



Departement Oefen- en Sportwetenskappe
Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences

Student Reflections on the Attainment of Competencies in a Community Service-learning Module in Human Movement Science



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This serves to declare that the dissertation hereby submitted for the qualification M.A. in Human Movement Science at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and that I have not previously submitted the same work for a qualification at/in another University/Faculty.

In addition, I cede the copyright of this dissertation to the University of the Free State.

The mission of the University of the Free State (UFS, 2010) is the pursuit of scholarship as embodied in the creation, integration, application and transmission of knowledge. This pursuit is acknowledged by promoting, among other things, community service and the development of the total student as part of the University's academic culture. One of the reasons for having students participate in community service-learning (CSL) modules is that these modules address two components of the University's mission: community service and the development of the total student. This links with the required transformation stipulated in the White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education of 1997 (SA, 1997: 7–8).

Many claims have been made as to the benefits students derive from participation in CSL modules (Astin & Sax, 1998; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Furco, 2002). These benefits can be divided into personal, interpersonal, academic and social benefits. Personal benefits include self-efficacy, self-knowledge, personal development (Simons & Cleary, 2006) as well as improved leadership skills, relationship skills and the definition of personal strengths and weaknesses (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005). Interpersonal benefits include interpersonal development, problem-solving skills (Simons & Cleary, 2006), working more effectively with others (Furco, 2002), awareness of cultural differences and awareness of cultural stereotypes (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005). Academic benefits include academic development, a better appreciation of academic work (Furco, 2002), the application of theory that improves skills such as critical observation, analysis and application (Winfield, 2005), as well as an increased understanding of the theoretical aspects (Erasmus & Jaftha, 2005). Social benefits include involvement in the community (Furco, 2002) and an increased awareness of community life and challenges (Erasmus & Jaftha, 2005).

The literature highlights the diverse benefits of participating in CSL modules. However, the question arises whether the benefits derived are related to the competencies required by a person entering the recreation industry. The purpose of the study was to determine which competencies, if any, as seen from the students' perspective, increased by participating in the CSL module offered by the Department of Exercise and Sports Sciences at the University of the Free State.

The research was undertaken from a phenomenological viewpoint. Through a literature and job analysis study the competencies required in the recreation industry were identified. It was then determined what competencies students thought they would be able to gain by doing the module. Then the competencies that students perceived to have gained during the CSL module were obtained through student reflections. This data was then compared to the literature and job analysis information to determine how the perceived competencies gained by students through the CSL module relate to the competencies needed by a recreation specialist.

Multimethod strategies of data collection were used. A literature study and a web search were undertaken to determine the required competencies. The nominal group technique (NGT) was used to determine students' perceptions of competencies required. Structured and unstructured reflection and the NGT of interviewing were employed to determine the perceived gain of competencies.

With regard to the competencies identified (through literature, job descriptions and student perceptions) that would be required in the recreation industry, results showed that students did indeed feel that their competencies increased. Four main themes were identified: communication, management skills, group dynamics and cultural diversity and self-evaluation. The findings indicate that CSL should be considered by lecturers in recreation as a pedagogical tool to impart competencies that are difficult, if not impossible, to teach to students in the normal classroom set-up. When selecting CSL as an educational mode during the planning and conceptualisation of the module, it should be ensured that the module is designed in such a way that it imparts specific competencies that are required in the recreation industry.

Key terms

Recreation; Competency; Community service-learning (CSL); Reflection.

Die missie van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat (UV, 2010) is die soeke na kundigheid, soos vervat in die skep, integrasie, toepassing en oordrag van kennis. Hierdie strewe word erken deur die bevordering van, onder andere, samelewingsdiens en die ontwikkeling van die totale student as deel van die Universiteit se akademiese kultuur. Een van die redes waarom studente by samelewingsdiensleer (SDL) betrek word, is dat hierdie modules twee komponente van die Universiteit se missie aanspreek: samelewingsdiens en die ontwikkeling van die student in sy totaliteit. Dit skakel met die vereiste transformasie soos aangedui in die Witskrif oor die Transformasie van Hoër Onderwys van 1997 (SA, 1997: 7–8).

Talle aansprake is al gemaak wat betref die voordele wat studente put uit deelname aan SDL-modules (Astin & Sax, 1998; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Furco, 2002). Hierdie voordele kan in persoonlike, interpersoonlike, akademiese en sosiale voordele verdeel word. Persoonlike voordele sluit eiewaarde, selfkennis en persoonlike ontwikkeling in (Simons & Cleary, 2006), asook verhoogde leierskapsvaardighede, verhoudingsvaardighede en die definiëring van persoonlike sterktes en swakhede (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005). Interpersoonlike voordele sluit in interpersoonlike ontwikkeling, probleemoplossingvaardighede (Simons & Cleary, 2006), die vermoë om meer doeltreffend saam met ander te werk (Furco, 2002), asook 'n bewuswording van kulturele verskille en van kulturele stereotipes (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005). Akademiese voordele sluit akademiese ontwikkeling, 'n groter waardering vir akademiese werk (Furco, 2002), die toepassing van teorie wat vaardighede soos kritiese waarneming, analise en toepassing verbeter (Winfield, 2005), asook 'n verhoogde begrip van die teoretiese aspekte (Erasmus & Jaftha, 2005). Sosiale voordele sluit gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid (Furco, 2002) en 'n verhoogde bewustheid van gemeenskapslewe en -uitdagings in (Erasmus & Jaftha, 2005).

Die literatuur laat val die klem op die onderskeie voordele van deelname aan SDL-modules. Die vraag ontstaan egter of die voordele wat daaruit verkry word, verband hou met die vaardighede wat van 'n persoon verwag word wanneer daar tot die rekreasiebedryf toegetree word. Die doel van die studie was om te bepaal watter vaardighede, indien enige, soos beskou vanuit die studente se perspektief, uitgebou

is deur deelname aan die SDL-module wat deur die Departement Oefen- en Sportwetenskappe aan die Universiteit van die Vrystaat aangebied word.

Die navorsing is vanuit 'n fenomenologiese oogpunt onderneem. Deur die bestudering van 'n literatuur- en werkanalise is die vaardighede wat in die rekreasiebedryf vereis word, geïdentifiseer. Daarna is bepaal watter vaardighede studente dink hulle deur voltooiing van die module behoort te bekom. Daarna is die vaardighede wat studente reken hulle deur die SDL-module bekom het, deur middel van refleksie verkry. Hierdie data is vervolgens met die inligting wat uit die literatuur en werkanalise verkry is, vergelyk om te bepaal hoe die waargenome vaardighede wat studente deur middel van die GSL-module bereik het, verband hou met die vaardighede wat van 'n rekreasie-spesialis verlang word.

Veelvuldigemetode-strategieë van dataversameling is gebruik. 'n Literatuurstudie en websoektog is onderneem om die verlangde vaardighede te bepaal. Die nominalegroep-tegniek (NGT) is gebruik om studente se persepsies van die verlangde vaardighede te bepaal. Gestruktureerde en ongestruktureerde refleksie en die NGT van onderhoudvoering is gebruik om die waargenome verkryging van vaardighede te bepaal.

Wat betref die geïdentifiseerde vaardighede (deur die literatuur, werksbeskrywings en waarnemings van studente) wat in die rekreasiebedryf verlang word, het resultate aangetoon dat studente inderdaad voel dat hulle vaardighede toegeneem het. Vier hoofemas is geïdentifiseer: kommunikasie, bestuursvaardighede, groepdinamika, en kulturele diversiteit en selfevaluering. Die bevindings toon aan dat SDL deur dosente in rekreasie oorweeg behoort te word as 'n pedagogiese hulpmiddel om vaardighede te oor te dra wat moeilik is, indien nie onmoontlik nie, om aan studente in die gewone klaskameropset te leer. Wanneer SDL as 'n opvoedkundige modus tydens die beplanning en konseptualisering van die module gekies word, behoort sorg gedra te word dat die module op so 'n wyse ontwerp word dat dit spesifieke vaardighede wat in die rekreasiebedryf vereis word, oordra.

Sleutel terme

Rekreasie; Bevoegdheids; Samelewingsdiensleer (SDL); Refleksie.

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Chapter 1

Overview

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

1.1 BACKGROUND

A strategic priority identified at the University of the Free State (UFS) is the integration of community service (CS) with teaching, learning and research. Community service-learning (CSL) is recognised internationally as a mechanism that promotes integration of teaching/learning with service (UFS, Service-learning Home Page: 2010). The Community Service Policy of the UFS stipulates that eventually all academic programmes should include at least one service-learning module (UFS, 2006: 12-13).

“Leisure has become a major force in contemporary society with powerful social, cultural, and economic implications for how we live our lives” (Edginton, Hudson & Scholl, 2005: 2). Recreation can be considered a form of leisure (Rossman & Schlatter, 2000: 11). Hurd, Barcelona and Meldrum (2008: 46) state that graduates in recreation will initially be frontline managers, many having aspirations to progress to middle or top management. “This career progression starts by gaining experience in the field and building competencies needed for the next level” (Hurd *et al.*, 2008: 46). It is important to know what competencies are required for persons entering the recreation field and what competencies students perceive to gain while studying at the University.

The Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences (formally known as the Department of Human Movement Science) offers a B.A. degree in Human Movement Science (HMS). The following postgraduate programmes are: Biokinetics, Sports Science, Kinderkinetics and Recreation and Tourism. This division is depicted in Figure 1.1.

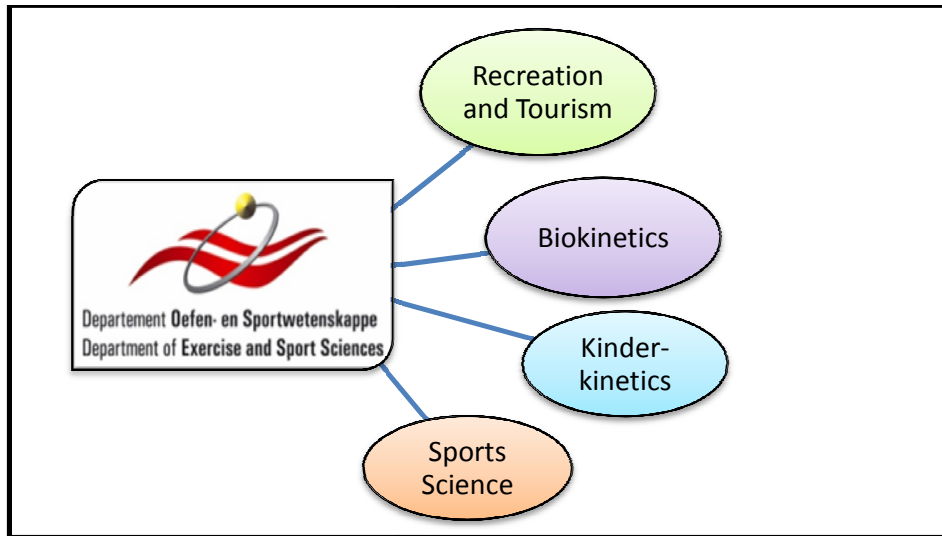


Figure 1.1 Human Movement Science Programme

In response to the mandate of all programmes presenting a CSL module, the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences offers a CSL module to third-year students. The Department sought to introduce a learning experience where the students could draw upon the knowledge that they had acquired throughout the Human Movement Programme and combine it with relevant service work in the community. A synthesis of students' understanding of the various modules that could be linked with each other was desired. The approach subsequently decided upon was a capstone module (HEQC, 2006a: 39).

CSL is considered a form of experiential learning (HEQC, 2006a: 14). It was therefore desired to combine the work studied over the two preceding years with a specific third-year recreation module with service learning. Since many of the competencies required to become a recreation specialist cannot be taught solely in the classroom, CSL was seen as a suitable method to attempt to expose students to learning situations outside of the classroom. It was therefore envisaged that through experiential learning, students would be able to acquire the necessary competencies.

There are many reasons for utilising CSL in educational settings. The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) identifies a number of reasons for valuing CSL, which include: the enhancement of social responsibility; it aids in teaching

problem skills; it aids students in learning about themselves and their capacities; it promotes collaborative learning as well as enhances relationships among higher education institutions (HEIs), community and service agencies, and different communities (HEQC, 2006a: 56).

The UFS Community Service Policy document indicates that the inclusion of CSL modules is driven by the demonstrated evidence of community service-learning as “an educational approach that leads to a deeper understanding of the linkage between curriculum content and community dynamics, as well as the achievement of personal growth and a sense of social responsibility within students and staff involved” (UFS, 2006: 13).

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Few recreation modules are offered to undergraduate students in HMS at the UFS. It is therefore necessary to impart the necessary competence to students within the limited time available. It is crucial to determine whether students believe that they are indeed obtaining the necessary competencies.

Although the CSL module has been offered since 2004, the department had to date not performed any research on CSL or the CSL module that is presented. It is vital to determine the module’s effectiveness for imparting the desired skills and competencies to students. This research was undertaken to determine what the students themselves perceived their learning to be. It was not ascertained whether learning had taken place, merely student perceptions were taken into consideration.

Competencies required by persons in the recreation industry were investigated and compared to those that students perceived to have increased during the module. The results not only highlighted competencies that students perceived to have increased, but also identified competencies that students felt had not increased. This information can be utilised to improve the module in order to impart the desired competencies to the students.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed during this study:

- What are the initial perceptions that students have regarding the competencies they can *potentially* gain through the CSL module?
- What perceptions do students have regarding the competencies they *have* attained through the CSL module?
- How do the perceived competencies gained by students through the CSL module relate to the competencies needed by a recreation specialist?

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter two focuses on recreation, beginning with a definition of recreation and related concepts. As the research questions revolve around perceived competencies, the term “competencies” is investigated and the competencies of a person within the recreation industry are determined. In order to determine the required competencies a literature review was undertaken as well as research on job descriptions on the World Wide Web. The tasks as well as the competencies of a recreation specialist and a recreation leader were investigated. A comparison of (competencies found in) literature and job descriptions is then presented, concluding with the identification of the core competencies required by a recreation specialist.

Chapter three introduces the reader to the concept of community service-learning. A foundation is created by explaining community engagement before describing the meaning of community service-learning. Philosophical aspects, experiential learning and the benefits of CSL are discussed. Reflection as an important pedagogical tool is highlighted. The chapter ends with a description of the CSL module of the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences.

Chapter four describes the research methodology undertaken in this study. The research rationale and aim along with the research problem and objectives are stated. The research design is explained, including discussions on the sampling method and data collection. This includes a discussion on the Nominal Group Technique (NGT), reflection activities including structured reflection and unstructured reflection. As this is a qualitative study the trustworthiness of the methodology is

explored, followed by a brief discussion of the ethical considerations. The chapter ends with a discussion of data analysis, including the analysis that took place during the nominal groups and content analysis that included a priori coding and inductive coding.

Chapter five reports the research results. Students' perceptions, which were obtained from the prenominal and postnominal groups and the reflection activities, are given. The results are then discussed in chapter six. The discussion concludes with the recommendations and conclusions of the research.

Chapter 2

Recreation and Related Concepts

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.2 RECREATION

2.3 CONCEPTS RELATED TO RECREATION

2.4 RECREATION COMPETENCIES

2.4.1 Competencies Identified in Literature

2.4.2 Competencies Identified in Job Descriptions

2.5 CONCLUSION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As the CSL module in HMS is directed towards recreation, it is necessary to consider the various terms associated with the concept. This chapter will provide a brief overview of recreation and related concepts. The term competency will be investigated and the competencies required by a person in the recreation field will be explored. Due to the varying and diverse occupational positions in the field of recreation, an analysis of job descriptions will be presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion to highlight the competencies needed in two (recreation leader and recreation specialist) of the various posts available to persons in the recreation field.

2.2 RECREATION

Rossmann and Schlatter (2000: 5) comment that “there is a lack of precise definitions in the recreation and leisure field”. An example of varying definitions can be found in Torkildsen (2005: 51-57) where he highlights six headings (recreation as leisure activities, recreation and wholesomeness, recreation as re-creation, linking experience to activity, recreation, well-being and leisure and finally recreation and social cohesion), thereby grouping various ways researchers have described recreation with 20 varying definitions. Consequently it is difficult to formulate an all-encompassing definition of recreation.

Mull, Bayless and Jamieson (2005: 4) state that recreation “is a voluntary activity that creates a diversion from work. It is a reenergizing, socially acceptable use of leisure time”. Recreation can include activities that require one to be physically active or involved, as well as passive activities. Accordingly, one can include board games, reading, walking or being physically active.

Recreation, according to Rossman and Schlatter (2000: 11-12), is a term that is used to describe a leisure activity that has to do with restoration, social purpose and morality. They continue by adding that leisure activities are manipulated in order to accomplish socially desirable goals. For the purposes of this study recreation will be viewed as described by Rossman and Schlatter, as this is the prescribed textbook for the HMS students and therefore most likely the perspective from which they would have viewed recreation.

