturers (service learning supervisors), community organisation staff and community members were identified. This corresponds well with the dyadic relationships depicted in the SOFAR structural framework for relationships in service learning (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 5) (cf. 2.5). A previous study by S.P. Kelly and Miller (2008, p. 37) revealed that community partners more readily expressed satisfaction with relationships with students than with lecturers. This may partly be attributed to the fact that students tend to spend more time in the community than lecturers. Participants in this study articulated their positive experiences of relationships between themselves and students, as well as students and community members, as follows:

... daai band wat ek met die studente op die ou einde het, is vir my 'n wonderlike band. Ons raak regtig soos familie van mekaar (P1).

... that bond that I ultimately have with the students, for me that is a wonderful bond. We really become like a family (P1).

Ek dink dit was vir die studente baie lekker tussen die bejaardes ... dan raak hulle so lief op die ou einde dat as hulle weggaan is hulle almal in tranes ... hulle het gebond met mekaar. Wat vir my baie wonderlik was (P1).

I think it really was pleasant for the students among the elderly ... then they became so fond of [them] that in the end when they leave all were in tears ... they bonded with each other. For me, this was wonderful (P1).

They feel at home. They feel at home to work with them. There is a better – there is a little, you know, a problem as far as language is concerned. But you don't even see it. Because of, you know, the way they are working, the cooperation. Therefore, you know, you don't even see it. You don't even notice it (P4).

Hulle voel tuis. Hulle voel tuis om met hulle te werk. Daar is 'n beter – daar is 'n klein, jy weet, probleem sover dit die taal aangaan. Maar jy sien dit nie eers nie. As gevolg van, jy weet, die manier waarop hulle werk, die samewerking. Daarom, jy weet, jy sien dit nie eers nie. Jy kom dit nie eers agter nie (P4).

Not only did fostering relationships between students and community members contribute to trust and cooperation in the partnership, but it also assisted partners to overcome barriers such as language differences.

Bringle et al. (2009, p. 9) point out that lecturers often express concern about the time requirements of building relationships with communities. In this study, however, it seemed as though participants were generally satisfied with the nature of relationships with academic staff as is exemplified in many of the quotations presented in this section. This is significant, as Jordaan (2012, p. 238) argues that “[t]he success of a community-based module rests to a large extent on the strength of the relationship between the faculty and the community.”

As a final, contrasting nuance, there was one participant that expressed a negative experience of relationships with students. She reflected that she in particular perceived students to have had experienced her negatively:

Verlede jaar het dit my nogal angstig gemaak. Want op 'n stadium het [DOSENT] oop kaarte gespeel en die verslae was daar en ek kon dit lees en die feit dat hulle my negatief ervaar het, was vir my nogal sleg. En dit was vir my jammer dat hulle die [INSTANSIE] ook negatief [ervaar het] – jy weet, dit was vir my sleg. Dit was 'n slegte belewenis (P5).

Last year it made me somewhat anxious. Because at one stage [LECTURER] played open cards with me and the reports were there and I could read it and the fact that they experienced me negatively, was really unpleasant for me. And it was sad that they also experienced the [INSTITUTION] negatively – you know, it was unpleasant for me. It really was an unpleasant experience (P5).

It is noteworthy that this participant also did not experience the service learning engagement, as a whole, as successful. Witchger Hansen (2010, p. 118) similarly found that service learning

partners who were disappointed with the service learning partnership, expressed disappointment with the relationships within the partnership. This finding also corresponds with literature that emphasises positive relationships as a prerequisite for successful service learning engagements (e.g. Bringle et al., 2009, p. 10; Brower, 2011, p. 60; Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013, p. 76). The latter authors explain the importance of fostering relationships as follows:

Our willingness to listen and learn from the people will determine the community's degree of participation in service-learning endeavours, the extent of their ownership and if they are to be empowered in order to make services flowing from our engagement sustainable (Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013, p. 76).

The importance of fostering relationships within service learning engagements towards enablement is, therefore, unmistakably evident.

b. Working together

Participants in this study concurred that working together with the university was an important contributor to enabling partnerships in which goals were not only achieved, but achieved together in a way that facilitated communal ownership of the project.

<p><i>En so het ons saam – en dit het nie net gevoel die universiteit kom en hulle gee 'n program en ons sê nee, ons wil dit nie hê nie. Nee, ons het saam gewerk en altyd die kurrikulum in gedagte gehou (P2).</i></p>	<p><i>And so together – and it did not feel as though the university came and they gave as a programme and we say no, we don't want it. No, we always worked together and always kept the curriculum in mind (P2).</i></p>
<p>Researcher: <i>So what has been your experience of how you could guide what happens in the partnership?</i></p> <p>Participant: <i>No, it's not a matter of guiding. It's a matter of working together to the goal (P4).</i></p>	<p>Navorsers: <i>So wat was jou ervaring van hoe julle kon rig wat in die vennootskap gebeur?</i></p> <p>Deelnemer: <i>Nee, dit is nie 'n saak van rig nie. Dit is 'n saak van saamwerk tot die doelwit (P4).</i></p>

As mentioned in Chapter 2, different approaches to service learning exist, and a project-based approach was generally the most prevalent approach to the service learning engagements of this study (cf. 2.4.5.1). The way in which these participants perceived working together with occupational therapy students and lecturers in these service learning engagements, however, contradicts the critique of project approaches for its disallowance of 'doing with' communities (Mahlomaholo & Matobako, 2006, p. 210). Given the philosophical and pragmatic complexities of a social change approach to service learning as pointed out in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.4.5.1), this finding is encouraging, as it suggests that the criticism against project-based approaches may not be entirely warranted for this specific context. While I am in full agreement that a social change approach to service learning represents an ideal, the findings of this study indicate that

a project-based approach does indeed allow for working with communities – essentially allowing for community participation as an enablement foundation and in so doing, enhancing the enabling and transformative potential of project-based service learning engagements.

On the other hand, however, there were engagements in which participants did not have positive experiences of ‘working together’. The lack of ‘working together’ emerged in participants’ recommendations for future endeavours, rather than being identified as a specific barrier to enablement. However, the need for improvement in this regard, and thus the enduring risk of marginalising communities within project-based approaches to service learning, should be duly noted. The following is an interview excerpt illustrating this finding:

<i>Want as ons – ek dink ons moet saamwerk. Ek is meer as bereid om saam te werk. Ek het geen probleem daarmee nie. Maar dan dink ek, dan dink ek ons moet so gou as moontlik bymekaar kom om te kyk hoekom het hierdie eerste paar maande, waar het fout gegaan – saam met hulle en te sê: ons het nog tyd om die projek te red (P5).</i>	<i>Because if we – I think we must work together. I am more than prepared to cooperate. I have no problem with it. But then I think, then I think we must meet as soon as possible to evaluate why this first few months, where did it go wrong – together with them and to say: we still have time to save the project (P5)</i>
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The findings of this study reiterate that working together with communities is a pillar to enablement. To use the apt description of one participant:

<i>The most [important] thing is only to work together, sharing ideas and then listening. I think those are the pillars that somebody can do (P4).</i>	<i>Die mees [belangrike] ding is slegs om saam te werk, idees te deel en dan te luister. Ek dink daardie is die pilare wat iemand kan doen (P4).</i>
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c. Reciprocity

With reference to the operational definition of reciprocity utilised in this study (cf. Concept Clarification & 2.5.4.1), participants voiced their understanding and experiences of reciprocity within the service learning engagements as is exemplified in the following quotation:

<i>... die gedagte was altyd dat ons albei sou baat vind. Die studente moes ook leer hier en ons moes ook baat vind. En dit het honderd persent gebeur. Want ek het die ontwikkeling en die groei in die studente gesien nadat hulle met die leerders van die skool en die gemeenskap [gewerk het] ... kon ek die ontwikkeling by die studente sien en ook die ontwikkeling dan nou ook by die leerders (P2).</i>	<i>... and the idea always was that both would benefit. The students should also learn here and we also had to benefit. And that happened one hundred percent. Because I saw the development and the growth in the students after they have [worked] with the learners of the school and the community ... I could see the development in the students and also the development within the learners (P2).</i>
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There are reservations about the possibility of attaining true reciprocity in service learning engagements, both locally (e.g. Erasmus, 2011, p. 355) and internationally (e.g. Jacoby, 2009,

p. 97). The results of this study suggest that, to some degree at least, participants experienced benefit to both their communities and the students – evidencing a form of reciprocity present in these engagements. Also, these experiences of reciprocity were perceived as positive contributors to enablement and were articulated as follows:

<i>Because, you know, the university ... they have played their part... And then we also played our part. So that we can ... come together. And then as far in ... a betterment of our children (P4).</i>	<i>Want, jy weet, die universiteit ... hulle het hul deel gedoen... En dan het ons ook ons deel gedoen. Sodat ons kan ... saamkom. En dan wat betref ... 'n verbetering van ons kinders (P4).</i>
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Questions regarding the possibility of reciprocity in service learning often centres around the implicit inequitable distribution of power between the university and the community (Erasmus, 2011, p. 355; Jacoby, 2009, p. 97). Participants' perceptions of power sharing within these service learning engagements may shed some light on their positive experiences of reciprocity. For example, one participant commented:

<i>Die gelykstelling wat ons is, die: there's no big brother in dié nie. Daar is nie: ek weet, ons weet alles, julle weet niks. Julle moet van ons leer. Dit was altyd 'n vennootskap van: ons wil by julle kom leer. Ons wil vir julle – ons wil – ons reik 'n hand van: hier is my hand, vat dit en loop saam met ons die pad. Dit was nog altyd – en een wat ons met groot genoegdoening gevat het en saam gestap het (P3).</i>	<i>The equality that we are, the: there's no big brother in this. There is not: I know, we know everything, you know nothing. You must learn from us. It has always been a partnership of: we want to learn from you. We want for you – we want – we reach out a hand of: here is my hand, take it and we walk this road together. It has always been – and one that we took with great delight and walked together (P3).</i>
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Findings of positive experiences of reciprocity and power sharing in this study are reassuring amidst the many concerns in this regard (Erasmus, 2011, p. 355; Jacoby, 2009, p. 97). However, some participants did not perceive reciprocity within these service learning engagements. The following participant articulated that the community did not benefit from the service learning engagement, thus rendering the engagement non-reciprocal:

<i>... die studente se betrokkenheid – ek dink nie op hierdie stadium – is so 'wow' op hierdie stadium soos wat ek gehoop het dit sou wees nie. (Lang stilte). Weet jy, die impak is nie so groot nie. Omdat ek – hoekom ek so sê: is die feit dat hulle nou die groente kom plant het en onttrek het. So ek dink – en soos wat ek nou sien, neem die onkruid nou oor daar. So ek dink nie dit gaan 'n suksesvolle situasie wees nie. Dit gaan nie 'n suksesvolle projek wees nie (P5).</i>	<i>... the students' involvement – I don't think at this stage – is as 'wow' at this stage as I would have hoped it would be. (Long silence). You know, the impact is not so great. Because I – why I say so: is the fact that they came and planted the vegetables and then withdrew. So I think – and the way I see it now, the weeds are now taking over there. So I don't think it will be a successful situation. It is not going to be a successful project (P5).</i>
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A lack of benefit to the community, which negates any possibility of reciprocity in service learning, was also found by Netshandama (2010, p. 83). In a review of service learning

literature published in medical education, Hunt et al. (2011, p. 249) also found limited evidence of reciprocity in these engagements. Therefore, despite encouraging findings in this study that reciprocity seems to be a possibility in service learning engagements, the very real danger exists that communities may experience these engagements as exploitative rather than reciprocal (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 7; Netshandama, 2010, p. 79).

D'Arlach, Sánchez and Feuer (2009, p. 5) suggest that when service learning activities are structured in such a way that also places community members in positions of authority, such as sharing their unique knowledge with students, the likelihood of reciprocity is enhanced. Evidence of the power of this suggestion was also found in this study, as expressed by the following participant:

<i>Hier was 'n student wat eendag so breipatrone met 'n tannie uitgeruil het. En dit was vir my wonderlik. Sy't by die tannie gaan sit en sy sê sy kan nie brei nie en die tannie het haar gehelp. So die bejaardes kon van hulle kennis op die jongmense afdra wat vir my baie wonderlik was (P1).</i>	<i>A student once swapped knitting patterns with an auntie. And for me this was wonderful. She went to sit with the auntie and told her she couldn't knit and the auntie helped her. So the elderly could convey some of their knowledge to the students which was wonderful to me (P1).</i>
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Knowledge is the primary commodity of the university, and thus implicitly the area in which the university is considered to have the most power. Moreover, the legitimacy and existence of the university depends on maintaining this power over knowledge (D'Arlach et al., 2009, p. 5). Targeting exactly this area of power imbalance and seeking reciprocity in sharing and co-creating knowledge, may perhaps be a powerful, yet deeply challenging way, for universities to promote reciprocity in service learning engagements. In the context of medical education, Hunt et al. conclude:

As partnerships between medical schools and communities mature, both parties can benefit immensely through reciprocal knowledge transfer. Ideally, as academic faculty and medical students bring technical and scientific expertise to the community, they gain in return even more knowledge from community members on culture, public health priorities, and the influence of social determinants on health (Hunt et al., 2011, pp. 249–250).

Conceptually, reciprocity is a defining characteristic of service learning (Bringle et al., 2013, p. 338; Petersen & Osman, 2013, p. 7). In practice, however, it remains a challenging ideal to attain. Findings of this study demonstrate that reciprocity is possible and is experienced as an enabling feature of service learning engagements. The danger of non-reciprocal interactions, especially when those are seated in asymmetrical power relations, is, however, pervasive and

cannot be ignored. Strategies directed toward reciprocal knowledge sharing and co-creation may contribute to more enabling service learning engagements.

d. Summary: Interdependence

Participants in this study perceived fostering positive, trusting and respectful relationships, working together and reciprocity, as three distinct yet interrelated concepts that contributed to enablement within these service learning engagements. The absence of these characteristics of interdependent partnerships undermined the transformative potential of service learning engagements and manifested as barriers to enablement – often by hampering the enablement foundation of power sharing. Therefore, it seems that promoting interdependence through relationship-building, co-creation and reciprocal interaction should be a priority in all service learning engagements, particularly in South Africa where the socio-political history is perpetuated by somewhat modulated though ever enduring power inequities (O'Brien, 2012, p. 205).

4.3.1.4 *Meeting tacit needs*

Theme	Category	Codes
Enabling occupation	4.3.1.4 Meeting tacit needs	a. Providing something new b. Being present and showing interest c. Making memories

Addressing real needs as a facilitator to enablement was presented earlier (cf. 4.3.1.2. c) as a finding of this study. Literature triangulation yielded a community development principle named 'felt needs', that is, addressing the needs of people as they view them (Bhattacharyya, 2004, p. 22). Van der Merwe and Albertyn (2009, p. 165) posit that, in addition to addressing felt needs, 'unfelt needs' should also be uncovered and addressed within community development endeavours.

Participants in this study articulated ways in which initially unexpressed needs were met during service learning engagements. The meeting of these tacit needs was identified in retrospect when participants reflected on positive experiences, and mechanisms that enabled these positive experiences, within the service learning engagements. Three codes emerged to constitute this category, namely (a) providing something new, (b) being present and showing interest and (c) making memories.

a. Providing something new

Participants in this study experienced that students brought something new to their communities. New knowledge, a new energy and providing a diversion from the norm were all mentioned as 'something new' brought to the community through the service learning engagements, which met tacit needs within the community. The following examples from participant interviews reflect these findings:

<i>Weet jy, ons kry eerstephandse nuwe kennis van die universiteit af, wat vir my baie belangrik is en vir my lekker is, omdat ek gedurig gestimuleer wil wees (P6).</i>	<i>You know, we get first-hand new knowledge from the university, which is very important to me and I enjoy it, because I want to be stimulated regularly (P6).</i>
<i>Want dit gaan die – jy weet die gesindhede en die positiwiteit wat julle, en die energie wat julle na ons dorp toe bring, wil ek nie sien tot niet gaan nie (P2).</i>	<i>Because it is going to – you know, the attitudes and positivity that you, and the energy that you bring to our town, I don't want to see that going to waste (P2).</i>
<i>Maar as daar ... mense is wat met hulle aangaan, bring jy ook nuwe dinge in hulle lewe. En dit geniet hulle ook (P8).</i>	<i>But if there ... are people that continue with them, you also bring new things into their lives. And they enjoy that too (P8).</i>

These findings are supported by the work of Alperstein (2007, p. 62) and Brosky, Deprey, Hopp and Maher (2006, p. 47). The former author found that service learning students “added fresh views” (Alperstein, 2007, p. 62) to the community, while the latter authors concluded that community partners in their study perceived service learning students to “bring new energy to their facilities” (Brosky et al., 2006, p. 47). The findings of this study indicate that participants perceived the addition of something new to the community as a result of service learning engagements, as beneficial to the community. It met tacit needs, such as being stimulated with new ideas, facilitating change as an enablement foundation, and so contributed to the enabling nature of service learning engagements.

b. Being present and showing interest

Participants perceived the presence of the university (as represented by lecturers and students) in the community as an enabling force in and of itself. The nature of this enabling force was articulated in different ways, the first of which was the association with the university that was regarded as inspiring:

<i>Dit is regtigwaar vir ons – om met so 'n uitstekende universiteit wêreldwyd geassosieer te word, om te weet, ons is bevoorreg (P2).</i>	<i>Truly, for us – to be associated with such an excellent university worldwide, to know, we are privileged (P2).</i>
<i>... I think the very important thing working with the university, it was a light to us. We were not aware. But it was really a light for us (P4).</i>	<i>... Ek dink die baie belangrike ding om met die universiteit saam te werk, dit was vir ons 'n lig. Ons was nie bewus nie. Maar dit was regtig 'n lig vir ons (P4).</i>

Braveman, Otr, et al. (2001, p. 123) posit that the benefits of service learning engagements can be both tangible and symbolic. Symbolic benefits may include an enhanced status as a result of being associated with an academic institution, which supports the findings of this study.

A second nuance in this code was participants' experiences of the physical presence of university students and staff in their communities, and the interest that they showed in the community. Participants perceived this to be something that encouraged the community, as expressed in the following quotations:

<p><i>Net weer om vir ons as onderwysers weer net bietjie weer bewus te maak: luister, dit wat julle doen is nie in vain nie. Iemand anders is ook daar om julle te ondersteun en vir julle te help en leiding te gee om dit wat julle doen ... daarmee voort te kan gaan (P2).</i></p>	<p><i>Just to make us as teachers aware again: listen, that what you do is not in vain. Someone else is also involved to support you and help you and to give you guidance to enable you to continue ... with that which you are doing (P2).</i></p>
<p><i>En net om te weet – net daai versekering te weet dat mense, professionele mense, mense wat opgelei is in daai veld, om net daai versekering van hulle af te kry: julle is op die regte pad (P3).</i></p>	<p><i>And just to know – to just have that reassurance that people, professional people, people that are trained in that field, just to receive that reassurance from them: you are on the right track (P3).</i></p>
<p><i>Weet, partymaal is 'n bestuurder 'n alleng mens. Jy word alleng in dit wat jy doen. En nou kom iemand van buite en jy kan presies vir daai student nou sê: maar hoe voel jy oor sekere van die personeel? Want jy't maar altyd personeel op jou. Jy's nie altyd reg nie. En sy raak vir jou 'n vertroueling vir daai paar dae wat sy hier is. En dit beteken vir my as bestuurder verskriklik baie lat ek 'n vertroueling kan hê van buite (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>Know, sometimes a manager is a lonely person. You become lonely in what you do. And now someone comes from the outside and now you can say exactly to that student: but how do you feel about certain staff members? Because you always have the staff on you. You are not always right. And she becomes a confidant to you for those few days that she is here. And it means a lot to me as a manager that I can have a confidant from outside (P1).</i></p>

Du Plessis and Van Dyk (2013, p. 76) relate showing a genuine interest in communities with building trustful relationships (cf. 4.3.1.3. a). The findings of this study extend this relation to show that, when community members experienced support and encouragement within the service learning engagement, it met tacit needs of being validated. This gave them renewed confidence, which contributed to enabling them in their daily life occupations (cf. 4.3.1.7. b & c).

c. Making memories

Participants in this study shared various memories of specific activities that happened within the service learning engagements. The activities varied, but the mechanism that was experienced as enabling remained the same – doing things that make lasting memories in the community. Hosting 'events' such as career day exhibitions, games days and health promotion events days were some of the activities mentioned by participants that left them with lasting memories:

En na daai week wat hulle hier was het hulle verskriklik, ag nog steeds – ek het dit nou die dag vir iemand gesê – toe sing hulle weer die Banana liedjie.⁴ So hulle het absoluut – jy weet, en dan praat hulle ook van: toe die studente hier was het hulle ons dit geleer (P2).

And that week that they were here they, oh still – I told it to someone the other day – they sang the Banana song⁴ again. So they absolutely – you know, and then they also talked about: when the students were here they taught us that (P2).

... hulle [het] in die saal [met] die hele groep graad agts, al hulle stalletjies⁵ gehad. ... dit was vir my baie effektief gewees. ... as jy na die kinders se gesigte kyk en jy, jy sien dit en baiekeer as ek nou weer na die DVD ook kyk, dan kan ek [sien] – dit beteken so baie vir hulle (P8).

... in the hall with the whole group of grade eights, they had all their stalls.⁵ ... it was very effective for me. ... when you looked at the children's faces and you, you saw it and often when I look at the DVD again, then I can [see] – it meant so much to them (P8).

Die suster het gestaan en huil toe die studente daai speletjies met die oumense speel. Om te sien wat kry hulle uit daai ou mense uit. Hulle sing Jan Pierewiet en ja, dit was 'n verskriklike groot belewenis. Ja. Daai ... middag met die speletjies speel was r rig 'n groot geleentheid. Ons was nege tafels vol speletjies en studente en van die kinders van die swart skool. Ja. En bejaardes (P1).

The sisters stood there and cried when the students played those games with the elderly. To see what they get out of those elderly people. They sang Jan Pierewiet and yes, it was a very big experience. Yes. That ... afternoon with the games was really a big occasion. We had nine tables full of games and the students and some of the children from the black school. Yes. And the elderly (P1).

These results suggest that participating in activities that have the potential to create powerful memories for community participants, such as specific 'events', contributed to the sustainability of the effect of the 'intervention' in the community, such as learners remembering what they were taught by students long after the engagement had ended. Health promotion is a form of 'intervention' that is well suited to and frequently used in service learning in health sciences (Alperstein, 2007, p. 60; Horowitz et al., 2010, p. 79; Olivier et al., 2007, p. 63; Scott, 1999, p. 567). The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (World Health Organisation, 1986) identifies various health promotion strategies, of which the development of personal skills, and strengthening community actions are two. On a micro-level, the findings of this study provide anecdotal evidence for the value of 'events' as a health promotion strategy to enhance personal skills and strengthening community actions. Thus making memories through health promotion events seems to have contributed towards enabling personal skills that make better decision-making (e.g. regarding a healthy lifestyle, career choice or participation in recreational activities) possible.

⁴ Field note: The 'Banana song' was a song that students taught to learners of the school as part of a health promotion campaign promoting a balanced lifestyle.

⁵ Field note: The stalls were part of a career day exhibition at a high school that was organised by students as part of their service learning activities.

d. Summary: Meeting tacit needs

The findings in this category relate to addressing tacit needs in communities – things that community partners valued in retrospect that had not necessarily been part of the consciously targeted activities or objectives of service learning. Providing new knowledge, energy and a diversion from the norm seemed to stimulate communities towards new ideas – something that could relate to the enablement foundation of a vision of possibilities (cf. 2.2.4). Similarly, the presence and interest portrayed by students and staff from the university inspired renewed confidence among community members. Participants relayed direct relations between the presence and interest of the university and the enablement of daily life occupations such as their work. Finally, the code of making memories provided some insights into the positive effect that activities such as health promotion events can have on the enablement of occupational performance skills, including personal skills and decision-making skills, for community members. Meeting these tacit needs seem to have had enabling potential. Proactively working towards identifying and addressing such tacit needs in communities could, therefore, prove to be a valuable contributor to occupational enablement.

4.3.1.5 *Positive student attributes*

Theme	Category	Codes
Enabling occupation	4.3.1.5 Positive student attributes	a. Student commitment and professionalism b. Quality of student service

A review of service learning literature reporting on community outcomes of service learning indicates that communities are generally satisfied with students and their work (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 397) (cf. 2.5.3.2). Most participants in this study also reported general satisfaction with students and their work. In addition to positive relationships between students and community members (cf. 4.3.1.3. a), participants emphasised (a) students' commitment and professionalism, and (b) the quality of student service as the emergent codes constituting this category.

a. Student commitment and professionalism

Participants in this study perceived occupational therapy service learning students to be committed and professional in their engagements with the community. The following are examples from participant interviews of comments in this regard:

<i>Maar ek dink, ek wil net sê: die arbeidsterapie studente is puik studente. ... Hulle het hard gewerk, hulle beste gegee, in die gemeenskap ingegaan, dadelik deel gevorm van die gemeenskap (P2).</i>	<i>But I think, I just want to say: the occupational therapy students are excellent students. ... They worked hard, gave their best, went into the community, and immediately formed part of the community (P2).</i>
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Baie professioneel gedoen. Ja, ek het my eintlik verstom om te dink vierdejaar studente kan dit so professioneel doen. Ja, dit was vir my rêrig van hoogstaande gehalte (P1).

Done very professionally. Yes, I was really astonished to think that fourth-year students could do it so professionally. Yes, it really was of the highest quality for me (P1).

Alperstein (2007, p. 62) similarly found that health sciences students in her study were perceived to “[work] in a professional manner, and [show] commitment to their work.” Students in health sciences are trained to become professionals; consequently, the development of ‘professionalism’ in students is targeted in most health science education programmes (Bossers et al., 1999, p. 117). One would, therefore, expect that student professionalism would be observable among health sciences students such as in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

More contemporary studies on professionalism among occupational therapists, however, yields some challenges with the notion of professionalism, not the least of which are the complex power relationships implied therein (Mackey, 2014, p. 174). In the context of service learning, overemphasising the notion of professionalism among students has entrenched in it the danger of perpetuating power imbalances between the university (represented by students) and the community. However, despite this danger, participants in this study seemed to have experienced students’ professionalism as a positive attribute of student work in the community. In addition, students’ commitment, as reflected in ‘working hard’ and ‘giving their best’, was also perceived as positive attributes of students’ work.

When students’ work was perceived in a positive light, as characterised by the commitment and professionalism of the students, it seemed to enhance the potential of students’ work to be enabling in nature. There were, however, participants who did not experience all students to be fully committed to their work, as expressed in the following quotations:

So, ek weet nie wat is die siening van die studente nie. Of hulle eerder ’n ander projek wou hê en of hulle werklik hulle hart en siel by die bejaardes is nie. Ek weet nie (P5).

So, I don’t know what the views of the students were. Whether they rather wanted another project and whether their hearts and souls really were with the elderly. I don’t know (P5).

Maar nou kry jy ’n student wat net eenvoudig alles insit met die bejaardes, met die personeel, met haar groepe en dit is suksesvol. Dan kry jy ’n ander een wat dink dit moet vir haar gebeur en dan gebeur hier nie veel nie... (P6).

But now you get a student that simply puts in everything with the elderly, and with the staff, with her groups and it is successful. Then you get another one who thinks it must happen for her and then not much happens here ... (P6).

A lack of commitment observed among students, therefore, proved to be detrimental to the outcomes of service learning engagements. These findings are mirrored in the study of Witchger Hansen (2010, p. 119), who found that in occupational therapy service learning

partnerships where community partners were disappointed with the outcomes, students were perceived to be disinterested in the project and the population that they were working with.

Positive student attributes, such as commitment and professionalism, appeared to contribute to an overall positive perception of students' involvement in the community. It also seemed to enhance students' relational contact with the community when community members felt valued and respected as a result of students' commitment and professionalism (cf. 4.3.1.3. a). This placed students in a position where they could contribute more meaningfully to enablement in the community.

b. Quality of student service

The quality of the service rendered by students was also perceived as a positive contributor to enablement. One participant expressed it as follows:

<p><i>... in die eerste plek was dit vir my baie noodsaaklik laat hulle kom want ons het in [PLEK] glad nie arbeidsterapie dienste nie. So dis vir my baie noodsaaklik en regtig het hulle vir my 'n baie goeie diens gelever aan die [INSTANSIE] want die ou mense het regtig hulle insette en goed nodig om goed te kan funksioneer (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>... in the first place it was very essential that they come because in [PLACE] we don't have any occupational therapy services. So for me it was very essential, and they really did deliver a very good service to the [INSTITUTION] because the elderly people really need their inputs and things to be able to function well (P1).</i></p>
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These findings draw a positive relation between good quality student service and benefits to clients in terms of outcomes. Witchger Hansen (2010, p. 154) found that benefit to clients was a marker for community satisfaction with service learning projects. It seems, therefore, that ensuring that students deliver a good quality service which benefits community members is an important consideration in order for service learning engagements to be enabling.

c. Summary: Positive student attributes

The findings of this study indicate that when students are committed and act in a professional manner in the community, and are able to deliver a service of good quality which successfully addresses real and tacit community needs (cf. 4.3.1.2. c & 4.3.1.4), enablement of occupation is facilitated more optimally. The nature of service activities that were perceived as beneficial to the community are further explored in the next category.

4.3.1.6 Enabling service activities

Theme	Category	Codes
Enabling occupation	4.3.1.6 Enabling service activities	a. Training strategies b. Involving the wider community c. Delivering tangible products d. Infrastructure development

Using a grounded theory inquiry approach, Smith-Tolken (2011, p. 362) found that university – community engagements result in an exchange of tangible and intangible commodities. The author provides examples such as tangible pamphlets and booklets, and intangible knowledge sharing and access to expertise. This category reports on activities yielding tangible and intangible ‘commodities’, which were perceived as enabling in the process of occupational therapy-based service learning engagements. The findings presented in this category align well with Smith-Tolken’s ‘exchange of tangible and intangible commodities’, although the focus is on activities that were enabling to the community (i.e. the notion of ‘exchange’ does not emerge so strongly).

Four codes emerged from the data to constitute this category, namely (a) training strategies, (b) involving the wider community, (c) delivering tangible products, and (d) infrastructure development.

a. Training strategies

Many service activities performed by students in communities involved training strategies, evidencing the adoption of the role of ‘trainer’ or ‘educator’ as one of the roles of the occupational therapist in the community in these service learning engagements (Scaffa, 2001a, p. 15). Participants in this study expressed their experiences of the enabling nature of training strategies as is exemplified in the following verbatim quotations:

Ek dink [die opleiding] het [die personeel] in die eerste plek bemagtig. Ek dink dit het hulle ook 'n bietjie 'n uplift gegee. Want partymaal, die werk wat hulle by die [INSTANSIE] doen is maar bietjie afbrekend en afkrakend. En ek dink rêrig die studente het hulle bemagtig om die werk vir hulle so maklik as moontlik te maak. Ons sê altyd: work smarter, not harder. En ek dink nogal dit het vir hulle baie beteken (P1).

I think [the training] in the first place empowered [the staff]. I think it also gave them a bit of an uplift. Because sometimes, the work that they do at the [INSTITUTION] is a bit disparaging and denigrating. And I really think the students empowered them to make the work as easy as possible. We always say: work smarter, not harder. And I think it meant quite a lot to them (P1).

Eintlik vir alles wat hulle gedoen het of begin het, het my regtig, my oë baie oopgemaak. Ek is getrain oor kinder[s], maar ek het duisende goete geleer hoe om te sien waarmee 'n kind mee sukkel (P8).

Actually for everything they did or started off, it really, opened my eyes a lot. I was trained about children, but I learned a thousand things about how to discover what a child has difficulty with (P8).

Participants in this study clearly perceived the community to benefit from training that they received from occupational therapy students in service learning. The provision of training is a common need from communities in relation to service learning (Nduna, 2007, p. 72; Netshandama, 2010, p. 78); perhaps, as previously stated, because knowledge is viewed as the university's primary commodity (cf. 4.3.1.3. c). Brower (2011, p. 60) further elucidates the need for training by identifying it as a way to address immediate felt needs, and thus extrapolating "provid[ing] for immediate needs through training and resources" as the first principle for sustainable development through service learning.

The operationalisation of training strategies manifested in different ways across interviews. Some participants particularly reflected on the value of gaining *knowledge* through training, while *skills* development was noted by others as enabling:

<p><i>[The students] come here, talk with them. They train them and they did tell them how to do it or how to handle the kids. And then they [the teachers] ... take that information and use it. And then it works (P4).</i></p>	<p><i>[Die studente] kom hierheen, praat met hulle. Hulle lei hulle op en het vir hulle vertel hoe om dit te doen of hoe om die kinders te hanteer. En dan vat hulle [die onderwysers] ... die inligting en gebruik dit. En dan werk dit (P4).</i></p>
<p><i>Hulle het gehelp met opleiding van personeel [t.o.v. die verplasing van bejaardes]⁶. Wat ook baie help want ons het 'n tekort aan susters wat nie regtig die tyd het om aan die personeel regte opleiding te gee, hoe om bejaardes te hanteer nie (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>They helped with the training of personnel [with regard to transferring the elderly]⁶. Which also helped a lot because we have a shortage of sisters that don't really have the time to give the personnel the right training, on how to handle the elderly (P1).</i></p>

In addition to providing knowledge and developing skills, participants also perceived it as particularly valuable to observe and 'do with' students, as a specific training strategy, as expressed in the following interview excerpts:

<p><i>You know, the method that [the students are] using and then playing with children, the different things that they are doing, you know – [the teachers] copied that from them and then goes on when they are not here (P4).</i></p>	<p><i>Jy weet, die metode wat [die studente] gebruik om te speel met die kinders, die verskillende dinge wat hulle doen, jy weet – [die onderwysers] boots dit na van gaan dan daarmee voort wanneer hulle nie hier is nie (P4).</i></p>
<p><i>Weet jy, ek dink die verpleeghulpe ontwikkel. As hulle sien wat doen die arbeidsterapeute en hoekom hulle dit doen (P6).</i></p>	<p><i>You know, I think the nursing assistants develop. When they see what the occupational therapists do and why they do it (P6).</i></p>

⁶ Field note: This comment related specifically to experiential skills training done by students to teach staff practically how to do transfers with elders.