2.3 CONCEPTS RELATED TO RECREATION

Sport is considered to be an “institutionalised competitive physical activity” (Rossman & Schlatter, 2000: 13). It requires physical exertion and a contest of physical skills that are regulated by set rules. Recreational sport is another term that is frequently used when discussing recreation. Recreational sport differs from the preceding definitions of recreation and sport as it refers to programmes that are “designed to give *everyone* an active role regardless of sport interest, age, race, gender, or athletic ability” (Ross, 2006: 273). Ross continues by stating that active participation is an important element to recreational sport, as the individuals’ choice to participate is paramount. This choice is not always evident in sport pursuits. Summarising the concept as described by Mull *et al.* (2005: 16), recreational sport is sport that is participated in for recreational purposes. Therefore, although some activities may be traditionally considered as sport they can still be performed within the recreational context. Students can therefore employ sport activities while planning recreation programmes.

2.4 RECREATION COMPETENCIES

Edginton *et al.* (2005: 208) state that competence “refers to the ability of individuals to interact successfully with their environment”. Priest and Gass (2005: 19) expand on this definition by remarking that “competence is a combination of skill, attitude, knowledge, behavior, confidence, and experience”.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) provides the following educational definitions of competence: “competence in turn, might be defined as the application of knowledge, skills and values in a specific context to a defined standard of performance” (SAQA, 2000b: 16). In the National Qualifications Framework and Quality Assurance document published in 2000 SAQA refers to various types of competence. “**Applied competence**: which is the union of practical competence, foundational competence and reflexive competence.

- **practical competence** is the demonstrated ability, in an authentic context, to consider a range of possibilities for action, make considered decisions about which to follow and to perform the chosen action,
- practical competence is grounded in **foundational competence** where the learner demonstrates an understanding of the knowledge and thinking which underpins the action taken, and it is integrated through
- **reflexive competence**, in which the learner demonstrates the ability to integrate or connect performances and decision-making with understanding and with an ability to adapt to change in unforeseen circumstances appropriately and responsibly and explain the reason behind these adaptations” (SAQA, 2000a: 17).

Although many of the resources consulted mentioned that it was necessary to possess competencies, or even more specifically knowledge, skills and abilities, few actually provided definitions or explanations of the terms. Knowledge is described by Rossman and Schlatter (2000: 285) as “a body of information one must possess that is directly applied to the performance of the job”. Brannick and Levine (2002: 106) describe knowledge as “the degree to which employees have mastered a technical body of material directly involved in the performance of a job”. Brannick and Levine (2002: 125) also state that knowledge refers to information about a discipline. They

give a further explanation that is closely related to Rossman and Schlatter's 2000 definition, when they remark that knowledge is "a body of information applied directly to the performance of a function" (2002: 178). To have skill one needs to possess a demonstrable aptitude to perform a learned psychomotor act (Rossman & Schlatter, 2000: 285). Or as Brannick and Levine (2002: 106) describe it "the capacity to perform tasks requiring the use of tools, equipment and machinery". Ability is seen by Rossman and Schlatter (2000: 285) as the current expertise to perform an observable behaviour or that results in an observable product. Brannick and Levine (2002: 106) describe it somewhat differently. They state that "ability is the capacity to carry out physical and mental acts required by a job's tasks where the involvement of tools, equipment, and machinery is not a dominant factor".

Unlike the definitions by Edginton *et al.* (2005), Priest and Gass (2005) and SAQA (2000), other definitions of competence or competencies refer more specifically to the workplace. According to Tett, Jackson and Rothstein (2000: 215) quoted by Chelladurai, (2006: 50) competency can be defined as "an identifiable aspect of prospective work behavior attributable to the individual that is expected to contribute positively and/or negatively to organizational effectiveness. In short, a competency is future-evaluated work behavior". It is consequently clear that the term competency not only refers to knowledge, skills and values required to perform a specific occupation, but also includes job description/performance measurement indicators (Walters & Isaacs, 2009: 19).

"A job description is a brief written description of work - it's a snapshot intended to communicate the essence of the job. A job description usually contains identifiers (job title plus other classifying information), a summary (mission or objective statement), and duties and tasks (what gets done), and it may contain other information such as reporting relations, accountability, and minimum qualifications." (Brannick & Levine, 2002: 4.)

2.4.1 Competencies Identified in Literature

The competencies required by a graduate entering the recreational field would include all aspects necessary to perform the job duties and tasks as specified in the

job description. Few results could be found as to research done on the competencies needed in recreation. In a study performed by Tait, Richins and Hanlon (1993: 12-26), persons working in the recreation industry were interviewed about the skills and knowledge priorities needed to be successful. The following aspects were identified by all respondents in the study as being essential: qualification in recreation; communications ability; group dynamics; negotiation skills; effective writing skills and planning. Ninety percent of the respondents in the Tait *et al.* study rated the following as important: qualification in sport, group/individual dynamics in recreation, work with people/participants in recreation, human resource development, marketing, understanding financial statements, negligence, current issues and trends, age related needs, motivation and performance, self-confidence, customer service, conflict resolution, self-evaluation, dealing with customers. Concepts of society and community, practical experience in recreation and work with customers in tourism received a rating of 88.5% and 87.5% respectively.

Russell and Jamieson (2008: 24-25) contend that empathy, integrity, energy and vision are personal qualities of a successful recreation programmer. Empathy is important as one wishes to focus on the needs and desires of the people served, whether for profit or not. "At its root, empathy means having a genuine respect and liking for others and enthusiasm for their differences." (Russell & Jamieson, 2008: 24.) Integrity includes treating participants with dignity and fairness, being forthright, truthful, ethical and responsible to participants. Energy includes being a self-initiator, requiring vigour and enterprise. Finally, vision is important in order to be able to visualise what should take place in the programme in order to run it successfully.

It is also maintained by Crossley, Jamieson and Brayley (2007: 309-310) that certain personal skills and attributes are needed by persons in the recreation and tourism industries. They state that it is difficult to teach these through academic curricula, but that they should somehow be re-enforced. The following skills are highlighted: self-confidence, flexibility, people skills, self-motivation, empowerment, "big picture" vision, creativity, attention to detail, entrepreneurship and initiative, patience, stability and finally placement skills.

Each of the above-mentioned aspects are described briefly by Crossley *et al.* (2007: 309-310). Self-confidence is gained through mastering something successfully and flexibility is needed in the recreation industry due to the variety of responsibilities. The ability to work with different people and working at all hours requires one to use a variety of skills and this requires flexibility. Being assertive and friendly is vital when working with people. People must be motivated to perform in order to advance in their field. One does not have to be an authoritative leader, but one that empowers subordinates through coaching and assistance. Vision is needed to see the company in the larger context. How does it fit into society and the industry? Tackling unusual problems are common and therefore one should try to expand vision and creativity by reading widely. As missing a detail can result in an unsatisfied customer it is important to ensure that all aspects run efficiently. "While following job responsibilities is important, taking the initiative to solve problems, improve procedures, and find new opportunities are definite pluses in employment" (Crossley *et al.*, 2007: 309). Thus, entrepreneurship and initiative are also important attributes needed. Patience is needed as it takes time to climb the corporate ladder. Many students feel that they should start as managers, but becoming a good manager is based on patience and hard work, which will give them the maturity and understanding required. Stability becomes important due to the high turnover of staff in this field. Most organisations promote from within so those who have greater stability will be able to progress further sooner. Placement skills "require a student to understand their goals in order to best represent their education and experience to an employer" (Crossley *et al.*, 2007: 310).

Leadership and more importantly goal-directed leadership was identified as being vital for recreation and leisure services (Edginton *et al.*, 2005: 50) identify. They maintain that this skill is needed to guide their participants through the recreation experience in order to achieve the goals and aspirations that they had prior to commencement of the activities. The authors also maintain that there are four levels of leadership in leisure and recreation: direct, supervisory, managerial and civic or community levels. They continue by stating that leaders "should attempt to share expectations, build trust, communicate effectively, share decision-making, foster a sense of cooperation, create a sense of risk or spontaneity, provide positive

reinforcement, and establish a social and emotional bond with the participant” (Edginton *et al.*, 2005: 117).

It is implied by Sawyer and Smith (1999: xv-xvi) that a recreation specialist/leader does not function in isolation. As many people are involved, the effective coordination of human and material resources is required in order to achieve specified goals. These people are managers who are needed in both sport and recreational settings to be successful in attaining the goals and objectives. Well-known management functions include planning, organising, staffing, leading, controlling and decision-making (Chelladurai, 1991: 5-8; Bridges & Roquemore, 1992: 6; Sawyer & Smith, 1999: xviii-xix).

2.4.2 Competencies Identified in Job Descriptions

As the stated definitions for competencies do not only include knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform a specific occupation, but job description/performance measurement indicators as well. A study was done on various job descriptions for persons working in the recreation industry. The job descriptions for a recreation leader and a recreation specialist were obtained via a web search. As the aim of the web search was to determine what job descriptions were available, it was thought more relevant to use Google than an academic search engine. The information being sought was more readily available to the general public looking to fill an available position. The two terms were selected due to 1) a recreation leader being used in Rossman and Schlatter’s description of a job analysis in their book *Recreation Programming* (2002: 285), the prescribed textbook for the HMS students, and 2) a recreation specialist, as someone who has a qualification in recreation would tend to specialise in this area. For the purpose of this study a recreation specialist is considered to be someone who is qualified and competent in service delivery in recreation.

The first 20 sites listed for each category were visited and all relevant sites (recreation specialist = 11 and recreation leader = 15) were then included to obtain a list of possible competencies needed for the advertised position. Sites that were not included (deemed as not relevant) were sites that referred one to another search

engine, those that were duplicates, or those that required the filling in of details in order to apply directly for a job. The 26 sites that were selected gave comprehensive descriptions of tasks to be performed. Seven recreation specialist sites and 11 recreation leader sites also provided additional lists of knowledge, skills and abilities or competencies needed to successfully fill the post.

The information of duties obtained from the 26 websites was synthesised into two tables in order to determine the diverse duties and tasks that were required to perform the job. The information supplied for a recreation specialist can be found in Table 2.1 and a recreation leader in Table 2.3. It must be noted that there is an overlap between some of the tasks as they cannot always be placed in watertight compartments. Some tasks could also be placed under more than one duty, although this was avoided as far as possible. The web source indicated in the far right column represents the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that the information was retrieved from. The URL lists can be found in Tables 2.2 and 2.4.

Table 2.1: Tasks of a Recreation Specialist

Duty	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Planning	Planning	1, 2
	Schedule activities, special events, and/or programmes	1
	Assist with special events within the section and department	1
	Development of overall operations	3
	Programme development	5
	Programme design	5
	Plan recreational activities	6
	Develop curriculum	8
	Plan activities for a recreation programme	9
	Participate in programme planning sessions	9
	Develop activity and lesson plans	9
	Ability to plan leisure classes for the public	10
	Plan, develop major recreational activities	11
	Schedule special activities	11
	Plan and prepare art and craft projects	9, 11
	Prepare schedules	11
	Development of overall operations of the recreation division and individual activities	3
Develop and/or recommend methods in operations of programmes	3	

Table 2.1: Continued

Duty	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Organising	Organising	1, 2
	Assist with special events within the section and department	1
	Organise all competitions and tournaments	4
	Organise recreational activities	6
	Organise special services	9
	Organise activities for a recreation programme	9
	Organise daily recreation activities for programme participants of various age groups in programmes such as arts and crafts, physical fitness, social functions or other related programmes.	9
	Organise various special events	9
	Coordinate and schedule guest speakers and other specialised presentations for the site or programme	9
	Assist with coordination of participants and programme activities	10
	Arrange special displays and shows	11
Lead	Lead activities	8
	Direct others to perform minor event tasks and activities	10
	Participate in major recreational activities	11
	Provide direction and assistance to participants	10
	Participate in various instructional programmes	11
Implement	Implement	1
	Coordinate with staff from other agencies	1
	Conduct recreational activities	2
	Administer recreational activities and programmes	2
	Implementation of a viable recreation programme	4
	Conduct all competitions and tournaments	4
	Programme facilitation	4
	Help coordinate special events and implement programme activities	4
	Teach or provide special services	5
	Implement activities for a recreation programme	6
	Implement daily recreation activities for programme participants of various age groups in programmes such as arts and crafts, physical fitness, social functions or other related programmes	9
	Implement various special events	9
	Conduct daily recreational activities such as sports, games, dances, exercise, arts and crafts classes and other special events for programme participants	9
	Assist community centre patrons with games and craft work	9

Table 2.1: Continued

Duty	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Implement continued	Ability to implement leisure classes for the public	9
	Conduct a general programme or recreation at an assigned area	10
	Implement activities in specialised programme areas	10
	Conduct operations, direct others to perform minor event tasks and activities	10
	Operation of a viable recreation programme	4
	Daily instruction	8
Staffing	Hire, supervise, discipline, terminate, and coordinate volunteers, part-time and seasonal workers, and others who assist in conducting recreation activities	1
	Conduct training programmes for officials and coaches, paid and volunteer	1
	Develop and evaluate subordinate employees' performance standards, provide leadership, guidance and counsel to subordinate staff	3
	Direct programme instructors	11
	Train new staff	11
Control (Supervising)	Control	3
	Enforce rules and regulations	9
	Establish and maintain internal controls and review procedures to ensure that personnel and funds are used in accordance with governing regulations	3
	Assist in formulating rules and regulations	11
	Supervise the work of subordinate staff	1
	Directly supervise	3
	Supervise recreational activities	6
	Supervise special services	9
	General supervision of the recreation centre	9
	Supervision over one or more recreation specialists and other part-time staff members	11
	Supervise part-time staff	11
	Supervise recreation programmes and facilities	11
	Supervise programmes	11
	Supervise various facilities and/or programmes	11
	Supervise athletic leagues and tournaments	11
	Supervise various instructional programmes	11
	Supervise recreation programmes and facilities	11
Supervise maintenance/operation of recreation facilities	11	
Supervise care and use of equipment and supplies	11	

Table 2.1: Continued

Duty	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Promotion	Develop monthly activity calendars, news releases or other materials to promote programmes and activities	1
	Promote recreational activities	6
	Prepare and distribute programme flyers and other publicity	6
	Prepare news releases, flyers, newsletters and posters for recreation activities or programmes	9
	Contact outside community agencies to increase public awareness	9
	Promote public relations	11
	Promote the physical, creative, and social development of participants	2
Equipment and Facility	Locate various sources for procurement of supplies, equipment and services and develop specifications for contract services	3
	Order, maintain, and schedule the repair of all recreation department equipment	4
	Prepare and gather supplies	6
	Maintain inventory control on all games and equipment	9
	Maintain an accurate and current listing of people using equipment	9
	Assist with setting up of equipment	10
	Assist with setting up of equipment and supplies storage	10
	Assist in maintaining the recreation site	9
	Maintenance/operation of recreation facilities	11
	Maintain work areas in a clean and organised manner	11
	Open and close facility when used	7
	Unlock doors prior to scheduled activities	7
	Provide simple facility room set-up	7
	Schedule use of bus, vans, and facilities in support of events; may drive vehicles in support of activities	1
	Operate vehicles; transport programme participants as required	9
Various facility management duties	7	
Communication	Explain and demonstrate to detainees the proper technique and use of all recreational equipment, including the enforcement of safety rules and regulations	4
	Provide informational and directional assistance	7
	Answer questions and complaints from customers and refer them to appropriate staff	7
	Provide assistance and direct customers to activity areas	7
	Communicate with parents	8
	Answer questions of the public	9

Table 2.1: Continued

Duty	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Communication continued	Ability to work with instructors, demonstrate excellent customer service skills and communicate with staff	10
	Inform supervisors of all positive and negative information regarding facilities, programmes, staff or the general public	11
	Answer inquiries regarding rental use policies, fees and regulations and interpret and explain operating policies of the programmes or facilities	11
Safety and Security	Inspect recreation area for cleanliness and safety	4
	Conduct weekly safety training sessions with recreation orderlies and clerks	4
	Perform security inspections of building	7
	Inspect building before, during, and after use, and report malfunctioning equipment	7
	Perform final security inspection before securing and locking building	7
	Observe safety precautions; correct minor safety problems; conduct activities in a safe manner; maintain discipline at indoor and outdoor recreation areas	9
	Monitor site facilities; ensure safety of facilities; provide information and assistance to users of facilities	9
	Report all accidents and ensure that victims receive proper care	1
	Ensure that all rules, regulations and safety practices are properly enforced	1
	Provide general supervision of the recreation centre; enforce rules and regulations	1
Monitor	Monitor task in conjunction with event	10
	Monitor programme site facilities	9
Administrative	Prepare and execute annual operating budgets	3
	Prepare and manage all recreation administrative matters	3
	Perform various clerical duties	6, 7
	Prepare simple reports; operate telephone system, fax machine, and copy machine; file paperwork	7
	Prepare class schedules	9
	Assist in completing necessary forms and records including emergency cards, purchase records, maintenance checklists and weekly attendance reports	9
	Sell participation cards and collect fees for class registrations	9
	Provide information and prepare reports as required	9
	Maintain accurate records of attendance, expenses, schedules, and supply requests	9
Maintain activity records and submit periodic and special reports	10	