A final operational characteristic of training strategies that seemed to add value to students' service learning engagements was involving 'experts' (such as qualified occupational therapists who are knowledgeable in a specific field). This seemed to add credibility to the training that was provided, and so enhanced the perceived enablement:

<p><i>En nou het die Bestuur ook bietjie insig daarin gehad. Want hulle het mos vir [ARBEIDSTERAPEUT] laat kom om te kom gesels en toe het die Bestuur dit gehoor, van die kinders het dit gehoor en die oumense. En dit het baie beteken (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>And now the Management also had some insight into it. Because they arranged for [OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST] to come and talk and then the Management heard it, some of the children heard it and the elderly. And it meant a lot (P1).</i></p>
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<p><i>En dan: ons het nou geestelik en sosiaal en emosioneel – het ons 'n werkwinkel gehad wat julle bekwame mense gebring het na ons toe saam met die [studente]. Waar ons emosionele versterking, die personeel het dit ook nodig. Waar 'n mens bietjie jou emosies ondersoek het en gesien het hoe moet jy, as jy kwaad is, hanteer. Jy weet, al daai emosionele goetertjies het julle ook vir ons begelei met dit (P2).</i></p>	<p><i>And then: we had spiritual and social and emotional – we had a workshop where you brought competent people to us together with the [students]. Where we [did] emotional strengthening, the personnel also need that. Where you investigated your emotions a little and contemplate on how you must, when you are angry, handle it. You know, all those emotional things you also guided us with (P2).</i></p>
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Participants in this study expressed a need for training as a priority in service learning engagements, and shared their experiences of the enabling effects that training had in their communities. Specific strategies, such as knowledge and skills training, training through observing and doing with students, and involving experts, were identified as operational characteristics of training that contributed to the impact and sustainability of the training that students provided in the service learning engagements.

b. Involving the wider community

Participants articulated that involving the wider community in projects within a specific community organisation had great value, specifically in terms of continuity and sustainability of joint service learning endeavours. Two nuances emerged within this code – the first was focused specifically on the role that occupational therapy service learning students played in facilitating the involvement of volunteers, and the second related to creating connections with other organisations and groups within the community. The following interview excerpt provides a glimpse of the value that the involvement and empowerment of volunteers had in an organisation:

<p><i>En hulle het ook verskriklik baie gehelp met vrywilligers. Die studente het gekom en die vrywilligers bemagtig en die vrywilligers kon aangaan met daai take wat hulle gedoen het ... Oor ons nie rêrig geld het om die regte</i></p>	<p><i>And they also helped an awful lot with volunteers. The students came and empowered the volunteers and the volunteers could continue with the tasks they were doing ... Because we don't really have</i></p>
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<p><i>hoeveelheid personeel aan te stel nie, kon die vrywilligers inkom en ons daarmee help (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>money to appoint the right quantity of personnel, the volunteers could come in and help us with that (P1).</i></p>
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By involving and empowering volunteers to make a contribution in this community-based organisation, the sustainability of student activities was enhanced as volunteers could continue with projects once students left. Involving volunteers, therefore, offers a possible solution to challenges such as intermittent contact (cf. 4.3.2.1) and barriers to sustainability (cf. 4.3.2.3). Furthermore, involving volunteers helped to address a very real need (cf. 4.3.1.2. c) in terms of staff shortages, which is a need that prevails in many community-based institutions (Nduna, 2007, p. 72).

The second nuance, creating connections with other organisations and groups, was experienced just as positively, but with a slightly different emphasis to involving volunteers. Intergenerational and interracial contact, as well as contact with other community structures, were identified by participants as valuable endeavours as narrated in the following citations:

<p><i>Die studente het baie keer né, die skole ook betrek. Ek sien nou die skool is nou vandag hier om komberse uit te deel. ... Die dag wat ons speletjies gespeel het, het [die student] van die swart skole⁷ se kinders [betrek] – en daai interaksie met die jonger mense, was vir die oumense 'n groot belewenis. 'n Verskriklike groot belewenis. Ja. ... Hulle het die skole laat kom en dit het vir die oumense verskriklik baie beteken. En as ons daai speletjies gespeel het dan kom ons nou by volksliedere. En dan kan daai swart kind opstaan en sy sing Nkosi Sikelele en dan – daai oumense kry lekker tot in hulle kleintoontjies in. Ja, dit was 'n verskriklike groot belewenis (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>The students often involved the schools, too. I see now, the school is here today to hand out blankets. ... The day that we played games, [the student] also [involved] the children from the black schools⁸ – and that interaction with the young people, was a big experience for the elderly. A very big experience. Yes. ... They brought the schools here and that meant an awful lot to the elderly. And after we had played those games we got to the anthems. And then that black child stood up and she sang Nkosi Sikelele and then – those elderly people enjoyed it down to their little toes. Yes, it was a very big experience (P1).</i></p>
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<p><i>... het hulle 'n Powerpoint gedoen oor dwelms en ... alkohol en so. En toe't van die studente gespeel dat hulle het ... dwelms – en ons het die plaaslike polisie ook betrek. So hulle het nog van daai mense ook by die skool gekry. En die graad aggies het hulle boeglam geskrik, hoor [toe die polisie die studente deursoek]. So (lag) ek het 'n wonderlike graad agt klas vir daai jaar gehad. Hulle het nie eens aan dagga of drank gedink nie (P7).</i></p>	<p><i>... they did a Powerpoint about drugs and ... alcohol and so on. And then some of the students pretended that they had ... drugs – and we involved the local police too. So they even got some of those people to the school too. And then the grade eights, they had a big fright [when the police searched the students]. So (laugh) I had a wonderful grade eight class that year. They did not even think about dagga or liquor (P7).</i></p>
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⁷ Contextual note: This excerpt comes from the interview with a community representative from a rural service learning site. In this community, segregation of ethnic groups into 'white', 'brown' and 'black' prevails in the distribution of residential areas, and consequently also the schools in the town.

Cultivating intergenerational contact, such as between the elders⁸ residing in the residential care facility and the children from local schools, is proven to benefit elders by reducing stereotypes and improving their well-being (Hernandez & Gonzalez, 2008, p. 303). This supports the findings of this study that involving the wider community, such as creating intergenerational contact, was valuable to elders in this community.

In addition, the findings suggest that interracial contact in a community marked by geographical segregation of racial groups may promote a greater appreciation of diversity. During a review of service learning at the university where the study was conducted, the international consultant was present at the scene shortly after one of the motor vehicle accidents occurred in which occupational therapy service learning students were involved, in this same community (cf. 4.3.2.4. a). He noted in his concept report that his experiences with community members following the accident provided evidence of the “ameliorative role” of the university in the community with reference to interracial acceptance, and extrapolated from his observations that “[i]t is important not to miss the significance of this encounter as an indicator of the interrelationship between community engagement and diversity” (Eatman, 2011, p. 6). These findings bear particular contextual relevance by pointing to the potential of service learning engagements to promote greater appreciation of diversity in a country that is characterised by pervasive prejudice and intolerance of diversity. Bearing in mind the implicit objectives of a social change approach to service learning to promote social justice (cf. 2.4.5.1), possible inferences about strategies to contribute to social justice may tentatively be drawn from these findings.

Facilitating connections with other community structures, such as the police (P7), schools (P5), luncheon clubs (P1) and other charity organisations (P5), was identified by participants as beneficial to their communities. These organisations may serve as structural factors that can potentially support occupational engagement and thus contribute to occupational justice (cf. 2.2.1 and Figure 3). Bringle and Steinberg (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010) correspondingly report that successful service learning projects help community organisations to form new connections with other organisations in the community, which they view as beneficial. In the same vein, Van Schalkwyk and Erasmus (2011, p. 77) recommend that expanding connections should be a conscious effort for all stakeholders in service learning partnerships.

The findings of this study indicate that involving volunteers, connecting with other community structures and organisations, and creating opportunities for intergenerational and interracial contact, are beneficial endeavours that contributed to sustainability and addressing real needs through service learning. Findings further suggest that by involving the wider community,

⁸ The term ‘elders’ is used as a “respectful term acknowledging a long life” (Du Toit et al., 2014, p. 127) (as opposed to, for example, ‘the elderly’ which poses the danger of implicitly ‘othering’ older members of society).

service learning projects may contribute to cultivating solidarity in communities – that is, a greater sense of common identity and purpose – as an enabling by-product of such endeavours; also akin to Wilcock’s (2007, p. 5) notion of belonging (cf. 2.2.3).

c. Delivering tangible products

Many participants commented on tangible products that were delivered as a result of service learning engagements, which were perceived as helpful to communities. There were various examples of such tangible products, including assistive devices for elders that had had strokes (P1), information leaflets containing health promotion messages (P1, P2), reminders of specific events, such as a poster or a DVD recording (P7), learning materials for a crèche (P4), and sewing kits following a sewing skills development project at a high school special education class (P7). Some participants noted the value of these tangible products as follows:

<p><i>En dan op die ou einde dink ek het hulle stukke uitgedeel ook oor presies – soos met die hulpmiddels: dit se hulpmiddels gaan julle gebruik. Oor die vrywilligers: so wil ons graag hê julle moet die vrywilligers hanteer. Wat ons nou elke dag nog gebruik. Hulle lê daarso. Ek gebruik dit elke dag. Gaan terug na daai goeters toe wat hulle met ons gedoen het (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>And then in the end I think they distributed pamphlets about how exactly – like with the assistive devices: these assistive devices you are going to use. About the volunteers: this is the way we prefer you should handle the volunteers. Which we still use everyday. They are lying there. I use it everyday. It goes back to those things they did with us (P1).</i></p>
<p><i>En julle het vir ons goed nagelaat. Soos die prente op ons – elke onderwyser het ’n healthy balance lifestyle blaaie gekry en wat ons elke keer – omdat ek LO [Lewensoriëntering] gee, wys ek terug daarna. En dan onthou ons. Byvoor-beeld by ‘Physical’, wat het die studente nou weer gedoen? Dan sing ons die liedjie (P2).</i></p>	<p><i>And they left things behind for us. Like the pictures on our – every teacher received a healthy balance lifestyle leaflet that we [use] everytime – because I teach LO [Life Orientation], I refer back to it. And then we remember. For example ‘Physical’, what did the students do again? And then we sing the song (P2).</i></p>

Suarez-Balcazar et al. (2005, p. 57) also note tangible products as a possible benefit to communities resulting from occupational therapy service learning engagements. The two interview excerpts cited above particularly stress the value of tangible products to serve as reminders of collaborative activities, which seem to have contributed to the sustainability of the targeted outcomes of service learning. These findings, therefore, provide another way to compensate for a lack of continuity in student service (cf. 4.3.2.1. a) and barriers to sustainability (cf. 4.3.2.3) in addition to strategies such as involving the wider community (cf. 4.3.1.6. b). Delivering tangible products, therefore, contributes to enablement in general (e.g. by providing something to refer back to), and enabling occupation specifically (e.g. in the case of providing needed assistive devices for occupational performance).

d. Infrastructure development

In addition to tangible products, participants also shared their experiences of infrastructure development as an enabling service activity. Examples of infrastructure development done through service learning included sensory rooms and gardens (P1, P5, P6), painted chess boards on cement surfaces at a school (P7), a vegetable garden (P5) and structural environmental adaptations such as to a living room in a residential care facility (P6).

Findings in this code were particularly divergent depending on what transpired. On the one hand, infrastructure development contributed to addressing real needs (cf. 4.3.1.2. c), ensuring stakeholder buy-in (cf. 4.3.1.2. b) and enhancing sustainability, as expressed by the following participant at various occasions during the interview (indicated with ellipses):

En die derde ding was die sensoriese kamer wat hulle ingerig het. Dit kon ons definitief baie gebruik met die Alzheimer pasiënte. Dit het ons baie gehelp. ... Want julle moet weet, ons het niks gehad wat Alzheimer pasiënte stimuleer nie. Niks. So dit het baie beteken dat ons 'n Alzheimer pasiënt kan sensoriese kamer toe vat en die oom en die tannie vir 'n halfuur stimuleer daar. As ons tyd het probeer ons dit 'n uur doen. ... Nee regtig, ek kan nou sê met die sensoriese kamer gaan ons aan en die personeel gaan rêrig – hulle het regtig ter harte geneem wat die studente vir hulle gesê het. En die vrywilligers, ons sukkel nie so baie met hulle nie. Moet so nou en dan weer 'n bietjie optel maar dit gaan eintlik baie goed. Ja, dis nie nodig – dit was nie rêrig nodig om baie op te volg nie (P1).

And the third thing was the sensory room that they equipped. That we could definitely use a lot with the Alzheimer patients. That helped us a lot. ... Because you must know, we had nothing with which to stimulate the Alzheimer patients. Nothing. So it meant a lot that we could take an Alzheimer patient to the sensory room and the uncle and the auntie could be stimulated for half an hour there. If we have time we try to do it for an hour. ... No really, I can say with the sensory room we really carry on and the personnel really go – they really took to heart what the students told them. And the volunteers, we don't struggle so much with them. We have to pick things up now and then but it really is going well. Yes, it is not necessary – it was not really necessary to do a lot of follow-up (P1).

Another inspiring anecdote of the benefit of infrastructure development for a specific community member was shared by a different participant:

Wat ons wel gedoen het, wat vir my baie positief was, is dat ons 'n inwoner het wat 'n erge beroerte gehad het en sy kan nie praat nie en sy kan ook nie sluk nie. So sy is totaal bedlêend. Sy kry buisvoeding en die feit dat sy nie kan praat nie maak dit vir ons baie moeilik om met haar te kommunikeer. En in die lente het ons letterlik die bed gevat en uitgestoot binne-in die feetjietuin onder die appelkoosboom waar sy dan die blou – die gekleurde en die blou bottels kon sien en die – letterlik die son op haar vel kon voel. So dit was vir my positief. Ek dink as die feetjietuin nie daar was nie, sou ons nie vir mev [NAAM]

What we did however, which was very positive to me, was that we have a resident that had a severe stroke and she cannot talk and she also cannot swallow. So she is totally bedridden. She receives tube feeding and the fact that she cannot talk makes it very difficult for us to communicate with her. And in the spring we literally took her bed and pushed it into the fairy garden under the apricot tree where she could then the blue – see the coloured and blue bottles and the – literally feel the sun on her skin. And that was positive to me. I think if there was no fairy garden, we would not have pushed Mrs

<i>uitgestoot het om te ervaar wat sy wel ervaar het nie (P5).</i>	<i>[NAME] outside to experience what she did experience (P5).</i>
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On the other hand, infrastructure development that was not accompanied by the appropriate maintenance strategies or that was not appropriately designed to the needs and realities of the community, was perceived as a barrier in the service learning engagement. Participants expressed their views as follows:

<i>Die studente het die plante kom plant en kom verf en dit mooi gemaak. En ek dink omdat daar nie 'n [NAAM] was of iemand om dit te kon dryf nie, het dit toe nou nie gerealiseer, die werklike feetjietuin nie (P5).</i>	<i>The students came and planted the plants and painted and made it pretty. And I think because there wasn't a [NAME] or someone that could drive it, it did not realise, the real fairy garden (P5).</i>
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<i>Dis nie so suksesvol nie. Ek vat die sensoriese stimulasiekamer. Ons noem dit die vroetelkamer, want dis wat die ou mense daar doen. ... Hy moet in vier afgeskort word. En dan moet elke hoekie moet iets anders wees. Maar hy's nie deel van die groter sitkamer nie. Die ou mense dwaal nie soontoe nie. ... Wat hulle nie sien nie, trek nie hulle aandag nie. ... En om die personeel met 'n bejaarde soontoe te laat gaan, dan los dit weer twee, om negentien ander op te pas. Waar, as jy hom heeltemal oopmaak dat hulle kan sien, dan kan hulle oë oral wees, want mens het regtig toesig nodig... (P6).</i>	<i>It is not very successful. I take the sensory stimulation room. We call it the fidget room, because that is what the elderly people do there. ... It must be separated into four areas. And then every corner must be something different. But it is not part of the larger sitting room. The elderly people don't wander there. ... What they don't see, don't draw their attention. ... And to let the staff go there with an elderly person, it leaves two to look after nineteen. Where, if you open it completely so that they can see, then their eyes can be everywhere, because the people really need the supervision... (P6).</i>
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Universities are viewed by communities as resource-rich (Netshandama, 2010, p. 78), and in South Africa, extension of university resources to under-resourced communities is an explicit driver of service learning on a policy level (Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, p. 90) (cf. 2.4.1). Infrastructure development provides a means for universities to make a meaningful material contribution to under-resourced community areas through service learning. Under the right circumstances, infrastructure development can contribute to sustainability of service learning engagements. Paying specific attention to designing infrastructure to the needs and realities of the community, and ensuring a feasible maintenance strategy emerged from the findings as two vital principles to ensure that infrastructure development does indeed contribute to enablement rather than disablement.

e. Summary: Enabling service activities

The results presented in this category revealed that training strategies, involving the wider community, delivering tangible products and infrastructure developments were identified as service activities performed by occupational therapy students that had the potential to contribute to enablement in the community in various ways. Specific strategies for training, namely

knowledge and skills training, observing and doing with students, and involving experts in training emerged from the data. Involving volunteers and other community structures, including the value of intergenerational and interracial contact, were identified as ways in which the wider community was involved to the benefit of service learning sites. Delivering tangible products and infrastructure development both showed the potential to contribute to the sustainability of service learning engagements; however, certain conditions such as feasible maintenance strategies and designing infrastructure around the real needs of communities were identified as prerequisites for infrastructure development to contribute to enablement. The identification of service activities that have enabling potential in this study can make a valuable contribution towards the collaborative negotiation of future service activities for both community and university stakeholders, by providing evidence of previous successful activities, as well as identifying specific strategies that need to be implemented for these activities to contribute to community enablement.

4.3.1.7 *Successful outcomes*

Theme	Category	Codes
Enabling occupation	4.3.1.7 Successful outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Attitudinal change leading to practice reform b. Enhancing confidence and dignity c. Enhancing occupational participation d. Promoting students' social responsibility

Findings related to successful outcomes of service learning engagements, as perceived by participants, are reported on in this category. Due to the varied nature of service activities at the respective service learning sites, the outcomes of service learning is also expected to be varied (Braveman, Otr, et al., 2001, p. 123). Common trends in participants' experiences of occupational therapy service learning outcomes were, however, identified. In the process of descriptive coding, participants' perceptions of successful outcomes stemming from occupational therapy service learning engagements were interpreted and labelled using occupational therapy language where applicable. Comprising this category, four codes emerged from the data, namely (a) attitudinal change leading to practice reform, (b) enhancing confidence and dignity (c) enhancing occupational performance, and (d) promoting students' social responsibility.

a. Attitudinal change leading to practice reform

One of the positive outcomes of student service learning activities mentioned by participants was attitudinal change leading to practice reform. Inputs such as training or personal development activities, frequently led to changes in the way that things were being done, as expressed by the following participants:

<p><i>They did gain some knowledge from the student[s] when they come, they gain a lot. Because there is a change. If you go to the classrooms, you know, there is a change. That's right (P4).</i></p>	<p><i>Hulle het wel kennis opgedoen by die student[e] wanneer hulle kom, hulle het baie daarby gebaat. Want daar is verandering. As jy in die klasse ingaan, jy weet, daar is 'n verandering. Dis reg (P4).</i></p>
<p><i>Ek kan definitief sien dat die personeel meer Eden-gesentreerd⁹ is, meer dit vir die bejaardes wil huisliker maak. Hulle kom – in die oggende na ontbyt, sit hulle musiek aan en hulle speel met 'n bal en hulle dans met die bejaardes en hulle kommunikeer met die bejaardes en hulle doen handversorging en hulle doen voetversorging. Ja, ek kon definitief sien dat die personeel daai stappie hoër bemagtig is om die bejaardes reg te hanteer (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>I can definitely see that the personnel is more Eden centered⁹, want to make it more homely for the elderly. They come – in the mornings after breakfast, they turn on music and they play with a ball and they dance with the elderly and they communicate with the elderly and they do hand care and they do foot care. Yes, I could definitely see that the personnel are that one step more empowered to handle the elderly correctly (P1).</i></p>
<p><i>... met programme wat die arbeid[sterapie]studente vir ons ... voorgestel het ... het ons die oë na binne gekeer om te kyk, wat het ons in die binnekant wat ons verder kan ontwikkel ... wat kan ons beter doen? En dit het vrugte afgewerp. Ons ... toleransievlakke met ons kinders, onder mekaar, onse verhoudinge, dié het honderd en twintig persent met rasse skrede verbeter ... daar is ewe skielik 'n groter bewuswording van onse verantwoordelikheid (P3).</i></p>	<p><i>... with the programmes that the occupational [therapy] students ... compiled for us ... we turned the eyes inward to discover, what do we have inside that we can develop further ... what can we do better? And that bore fruit. Our ... tolerance levels with our children, among one another, our relationships, these have improved rapidly one hundred and twenty percent ... all of a sudden there is a greater awareness of our responsibility (P3).</i></p>

Participants mentioned various stakeholders who had demonstrated changes in attitudes and ways of doing, including community representatives themselves (P2), community organisation staff (P1, P2, P3, P4), community organisation management teams (P1, P3) and community members such as children in schools (P2, P3, P7). These findings provide anecdotal evidence that service learning endeavours did indeed contribute to change in the community. Change is one of the occupational therapy enablement foundations (cf. 2.2.4), and in the context of occupational therapy, targets occupational participation, health, well-being and occupational justice (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 103). The aforementioned quotations primarily relate to changes in occupational participation – that is, how community members participated in their daily life occupations such as teaching, caring and relating to others. In addition, another significant finding was that changes in organisational policies and the implementation thereof, had taken place as a result of service learning endeavours. These changes in organisational policies and practice seem to have contributed to countering occupational injustices such as

⁹ Referring to the implementation of the *Eden Alternative*[®] principles such as countering boredom and ensuring human companionship, following training provided by students and a trained *Eden Alternative*[®] expert as part of students' service learning activities.

occupational deprivation in a residential care facility (Du Toit, Böning, & Van der Merwe, 2014, p. 133), as is exemplified in the following interview excerpt:

[Dit het 'n verskil gemaak] in die opsig dat ons vir die bejaardes dit meer wil huislik maak. Ons het byvoorbeeld ontbyt – vir die mense wat kan, hoef nie ontbyt te kom eet 'n seker tyd nie. Daai roetine bietjie weggevat. So hulle kom eet ontbyt – kan nou geëet word van half agt tot kwart oor nege in die oggende. So hulle kan bietjie later slaap. Hulle kan kom ontbyt eet wanneer hulle wil. Ons het vir hulle 'n teekamer reggemaak. Hulle kan hulle eie teetjies maak. So dit maak dat die bejaardes 'n bietjie meer 'n huisliker atmosfeer het. En dit het nogal baie gehelp. Nie hierdie roetine en institusiegerigte sorg meer nie (P1).

[It made a difference] in the sense that we want to make it more homely for the elderly. For example, we have breakfasts – for the people who are able, they don't have to come and eat breakfast at a certain time. Took away that routine a little bit. So they can come and have breakfast from half past seven to quarter past nine in the morning. So they can sleep a little later. They can have breakfast when they want. We arranged a tearoom for them. They can make their own tea. So it creates a bit more of a homely atmosphere for the elderly. And it really helped a lot. Not this routine and institution directed care anymore (P1).

By changing organisational practices, the community members (in this case residents of a residential care facility) were afforded renewed opportunities to participate in meaningful occupations, such as making their own tea in a more homely environment. The enablement of such change through service learning, can make small yet meaningful contributions towards greater individual and social change (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 104), and consequently to individual occupational and social justice.

b. Enhancing confidence and dignity

Participants articulated experiences where they were able to observe how community members gained in confidence through their interactions with occupational therapy service learning students. The following interview excerpts both relate to enhancing confidence:

... hy is een van daai gevalle waar daai kind se hele menswees, se hele ingesteldheid, hy't gegroei in sy selfvertroue. Sy ouers van die huis se kant af, daar is 'n definitiewe doelbewuste ingryping as gevolg van dit wat by die skool gebeur het deur die arbeids[terapiestudent] ... Sy persoonlikheid, sy netheid en in daai kind – hy het 'n spraakprobleem maar hy babbel en hy loop oor van selfvertroue (P3).

... he is one of those cases where that child's whole personhood, his whole attitude, he grew in confidence. His parents from the home's side, there is a definite purposive intervention as a result of what happened at the school through the occupational [therapy student] ... His personality, his tidiness and in that child – he had a speech problem, but he is now babbling and overflowing with confidence (P3).

En 'n bietjie – ek dink ook, selfvertroue op te bou om te kan sê, maar dis wat ek doen ... Ek kan rêrig. Ek kan altyd die positiwiteit daar aanvoel in die klas as ek daar instap en die studente is daar en die kinders wys vir hulle en ... die aktiwiteite gebeur daar (P7).

And a bit – I think also, building confidence to be able to say, but this is what I do ... I really can. I can always sense the positivity there in the class when I walk in there and the students are there and the children show them and ... the activities happen there (P7).

Townsend et al. (2013, p. 103) note that inspiring confidence is one of the check-points to facilitate a vision of possibilities – one of the occupational therapy enablement foundations (cf. 2.2.4). The OTPF isolates enhanced confidence as an outcome of occupational therapy that can be identified in clients' subjective impressions of the achievement of objectives (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014, p. S16). The findings of this study indicate that, through occupational therapy service learning engagements, confidence was enhanced among community members. Community representatives were also able to relate this enhanced sense of confidence with greater social participation (P3) and enhanced participation in school (P7) as two examples of occupational performance areas that were positively affected.

In addition to enhanced confidence, participants also articulated experiences of enhanced dignity. The following participant summarised her overall impression of the effect of service learning in their community organisation as follows:

<i>Die bejaarde is in die eerste plek meer menswaardig gemaak. Want ons kon dalk die oom leer hoe om reg te loop as hy verkeerd geloop het. So ons het aan die bejaarde meer menswaardigheid gegee (P1).</i>	<i>The elderly person was in the first place given more dignity. Because we could perhaps teach the uncle the right way to walk if he walked in the wrong way. So we gave the elderly person more dignity (P1).</i>
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She also referred to this enhanced dignity in another anecdote:

<i>... ek dink dis vir hulle 'n 'wow'. Want hulle voel nutteloos en hier kon 'n tannie haar breipatroon vir 'n student gee. En haar kennis met hierdie student deel. En as die student – hulle gaan sit en sy help haar. Ek dink dit – hulle voel bietjie meer van nut. Hulle beteken weer iets in die samelewing (P1).</i>	<i>... I think for them it is a 'wow'. Because they feel useless and here an auntie could give her knitting pattern to a student. And could share her knowledge with this student. And if the student – they sit together and she helps her. I think it – they feel a bit more useful. They can mean something in society again (P1).</i>
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Human dignity is defined as “a subjective experience of well-being contingent on the collective sum of (inter-)individual experiences of values” (Mattson & Clark, 2011, p. 316). The profession of occupational therapy values and fosters human dignity (Creek, 2003, p. 28; Witchger Hansen, 2010, p. 29), and this is reflected in the findings of this study. However, if human dignity is viewed as the subjective experience of well-being of a person, the evidence here may only be viewed as anecdotal, as it was shared by the community representative, not the people themselves. Nonetheless, in answering the research question, community representatives did perceive occupational therapy service learning engagements to enhance dignity as an outcome of occupational enablement endeavours.

c. Enhancing occupational participation

The aim of occupational therapy has been extrapolated as the enablement of participation in occupation (cf. 2.2). Participants relayed ways in which they perceived occupational therapy service learning engagements to enhance occupational participation in communities, such as the following quotation:

[Die wellness program] het ons absoluut net weer laat besef dat ons geestelik – ons is in 'n groef soms – dat mens geestelik verryk moet word. En deur die geestelike verryking het ons 'n geestelike groep opgestel waar ons Bybelstudie nou elke Dinsdagoggend voor skool het. Ten spyte van die feit dat ons elke [oggend] open met skriflesing en gebed, het ons nou 'n Bybel-studiegroep waar 'n mens regtig geestelik verryk word. Die tweede een is sosiaal. Op sosiale vlak het [ons] fiets gery. Ons stap saam... ons [hou] funksietjies ... waar ons net pret het. Jy weet, saam piekniek gaan hou. Ek het nou die dag vir ons 'n piekniek gehou. Ons het op die gras gesit en ons het net lekker saam gekuier ... (P2).

[The wellness programme] absolutely made us realise again that spiritually – we are in a rut sometimes – that one must be enriched spiritually. And through the spiritual enrichment we established a spiritual group where we now have Bible study every Tuesday morning before school. Despite the fact that we start each [morning] with the reading of scripture and prayer, we now have a Bible study group where one is really enriched spiritually. The second one is social. On a social level [we] ride bicycle. We hike together... we [have] functions ... where we just have fun. You know, having a picnic together. The other day I held a picnic for us. We sat on the grass and just babbled away (P2).

Through implementing a wellness programme as part of a service learning project, occupational therapy students were able to catalyse a renewed focus on occupational domains such as spirituality and social interaction in the promotion of well-being. There is also evidence of community ownership of implementing strategies based on what students shared in the wellness programme – in the instance above, staff from the school themselves initiated activities such as Bible study and having picnics. These findings, therefore, indicate that occupational therapy service learning engagements do indeed have the potential to advance “health, well-being and participation in life” (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014, pp. S17–S18) through enabling occupation in communities.

Another example of enhancing occupational participation was articulated as follows by another participant:

Deelnemer: ... ons bejaardes kon positief besig gehou het met dit wat die studente aangebied het. En ons kon daarmee voortgaan (P1).

Participant: ... we could keep the elderly busy positively with what the students presented. And we could continue with it (P1).

Navorsers: Watse verskil het dit vir julle gemaak?

Researcher: What difference did it make for you?

Deelnemer: ... 'n totale verskil aan die menswees van die bejaardes. Ek bedoel, want hulle het gesit in hulle kamers en hulle

Participant: ... a total difference to the personhood of the elderly. I mean, because they sat in their rooms and they did not

<i>het nie aan aktiwiteite deelgeneem nie (P1).</i>	<i>participate in activities (P1).</i>
Deelnemer (later in onderhoud): ... Want ek bedoel, op die ou einde baat die gemeenskap ook maar daarby. Want hulle kan sien, die kinders van die oumense kan sien, maar hier is nou met my ma vordering. My ma is nie meer so huilerig nie. Sy skreeu nie meer so nie. Sy raak nie aggressief nie. My ma het rustig geraak. So, ek dink dit raak 'n hele samelewing (P1).	Participant (later in interview): ... <i>Because I mean, in the end the community also benefits from it. Because they can see, the children of the elderly can see, but here is progress with my mother. My mother does not cry so much. She does not shout like that anymore. She does not get aggressive. My mother became calm. So, I think it touches the entire society (P1).</i>

Another participant shared a similar observation of the effects of activity participation on elders:

<i>... maar as die ou mense deelneem aan die aktiwiteite, dan's hulle minder veeleisend, minder deurmekaar, minder vervelig, minder klaerig... (P6).</i>	<i>... but if the elderly people participate in the activities, then they are less demanding, less confused, less bored, less complaining... (P6).</i>
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These exemplars demonstrate the value that participation in meaningful activities, initially facilitated by service learning students and later handed over to community organisation staff, had for elders in a residential care facility. Not only did elders “come out of their rooms” (P1), which counters loneliness and boredom, but they also experienced the effects of occupational participation on their emotional well-being to such an extent that it was observable by their families and the staff of the facility. Extracting from the *Eden Alternative*[®] (cf. 4.3.1.6 a – footnote 7), Du Toit et al. (2014, p. 128) theorise loneliness, helplessness and boredom as “three plagues that sabotage human dignity and occupational justice.” Drawing on this theory, findings of this study show that service learning engagements successfully contributed to countering some of these ‘plagues’, and therefore, promoted not only human dignity (cf. 4.3.1.7 b), but also occupational justice by addressing among other occupational deprivation.