Table 2.1: Continued

Duty	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Administrative continued	Distribute materials to day-camp personnel and assist them in planning and administering day-camp programme	11
	Maintain records, collect fees, register programme participants, answer phones	11
	Maintain accurate attendance and financial records for programmes; collect, report, and deposit all fees	1
	Receive and account for money paid for programmes and facilities	7
	Accept money from customers paying for admission to recreation programmes, fees for department activities and facilities	7
	Issue receipts	7
	Maintain recreation department records	4
	Daily statistics	5
	Handle payroll for staff	1
	Prepare and manage all recreation administrative matters to include but not limited to: briefings, letters of operation, standard operating procedures, after action reports, management narratives, etc.	3
	Handle telephone inquiries, greet visitors, and provide information	1
	Prepare monthly attendance and programme evaluation reports for all activities and/or programmes	3
	Make decisions regarding weekend rainouts for all outdoor athletic events ensuring that the hotline and appropriate media are utilised	1
	Management of overall operations of the recreation division and individual activities (annual operating budgets)	3
Creativity	Provide a variety of activities	9
	Use initiative, originality, and specialised knowledge in performing work; exercise a considerable degree of independence in making work decisions	11
Other	May solicit corporate and private donations for programmes	1
	Perform related duties as needed or assigned	1,3,6,7,9,10,11
	Advise on recreational activities and programmes	2
	Coach all athletic teams	4
	Check all detainees in and out of the gym	4
	Quality improvement	5
	Attend training workshops and staff meetings	9
	Work with neighbourhood and community groups on matters of civic and recreation interest	10

Table 2.2: URL Addresses for Web Source

URL Address for Table 2.1	Number listed on Table
http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/cfforms/hr/hrjobdesc.cfm?jc=8520 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	1.
http://www.acpeople.com.au/cat/Recreation-Specialist_188.htm Date of access: 23 April 2009.	2.
http://federalgovernmentjobs.us/jobs/Supervisory-Recreation-Specialist-1379120.html Date of access: 23 April 2009.	3.
http://www.careerbuilder.com/JobSeeker/Jobs/JobDetails.aspx?job_did=J8D3CN74PXMWHLWG02P&cbRecursionCnt=1&cbid=5626b20eb9934ec19c9b2c52e4718e7d-293782196-wo-6&ns_siteid=ns_xx_g_recreation_specialist Date of access: 23 April 2009.	4.
http://jobs.syracuse.com/careers/jobsearch/detail?jobId=16708344&viewType=main&networkView=main Date of access: 23 April 2009.	5.
https://www.calopps.org/ViewAgencyJob.cfm?ID=6556&kw= Date of access: 23 April 2009.	6.
http://www.simplyhired.com/job-id/s3vpbcitue/recreation-specialist-jobs/ Date of access: 23 April 2009.	7.
https://www.careersingovernment.com/index.cfm?page=jobView&jobID=17301 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	8.
http://www.cityofmesquite.com/hr/documents/PM087112.pdf Date of access: 23 April 2009.	9.
http://www.ucitymo.org/DocumentView.aspx?DID=772 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	10.
http://www.ucitymo.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=805 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	11.

Table 2.3: Tasks of a Recreation Leader

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Planning	Research and develop quality sport, recreation and leisure programmes for implementation	1
	Plan and develop sport and recreation programmes	1
	Develop and/or maintain recreation and sport programmes	1
	Ensure that a variety of sport, recreation and cultural programmes are planned	1
	Assist in coordinating and scheduling guest speakers and other specialised presentations for the site	2
	Develop and plan activities in a specialised programme area	3
	Plan a wide variety of activities at a recreation facility or park site	3
	Prepare activity materials which may include gathering craft supplies, food preparation, and creating demonstration projects	4
	Research programme activities and assist in creation of monthly calendars	4

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Planning continued	Planning recreational activities	5, 9, 11
	Schedule age-appropriate activities and programmes	5
	Assist with the coordination of the development of recreation programmes and services	6
	Plan and coordinate departmental programmes, projects and activities	7
	Plan and coordinate a variety of department programmes, projects and activities	7
	May provide input regarding programme planning	8
	Plan organised recreation activities at an assigned playground, park, or recreation centre, following general instructions from a supervisor	10
	Under the direction of the coordinators/supervisor plan field trips, classes, monthly activity reports, and monthly calendars	12
	Plan various student activities and special projects	13
	Assist in the planning and development of programmes	13
	Assist the programme coordinator with planning of all recreation activities in accordance with recreation department objectives	15
Organising	Assist in organising activities for the recreation programme	2
	Assist in organising various special events	2
	Organise a wide variety of activities at a recreation facility or park site	1
	Organise recreational activities	5, 11
	Organise age-appropriate activities and programmes	5
	Organise work and work crews	6
	Coordinate a variety of department programmes, projects and activities	7
	Organise and coordinate recreational services	9
	Organise and direct hobby, adult, youth, and children's groups	10
	Organise field trips	10
	Under the direction of the coordinators/supervisor organise field trips, classes, monthly activity reports, and monthly calendars	12
	Work closely with coordinators to organise special events	12
	Organise student recreation activities and/or athletics programmes	13
	Organise various arts and crafts projects	13
	Organise various student activities and special projects; assist in the planning and development of programmes	13
	Assist in organising a variety of recreational and educational activities and programmes for youth and adults	14
Organise games	15	

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Lead	Delivery of all recreation, leisure and sport programmes and activities	1
	Lead and supervise activities, particularly for youth and elders	1
	Lead participants in a variety of recreational activities	2
	Perform leadership recreation work in a lead capacity	3
	Direct a wide variety of activities at a recreation facility or park site	3
	Flexibility and good leadership skills required	4
	Lead groups of various sizes in activities	4
	Lead small and large groups in community-based activities (even in inclement weather)	4
	Provide one-on-one assistance to participants for various activities	4
	Lead a variety of recreation activities	5
	Conduct and instruct recreational programme activities within one or more assigned programme areas, including sports programmes, based on district rules, regulations, policies and procedures	8
	Provide instruction to youth	8
	Direct recreational services	9
	Instruct participants	10
	Work closely with coordinators to direct staff	12
Lead student recreation activities and/or athletics programmes	13	
Lead games	15	
Implement	Implement the most appropriate programmes	1
	Implement recreation programmes to ensure that residents have access to sport, recreation and leisure activities	1
	Ensure that a variety of sport, recreation and cultural programmes are implemented	1
	Schedule activities, facilities and volunteers as required	1
	Liaise with the recreation facility attendant to ensure that programmes and facilities are coordinated	1
	Book all sport rental and community events	1
	Assist with and facilitate local involvement in regional and territorial programmes and competitions	1
	Provide leadership training and opportunities and volunteer recognition	1
	Assist in implementing activities for the recreation programme	2
	Conduct daily recreational activities such as sports, games, dances, exercise, arts and crafts classes and other special events for programme participants	2
	Assist community centre patrons with games and craft work	2
	Assist in implementing various special events	2
	Conduct a general programme of recreation at an assigned area	3
Provide direct recreation and community access services	4	

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Implement continued	Facilitate in-house group activities and implement modification to suit multiple abilities as needed	4
	Conduct recreational activities	5
	Implement and conduct age-appropriate activities and programmes	5
	Assist with special events within the section and department	5
	Assist with the coordination of the delivery of recreation programmes and services	6
	Implement departmental programmes, projects and activities	7
	Implement a variety of department programmes, projects and activities	7
	Assist with the operation of recreation/sports camps	8
	Facilitate recreational services	9
	Conduct a general programme of recreation at an assigned playground, school, activity centre, or senior centre	10
	Assist in the implementation of recreation activities	11
	Assist in implementing a variety of recreational and educational activities and programmes for youth and adults	14
	Assist in coordinating and implementing a variety of recreation activities and programmes	14
	Participate in teaching recreation classes such as arts and crafts and outdoor games to children, adults and the disabled population	14
	Assist and participate with children	15
	Assist the programme coordinator with the implementation of all recreation activities in accordance with recreation department objectives	15
	Implement children's programmes set up by programme director	15
	Instruct games	15
	Assist programme/activities coordinator in implementation of activities and on field trips	15
	Assist the Softball Programme Coordinator in the day-to-day operation of the park and associated programmes	6
Staffing	Provide training	1
	Assist in the training of recreation leaders at staff meetings and workshops	12
	Recruit, train and oversee volunteers	1
	Provide direction to volunteers and temporary employees	5
	Recruit, develop and manage a diverse group of volunteers	6
	Provide instruction and in-service training for subordinate staff	7
	Provide training as required	1
Control (Supervising)	Manage youth and adult softball tournaments and local league play	6
	Supervise departmental programmes, projects and activities	7
	Supervise activities	1
	Supervise recreation facilities and casual employees	1

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Control (Supervising) continued	Act as a lead over part-time and volunteer staff	3
	Supervise a variety of department programmes, projects and activities	7
	Supervise assigned staff and volunteers	7
	Supervise a variety of department programmes, projects and activities	7
	Supervise organised recreation activities at an assigned playground, park, or recreation centre, following general instructions from a supervisor	10
	Supervise a variety of competitive and non-competitive games, stunts, contests, and instructional and classroom activities	10
	Supervise and direct Recreation Leader I and Recreation Aide employees	10
	Organise and supervise field trips	10
	Supervise all recreational activities	11
	Oversee and direct staff in the daily implementation of programmes	12
	Supervise student recreation activities and/or athletics programmes	13
	Supervise assigned programmes	13
	Supervise various arts and crafts projects	13
	Supervise various student activities and special projects; assist in the planning and development of programmes	13
	May give direction to programme volunteers on specific activities or projects	8
	Supervise children on playground, recreational facilities and in classroom/study activities	13
	Supervise children on playgrounds	14
	Supervise organised games	14
	Assist the programme coordinator with supervision of all recreation activities in accordance with recreation department objectives	15
	Supervise, children during before/after school programme and summer activities	15
Supervise children	15	
Promotion	Promote programmes and volunteer and leadership opportunities	1
	Promote recreation and sport programmes in order to ensure that residents are aware of available opportunities and activities Main activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate an active community relations campaign to promote recreational and cultural programmes • Arrange for advertising of programmes • Maintain constant community liaison including contacts with local, regional and territorial sport and recreation organisations 	1
	Develop monthly activity calendars, news releases, or other materials to promote programmes and activities	5
	Maintain effective public relations	5

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Promotion continued	Report to local media outlets	6
	Promote a variety of department programmes, projects and activities	7
	Assist in promoting a variety of recreation activities and programmes	14
	Prepare and distribute flyers and posters	14
Equipment and Facility	Book all sport rental and community events	1
	Supervise the use of equipment and supplies	2
	Maintain inventory control on all games and equipment; maintain an accurate and current listing of users	2
	Assist in maintaining the recreation site	2
	Facility clean-up	4
	Clean-up after group activities which may include wiping work surfaces, moving chairs, re-organising supplies, cleaning floors, and emptying garbage	4
	Independently open the building and set-up for nightly programmes	4
	Close the building by securing all closets, turning out lights, and locking all entrances	4
	Provide facility tours and basic orientation to new volunteers	4
	Schedule use of bus, vans, and facilities in support of events; may drive vehicles in support of activities	5
	Use tools and supplies, manual and power-operated hand tools, power equipment, and assist with sports field maintenance	6
	Provide oversight and direction with ongoing field and facility maintenance activities	6
	Inspect assigned facilities and/or equipment and recommend any necessary repair, maintenance and/or supplies	7
	Prepare buildings, fields and facilities for scheduled activities/events	8
	Open, secure and clean buildings and other areas before and after programme use	8
	Prepare facilities and set up equipment for scheduled recreational activities	8
	Inspect programme areas and equipment and recommend maintenance and repair as needed	8
	Transport, issue, receive and control the use of recreational equipment and supplies	8
	Monitor equipment inventories and recommend procurement of items as needed	8
	May prepare the playing field	10
	Issue and receive recreation equipment such as balls, bats, gloves, nets, and horseshoes	10
	Ensure that the safety and cleanliness of recreational equipment and teaching materials are maintained	13
	May perform field preparation duties in programmes such as baseball, softball, volleyball, arts and crafts, leisure activities and special events	13

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Equipment and Facility Continued	Perform light custodial duties, e.g., maintain recreation equipment, maintain cleanliness of facilities, perform set-up and break-down duties for activities and special events	13
	Report any repair or maintenance issues to the appropriate management, e.g. leaks, damaged equipment or facilities, dangerous hazards	13
	Operate various programme equipment and machinery, e.g., karaoke machine, DVD player, screen projector, audio equipment and microphones	13
	Set up facilities and fields for events	14
	Maintain recreation facilities and equipment in a neat and orderly manner; clean kitchen and cooking utensils as needed; take inventory of equipment, supplies and materials	14
	Demonstrate the use of equipment and explain techniques of activities to increase children's knowledge or competence	15
	Set up and clean after recreation activities are over including sweeping or vacuuming of floors	15
Communication	Communicate with community members to determine their needs and interests	1
	Ensure recreation information is available	1
	Answer questions from the public	2
	Communicate effectively with all participants, caregivers, and family members	4
	Coordinate with staff from other agencies	5
	Communicate effectively with the general public, co-workers, supervisors, softball players, and game officials	6
	Understand and follow oral and written instructions	6
	Must be able to manage potentially hostile and confrontational situations	6
	Contact public/parents with programme information and updates; draft various reports and correspondence	13
	Respond to inquiries or requests for information from interested community groups and citizens	14
Safety and Security	Enforce the rules and regulations	2
	Observe safety precautions; correct minor safety problems; conduct activities in a safe manner; maintain discipline at indoor and outdoor recreation areas	2
	Ensure that all rules, regulations, and safety practices are properly enforced	5
	Report all accidents and ensure that victims receive proper care	5
	Enforce policies and procedures	6
	Promote and practise safety procedures in assigned programmes	7
	Implement and monitor district procedures regarding the safety of participants	8
	Maintain accident, incident, and emergency reports	10
May render first aid	10	

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Safety and Security continued	Maintain order during activities and enforce rules and regulations	10
	Perform all work duties and activities in accordance with city policies and procedures	10
	Work in a safe manner and report unsafe activity and conditions	10
	Follow city-wide safety policy and practices and adhere to responsibilities concerning safety prevention, reporting and monitoring as outlined in the City's Safety Handbook	10
	Work closely with children, parents and staff to ensure programme safety	12
	Provide a safe recreational environment for the assigned community programmes, youth activities and/or special events	13
	Adhere to operational guidelines and procedures for the overall and day-to-day operation of the recreation programmes/facilities; ensure operations comply with established policies procedures and applicable regulatory standards	13
	Enforce camp and recreation department policies to guide, conduct, maintain discipline and safeguard health of the campers	15
Monitor	Monitor the care and maintenance of any equipment and facilities in the community	1
	Monitor recreational programme activities within one or more assigned programme areas, including sports programmes, based on district rules, regulations, policies and procedures	8
Administrative	Administer recreation programmes to ensure that programmes are delivered within guidelines and budgets Main activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a recreation plan • Prepare the recreation programme budget • Prepare financial and programme reports • Manage contracts associated with the recreation programme • Monitor the use of recreation equipment and facilities • Ensure the maintenance of equipment and facilities to ensure safety and security • Be familiar with legislation, policies, procedures and rules about sport, recreation and cultural activities, events and competitions • Distribute information about regional and territorial participation and competitions • Record information on and prepare reports concerning community programmes, costs, numbers of participants and equipment and facility use • Provide monthly and yearly reports about recreation programmes and opportunities • Ensure that all programmes and activities are implemented according to relevant legislation, policies and procedures 	1
	Sell participation cards and collect fees for class registration	2
	Assist in completing necessary forms and records including participation cards, attendance records, maintenance checklists and financial reports	2

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Administrative continued	Keep financial and activity records and submit periodic and special reports	3
	Meticulous record keeping	4, 6
	Maintain accurate attendance and financial records for programmes; collect, report, and deposit all fees	4,5
	Support operations by handling telephone inquiries, greeting visitors, providing information	5
	Complete written reports and record as required	7
	Perform a variety of clerical/administrative work as necessitated by the assignment	7
	Perform record keeping and scorekeeping duties at sports event	8
	Provide routine administrative support	8
	Keep score for various adult/youth athletic sports leagues	8
	Maintain records of participation and collect participant fees	8
	Perform routine administrative duties such as phone and counter reception and registration processing	8
	Accept and process reservations and registrations for individuals, groups, and facilities	10
	Maintain attendance and activity records, score cards, and team standings	10
	Make periodic written and oral reports, including budget updates and projections	10
	Work the front counter as needed, assisting with new member enrolments, phones, maintain, supply inventory, and keep accurate records	12
	Confirm child attendance in after-school programmes; release children to parents from programmes, e.g., after-school, summer, spring, and winter programmes.	13
	Maintain activity calendars and bulletin boards	14
	Participate in centre meetings	14
	Prepare and submit daily and monthly attendance reports	14
	May be required to perform general clerical duties including operating a personal computer with WordPerfect software	14
Attend staff and safety meetings	15	
Access funding and prepare funding proposals	1	
Evaluation	Evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and identify areas where new programmes are needed	1
	Evaluate a wide variety of activities at a recreation facility or park site	3
	Evaluate a variety of department programmes, projects and activities	7
	Assist in evaluating programme techniques and content	14
	Complete needs assessments to determine the programmes that are required	1
	Assess the recreation requirements of the community	1
	Research sport and recreation programmes, funding sources and project requirements	1