Finally, the following reflection from a participant during the interview provides a rich description of the value of occupational enablement:

<i>Want andersins sit hulle hier. Hulle voel hulle kinders het hulle verwerp. Hulle voel die gemeenskap het hulle verwerp. Hulle is te oud om iets te doen. En hier kom die studente en hulle leer iets by 'n bejaarde. Ek dink dit beteken vir die bejaardes verskriklik baie. So bietjie opheffing, so bietjie weer mens wees, so bietjie – voel gebonde. Voel bietjie weer gebonde. Ja. Ja, ek dink dit beteken vir hulle baie (P1).</i>	<i>Because otherwise they sit here. They feel their children had rejected them. They feel the community had rejected them. They are too old to do something. And here comes the students and they learn something from the elderly person. I think it means incredibly much to the elderly. A little upliftment, being a bit more human again, a bit – feeling that they belong. Feeling that they belong again. Yes. Yes, I think it means a lot to them (P1).</i>
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Without any formal knowledge on occupational therapy theory, this participant was able to articulate the value of occupation through *doing* (e.g. teaching a student something), *being*

("being a bit more human again"), and *belonging* ("Feeling that they belong again"), exemplifying Wilcock's (2007, p. 5) renowned equation $d+b^3 = sh$ (cf. 2.2.3) for survival and health. Enhancing occupational participation, therefore, was perceived by participants in this study as a successful outcome of occupational therapy service learning.

d. Promoting students' social responsibility

Although this code does not relate to successful outcomes for the community directly, participants in this study were able to articulate their observations of the effect that participation in service learning had on the development of students' social responsibility. As these were part of participants' perceptions of occupational therapy service learning engagements, this code was included in the category of successful outcomes. One participant commented as follows:

<p><i>Ek dink gesindhede het verander. Gesindhede van die studente, dat hulle gesien het wat hier aangaan en besef waarom die rêrige lewe gaan. Jy weet, dat hulle nie net in 'n praktyk gaan staan en net die rooskleurigheid van dit sal sien nie, maar ook sien waarmee ons elke dag te werk het. En dan meer begrip hê (P2).</i></p>	<p><i>I think attitudes changed. Attitudes of the students, that they saw what expired here and realise what life really is about. You know, that they don't go into a practice and then only see the rose coloured outlook of it, but also see what we work with every day. And then have more understanding (P2).</i></p>
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It seems that community representatives were able to observe that occupational therapy service learning students became aware of the realities that communities face. These findings are supported by findings of Horowitz et al. (2010, p. 87) and Maloney et al. (2014, p. 152), who concluded that occupational therapy students gain an enhanced awareness of social issues through participation in service learning.

I have argued in the literature review section that an enhanced awareness of social issues does not necessarily result in acting upon this sense of social responsibility, but that awareness is a crucial first step in developing social responsiveness (cf. 2.5.1.3). Participants in this study were able to relate both an enhanced awareness of social issues, as well as civic action resulting from such awareness as expressed by the following participant:

<p><i>... daar was wonderlike uitvloeisels. Studente wat hier was en wat in die gemeenskappe getroud is en wat terugkom [INSTANSIE] toe en sê: maar tannie, ons was hier by die bejaardes en nou is ek in die gemeenskap getroud. Kan ek iets doen? En reeds een van hulle is nou besig om vir ons 'n programmetjie op te stel met [INWONER] en [INWONER] ... sy't teruggekom en gesê: maar ek was hier saam toe ek 'n student was. Kan ek iets vir hierdie twee doen om hulle besig te hou? En nou kom sy een maal 'n week en sy kom hou hulle besig. Hulle maak kaartjies. Hulle doen</i></p>	<p><i>... there were wonderful byproducts. Students who were here and got married into the communities and came back to the [INSTITUTION] and said: but auntie, we were here with the elderly and now I got married into the community. Can I do something? And one of them is now compiling a little programme for us with [RESIDENT] and [RESIDENT] ... she came back and said: but I was here when I was a student. Can I do something for these two to keep them busy? And she comes once a week and she comes to keep them busy. They make cards. They do mosaic. So she keeps them</i></p>
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<p><i>mosaïekwerk. So sy hou hulle positief besig, een maal in 'n week vir twee ure. En los vir hulle iets vir die res van die week om te doen. ... En 'n ander student weer het gesien ons het groot geldnood. En sy gaan trou in [PLEK] se gemeenskap. En sy reël saam met haar nuwe skoonma vir die [INSTANSIE] 'n tee 'n oggend, om geld in te samel. As sy nie 'n student was nie, hier saam met hulle was nie, het sy nie hierdie nood raakgesien nie. En sy reël hierdie funksie. En hulle samel op 'n oggend agtduisend rand vir die [INSTANSIE] in (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>busy positively, once a week for two hours. And leaves something for them to do the rest of the week. ... And another student saw our great financial need. And she married into the [PLACE] community. And she arranged, together with her mother-in-law, for the [INSTITUTION] a tea one morning, to raise funds. If she had not been a student, here with them, she would not have seen this need. And she arranged this function. And they collected eight thousand rand for the [INSTITUTION] in one morning (P1).</i></p>
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These findings attest to both an enhanced sense of interconnectedness with the community, as well as greater community involvement fostered among occupational therapy students as a result of participation in service learning (cf. 2.5.1.3), extending beyond the study years. Maloney et al. (2014, pp. 156–157) investigated the effect of service learning on occupational therapy students' feelings of civic responsibility. These authors recommend that further research is necessary to determine whether participation in service learning does indeed have long-term effects on graduates' social responsibility. Although it was not an expressed purpose of this study, these findings, therefore, seem to make a contribution to this identified knowledge gap in occupational therapy service learning literature by indicating that participation in service learning does indeed have the potential to effect long(er)-term social responsibility among occupational therapy graduates.

e. Summary: Successful outcomes

Successful outcomes of service learning endeavours for communities, which participants in this study had experienced, emerged as attitudinal change leading to practice reform, enhancing confidence and dignity, and enhancing occupational participation. The findings presented in these three codes demonstrated that community representatives perceive occupational therapy service learning engagements to have the potential to enable occupation and contribute to occupational justice. A fourth code emerged from the data, namely promoting students' social responsibility. The findings presented in this final code indicate that service learning promoted an awareness of social issues, as well as community participation, among students and graduates, as perceived by the community representatives who participated in this study. Occupational therapy service learning engagements in this study thus lead to successful outcomes in both the enablement of occupation and the promotion of student citizenship.

4.3.1.8 *Conclusion: Enabling occupation*

As a whole, the findings presented in the theme 'Enabling occupation' called attention to facilitators of enablement in service learning partnerships, and demonstrated participants' perceptions of activities and outcomes that attest to the enablement of occupation in

communities. I will elaborate more on the conclusions to be drawn, and recommendations to be made based on these findings in Chapter 5 (cf. 5.2 and 5.3). Following the theme ‘Enabling occupation’, the second theme emerging from the data in this study, namely ‘Disabling occupation’, will now be presented.

4.3.2 Disabling occupation

The theme of ‘disabling occupation’ was characterised by participant perceptions relating to factors that served as barriers to successful outcomes and reciprocal partnerships. In effect, these factors resulted in ‘disabling occupation’ – that is, it either ‘passively’ prevented the enablement of occupation by acting as a barrier or it actively countered productive efforts. Four categories emerged from data analysis to constitute this theme, namely intermittent contact, managerial challenges, barriers to sustainability, and risk to student. Each category is presented by introducing the category as a whole, and then presenting and discussing the codes that contributed to that category.

4.3.2.1 Intermittent contact

Theme	Category	Codes
Disabling occupation	4.3.2.1 Intermittent contact	a. Lack of continuity b. Goals not realised

Codes relating to intermittent contact emerged in all of the interviews conducted. A lack of time spent with the community in service learning has previously been argued as a barrier to following a social change (‘genuine engagement’) approach (cf. 2.4.5.1) and to developing transformative partnerships (cf. 2.5.4.4). Two codes relating to intermittent contact emerged from the data, namely (a) lack of continuity, and (b) goals not realised.

a. Lack of continuity

Participants perceived a lack of continuity resulting from intermittent contact with the community, as a significant barrier in the service learning engagements studied. Some even highlighted the lack of continuity as the “biggest problem” (P1). The following excerpts exemplify these perceptions relating to a lack of continuity:

<i>Toe die studente meer gereeld gekom het in daai eerste jare, was dit vir my asof daar meer 'n kontinuiteit was in dit wat hulle gedoen het. En hulle ... meer kort-kort kon opvolg oor dit wat die personeel doen. Onthou, daai eerste jare het hulle die hele jaar deur gekom. En nou het hulle net 'n week gekom. En baie goeie werk gedoen. Maar nou gaan dit half 'n bietjie verlore (P1).</i>	<i>When the students came more frequently in those first-years, it was as though there was more continuity in what they did. And they ... could follow up more frequently with what the personnel were doing. Remember, those first-years they had been coming throughout the whole year. Recently they are only coming for a week. And did very good work. But now it sort of goes to waste a bit (P1).</i>
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... en die feit dat julle nie meer so gereeld gekom het nie. Sodat mens dit alles moes inkrank in 'n sekere week of twee weeklikse program of drie weekliks, jy weet. Die studente het mos laas jaar darem nog geleidelik met drie weke met die – met van die studente ook gekom. ... Want ons sou dit graag 'n meer deurlopende proses wou hê (P2).

... and the fact that you were not coming so frequently anymore. So that one had to crank everything into a certain week or two weekly programme or three weekly, you know. Last year the students had still been coming gradually for three weeks – with some of the students. ... Because we would have liked it to be a more continuous process (P2).

It appears as though a lack of continuity had a particularly negative impact on the relationships between students and community members as voiced by this participant:

So dit was frustrasie in die sin van ja, die tydaspect. Net wanneer jy begin om die verhouding tot die volgende vlak te vat, dan onttrek die studente (P3).

So it was frustration in the sense of yes, the time aspect. Just when you start to take the relationship to the next level, then the students withdraw (P3).

The detrimental impact of a lack of continuity resulting from intermittent contact with the community features strongly in literature. Bringle et al. (2009, pp. 11–12) conclude that the investment of time is a crucial factor in the development of relationships, and a prerequisite for transformational partnerships (cf. 2.5.4.2). In the South African context, the studies of both Netshandama (2010, p. 80) and Alperstein (2007, p. 62) indicated the need among community partners for more continuous contact with the university. In a study on service learning partnerships in occupational therapy, Witchger Hansen (2010, pp. 123–124) also found that a lack of time spent in the community, resulting in a lack of continuity, lead to dissatisfaction with occupational therapy service learning engagements.

There were, however, instances in this study where participants perceived less continuous inputs from students as beneficial and more suited to their unique setting. For one participant, less frequent student visits allowed time for community organisation staff (in this case they were educators) to apply the knowledge gained from students before receiving new information:

But if they came twice a month, it works a lot. Because they came a week and then after that week they [gave] the very same thing that they have done and then they repeat them, you know. And then if they come again and then my teachers have already done something as far as the previous teaching is concerned (P4).

Want wanneer hulle twee maal per maand kom, werk dit beter. Want hulle kom 'n week en na daardie week dan [gee hulle] dieselfde ding wat hulle gedoen het en dan herhaal hulle dit, jy weet. En dan wanneer hulle weer kom het my onderwysers reeds iets gedoen wat die vorige opleiding betref (P4).

Another participant commented that a once-off input such as an events day made a bigger impact in their setting than would a continuous service:

Ek verkies daai een dag. En dit maak 'n impak, daai dag. ... En veral omdat – al is dit net die verskil tussen die hoërskool en die laerskool. Want dit is 'n groot verskil. By die – as ek die RO [remediërende onderrig] klas by die Laerskool gehad het sou ek wou gehad het die studente moet meer dikwels inkom om 'n pad te loop met die kleintjies. Maar by die hoërskool is daai een dag effek amper vir my beter (P7).

I prefer that one day. And it makes an impact, that day. ... And especially because – even if it is just the difference between the high school and the primary school. Because it is a big difference. At the – if I had the RE [remedial education] class at the primary school I would have liked the students to come more frequently and walk a road with the little ones. But at the high school that one day effect is almost better for me (P7).

Perceptions regarding intermittent contact and a lack of continuity, therefore, seem to be contextually determined. However, the importance of contextually defined continuity and investing time in building relationships in the community for both staff and students, to enable transformative partnerships that can contribute to occupational enablement, is evident.

b. Goals not realised

A second disabling effect of intermittent contact was that, in some cases, it led to goals of service learning engagements not being realised. The following two comments from participants clearly indicate the frustration that could be coupled with the detrimental effect of intermittent contact on the achievement of the goals of the service learning engagement:

En as ons dan nou gevoel het: joe, hier gebeur iets, dan is julle weg. Jy weet, dit kan 'n uitdaging wees. So maar dit gaan absoluut oor: ons sal julle, die universiteit, regtig meer hier wou hê (P2).

And when we then felt, wow, here something is happening, then you are gone. You know, it can be a challenge. So it is absolutely about: we would really want to have you, the university, here more often (P2).

Weet jy, as daar nie kontinuïteit is nie, is dit sleg, en dan, soos die mosaïek-projek, die kinders het begin daarmee en nou trek hy so bietjie stadig (P6).

You know, if there is no continuity, it is bad, and then, like the mosaic project, the children started with it and now it has slowed down (P6).

When the goals of the service learning engagement are not realised to the satisfaction of community partners, regardless of the reasons, communities and students alike experience disappointment. In extreme cases, it may even lead to what Netshandama calls “community fatigue” and mistrust of the university in future engagements (Netshandama, 2010, p. 80). Therefore, it is essential to address the potentially detrimental effects of the non-realisation of goals as a result of intermittent contact proactively. During the participant verification stage of this study participants added that when there was sufficient carry-over between students, between service learning ‘blocks’ and also from one year to the next, to ensure continuity (cf. 4.3.2.1 a), it did help to counter the negative impact of intermittent contact on the realisation of partnership goals (P2, P3). This is an encouraging suggestion that may help to ensure more enabling outcomes in service learning despite restrictions on time spent in the community.

c. Summary: Intermittent contact

Participants in this study continually reiterated that more and more continuous contact with the community, especially by students, is desirable. It is important to note, however, that service learning is but one part of a larger module for occupational therapy students at the university where the study was executed. Therefore, the time that is available for students to spend in the community to participate in service learning is limited.

Despite the findings of this and other studies that community members want students to spend more time in the community (e.g. Nduna, 2007, p. 74), the reality of time limitations in student academic programmes will not change. Other findings of this study have indicated that participants perceived that positive outcomes are indeed achieved through service learning (cf. 4.3.1.7) despite constraining factors like time limitations. Therefore, although intermittent contact was perceived to hamper continuity and goal attainment in this study, ways to ensure the realisation of goals despite time limitations should be sought. Participants in this study made a valuable suggestion in this regard by prioritising efficient carry-over between students, and feedback to the community, to curb the disabling potential of intermittent contact between students and the community.

4.3.2.2 *Managerial challenges*

Theme	Category	Codes
Disabling occupation	4.3.2.2 Managerial challenges	a. Initiator power b. Enthusiasm vs. planning c. Management of logistics d. Linking with government structures

The management of service learning engagements requires the integration of various activities and skills in order to enhance the potential of the engagement to be successful (cf. 2.5.4.3). In this study, participants experienced a number of managerial challenges which hampered enablement in service learning engagements.

Four codes emerged from the data to constitute this category, namely (a) initiator power, (b) enthusiasm vs. planning, (c) management of logistics and (d) linking with government structures.

a. Initiator power

As the initiator of the service learning engagements in all but one of the partnerships in this study (cf. 1.1), the university continued to exert primary power over the continuation or termination of service learning partnerships in its management of service learning engagements. This caused uncertainty over the university's long term commitment to the endeavour, which seemed to limit the transformative potential of partnerships as expressed by the following participant:

Die grootste ene was die onsekerheid van: gaan die program nog aan? Ons sal graag langtermyn wil beplan. Maar dan besef jy gedurigdeur jy – die program self, die betrokkenheid van die universiteit self by die skool ... jy het vir 2013 het jy daai vennootskap. So, jy kan net beplan vir 2013. 2014 lê in die verskiet en jy sou graag dit wat jy geïdentifiseer het, jy sou miskien daarop wou bou en dit maak dat die onsekerheid. Die onsekerheid. Gaan hulle hier wees? Vir hoe lank gaan hulle hier wees? Nie net vir die betrokke jaar of maande wat hulle hier is nie, maar vir vorentoe. En ek weet daar is sekere ander invloede wat 'n rol speel dat selfs die universiteit nie lank vooruit kon sê: luister, dis vir die volgende tien jaar of vyf jaar wat ons hier gaan betrokke wees nie. Miskien verstaan 'n mens ook dit. Maar dit druk jou altyd terug om te sê: luister, kom ons vat dit een tree op 'n slag en ons hanteer dit maar soos wat die beskikbaarheid van die studente en vir so lank wat die lewensvatbaarheid van die program self hier is (P3).

The biggest one was the uncertainty of: is the programme still going on? We would like to do long-term planning. But then you realise throughout that you, the programme itself, the involvement of the university with the school ... you have that partnership for 2013. So, you can only do planning for 2013. 2014 lies in the future and you may have liked to build on what you have identified, and that creates uncertainty. The uncertainty. Are they going to be here? For how long will they be here? Not only for the specific year or months that they are here, but also in future. And I know there are certain other influences that play a role and that even the university cannot predict long term: listen, it is for the next ten years or five years that we are going to be involved here. Perhaps one understands it, too. But it always pushes you back to say: listen, let us take it one step at a time and handle it as the availability of the students allows and for as long as the programme is viable (P3).

Bringle et al. (2009, p. 9) posit that long-term service learning partnerships are not necessarily always desirable as exploitative partnerships can also be enduring due to unilateral dependency. Nonetheless, long-term commitment to partnership is a prerequisite for transformational partnerships (Clayton et al., 2010, p. 8). The findings of this study indicate that when the university, whether by choice or due to constraining factors, exerted its power to continue or terminate service learning partnerships, community partners perceived it to have a disabling influence on the service learning engagement. Participants perceived a lack of long-term commitment on the part of the university, which seemed to restrict options pertaining to collaborative activities (cf. 4.3.1.2), as well as limit the extent to which projects could be planned to build on one another, to contribute to continuity (cf. 4.3.2.1 a).

The aforementioned participant articulated understanding on the part of the community for factors that impede on the university's ability to commit to long-term partnerships. However, an understanding of constraining factors did not mitigate the detrimental impact of asymmetrical power on the enabling potential of the partnership. Another participant articulated an even more glaring account of asymmetrical power pertaining to continuation of student services as follows:

'n Paar keer het [DOSENT] al vir my gekom sê sy gaan die studente wegvat, en sy het hulle weggevat die begin van die jaar. En ek dink ons is altwee ewe kwaad vir mekaar daai dag gewees. Toe sê ek: maar vat hulle.

A few times [LECTURER] had said to me she was going to take the students away, and she took them away at the beginning of the year. And I think we were equally angry with each other that day. Then I said: but take

<p><i>Dis reg. [INSTANSIE] sal oor twintig jaar nog hier wees, met of sonder arbeidsterapie studente. Sy't hulle weggevat en hulle is weer terug. So ja, ek is bly hulle is terug (P6).</i></p>	<p><i>them. It is fine. [INSTITUTION] will be here in twenty years' time, with or without occupational therapy students. So she took them away and they are back again. So yes, I am glad they are back (P6).</i></p>
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Service learning partnerships are particularly susceptible to unequal power relations, due in part to inequitable distribution of resources between communities and universities (Butin, 2010, p. 7; Erasmus, 2011, p. 355; Jacoby, 2009, p. 97) (see also discussion on reciprocity – cf. 2.5.4.1 and 4.3.1.3 c). Bearing cognisance of the propensity of service learning partnerships for asymmetrical power, one would expect that staff members from universities would be sensitive to not perpetuate or abuse the university's power as initiator. Unfortunately, some participants in this study bore witness to instances where the university staff did not display such sensitivity. The fact that many of the lecturers responsible for service learning in this occupational therapy department are contract appointments with limited, if any, experience in service learning pedagogy and no formal training in this regard, may have been a dynamic that aggravated these negative experiences (cf. 2.5.2.1).

These instances of asymmetrical power relations raise questions about whether these service learning partnerships do not exploit communities at worst (Clayton et al., 2010, p. 8; Netshandama, 2010, p. 80), or at best, act as a barrier to enablement in service learning engagements. Erasmus (2011, p. 355) and Witchger Hansen (2010, p. 41) both reiterate that universities should relinquish asymmetrical control of service learning engagements in favour of reciprocity in all aspects of the partnership, including the power to continue or terminate the partnership. Such reciprocal power would support the enablement foundation of power sharing (cf. 2.2.4), which is a prerequisite for enabling service learning engagements.

b. Enthusiasm vs. planning

Service learning educators are often enthusiastic about the potential of service learning (Hunt et al., 2011, p. 248). Participants in this study experienced such enthusiasm from lecturers; however, it seemed as though enthusiasm for service learning projects sometimes overshadowed the realisation of the need for proper planning. One participant articulated such an experience as follows:

<p><i>En [DOSENT] is toe verskriklik opgewonde. ... En sy kom toe eendag, tipies [DOSENT], en sy warrelwind hier in en sy sê: ek gaan vir jou studente bring. Is dit reg? Ek sê: nee dis reg. Dit klink vir my goed. En so het sy toe die eerste groepie studente gebring. ... En van die studente het toe aangegaan en dit was in 'n mate ongestruktureerd... [D]jie eerste jaar van my betrokkenheid by</i></p>	<p><i>And then [LECTURER] was very excited. ... And she came one day, typically [LECTURER], like a whirlwind and said: I am going to bring students to you. Is that fine? I said: no, it's fine. It sounds good. And so she brought the first group of students. ... And some of the students then continued and it was unstructured in a way... [T]he first year of my involvement at [INSTITUTION] ... I was</i></p>
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[INSTANSIE] ... was ek oorhaastig en nie too hasty and did not plan and the things that beplan nie en die dinge wat ek wou I wanted to implement, did not work. Then I implementeer, het nie gewerk nie. Toe't ek decided: let us stand back and start again besluit: kom ons staan terug en ons begin from the beginning (P5). weer van voor af (P5).

Enthusiasm for the service learning engagement is important, as it provides emotional energy to overcome challenges particularly in the initial stages of the engagement. However, adequate, collaborative planning and decision-making within the service learning partnership is a vital part of the partnership formation process (cf. 2.5.4.3) that should be managed constructively from the onset. When enthusiasm overshadowed collaborative planning and decision-making, it seemed to lead to impulsive, unsustainable and unsuccessful service learning projects; therefore, it acted as a barrier to enablement through service learning.

Although there were participants that undoubtedly perceived enthusiasm that overshadowed planning as a barrier to enablement through service learning, there were also participants who experienced the value of proper planning within the service learning engagements in this study. One participant articulated the following:

Ek dink dit is daai, ek dink dit is die interaksie I think it is that, I think it is the interaction voor die tyd en dat, en die beplanning was before the time and that, and the planning was goed. ... Die studente het nie onvoorbereid good. ... The students did not arrive hier aangekom en nou moet hier unprepared and then we have to run around rondgehardloop word vir dit of nou moet hier for this or run around for that. When they rondgehardloop word vir dat, nie. As hulle arrived here and went into the hall and set up hier aan-gekom het en in die saal ingegaan the stalls, then the programme could run. So, het en hulle stalletjies opgestel het, dan het we were very proud every time when we die program geloop. So, ons was baie trots could say that this day was a successful day elke keer om te sê dat hierdie dag was 'n (P7). suksesvolle dag (P7).

The findings of this study, therefore, evidences the unmistakable importance of planning as a vital management strategy, by illustrating both the detrimental influence of a lack of planning, as well as the contribution that planning makes to successful service projects with enabling potential.

c. Management of logistics

The management of logistics in service learning, such as negotiating student schedules with community schedules, is notoriously difficult (Jordaan, 2012, p. 240). Participants in this study experienced some challenges in this regard, expressing concerns about the management of student schedules as follows:

Ek dink die frustrasies was dat, partykeer het die rooster verander en dan het ek nou vir hulle gesê, “kom op daardie periode.” Dan is die kinders nie hier nie. Dit was die grootste frustrasie. ... So omdat ons rooster nie altyd konstant is nie, het dit 'n bietjie frustrasie veroorsaak. Want ek sou ook ge-frustreerd gewees het as ek voorbereid aankom by die skool en nou't die [rooster] verander (P7).

I think the frustrations were that, sometimes the timetable changed and then I told them, “come that period.” Then the children were not here. That was the biggest frustration. ... So because the timetable was not always constant, it caused a little frustration. Because I would also have been frustrated if I arrived at the school prepared and then the [timetable] has changed (P7).

Lohman and Aitken (2002, pp. 162–163) similarly found scheduling conflicts to impact negatively on occupational therapy service learning engagements. In another study published on occupational therapy service learning in South Africa, Olivier et al. (2007, p. 67) also identified the management of student and community timetables as a challenge. These previous studies, as well as the findings of this study, therefore, concur that challenges in the management of logistics is potentially a barrier to enablement in service learning engagements. Recognition of this potential disabling influence on service learning engagements, and the consequent proactive management of logistical challenges through, for example, effective communication strategies (cf. 4.3.1.1) as also suggested by Olivier et al. (2007, p. 67), could contribute to mitigate the disabling impact of logistical challenges.

d. Linking with government structures

Another managerial aspect of service learning engagements that participants perceived as challenging was linking with relevant government structures. Participants articulated both a realisation of the need on the part of the community to establish such links with government structures, as well as the challenges that were experienced in this regard, as is exemplified in the following interview excerpt:

Ons het gesukkel saam met die studente om rêrig met die Departement Gesondheid, daai link hier te kry... Want die arbeidsterapeut wat by die Departement Gesondheid is en die [INSTANSIE] het êrens 'n misverstand gehad. En nou is dit vir haar moeilik om by ons te kontak want sy voel bietjie te na gekom. So ek dink dit is dalk maar die rede oor ons nie lekker met Departement Gesondheid en hulle arbeidsterapeut kon link nie – wat dalk kon goed wees – as die studente met haar dalk meer kon link en ja, vir die gemeenskap se onthalwe (P1).

We had difficulty, together with the students, to really get that link with Department of Health. ... Because the Department of Health's occupational therapist and the [INSTITUTION] had a misunderstanding somewhere. And now it is hard for her to contact us because she feels a bit offended. So I think that may be the reason why we could not really link with the Department of Health and their occupational therapist – which could have been a good thing – if the students could perhaps link with her more and yes, for the sake of the community (P1).

Another participant shared similar experiences pertaining to challenges to linking with the Department of Education (P3).

Government structures and policies are important underlying occupational determinants that manifest as structural factors in the *Framework for Occupational Justice* (cf. 2.2.1 and Figure 3). In addition, the CHESP triad partnership model specifically isolates the service sector as a third partner in service learning, encouraging service learning practitioners to partner with governmental structures and non-governmental organisations together with communities (Bender et al., 2006, p. 93; Stanton & Erasmus, 2013, pp. 78–79). It was envisaged that the tripartite partnership model would contribute to the sustainability of service learning partnerships, as well as to diffusing potential power struggles (Bender et al., 2006, p. 93). However, due to constraining factors such as understaffing and complicated policies and procedures, securing the involvement of governmental agencies has proved to have limited success in South African service learning engagements (Van Schalkwyk & Erasmus, 2011, p. 70), as was also the case in this study.

The findings of this study, therefore, indicate that community representatives value the involvement of government structures in service learning, supporting the intentions of the CHESP triad partnership model. However, the findings also confirm the challenges experienced by others in securing such involvement. Van Schalkwyk and Erasmus (2011, pp. 70, 76) suggest that, when government agencies are unable or unwilling to partner as a service sector partner in service learning, non-governmental organisations could fulfill this role. This has been the case in various instances in this study, such as the NPC that was formed to represent the rural communities where three of the service learning sites included in this study are situated (cf. 1.1). The recent publication titled *Knowledge as Enablement: Engagement between higher education and the third sector in South Africa* (Erasmus & Albertyn, 2014) further attests to a high regard for the value of non-governmental agencies as service sector partners in community engagement in South Africa.

e. Summary: Managerial challenges

The findings of this study illuminated some managerial challenges that participants perceived as barriers to enablement and successful partnerships in service learning. Asymmetrical power favouring the university as the initiator, particularly as it relates to the continuation or termination of student involvement in communities was perceived by some participants as a lack of long-term commitment to the partnership, which served as a barrier to the enablement foundation of power sharing. Enthusiasm which overshadowed proper planning was a second managerial challenge, while challenges regarding the management of logistics were also experienced. Finally, linking with government structures as service sector partners emerged as a fourth managerial challenge in this study. All of these managerial challenges acted as barriers to the enabling potential of service learning engagements in some way.

Some suggestions for the constructive management of these challenges were made by participants or derived from literature, such as universities relinquishing unilateral control in the partnership in favour of reciprocity to mitigate power imbalances, ensuring collaborative planning amidst enthusiasm, utilising effective communication strategies to manage logistical challenges, and partnering with third sector (non-governmental) organisations when government agencies are unable to act as the third service learning partner. Although these suggestions do not completely solve these managerial challenges, they may contribute to mediating the extent to which these challenges hamper enabling service learning engagements.

4.3.2.3 Barriers to sustainability

Theme	Category	Codes
Disenabling occupation	4.3.2.3 Barriers to sustainability	a. Discrepancies between expectations and capabilities b. Poor follow-up c. Staff shortage and staff turnover d. Ontological barriers

Service learning aims to make sustainable contributions to communities (e.g. Brower, 2011; Fourie, 2003; Jordaan, 2012). Sustainability of enablement and the enablement of occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements are, therefore, important considerations. Participants in this study identified factors that were perceived as barriers to sustainability in service learning engagements. Four codes emerged from the data, namely (a) discrepancy between expectations and capabilities, (b) poor follow-up, (c) staff shortage and staff turnover and (d) ontological barriers.

a. Discrepancies between expectations and capabilities

Participants in this study experienced discrepancies between expectations and capabilities on different levels. For some community representatives, their expectations were not met by the capabilities of the university or students while others perceived the university to hold expectations that the community felt they were not yet capable of fulfilling. Both these nuances will be considered briefly. Firstly, discrepancies between the community representative's expectations and the capabilities of students were expressed as follows:

Die gedagte ... is ook dat die kinders en kleinkinders – die aftreeoord moet soos 'n huis wees. As ouma kom kuier, of as die kinders vir ouma kom kuier, moet die kleinkinders kan besig gehou word. Dit het nie heeltemal gerealiseer soos wat ek dit gesien het nie. Die studente het die plante kom plant en kom verf en dit mooi gemaak. En ek dink omdat daar nie ... iemand [was] om dit te kon dryf nie, het dit toe nou nie gerealiseer, die werklike feetjietuin nie (P5).

The thought ... also is that the children and the grandchildren – the retirement village must be like a home. If grandmother comes to visit, or if the children come to visit grandmother, the grandchildren must be kept busy. It did not realise entirely as I had envisioned. The students planted the plants and painted and made it pretty. And I think because there wasn't ... someone who could drive it, it did not materialise, the real fairy garden (P5).

When first engaging with communities through service learning, it is anticipated that partners may hold different expectations of the partnership initially. However, literature on partnerships emphasises that compatibility of expectations of the partnership should be considered as a prerequisite for the formation of a partnership (cf. 2.5.4.3). Also, open communication (cf. 4.3.1.1) and shared decision-making (cf. 4.3.1.2 a) should clarify roles and responsibilities in order to elucidate partner capabilities from the onset (cf. 2.5.4.3). Given these prerequisites for successful partnerships, it is not surprising then that various other South African authors who similarly report on discrepancies between communities' expectations and the mandate, intent or capabilities of the university in service learning (Nduna, 2007, p. 75; Netshandama, 2010, p. 79; Van Schalkwyk & Erasmus, 2011, p. 74), also link these discrepancies with non-achievement or unsustainability of partnership outcomes.

The second nuance in this code emerged as a discrepancy between the expectations of the university and the perceived capabilities of the community, as the following participant articulated:

<p><i>Want ja, en ek dink van die universiteit se kant af het hulle gevoel ons moet so half op ons eie bene begin staan. Wat ons probeer doen het. Maar omdat daar nie r�rig studente was nie het dit vir my gevoel – daar's ander strukture in die dorp wat baie ander goed aanspreek (P2).</i></p>	<p><i>Because yes, and I think from the university's side they felt that we should start to stand on our own feet. Which we tried to do. But because there weren't really students, to me it felt – there were other structures in the town that addresses a lot of other things (P2).</i></p>
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This participant's comment related specifically to the NPC that was established, in the participant's view, to facilitate the university's involvement in the community (cf. 1.1). Later, however, the participant perceived that the university expected the NPC to start fulfilling a service delivery role to the community itself, as opposed to only facilitating service delivery through service learning by the university, which according to the participant was not the expectation that they (as the NPC) had held of the NPC or the partnership with the university. This discrepancy in the expectations of the NPC as a representative structure of the community, and the university, created some tensions in the relationships between role players. Although it related to structures that reached wider than only occupational therapy service learning engagements, this discrepancy also hampered the enabling potential of the service learning partnership as a result of some of the tension mentioned.

A third related nuance emerged within this code, namely meeting extensive needs. Participants commented on various instances where they perceived the need in the community to be greater than what could feasibly be addressed in the service learning partnerships, which also seemed to hinder sustainable enablement in the community. One example of a participant's comment in this regard was as follows:

Dalk 'n bietjie oor hulle nie baie tyd het nie, bietjie meer individuele aandag aan sekere bejaardes. Maar die studente het nie rêrig daai tyd gehad nie. Hulle tydjie is so kort wat hulle hier is en ons nood is so groot, dat hulle nie by al die – en hulle is min. Hulle is een wat hier geplaas word en dis baie pasiënte (P1).

Perhaps a little because they do not have a lot of time, a bit more individual attention to some of the elderly. But the students did not really have that sort of time. Their time here was so short and our need is so great, that they did not get around to all the – and they were few. Only one was placed here and there were many patients (P1).

Participants expressed an understanding of the university's limitations in addressing extensive needs, as was also the case in the study of Netshandama (2010, p. 78). Therefore, it does not seem as though the presence of extensive needs is detrimental to service learning engagements. Rather, the relevance of this finding lies in being cognisant of the influence that extensive needs may have on the expectations of communities, the sustainability of the impact of service learning activities, and the potentially overwhelming influence it may have on students (Sensenig, 2007, p. 379). Such awareness may aid in proactively confronting the existence of extensive needs, and collaborate with communities to assist in prioritising those needs that can feasibly and sustainably be addressed together in a service learning engagement (cf. 4.3.1.2).

b. Poor follow-up

During the interviews in this study, participants repeatedly stressed the importance of follow-up to ensure sustainability of the intended outcomes of service learning activities. Some participants articulated the effect of a lack of follow-up, as is exemplified in the following interview excerpt:

... hier is nie rêrig iemand wat opvolg wat die studente gedoen het nie. So op die ou einde gaan dit maar verwaarloos. Ons probeer. Maar dis nie na wense nie. Ons sal dit graag meer wil gereeld doen. Die opvolg (P1).

... there is not really someone who follows up on what the students did. So in the end it is going to be neglected. We try. But it is not ideal. We would like to do it more regularly. The follow-up (P1).

Another participant reiterated the importance of repeated involvement and follow-up as follows:

So, volhoubaarheid, voel ek, kan nie net 'n week 'n jaar geskied nie. Dit moet – volhoubaar is: dit moet aanhoudend gebeur. En julle het soveel om te bied. En julle bied nie elke keer dieselfde nie, dat – dis wanneer groei plaasvind, as volhoubaarheid plaasvind. So dis hoekom ons nie wil hê hierdie ver-bintenis moet gestaak word of so nie (P2).

So, sustainability, I feel, cannot only occur in a week or a year. It must – sustainability is: it must happen continuously. And you have so much to offer. And you don't offer the same everytime, that – that is when there is growth, when there is sustainability. So that is why we don't want this engagement to be discontinued in any case (P2)

Participants in the study of Alperstein (2007, p. 64) raised analogous concerns about a lack of follow-up, and related these concerns not only to sustainability, but also to the ethical

responsibility of the university to follow through on identified challenges within communities. For occupational therapists concerned with occupational justice, this perceived poor follow-up raises questions about whether unsustainable interventions are just, or whether such interventions counter the enablement foundation of justice (cf. 2.2.4) and are in fact exploitative of communities (Clayton et al., 2010, p. 8; Netshandama, 2010, p. 80). Undoubtedly, these findings indicate that poor follow-up obstructs any efforts to sustainable occupational enablement.

c. Staff shortage and staff turnover

Staff shortages and high volumes of staff turnover within the community organisations in which service learning took place were identified as factors that seemed to impede on sustainability of service learning endeavours in the community. Staff shortages hampered the extent to which community organisation staff was able to participate in students' service learning activities, such as assisting with translation or helping with the presentation of group activities. This in turn impacted negatively on the sustainability of these inputs, as expressed by the following participants:

<p><i>... soos wat ons nou so hier is, die werkers ... wat na die kinders kyk, ons is nooit altyd dieselfde nie. ... partykeer is [PERSOON] nie hier nie en miskien ek is besig met die ander spul. ... ek voel nie dat ek genoeg sterk mense het om te sê ... ek sal maar vir jou [student] gaan 'n hand gee nie (P8).</i></p>	<p><i>... as we are here now, the workers ... who look after the children, we are never always the same. ... sometimes [PERSON] is not here and maybe I am busy with the other lot. ... I feel that I do not have enough strong people to say ... I wil give you [student] a hand (P8).</i></p>
<p><i>Ek dink die grootste probleem hoekom dit nie aangaan nie is, ons is besig hier binne. Ons werk regtig hard. ... Ons is regtig besig. So, die verpleegkundiges is nie altyd betrokke nie want ek het 'n lading van omtrent veertig bejaardes op 'n verpleegkundige per skof, wat baie hoog is (P6).</i></p>	<p><i>I think the biggest problem why it does not continue, we are busy in here. We really work very hard. ... We are really busy. So, the nurses are not always involved because I have a load of about forty elderly to one nurse per shift, which is very high (P6).</i></p>

In addition, high volumes of staff turnover resulted in activities such as training being unsustainable if it was not repeated regularly, as staff turnover resulted in the loss of staff previously trained as part of service learning engagements and the continued need for training of new staff members. One participant articulated it as follows:

<p><i>Die enigste probleem dalk by die personeel is né, ons wissel so in personeel dat ons meer kort-kort dalk daai opleiding met die personeel nodig het (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>The only problem perhaps with the staff is, we have such a high turnover in staff that perhaps we need that training of the staff more frequently (P1).</i></p>
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In contrast to the prior two barriers to sustainability, staff shortages and high volumes of staff turnover are factors that relate to the innate characteristics of the community organisation, and fall outside of the control of the university. The findings of this study suggest that it may be worthwhile to consider characteristics of the community, such as staffing and staff turnover, when negotiating the compatibility in the partnership formation stage (cf. 2.5.4.3), as well as when embarking on collaborative decision-making regarding service activities in the implementation stage (cf. 4.3.1.2). Considering these characteristics, and attempting to compensate for characteristics that may impede on sustainability from the onset, may limit the potentially disabling effect thereof within service learning engagements.

d. Ontological barriers

Ontology was defined in Chapter 3 as the way we view reality (cf. 3.2). One's ontological position may be influenced by different factors, including one's life experiences, education, cultural background and religious convictions to name but a few. Findings related to the effect of differences in ontological positions on enablement through service learning emerged as a fourth factor related to barriers to sustainability. Two nuances arose from the data, namely professional and cultural ontologies. Each of these nuances will be considered briefly.

Participants articulated differences in professional ontologies, specifically between the nursing profession as a caring profession, and the profession of occupational therapy as a serving profession. The following participant articulated some examples of where differences in professional ontologies caused misunderstandings:

... ons is meer versorgingsgerig en die arbeidsterapeute is omgewingsgerig ... as ek dit so kan stel. En nie noodwendig sien die ou wat die versorging doen dat die groter omgewing 'n groot rol speel in die versorging nie. Verpleegpersoneel is meer taakgeoriënteerd. ... Jy doen 'n ding en kry hom klaar. ... Ons probeer so min as moontlik doen vir die ou mense, maar daar is bepaalde redes hoekom goed gedoen word. En dan kom die studente en dan dink hulle nee, hierdie ou is so nice, hy gaan dit [self] kan doen. Dan vir die een ete wat hulle daar sit, dan eet hy self, en die volgende ete wat hulle nie daar is nie, smyt hy daai bord kos op die grond. En dan vat dit meer tyd om skoon te maak ... as wat jy hom van die begin af voer. En dáár is 'n fyn balans wat gekry moet word (P6).

... we are more care oriented and the occupational therapists are more environment oriented ... if I can express it like that. And the one that does the care does not necessarily realise that the larger environment plays a substantial role in the caregiving. Nursing staff are more task-oriented. ... You do a thing and you get it done. ... We try to do as little as possible for the elderly people, but there are certain reasons why things are done. And then the students come and they think no, this guy is so nice, he will be able to do it [himself]. Then for the one meal when they are there, he eats by himself, but the next meal when they are not there, he throws the plate of food on the floor. And then it takes more time to clean up ... than had you fed him from the start. And there is a fine balance that must be reached (P6).

In my experience as fieldwork assessor and service learning supervisor, I have often observed that occupational therapy students expect community organisation staff to change their ways of doing when students ‘empower’ them with knowledge or explain to them the ‘importance’ of allowing a client to do things for themselves. Du Toit et al. (2014, p. 127) also assert in the context of residential care facilities that “a key role of the occupational therapist [is] to ... assist staff members in appreciating the human being rather than merely caring for the elder’s human body.” As occupational therapists, concerns with human agency, opportunity for occupational participation and thus occupational justice, forms a collective professional ontology for ‘us’ (cf. 2.2.1); however, this is not a professional ontology that is necessarily shared by other professions. As articulated by the aforementioned participant, nursing professionals are ontologically positioned to provide care to clients, which may in some instances stand in opposition to ‘independent’ occupational participation for recipients of nursing care.

The findings of this study suggest that, perhaps, occupational therapists and occupational therapy students should consider professional ontologies as an influential force on ways of doing. Such consideration may cause ‘us’ to portray greater sensitivity when approaching other professions to assist ‘us’ in achieving ‘our’ goals. These findings also reiterate the importance of collaborative decision-making (cf. 4.3.1.2 a) and ensuring stakeholder buy-in (cf. 4.3.1.2 b) when negotiating service activities, to ensure that activities are mutually and sustainably enabling and perhaps can straddle different professional ontologies. Also, these findings point to the continued need for interprofessional education, which at the time that this study was conducted, was not utilised as an explicit educational approach at this occupational therapy department.

Differing cultural ontologies emerged as a second nuance to this code that held the potential to act as a barrier to sustainability. One participant reflected specifically on the cultural ontologies of community members, and the impact that it might have had on the community’s acceptance of service learning endeavours:

<p><i>Dat [INSTANSIE] se inwoners se kultuur – dis ‘n moeilike kultuur... Hier het jy multikultureel, wil ek amper sê. Want jy’t hier Engelse Engels. English, English. High English ladies wat Anglikaans is. Jy’t die Metodiste hier. Jy het Jehova Getuies hier. Jy’t die Boere, Boere hier wat nie wil Engels praat nie. So, ek is nie seker of [die studente] geweet het wat hulle in die gesig gaan staar nie (P5).</i></p>	<p><i>That the culture of the residents of [INSTITUTION] – it is a difficult culture... Here you have multicultural, I almost want to say. Because you have English English. High English ladies who are Anglican. You have Methodists here. You have Jehova’s Witnesses here. You have Boers, Boers here that do not want to speak English. So, I am not certain whether [the students] knew what they were going to encounter (P5).</i></p>
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Another participant expressed concern about students’ experiences of staff’s behaviour at her organisation.

<p>Deelnemer: ... Maar iets wat ek ook agtergekom, dit is partykeer oor die mense wat [saam met my werk]. Partykeer kon ek gesien het as ek iemand gevra het om vir my tog 'n hand kom gee met hulle, was hulle nie altyd so oop gewees nie (P8).</p>	<p>Participant: ... But something that I also noticed, it is sometimes because of the people that [work with me]. Sometimes I could see that when I asked someone to come and give a hand with them, they were not always so open (P8).</p>
<p>Navorsers: Hoe het jy die studente se houding teenoor jou en jou personeel beleef?</p>	<p>Researcher: How did you experience the students' attitudes towards you and your personnel?</p>
<p>Deelnemer: ... Ek het geen probleem gehad [nie]... Maar omlaai ek partykeer die gedrag van my mense gehad het, was dit vir my 'n vraag ... hoe voel die studente? ... dit is al bekommernis wat ek gehad het (P8).</p>	<p>Participant: ... I had no problem with that ... But because sometimes I had the behaviour of my people, it was a question for me ... how did the students feel? ... that is the only concern that I had (P8).</p>
<p>Navorsers: Okay, ek hoor dit het jou bekommerd gemaak dat die studente hulle dalk negatief beleef het?</p>	<p>Researcher: Okay, I hear that it concerned you that the students may have experienced them negatively?</p>
<p>Deelnemer: Lat hulle nie miskien... vir hulleself gedra soos wat ek verwag het nie ... ek verstaan die mense en soos wat ek gesê het, ek aanvaar die mense. Maar ek is altyd bekommerd oor die tweede persoon; wat dit aan haar gedoen het (P8).</p>	<p>Participant: That they perhaps did not ... behave themselves as I expected... I understand the people, as I said, I accept the people. But I am always concerned about the second person; what it did to her (P8).</p>

This participant specifically articulated her concern with students' experiences of staff's behaviour based on cultural interpretations of behaviour; thus, the cultural ontologies that inform actions and interpretations of actions. The findings of this study, therefore, highlight the role that culturally informed ontologies can play in the effectiveness of service learning activities, as well as the relationships within service learning partnerships. Participants in this study perceived differences in cultural ontologies as a potential barrier to enablement. It is, therefore, not surprising that many authors identify the development of cultural competence as a key activity that should form part of the maintenance stage of service learning partnership development (e.g. Bender et al., 2006, p. 97; Reeb & Folger, 2013, pp. 408–409; Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2005, pp. 55–56) (cf. 2.5.4.3). Explicitly developing greater cultural competence among university staff, students and community members may contribute to curbing the potential disabling effect that differing cultural ontologies may have on relationships and outcomes of the service learning partnership.

e. Summary: Barriers to sustainability

The findings reported on in this category related to factors that participants perceived to have been barriers to the sustainability of service learning engagements and the outcomes of service activities. Discrepancies between stakeholder expectations and capabilities, a lack of follow-up as well as professional and cultural ontological differences were perceived as barriers which the university could potentially manage through, for example, ensuring effective communication,

collaborative decision-making and the development of cultural competence among all stakeholders. Staff shortages and staff turnover were perceived as a barrier to sustainability outside of the control of the university, which requires proactive consideration from the onset of the service learning partnership. The findings of this study indicated that these barriers to sustainability limited the potential of service learning engagements to enable occupation in communities, and in some instances may have bordered on injustice to communities.

4.3.2.4 Risks to students

Theme	Category	Codes
Disabling occupation	4.3.2.4 Risks to students	a. Risk to personal safety b. Unpreparedness for realities of community c. Project failure

This final category in the theme of disabling occupation related more to the disablement of students' 'occupations' in service learning than to disablement of communities. However, as this category emerged from participants' perceptions regarding enabling occupation through service learning, it was included in the findings. Three categories arose from the data which related to risks to students as a barrier in service learning, namely (a) risk to personal safety, (b) unpreparedness for realities of the community, and (c) project failure.

a. Risk to personal safety

Service learning sites in this study were distributed across a relatively wide geographical area, and were located in a variety of settings, including rural, peri-urban and urban settings. The locations of service learning sites often required students to travel long distances (e.g. more than 150 km per day), and to travel to areas that are sometimes perceived as 'dangerous' (although proper risk management by the university in these service learning engagements endeavours to ensure that the location of service learning sites do not pose a direct threat to students' immediate safety). Participants in this study perceived the potential threat to students' personal safety as a risk factor which had negatively impacted on service learning partnerships, as articulated by the following participants:

<i>En ek dink dalk van julle kant af is die hoë risiko die gevaar vir hulle op die paaie. Dit het ons nou hoeveel maal beleef met die studente wat in ongelukke was en ek dink dis julle, die universiteit se grootste risiko, is die afstand wat die studente moet afry hiernatoe (P1).</i>	<i>And I think perhaps from your side the high risk is the danger for them on the roads. We have experienced that many times now with the students that were in accidents and I think it is your, the university's, biggest risk, the distance that the students must travel to come here (P1).</i>
<i>Dan die feit dat julle so ver moes ry en daai motorongelukke, was vir ons ook sleg. Jy weet, want ons het besef dit benadeel die program (P2).</i>	<i>Then the fact that you had to travel so far and those motor accidents were also unpleasant for us. You know, because we realised that it impaired the programme (P2).</i>

These participants referred to two incidents where occupational therapy service learning students were involved in motor vehicle accidents on their way to rural service learning sites. The risk to the personal safety of students during service learning is a reality that can, unfortunately, only be managed, but not avoided. Risk management is regarded as a vital part of service learning partnerships (Bender et al., 2006, pp. 114–115) and should consider risks to all partners. The negotiation and management of risk is also an enablement foundation (cf. 2.2.4). Disproportionate risk to student safety in service learning should be avoided through careful selection of service learning sites. Additionally, drawing on the enablement foundation named ‘choice, risk and responsibility’ (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, p. 100), it may be an option to allow students to *choose* service learning sites rather than being *placed* at sites, in order to allow them to have a choice over the risks that they are willing to take for the sake of their own learning experiences. This might, however, result in some sites not hosting any students in a particular year. Although such a step has both advantages and disadvantages from an educational perspective, it would be beneficial to universities and communities from a liability perspective to offer students a choice (Bender et al., 2006, p. 119).

b. Unpreparedness for realities of community

Some participants in this study commented on the risk to students due to an unpreparedness for the realities of the community, as is exemplified in the following interview excerpt:

<p><i>Ek weet ook nie of die studente ingelig is oor wat hulle moontlik by [INSTANSIE] kan ervaar nie. Ek weet nie of hulle voorheen al enige kontak gehad het met bejaardes nie (P5).</i></p>	<p><i>I also don't know whether the students were informed about what they possibly could experience at [INSTITUTION]. I don't know if they have previously had any contact with the elderly (P5).</i></p>
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Both Netshandama (2010, p. 79) and Alperstein (2007, p. 64) found that communities view the preparation of students to work with communities as an explicit responsibility of universities. Ensuring that students are, at least theoretically, prepared for some of the challenges that they will face in the community, decreases risks to both students and communities.

During participant verification stages of this study the use of the term ‘unpreparedness’ was questioned by some participants, who suggested that there should rather be referred to ‘unawareness’ of the realities of the community (P1, P7). Participants suggested that service learning sometimes exposes students to a ‘reality shock’ which, initially, may be perceived as something negative on the part of the student, but which participants felt was necessary for students’ holistic development through service learning. Along a similar line of argumentation, Hunt (2006, p. 259) notes that students often experience service learning as “an eye-opening or emotionally startling experience that exposes them to something not previously part of their reality.” Kiely (2005, p. 8), drawing on the work of Mezirow, refers to such experiences as “disorienting dilemmas” that are necessary for transformative learning to take place (cf. 2.4.3).

In concluding this code, the findings indicate that unpreparedness among students for the realities in communities may be a risk to students and communities, which is the responsibility of the university to limit through proper preparation of students. On the other hand, findings during the participant verification stages indicated that students' initial unawareness of the realities of the community do not necessarily pose a risk to students or the community. Rather, being confronted with previously unknown realities of the community may serve to catalyse transformative learning for students. Therefore, 'unpreparedness' was maintained as the description of the risk to students that may potentially be disenabling, while 'unawareness' was described as a different nuance that, when dealt with constructively by facilitating an enhanced awareness of realities, could have enabling potential for students.

c. Project failure

Finally, participants perceived that project failure was a risk to students that could be detrimental to the enablement of students through service learning. Participants expressed their views as follows:

<p><i>... want op die ou end dink ek ons wil almal 'n resultaat hê. En as die ding gaan nie suksesvol wees nie, dan dink ek blus dit [die studente se] entoesiasme (P5).</i></p>	<p><i>... because in the end I think all of us want a result. And if the thing is not going to be successful, then I think it dampens [the students'] enthusiasm (P5).</i></p>
<p><i>Ek dink as juis 'n student sukkel en ontmoedig word en nie suksesvol is nie, kry jy 'n gly in geriatric forever in jou lewe. ... Maar as jy hier suksesvol is, dan kan jy dit eendag soontoe vat en sê: jo, maar dit is wat ek geleer het. Kom ek help julle (P6).</i></p>	<p><i>And I think that if a student struggles and is discouraged and is unsuccessful, you are put off from geriatrics forever in your life. ... But if you are successful here, then you can take it into the future and say: jo, but this is what I learned. Let me help you (P6).</i></p>

Successful service learning outcomes are important to communities and students alike (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 413). For both these stakeholders, successful outcomes may spark a continued vision of possibilities (cf. 2.4.4). As suggested by the participants in this study, for students, successful outcomes may enhance their enthusiasm and commitment to the profession (Horowitz et al., 2010, p. 88). Therefore, project failure poses a threat to student enablement through service learning by potentially countering students' enthusiasm and commitment. On the other hand, though, unsuccessful projects do pose potentially beneficial learning opportunities to students by, for example, exposing them to "disorienting dilemmas" in service learning (Kiely, 2005, p. 8). The educational value of such experiences is, therefore, not disregarded in the interpretation of this code; however, the importance of successful projects from the perspective of the community should be duly noted.

d. Summary: Risks to students

Threats to personal safety, unpreparedness and project failure emerged as risks to students, which community representatives perceived as potential barriers to the success of service learning engagements. Although risks to students do not necessarily impact directly on the (dis)enablement of occupation through service learning, student risks that go unmanaged may prevent the attainment of successful outcomes to communities and students alike, and threaten the continuation of service learning partnerships.

4.3.2.5 *Conclusion: Disenabling occupation*

As a whole, the findings presented in the theme 'Disenabling occupation' called attention to barriers to enablement in service learning engagements. These barriers require proactive consideration and management in order to lessen their potentially disabling effects in occupational therapy service learning engagements. I will elaborate more on the conclusions to be drawn, and recommendations to be made based on these findings in Chapter 5 (cf. 5.2 and 5.3). Before this can be done, however, I deemed it necessary to reflect on some salient issues that arose in this study in the following final section to this chapter.

4.4 Researcher reflections on salient issues

In Chapter 3 (cf. 3.3.8.4) I reflected on the potential influence of power relations between myself and participants, as well as my experience thereof in the research process. In this section I would like to offer some additional reflections on salient issues that arose in the study which could influence both my own and the reader's interpretation of the data. In doing so I also hope to contribute to the trustworthiness of the data through meticulously documenting all observations and findings, and providing thick, rich descriptions thereof (cf. 3.3.8). The issues on which I reflect here were derived from two data sources. These were observations made in field notes, and issues emerging in the process of data analysis (coding notes) that were not included in the final thematic analysis. Verbatim quotations related to the coding notes are sometimes used to support the reflections. Four issues are addressed, namely senior vs. junior students in service learning, occupational therapy as 'keeping busy', service learning as 'helping' and the value of community immersion for students.

4.4.1 Senior vs. junior students in service learning

Of the seven service learning sites included in the study, senior (third and fourth academic year) students performed service learning at three of the sites, while junior (first and second-year) students performed service learning at the remaining four sites. I noticed during interviews that at sites where service learning was performed by senior students, participants portrayed predominantly positive perceptions regarding the service learning engagements. On the other

hand, at sites where service learning was performed by junior students, participants expressed more concerns with the service learning engagement.

I acknowledge that this observation may be an over-generalisation amidst other 'variables', to use a positivistic term. However, I make this observation as I do believe that the maturity of the students involved in service learning can influence the enablement of occupation through service learning. I believe so firstly because junior students do not yet have a balanced disciplinary picture of occupational therapy, including the academic knowledge and skills needed to be able to facilitate occupational enablement. Although they work under supervision from qualified occupational therapists and are mentored by senior students, they are still grappling with gaining an understanding of concepts such as 'occupation', and understanding what the profession is all about. Therefore, while community representatives may be expecting an 'occupational therapy service', or at least a service informed by the discipline of occupational therapy, the extent to which junior students are able to deliver such a service is potentially limited.

Secondly, the inter-personal skills of senior students (including for example skills in the therapeutic use of self) are generally more developed than those of junior students, which enhances their ability to form close relationships with community representatives and community members (cf. 2.5.4.2 and 4.3.1.3. a).

I do not make this observation in order to argue that junior students should not participate in service learning. On the contrary – they have a wealth of knowledge and skills to gain from such participation. However, it is of paramount importance that communities are accurately informed of the capacity of students so that community members can negotiate realistic service goals together with university staff. As one participant commented:

<i>Weet jy, [ek sal bietjie meer wil weet] ... sekere jare, doen sekere goed ... Die tweedejaars moet dit doen. Die derdejaars moet dit doen. Die vierdejaars moet dit doen (P6).</i>	<i>You know, [I would like to know a little more] ... certain years, do certain things ... The second-years must do this. The third-years must do this. The fourth-years must do this (P6).</i>
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Also, the amount of guidance and direct supervision required by junior students should receive due consideration when planning service learning engagements, as the supervision requirements seem to be significantly higher for junior students than those of senior students. Creative approaches such as group supervision and mentoring by senior students (Hagedorn & Adams, 2006, p. 134; Van Niekerk, Duncan, & Prakke, 2006, p. 234) can overcome pragmatic challenges to high supervision demands. Although these forms of supervision are already used at the department under study, optimising these strategies may contribute to more enabling service learning engagements.

4.4.2 Occupational therapy as 'keeping busy'

The profession of occupational therapy was born from the concept of occupation as 'work', the absence of which was viewed to result in "deterioration of the human condition" (Polatajko, 2001, p. 204). Thus the provision of 'occupations' as diversional and therapeutic interventions was the initial focus of occupational therapy, and occupational therapists themselves articulated their roles as "... to provide the patient with a well-balanced day..." and "...[keeping] the patient's mind ... occupied with some diversional occupation such as art, music, crafts or recreation" (Polatajko, 2001, p. 205). However, several paradigm shifts in the history of the profession had irrevocably altered the face of the profession, with a contemporary paradigm integrating concepts such as meaningful occupation, health and well-being, enablement and occupational justice as core constructs and values of the profession (Duncan, 2011, p. 22). Given these advances in the professional paradigm of occupational therapy, it comes as somewhat of a surprise when the value of the contribution of occupational therapy to communities through service learning is centered primarily around 'keeping people busy'. For example, one participant articulated this perception of occupational therapy as follows:

<i>Maar ons het nie iets om hulle mee besig te hou nie. ... En sy't teruggekom en gesê: maar ek was hier ... toe ek 'n student was. Kan ek iets vir hierdie twee doen om hulle besig te hou? En nou kom sy een maal 'n week en sy kom hou hulle besig. Hulle maak kaartjies. Hulle doen mosaïekwerk. So sy hou hulle positief besig, een maal in 'n week vir twee ure. En los vir hulle iets vir die res van die week om te doen (P3).</i>	<i>But we don't have something to keep them busy with. ... And she came back and said: but I was here ... when I was a student. Can I do something for these two to keep them busy? And now she comes once a week and she keeps them busy. They make cards. They do mosaic. So she keeps them busy positively, once a week for two hours. And leaves something for them to do the rest of the week (P3).</i>
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From a critical perspective it may be necessary to ask why this perception of the profession prevails more than seven decades after the first paradigm shift away from diversional activity, and with more than three decades worth of research on occupational therapy as it is practiced within the contemporary paradigm. On the other hand, the participant cited above articulated that the occupational therapist keeps residents busy 'positively', and was able to relate other contributions of occupational therapy beyond 'keeping busy' (cf. 4.3.1.7). I offer this reflection to sensitise occupational therapists and students in service learning to maintain a contemporary focus on occupational therapy, and to demonstrate the potential of the profession through occupational enablement beyond diversional activities.

4.4.3 Service learning as 'helping'

Butin (2010, p. 7) critiques conceptualisations of service learning based on a notion of "downward benevolence". Charitable approaches to service learning with the primary purpose to 'help' others, are also widely criticised (cf. 2.4.5.1). Yet, despite a purposeful avoidance of a

charitable approach in the service learning engagements in this study, participants still articulated expectations of ‘being helped’, such as in the following quotation:

<i>So dit het ons daarin gehelp. Ons kinders: die verwagtinge waarna hulle na ons kyk. Want hulle sien hierdie mense. Hulle hoor as ons hierdie mense voorstel. So hulle weet hier is mense wat nie net vir ons kom help nie maar ook wat ons onderwysers toerus om vir ons as leerdere te help. So hulle kyk met daai verwagting, na die studente: julle is hier om ons te help (P3).</i>	<i>So it helped us. Our children: the expectation with which they look at us. Because they see these people. They hear when we introduce these people. So they know here are people that not only come to help us but also equip our teachers to help us as learners. So they look at the students with that expectation: you are here to help us (P3).</i>
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Such perceptions of the university ‘helping’ communities require scrutiny in light of enablement foundations such as power sharing and community participation (cf. 2.2.4). Perhaps an answer to this dichotomy of power sharing vs. ‘helping’ is hinted at in the following comment:

<i>Ek dink ons eerste doelwit was om vir hulle [die student] te help om regtig op grondvlak te kom werk in dalk armer gemeenskappe en tweedens om vir die bejaardes in die tehuis te help met sekere van hulle wanfunksies (P1).</i>	<i>I think our first goal was to help them [the students] to really work on ground level in maybe poorer communities and secondly to help the elderly in the home with some of their malfunctions (P1).</i>
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I suggested in another publication based on this study that reciprocal ‘helping’ where the community also genuinely experience that they are ‘helping’ and not just ‘being helped’ may assist in balancing power between stakeholders (Janse van Rensburg, 2014, p. 57). In so doing, charitable notions and a “downward benevolence” may be refuted in favour of reciprocity.

4.4.4 The value of community immersion for students

Finally, I reflect very briefly on isolated findings that did not emerge in the codes or categories during the analysis and interpretation of data to answer the research questions of this study, but that aligns with previous studies and thus serves to confirm the existing body of knowledge. Participants representing the rural service learning sites in this study expressed their experiences of the value that immersion in the community had for students as follows:

<i>Bedoelende fisies het dit aan hulle lywe geraak, dat hulle moes uitreik by die gemeenskappe. En die gemeenskap het weer fisies betrokke geraak by hulle. Jy weet, die verbintenis, die sosialisering van die studente veral op die platteland met hierdie gemeenskap waarin hulle beweeg het van [DORP], het dit hulle regtig weer teruggebring aarde toe – en op grondvlak met die mense gewerk (P2).</i>	<i>Meaning physically it touched them personally, that they had to reach out to the communities. And the community in turn became physically involved with them. You know, the connection, the socialisation of the students especially in the rural area with this community of [TOWN], it really brought them back to earth – and they worked on ground level with the people (P2).</i>
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<p><i>... ek dink dit was vir hulle makliker ook toe hulle in die [INSTANSIE] bly. Want hulle het regtig gesien dan hoe funksioneer die plek (P1).</i></p>	<p><i>... I think that it was easier when they stayed in the [INSTITUTION]. Because they really then experienced the functioning of the place (P1).</i></p>
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These reflections by participants concur with previous findings of a study conducted among students in these rural service learning engagements, which indicated that students gained much from being immersed in these communities. An enhanced sense of the realities faced by communities, a greater sensitivity for reciprocity, personal growth as well as a better understanding of the role of the occupational therapist in community settings were some of the benefits of immersed service learning experiences for occupational therapy students (Janse van Rensburg & Du Toit, 2012).

Participants in this study specifically requested the researcher to report on this finding during participant verification stages (P2, P3). These participants particularly articulated that the community would like to see publication of results that support the benefits of service learning for students, as they perceive such results to enhance the likelihood of longer-term commitments to the community by the university.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the findings of this study were presented and discussed. A description of the participants was provided, whereafter the major findings of the study were presented in two themes, namely enabling occupation and disabling occupation. Mirroring these opposing themes, many of the categories and codes contained binary findings; however these were presented simultaneously in one theme only. I ended the discussion of findings with brief reflections on four salient issues that arose during data analysis namely senior vs. junior students in service learning, occupational therapy as 'keeping busy', service learning as 'helping' and the value of community immersion for students.

Findings presented in this chapter addressed the purpose of the study, namely to describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning in communities, as well as the barriers and facilitating factors to this process, at a South African university, by meeting the objectives of the study as follows (cf. 1.4):

- The theme of 'enabling occupation' illuminated factors which participants perceived as facilitators to occupational enablement through service learning, namely effective communication strategies, collaborative planning and project selection, interdependence, meeting tacit needs, positive student attributes and enabling service activities. The identification of these facilitating factors therefore addressed the third research objective,

namely to describe community representatives' perceptions regarding facilitating factors to enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

- Findings presented in the category of 'successful outcomes', as part of the theme 'enabling occupation', described evidence of participants' perceptions of 'enabling occupation' as it related to occupational participation and occupational justice. These findings, therefore, addressed the first research objective, namely to describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning.
- Finally, the theme 'disabling occupation' described participants' perceptions of barriers to occupational enablement in service learning, namely intermittent contact, managerial challenges, barriers to sustainability and risks to students. The emergence of these barriers to enablement from the data addressed the second research objective, namely to describe community representatives' perceptions regarding barriers to enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

Final conclusions, the implications and recommendations for occupational therapy service learning practice based on these findings are presented Chapter 5 – *Conclusions and Recommendations*. Further, in Chapter 5 the value and limitations of this study are retrospectively considered, and recommendations for future research are made.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and recommendations: Lessons learned from community representatives

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the results and findings of this study were presented, discussed and interpreted. In this chapter, the conclusions of the study in pursuit of the objectives of the research are assimilated. Recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the study are presented, as well as recommendations for future research. Finally, the limitations and value of the study are considered, and final reflections on the study are presented in the closing section of the chapter.

5.2 Conclusions – answering the research questions

The ways in which the findings of this study, generated by inductive coding, addressed the stated research objectives were summarised in the conclusion to Chapter 4 (cf. 4.5), and are visually depicted in Figure 12.

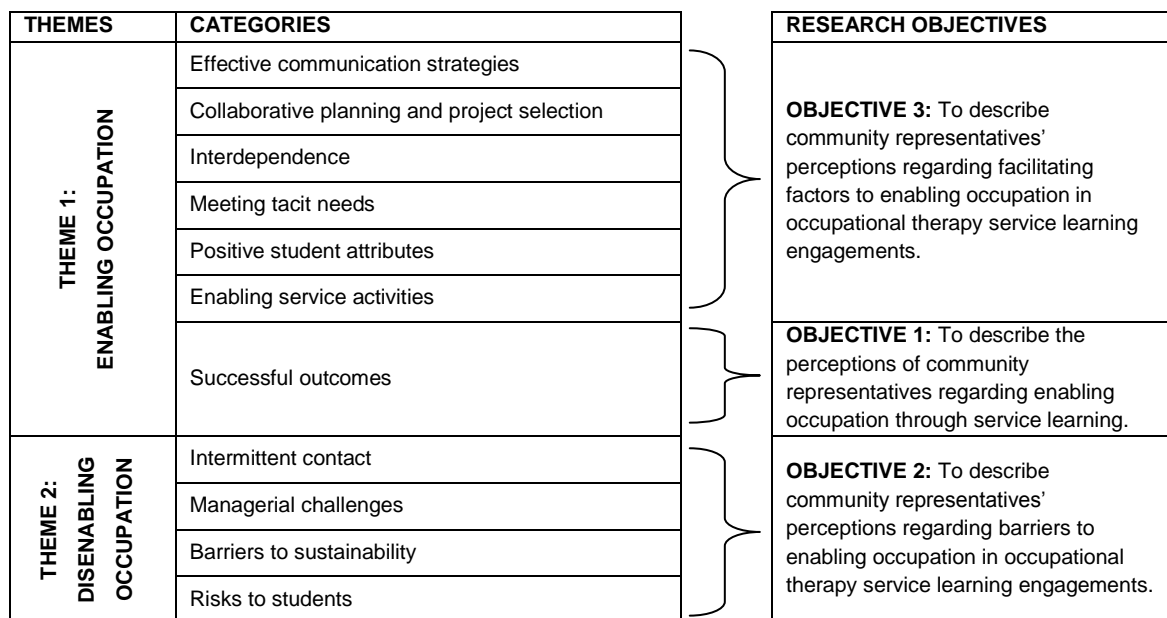


Figure 12: Visual representation of the alignment between the findings of the study and the research objectives (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg)

Conclusions based on these findings will henceforth be discussed for each of the research objectives.