Table 2.3: Continued

Duties	Descriptions of Tasks and Responsibilities	Web Source
Creativity	A wide range of sport recreation and cultural programmes are provided	1
	Ensure that a variety of sport recreation and cultural programmes are planned and implemented	1
	Work with independence and initiative within established policies and procedures	12
Working with Others	Work independently or with teams	6
	Maintain effective relationships with local service providers, businesses, civic organisations, and the general public; and local state and regional national softball organisations	6
	Demonstrate cooperative behaviour with colleagues, supervisors and the public at all times	8
	Must be able to work with other recreation leaders and senior recreation leaders	11
	Work effectively with other staff to provide quality programmes for youth such as homework help, sports, arts and crafts and other activities	12
	Work with neighbourhood and community groups on matters of civic and recreational interest	3
	Show respect for all people, while maintaining strong personal boundaries	4
	Maintain a professional attitude and provide excellent customer service to participants at all times	12
Other	Encourage and promote a healthy lifestyle	1
	Develop recreation and sports organisations	1
	Attend workshops, seminars and classes as required	2
	Perform other duties as assigned	5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
	Demonstrate continuous effort to improve operations, decrease turnaround times, streamline work processes, and work cooperatively and jointly to provide quality seamless customer service	3
	May solicit corporate and private donations for programmes	5
	Enforce department of community services policies and procedures	6
	Promotion of social values and personal accountability	9
	Knowledge of basic street slang and security threat groups is also a requirement	9
	Officiate at sports contests	10
	Act as referee	14
	Referee games	15
	Assist with various special events and projects	13

Table 2.4: URL Addresses for Web Source

URL Address for Table 2.3	Number listed on Table
http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/school/tools/JD_docs/Recreation%20Leader%20JD.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	1
http://www.cityofmesquite.com/hr/documents/CL048115.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	2
http://phoenix.gov/JOBSPECS/43030.html Date of access: 24 April 2009.	3
http://www.finaid.wvu.edu/studentjobs/students/ws/off-campus/community_service_files/Recreation%20Leader%20Max%20Higbee.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	4
https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/cfforms/hr/hrjobdesc.cfm?jc=8510 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	5
http://jobs.oregonlive.com/careers/jobsearch/detail?jobId=16986591 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	6
http://www.cityofwestsacramento.org/cityhall/departments/cmo/hr/pdf/669973_23831739_197.pdf?CFID=669973&CFTOKEN=23831739 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	7
http://www.larpdrecandpark.org/employment/PTjobdescript/RecreationLeaderI-PT.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	8
http://www.in.gov/idoc/2379.htm#2FD4 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	9
http://www.chandleraz.gov/hr/salaryplan/description.aspx?id=R008 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	10
https://www.calopps.org/viewagencyjob.cfm?id=5730 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	11
http://agency.governmentjobs.com/santaclarita/default.cfm?action=viewjob&JobID=152495 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	12
http://www.ci.palm-coast.fl.us/CityDocs/Departments/PersonnelManagement/PositionDescriptions/Recreation%20Leader%20I.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	13
http://www.ci.la-porte.tx.us/Employment/Recreation_Leader_Seasonal.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	14
https://sdcea.memberstatements.com/Clubs/sandiegoce/Uploaded/FacilityPics/hr/Recreation%20Leader%20Camp%20Counselor.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	15

A summary of the number duties and tasks relating to these duties that were listed on the various websites for both the recreation leader and recreation specialist is indicated in Table 2.5. The tasks relating to typical managerial duties such as planning, organising, implementing and control dominate. The rank order was determined by tallying the N for each duty. The results were then ordered from the duty with the most aspects listed to those that had the least aspects listed. "Other"

was inserted last as this covered a broad spectrum of duties that could not be easily placed into the identified duties such as administration, planning, etc.

For Table 2.5 the total N was determined by adding the number of duties listed for the recreation leader and the recreation specialist. The percentage was then determined to determine the ranking of the duties.

Table 2.5: Summary of Tasks

Typical Duties	Recreation Specialist		Recreation Leader		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Administrative	25	15	38	14	63	15
Implement	19	12	34	12.5	53	12
Equipment and Facility	16	10	30	11	46	10.5
Control	19	11	25	9	44	10
Planning	20	12	22	8	42	10
Organising	12	7	18	6.5	30	7
Safety and Security	10	6	17	6	27	6
Lead	5	3	17	6	22	5
Communication	9	5	10	4	19	4
Promotion	7	4	11	4	18	4
Staffing	5	3	7	3	12	3
Working with Others	1	1	8	3	9	2
Evaluation	0	0	7	3	7	1.5
Creativity	2	1	3	1	5	1
Monitor	2	1	2	1	4	1
Other	13	8	20	8	33	8
Total N	165	100	269	100	434	100

The similarity of the tasks and duties of the recreation specialist and the recreation leader is also evident. The dominant 10 duties are precisely the same for both the specialist and the leader. As a result it can be deduced that the use of the two descriptions (recreation leader and recreation specialist) is based on semantic preferences by service providers to identify an individual who must provide recreation services.

Although the following two tables still differentiate between a recreation leader and specialist to depict the data that was retrieved from the various websites, for the

duration of this study the word “recreation specialist” will be used to describe someone who is working in the recreation industry.

Tables 2.6 and 2.8 display various components that were specifically identified on the 18 websites as being important with regard to competencies or knowledge, skills and abilities. Some were listed under a general heading of competencies, or they were specifically broken down into the three areas of knowledge, skills and abilities. Components listed under general competencies were broken down into knowledge and skills for the tables. As with the previous tables, the web source that is in the far right column represents the URL from which the information was retrieved. The URL lists can be found in Tables 2.7 and 2.9.

Table 2.6: Competencies of a Recreation Specialist

Competency	Web Source
Knowledge (of):	
Objectives and principles of public recreation	3
Principles and practices of recreation programme planning	3
Recreation facility safety conditions and hazardous areas or conditions	3
Recreation programme safety rules and regulations	2, 3
Record-keeping techniques	3
Basic mathematical principles	3
Basic public relations and promotional techniques and their application to leisure services	3
Emergency procedures including first aid	3
Practices and techniques of various arts and crafts preparation	3
The philosophy of organised recreation; principles and practices of recreation programme planning, development, and scheduling	1
The principles, rules, materials, and equipment requirements of recreational activities in an assigned area	1
Recreation programmes and facilities	5
Recreation and leisure activities for seniors	2
Knowledge of the role of the special activity in the total recreational programme	5
Modern office practices, procedures and equipment	5
The proper technique and use of fitness equipment and the ability to instruct users	5
Skill (in):	
Managing budgets and monitoring use of supplies	3
Teaching rules and procedures of various arts, crafts, games and sports	3
Enforcing recreation centre rules and regulations	3
Organising and maintaining large groups	3

Table 2.6: Continued

Competency	Web Source
Planning and coordinating projects	3
Demonstrating various arts and crafts techniques	3
Must be able to work with citizens, students, or participants in accordance with recreation policies and procedures (problem solving and analytical skills)	4
Ability (to):	
Work varied shifts	3
Plan, organise and implement recreation programmes and activities	3
Supervise recreation programme participants	3
Enforce recreation site safety rules and regulations	3
Respond quickly and effectively in an emergency situation	3
Respond to requests or inquiries from the general public	3
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work including the general public	3
Maintain recreation centre records	3
Solve minor disciplinary problems	3
Receive coin and currency and make correct change	3
Perform basic mathematical calculations	3
Participate in organising and implementing recreation programme activities	3
Learn and enforce recreation site safety rules and regulations	3
Pass a medical physical examination and drug test	3
Meet the city's driving standards	3
Organise and administer recreation activities	5
Instruct subordinate part-time staff and programme participants	5
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, participants, vendors, sports groups, corporate organisations, and general public at all times	5
Communicate effectively in oral and written form	5
Communicate and understand the needs of staff, programme participants and the general public	5
Coordinate, plan, and prepare projects, special events and programmes	5
Work a combination of days, nights and weekends	5
Be trained on new techniques and jobs and learn new skills proficiently	5
Direct, hire, evaluate and supervise Recreation Leaders or other staff assigned to carry out recreational activities	1
Maintain accurate records and prepare necessary reports	1
Plan and implement recreational programmes	1
Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing	1
Give instructions in assigned recreation activities	1
Maintain discipline and enforce safety policies and procedures	1
Maintain effective working relationships with other staff and the general public	1
Read rosters and correspondence (i.e., e-mails) from recreation office	4

Table 2.6: Continued

Competency	Web Source
Perform general maths calculations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and percentages	4
Write simple instructions and guides	4
Good computer skills	5
Computer literate	6
Job knowledge	3
Teamwork	3
Customer service	3
Flexibility	3
Work ethic	3
Energetic	7
Creative	7
Enthusiastic	7
Excellent work history and attendance record	1
Possession of a valid driver's licence and an excellent driving record	1
Some positions may require additional certification in area of specialisation	1
Manage time effectively	2
Show work initiative	2
Work independently	2
Must be able to maintain good relations with all staff, participants and other concerned groups	2

Table 2.7: URL Addresses for Web Source

URL Address for Table 2.6	Number listed on Table
http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/cforms/hr/hrjobdesc.cfm?jc=8520 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	1
https://www.calopps.org/ViewAgencyJob.cfm?ID=6556&kw= Date of access: 23 April 2009.	2
http://www.cityofmesquite.com/hr/documents/PM087112.pdf Date of access: 23 April 2009.	3
http://www.ucitymo.org/DocumentView.aspx?DID=772 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	4
www.ucitymo.org/DocumentView.asp?DID=805 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	5
http://jobs.monstergulf.com/details/7003333.html?sig=js-2-dea8797190e7a34df884d2b37a805c84-1 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	6
https://www.careersingovernment.com/index.cfm?page=jobView&jobID=17301 Date of access: 23 April 2009.	7

Table 2.8: Competencies of a Recreation Leader

Competency	Web Source
Knowledge (of):	
Recreation, sport and leisure programme administration, management and delivery recreation	1
Sport and leisure programme evaluation	1
Coaching theory and practice	1
Volunteer training, development and recognition	1
Events coordination and planning	1
Cultural activities and traditional sports and games	1
An understanding of relevant legislation, policies, procedures and rules	1
An understanding of the cultural and political environment	1
Emergency procedures, first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)	1
Recreation facility safety conditions and hazardous areas or conditions	2
Recreation programme safety rules and regulations	2
Record-keeping techniques	2
Basic mathematical principles	2
Emergency procedures including first aid	2
Practices and techniques of various arts and crafts preparation	2
Principles and methods used in organising, conducting, and supervising a programme of recreational activities	3
Fiscal controls needed to handle recreational funds	3
Theory and philosophy of recreation and/or group work and its application to individual and group behaviour	3
Techniques of planning, organising, and promoting programme activities	3
First aid and safety practices and procedures	3
General and practical recreation programming and principles	4
Policies, rules and regulations related to assigned activities, including a wide variety of group games and sports	5
Basic craft tools, equipment and materials, and their proper use	5
The care and proper use of recreational equipment and supplies	5
Methods and techniques of playground planning	6
Philosophy and objectives of public recreation	6
Child psychology, sociology and personal health and hygiene	6
Rules and regulations of athletic competition such as basketball, baseball, softball and other games and sports	6
A large variety of recreational activities suitable for children, adolescents, and adults	6
Arts and crafts, including dramatics, music, and rhythmic	6
First aid and proper response in an emergency situation	6
Supervisory skills and training methods	6
Federal regulations and city policies regarding safe work and recreational practices	6

Table 2.8: Continued

Competency	Web Source
Knowledge (of) continued:	
Current principles and practices of child safety and instruction work	8
Techniques of supervising children during recreation activities	9
General programme content for community recreation activities in the area of assignment	9
Recreational, cultural, and social needs of the community	9
Modern office practices, procedures and equipment	9
Basic mathematics	9
Assertive leadership skills	7
Excellent customer service	7
Computer knowledge	7
Bilingual in English/Spanish a plus	7
Safety precautions and the ability to maintain discipline are desirable	11
Activities that appeal to teenage groups	11
Skills (in):	
Team leadership and management skills	1
Financial management skills	1
Supervisory skills	1
Contract management skills	1
Strategic planning skills	1
Analytical and problem-solving skills	1
Decision-making skills	1
Negotiations skills	1
Effective verbal and listening communications skills	1
Computer skills including the ability to operate spreadsheets	1
And word processing programmes at a highly proficient level	1
Effective written communications skills	1
Prepare reports	1
Effective public relations and public speaking skills	1
Research and programme development skills	1
Stress management skills	1
Time management skills	1
Teaching rules and procedures of various arts, crafts, sports and games	2
Organising and overseeing large groups	2
Planning and coordinating projects	2
Demonstrating various arts and crafts techniques	2
Safe first aid and CPR methods, procedures and practices	8
The principles and techniques of customer relations skills; ability to deal diplomatically with individuals; ability to react quickly and calmly in emergency situations	8

Table 2.8: Continued

Competency	Web Source
Skills (in) continued:	
Communication skills: Excellent oral and written communication skills and excellent public relations skills are required	10
Mathematical skills: No special maths skills required	10
Computer skills: No special computer skills needed	10
Reasoning ability and other skills: Requires good organisational skills and customer service skills	10
Ability (to):	
Work varied shifts	2
Maintain records	2
Receive coin and currency and make correct change	2
Perform basic mathematical calculations	2
Participate in organising and implementing recreation programme activities	2
Learn and enforce recreation site safety rules and regulations	2
Respond quickly and effectively in an emergency situation	2
Solve minor disciplinary problems	2
Respond to requests or inquiries from the general public	2
Understand and follow oral and written instructions	2
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work	2
Pass a medical physical examination and drug test	2
Meet the city's driving standards	2
Plan and organise recreation programmes.	3
Train, direct, and evaluate employees and volunteers involved in recreation work	3
Maintain financial and activity records and produce written documentation in the English language	3
Work cooperatively with peers, subordinates, supervisors, and the general public	3
Work safely without presenting a direct threat to self or others	3
Lead groups in recreational activities	4
Maintain discipline and enforce safety policies and procedures	4
Follow both oral and written instructions	4
Maintain accurate and legible records	4
Maintain effective working relationships with other staff and the general public	4
Perform physical aspects of the classification	4
Communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing	4
Exercise sound independent judgment within established guidelines	4
Coordinate multiple activities, projects or programmes; interpret and apply policies, procedures and guidelines	4
Establish and maintain effective relationships with peers, public, children, and other city staff	4

Table 2.8: Continued

Competency	Web Source
Ability (to) continued:	
Maintain physical condition appropriate to the performance of assigned duties and responsibilities	4
Maintain effective audio–visual discrimination and perception needed for making observations, communicating with others, reading and writing, and operating assigned office equipment; maintain mental capacity which allows for effective interaction and communication with others	4
Work with adults, children and families to conduct and monitor a variety of recreational activities, including sports programmes	5
Interpret and monitor participants for compliance with district regulations and policies	5
Prioritise work assignments, meet deadlines and work effectively under pressure and with frequent interruptions; respond appropriately in an emergency situation	5
Understand and carry out oral and written instructions	5
Maintain discipline among programme participants and observe safety precautions.	5
Communicate effectively with a wide range of people	5
Make basic arithmetic calculations with speed and accuracy; count money and make change	5
Respond appropriately to changing situations	5
Use basic computer hardware and software	5
Maintain the confidentiality of participant, parent and staff information	5
Maintain cooperative relationships with those contacted in the course of the work	5
Follow written and oral instructions	6
Develop, organise, and supervise recreational activities following general guidelines set by a supervisor, including the ability to adapt a programme to specific and immediate circumstances	6
Read and interpret recreation manuals, including game and activity instructions, rules, and standards	6
Adhere to programme standards and objectives outlined in city policy and by supervisors	6
Accompany groups of all ages on field trips and off-site activities	6
Enforce sport and activity rules and regulations	6
Enforce discipline	6
Open, prepare, and supervise the use of, and break down and close, a recreational facility, which may include rearranging classrooms and moving furniture	6
Prepare written reports, maintain attendance and activity records, perform programme surveys and evaluations, and maintain registration and reservation records	6
Operate standard office equipment related to the position and operate a personal computer using programme applications appropriate to assigned duties	6
Operate equipment related to sports and recreational activities, which may include a motor vehicle	6
Communicate effectively with the public and other employees	6
Positive, team oriented, self-motivated, and enthusiastic	7
Work effectively, compassionately and creatively with youth ages 5 through 18	7