5.2.1 Conclusions to objective 1: To describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through service learning

While the ways in which the findings of the study answered to the objectives of describing perceptions regarding *facilitating factors and barriers* to enabling occupation are quite clear, the way in which the findings of the study answered the first research objective, that is to describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding *enabling occupation* through service learning, is less apparent. In order to refine the conclusions that may be drawn from the findings, particularly in relation to the first objective, I have decided to plot the findings of the study against the theoretical underpinnings informing this study. Scrutinising the ways in which participants' experiences in occupational therapy service learning engagements attest to *enablement*, and the enablement of *occupation*, will assist in refining the final conclusions to the first objective. The enablement foundations (cf. 2.2.4) were used as the theoretical parameters against which perceptions of enablement were plotted, while the enablement of occupation specifically, is viewed from the perspectives of occupational participation and occupational justice (cf. 2.2.1 and 2.2.3).

5.2.1.1 *Conclusions regarding community representatives' perceptions of enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements*

This section presents conclusions relating to community representatives' perceptions of *enablement* in occupational therapy service learning engagements, based on the occupational therapy **enablement foundations** (cf. 2.2.4), as it emerged from the findings of this study.

a. Choice, risk and responsibility

Findings that were most closely related to the notion of **choice** emerged in the category of collaborative planning and project selection (cf. 4.3.1.2). It is concluded from the findings that participants in this study perceived to have choices in the design and selection of student service activities. There were, however, also some participants who recommended that more choice in the service learning engagement would be desirable.

The concept of **risk** was perceived by participants primarily in relation to risks to students (cf. 4.3.2.4). In general, participants did not identify specific risks to the community associated with service learning engagements, despite prompting during interviews. The only reference to risks to the community was made with regard to students' unpreparedness for the realities of the community (cf. 4.3.2.4. b).

Pertaining to **responsibility**, participants valued clarification of responsibilities in service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.1. b), while there were also participants who lamented a lack of

clarification regarding responsibilities which was perceived as being detrimental to the success of service learning engagements.

b. Community participation

Participants' experiences relating to **community participation** emerged in categories such as collaborative planning and project selection (cf. 4.3.1.2), interdependence (cf. 4.3.1.3) and effective communication strategies (cf. 4.3.1.1). It is concluded from the findings that community representatives were able to participate in decision-making and working together with students towards collaboratively identified goals (cf. 4.3.1.2. a); and that participation was, among others, facilitated through effective communication strategies in which relevant role players could participate (cf. 4.3.1.1). Participants greatly valued the ability to 'work together' in service learning engagements in these ways (cf. 4.3.1.3. c); it also seemed to enhance community members' sense of agency. There were, however, instances where participants experienced a lack of communication and collaboration in occupational therapy service learning engagements, which countered the enablement foundation of community participation.

c. Vision of possibilities

The findings of this study demonstrated that **visions of possibilities** were indeed sparked through occupational therapy service learning engagements. Participants shared experiences of enhanced confidence and dignity (cf. 4.3.1.7. b), while meeting tacit needs such as providing something new (cf. 4.3.1.4. a) and being present and showing an interest (cf. 4.3.1.4. b) also contributed to enhancing community members' visions of possibility.

d. Change

Positive **change** was noted by participants in relation to attitudinal change which lead to practice reform, confidence and dignity, enhanced occupational participation and students' social responsibility (cf. 4.3.1.7). These outcomes, which stemmed from occupational therapy service learning engagements, contributed to change for community members on an individual level (e.g. confidence, dignity and occupational participation), as well as change on an institutional level (e.g. practice reform). However, the findings of the study did not bring forth evidence of change on a macro (societal) level. The sustainability of change was questioned by participants, when identifying barriers to sustainability such as a lack of follow-up (cf. 4.3.2.3. b); therefore, conclusions regarding the enablement foundation of change can only be drawn on a short-term, micro level.

e. Justice

The contribution of occupational therapy service learning engagements to **justice** as an enablement foundation was revealed in participants' accounts of the contribution of meaningful activities to community members' occupational participation (cf. 4.3.1.7. c), as well as accounts

of practice reform (cf. 4.3.1.7. a), contributing to occupational justice. Conclusions related to occupational participation and occupational justice are explored in more depth in a following section (cf. 5.2.1.2). A tentative argument was also extrapolated from the findings of the study relating to the possible contribution of service learning engagements to social justice, by potentially enhancing community members' appreciation of diversity through activities that entail intergenerational and interracial contact (cf. 4.3.1.6. b).

Concerns about justice in occupational therapy service learning engagements were inferred from the findings relating to poor follow-up of service activities (cf. 4.3.2.3. b), as well as instances of asymmetrical power relations, which are addressed in the enablement foundation of power sharing (cf. 5.2.1.1. f). Apart from these deduced concerns, however, participants did not overtly raise issues directly related to justice during interviews. Perhaps one conclusion based on this observation could be that community members and representatives may have untapped agency in questioning and confronting issues of justice that affect the community. Enhancing awareness of individual and social rights and responsibilities in communities through occupational therapy service learning engagements may reveal different findings related to justice in the future.

f. Power sharing

It is concluded from the findings of this study that role players in occupational therapy service learning engagements successfully employed the enablement foundation of **power sharing**, as emerged from participants' descriptions of collaborative decision-making (cf. 4.3.1.2. a) and reciprocity (cf. 4.3.1.3. c). Participants also articulated strategies that promoted power sharing, such as service learning projects that connected with existing structures in the community (cf. 4.3.1.2. d).

Conversely, there were participants who described experiences of asymmetrical power relations and mishandling of initiator power on the part of the university (cf. 4.3.2.2. a). It would seem, therefore, that the concept of power requires continued interrogation in occupational therapy service learning engagements pertaining to its effects on all role players, including students and community members.

5.2.1.2 *Conclusions regarding community representatives' perceptions of occupational participation and occupational justice in occupational therapy service learning engagements*

Conclusions in the preceding section demonstrated that community representatives did experience aspects of *enablement*, as manifested in the enablement foundations, in occupational therapy service learning engagements, albeit on a micro-level. In this section the second construct, namely occupation, is briefly explored in order to draw conclusions regarding

participants' perceptions of enablement of *occupation* in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

Occupation was operationally defined as the individually appraised, goal-directed things that people actively do on a daily basis, to satisfy human needs, and that gives purpose and meaning to life (cf. Concept Clarification). The *Framework for Occupational Justice* presented in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.2.1 and Figure 3) depicts **occupational outcomes** such as the promotion of **occupational rights**, which demonstrates occupational justice, as well as **occupational injustices**. These 'indicators' of occupational outcomes, as well as Wilcock's theory of doing, being, becoming and belonging (cf. 2.2.3) were used to plot the findings of the study in a similar way as was done with the enablement foundations, in order to refine conclusions regarding participants' perceptions of *occupational* enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

a. Occupational rights: Meaning, participation, choice and balance

The findings of this study revealed that community members' **participation** in daily life occupation was enhanced through occupational therapy service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.7. c). Anecdotal evidence of greater **meaning** and more **choice** in activity participation for community members also emerged from these findings (for more detail regarding choice, cf. 5.2.1.1. a). In addition, participants articulated how a health promotion campaign as part of occupational therapy service learning engagements enhanced community members' knowledge of a balanced lifestyle (cf. 4.3.1.4. c) and enabled them to make changes in their lives to promote **balance** (cf. 4.3.1.7. c).

There were, however, also instances where students' involvement was perceived as not in actuality contributing to meaning or participation in communities (cf. 4.3.1.2. d and 4.3.1.3. c).

b. Occupational injustices: Imbalance, marginalisation, deprivation and alienation

Singular instances where communities were **marginalised** in occupational therapy service learning engagements emerged from the data. Participants perceived to be marginalised when there was a lack of working together (cf. 4.3.1.3. b), poor communication (cf. 4.3.1.1. a) and when the university as initiator exerted its implicit power disproportionately (cf. 4.3.2.2. a). No direct relations between the findings of the study and **imbalance**, **deprivation** or **alienation** could be drawn.

Other conclusions regarding justice are presented in a preceding section (cf. 5.2.1.1. e).

c. Occupation: Doing, being, becoming and belonging

The findings of this study revealed that occupational therapy service learning engagements contributed to community members' engagement in purposeful activity – that is, **doing**

(cf. 4.3.1.7. c). Due to the individually appraised nature of being, participants, as representatives of their communities, generally did not articulate experiences that relate to **being**, with a single exception as quoted in the last paragraph of the code 'enhancing occupational participation' (cf. 4.3.1.7. c). The idea of **becoming** relates closely to the concept of change, which was presented earlier in this chapter (cf. 5.2.1.1. d). Finally, notions of **belonging** emerged in diverse ways within the findings of this study. Participants articulated their experiences of how connecting with the wider community, including intergenerational and interracial contact, was a beneficial endeavour in service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.6. b). The findings also suggested that participation in service learning may enhance occupational therapy students' sense of interconnectedness with the community, leading to a greater sense of social responsibility (cf. 4.3.1.7. d). Relational closeness and reciprocity emerged in the category labelled interdependence, which also alludes to the notion of belonging (cf. 4.3.1.3); however, dichotomous findings were present in this category with participants articulating both positive and negative experiences of fostering relationships and reciprocity.

5.2.1.3 Summary

Participants in this study perceived most of the *enablement* foundations to have been present in the occupational therapy service learning engagements in this study, which they experienced as factors that promoted occupational enablement through service learning. However, for all of the enablement foundations except a vision of possibilities, there were instances where some community representatives also had negative experiences. Therefore, in as far as enablement is concerned, there seems to be room for improvement in future occupational therapy service learning engagements.

Relating to the enablement of *occupation*, links to enhanced occupational participation, meaning, choice and balance emerged from community representatives' descriptions of occupational therapy service learning engagements. However, these links were mostly inferred by the researcher while participants tended to articulate occupation as 'keeping busy' (cf. 4.4.2). It would seem, therefore, that a greater focus on occupation, occupational rights and occupational justice may assist lecturers and students in occupational therapy service learning engagements to make a unique disciplinary contribution to communities through service learning.

5.2.2 Conclusions to objective 2: To describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding **barriers** to enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements

The findings of this study revealed two sets of barriers to enablement. On the one hand, participants experienced specific barriers to occupational enablement in occupational therapy

service learning engagements, while on the other hand the absence or lack of facilitating factors were also, in some cases, perceived as barriers. Specifically identified barriers were presented in the theme 'Disabling Occupation' (cf. 4.3.2). In summary, it is concluded that community representatives perceived the following factors as barriers to occupational enablement:

- **Intermittent contact** with the community, which led to a lack of continuity and the non-realisation of goals (cf. 4.3.2.1).
- **Managerial challenges** such as asymmetrical power relations perpetuated by the university as the initiator of service learning engagements, a lack of proper planning, logistical challenges such as scheduling conflicts, and challenges with linking with government structures (cf. 4.3.2.2).
- Factors that impacted negatively on the **sustainability** of service activities and the outcomes thereof, such as discrepancies between expectations and capabilities, poor follow-up, staff shortages and high volumes of staff turnover, and ontological barriers (cf. 4.3.2.3).
- **Risks to students**, such as risks to personal safety, the risk of project failure and students' unpreparedness for the realities of the community (cf. 4.3.2.4).

The emergence of these barriers to occupational enablement through service learning, as perceived by community representatives, contributes to a greater understanding of the dynamics of service learning engagements. However, from a strategic and operational perspective, possessing knowledge alone of which factors community representatives perceive as barriers, does not necessarily lead to providing the direct answers as to how future engagements may be shaped to curb these barriers.

For most of the barriers that emerged from the findings of this study, participants also articulated experiences of, or suggestions for, ways in which these barriers may be limited or avoided altogether. Following the same sequence in which the barriers were presented previously, the following suggestions for limiting barriers was extrapolated from the data:

- Although **intermittent contact** between communities and students is unavoidable due to student academic schedules, participants indicated that when proper structures for feedback between different student groups, and between students and the community, are in place, barriers such as a lack of continuity resulting from intermittent contact, are assuaged.
- Relating to **managerial challenges**, promoting reciprocity in service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.3. c) was inferred as an antidote to asymmetrical power relations (cf. 4.3.2.2. a). Collaborative planning (cf. 4.3.1.2) was inferred as a strategy that could assist in overcoming unwarranted enthusiasm that leads to a lack of proper planning (cf. 4.3.2.2. b). Effective communication strategies (cf. 4.3.1.1) could curb the effects of logistical challenges

(cf. 4.3.2.2. c), while including other role players such as non-governmental organisations was suggested in instances where linking with government structures failed (cf. 4.3.2.2. d).

- With reference to **sustainability**, open communication (cf. 4.3.1.1) and shared decision-making (cf. 4.3.1.2. a) were suggested as antidotes to discrepancies between expectations and capabilities (cf. 4.3.2.3. a). Planning and implementing adequate maintenance and exit strategies may contribute to ensuring better follow-up (cf. 4.3.2.3. b) and compensating for inherent characteristics of the community organisation that act as barriers, such as high volumes of staff turnover (cf. 4.3.2.3. c). Collaborative decision-making (cf. 4.3.1.2. a) and ensuring stakeholder buy-in (cf. 4.3.1.2. b) were suggested as strategies to overcome barriers caused by differing professional ontologies, while the development of cultural competence among all role players was suggested as a strategy to overcome differing cultural ontologies (cf. 4.3.2.3. d).
- Proactive risk management and adequate preparation of students emerged as possible strategies to lessen **risks to students** (cf. 4.3.2.4).

Concluding the findings relating to community representatives' perceptions regarding barriers to enablement, it seems that cognisance of barriers, coupled with the proactive operationalisation of facilitating factors to occupational enablement (cf. 5.2.3), can potentially moderate the disenabling effects of the barriers that emerged from this study.

5.2.3 Conclusions to objective 3: To describe the perceptions of community representatives regarding facilitating factors to enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements

The findings of this study yielded many factors that participants perceived as facilitating factors to occupational enablement. On a basic interpretive level, the first six categories grouped under the theme 'Enabling Occupation', represents the facilitating factors as perceived by community representatives (cf. 4.3.1.1 to 4.3.1.6). These are effective communication strategies, collaborative planning and project selection, interdependence, meeting tacit needs, positive student attributes and enabling service activities.

However, when the findings of this study are interpreted at a meta-level, facilitators of enablement can be categorised and viewed as three interconnected 'layers', which are depicted in Figure 13. Firstly, there are **contextual factors** (the outside layer) that can either facilitate or hamper occupational enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements. As argued in the discussion of barriers to enablement (cf. 5.2.2), cognisance of potential barriers and the proactive management thereof, may play a facilitating role in service learning engagements. Therefore, contextual factors were included as *potential* facilitators, when managed correctly.

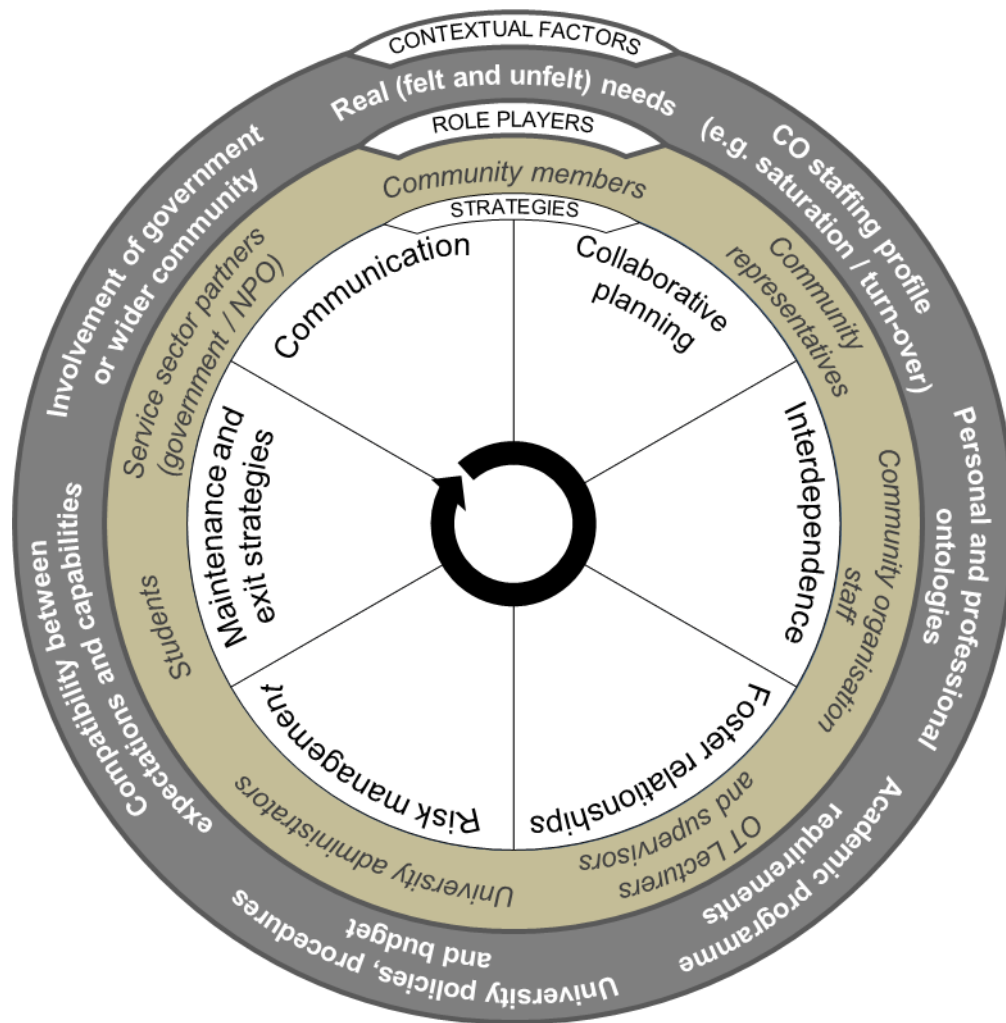


Figure 13: Facilitating factors to enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg)

Secondly, there are numerous **role players** (the middle layer) that act within occupational therapy service learning engagements. These role players have differing responsibilities and roles in service learning engagements, but each of them contributes in some way to facilitating occupational enablement through service learning.

Thirdly, there are **strategies** (inside ‘pie’ layer) that, when employed successfully, act as facilitators to enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements. The circle shape was chosen to represent a continuous, interrelated, cyclical process, similar to Smith-Tolken’s (2011, p. 362) notion of a “cyclical interchange of social commodities” which emerged as the core activity of community engagement in her grounded theory study. The layers are meant to depict movable ‘cogs’ around an axis, which illustrates, for example, that all of the contextual factors may be relevant to any of the role players, as may all of the facilitating strategies. The circles have no specific start or end point, and are in continuous motion. There is no inferred linearity – rather, the contexts, role players and strategies can be ‘turned’ and applied as it is most suited to each unique service learning engagement at a given time.

Conclusions regarding participants' perceptions of facilitating factors to occupational enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements are henceforth discussed based on Figure 13, starting with the contextual factors, then addressing role players, and finally the strategies.

5.2.3.1 *Contextual factors as facilitators*

The following contextual factors are depicted Figure 13, in no specific order (read counter-clockwise on the figure): real (felt and unfelt) needs; involvement of government and the wider community; compatibility between capabilities and expectations; university policies; procedures and budget; academic programme requirements; personal and professional ontologies; and the community organisation staffing profile.

These contextual factors were identified in this study as factors that can either contribute to occupational enablement or act as barriers to enablement, in occupational therapy service learning engagements, as perceived by community representatives. The following paragraphs contain the conclusions regarding each of the contextual factors.

a. Real (felt and unfelt) needs

This study has indicated that when communities' real needs are addressed through service learning engagements, agency is fostered in the community itself (cf. 4.3.1.2. c). In addition, meeting tacit or unexpressed needs also contributed to enablement in general by, for example, stimulating the enablement foundation of a vision of possibilities (cf. 4.3.1.4).

b. Involvement of government and the wider community

The lack of involvement of **government** in service learning engagements was identified by participants in this study as a potential barrier to enablement. Thus, it can be concluded that the involvement of government structures in service learning engagements may be a facilitating factor, as also suggested by the CHESP triad partnership model which encourages involvement of service sector partners (cf. 4.3.2.2. d).

This study has indicated that the involvement of the **wider community** in service learning engagements, such as volunteers or other organisations, have many potential benefits that can facilitate occupational enablement (cf. 4.3.1.6 b). Especially in the absence of government involvement, these connections are vital to contribute to sustainability of the attainment of partnership goals.

c. Compatibility between capabilities and expectations

Compatibility between capabilities and expectations of role players in service learning engagements is a contextual facilitator of enablement, as can be inferred from participants'

perceptions that incompatibility between capabilities and expectations are detrimental to service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.2.3. a).

d. University's policies, procedures and budget

The university's policies, procedures and budget are contextual factors that impact on many other potential facilitators as depicted in the framework. Performance appraisal and promotion **policies** may impact on lecturers (as role players) in various ways, including their willingness to participate in service learning and the resources that lecturers have at their disposal (particularly in terms of time) to commit to service learning engagements (cf. 2.5.2.1 & 2.5.2.2).

With regard to **budgeting**, the allocation of funding for service learning may, for example, influence academic staffing and supervision of students at service learning sites, and the type of service activities that students can perform. Intermittent contact (cf. 4.3.2.1), a lack of follow-up (cf. 4.3.2.3. b) and initiator power (cf. 4.3.2.2. a) were three factors that participants in this study described as potential barriers to enablement, which I know from my involvement in service learning, was caused by funding limitations in many instances.

e. Academic programme requirements

Academic programme requirements acted as barriers to occupational enablement in the perceptions of participants in this study, by reducing the continuity of students' contact with the community and, as a result, also limiting follow-up and the achievement of the objectives of the service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.2.1. c). Differences in the capabilities of different year groups of students were also noted in the reflections on salient issues in Chapter 4 (cf. 4.4.1). Academic programme requirements and the impact thereof on student service learning schedules, therefore, have a very real contextual influence on the enablement of occupation in communities.

f. Professional and personal ontologies

The findings of this study indicated that differences in professional and personal ontologies may threaten occupational enablement through service learning (cf. 4.3.2.3. d). Differences in **professional ontologies** have led to misunderstandings and have also hampered the sustainability of students' inputs through service learning. Differences in **cultural ontologies** were also described by participants as a potential barrier to enablement if not dealt with correctly. However, when differing ontologies are managed constructively, it may lead to greater enablement of various role players by virtue of enriching their understanding and appreciation of diversity.

g. Community organisation staffing profile

The staffing profile of the community organisation where service learning engagements take place was shown in this study to be a contextual factor that can potentially hamper sustainable occupational enablement on the one hand, or contribute to occupational enablement on the other hand. Staff shortages and high staff turnover were specific factors identified by participants as detrimental to the sustainability of service learning inputs from students (cf. 4.3.2.3. c). Conversely, community organisation staff, and in particular community representatives in this study, was shown to play pivotal roles as communication mediators, among others (cf. 4.3.1.1. c).

5.2.3.2 *Role players as facilitators*

The second layer depicted in Figure 13 is labelled role players. Various findings in this study have underscored the vital role that various role players play within service learning engagements. Drawing on the SOFAR structural model suggested by Bringle and co-workers (Bringle et al., 2009, p. 5; Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 541) and expanding on the figure presented in Chapter 2 (cf. 2.5 and Figure 7), role players in occupational therapy service learning engagements are depicted as community members, community representatives, community organisation staff, occupational therapy lecturers and supervisors, university administrators, students and service sector partners. The representation of role players in Figure 13 is aligned with previous literature, with one exception, namely referring to community representatives as a separate group. This distinction is based on the findings of this study indicating that community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements have pivotal roles which may be clearly differential from the roles of other community organisation staff members (cf. 4.3.1.2. c), including that of gatekeepers and communication mediators.

5.2.3.3 *Strategies as facilitators*

Findings of this study have enabled me to draw conclusions regarding strategies that may be employed in current and future service learning engagements, which can act as facilitating factors to the enablement of occupation that is contextually relevant and contributes to promoting social and occupational justice (cf. 1.2). Each of the strategies depicted in the segments of the inner layer of the circle in Figure 13 are henceforth discussed.

a. Communication

The findings of this study illuminated effective communication strategies as vital facilitators to occupational enablement through service learning (cf. 4.3.1.1). Specific strategies for the operationalisation of effective communication to facilitate occupational enablement in

occupational therapy service learning engagements emerged from the data, the details of which will be incorporated in the recommendations that relate to communication (cf. 5.3.3.3. a).

b. Collaborative planning

Collaborative planning and project selection emerged as a strong facilitator to enablement in the findings of this study. Theoretical links with foundational principles such as agency, reciprocity and enablement were made to argue the importance of collaborative planning in occupational therapy service learning engagements, in support of the findings of this study (cf. 4.3.1.2). Collaborative planning, therefore, is a vital strategy in facilitating occupational enablement.

c. Interdependence

Fostering interdependence in service learning engagements builds on principles such as agency, reciprocity and enablement and draws on enablement foundations such as choice, risk and responsibility, community participation and justice. The notion of interdependence is suggested to enhance the transformative potential of partnerships, contribute to more equitable power distribution in service learning engagements, and ultimately contribute to greater social and occupational justice through service learning (among others through countering potential exploitation of vulnerable role players) (cf. 4.3.1.3). In doing so, interdependence becomes a powerful strategy to facilitate enablement of occupation through service learning.

d. Foster relationships

Service learning engagements are dependent on relationships between various stakeholders. The findings of this study have demonstrated the invaluable contribution of positive relationships to occupational enablement through service learning, and also indicated the detrimental effect that negative relational experiences may have on service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.3. a). Fostering positive relationships in occupational therapy service learning engagements can, therefore, be concluded to be an imperative strategy towards facilitating occupational enablement through service learning.

e. Risk management

Participants in this study voiced concerns regarding the risks to students' physical safety in service learning engagements, for example as a result of travelling long distances (cf. 4.3.2.4. a). Project failure has potential risks for both students and communities while community fatigue resulting from perpetual unsuccessful engagements was also identified as a risk factor (cf. 4.3.2.1. b and 4.3.2.4. c). Risk management, as a strategy to curb the potential barriers posed by risks in service learning engagements (cf. 5.2.2), is therefore concluded to be a facilitating strategy towards enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

f. Maintenance and exit strategies

The importance of collaboratively negotiated, feasible and well-designed maintenance and exit strategies emerged in various findings in this study as crucial facilitators of sustainable occupational enablement. Reference to maintenance and exit strategies were made in findings relating to infrastructure development (cf. 4.3.1.6. d), delivering tangible products (cf. 4.3.1.6. c), managerial challenges in terms of initiator power and planning (cf. 4.3.2.2. a & b and 5.2.2), as well as barriers to sustainability such as poor follow-up and high staff turnover (cf. 4.3.2.3. b & c and 5.2.2). It is concluded based on these findings, that maintenance and exit strategies are important facilitators of sustainable occupational enablement through service learning.

5.2.3.4 *Summary*

The findings of this study revealed multiple layers of facilitating factors to occupational enablement through service learning, as interpreted from the perceptions shared by community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements. These layers were labelled as contextual factors, role players and strategies. All of these facilitating factors have the potential to act as barriers to occupational enablement. However, when they are operationalised effectively, facilitating factors provide the momentum for occupational enablement through service learning.

5.2.4 Final conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, integrating these with the literature that was consulted as presented in Chapters 2 and 4, and drawing on the conclusions presented in this section (cf. 5.2.1 to 5.2.3), I have compiled a visual representation of the conclusions of this study, which is depicted in Figure 14.

The ultimate intended **outcome** of occupational therapy service learning engagements is depicted in the banner at the top of the framework, namely the enablement of occupation for social and occupational justice, health and well-being (cf. 1.2).

Activities and objectives that may contribute to this outcome are indicated by the bar and pointed blocks below the banner. These serve as examples of beneficial activities and objectives as revealed in this study from the perceptions of community representatives. Examples of activities are health promotion event days, training, delivering tangible products such as posters or assistive devices, and infrastructure development. Examples of objectives include attitudinal change leading to practice reform, enhancing confidence and dignity, enhancing occupational participation and promoting social responsibility (cf. 4.3.1.7).

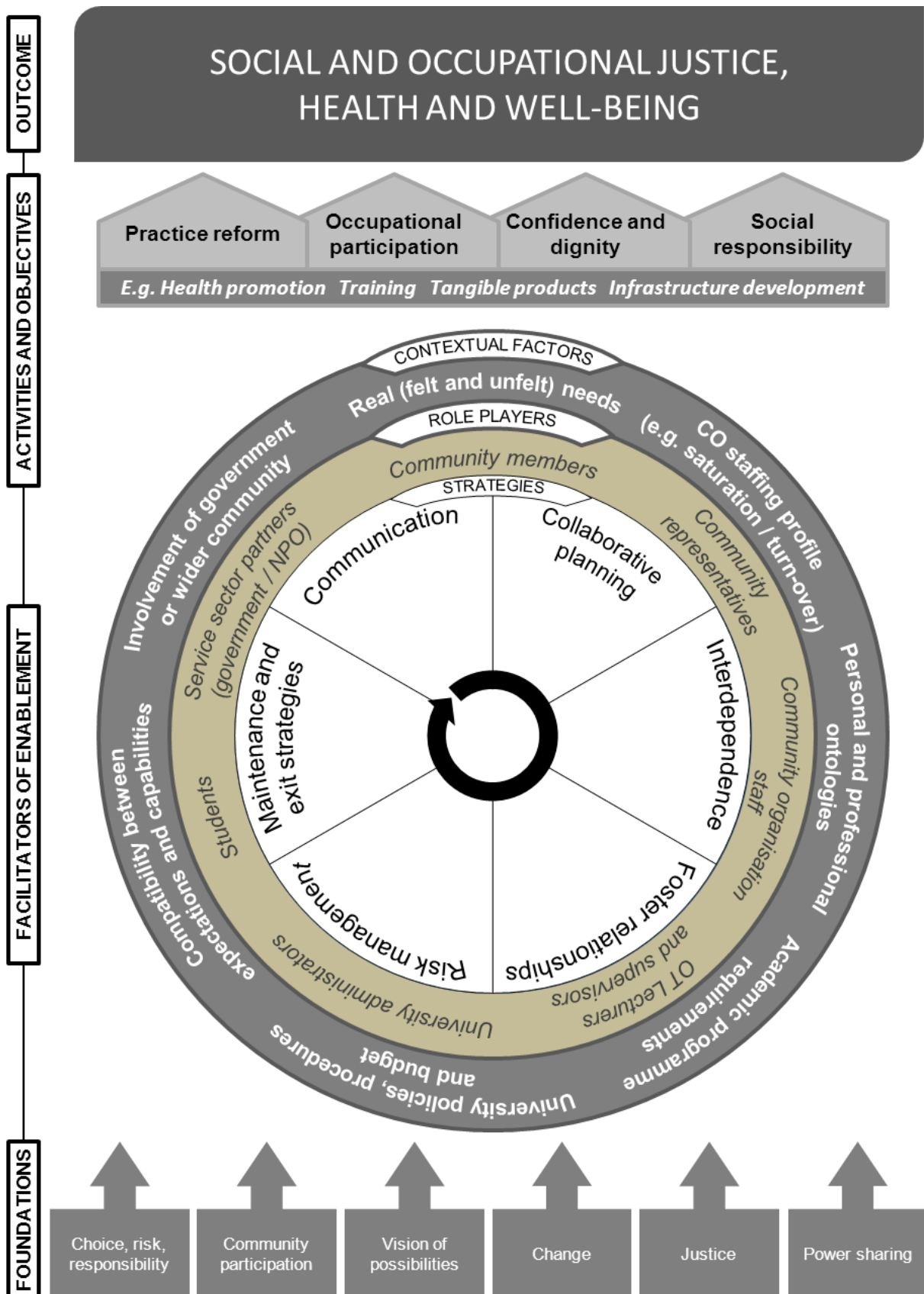


Figure 14: Visual representation of the conclusions of this study for enabling occupation through service learning (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg) ('Enablement foundations' integrated into figure from Townsend, E.A., Polatajko, H.J. & Craik, J. (2007); with permission from CAOT Publications ACE – cf. Appendix A)

These objectives may be attained through the effective operationalisation of **facilitators** to enablement, which is depicted in the circular portrayal in the middle of the framework. These facilitators include contextual factors, role players and strategies, and were discussed comprehensively in the preceding section (cf. 5.2.3).

These facilitators are built upon the occupational therapy **enablement foundations** (cf. 2.2.4), which provides theoretical grounding to the facilitators. Findings of this study revealed participants' perceptions of the operationalisation of these enablement foundations in the occupational therapy service learning engagements included in the study (cf. 5.2.1.1), demonstrating that when these foundations are employed effectively, they indeed form the foundation for occupational enablement through service learning.