Table 2.8: Continued

Competency	Web Source
Ability (to) continued:	
Excellent communication and follow-up skills	7
Juggle numerous responsibilities and tasks	7
Creative problem solving	7
Plan, coordinate and deliver instructional training in recreation programmes	8
Understand and follow written and oral instructions	8
Clearly communicate information both verbally and in writing	8
Analytically observe, and objectively and clearly report routine and non-routine, emergency and non-emergency activities	8
Operate basic office equipment	8
Access, operate and maintain various software applications	8
Operate various programme equipment and machinery, e.g., karaoke machine, DVD player, screen projector, audio equipment and microphones	8
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with departmental staff, supervisors and the general public	8
Assist in coordinating, organising, and implementing recreation and leisure time activities and specialised events	9
Prepare and distribute publicity concerning new or ongoing recreation offerings	9
Work with the disabled, children and adults in supervising recreation activities and services	9
Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing	9
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work	9
Plan and lead such activities	11
Establish and maintain effective working relationships with other employees and participants	11
Personal Attributes:	
Maintain standards of conduct	1
Be respectful	1
Possess cultural awareness and sensitivity	1
Be flexible	1
Demonstrate a dedication to the position and the community	1
Demonstrate sound work ethics	1
Be consistent and fair	1

Table 2.9: URL Addresses for Web Source

URL Address for Table 2.8	Number listed on Table
http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/school/tools/JD_docs/Recreation%20Leader%20JD.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	1
http://www.cityofmesquite.com/hr/documents/CL048115.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	2
http://phoenix.gov/JOB_SPECS/43030.html Date of access: 24 April 2009.	3
https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/cfforms/hr/hrjobdesc.cfm?jc=8510 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	4
http://www.larpdrecandpark.org/employment/PTjobdescript/RecreationLeaderI-PT.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	5
http://www.chandleraz.gov/hr/salaryplan/description.aspx?id=R008 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	6
http://agency.governmentjobs.com/santaclarita/default.cfm?action=viewjob&JobID=152495 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	7
http://www.ci.palm-coast.fl.us/CityDocs/Departments/PersonnelManagement/PositionDescriptions/Recreation%20Leader%20I.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	8
http://www.ci.la-porte.tx.us/Employment/Recreation_Leader_Seasonal.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	9
https://sdcea.memberstatements.com/Clubs/sandiegoce/Uploaded/FacilityPics/hr/Recreation%20Leader%20Camp%20Counselor.pdf Date of access: 24 April 2009.	10
https://www.calopps.org/viewagencyjob.cfm?id=5730 Date of access: 24 April 2009.	11

A summary of the competencies for both recreation leader and recreation specialist listed on the various websites is presented in Table 2.10. Competencies relating to safety management are dominant (17.9%). Followed by communication (13.8%), interpersonal competencies (13%) and then philosophical orientation and planning (both 9.8%).

The presence of management competencies is evident (planning, organising, administration). However, if the competencies (Table 2.10) are contrasted with the tasks and duties identified (Table 2.5) differences seem evident. The duty comprising safety aspects has a rank order of seven, but on the list of competencies safety management was rated as number one. Communication was high on the competency list (rated second), but only ranked number nine on the duty list.

Interpersonal (working with others) was listed third amongst the competencies, but only 12th on the list of duties.

Table 2.10: Summary of Competencies

Top 10 Competencies	Total	
	N	%
Safety management	22	17.9
Communication	17	13.8
Interpersonal	16	13
Philosophic orientation	12	9.8
Planning	12	9.8
Specific recreation activities	10	8.1
Staffing	10	8.1
Mathematical principles	9	7.3
Administration	8	6.5
Organising	7	5.7
	123	100%

Administrative tasks had the highest percentage on the duties and task list in comparison to number nine on the competency list. Organising was higher on the task and duties list (sixth) than on the competency list (10th). Planning was the only item that remained in the same position on both tables (fifth).

Philosophic orientation, specific recreation activities and mathematical principles do not feature on the duty and task list whatsoever, although they are categorised fourth, sixth and eighth respectively with the competency list.

At first it seems perplexing that there is such a vast difference in some of the frequencies of the tasks and competencies supplied by the various websites (administrative for example). An explanation can be given for the differences; one is expected to be competent to perform the required tasks of the job. For this reason the person would need to have competence, thus the knowledge, skill and ability to perform the task assigned and the competencies may not be specifically listed.

For example “meticulous record keeping” is one task listed as an administrative duty. In order to successfully perform this task one may need a variety of competencies

that do not fall specifically under “administrative”. One may need basic mathematics, reading and writing, computer, filing, time management besides knowledge, skills and abilities.

A philosophic orientation towards recreation and competency in specific recreation activities would be needed to perform a number of duties and tasks. In order to plan, implement and perform administrative duties one would need a background of recreation (philosophy and skills and knowledge of activities) to perform these tasks well. A programme philosophy will consist of principles that will guide the administration of the programme (Martens, 2001: 2). This will influence policies and actions within the organisation and therefore impact on a number of aspects such as planning, communication, implementation of activities, and budgeting, to name only a few. In essence it influences all aspects within an organisation and therefore the tasks that will be performed by those working within the organisation.

If the information available in the literature is compared with the information provided by the various job descriptions, the following aspects can be regarded as important for a person entering the recreation field as they have prominence in both: communication, planning, leadership, management (planning, organising, implementing, control and staffing aspects) and people skills (working with others). Other aspects that came to the fore in both, but not as prominently, were: creativity, financial/mathematical aspects and issues and trends in the industry. The aspects are summarised in Table 2.11.

Table 2.11: Comparison of Competencies Found in Literature and Job Descriptions

Literature:	Job Description (Tasks, Duties and Competence)
Communications ability	Communication
Management	Planning Organising Leading Supervising Control Staffing
Planning	Planning
Leadership	Lead

Table 2.11: Continued

Group dynamics	Working with others
Group/individual dynamics in recreation	
Work with people/participants in recreation	
People skills	
Dealing with customers	Dealing with customers
Marketing	Promotion
Understanding financial statements	Mathematical principles
Customer service	*
Work with customers in tourism	
Current issues and trends	Philosophy and principles and practices of recreation
Concepts of society and community	
Age-related needs	Knowledge of specific activities and a specific programme area
Human resource development	
Negotiation skills	
Effective writing skills	* Administrative
Negligence	
Self-evaluation	
Self-confidence	
Patience	
Creativity	Creativity
Entrepreneurship and initiative	
Flexibility	*Flexibility
Motivation and performance	*
Self-motivation	
Empathy	
Integrity	Ethics and respect
Energy	*
Vision	
Practical experience in recreation	
Conflict resolution	*
Empowerment	
“Big picture” vision	
Attention to detail	
Stability	
Placement skills	

Items marked with a * represent aspects that were initially listed under “other” during the analysis of job descriptions.

2.5 CONCLUSION

It is necessary to determine what core competencies are needed by a recreation specialist. Communication, leadership, management (planning, organising, implementing, control and staffing aspects) and people skills (working with others) were observed in both the literature study and the job description analysis. For the purpose of this study, these competencies are regarded as core competencies required by a recreation specialist.

Chapter 3

Community Service-Learning

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter recreation was discussed to introduce the basic elements of recreation on which the module under investigation is based. As the module utilises CSL as pedagogy, it is important to explain the meaning of CSL. This chapter will therefore begin by explaining what community engagement is, as this is the foundation on which CSL has been introduced into higher education. This chapter will continue with a definition and explanation of CSL, providing a brief philosophic viewpoint, as well as some benefits of CSL. Reflection, as a specific aspect of CSL pedagogy, will be expanded upon. The chapter will conclude with a description of a CSL module in recreation – that of the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences at the UFS.

3.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The concept of community engagement was relatively unheard of in the South African higher education arena until the late 1990s. The publication of the White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education in 1997 (SA, 1997: 7-8) started the

process of HEIs investigating the role that community engagement should play in higher education.

The debate that followed the release of the White Paper in 1997 has changed the view of community engagement. Community engagement is no longer seen as only one of the three pillars (along with teaching and research) of higher education, but as “an integral part of teaching and research – a mechanism to infuse and enrich teaching and research with a deeper sense of context, locality and application” (Lazarus, Erasmus, Hendricks, Nduna & Slamet. 2008: 60).

Incorporating community engagement into teaching and learning assists in the fulfilment of various goals set by the Department of Education as stated in the White Paper. They include goals such as “... to promote and develop social responsibility and awareness amongst students and the role of higher education in social and economic development through community service programmes”. As well as “to produce graduates with the skills and competencies that build the foundations for lifelong learning, including, critical, analytical, problem-solving and communication skills, as well as the ability to deal with change and diversity, in particular, the tolerance of different views and ideas” (SA, 1997: 7-8). These goals are usually attained in the form of intentional as well as unintentional outcomes of a module. Intentional outcomes are those that the educator sets for students, unintentional outcomes are those that happen as a result of participation, but were not planned, i.e. incidental learning or development.

The integration of teaching and learning and research with community engagement is further illustrated in Figure 3.1. Adapted from Bringle, Games and Malloy (1999) Figure 3.1 indicates the various types of community engagement (HEQC, 2006a: 12). Bringle *et al.* (1999) provide different forms of community engagement than those identified later by Furco's (2000) typology. Distance education, community-based research, participatory action research, professional community service and service-learning are identified by Furco in this overarching typology of community engagement.

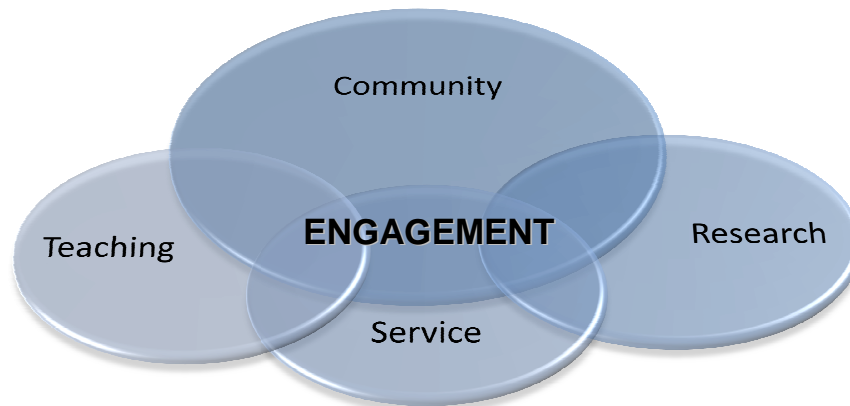


Figure 3.1: Types of community engagement

Source: HEQC (2006a: 12) adapted from Bringle, Games and Malloy (1999)

The Community Service Policy of the UFS (UFS, 2006: 3) envisions community engagement in the form of a “pioneering approach that is increasingly integrated with teaching, learning and research”. The policy therefore indicates that community engagement does not stand alone, but with the traditional pillars of education at a HEI. The policy defines community engagement as “continuously negotiated collaborations and partnerships between the UFS 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” (UFS, 2006: 9).

According to the HEQC community engagement “is the combination and integration of teaching and learning (e.g. service-learning), professional community service by academic staff and participatory action research applied simultaneously to identified community development priorities” (HEQC, 2006b: 11).

Gibbons (2005: 4-5) states that it is necessary for HEIs to engage with the community to move towards not only producing reliable knowledge through research, but also socially robust knowledge. This is done through contextualisation – when not only the scientists speak to society but society speaks to the scientists. This engagement with the community is important in order to stimulate new, different

kinds of knowledge, knowledge that is “valid beyond the laboratory, because tested in a range of other contexts” (Gibbons, 2005: 5).

Lazarus *et al.* (2008: 60-61), Naudé (2007: 7-8) and the HEQC (2006a: 10-11) refer to the work of Ernest Boyer, who proposes four forms of scholarship as being important for higher education. Boyer (1990: 16-25) identifies these four forms of scholarship as the scholarship of discovery, scholarship of integration, scholarship of application and the scholarship of teaching.

The scholarship of discovery is concerned with research and the generation of new knowledge. The scholarship of integration emphasises a more integrated view of knowledge, looking at the actual meaning / significance of findings and interpreting the data in a larger social context. This is often interdisciplinary and even “educating nonspecialists too” (Boyer, 1990: 18). This is in agreement of Gibbons’s socially robust knowledge mentioned earlier in the chapter (Gibbons, 2005: 5).

Scholarship of application is most closely linked with engagement. In this regard Boyer refers to questions such as “How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions? Can social problems *themselves* define an agenda for scholarly investigation?” (Boyer, 1990: 21).

Finally, the scholarship of teaching emphasises the transmitting, transforming and extending of knowledge. Naudé (2007: 8) includes development skills, ability and character. Thus, in the scholarship of teaching, students do not only learn from academics, but academics can also learn from students and the community. Lazarus *et al.* (2008: 60-61) and the HEQC document (2006a: 10) specifically refer to the combination of the four forms of scholarship as the scholarship of engagement.

3.3 WHAT IS COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING?

When reviewing the literature on CSL it becomes evident that various researchers differ about naming the term. Some researchers prefer SL (service learning) while others favour CSL (community service-learning). In essence these two terms can be

used interchangeably as the difference lies only in the researcher's and practitioner's preference. The term used in the faculty of Humanities at the UFS is CSL.

Community Service Learning can be viewed as the integration of community engagement into the curriculum. Furco (2000: 10) uses an experiential education continuum to illustrate the various forms of service programmes (of which CSL is one) as illustrated in Figure 3.2. This is a more focused approach to learning than the types of community engagement presented in Figure 3.1 (HEQC, 2006a: 12).

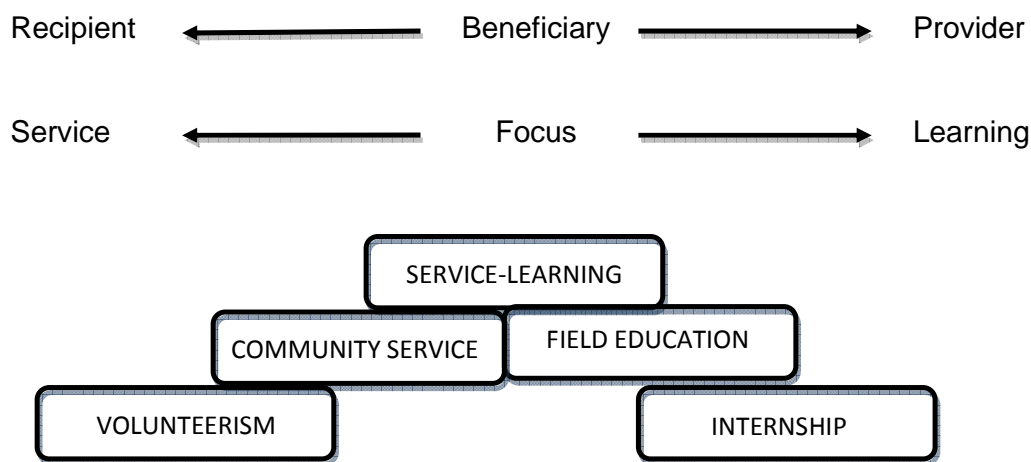


Figure 3.2: Distinctions among service programmes

Source: Furco (2000: 10)

There are two main focal points in this typology, 1) who is receiving the benefits and 2) where does the focus lie? On the one hand, the person who is providing the service benefits the most and in this case the focus is learning; this occurs for example in internships. On the other hand, in the case of volunteerism, the beneficiary is the recipient of the service and the focus is not on learning, but the service given. Community service and field education are less extreme and focus less on either the recipient or provider and thus service or learning. Furco then explains that service-learning (SL) programmes are different from other experiential programmes as they intentionally try to benefit the provider and recipient of the service “as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring” (Furco, 2000:12).

A definition of CSL that is cited most often is the one of Bringle and Hatcher (1996: 222). They view this form of community engagement as “a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline enhanced sense of civic responsibility.”

Another definition of SL is provided by Eyler and Giles (cited in Mouton & Wildschut, 2005: 118): “... service learning is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems and, at the same time, reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves”.

In the UFS policy, CSL is defined as “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)” (UFS, 2006: 9-10).

From an academic viewpoint CSL is the connection between student learning and service. It is also the connection between the student and the community that benefits, as well as the development of competence. As depicted by Furco’s (2000) typology (Figure 3.2) and the discussion that followed, CSL strives not only to benefit the community that the student is involved in, but also to benefit the student academically, further justifying its use in HEIs. This is also seen as a motivational factor for the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences to use this method of instruction for one of its modules in order to benefit the community and increase students’ competencies.

The HEQC (2006a: 25) summarises work by Howard (2001) as well as Stacy, Rice and Langer (2001) to identify four criteria that are essential for service learning, namely relevant and meaningful service with the community, enhanced academic learning, purposeful civic learning and structured opportunities for reflection.

Relevant and meaningful service with the community is explained by the HEQC (2006a: 25) as service that should assist in achieving module outcomes while also being relevant to improving the communities' quality of life. The community should view the service as worthwhile and necessary and value students' interests and skills. Enhanced academic learning elucidates that learning **MUST** take place. The learning should not be incidental, but should be clearly connected to the module objectives.

Purposeful civic learning refers to the "preparation of students for active civic participation and therefore social responsibility" (HEQC, 2006a: 25). Finally, structured opportunities for reflection refer to a crucial element of CSL. Reflection will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

The discussion of CSL given thus far alludes to the fact that it differs from traditional learning. Persons using CSL as pedagogy need to make a paradigm shift away from just teaching to learning. Below are two tables that highlight some of the distinctions between traditional learning and service learning. In Table 3.1 traditional learning is portrayed as somewhat distanced from the student. It indicates that students learn from someone else's knowledge from the viewpoint of a spectator with clear distinctions between the learner and teacher. Service learning is depicted quite differently as students are viewed as participants who learn from theory, experience and personal knowledge. There is a less hierarchical structure between student and teacher and it highlights the shift necessary to move from traditional methods of instruction to incorporating CSL into a curriculum.

Table 3.1: Distinctions between Traditional Learning and Service Learning

Traditional Learning	Service Learning
Theory	Theory and experience
Others' knowledge	Personal knowledge
Spectator	Participant
Individual learning	Co-operative learning
Distinction between teacher and learner	Blurred distinction between teacher and learner
Answers	Questions and answers
Certainty of outcomes	Heterogeneous outcomes
Ignorance avoided	Ignorance a resource
Objectivist epistemology	Connected/feminist epistemology

Source: HEQC (2006a: 27), adapted from Howard 1993

Hay (2003: 185) also illustrates the differences between a traditional module and an SL module. The viewpoint of this researcher is somewhat different as the focus is on aspects such as where the module takes place, who does the teaching, preparation, how learning and assessment take place and who the architect of the module is. This is portrayed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Some of the Most Discernable Differences Involved in Service-Learning Programmes

	Traditional Course	Service-Learning Course
Place	Classroom	Classroom, community, fieldwork-related experiences
Lecturers	Lectures on different levels	Lectures, supervisors, clients, peers, community leaders and other knowledgeable people
Preparation	Readings, previous courses	Expanded readings, previous courses, personal characteristics, site visits
Learning	Writing, exams, cognitive, short term, theoretical, passiveness, sequential, linear, structured learning, convergent thinking, deductive learning, usually assessed at end of course	Writing exams, cognitive and affective development for short and long term, practical, active, perplexity, non-linear, expansive and integrative, divergent thinking, inductive learning from experience, learning continues beyond the course
Assessment	Lectures on various levels	Lecturers, supervisors, self-assessment and even community leaders
Architect	Individuals	Teams comprising academics, members of the triad and students

Source: Hay (2003: 185)

Hay (2003: 185) contrasts traditional learning and SL by indicating that they differ to varying degrees in all the above-mentioned aspects. There are some aspects in respect of which SL and traditional learning share similarities. Service learning generally has additional aspects to the pedagogy, seemingly strengthening the choice of SL as a means of educating students. An example of such a similarity between SL and traditional learning is where learning takes place. In traditional learning, the classroom is the focus and the area where learning takes place. In SL the classroom is also used for learning, however, the classroom is not the only place where learning takes place. Learning also occurs in the community and fieldwork-related experiences.

Community service-learning therefore serves as an instrument for community engagement. The phrases are therefore not interchangeable. Thus, from an academic perspective CSL can be seen as an answer to community engagement. It can be a method to become more connected to the community in order to produce the desired transformation that is so sought after as well as a good teaching pedagogy to increase student competencies.

As recreation is a leisure activity, learning how to plan and implement such an activity or programme cannot be done through theoretical classes alone. Students must experience the various elements that need to be completed in order to gain competencies required in this field. Community service-learning provides the students with an experiential learning opportunity for the achievement of intended and unintended outcomes and development of competencies.

3.4 PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING

Community service-learning is a form of experiential education. The pedagogy rests largely on principles established by Dewey (Eyler & Giles, 1999: 7). Dewey never used the terms SL or CSL, but many of his thoughts can be related to the concepts. Five aspects are highlighted by Saltmarsh (1996: 13) as those that can most certainly be linked to CSL: 1) Education and Experience 2) Democratic Community 3) Service 4) Reflective Inquiry and 5) Education for Social Transformation.

How can these five aspects be applied to CSL? Dewey believed that the mind needs to be connected to action. On the one side is action and on the other is knowledge and one learns through this active process as “explorer, maker, creator” (Saltmarsh 1996: 15), thus the first item on Saltmarsh’s list – education and experience. Dewey believed that education is a process of living and it involves “socially interconnected action for a particular social end” (Saltmarsh, 1996: 16). The democratic community is important for connecting with others. Learning that takes place within a democratic community contributes to social well-being. Dewey points out that it is not charity, but one acts in service according to “one’s place of privilege in society and a relationship to those less privileged defined by a sense of justice” (cited in Saltmarsh, 1996: 17).

Reflective inquiry is an important aspect of experiential learning and CSL in particular. Saltmarsh (1996: 18) comments “Without fostering reflective thinking, learning cannot move beyond conditioning, beyond the classroom, beyond formal education. Without reflection on activity, the connection between thought and action is dissipated, the ability to formulate further action is lost, and the whole philosophical scheme collapses.”

Education for social transformation (the last aspect identified by Dewey) can be considered the “political” aspect. According to Saltmarsh (1996: 19) “Dewey proposes a politics of social transformation that shuns confrontation and agitation.” Dewey desired a radical democratic transformation. Saltmarsh (1996: 17) states that Dewey’s conception of democracy was not political, but cultural. Dewey desired a society in which everyone would be engaged in some sort of activity that would improve the quality of other people’s lives, thus reducing the detachment between people.

3.5 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

An authority on experiential learning is Kolb (HEQC, 2006a: 17; Naudé, 2007: 102) whose work is derived from Dewey, Lewin and Piaget. Kolb identifies various characteristics of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984: 25-38):

- Learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes
- Learning is a continuous process

- The process of learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world
- Learning is an holistic process of adaptation to the world
- Learning involves transactions between the person and the environment
- Learning is the process of creating knowledge

Kolb maintains that experiential learning offers a foundation to an education approach and to a lifelong learning process that is based on various intellectual traditions. He uses an experiential learning model as a framework to scrutinise and strengthen the crucial links between education, work and personal development. The model that Kolb proposes is depicted in Figure 3.3 and “offers a system of competencies for describing job demands and corresponding educational objectives and emphasizes the critical linkages that can be developed between the classroom and the ‘real world’ with experiential learning methods” (Kolb, 1984: 4). The model depicts that one can/should learn in the workplace and most important for CSL “it stresses the role of formal education in lifelong learning and the development of individuals to their full potential as citizens, family members, and human beings” (Kolb, 1984: 4).

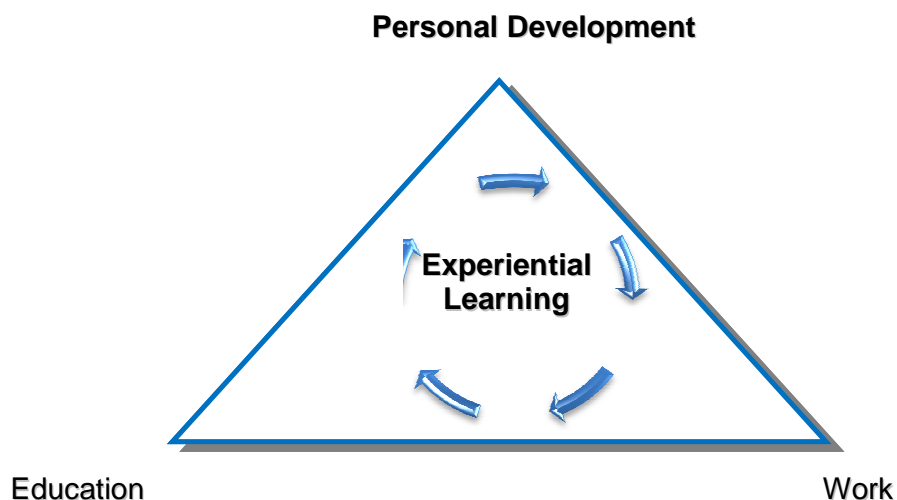


Figure 3.3 Experiential learning as the process that links education, work, and personal development

Source: Kolb (1984: 4)

It is believed that through a CSL module Exercise and Sport Science students will experience lifelong learning. An example would be working together with others. The students are placed in groups by the lecturer and are not given the choice of deciding who to work with. They are therefore not able to form groups with people they are already acquainted with. This places them in a situation where they are now required to interact with the group and determine the best way for the group to work together. It should therefore facilitate lifelong learning with regard to communication, group work, and understanding of other people that are different from them (language and culture). These are elements needed in the recreation industry, therefore it is hoped that students can gain competencies needed in the recreation industry through lifelong learning that will take place through experiential learning in the CSL module.

Although many researchers (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997: 153; Kottkamp, 2000: 128; Eyler, 2002: 520; Felten, Gilchrist, & Darby, 2006: 39; HEQC, 2006a: 17-19;) refer to David Kolb's 1984 experiential learning cycle, Kolb himself refers to it as the Lewinian Experiential Learning Model (Kolb, 1984: 21). Lewin felt that feedback was of great importance for learning to take place (Kolb, 1984: 21-22).

The model identifies four elements (concrete experience, observations and reflections, formation of abstract concepts and generalisations, testing implications of concepts in new situations) in a cyclical process as depicted in Figure 3.4.

A concrete experience is gained by direct practical experience. The concrete experience forms the basis of the next part of the cycle, observation and reflection. This stage is often referred to as reflective observation and focuses on what the experience means to the individual, and necessitates observation, examination, analyses and interpretation of the impact of the concrete experience. During the formation of abstract concepts and generalisations, part of the cycle theories or explanations for why events happened as they did are formed. Testing implications of concepts in new situations (active experimentation) is the final phase of the cycle. The new level of knowing that has now been generated in the previous stages of the cycle is then tested in action, returning to the beginning of the cycle (HEQC, 2006a:18-19).

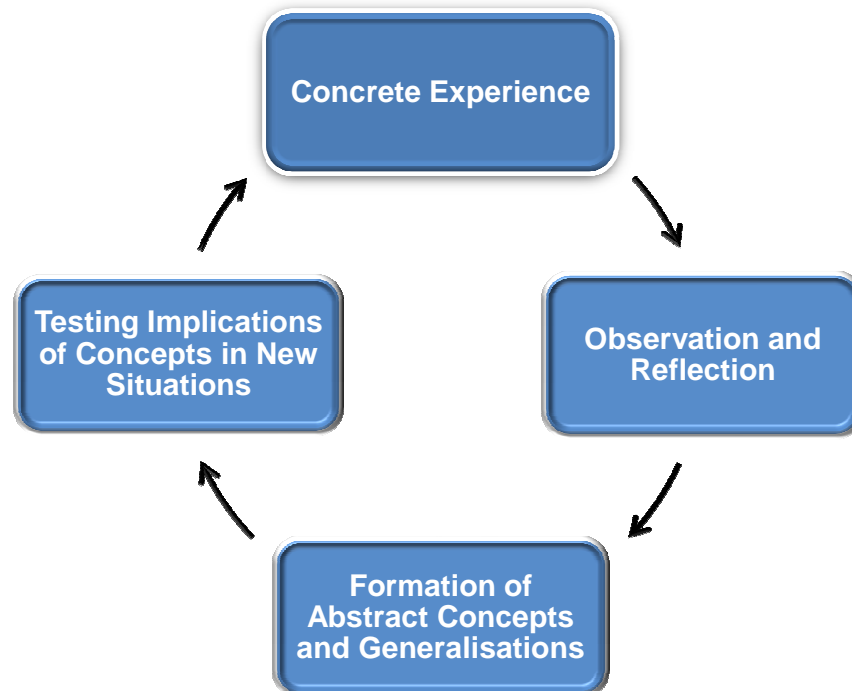


Figure 3.4 The Lewinian/Kolb Experiential Learning Model

Source: Kolb (1984: 21)

Community service-learning is viewed as a form of experiential learning (Weigert, 1998: 5, Eyler & Giles, 1999: 7; Furco, 2000: 9, 12). The fact that so many researchers in the CSL field refer to the Kolb/Lewinian model highlights its importance to the pedagogy. The concrete experience that is encountered may be one that has not been experienced before, one thinks about this experience, reflects on it and then uses the resulting ideas to test one's decision or actions. The results then "serve as guides in acting to create new experiences" (Kolb, 1984: 21) as mirrored in CSL.

Furco's 2000 typology presented earlier in Figure 3.2 showed how SL falls in the middle of various well-known experiential learning pedagogies, benefiting both students and communities in a reciprocal way. Therefore, just as CSL was shown to be a type of community engagement, it is also a form of experiential learning.

The Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences' community service-learning module confronts students with situations that they have not experienced before

(e.g. working with children, working with different races). A requirement of the module is for the students to reflect in a variety of ways on the events that take place in the community, and to apply this new knowledge to subsequent community visits and other areas of application. The Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences' module can be seen as a CSL module incorporating the aspects of both community engagement and experiential learning.

3.6 BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING

Experiential learning is a powerful tool to be used in education, but the question remains as to why specifically CSL should be used. Burnett, Hamel and Long (2004: 181) make important statements regarding students, which can be used to partly respond to this question. They maintain that CSL integrates in-depth academic action learning and purposeful civic learning, developing knowledge and skills that can be transferred to the social, political, and cultural environment.

An important factor of CSL is the partnerships that are formed. This partnership, often called a triad, is between the academics (lecturer and students), the community and a service provider. Imperative to the partnership concept is the notion of reciprocity (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 114; Erasmus & Jaftha, 2005: 1-13; UFS Community Service Policy Document 2006: 9). The reciprocal nature of the partnership is based on the premises that all the members of the partnership are equal and that all work towards the same ultimate goals and that each member of the partnership receives benefits.

In a South African study of pilot modules at the UFS, the following benefits to the community were identified by Fourie (2003: 36): social, educational, knowledge and information, skill acquisition, behavioural changes and capacity building. The service partners that are involved with CSL also report benefits such as "opportunity to network with other community organisations, status of working with the university, community collaborations" (Gelmon, Holland, Seifer, Shinnamon & Connors, 1998: 104).

Although all members of the partnership are supposed to benefit in one way or the other, this study concentrates on the students' perceptions of what they have learnt through the CSL module. Subsequently the discussion on benefits will focus mostly on what students perceive.

Many claims have been made as to the benefits students derive by participating in CSL modules (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996: 222; Mc Ewen, 1996: 53; Astin & Sax, 1998: 255-261; Furco, 2002: 25). Some of the competencies that have been demonstrably improved include: leadership, functioning as part of a group, negotiation skills (Myers, 2008: 1-3); self-efficacy and self-knowledge, interpersonal development, personal development and problem-solving skills (Simons & Cleary, 2006: 315-316). Holland (2001: 51) adds to the list by identifying a number of benefits such as enhancing student learning, building social responsibility and citizenship skills in students. Furco (2002: 25) states that students experienced further academic development by applying their knowledge to address a curriculum-related need in the community. He intimates that students worked more effectively with others, developed personal leadership skills, defined career goals, gained a better appreciation for their academic work, stood up for what is right, and developed a spirit for involving themselves in the community (Furco, 2002: 38). Burnett *et al.* (2004: 180) reported enhanced subject knowledge, increased examination of subject elements, increased community feelings of support and a powerful learning experience.

Winfield (2005: 16) found that students became aware of ways in which they can apply theory while participating in activities that improve skills such as critical observation, analysis and application. Ideally, students improve basic competencies while participating in activities that also appeal to their social conscience. Winfield also contests that involvement with improved competence can reinforce personal as well as academic confidence, which is important if student cynicism is to be transformed into innovation. Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda and Yee (2000: ii – iv) identified positive effects on the following aspects of CSL: academic performance (critical thinking skills, writing skills), values (commitment to activism and to promoting racial understanding), leadership (including interpersonal skills and self-rated leadership ability), self-efficacy, increased awareness of the world, increased

awareness of personal values and increased engagement in the classroom experience, heightened sense of civic responsibility and personal effectiveness. Stevens (2008: xiv) states that SL projects allow students to develop in ways that can have lifelong benefits, gaining practical experience, putting education theory into practice making theory more relevant, real-world learning leading to preparation for further education, careers and for community involvement. She continues to say that those who engage in service learning tend to be more satisfied with their lives and concludes by adding that SL has been shown to enhance knowledge and skills.

Summarising their findings of research over a seven-year period, Eyer, Giles, Stenson and Gray (2001: 1-4) identify the following effects of service learning:

- **Personal Outcomes:** Service learning has a positive effect on student personal development such as sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual growth, and moral development. Service learning has a positive effect on interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others, leadership and communication skills.
- **Social Outcomes:** Service learning has a positive effect on reducing stereotypes and facilitating cultural & racial understanding; it may support course goals of reducing stereotyped thinking and facilitating cultural & racial understanding; it has a positive effect on sense of social responsibility and citizenship skills; and it has a positive effect on commitment to service.
- **Learning Outcomes:** Students or faculty report that service learning has a positive impact on students' academic learning; students or faculty report that service learning improves students' ability to apply what they have learned in "the real world"; service-learning participation has an impact on such academic outcomes as demonstrated complexity of understanding, problem analysis, critical thinking, and cognitive development.
- **Career Development:** Service learning contributes to career development.