5.3 Implications – recommendations for practice

The problem statement formulated for this study articulates the need to investigate the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation through occupational therapy service learning engagements so as to *inform current practices and future engagements* in occupational therapy service learning endeavours (cf. 1.2). The conclusions that were drawn from the findings of this study, as depicted in Figure 14 presented previously, can potentially provide a framework upon which current and future occupational therapy service learning engagements can be built. Absent from Figure 14, however, is an indication of the foundational principles and theoretical grounding of the framework, as well as guidelines for the operationalisation of proposed strategies. As a result, Figure 15 on the following page was compiled and labelled *A framework for occupational enablement through service learning in occupational therapy* (hereafter referred to as the framework).

The framework consists of five levels. The first level contains the foundational **principles** on which the framework is built, which is depicted in the three quadrangles at the bottom of the framework. These principles are agency, reciprocity and occupation-based enablement, and stem from social change and community development theories, service learning theory and occupational therapy theory. The other four levels of the framework were discussed in the final conclusions (cf. 5.2.4), namely the **enablement foundations, facilitators of enablement, activities and objectives, and outcomes**. In the framework, a summary of recommendations for operationalising the strategies that were included as facilitators of enablement is also included.

The recommendations for practice in occupational therapy service learning engagements will henceforth be presented based on these five levels of the framework, working from the bottom upwards. The reader is advised to refer to Figure 15 when perusing the recommendations made, in order to maintain an overarching perspective of the suggested framework.

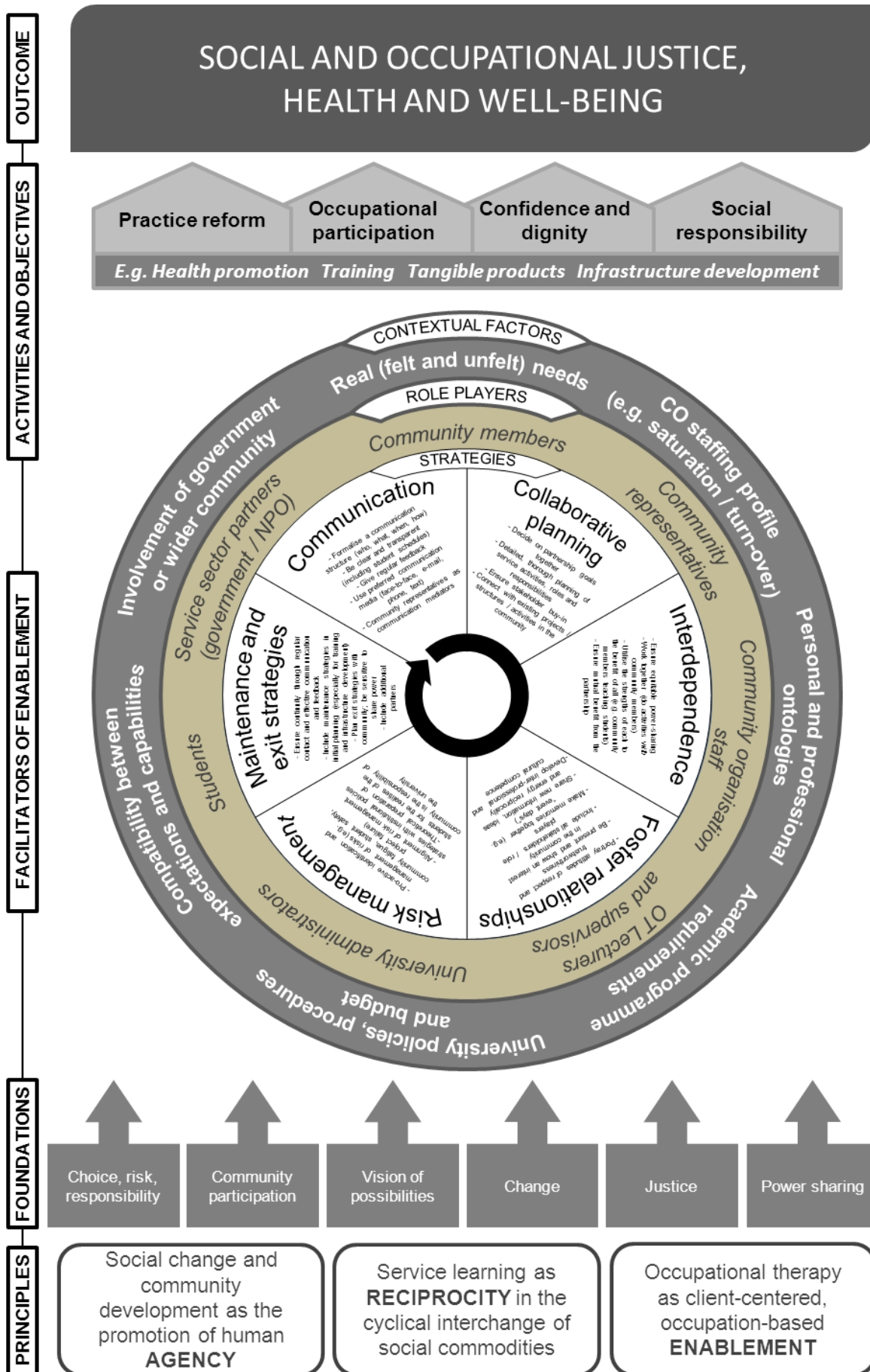


Figure 15: A framework for occupational enablement through service learning in occupational therapy (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg) ('Enablement foundations' integrated into figure from Townsend, E.A., Polatajko, H.J. & Craik, J. (2007); with permission from CAOT Publications ACE – cf. Appendix A)



Figure 15a: A framework for occupational enablement through service learning in occupational therapy – Strategies as facilitators of enablement (compiled by E. Janse van Rensburg)

5.3.1 Recommendations based on the foundational principles: Agency, reciprocity and enablement

Throughout the findings presented in this dissertation, the promotion of human agency, the principle of reciprocity, and enablement, arose as foundational principles on which successful, contextually relevant occupational therapy service learning engagements may be built. It is, therefore, proposed that lecturers and students who are involved in service learning engagements should be equipped with relevant theoretical knowledge regarding these foundational principles, so as to provide a solid theoretical foundation for service learning engagements. Ideally, all role players, including role players in the community such as

community representatives, should participate in reciprocal knowledge sharing and generation processes on these foundational principles in a way that is relevant and useful for them in service learning engagements.

5.3.2 Recommendations based on the enablement foundations

Based on conclusions indicating that not all occupational therapy service learning engagements included in this study attested to the successful implementation of enablement foundations (Townsend, Beagan, et al., 2013, pp. 100–101) (cf. 5.2.1.1 and 5.2.1.3), with the exception of a vision of possibilities, it is recommended that attention should be given to the following foundations:

- Allowing for **choice** by utilising strategies recommended under communication and collaborative planning.
- Paying attention to **risk** by utilising strategies recommended under risk management.
- Clarifying **responsibilities** through strategies recommended under communication and collaborative planning.
- Facilitating greater **community participation** by utilising strategies recommended under communication, collaborative planning, interdependence and fostering relationships.
- Continuing to embrace a **vision of possibilities**, and sparking and/or supporting such visions among community members. Of particular note are the findings presented in the category ‘meeting tacit needs’ (cf. 4.3.1.4), which may provide practical strategies to promote a vision of possibilities.
- Considering sustainability of **change** through strategies recommended for collaborative planning as well as maintenance and exit strategies.
- Engaging more actively with notions of **justice** through activities that may enhance community members’ awareness of individual and social rights, such as health promotion and training strategies.
- Being very sensitive to **power sharing** through utilising strategies recommended for collaborative planning, interdependence and fostering relationships.

5.3.3 Recommendations based on the facilitators of enablement

Recommendations based on the facilitators of enablement as depicted in Figure 15 and discussed in section 5.2.3 are listed for contextual factors, role players and strategies respectively.

5.3.3.1 Contextual factors as facilitators

Contextual factors include real (felt and unfelt) needs, involvement of government and the wider community, compatibility between capabilities and expectations, university policies, procedures

and budget, academic programme requirements, professional and personal ontologies, and the community organisation staffing profile. Recommendations are suggested for each of these contextual factors.

a. Real (felt and unfelt) needs

- Community members' felt and unfelt needs should be explored explicitly, and service activities should be negotiated to best address those needs that are feasible within the given context (as influenced by other contextual factors).
- Felt needs that are expressed, or unfelt needs such as limitations that they set for themselves or needs that are identified by other role players such as students or lecturers, which fall outside of the scope of the service learning engagement, should be recognised and acknowledged by the role players in the service learning engagement. Efforts should be made to enable community members to address those needs through other means, such as facilitating connections with other organisations, government structures or university departments that may be in the position to assist these community members to achieve the objectives that they set for themselves or overcome their perceived limitations. In doing so, students and lecturers convey a message of commitment to the partnership, and continue to facilitate agency by validating community members' ability to identify and address their own development goals.

b. Involvement of government and the wider community

- It is suggested that involvement of relevant government departments should be sought within occupational therapy service learning engagements in order to contribute to the feasibility and sustainability of service learning objectives as suggested by literature. Recent experiences in the occupational therapy department in 2014 have shown that the involvement of government structures, such as the Department of Education: Directorate Inclusive, indeed facilitates the enablement of occupation in communities. Therefore, despite the known difficulties associated with partnering with government structures in the South African context, it is recommended that attempts at establishing such links should not be abandoned. Rather, these connections should be sought continuously, for the optimal facilitation of enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements.
- Opportunities for involving other organisations or members of the community in occupational therapy service learning engagements should also be targeted in these engagements. In addition, the agency of community members and organisations should be facilitated to also establish new and continue with established connections. Especially in the absence of government involvement, these connections are vital to contribute to sustainability of the attainment of partnership goals.

c. Compatibility between capabilities and expectations

- It is recommended that compatibility of capabilities and expectations are specifically interrogated when negotiating new partnerships, as well as when collaborating with communities on service learning project selection (also in existing occupational therapy engagements). This interrogation of capabilities and expectations should be explicitly facilitated by the service learning coordinator and service learning supervisors at service learning sites. If agency and equitable distribution of power is to be facilitated in decision-making in occupational therapy service learning engagements, all role players should be adequately informed of the expectations and the capabilities of the others so as to enable informed decision-making.

d. University policies, procedures and budget

- Relating to the university's policies on an institutional level, it is suggested congruent with the literature in this regard, that academic staff who participate in service learning should be equitably recognised and rewarded within the performance appraisal and promotion structures of the university (cf. 2.5.2.2. b). The current *Academic Appointment and Promotions Policy* at the university where the study was conducted stipulates the "Scholarship of Engagement" as one of the three areas of assessment; however, emphasis is placed on the integration of community engagement with teaching and research and the policy specifically states: "It is not sufficient, therefore, to be simply 'busy' in community work. What is required in such work is the demonstration of scholarship in the design, conduct and assessment of such labour" (University of the Free State, 2011, p. 5). In theory, these requirements seem reasonable and desirable within an academic institution. However, the time and effort invested in community engagement endeavours such as service learning may be quite difficult to quantify and 'convert' to 'scholarly evidence'. Performance policies that relate to community engagement should be scrutinised continuously and reviewed to make equitable provision for the investments that academic staff members make in the community through activities such as service learning. An example of such a provision may be to allow for 'evidence' such as evaluations from community representatives in service learning engagements to carry equitable (note: not necessarily equal) weight in relation to, for example, the publication of scientific articles, when assessing performance in the "Scholarship of Engagement". In addition to traditional peer-reviewed academic publications, other forms of outputs should also be included as suggested by Eatman (2011, p. 4-5).
- On a departmental level, recommendations relate to the operationalisation of existing policies for the optimal benefit of role players in service learning engagements. Firstly, it is suggested that all academic staff members involved in service learning should be familiarised with the content of policies on community engagement and service learning, particularly part-time contract appointments (cf. 2.5.2.1) who do not have access to such

documentation on a daily basis. Secondly, academic staff members involved in service learning should look for opportunities within service learning engagements to gather evidence of scholarship, such as opportunities for producing scholarly articles for publication, as part of the service learning engagement (Schindler, 2014, pp. 77–78).

- Relating to budgeting, on an institutional level, the current budgeting model which allocates a fixed amount for service learning annually may address challenges in previous funding models where contracting with communities had to be done on a year to year basis as a result of not knowing what funding would be available in following years (cf. 2.5.2.2. a), thus decreasing previously perceived barriers to enablement influenced by funding such as intermittent contact, poor follow-up and initiator power. It is recommended that the newly implemented budgeting model should be assessed for its impact on service learning engagements, and revisited should findings of such an assessment necessitate changes.
- On a departmental level it is recommended that the benefits of the revised funding model be utilised optimally in the following ways: (1) doing long-term contracting with communities (e.g. four-year contracts) as opposed to annual contracting in order to portray commitment to the engagement and facilitate greater continuity and sustainability in service learning engagements, (2) considering the possibility of involving permanent staff members in service learning engagements, or employing additional staff members on long-term (e.g. four-year) contracts, rather than short-term (one-year) contract appointments for reasons stated previously (cf. 2.5.2.1) and in order to ensure that academic staff members can build long-term trust relationships with communities (cf. 4.3.1.3. a), and (3) due to ever-present limitations in funding, considering limiting the number of service learning partnerships in order to simplify supervision requirements, enhance the quality of relationships and centralise funding and resources (Witchger Hansen, 2010, p. 179).

e. Academic programme requirements

- Since communities' preferences regarding the continuity and nature of services vary greatly, specific recommendations, for example regarding the frequency of student contact with the community, are hard to formulate. The generic recommendations to be inferred from these findings are that academic programme requirements should be molded to ensure that students spend sufficient time in communities in order to foster relationships (cf. 4.3.1.3. a), and that differences in communities' needs regarding students' time spent in the community should be matched with the available time in student academic schedules (among other variables). For example, at the university where the study was conducted, first-year occupational therapy students have significantly more service learning contact hours in the community than third-year occupational therapy students. Therefore, it would be wise to negotiate service learning engagements for first-year students in areas requiring more

regular community contact, while third-year students should be placed in areas where intermittent or once-off contact of a more advanced nature is desirable (cf. 4.3.2.1. a).

- Similarly, it is recommended that the service needs and goals of communities are matched with the outcomes of the academic programme of different year groups when negotiating service learning partnerships and the goals of such partnerships with communities. This has not always been the case at this occupational therapy department, and has resulted in experiences of disjuncture between student service activities and the needs of the community (cf. 4.3.1.2. d – contrasting nuance).

f. Professional and personal ontologies

- Lecturers and students at the occupational therapy department should be made aware of the findings of this study relating to professional and personal ontologies and the implications thereof for practice in occupational therapy service learning engagements. These implications entail portraying and communicating a sensitivity for differing professional ontologies, respecting the ontologies and responsibilities of other professions, and refraining from imposing one's own professional ontology, explicitly or by inference, on other professions, such as by expecting nursing staff to facilitate independence in populations with high care demands, or to expect that nursing staff should continue with activities designed by occupational therapy students in addition to an already significant workload that is seated in a different ontological framework than that of cultivating occupational engagement.
- In order to ensure that cultural ontologies become facilitators rather than barriers to enablement, it is recommended that the development of cultural competence, specific to members of the community in which the service learning engagement is situated, should be structured as an explicit outcome of service learning engagements for students, and that lecturers involved in these engagements will also participate in the process of enhancing their own cultural competence.
- Ways in which the development of cultural competence for students may be facilitated could include guided reflection sessions with community members regarding cultural issues, written reflection assignments or class reflection activities on culture. To curb the dangers of reinforcing stereotypes and 'othering' (cf. 2.5.1.4), it is crucial that students are facilitated in the processes of developing cultural competence, utilising strategies such as dialogical communication (Bohm, 2013) and critical discourse analysis. This implies that academic staff involved in service learning should be critically cognisant of their ontological positions and prejudices, and be skilled in facilitating students in critical discussions.

g. Community organisation staffing profile

- The staffing profile of the community organisation, including characteristics such as staffing saturation and typical staff turnover rates, should be investigated specifically as part of the context of the community, and considered in terms of implications when negotiating and planning service activities. For example, when training is provided as a service activity in organisations with high staff turnover rates, measures to ensure carry-over of the information to new staff members should be put in place (e.g. students can create a training DVD and manual in addition to *in vivo* training).

5.3.3.2 *Role players as facilitators*

Recommendations regarding role players as potential facilitators to enabling occupation through service learning are integrated into several of the other recommendations. For the sake of brevity, these will not be repeated. Only one recommendation is extrapolated from the findings of this study relating to role players, which was not discussed elsewhere:

- Community representatives should be viewed as a separate group of role players in current and future occupational therapy service learning engagements, in order to emphasise the distinct roles of community representatives for other role players. For example, other role players (such as university staff and students) may regard consultation with community representatives as equating to consultation with community members. When these two groups are separated as suggested, other role players may be more likely to consult with community representatives, and then employ the functions of the community representatives as gatekeepers and communication mediators to consult further with other community members and community organisation staff. This may potentially enhance communication and collaborative planning strategies (cf. 5.3.3.3) that act as facilitators to enablement, and contribute to enablement foundations such as community participation, choice, risk and responsibility, and power sharing.

5.3.3.3 *Strategies as facilitators*

Recommendations for the operationalisation of strategies as facilitators of enablement, as depicted in Figure 15 and 15a, are made for each of the strategies, namely communication, collaborative planning, interdependence, foster relationships, risk management and maintenance- and exit strategies.

a. Communication

- A communication structure should be formalised in all service learning engagements, right from the formation stage of the partnership. This formalised communication structure should specify who is responsible for which aspects of communication, how communication will

take place, when and where it will take place. Preferences regarding these operational characteristics of communication are unique to each community and should be negotiated collaboratively between all role players in the engagement. The university where the study was conducted provides valuable guidelines for partnerships in service learning, among others in documents such as the *Guidelines for Service Learning Collaboration*. This agreement template makes provision for the formalisation of various aspects of the partnership, of which a communication structure is one.

- Clarity and transparency in feedback should be prioritised in all communication. In particular, clear communication regarding student schedules was pointed out by participants in this study as a vital aspect of clarity in occupational therapy service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.1. b and 4.3.2.2. c). Linking this recommendation with the foundational principle of agency, the enablement foundation of community participation and other strategies such as collaborative planning, it is suggested that occupational therapy service learning students' schedules should not only be communicated with communities timeously and accurately, but that communities should be consulted in advance, before compiling student schedules, in order to negotiate student schedules that are desirable to the community and feasible within the context of the academic programmes of students.
- Role clarification on the responsibilities of all role players should also be a priority in service learning engagements and should be negotiated collaboratively and communicated clearly with each community. It is specifically recommended that 'non-traditional' roles should be explored, such as placing community members in roles where they convey knowledge to students in a way that is also reciprocally beneficial to the community (cf. 4.3.1.3. c). Placing community members in the roles of 'experts' enhances reciprocity in service learning engagements, and also assists in allaying power imbalances in partnerships.
- Feedback should be given regularly and in a way that is accessible to communities. Formalised communication structures, as recommended earlier, should be utilised to afford all role players the opportunity to give relevant and timeous feedback. For example, students could give feedback regarding the progress of service activities while community representatives may give formative feedback to students regarding their experience of students' service delivery. Provision must also be made for this recommendation in student schedules and outcomes at the occupational therapy department where this study was conducted.
- Preferred communication media should be negotiated with role players. Face-to-face communication should, in principle, be prioritised and scheduled, especially between community representatives and academic staff who may not be present in the community as often as students. The use of augmentative communication media should be negotiated specifically so as to ensure that preferred communication media are used in each service learning engagement (cf. 4.3.1.1. a).

- Community representatives' potential facilitating roles as communication mediators should be negotiated explicitly to ensure that all stakeholders are comfortable with what is expected of them in the partnership, and feel capable of fulfilling such expectations (cf. 4.3.2.3. a).
- b. Collaborative planning
- The review of literature presented in Chapter 2 provided arguments for a service-oriented approach to service learning, rather than a content-oriented approach; among other reasons because a service-oriented approach better fosters reciprocity and equitable distribution of power in the service learning engagement (cf. 2.4.5.2). The occupational therapy department where this study was conducted is currently moving towards a more service-oriented approach in many of its service learning engagements. In light of the findings of this study in support of collaborative planning in occupational therapy service learning engagements as a facilitator of enablement, it is recommended that this department makes an explicit commitment to a service-oriented approach to service learning.
 - Within a service-oriented approach to service learning, collaborative planning of service goals and service activities of students in occupational therapy service learning engagements should be a priority (cf. 4.3.1.2). It is suggested that preliminary collaborative planning should be done between academic staff and community representatives (in consultation with community members); but that students will also be included in collaborative planning of service activities as partners in service learning (cf. 2.5.1.5). The extent to which students are expected to contribute to the planning and decision-making process, and the amount of guidance received from academic staff, should be graded according to students' academic years (cf. 4.4.1).
 - Detailed planning of partnership goals, service activities, and the roles and responsibilities of respective role players in the implementation of the action plan should be done in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders (cf. 4.3.1.1. b; 4.3.1.2. a). In practice, that would entail that students will not be expected to present their planning to community representatives (as is usually expected in the current occupational therapy service learning programme), but that planning will be done together with representatives from the community and the responsible academic staff member.
 - During both the planning and implementation stages of the collaboratively selected service activities, stakeholder buy-in from relevant stakeholders should be sought; especially those who were not necessarily part of the decision-making process (cf. 4.3.1.2. b).
 - The results of this study indicated that service goals and activities that connect with existing projects, structures (such as school curricula) or activities in the community have a greater probability of being sustainable and enabling (cf. 4.3.1.2. d). It is, therefore, recommended that when service goals and –activities are collaboratively explored and chosen,

opportunities for connecting with existing structures or programmes in the community should be considered.

c. Interdependence

- It is recommended that power relations should be interrogated explicitly together with all role players in service learning engagements, both as part of initial contracting as well as during continuous re-evaluation of service learning engagements. Although some of the participants in this study voiced positive experiences of power sharing (cf. 4.3.1.3. c), there were other participants who had negative, disabling experiences in this regard (cf. 4.3.2.2. a). Therefore, it is imperative that the distribution of power in occupational therapy service learning engagements should be scrutinised to ensure that these engagements are not exploitative, and that power is distributed equitably.
- The findings of this study suggest that working together with community members towards partnership goals (e.g. as opposed to doing things *for* community members), made a positive contribution towards nurturing interdependence in occupational therapy service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.3. b). It is, therefore, recommended that service goals and – activities should be collaboratively chosen in such a way as to allow for opportunities for occupational therapy students and community members to work together towards such goals.
- In order to facilitate interdependence in occupational therapy service learning engagements, it is recommended that the strengths of role players be utilised to the benefit of all. For example, students can access community members' expertise, recognising community members' legitimate bearing of expert knowledge for relevant aspects of the service learning engagements, and so contributing to interdependence as opposed to dependency in the service learning engagement (cf. 4.3.1.3. a).
- It is of paramount importance that mutual benefit within the partnership should be ensured and evaluated. It is recommended that the attainment of the goals of the service learning engagement should be evaluated in collaboration with communities on an annual basis to ensure that all parties benefit from the partnership in an equitable manner.

d. Fostering relationships

- Findings of this and other studies show that communities greatly value relationships characterised by trust and respect (cf. 4.3.1.3. a). It is, therefore, recommended that academic staff and students should make an active effort to portray these relational attitudes by, for example, respecting communities' schedules (e.g. being on time, making appointments and not just showing up without an appointment, keeping to scheduled appointments), familiarising themselves and accessing the correct authorities and lines of communication within community organisations, acting in a professional manner without

inferring authority (cf. 4.3.1.5. a), keeping to promises and not making promises that cannot be kept.

- Being present and showing a genuine interest in communities emerged from the findings of this study as a strategy that can contribute to fostering relationships with communities, and enhancing communities' confidence (cf. 4.3.1.4. b). Occupational therapy staff and students should, therefore, not underestimate the value that an egalitarian presence can have in communities, and utilise the enabling power of demonstrating an authentic interest in communities to optimise endeavours geared towards occupational enablement and occupational justice. Building trusting relationships by showing a genuine interest in the well-being of communities may also provide a platform for occupational therapy staff and students to interrogate injustices that are identified within communities in a non-threatening manner.
- The findings of this study suggest that making memories together with communities may contribute to fostering relationships, and may also enhance the potential sustainability of the effects of service learning 'interventions' (such as health promotion events) (cf. 4.3.1.4. c). This unique contribution of this study provides a powerful strategy for role players in occupational therapy service learning engagements to promote health, well-being and occupational justice in communities. The recommendation is, therefore, that ways in which powerful memories can be created, such as events days, continue to form part of occupational therapy service learning engagements in the future.
- Sharing new information, ideas and energy emerged as another contributor to enablement in occupational therapy service learning engagements in this study (cf. 4.3.1.4. a). In light of these findings, students in occupational therapy service learning engagements can be encouraged to share ideas with communities enthusiastically, but should also be cautioned that enthusiasm should not override reciprocity and proper planning (cf. 4.3.2.2. b).
- Both the literature review (cf. 2.5.1.3 and 2.5.4.3) and the findings of this study (cf. 4.3.2.3. d) have pointed to the importance of developing cultural competence among role players in occupational therapy service learning engagements. Developing cultural competence may also contribute in meaningful ways to a better mutual understanding among role players, and thus to fostering relationships. As recommended earlier (5.3.3.1. f), ways of developing cultural competence, particularly among university staff and students, but also other interested role players, should be sought in occupational therapy service learning engagements. Ways of fostering inter-professional competence, particularly in the presence of differing professional ontologies, is also recommended.

e. Risk management

- Building on the enablement foundation of choice, risk and responsibility, students and lecturers should engage consciously and proactively with potential risks in service learning.

The university where the study was conducted provides comprehensive risk management guidelines for service learning, which is also available on the institution's website. However, as a service learning supervisor, I have experienced that some adverse events were caused by students and/or lecturers naively dismissing risk management guidelines such as specific travel routes. In addition, due to time limitations in the academic programmes of students, risk management in service learning at the occupational therapy department where the study was conducted is often only mentioned during orientation lectures, leaving it up to students to peruse and then sign risk management documentation. Risk management then becomes simply an administrative task of which the seriousness is undervalued. Thus, it is recommended that risk management must be engaged with seriously, and specific risk management guidelines, such as those provided in the university's risk management guidelines for service learning, must be discussed with students in person in addition to providing documentation, in order to emphasise the gravity of the matter.

- Proactive, as opposed to reactive, identification and management of risks in occupational therapy service learning engagements, particularly those pointed out in this study (e.g. student safety, project failure, community fatigue), is recommended. Students may be asked, for example, to specifically reflect on potential risks of the service learning engagement for themselves and the community, and compile an action plan to indicate how these risks will be curbed. Similarly, lecturers and community representatives may reflect on potential risks collaboratively during initial contracting stages, and return to these in later stages of the engagement, to ensure that risks are managed proactively and constructively to the satisfaction of all role players. This may also be another opportunity for employing strategies such as dialogical communication.
- Although one would assume this to be the case already, it is recommended that risk management strategies must be consciously aligned with institutional policies so as to ensure, for example, that cover provided by the university's insurance, will be valid. At the department where the study was conducted, risk management guidelines can be verified against institutional policies on an annual basis by the service learning coordinator.
- As mentioned in Chapter 4 (cf. 4.3.2.4. a), the recommendation is made to consider allowing students to *choose* or apply for service learning sites rather than being *placed* at sites in occupational therapy service learning modules. This may be particularly relevant to rural service learning sites where the risks involved in travelling long distances are greater; allowing students to have choices over the risks that they are willing to take for the sake of their own learning experiences. This could be beneficial to universities and communities from a liability perspective (Bender et al., 2006, p. 119).
- Literature indicates that communities view the preparation of students to work with communities as the responsibility of the universities (4.3.2.4. b). Since unpreparedness for the realities of a specific community may put students and communities at risk, thorough

preparation of students for the realities of the community should form part of students' service learning modules. Although students have a general orientation lecture to service learning annually at the occupational therapy department where the study was conducted, very little time is spent on orientating students to community sites in as far as it relates to specific realities of each community (e.g. the pathologies such as dementia that they may encounter at residential care facilities). It is recommended that time should be allocated within service learning modules for service learning supervisors at respective service learning sites to prepare students regarding specific issues they may encounter at the site. Examples of preparation activities may be to provide students with reading material on health conditions they may encounter in the community, and facilitating a discussion with students about the topic. Managers at service learning sites, and community representatives in particular, can successfully be included in such preparation activities; however, the responsibility remains with the university to prepare students adequately.

f. Maintenance and exit strategies

- Continuity of service learning related activities should be promoted through regular contact and effective communication and feedback. Where regular contact is not feasible or desirable within the context of the service learning engagement (e.g. student academic programme requirements – cf. 5.3.3.1 e), formal mechanisms for feedback to next students, and accessible feedback to communities, is vital.
- Maintenance strategies should be included in initial planning for service learning activities. This study has indicated that planning maintenance strategies is of particular importance when infrastructure development (cf. 4.3.1.6. d) and training form part of service learning activities, and particularly when contextual characteristics such as high staff turnover volumes are present (4.3.2.3. c).
- Delivering tangible products, such as information leaflets, DVDs, games and posters relating to the service activities, is a strategy that may contribute to the sustainability of the effects of collaborative service activities (cf. 4.3.1.6. c).
- Planning of exit strategies should be a collaborative endeavour with the community. University staff and students should be particularly sensitive to share power in decisions relating to exit strategies.
- Literature and findings of this study suggest that additional partners such as government departments, non-profit organisations and community volunteers, may contribute positively to sustainability in service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.2.2. d and 5.3.3.1. b). As recommended earlier, looking for opportunities to include additional partners in service learning engagements is recommended.

5.3.4 Recommendations relating to the activities and objectives of occupational therapy service learning engagements

Examples of activities and objectives for occupational therapy service learning engagements, as they emerged from this study, are presented in Figure 15. The following recommendations are made relating to the activities and objectives of occupational therapy service learning engagements:

- The objectives presented in the framework are very broad, and it is recommended that specific objectives should be refined and formulated for each occupational therapy service learning engagement.
- These specific objectives should be stated in ‘SMART’ terms – they should be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-related (Haughney, 2015).
- Objectives should be collaboratively negotiated (cf. 5.2.7.3), and special attention should be paid to contextual factors that may influence the attainment of objectives.
- The academic year of students involved in service learning should be considered when selecting objectives and service activities. It is recommended that junior students (first and second academic years) should primarily be involved in health promotion-based activities, while senior students (third and fourth academic years) can focus more on intervention-based and social change oriented objectives.

5.3.5 Recommendations relating to the outcomes of occupational therapy service learning engagements

The approach to service learning that is followed (cf. 2.4.5) will necessarily impact on the type of outcomes that can realistically be targeted. The overarching outcomes of social and occupational justice, health and well-being require a social change and service-oriented approach to service learning. It is, therefore, recommended that, ideally, a social change and service-oriented approach should be followed in occupational therapy service learning engagements. Findings of this study suggested that there may also be room for project-based approaches to service learning; however, further investigation into and critical engagement with the apparent advantages and potential pitfalls of such an approach is needed before it can be recommended as a theoretically and practically desirable approach (cf. 5.4).

5.4 Recommendations for future research

The following recommendations are made for future research in the fields of service learning and occupational therapy:

- Research into the efficacy, benefits and pitfalls of a project-based approach to service learning, in occupational therapy service learning engagements as well as other disciplinary fields.
- Critical investigation into the intricacies of power relations in occupational therapy service learning engagements.
- Research into the effects that changed practices, which occurred after the execution phase of this study, have had on how communities perceive occupational therapy service learning engagements at this university. Examples of such changes include moving from a content-oriented approach to a service-oriented approach and utilising a different budgeting structure.
- Long-term impact studies on the impact of occupational therapy service learning engagements in communities.
- Further research into the unique functions and roles of community representatives in service learning engagements (cf. 4.3.1.1. c).
- Research into questions that are relevant to specific communities – that is, research questions that interest and benefit such a community. Identifying and investigating such research questions would require a participatory research approach, which is strongly recommended in order to enhance reciprocal knowledge generation through service learning.
- Following this descriptive study, an evaluative study may now be more feasible to address the initially planned purpose of this study (cf. 3.1). The framework for enabling occupation through service learning suggested in this chapter (cf. 5.3) may provide context-specific theoretical grounding for an evaluation research study, and could assist in designing data collection instruments for a quantitative, qualitative and/or mixed-method evaluation study. In view of the previous recommendation, a participatory approach, also to evaluation research, is strongly recommended.
- This study has highlighted several contentious issues relating to potentially dominant discourses (cf. 2.4.5.1, 4.4.2 and 4.4.3). Critical investigation into the discourses in occupational therapy education in general, and specifically in occupational therapy service learning engagements, is recommended, since this study's epistemological framework is not located within the ambit of a critical paradigm.
- The following section points out the limitations of this study in attempting to describe the enablement of *occupation* as a temporal, contextual and individually appraised construct, from the perceptions of community representatives (cf. 5.5). Future studies that explore occupational enablement from the perceptions of community members themselves is recommended to expand on the anecdotal descriptions of community representatives presented in this study.

- Further investigation into the ethical issues that arose during the course of this study, particularly those relating to the personal acknowledgement of individual participants, as co-creators of knowledge, in a study positioned in the constructivist paradigm.