Erasmus and Jaftha (2005: 1-13) state that UFS students report an increased understanding of the theoretical aspects of the module, an increased awareness of community life and challenges; and also personal growth. Mouton and Wildschut (2005: 142) found that in their study South African students improved their

leadership skills, relationship skills and project planning abilities. The awareness of cultural differences and students becoming aware of their own cultural stereotypes, defining of personal strengths and weaknesses were also highlighted as benefits of CSL in the study.

The following competencies were identified in the previous chapter as being important for recreation and have been shown to develop during CSL by previous research: leadership, interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others (relationship skills), leadership and communication skills. These competencies are also identified as general benefits of CSL in the above section. Thus, it can be seen that through CSL some competencies required in the recreation industry can be fostered.

3.7 REFLECTION

The widely accepted definition of CSL of Bringle and Hatcher (1996: 222) and the CSL definition of the UFS (UFS, 2006: 9-10) both stipulate the role of reflection, consequently highlighting the importance of this element in CSL.

Dewey (1916) as quoted in Saltmarsh (1996: 18) defined reflection as “the discernment of the relation between what we try to do and what happens in consequence”. He continues by stating that reflection is the “intentional endeavor to discover specific connections between something which we do and the consequences which result so that the two become continuous.” The concept has not changed much since this 1916 remark and the influence of Dewey can be seen in various definitions of reflection.

Hatcher and Bringle (1997: 153) define reflection as “the intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives.” A somewhat more encompassing definition is provided by Kottkamp (2000: 127): “A cycle of paying deliberate analytical attention to one’s own actions in relation to intentions-as if from an external observer’s perspective - for the purpose of expanding one’s options and making decisions about improved ways of acting in the future, or in the midst of the action itself.”

The question then needs to be asked why reflection is needed in higher education. One answer is given by Felten *et al.* (2006: 38) stating that reflection “acts as a bridge between conceptual understandings and concrete experiences”. Often reflection is referred to as the hyphen in community service-learning in that it is the bridge between the service and learning (Eyler, 2001: 35). Bringle and Hatcher (2000: 114) make an important statement in this regard that CSL by itself will not necessarily produce learning. The educational content of the module and CSL activities are brought together by reflection. Reflection is referred to as a bridge that directs students’ attention to new interpretations of happenings and provides a way through which a deeper understanding of CSL can be gained.

Commenting on the variety of research undertaken, Eyler (2002: 520) maintains that the greater the opportunity for reflection the better the links between the service performed and module content as well as ethnic and cultural diversity having a greater compelling impact on students. Hatcher and Bringle (1997) affirm Eyler’s (2002) concept that there must be various opportunities for reflection and links between module content. Hatcher and Bringle (1997: 154-156) discuss five guidelines for effective reflection activities. Two of their guidelines correspond with Eyler (2002: 520). They are: 1) link experience to learning objectives and; 2) that they occur regularly. Other guidelines are: 1) give guidance to the activities; 2) allow feedback and assessment; and 3) include the clarification of values.

Reflection is therefore seen as an important aspect of CSL as it plays a large role in the learning process. Used wisely by a lecturer, it directs students to interpreting events. It does not guarantee learning, but serves as a powerful facilitator, encouraging learning to take place.

Literature suggests that there are currently many different types of reflection (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997: 153-156; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 115-117; Kottkamp, 2000: 128-136) and the selection is dependent on the nature of the module being presented, students enrolled and the lecturer presenting the module. Although methods or types of reflection differ, what remains important is the reason for utilising it. Eyler (2002: 517) affirms this statement by stating that continuous reflection promotes the development of knowledge, skills, and cognitive capacities.

Writing is seen as a special form of reflection and many different forms of reflection fall into this category: journals, double-entry journals, three-part journals, critical-incident journals, learning journals, stop-action journals, experiential research papers, ethical case studies, assignments (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997: 154-155; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 115-116; Kottkamp, 2000: 128-136).

Examples of reflection that encourage creativity (other than writing) include photo essays, or painting a mural (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997: 156). Somewhat more formal means of reflection include directed readings (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 116), portfolios (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997: 156) class presentations (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 116), electronic reflection (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 116; Kottkamp, 2000: 131) the use of metaphor and contrived situations (Kottkamp, 2000: 129), which includes case studies, role-plays and simulations.

The forms of reflection that are utilised in this study will be elaborated on in the next section as well as in the next chapter on the methodology of the research.

3.8 The Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences' Community Service-Learning Module

The UFS policy on Community Service has stressed that Community Service (learning) should promote teaching and learning (UFS, 2006: 6). The Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences has been engaged in CSL since 2004, including it as a capstone module in the learning programme. The Exercise and Sport Sciences CSL module is based predominantly on recreation which is linked to a recreation module in the third-year curriculum. It is considered a capstone module as all students are expected to apply various aspects from their three years of study along with the new knowledge generated within this module. The HEQC (2006a: 39) states that the goal of a capstone module can be twofold, either to explore a new topic or to synthesise students' understanding of their discipline. Capstone modules provide students with the opportunity to make the transition from theory to practice by establishing professional contacts and gaining personal experience.

In accordance with the UFS policy that all students must perform some sort of CSL during their study at the UFS (UFS, 2006: 12-13), it is compulsory for Human

Movement Science students to participate in the CSL module. It was not only on account of the policy that the CSL module was included in the programme, but also due to the experiential learning opportunity afforded to the students. The foremost requirement of the CSL module is for students to present sport and recreation activities in the identified communities. These activities are to help to:

- Develop sport and recreation among the youth
- Encourage the youth to perform constructive activities and not be on the streets
- Physically develop the youth
- Encourage an active lifestyle

Introductory/orientation classes were presented to students and each student received a module guide. The following topics are covered in the module guide (Appendix A: Table of contents of the module guide) and during the classes:

- What is Community Service-Learning?
- Why do you have to do it?
- How can you benefit as student?
- Explanations and expectations
- What individuals and the group are required to do

The CSL module requires both group and individual work from the student. The following is required from each group on a weekly basis prior to the day's activities:

- The programme plan for the day
 - A goal for the day's activities
 - The animation plan (a full animation plan for the day indicating where each student's individual animation plan should be scheduled within the overall plan)
- A list of activities that the group plan to deliver
- Equipment to be used

A document is to be filled in after the day's activities by a representative from the students' group to indicate attendance, activities actually presented, judgement of performance and to highlight any important issues that may have occurred.

After completing the CSL module, each group have to make a reflection presentation during the reflection sessions at the end of the third term. Set guidelines are provided to students as to what is expected to be in the presentation. The presentation is seen as an opportunity to get students to talk about their experiences and learning with each other and then to formulate this into a presentation to the class, lecturer, service providers and community representatives. Bringle and Hatcher (2000: 116) and Eyler (2001: 41-42) support this method of reflection.

Students were also required to perform individual tasks. A portion of this was related to the theory (preparation of an individual animation plan). However, the majority of the individual work was based on reflection, as reflection is central to CSL (Eyler, 2001: 42). The forms of structured and unstructured reflection utilised in the module are elaborated upon in the methodology chapter.

3.9 CONCLUSION

Community service-learning can be viewed as a useful teaching pedagogy in any field of study. Not only can CSL be used to benefit participants involved in the module, it allows *all* members of the triad to derive benefit from the participation. It may be argued that one of the main reasons for a student to attend a higher learning institution is to develop both socially and academically. As such, the aim of the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences is not only to impart social skills to students, but to increase competencies required in the recreation industry. It is therefore necessary to determine whether students are aware of the competencies they are able to learn and have learnt through participating in the CSL module in order to fully benefit from the CSL experience.

Chapter 4

Research Methodology

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.2 RESEARCH RATIONALE AND AIM

4.2.1 Research Questions

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

4.4 SAMPLING

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4.5.1 Nominal Groups

4.5.2 Reflection Activities

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4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

4.8.1 Nominal Group

4.8.2 Content Analysis

4.9 CONCLUSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter aspects of the research methodology will be explained. The research aim and rationale, problems and objectives, research design, sampling and data collection will be expanded on. Ethical considerations of the study and the method to be utilised in data analysis will also be elaborated upon.

4.2 RESEARCH RATIONALE AND AIM

Recreation and Tourism is one of four postgraduate qualifications offered by the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences at the UFS. Of the modules offered in

the HMS programme, recreation forms only a minority of modules in the total curriculum at undergraduate level (8%). It is therefore important that when students are exposed to such modules that they are structured in such a way as to impart competencies required in the recreation industry.

The competencies identified in Chapter 2 can potentially be gained by various means, including theory-based modules, group work, practical work sessions, internships, community service and community service-learning. Community service-learning was chosen as pedagogy as it is clear that many of the recreation module outcomes required may be fostered through the use of CSL. Although it would be ideal to develop all the skills, knowledge and attitudes required of a recreation specialist, it is not possible to include all skills, knowledge and attitudes in the module outcomes.

The intended outcomes of the CSL module in HMS should be to address core competencies required in recreation. It is imperative to determine whether students perceive they are learning these competencies during the CSL they are performing, as well as identifying other perceived learning (unintended outcomes).

The purpose of the study is therefore to describe students' perceptions of the competencies they have acquired through the CSL module and compare these with the core competencies needed by a recreation specialist as identified in Chapter 2.

4.2.1 Research Questions

The following research questions are relevant:

- What are the initial perceptions that students have regarding the competencies they can *potentially* gain through the CSL module?
- What perceptions do students have regarding the competencies they *have* attained through the CSL module?
- How do the perceived competencies gained by students through the CSL module relate to the competencies needed by a recreation specialist?

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research was undertaken from a phenomenological viewpoint. The students' interpretation of their own learning therefore forms the core of the study. A phenomenological study endeavours to investigate the manner in which an individual understands his or her experiences (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2006: 270).

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 36) phenomenology "describes the meanings of a lived experience". Thus this study is an attempt to describe what students perceived about the competencies they would potentially be able to gain through the CSL module and their perceptions of the competencies they have attained through the CSL module.

As Babbie, Mouton, Vorster and Prosesky (2001: 271) describe, the qualitative method of enquiry does not seek to explain and predict, but describe and understand. The purpose is descriptive in order to understand events within the natural context in which they occur. The emphasis falls on the participants and their perspectives. The current study undertakes to describe and understand what the students experienced (subjective experiences) and how they used this to construct meaning and identify learning or competency acquisition. "Through uncovering how meanings are constructed, we can gain insights into the meanings imparted and thereby improve our comprehension of the whole" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a: 59-60). It is for this reason that a qualitative study is most suitable.

4.4 SAMPLING

All the third year students (N=64) performing CSL as part of the HMS programme in the Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences in 2008 were included in the sample. Due to the number of students participating, CSL activities are performed in groups. The class is divided into two halves; each half is then divided into three groups, thus totalling six groups. Three groups participate in the second term and the remaining three during the third term (six contact sessions with the community). The groups that participate simultaneously in CSL (groups one to three or four to six) go to the community at the same time on the same day, but to different venues. This also

allows for rotation of groups to the various sites in order for students to experience different communities. Different communities have different needs, resources and attendees, therefore requiring a different application of theory by the students. As students are working with groups of participants continued participation is facilitated by keeping to a fixed schedule.

The academic staff member randomly assigns groups for the first placement, and following that, groups rotate to each placement. Students are required to attend six service delivery sessions, as well as orientation and reflection sessions. Due to the nature of the activities, all students are required to deliver activities and therefore interact with the community.

Various forms of data collection were needed to ensure trustworthiness (consult 4.5), thus requiring different sampling methods. Criterion sampling was utilised for the students selected to participate in the nominal group discussion. Students that had not yet commenced with the CSL module were randomly selected to participate in two separate nominal group discussions. The random selection was done by making use of the random numbers table as described by Thomas, Nelson and Silverman (2005: 99-100). English names were withheld and only utilised for the selection of the second group in order to allow for two language groups. This was done as English-speaking students were in the minority. The first group selected therefore was comprised of only Afrikaans-speaking students, the second group was a combination of English and Afrikaans-speaking students, but English as a means of communication was used during the nominal group. The language groups were selected in an attempt to make students feel more comfortable to speak their minds in a language they felt more comfortable with.

Therefore the criteria used to select the sample for the preNGT were: 1) that participants were students enrolled for the CSL module and, 2) that they had not already commenced with the CSL module. The two language groups were created only for practical reasons. The same groups were requested to participate in the post NGT on completion of the module. The students, however, did not remain in the same groups due to external factors. Students rearranged the groups themselves to

ensure participation, thus there was no longer a distinction between language groups. Both postnominal groups were performed in English.

A combination of site selection and comprehensive purposeful sampling was undertaken for the structured and unstructured reflection data collection. McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 401) state that site selection is concerned with studying people involved in a specific event and comprehensive sampling is when every participant of the phenomenon is included in the sample. The site or event in this study is the module, thus all 64 students registered for the module were included in the study.

Information obtained from small samples is made more useful by purposeful sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 401). As the research does not attempt to generalise the findings it is therefore suitable to utilise purposeful sampling. Nieuwenhuis (2007b: 79) states that with purposive sampling participants are selected because of some defining characteristic that makes them holders of the data needed for the study. It is not a representative sample and the results will not be able to be generalised to all subsequent students in the module in future years. Insight will be gained into the entire third-year group registered for the module in 2008, as these were the students that would be undergoing the CSL experience and therefore would be able to identify the potential and gained competencies of the module for 2008.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION

In order to gain information regarding students' perceptions of CSL, multimethod strategies of data collection were used during this phenomenological study. Personal documents from the structured and unstructured reflection were gathered and the nominal group technique (NGT) of interviewing was employed.

4.5.1 Nominal Groups

Gallagher, Hares, Spencer, Bradshaw and Webb (1993: 76-77) explain that NGT is a procedure that is used for gathering information from groups of people who have

insight into the issue at hand. It is done in a structured way and its purpose is to generate ideas. Siegenthaler and Riley (2002: 61) comment that the technique gives all participants an opportunity and helps prevent individuals dominating the group discussion. Respondent validation takes place within the process (MacPhail, 2001: 162) as participants themselves weigh the importance of items.

Summarising Gallagher *et al.* (1993: 78-80), de Ruyter (1996: 45), Taylor-Powell (2002) and Siegenthaler and Riley (2002: 61-62) the following steps should be performed during a nominal group discussion: Firstly, an introduction takes place where participants are welcomed, the purpose, procedures and how results will be used are explained. Ethical permission is obtained from participants. Secondly, a question is posed to the group, then written on a flip chart, cards or paper and clarified if needed. During the third step, participants are asked to reflect individually on the question and then write down as many ideas as possible. A time limit is given for this. Ideas are then recorded (the fourth step) one by one as participants read their ideas out loud. The idea will be noted on the flip chart to enable the entire group to see it. The process continues until all ideas have been recorded. If participants identify additional aspects that come to mind during the sharing of ideas, they are encouraged to share it with the group while the round robin sharing of ideas is taking place.

A group discussion can now be held as the fifth step, as up to now any/all discussions have been discouraged. It is only now, after all ideas have been shared that participants are given the opportunity to explain their ideas further. A detailed discussion is still not needed; just an explanation or clarification of meaning. The significance or worth of ideas is not discussed. This aids with review and aspects that are duplicated are eliminated from the list.

The ranking of items then takes place as the sixth step. Participants are asked to rank the items (individually to avoid dominance within the group) from most important to least important each individual's ranks are then displayed on the chart. The ranks are then calculated resulting in a final ranked list. This study only required the nominal group participants to rank the five items they felt were most important. The most important item received a five and the last item ranked received a one. These

scores were then tallied to determine the top-rated items. If two items ended on the same score they were given the same rank and the ranking still continued to rank five.

The groups of students selected to participate in the nominal group for this research project were randomly selected (as mentioned in 4.3). This technique was used on two occasions (pre- and post-implementation of the module). Firstly, the prenominal group was conducted to identify various themes which students perceived would play a role during the module. Secondly, the postnominal group aimed to determine students' perceptions of the possible increase of the competencies they had previously identified as well as incidental learning that had taken place.

The composition of the prenominal groups: Group one consisted of seven participants. All participants were white and their first language was Afrikaans. There were one male and six female participants. The second group was mixed culturally and there were four English and four Afrikaans-speaking participants. Four male and four female participants were in group two. As the nominal group was not compulsory not all those who were selected to participate took part.

The composition of the postnominal groups: The intention was that the groups were supposed to remain the same as in the case of the prenominal group, but not all students could attend at the set times. The result was two culturally mixed groups and both postnominal groups were held in English. Group one consisted of eight participants. There were two male and six female participants, three English and five Afrikaans-speaking participants. The second group also consisted of three English, five Afrikaans-speaking participants. There were two male and six female participants. The groups were the same groups as those identified for the prenominal groups. However, not all the participants from the pre NGT took part in the post-discussion as participants were able to choose whether they were going to participate or not.