5.5 Limitations of the study

Limitations of the study that were anticipated during the planning stages were presented in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.6.3), namely the limitations posed by interviewing only community representatives, and the descriptive nature of the study. The following aspects are viewed as additional limitations of this study, and should be considered when interpreting and utilising the findings and conclusions presented:

- The contextual nature of the study (cf. 3.3.1) poses limitations in terms of the transferability of the findings of this study. Refer to Chapter 3 (cf. 3.3.8.2) for a comprehensive discussion on strategies that were employed to enhance the potential transferability of the findings.
- The findings of this study are temporal in nature. 'Perceptions' as investigated in this study, which was operationally defined as people's interpretations of their experiences (cf. 1.2), are particularly susceptible to changes over time, as (1) people's interpretations of experiences may change based on new information or different experiences, and (2) the experience of the phenomenon itself (i.e. the service learning engagement) may change over time, as the phenomenon changes. Therefore, the perceptions of community representatives presented in this study may change over time. Consequently, continuous investigation into communities' experiences and perceptions of occupational therapy service learning engagements is necessary to tailor these engagements to the needs and objectives of communities.
- The individually appraised, temporal and contextual nature of occupation (cf. 2.2.3), and particularly that of the associated occupational rights such as meaning and balance (cf. 5.2.1.2. a), renders occupation a construct that really cannot be described from the perceptions of anybody other than the persons 'doing' the occupation(s) themselves. Therefore, descriptions of *occupational* enablement of community members in this study were mostly anecdotal and should be viewed as a limitation of this study. Future research studies may be undertaken to expand these anecdotal descriptions by attempting to describe 'enabling occupation' from the perceptions of community members themselves (cf. 5.4).
- Perhaps the most glaring limitation of this study, when taking into account my own philosophical stance (cf. Preface) as well as the nature and character of occupational therapy and service learning is that this study was not done with a formalised participatory approach (such as utilising participatory action research). One reviewer on the Expert Committee panel evaluating the research proposal for this study at that stage pointed that

out. In retrospect, I support this reviewer's argument, that a "...Participatory Action Research approach [would] enable participants to become co-researchers who would determine the research question together with the candidate herself...I am arguing here for full participation of the community participants as 'agents' who are capable to make decisions about their lives and what they want..." (Mahlomaholo, 2012, p. 1). Cruz and Giles (2000, p. 32) also advocate the use of participatory action research in service learning. Therefore, partnering with community representatives within a participatory methodological approach could have been an ideal approach for this study. However, grounded arguments for the chosen methodology are presented in Chapter 3 (cf. 3.1 and 3.3.1) and these, while assuming the posture of intellectual humility, remain valid arguments. In addition, I have attempted to implement a participatory ethos within the chosen methodology, such as changing the research question to allow participants to share their experiences in a way that they wanted to, incorporating participants in data analysis through participant verification, and taking the findings of the study back to participants in an accessible format (e.g. posters).

5.6 Value of the study

Predictions regarding the intended significance of the study were made in Chapter 1 (cf. 1.6). Firstly, the study endeavoured to access the community voice on occupational therapy service learning engagements (cf. 1.6.1), and secondly endeavoured to make a contribution to informing and improving existing and future service learning practices at the occupational therapy department where the study was conducted (cf. 1.6.2). Through describing the perceptions of community representatives regarding occupational enablement, as well as the barriers and facilitators to the process, this study has contributed to the existing body of knowledge by providing a unique community perspective on occupational therapy service learning engagements.

In addition, through listening to and learning from the perceptions of community representatives, this study enabled the researcher to draw up a framework for enabling occupation through service learning to inform current and future practices in occupational therapy service learning engagements (cf. 5.3). This authentic framework, which is based on the perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements, demonstrates the value placed on the voice of the community pertaining to these engagements. It is hoped that this framework will make some contribution, albeit small, to realising effective and contextually relevant service learning engagements that promote social and occupational justice within the disciplinary field of occupational therapy (cf. 1.2).

Furthermore, the findings of this study and the resulting suggested framework contributes to the occupational therapy body of knowledge by providing practical recommendations to occupational therapy departments for the management and implementation of service learning in this disciplinary field.

Expanding on the intended significance of the study, other strengths that add to the value of the study can now be concluded retrospectively. To do this, criticism against and recommendations for contributions to the existing body of knowledge, specifically in service learning literature, was consulted to demonstrate how this study has potentially made a contribution to the existing knowledge base by addressing some of these gaps, albeit subject to limitations of context and time. A comparison of the criticisms of and recommendations for contributions to the existing body of knowledge, and the potential contribution of this study, is summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Potential contributions of this study to the existing body of knowledge

Criticism of and recommendations for contributions to the existing body of knowledge	Potential contribution of this study
<p>Past qualitative studies regarding the community outcomes of service learning tended to be programme evaluations, not research, and are not guided by theoretical frameworks (Mc Menamin et al., 2014, p. 303; Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 402).</p> <p>Alsop et al. (2006, p. 270) call for research regarding the outcomes of occupational therapy service learning engagements in South Africa.</p>	<p>This study was structured as a research study, not a programme evaluation, and investigated the perceptions of community representatives regarding the intended outcome of occupational therapy service learning engagements, that is, 'enabling occupation'. The study was guided by theoretical underpinnings situated in the disciplinary field of occupational therapy (e.g. 'enablement' and 'occupation'). Therefore, the findings of the study may make a theoretically grounded contribution to understand better how community representatives perceive service learning engagements, specifically in occupational therapy.</p>
<p>Past qualitative studies regarding community outcomes of service learning do not address standards for trustworthiness (Bringle & Clayton, 2013, p. 550; Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 402).</p>	<p>Care was taken throughout the study to address all aspects of trustworthiness, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (cf. 3.3.8). Therefore, this study makes a contribution by yielding results that are trustworthy by also illustrating the limitations in trustworthiness in a transparent manner.</p>
<p>Qualitative studies into community outcomes of service learning should follow inductive approaches to "reveal underlying themes in, and contextual meanings of, problems, changes and outcomes..." (Reeb & Folger, 2013, p. 410)</p> <p>"Studies focused on process rather than outcomes may expand our understanding of the impact of [service learning]" (Mc Menamin et al., 2014, p. 303).</p>	<p>This study followed an inductive approach (cf. 3.3.7). Consequently the findings of the study not only revealed participants' perceptions of the outcomes of occupational therapy service learning engagements (i.e. 'enabling occupation'), but also provides insights into the processes (e.g. barriers and facilitating factors) that influence the outcomes of service learning in communities.</p>

5.7 Final reflections and closure

This research study has taken me on a journey of deep learning and many insights. Being so intricately involved in the entire research process as the qualitative design and constructivist paradigm of this study predicted, taught me about myself, about research, about service learning and occupational therapy and most importantly, about the communities that we engage with, in ways that irrevocably altered my own perceptions of the 'big picture' (cf. Preface).

With reference to the philosophical stance declared in the Preface to this study, I would like to offer the following reflections on the meaning of this study for myself, and hopefully also for role players in occupational therapy service learning engagements.

This study has made a contribution towards answering my **pragmatic** concerns with what works and what does not work in occupational therapy service learning engagements, and the difference that research makes, particularly in how the findings of this study enabled the construction of a framework for enabling occupation through service learning. However, the potential difference that this study could make for members of communities in occupational therapy service learning engagements lies not so much in the findings or the resulting framework and recommendations, as in the way that the findings of the study are utilised in future occupational therapy service learning engagements to the benefit of communities.

My tangible experiences of the co-creation of knowledge with participants in this study, stemming from the **constructivist** paradigm informing the methodology of this study, have led me to challenge many of my previously held assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the creation thereof. In a very concrete way, this study has led me to a much deeper understanding of what it means to co-create, to co-exist, and to belong.

Not for a moment do I claim to understand these notions fully. However, having lived much of my life influenced by a predominantly individualist worldview, this deepened understanding has profoundly altered the way in which I view the world and reality. Perhaps together with fellow academics influenced by predominantly Western worldviews, I have yet to cognitise concepts (and their related constituents) such as 'community', 'reciprocity', 'becoming', 'belonging', 'meaning' and 'well-being' also as understood and lived by people with a worldview that overtly embraces the intrinsic mechanisms of a collective interconnectedness of humanity. I am only gradually becoming aware of the complexities posed by a critical engagement with ontological dispositions on a meta-level, something with which the relatively young profession of occupational therapy seemingly also has come to grapple with only recently (e.g. Hammell, 2014; Zango Martín et al., 2014). I would hope that this study may serve a purpose of providing some point of departure for future critical engagements with reference to occupational therapy

and service learning, which may serve the **transformative** paradigmatic purposes that initially informed this study.

In closing, the words of Eduardo Galeano, cited by Albuquerque, ring inspiringly true in the context of this study:

They are small things, they don't end poverty, they don't make us overcome underdevelopment, they don't socialise the media, and they don't expropriate Ali Baba's caves. But maybe they unleash the happiness of doing and translate that into actions. At the end of the day, acting upon reality and changing it, even if a little bit, is the only way to prove that reality can be transformed (Galeano (n.d.) in Albuquerque, 2011, p.169).

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APPENDIX A

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CAOT Publications ACE Copyright Request

December 10 2014

Elize Janse van Rensburg
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Dear Liezel,

According to your request, you would like permission to use the figure 4.2 diagram to be used in your master's dissertation titled "Enabling occupation through service learning: Perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagement" presented at the University of Free State

Figure 4.2 Enablement Foundation: Client-centered, Occupation –based in Townsend, E. A., Polatajko, H. J., & Craik J.(2007). Enabling Occupation II: Advancing an Occupational Therapy Vision for Health, Well-Being, & Justice through Occupation. P. 101 Ottawa, On, CAOT Publication ACE

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Thank you
Yours sincerely,

Stéphane Rochon
CAOT Publications Administrator

CTTC Building, 3400-1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, ON K1S 5R1 Canada
Tel: (613) 523-2268 • 1-800-434-2268 • Fax: (613) 523-2552 • www.caot.ca



Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
Association canadienne des ergothérapeutes

CAOT Publications ACE Copyright Request

April 28 2015

Elize Janse van Rensburg
Junior Lecturer: Occupational Therapy
PO Box Postbus 339
Bloemfontein 9300
Republic of South Africa

Dear Elize,

According to your request, you would like permission to use the figure 4.2 diagram to be used in your framework titled "A framework for occupational enablement through service learning in occupational therapy" presented at the University of Free State. An adaptation to the figure 4.2 from "client participation" to "community participation" will be made for the framework.

Figure 4.2 Enablement Foundation: Client-centered, Occupation-based, in Townsend, E.A., In E.A. Polatajko, H.J., & Craik, J. (2007) *Enabling Occupation II: Advancing an Occupational Therapy Vision for Health, Well-Being, & Justice through Occupation*. p.101 Ottawa, ON, CAOT Publications ACE.

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Thank you
Yours sincerely,

Stéphanie Rochon
CAOT Publications Administrator

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APPENDIX B

Permission letters to sites

Department of Occupational Therapy
Christiaan de Wet Building
University of the Free State

24 May 2013

XXX
XXX
XXX

Dear XXX

PERMISSION PERTAINING TO RESEARCH STUDY


I hereby request your permission to conduct a study titled *"Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning? Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements in the Free State."* with representatives at your institution involved in service learning engagements with the Occupational Therapy Department at the University of the Free State.

Limited evidence for the effect of service learning in communities, from the perspective of communities, exists. Therefore the study will attempt to evaluate occupational therapy service learning interventions in communities from the perceptions of community representatives using qualitative research methodologies. Investigation into this topic is necessary in order to investigate the value of occupational therapy service learning activities for communities, and to investigate factors that facilitate or hamper the achievement of community outcomes through service learning, in order to guide future service learning activities.

The participation of representatives from your institution would make an invaluable contribution to the research and we would greatly appreciate their involvement.

Please refer to the attached information document for a summary of what participation in the study will entail for representatives from your organisation. Attached to this letter you will find the protocol for the execution of the study. I hereby request your permission to approach representatives from your organisation for participation in the study.

Sincerely



Elize Janse van Rensburg
Student: M. Occupational Therapy / Higher Education Studies
University of the Free State

Please mark as appropriate:

- I give permission for execution of the study.
- I do not give permission for execution of the study.

XXX
XXX

27 Mei 2013

XXX
XXX
XXX

Geagte XXX


INGELIGTE TOESTEMMING MET BETREKKING TOT NAVORSINGSTUDIE

Hiermee versoek ek u toestemming om 'n studie getitel *"Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning? Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements in the Free State."* uit te voer met verteenwoordiger(s) van u organisasie wat betrokke is by diensleer aktiwiteite met die Arbeidsterapie Departement van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat.

Daar is beperkte bewyse beskikbaar t.o.v. die effek van diensleer in gemeenskappe, vanuit die oogpunt van gemeenskappe. Daarom sal die studie deur middel van kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodes poog om die effek van Arbeidsterapie diensleer intervensies in gemeenskappe te evalueer, vanuit die persepsie van gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers. Ondersoek na hierdie onderwerp is noodsaaklik ten einde die waarde van Arbeidsterapie diensleer aktiwiteite vir gemeenskappe te ondersoek, en om ondersoek in te stel na faktore wat die bereiking van gemeenskapsuitkomste d.m.v. diensleer bevorder en strem ten einde toekomstige diensleer aktiwiteite te rig. Verwys asseblief na die aangehegte inligtingsdokument vir 'n opsomming van wat deelname aan die studie sal behels vir verteenwoordiger(s) van u organisasie.

Die deelname van verteenwoordiger(s) van u instansie sal waardevolle bydrae tot die navorsing maak, en ons sal groot waardering vir hul deelname hê. Aangeheg hierby sal u die protokol vir die uitvoering van die studie vind. Hiermee versoek ek dus u toestemming om verteenwoordiger(s) van u organisasie te nader vir deelname aan die studie.

By voorbaat dank.



Elize Janse van Rensburg
Student: M. Arbeidsterapie / Hoër Onderwysstudies
Universiteit van die Vrystaat

Merk asseblief soos toepaslik:

- Ek verleen toestemming vir die uitvoering van die studie.
- Ek verleen nie toestemming vir uitvoering van die studie nie.

XXX
XXX

APPENDIX C

Information documents to participants and informed consent forms



INFORMATION DOCUMENT

RESEARCHERS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Elize Janse van Rensburg
(Student: M. OT/HES)

Department of Occupational Therapy
University of the Free State
Tel: 051 401 2829
Cell: 082 840 4080

Mrs. T. Rauch van der Merwe
(Study Leader)

Department of Occupational Therapy
University of the Free State
Tel: 051 401 2829

Prof. M.A. Erasmus
(Study Leader)

Division: Service Learning
University of the Free State
Tel: 051 401 3732

Secretariat of the Ethics Committee

Faculty of Health Sciences
University of the Free State
Tel: 051 405 2812

Dear Service Learning Community Partner,

Background Information

Service learning is used as a teaching method in the training of occupational therapy students at various universities in South Africa. It appears that service learning holds benefits for universities, students and communities, although challenges also exist. However, there is very little published information available on the effect that service learning has in communities, as evaluated from the perceptions of members of the communities themselves.

Proposed Study

In fulfillment of the requirements for the degree *M. Occupational Therapy / Higher Education Studies*, I propose to undertake a study titled: *“Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning? Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements.”* In this study I aim to investigate the perceptions of community representatives about occupational therapy service learning engagements by making use of the following methods:

- Studying documents (such as service learning agreements) in an effort to identify the intended outcomes of OT SL engagements.



- Conducting semi-structured interviews with community representatives in an effort to better understand the perceptions of community representatives with regard to OT SL engagements.
- Following the interviews with community representatives and analysis of the content of these interviews, I will do a follow-up interview, either with community representatives individually as previously, or in groups (“focus groups”). Community representatives will be given the choice as to how they would like to conduct this second interview.

A semi-structured interview is a data collection method during which participants are asked a series of open-ended questions, and given the opportunity to express their experiences, opinions and perceptions regarding the research topic. Interviews usually take between one and two hours, and will be arranged at a time and place convenient for the participant. Interviews will be recorded on digital voice-recorders, and after the interview these recordings will be transcribed (typed). Before analysis of the interviews takes place, all personally identifiable information will be removed from the transcription.

Ethical Considerations

All information that is collected will be handled strictly confidentially. No individually identifiable information will be released to any other person unless compelled by law, or specifically requested by the research participant in writing. All data will be stored securely, with only the researcher having access to it.

Research results may be submitted to a scientific journal for publication and/or presented at research congresses, which may lead to identification of the group, but not of individual participants.

Participation in the study does not involve any costs for the participants. Should the participant need to incur any transportation costs, the participant will be reimbursed at the prescribed UFS tariff. Participants will not otherwise be financially rewarded for participation in the study.

There are no risks involved in your participation in the study.

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. You will not lose any benefits or potential benefits should you decide not to participate in the study. You may also withdraw from the study at any stage.

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher at any stage if you are unsure about any aspect of the study, or require more information. Also use the contact information provided to report any effects that occur as a result of the study. You can also contact the Secretariat of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Free State if you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant. Their contact information is also provided on the first page of this document.

Your participation would make an invaluable contribution to the research and I would greatly appreciate their involvement.

Sincerely,



Elize Janse van Rensburg
Department of Occupational Therapy
University of the Free State



INFORMED CONSENT

INTRODUCTION:

You were asked to give consent for your participation in a research study titled *“Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning? Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements in the Free State.”*

You were informed about the study verbally and a written information document was also provided to you.

You may contact the researcher, **Elize Janse van Rensburg** at any time at **082 840 4080** should you have any questions regarding the research.

You may contact the Secretariat of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Free State at **051 405 2812** if you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant.

Your participation in the study is voluntary you will not be penalised or lose any benefits if you refuse to participate in the study or decide to terminate participation.

If you agree to participate, you will be given a signed copy of this document as well as the participant information sheet, which is a written summary of the research.

DECLARATION:

The research study was communicated clearly to me in verbal and written form. I understand what my involvement in the study entails and voluntarily give consent for my participation in the study.

Signed on the _____ day of _____, 20____ at _____
(place).

Signature

Name and surname in block letters

Thank you very much for being willing to participate in this research.





INLIGTINGSDOKUMENT

NAVORSERS EN ETIEK KOMITEE KONTAKBESONDERHEDE

Elize Janse van Rensburg
(Student: M. OT/HES)
Departement Arbeidsterapie
Universiteit van die Vrystaat
Tel: 051 401 2829
Sel: 082 840 4080

Mrs. T. Rauch van der Merwe
(Studieleier)
Departement Arbeidsterapie
Universiteit van die Vrystaat
Tel: 051 401 2829

Prof. M.A. Erasmus
(Studieleier)
Afdeling: Diensleer
Universiteit van die Vrystaat
Tel: 051 401 3732

Secretariat of the Ethics Committee
Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe
Universiteit van die Vrystaat
Tel: 051 405 2812

Geagte Diensleer Vennoot,

Agtergrondinligting

Diensleer word as onderrigmetode gebruik in die opleiding van Arbeidsterapie- studente by verskeie universiteite in Suid-Afrika. Dit kom voor asof diensleer voordele inhou vir universiteite, student en gemeenskappe, alhoewel daar ook uitdagings is. Daar is egter baie min gepubliseerde inligting beskikbaar oor die effek wat diensleer in gemeenskappe het, soos geëvalueer vanuit die persepsies van die lede van hierdie gemeenskappe.

Voorgestelde Studie

In voldoening aan die vereistes vir die graad *M. Arbeidsterapie / Hoër Onderwysstudies*, is ek van voorneme om 'n studie uit te voer met die titel: *"Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning? Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements."* Dit sal my oogmerk wees om die persepsies van gemeenskapsvertegenwoordigers te ondersoek rakende Arbeidsterapie diensleer betrokkenheid deur gebruik te maak van die volgende metodes:

- Bestudering van dokumente (bv. diensleer ooreenkomste) in 'n poging om die voorgename uitkomst van Arbeidsterapie diensleer betrokkenheid vas te stel.



- Uitvoer van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers in 'n poging om die persepsies van gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers m.b.t. Arbeidsterapie diensleer betrokkenheid beter te verstaan.
- Na afloop van onderhoude met gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers en analise van die inhoud van hierdie onderhoude, sal ek 'n opvolg-onderhoud uitvoer, of individueel met elke gemeenskapsverteenwoordiger soos voorheen, of in groepe ("fokusgroepe"). Gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers sal 'n keuse gegee word rakende hoe hulle hierdie tweede onderhoud gedoen wil hê.

'n Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoud is 'n data-insamelingsmetode waartydens deelnemers 'n reeks oop-einde vrae gevra word, en geleentheid gebied word om hul ervarings, menings en persepsies rakende die navorsingsonderwerp te lug. Onderhoude neem gewoonlik tussen een en twee uur, en sal gereël word op 'n tyd en plek wat geleë is vir die deelnemer. Onderhoude sal opgeneem word op digitale stemopnemers en na die onderhoud sal hierdie opnames getranskribeer (getik) word. Voordat analise van die onderhoude plaasvind, sal alle persoonlik identifiseerbare inligting van die transkripsie verwyder word.

Etiese Oorwegings

Alle inligting wat ingesamel word sal streng vertroulik hanteer word. Geen individueel identifiseerbare inligting sal aan enigiemand bekendgemaak word nie tensy sodanig verplig deur die wet, of spesifiek skriftelik versoek deur die deelnemer. Alle data sal veilig gestoor word waar slegs die navorser daartoe toegang het.

Navorsingsresultate mag aan 'n wetenskaplike tydskrif voorgelê word vir publikasie en/of voorgedra word by navorsingskongresse, wat mag lei tot identifisering van die groep, maar nie van individuele deelnemers nie.

Deelname aan die studie hou geen kostes vir die deelnemers in nie. Indien enige vervoerontkoste deur deelnemers aangegaan moet word, sal deelnemers daarvoor verged word teen die voorgeskrewe UV tarief. Deelnemers sal nie andersins finansieel vergoed word vir deelname aan die studie nie.

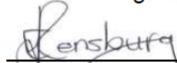
Daar is geen risiko's verbonde aan u deelname aan die studie nie.

U deelname is geheel en al vrywillig. U sal geen voordele of potensiële voordele verloor sou u besluit om nie aan die studie deel te neem nie. U mag te enige tyd aan die studie onttrek.

Moet asseblief nie huiwer om die navorser op enige stadium te kontak indien u onseker is oor enige aspek van die studie, of meer inligting benodig nie. Gebruik ook die kontakbesonderhede voorsien om enige gebeurlikhede wat spruit uit die studie, aan te meld. U kan ook die Sekretariaat van die Etiekkomitee van die Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe aan die Universiteit van die Vrystaat kontak indien u enige vrae het rakende u regte as navorsingsdeelnemer. Hulle kontakbesonderhede is ook op die eerste bladsy van hierdie dokument voorsien.

U deelname sal 'n baie waardevolle bydrae tot die navorsing maak, en ek sal u deelname opreg waardeer.

Vriendelike groete,



Elize Janse van Rensburg
Student: M. Arbeidsterapie / Hoër Onderwysstudies

INGELIGTE TOESTEMMING

INLEIDING:

U is gevra om toestemming te verleen vir deelname aan 'n navorsingstudie getitel *“Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning? Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements in the Free State.”*

U is mondelings ingelig oor die studie en 'n geskrewe inligtingsdokument is ook aan u verskaf.

U mag die navorser, **Elize Janse van Rensburg** te enige tyd kontak by **082 840 4080** indien u vrae oor die navorsing het.

U kan die Sekretariaat van die Etiekkomitee van die Fakulteit Gesondheidswetenskappe aan die Universiteit van die Vrystaat kontak by **051 405 2812** indien u enige vrae het rakende u regte as navorsingsdeelnemer.

U deelname aan die studie is vrywillig, en u sal nie gepenaliseer word of voordele verloor indien u wyer om aan die studie deel te neem of besluit om deelname te staak nie.

Indien u instem tot deelname aan die studie, word u van 'n getekende kopie van hierdie dokument asook 'n afskrif van die inligtingsdokument, wat 'n geskrewe opsomming is van die navorsing, voorsien.

VERKLARING:

Die navorsingstudie is duidelik in verbale en geskrewe vorm aan my gekommunikeer. Ek verstaan wat my betrokkeheid in die studie behels en gee vrywillig toestemming vir my deelname aan hierdie studie.

Geteken op die _____ dag van _____, 20__ te _____ (plek).

Handtekening

Naam en van in drukskrif

Baie dankie vir u bereidwilligheid om aan hierdie studie deel te neem.

APPENDIX D

Form for disclosure of interview information

Date: _____

I, _____ (full names), community representative of _____ (community or institution name), hereby request that the content of my interview with Elize Janse van Rensburg, Master's student in Occupational Therapy, be disclosed to _____ (name of individual if applicable) of _____ (name of institution).

I acknowledge that by requesting this disclosure, I am waiving the confidential treatment of the interview information in respect of the nominated person and institution above, and that I do so by my own choice, fully understanding the implications thereof.

Specifics of information to be disclosed:

Entire content of interview:

Only specific aspects (see below):

Specific aspects to be disclosed:

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

_____	_____	_____
.....	E. Janse van Rensburg
Community Representative	Researcher	Witness

APPENDIX E
Interview schedule

Research Question	Interview Questions	Onderhoud Vrae
<u>Primary Research Question:</u>	<u>Introductory Interview Question:</u>	<u>Inleidende Onderhoud Vraag</u>
How do community representatives perceive occupational enablement through service learning in occupational therapy service learning engagements at a South African university?	<i>Tell me about your service learning partnership with UFS?</i>	<i>Vertel my van julle diensleer vennootskap met die UV?</i>
<u>Subsidiary Research Questions:</u>	<u>Topic Guide:</u>	<u>Onderwerpgids</u>
What are the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements?	<p><i>What have you been striving to achieve in the community through the SL partnership with UFS?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Alternative or follow-up question:</u> <i>What has been your understanding of the intent with which UFS has been involved in your community?</i> 	<p><i>Waarna het julle gestreef om te bereik in die gemeenskap deur die DL vennootskap met die UV?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Alternatiewe of opvolg vraag:</u> <i>Wat het jy verstaan is die bedoeling waarmee die UV betrokke geraak het in julle gemeenskap?</i>
	<p><i>What features have characterised the SL engagement with UFS?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reciprocity & mutuality:</u> How have you gone about making decisions in the partnership (e.g. pertaining to the nature of the partnership / the nature of the service activities / identifying outcomes of the partnership etc.)? (Probe as separate questions). • <u>Choice, risk & responsibility:</u> What has been your experience of the choices / risk / responsibility you have had in this partnership? (Three separate questions). 	<p><i>Watter eienskappe het die DL betrokkenheid met die UV gekenmerk?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Wederkerigheid en gemeenskaplikheid:</u> Hoe het julle te werk gegaan met besluitneming in die vennootskap (bv. t.o.v. die aard van die vennootskap / die aard van die diensaktiwiteite / identifisering van die uitkoms van die vennootskap ens.)? (Gebruik as aparte vrae). • <u>Keuse, risiko & verantwoordelikeid:</u> Wat was jou ervaring van die keuses / risiko's / verantwoordelikhede wat jy in die vennootskap gehad het? (Drie aparte vrae).

<p>(What are the perceptions of community representatives regarding enabling occupation in occupational therapy service learning engagements? – continued)</p>	<p><i>In your opinion, what has changed in the community since you have entered into the SL engagement with UFS?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Vision of possibilities</u>: Probe aspects such as confidence, hope, trust, resilience, courage, transformation and empowerment from answers to question above. • <u>Change</u>: Probe relevant aspects for the specific community such as change in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Occupation (occupational performance components, performance skills, performance patterns, occupational performance areas) ○ Health ○ Well-being • <u>Justice</u>: Probe issues surrounding social, and specifically occupational justice, e.g. prejudice (e.g. with regard to disability), cultural and ethical competence, system injustices, social norms that may be constraining or constructive, issues of justice related to the environment and context of the community. • <u>Power sharing</u>: Probe issues of power-sharing and the client-centered nature of the SL partnership and engagement with students in the partnership. E.g. “What has been your (or the community’s) role in this partnership?” 	<p><i>Na jou mening, wat het verander in die gemeenskap vandat julle in die DL vennootskap met die UV betrokke geraak het?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Visie van moontlikhede</u>: Ondersoek aspekte soos selfvertroue, hoop, vertroue, moed, transformasie en bemagtiging vanuit die antwoorde tot bg. vraag. • <u>Verandering</u>: Ondersoek relevante aspekte vir die spesifieke gemeenskap bv. veranderinge t.o.v.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aktiwiteitsreekse (aktiwiteitsverrigtingskomponente, aktiwiteitsverrigtingsvaardighede, aktiwiteitsverrigtingsareas) ○ Gesondheid ○ Welstand • <u>Geregtigheid</u>: Ondersoek aspekte t.o.v. sosiale, en spesifiek “occupational” geregtigheid, bv. vooroordele (bv. t.o.v. gestremdheid), kulturele en etiese bevoegdheid, sisteem ongeregtighede, sosiale norms wat beperkend of konstruktief kan wees, kwessies van geregtigheid m.b.t. die omgewing en konteks van die gemeenskap. <p><u>Deel van mag</u>: Ondersoek kwessies t.o.v. deel van mag en kliënt-gesentreerde aard van die DL vennootskap en betrokkenheid met studente in die vennootskap. Bv. “Wat was jou (of die gemeenskap se) rol in hierdie vennootskap?”</p>
--	---	---

<p>What are the perceived barriers to enabling occupation through service learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What have the challenges been in the SL engagement?</i> • <i>What has prevented intended outcomes from being reached?</i> • <i>What else would the community have wanted from the partnership?</i> • <i>Why would you say has this not happened?</i> • <i>In your opinion, what can we learn from this that we can avoid or do differently in future / other SL partnerships to make it work more effectively?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wat was die uitdagings in die DL vennootskap?</i> • <i>Wat het verhoed dat die voorgenome uitkomst bereik word?</i> • <i>Wat anders sou die gemeenskap van die vennootskap wou hê?</i> • <i>Hoekom sou u sê het dit nie gebeur nie?</i> • <i>Na u mening, wat kan geleer word uit hierdie ondervinding wat in die toekoms / ander DL vennootskappe vermy kan word of anders gedoen kan word om dit meer effektief te laat werk?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the perceived facilitating factors to enabling occupation through service learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What has been the “recipe for success” in the SL engagement?</i> • <i>What have been the biggest success / value / contribution of the partnership?</i> • <i>What have been the biggest contributors to attainment of intended outcomes?</i> • <i>In your opinion, what can we learn from this SL engagement that we can apply in other settings to make SL partnerships more successful?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wat was die “resep vir sukses” in die DL vennootskap?</i> • <i>Wat was die grootste sukses / waarde / bydrae van die vennootskap?</i> • <i>Wat was die grootste bydraende faktore tot bereiking van voorgenome uitkomst?</i> • <i>Na u mening, wat kan geleer word uit hierdie DL vennootskap wat ons in ander opsette kan toepas om DL vennootskappe meer suksesvol te maak?</i>

APPENDIX F
Coding guideline

PROCESS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

Guideline for coders

The data analysis process suggested by Creswell (1998, pp. 147-148) and Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 140) will be utilised:

- *Identify statements that relate to the topic (horizontalisation of data):* The coders will seek statements in the transcriptions that relate to **enabling occupation, barriers and facilitators** in the OT SL process in enabling occupation and highlight the significant statements.

STEP 1.1: Highlight quotes that relate to enabling occupation, and barriers and facilitators to enablement. In the margin, use an “E” for quotes related to enablement, an “O” for quotes related to occupation, a “B” for perceived barriers and an “F” for perceived facilitators.

- Code the highlighted quotes using **descriptive coding** (Saldaña 2009:70):

Descriptive coding summarises in a word or short phrase – most often as a noun – the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data ... it is important that these codes are identifications of the topic, not abbreviations of the content. The topic is what is talked ... about. The content is the substance of the message.

STEP 1.2: Allocate descriptive codes to the highlighted sections of text.

- *Group statements into “meaning units”:* The coders then group the statements into categories or “meaning units”.

STEP 2: Organise the codes into categories (Saldaña 2009:12).

Note: According to Saldaña (2009:9) there may be “main” categories as well as subcategories if this is more suited to the data.

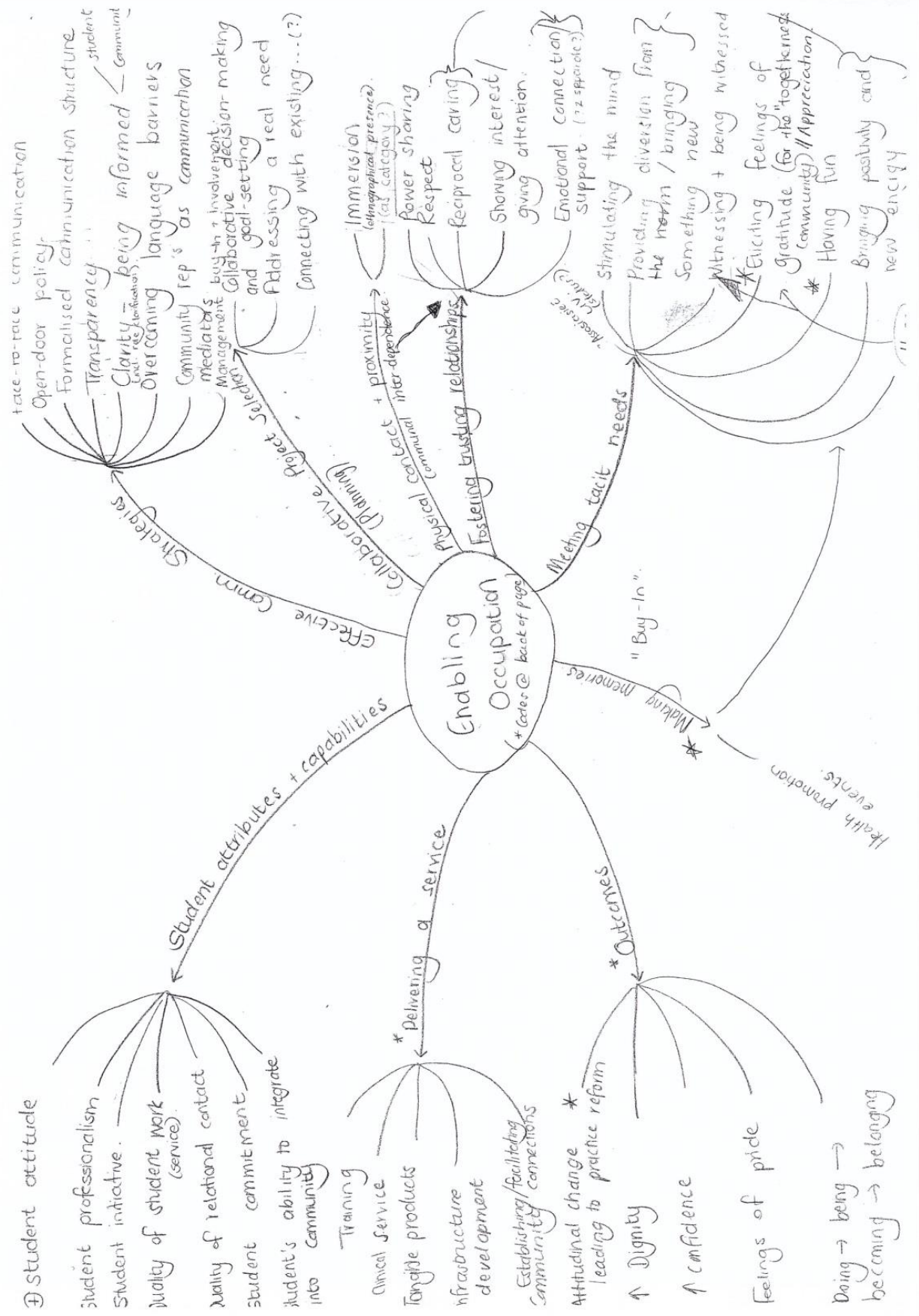
- *Construct a composite:* The researchers formulate an overall description of the meaning and the essence of community representatives’ perceptions.

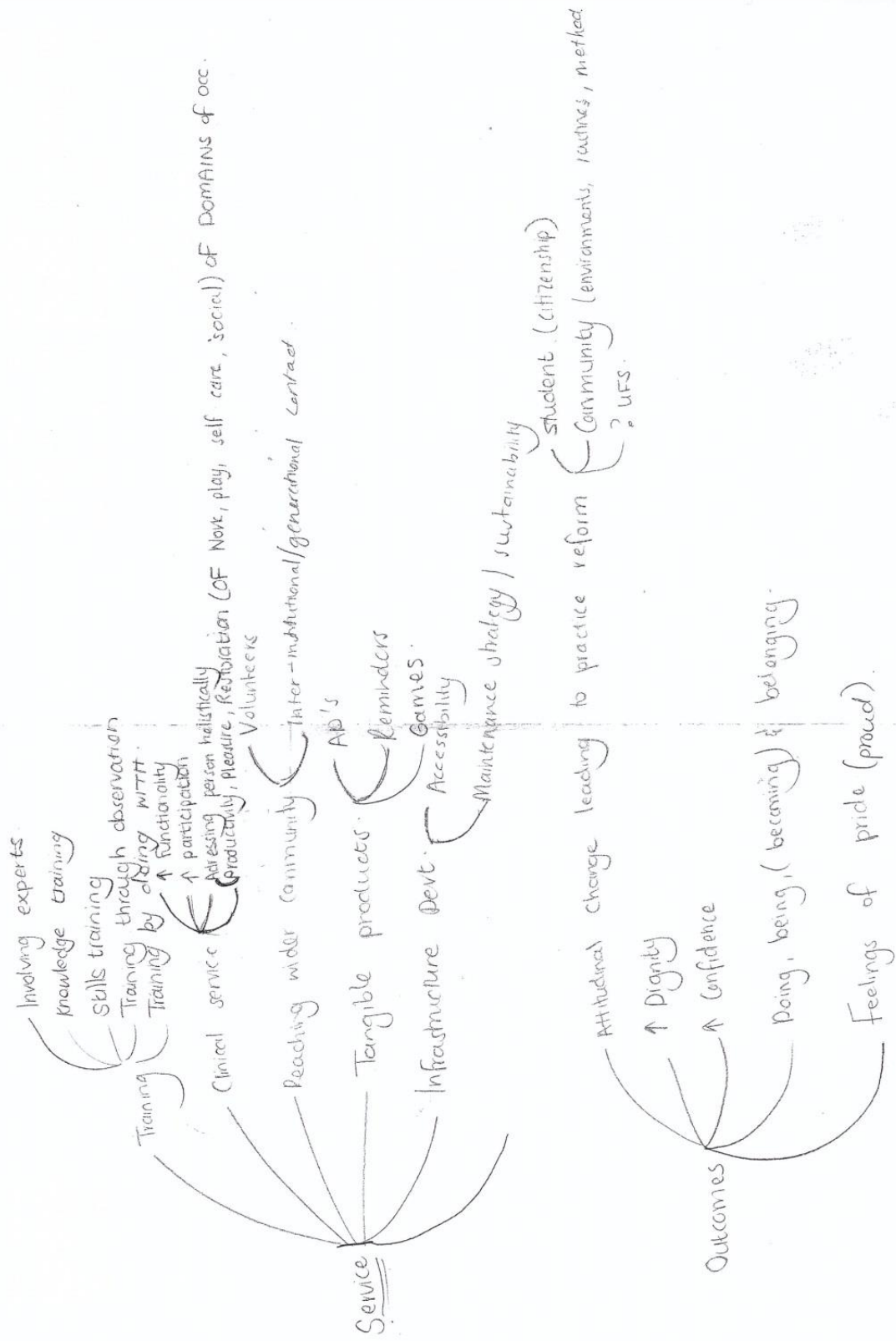
STEP 3: Conceptualise the categories to generate themes (Saldaña 2009:13). “A theme is a phrase or a sentence describing more subtle and tacit processes.” Themes are on a conceptual / theoretical level and are generated as an outcome of coding, categorisation and analytic reflection (Saldaña 2009:13).

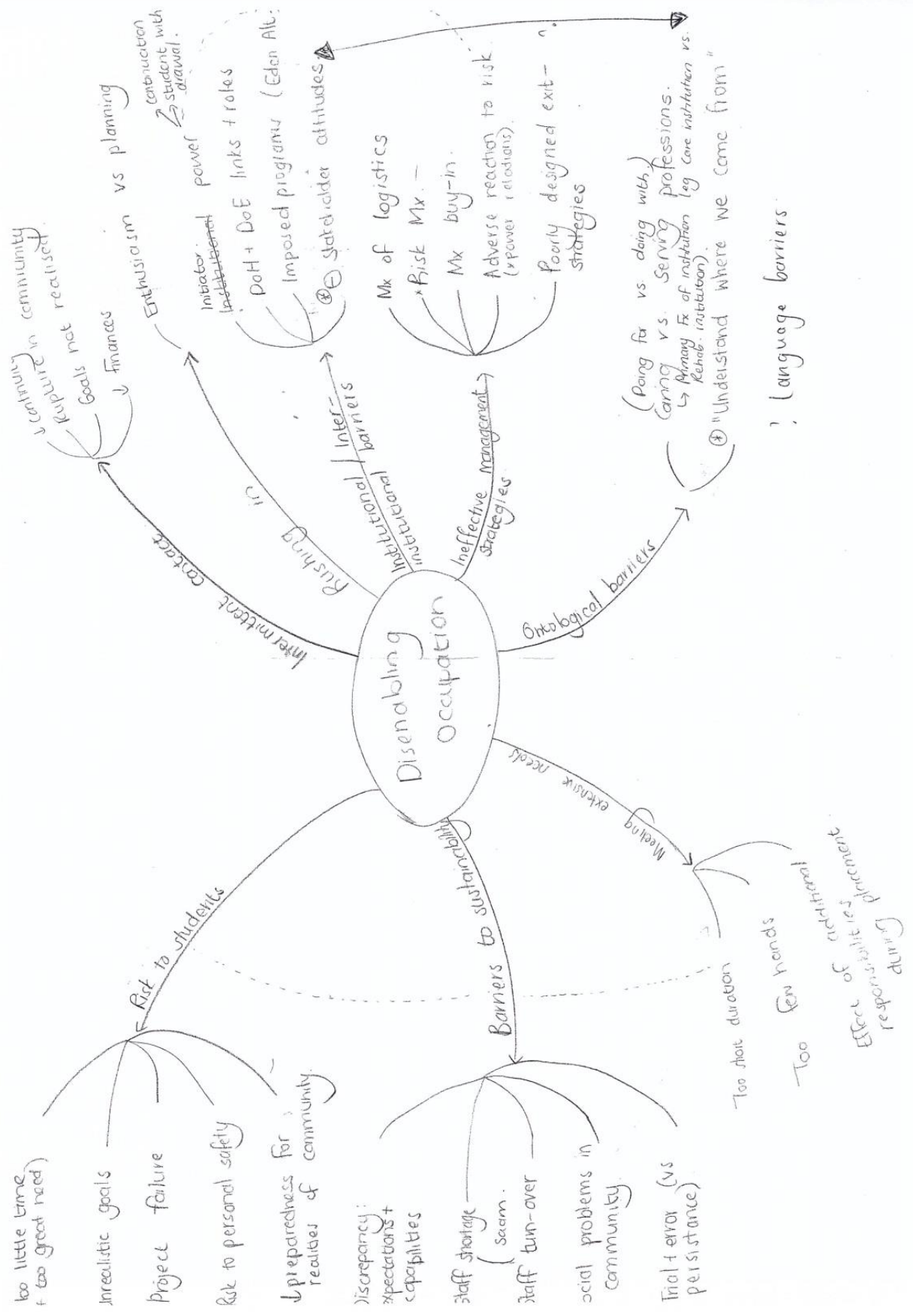
Coders will then meet to discuss their findings from the content analysis, and collaboratively construct the final findings.

APPENDIX G

Manual coding worksheets







APPENDIX H

Explanatory thematic analysis for participant verification

Everyone is equally dependent on one another, and benefit from the partnership equally (staff, students, community)

Things that often go unsaid, but when they are done, they contribute to positive, successful partnerships

Things that were more specific to the occupational therapy discipline, that contributed to positive outcomes in the community

Things that worked / Partnerships that were successful

Themes	Categories	Codes
THEME 1: ENABLING OCCUPATION	Effective communication strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalised communication structure Clarity, transparency and feedback Community representatives as communication mediators
	Collaborative planning and project-selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative goal-setting and decision-making Ensuring stakeholder buy-in Addressing real needs Connecting with the existing
	Communal inter-dependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fostering relationships Working together Reciprocity
	Meeting tacit needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being present and showing interest Providing something new Instilling hope Supporting a dream Making memories Having fun
	Positive student attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student commitment and professionalism Quality of student service Relational contact with community
	Effective OT service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training strategies Involving the wider community Delivering tangible products Infrastructure development
	Successful outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student citizenship Attitudinal change leading to practice reform Observable change in community Enhancing dignity, confidence and pride Enhancing functionality and occupational participation Doing, being, becoming and belonging
THEME 2: DISEMBLING OCCUPATION	Intermittent contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of continuity Goals not realized
	Ineffective management strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiator power Enthusiasm vs. planning Trial and error approach Management of logistics Risk management Poorly designed exit-strategies Linking with government structures
	Ontological and ideological barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional ontologies: caring vs. serving Personal / cultural ontologies: understand where we come from Institutional ideologies: imposed programs
	Barriers to sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discrepancy between expectations and capabilities Poor follow-up Staff shortage and staff turn-over Meeting extensive needs
	Risk to student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk to personal safety Unpreparedness for realities of community Project failure

Outcomes that community partners mentioned as a result of the partnership, which contributed positively to the community and/or student.

Things that didn't work / Partnerships that were unsuccessful

When partners do not see enough of one another.

Factors related to management that were barriers to success in partnerships.

Initiator power: when the 'power' of the university as initiator dictates conditions of the partnership (above the community)

Thematic analysis of results in the study *Enabling occupation through service learning: Perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements*, for participant verification with research participants.

Compiled by Elize Janse van Rensburg
Contact number: 0828404080

Things that caused outcomes of the partnership to be of shorter-term value than intended.

When ways of thinking was very different, it sometimes lead to friction in the partnership.

APPENDIX I

Infographic poster

SERVICE LEARNING

PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

LESSONS LEARNED FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE LEARNING

1. SET THE STAGE

AGREE ON THREE C'S OF
RECIPROCAL PARTNERSHIP FROM THE START

COMMUNAL INTER-DEPENDENCE



- All parties:
- o Depend on one another
 - o Influence one another through their actions
 - o Benefit from the partnership

} EQUALLY

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING



- o What do we have? (try to connect new projects to existing ones)
- o What do we want / need? (all partners must be clear and honest)
- o Decide TOGETHER with all partners on
 - Goals
 - Activities and responsibilities
 - How to evaluate outcomes

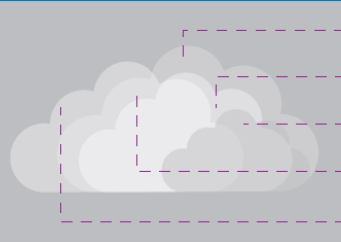
COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES



- o Schedule regular communication
- o Agree on how:
 - Face to face
 - Telephone
 - Sms / Whatsapp / Instant messaging
 - E-mail
- o Ensure: Transparency (communicate clearly and honestly)
Feedback (everybody is responsible to give feedback regularly)

FOSTER EQUAL RELATIONSHIPS WHERE THERE IS NO BIG BROTHER

2. HOW CAN WE FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS

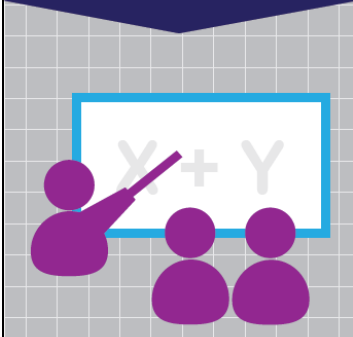


- Show interest
- Instill hope
- Have fun
- Support dreams
- Make memories together



3. ACTIVITIES THAT WERE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL

MUTUAL BENEFITS



TRAINING

- Sharing knowledge
- Developing skills
- Learn from experience (doing together with)

INVOLVING THE WIDER COMMUNITY

- Get volunteers and other organisations involved in projects

DELIVERING TANGIBLE PRODUCTS

- E.g. manuals, posters, games, activities

DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE

- E.g. stimulation rooms, sensory gardens

4. POSITIVE OUTCOMES FROM SERVICE LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

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- All parties learn from one another
- Attitudes change → ways of doing things change
- People have more confidence, hope and a sense of dignity
- People can participate in activities that they want to / need to
- People feel that they belong (students and community members → citizenship)

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+

5. POSSIBLE PITFALLS TO AVOID

THE FIVE I'S

INTERMITTENT CONTACT

- o When contact between parties is irregular, relationships suffer and projects fail.



IMBALANCE IN POWER

- o When any one party assumes to have less or more power, communal inter-dependence



INEFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

- o Poor planning – usually leads to frustration and unsuccessful projects.
- o Trial- and error – when faced with failure upon failure all partners become discouraged.
- o Poor risk management – consider risks from the onset and manage risks pro-actively (from the start)
- o Poor hand-over / exit strategies – make sure that hand-over or exit-strategies for each project are negotiated, even if the partnership continues.



INCOMPATIBLE IDEAS AND EXPECTATIONS

- o When ideas and expectations are too different, consider partnering with someone else.



IMPAIRING SUSTAINABILITY

- o Poor follow-up – projects that are not followed-up regularly even after completion are not sustainable. Plan for follow-up!
- o High staff turn-over – when there are regular changes in staff or community members, consider ways in which products of the partnership can be carried over to following stakeholders.



6. STUDENTS AS IMPORTANT PARTNERS

STUDENTS



Positive attributes such as commitment, professionalism, good relationships and high quality service facilitates service learning.

Unpreparedness, risks to personal safety and project failure blocks student and community success in service learning.



POSTER CONTENT COMPILED BY ELIZE JANSE VAN RENSBURG DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE JANSEVANRENSBURGE@UFS.AC.ZA 051 401 2829



7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- o Participants in the study *'Enabling occupation through service learning: Perceptions of community representatives in Occupational Therapy service learning engagements'* – Thank you for the lessons we could learn from you.
- o Prof. M.A. Erasmus and Mrs. T. Rauch van der Merwe – study leaders.
- o Elfriede Coetzer – Graphic Designing.
- o National Research Foundation (NRF) – partial funding of the study.

APPENDIX J

Ethics committee approval letters

Research Division
Internal Post Box G40
☎ (051) 4052812
☎ (051) 4444359

E-mail address: StraussHS@ufs.ac.za

Ms H Strauss

2013-01-23

REC Reference nr 230408-011
IRB nr 00006240

MS E JANSE VAN RENSBURG
DEPT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
UFS


Dear Ms Janse van Rensburg

ECUFS NR 213/2012

**PROJECT TITLE: ENABLING OCCUPATION THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING?
PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE
LEARNING ENGAGEMENTS IN THE FREE STATE.**

- You are hereby kindly informed that at the meeting held on 22 January 2013 the Ethics Committee approved the above project after the following letters were submitted:
 - a) *The final official letters to the authorities requesting permission to conduct the study*
 - b) *Signed permission letters from the authorities*
- Committee guidance documents: Declaration of Helsinki, ICH, GCP and MRC Guidelines on Bio Medical Research. Clinical Trial Guidelines 2000 Department of Health RSA; Ethics in Health Research: Principles Structure and Processes Department of Health RSA 2004; Guidelines for Good Practice in the Conduct of Clinical Trials with Human Participants in South Africa, Second Edition (2006); the Constitution of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Guidelines of the SA Medicines Control Council as well as Laws and Regulations with regard to the Control of Medicines.
- Any amendment, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.
- The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.
- A progress report should be submitted within one year of approval of long term studies and a final report at completion of both short term and long term studies.
- Kindly refer to the ETOVS/ECUFS reference number in correspondence to the Ethics Committee secretariat.

Yours faithfully



.....
PROF WH KRUGER
CHAIR: ETHICS COMMITTEE

Research Division
Internal Post Box G40
☎ (051) 4052812
Fax (051) 4444359

E-mail address: StraussHS@ufs.ac.za

Ms H Strauss/jdpls

2014-07-31

REC Reference nr 230408-011
IRB nr 00006240

MS E JANSE VAN RENSBURG
DEPT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
CR DE WET BUILDING
UFS

Dear Ms Janse van Rensburg

ECUFS NR 213/2012

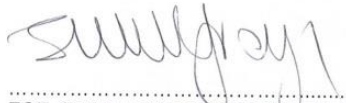
**PROJECT TITLE: ENABLING OCCUPATION THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING?
PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE
LEARNING ENGAGEMENTS IN THE FREE STATE.**

1. You are hereby kindly informed that the Ethics Committee approved the following at the meeting held on 22 July 2014:
 - **Major amendments to the protocol**
2. Committee guidance documents: Declaration of Helsinki, ICH, GCP and MRC Guidelines on Bio Medical Research. Clinical Trial Guidelines 2000 Department of Health RSA; Ethics in Health Research: Principles Structure and Processes Department of Health RSA 2004; Guidelines for Good Practice in the Conduct of Clinical Trials with Human Participants in South Africa, Second Edition (2006); the Constitution of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Guidelines of the SA Medicines Control Council as well as Laws and Regulations with regard to the Control of Medicines.
3. Any amendment, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.
4. The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.
5. All relevant documents e.g. signed permission letters from the authorities, institutions; changes to the protocol, questionnaires etc. have to be submitted to the Ethics Committee before the study may be conducted (if applicable).
6. A progress report should be submitted within one year of approval of long term studies and a final report at completion of both short term and long term studies.



7. Kindly refer to the ETOVS/ECUFS reference number in correspondence to the Ethics Committee secretariat.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Williams', is written over a dotted line.

FOR CHAIR: ETHICS COMMITTEE

Research Division
Internal Post Box G40
☎ (051) 401-7795
Fax (051) 4444359

E-mail address: EthicsFHS@ufs.ac.za

Ms M Marais

2015-01-23

REC Reference nr 230408-011
IRB nr 00006240

MS E JANSE VAN RENSBURG
DEPT OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
CR DE WET BUILDING
UFS

Dear Ms Janse van Rensburg

ECUFS NR 213/2012
PROJECT TITLE: ENABLING OCCUPATION THROUGH SERVICE LEARNING?
PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
SERVICE LEARNING ENGAGEMENTS IN THE FREE STATE.

1. You are hereby kindly informed that the Ethics Committee approved the following at the meeting held on 20 January 2015:
 - **Amendment to the protocol**
2. Committee guidance documents: Declaration of Helsinki, ICH, GCP and MRC Guidelines on Bio Medical Research. Clinical Trial Guidelines 2000 Department of Health RSA; Ethics in Health Research: Principles Structure and Processes Department of Health RSA 2004; Guidelines for Good Practice in the Conduct of Clinical Trials with Human Participants in South Africa, Second Edition (2006); the Constitution of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences and the Guidelines of the SA Medicines Control Council as well as Laws and Regulations with regard to the Control of Medicines.
3. Any amendment, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.
4. The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.
5. All relevant documents e.g. signed permission letters from the authorities, institutions; changes to the protocol, questionnaires etc. have to be submitted to the Ethics Committee before the study may be conducted (if applicable).

6. A progress report should be submitted within one year of approval of long term studies and a final report at completion of both short term and long term studies.
7. Kindly refer to the ETOVS/ECUFS reference number in correspondence to the Ethics Committee secretariat.

Yours faithfully



DR SM LE GRANGE
CHAIR: ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPENDIX K

Permission for individual acknowledgement letter and form

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

28 November 2014

Dear Research Participant,

The information document supplied to you prior to your participation in the study titled *“Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning: Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements,”* indicated that no individual research participants would be identified in order to ensure confidentiality of information shared.

However, when I returned to participants to share the results of the study, I realised that acknowledging participants in this study by name could possibly contribute to communicating my appreciation for your participation, and also give you due credit for and provide you with evidence of your individual participation. I would therefore like to give you the *option* as to whether you would like to be named individually in the acknowledgements when the results of this study are communicated for example in my dissertation and any future conference presentations or publications.

I kindly request that you complete the attached form and return it to me at your earliest convenience – either by fax (051 401 3288), e-mail (elize4@gmail.com) or by sending me an sms (0828404080) to indicate that I can come and collect it from you.

Again receive my greatest appreciation for your invaluable contribution to this study.

Sincerely,



Elize Janse van Rensburg
Department of Occupational Therapy
University of the Free State



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

I have read the letter explaining the option to be individually acknowledged for my participation in the study titled *“Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning: Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements.”*

I understand that I have a choice to be acknowledged by name, and I choose the following (please indicate your choice with an X in the corresponding block):

I choose to be named in the acknowledgements when the results of this study are communicated.

I choose NOT to be named in the acknowledgements when the results of the study are communicated.

Full names and surname: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Signature: _____



ERKENNING VAN DEELNEMERS AAN NAVORSING

28 November 2014

Geagte Navorsingsdeelnemer,

Die inligtingsdokument wat aan u voorsien is voor u deelname aan die studie met die titel *“Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning: Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements,”* het aangedui dat geen individuele navorsingsdeelnemers identifiseer sou word nie, ten einde konfidensialiteit van die inligting wat gedeel is te verseker.

Toe ek egter terugkeer na navorsingsdeelnemers om die resultate van die studie te deel, het ek beseft dat om deelnemers aan die studie by name te erken, moontlik kan bydra om my waardering vir u deelname te kommunikeer, en ook om aan u die erkenning te gee wat u toekom vir u deelname, asook om vir u 'n bewys van u individuele deelname te gee. Daarom wil ek aan u die *opsie* gee om aan te dui of u individueel genoem wil word in die erkennings wanneer die resultate van die studie gekommunikeer word, byvoorbeeld in my verhandeling, en in enige toekomstige aanbiedings of publikasies.

Ek versoek vriendelik dat u die aangehegte vorm voltooi en aan my terugstuur so gou as wat dit vir u gerieflik is – hetsy per faks (051 401 3288), e-pos (elize4@gmail.com) of deur vir my 'n sms te stuur (0828404080) om aan te dui dat ek dit by u kan kom afhaal.

Ontvang hiermee ook weer my grootste waardering vir u waardevolle bydrae tot hierdie studie.

Vriendelike groete,

Elize Janse van Rensburg
Departement Arbeidsterapie
Universiteit van die Vrystaat



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Therapy
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UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA



ERKENNING VAN DEELNEMERS AAN NAVORSING

Ek het die brief gelees wat die opsie verduidelik om individueel erken te word vir my deelname aan die studie getitel *"Enabling Occupation Through Service Learning: Perceptions of Community Representatives in Occupational Therapy Service Learning Engagements."*

Ek verstaan dat ek 'n keuse het om by name erken te word, en ek kies die volgende (dui asseblief u keuse met 'n X in die ooreenstemmende blokkie aan):

Ek kies om genoem te word in die erkennings wanneer die resultate van die studie gekommunikeer word.

Ek kies om NIE genoem te word in die erkennings wanneer die resultate van die studie gekommunikeer word nie.

Volle name en van: _____

Datum: _____

Plek: _____

Handtekening: _____

SUMMARY

Key terms: occupational therapy; service learning; practice learning; occupation; enablement; enabling occupation; community; community representatives.

Introduction: Occupational therapists concern themselves with human occupation, and the enablement of occupation can be viewed as the profession's collective domain of concern when working towards health, well-being and occupational justice. Six enablement foundations are described in occupational therapy literature, namely choice, risk and responsibility; client participation; vision of possibilities; change; justice and power sharing.

Service learning is employed as a form of practice learning in undergraduate occupational therapy curricula across the globe, in South Africa and at the university where this study was conducted. Research into the effects of service learning has focused on students to a large extent, while the perspectives of community partners have been relatively under-examined. Without knowing how communities perceive occupational therapy service learning engagements, it is difficult to establish whether these engagements are done in a manner that promotes health, well-being and occupational justice, and in a manner that is effective and contextually relevant.

Purpose: In an attempt to access the community's voice regarding occupational therapy service learning engagements, so as to inform current and future practices, the purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of community representatives in occupational therapy service learning engagements, regarding enabling occupation through service learning in communities, as well as the barriers and facilitating factors to this process, at a South African university.

Methodology: Positioned primarily in an interpretive, constructivist paradigm the study utilised a descriptive, qualitative enquiry design. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight community representatives from seven different occupational therapy service learning community sites. Interviews were transcribed and analysed following an inductive, systematic content analysis approach. The data was coded, grouped into categories and synthesised into themes. The trustworthiness of the study was promoted by, among others, making use of investigator triangulation during data analysis and by conducting participant verification of the interpreted results.

Findings: Two themes emerged from the data, namely 'enabling occupation' and 'disabling occupation'. The theme 'enabling occupation' illuminated factors which community representatives perceived as facilitators to occupational enablement through service learning, namely effective communication strategies; collaborative planning and project selection; interdependence; meeting tacit needs; positive student attributes and enabling service activities. In addition, findings that emerged within the category of 'successful outcomes' in this theme

described evidence of participants' perceptions of 'enabling occupation' as it related to occupational participation and occupational justice. The theme 'disabling occupation' described participants' perceptions of barriers to occupational enablement in service learning, namely intermittent contact, managerial challenges, barriers to sustainability and risks to students.

Conclusions: This study revealed that community representatives perceived most of the *enablement* foundations to have been present in the occupational therapy service learning engagements; however, there were also instances where some community representatives did not have positive experiences of the operationalisation of these enablement foundations. Relating to the enablement of *occupation*, links to enhanced occupational participation, meaning, choice and balance emerged from the data; however, these links were mostly inferred by the researcher. Due to its individually appraised nature, participants tended to have difficulty articulating specific perceptions that related to the occupations of community members.

The findings of the study enabled the researcher to construct a framework for enabling occupation through service learning, consisting of foundational principles; the enablement foundations; facilitators of enablement; activities and objectives; and outcomes of occupational therapy service learning engagements. Based on this framework, practical recommendations for the management and implementation of occupational therapy service learning engagements could be offered in order to inform occupational therapy service learning practices from the perspectives of community representatives.

Word count: 592

OPSOMMING

Kernbegrippe: arbeidsterapie; diensleer; praktykleer; aktiwiteit; aktiwiteitsreeks; instaatstelling; in staat stel van aktiwiteit; in staat stel van aktiwiteitsreeks; gemeenskap; gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers.

Inleiding: Arbeidsterapeute bemoei hulself met menslike aktiwiteit, en die instaatstelling van aktiwiteit kan beskou word as die beroep se kollektiewe area van belangstelling wanneer daar gestreef word na gesondheid, welstand en aktiwiteitsreeksgeregtigheid. Ses instaatstellingsgrondslae word in arbeidsterapieliteratuur beskryf, naamlik keuse, risiko en verantwoordelikheid; kliëntdeelname; visie van moontlikhede; verandering; geregtigheid en deel van mag.

Diensleer word wêreldwyd, ook in Suid-Afrika en by die universiteit waar die studie uitgevoer is aangewend as 'n vorm van praktykleer. Navorsing met betrekking tot die uitwerking van diensleer fokus merendeels op studente, terwyl die perspektiewe van gemeenskapsvennote relatief min ondersoek word. Sonder kennis van die persepsies van gemeenskappe rakende arbeidsterapie diensleer-verbintenisse, is dit moeilik om vas te stel of hierdie verbintenisse op 'n wyse hanteer word wat gesondheid, welstand en aktiwiteitsreeksgeregtigheid bevorder, wat effektief is en wat kontekstueel relevant is.

Doel: In 'n poging om te luister na die stem van die gemeenskap rakende arbeidsterapie diensleer-verbintenisse, ten einde huidige en toekomstige praktyke toe te lig en te rig, was die doel van die studie om die persepsies van gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers in hierdie verbintenisse rakende die instaatstelling van aktiwiteitsreeks deur diensleer in gemeenskappe, asook die struikelblokke en die fasiliterende faktore van hierdie proses, by 'n Suid-Afrikaanse universiteit te beskryf.

Metodologie: Die studie is in 'n interpreterende, konstruktivistiese paradigma geposisioneer, en het van 'n beskrywende, kwalitatiewe studieontwerp gebruik gemaak. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is met agt gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers vanaf sewe verskillende arbeidsterapie diensleer-areas gevoer. Onderhoude is getranskribeer en deur middel van 'n induktiewe, sistematiese inhoudsanalisebenadering geanaliseer. Die data is gekodeer, in kategorieë gegroepeer en gesintetiseer tot temas. Die betroubaarheid van die studie is bevorder deur, onder andere, van ondersoekertriangulasie gebruik te maak tydens data-analise en deur die geïnterpreteerde resultate met deelnemers te verifieer.

Bevindings: Twee temas is deur die data voortgebring, naamlik 'instaatstelling van aktiwiteitsreeks' en 'belemmering van aktiwiteitsreeks'. Die tema 'instaatstelling van aktiwiteitsreeks' het faktore toegelig wat gemeenskapsverteenwoordigers beleef het as fasiliteerders van die instaatstelling van aktiwiteitsreeks, naamlik effektiewe

kommunikasie-strategieë; deelnemende beplanning en seleksie van projekte; interafhanklikheid; die aanspreek van onuitgesproke behoeftes; positiewe studente-eienskappe en instaatstellende dienslewering-aktiwiteite. Bevindings wat voortgespruit het uit die kategorie van 'suksesvolle uitkomst' het deelnemers se persepsies rakende 'instaatstelling van aktiwiteitsreëse' beskryf soos dit verband gehou het met deelname aan aktiwiteitsreëse en aktiwiteitsreësegeregtigheid. Die tema 'belemmering van aktiwiteitsreëse' het deelnemers se persepsies rakende struikelblokke tot die instaatstelling van aktiwiteitsreëse beskryf, naamlik wisselvallige kontak, bestuursuitdagings, struikelblokke rakende volhoubaarheid en risiko's vir studente.

Gevolgtrekkings: Die studie het aangetoon dat gemeenskapsvertegenwoordigers beleef het dat die meeste grondslae van *instaatstelling* wel teenwoordig was in arbeidsterapie diensleer-verbintnisse. Daar was egter ook gevalle waar sommige gemeenskapsvertegenwoordigers nie positiewe ervarings gehad het ten opsigte van die operasionalisering van instaatstellingsgrondslae nie. Met betrekking tot *aktiwiteitsreëse*, het skakels met aktiwiteitsreëse-deelname, betekenisvolheid, keuse en balans na vore gekom. Hierdie skakels is egter meestal deur die navorser afgelei. Vanweë die individueel-beoordeelde aard van aktiwiteitsreëse het deelnemers dit moeilik gevind om persepsies uit te spreek rakende die aktiwiteitsreëse van lede van die gemeenskap.

Die bevindings van die studie het die navorser in staat gestel om 'n raamwerk vir die instaatstelling van aktiwiteitsreëse deur diensleer saam te stel, bestaande uit fundamentele beginsels; instaatstellingfondasies; fasiliteerders van instaatstelling; aktiwiteite en doelwitte; en uitkomst van arbeidsterapie diensleer-verbintnisse. Na aanleiding van hierdie raamwerk kon aanbevelings vir die bestuur en implementering van arbeidsterapie diensleer verbintnisse gemaak word ten einde arbeidsterapie diensleer-praktyke toe te lig en te rig vanuit die perspektiewe van gemeenskapsvertegenwoordigers.

Aantal woorde: 576