The questions posed to the students in the prenominal group were:

Question 1: What do you expect to gain (knowledge, skills and attitudes) from the community service-learning experience?

Question 2: How do you expect these aspects to link up with being a recreation specialist?

The questions posed to the students in the postnominal group were:

Question 1: What did you gain (knowledge, skills and attitudes) from the community service-learning experience?

Question 2: How do these aspects link up with being a recreation specialist?

4.5.2 Reflection Activities

Reflection which “acts as a bridge between conceptual understandings and concrete experiences” (Felten *et al.* 2006: 38) was utilised in a number of ways. Hatcher, Bringle and Muthiah (2004: 39) assert that reflection activities guide students towards new interpretations of events; furthermore they add: “When reflection activities engage the learner in examining and analyzing the relationship between relevant, meaningful service and the interpretative template of discipline, there is enormous potential for learning to broaden and deepen along academic, social, moral, personal, and civic dimensions”.

4.5.2.1 Structured Reflection

Bringle and Hatcher (2000: 115) and Kottkamp (2000: 128) highlight that writing is a special type of reflection through which students can come to a new understanding of problems, new meaning can be created and new ways of organising experiences can be cultivated. In order to write something you create self-produced feedback and as it is slower than other means of reflection it allows the writer to move back and forth between past, present and future in order to review the situation or experience.

The nominal groups identified themes that the students perceived would play a role in the module. These themes were used as guidelines during students' reflective reports (structured reflection). Students were expected to hand in a reflection report fortnightly, commenting on the nature of development in competencies that were identified.

Set guidelines were given to the students to reflect on in accordance with the results obtained from the nominal groups. Students were asked to comment on what they had learnt in the following areas:

- Communication skills: people skills, organising, planning, working with people of diverse cultures
- Group dynamics: the relationship/s within your group, working as a group
- Self-confidence: gain skills to work under pressure, coping when things go wrong
- Self-evaluation: development of patience, self-expression

4.5.2.2 Unstructured Reflection

A number of researchers in CSL have commented positively on the use of journals for reflection (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997: 154-155; Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 115; Kottkamp, 2000: 127-128; Eyler, 2001: 39-40; Rogers, 2001: 38) and it is therefore considered a suitable means of reflection for students.

Weekly journals were collected to gather student perceptions of learning and competency development that had taken place. The journals described student reflections, as well as any learning experiences they perceived as having taken place. It was hoped that by making use of journals, students would feel free to provide their own opinions and not conform to those of others. Journals are useful data sources for qualitative research as "often feelings are expressed that would otherwise never have been made public ... It is an immediate recording of experiences, unimpaired by the reconstructions of the memory" (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 301). A weakness of this data collection technique is selectivity. In order to reduce selectivity and aid data analysis students were given guidelines to order the diary/journal entries.

Students were required to express:

- Their feelings and emotions felt/experienced before, during and after the activity, during planning, etc. For example, personal expectations for the day.
- Any aspects that they had learnt (subject knowledge, managerial skills, personal skills, interpersonal skills, etc.)
- Benefits received by participating (if any)
- Personal experience (description of the entire experience)

4.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 276-278), based on Lincoln and Guba's work of 1985, the principles of good qualitative research are found in the concept of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness refers to the neutrality of the findings or decisions (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 276). Four terms are highlighted for trustworthiness.

Credibility: The question is asked: "Is there compatibility of the constructed realities that exist in the minds of the respondents and those that are attributed to them?" One way to ensure credibility and strengthen research is through triangulation – combining methods (Patton, 2002: 247). According to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 277) triangulation is about collecting "information about different events and relationships from different points of view. This means asking different questions, seeking different sources and using different methods".

A number of sources were used during data collection and analysis, "If the data from these different sources point to the same conclusions, you will have more confidence in your results" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c: 113). The sources included in this study were reflection journals, reflection reports and information generated from a pre- and postnominal group, with two groups being interviewed on both occasions.

Transferability: In qualitative studies one does not need to prove that the context will be relevant to other contexts. The obligation for demonstrating transferability rests on those who wish to apply it to the receiving context (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 277). One strategy to increase transferability is purposive sampling. As discussed in 4.4 this type of sampling was used in this research.

Dependability: If the study were to be repeated with the same or similar participants in the same or similar context the findings would be similar. It is suggested (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 278) that if credibility can be demonstrated this is sufficient to demonstrate dependability.

Confirmability: This refers to the “degree to which the findings are the product of the focus of the inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 278). In order to ensure that confirmability was maintained, a number of procedures were used. Verification of data took place throughout the study, therefore not attempting to establish trustworthiness only at the end of the study. Firstly, with the nominal group technique this takes place within the interview process. Participants are given the opportunity to elaborate on statements made and to clarify points before the voting round takes place. All involved are aware of what each participant has attempted to convey. The voting process at the end of each round of the nominal group is in itself a verification of the data and is performed by the participants themselves and not the researcher.

Students were asked to verify the data periodically to determine if the researcher interpreted it correctly, thus the stakeholders were involved in the verification of the data. During reflection sessions at the end of the module the information gathered from students was discussed and the researcher’s interpretations were verified by the students.

The nominal group sessions were held by an experienced independent researcher and not by the researcher conducting the study. This aided in controlling bias. The independent researcher is an experienced qualitative researcher whose expertise relates specifically to NGT. The expert has had much experience in conducting research involving the NGT as well as acting as a consultant with regard to its use.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The module was presented in the same manner as in previous years. The impact of the research on the students, if any, was minimal. Students were informed that

research would be performed on the module. In no way did the additional aspect of research impede students academically or affect students physically or emotionally. Students participating in the nominal group were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix B) for both the pre- and postnominal groups. This document asks participants to indicate if they agree to participate in the group and that the information can be used for research purposes. The document also states that persons participating, as well as their comments and decisions would, be kept anonymous.

To increase the students' sense of confidentiality and anonymity during the nominal group, an independent expert with no connection to the researcher, department or students was selected. This would allow students to feel free to express themselves without being judged by the researcher.

All students were informed that the documentation that was handed in would be reported on and confidentiality would be maintained. At no time would students be mentioned by name as to the comments they made. Privacy was maintained at all times. Students were required to sign a "contract" stating that they had read their module guide and understood all implications, risks responsibilities and elements regarding the CSL module and had had an opportunity to ask any questions for clarification of issues if needed. Students were shown respect as to their opinions, and were indeed encouraged to voice their own opinions without fear of retribution.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The nominal group data analysis was mostly performed during the actual nominal group. Two lists were generated with regard to the two questions that were posed to participants. Content analysis together with a priori coding and inductive coding was used during data analysis of the structured and unstructured reflection. The data was then analysed to provide a comparison of the perceived competencies gained through CSL and those required of a recreation specialist.

4.8.1 Nominal Group

The NGT incorporates a degree of data analysis during the process. Participants review all items mentioned and rank each item according to their order of importance. In this study each NGT participant was asked to rank their top five items. The item that was perceived as most important received five points, the second item received four points, the third item three points, the fourth item two points and finally the fifth item received one point. Each individual's ranking was taken into account, resulting in a numerical total and then a final list was compiled creating a ranked list of importance. This was done with both the pre- and postnominal groups. Thus two lists for each of the two questions posed were created both during the pre- and post-NGT.

4.8.2 Content Analysis

During the analysis of the various data sources, content analysis was used to identify various aspects in the text that would help to understand and interpret the raw data. Similarities and differences of student perceptions were sought (Nieuwenhuis 2007c: 101). Content analysis may be described as a data analysis that "classifies textual material, reducing it to more relevant, manageable bits of data" (Weber 1990: 5). Weber adds to his description of content analysis by saying that it "is a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. These inferences are about the sender(s) message, the message itself, or the audience of the message" (Weber 1990: 9). Content analysis can be undertaken from a statistical or more qualitative view as frequency may not necessarily be related to importance and meaning (Henderson, 1991: 92).

Content analysis of the structured and unstructured reflection reports was undertaken to look for instances where students described learning or an increase in competence. As some students submitted reports in Afrikaans, the students' comments used in this dissertation were translated by the researcher.

a) A Priori Coding

A priori coding is coding that contains codes that are determined before examining the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c: 107). Items identified during the NGT (pre and post) determine preset themes/categories. Content analysis was used with documents from structured and unstructured reflection to identify the content that students commented on within the various categories (Silverman, 2001: 122). The content and quality of the comments were also taken into consideration (Henderson, 1991: 92).

b) Inductive Coding

During the data analysis process inductive coding (new themes/categories, not the original pre-set themes as with a priori) may also take place, as new themes may be identified and examined (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c: 107). A similar data analysis was used by Furco (2002) to determine the differences between service and no-service groupings of students.

The researcher read through all reflection documents looking for statements made by the participants as to what they perceived they had learnt or competencies that were gained. All statements were read and sorted according to themes. The structured and unstructured reflection documents were first organised into the pre-set themes as identified during the nominal group. The remaining statements that did not fit into the pre-set themes were then allocated to suitable themes.

4.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the research methodology used was highlighted and explained. Details of the sample selection to obtain the data, how data was collected and analysed were described. It is deemed to be an applicable research methodology for the study. The results of these analyses follow in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 5

Research Results

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.2 NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

5.2.1 Prenominal Group

5.2.2 Postnominal Group

5.3 REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

5.3.1 A Priori Themes (Predetermined)

5.3.1.1 Communication

5.3.1.2 Management Skills

5.3.1.3 Group Dynamics and Cultural Diversity

5.3.1.4 Self-evaluation

5.3.2 Unintended Themes

5.4 CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the data analysis will be presented. The results obtained from the nominal groups – both pre and post – will be elaborated on. The perceptions that the students had of the competencies they would potentially be able to gain and the competencies they perceived to have gained will be presented.

5.2 NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

The NGT was utilised pre- and post-commencement of the CSL module. The prenominal group was used to identify students' perceptions before commencement of the CSL and this information was used to organise the structured reflection. The postnominal group was used to determine students' perceptions on the perceived development of competency. Two groups participated on both occasions (pre and post).

5.2.1 Prenominal Group

Two questions were posed to the two groups of participants in the prenominal group. The first question was “What do you expect to gain (knowledge, skills and attitudes) from the community service-learning experience?” and the second question was “How do you expect these aspects to link up with being a recreation specialist?”

With regard to the first question posed, Appendix C records all the unedited responses provided by all participants in both groups. The top five items identified by each group are included in Table 5.1. The rank that was allocated by students is indicated in brackets next to the response.

Table 5.1: Responses to question 1

Student Responses to Question 1		Theme Identified by Researcher
Group 1	Group 2	
	People skills, organising and planning (4)	Management
Good teamwork/group work between group members so that the CSL project will be successful. (2)	Learn to work in a group. Usually prefer to do things on my own – don't believe others can do it well enough. (2)	Group dynamics and cultural diversity
To gain knowledge about people (handling of children, personnel, and myself in group situations) (5)	Building relationships with my group– getting on with people I don't know (3)	
	Gaining knowledge to work with people of diverse cultures, age groups etc., – getting to know more about their lifestyle (5)	
Development of patience – not to lose my temper (1)	Gain skills to work under pressure, coping when things go wrong (4)	Self-evaluation
To have a more positive outlook on CSL as a whole (4)		
To see and experience the connection between theory and practice. (3)	Good opportunity to gain practical knowledge, e.g. working & people out there; to see whether we are suited to this field (CSL) (1)	Practical experience in recreation
	Overall experience, without focus on animation plan (5)	Other

The first nominal group ranked “development of patience” first, teamwork second, “experiencing the connection between theory and practice” third. They ranked “having a more positive outlook on CSL” fourth and the final item ranked was “gaining knowledge about people”. The second nominal group ranked “to gain practical knowledge” as the first item, teamwork was ranked second (as with the first group). The group ranked “building relationships with my group” third, “skills to work under pressure” and “people skills, organising and planning” fourth. The fifth ranking was for two responses. The first was “gaining knowledge to work with people of diverse cultures, age groups, etc. – getting to know more about their lifestyle” and the second item ranked fifth was “the overall experience”. Students felt that the overall experience would develop them, although they did not want the focus to be on the theory they were expected to apply (Table 5.1).

With regard to the second question posed, “How do you expect these aspects to link up with being a recreation specialist?” Appendix D records all the responses provided by all the participants in both groups. The responses received did not differ greatly from those noted in Table 5.1. The comments reiterated the skills and competencies students felt would be learnt by participating in recreation programmes. The students did not make a distinction between what they expected to gain and how they felt that this would link with being a recreation specialist. They emphasised the skills they thought would be required as a recreation specialist and that they could potentially learn throughout the module. Both groups identified that experience would be gained by working with diverse groups of people, work competence and practical experience would be gained and they would learn how to apply theory in practice.

With regard to question two the first nominal group ranked “handling of diverse groups” first, “to be more comfortable with what you do” as well as “knowledge about people will help you to work with people at all levels within the community” were ranked second. “To have patience and to stay calm” ranked third, “see the connection between theory and practice” fourth and the final item ranked by participants was “practical experience can lead to a successful practice–experience”.

Group two ranked “increased work competence” and “dealing with different problem situations” first. “Dealing with people from different backgrounds” was ranked second, three participants felt strongly that it would not help them and this was ranked third, working together was ranked fourth, and finally “aspects of theory to plan and organise events” was ranked fifth.

Tait *et al.* (1993: 19) indicated that communications ability, group dynamics and planning (a management skill) were essential perceived recreation training needs for persons in the recreation industry (all received 100% response by respondents in their study). Self-confidence and self-evaluation received a rating of 90% in their study. The data obtained during the prenominal groups conform to the research of Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23), thus similarities between the student perceptions and the results of the 1993 study were identified. The competencies identified by the students could mostly be categorised under four themes: communication ability, management skills, group dynamics and cultural diversity and self-evaluation.

As the responses obtained from the students fell mostly into the four themes and the themes were supported by previous research (Tait *et al.*, 1993: 19-23) the following aspects were identified by the researcher in the current study to be reflected upon during structured reflection by students:

- Communication ability
 - People skills (group 2)
 - To gain knowledge about people (handling of children, personnel, and myself in group situations) (group 1)

- Management skills
 - Organising and planning (group 2)

- Group dynamics and cultural diversity
 - Learn to work in a group (group 2)

- Building relationships with my group – getting on with people I don't know (group 2)
- Good teamwork/group work between group members (group 1)
- Gaining knowledge to work with people of diverse cultures, age groups, etc. (group 2)

- Self-evaluation
 - Self-confidence
 - Gain skills to work under pressure, coping when things go wrong (group 2)
 - Development of patience – not to lose my temper (group 1)
 - Learn to express myself in certain situations. How to respond towards different personalities/situations (group 2)

5.2.2 Postnominal Group

The postnominal group sought to elicit responses from students as to their perceptions on the competencies they had gained during the CSL module. The first question was “What did you gain (knowledge, skills and attitudes) from the community service-learning experience?” and the second question was “How do these aspects link up with being a recreation specialist?” The responses from all the participants of the two groups are given in Appendix E (question 1) and Appendix F (question 2).

Table 5.2 indicates the top five items that were ranked by both groups for the first question posed. The first group ranked “innovation” first, followed by “patience”, “research and preparation (planning)” was ranked third, “attitude” was ranked fourth and the fifth item was “human skills, especially communication skills”.

The second group's responses to the first question posed were ranked as follows. “Positive mindset”, followed by “patience”. Third was tied between three items, “interpretation of feelings and emotions”, “adapting to clients”, and “putting theory into practice”. Two items were ranked fourth, “planning, organising skills and improvising” as well as to “appreciate what I have in life”. Diligence was the last item that was ranked (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Responses to question 1

Student Responses to Question 1		Theme Identified by Researcher
Group 1	Group 2	
Human skills, especially communication skills within cultural diversity (5)	I learnt how to interpret feelings and emotions in everybody (3)	Communication ability
I've learnt that research is very important in new situations, i.e. preparation (3)	I learnt about better planning, having a back-up plan, organising skills and improvising (4)	Management skills
I've learnt to be patient (2)	Patience with everyone, group members and children (2)	Self-evaluation
To have a positive attitude no matter if things go wrong – won't get you anywhere anyhow (4)	Positive mindset – not to go with a negative attitude (1)	
	To appreciate what I have in life (4)	
Learn to innovate according to the situation at hand (1)	Diligence. Don't give up when something doesn't work, keep trying (5)	
	Actual implementation of the animation plan – theory into practice (3)	Other (practical experience in recreation)
	Adapting to clients – more than one idea for different clients (3)	Other (dealing with customers)

Both postnominal groups identified “patience” and ranked it equally (second). Items that were identified by both postnominal groups, but were given different rankings, were the attitude one had (ranked first with group two and fourth with group one). Planning was ranked third with group one and fourth in group two. In order to adapt to clients (group two, third rank) would require innovation (group one, ranked first) (Table 5.2).

The responses for the second question that was posed to both groups during the postnominal group once again highlighted the competencies that students felt would be required by a recreation specialist. The item ranked first by the first group was

“research”, second “keeping your clients in mind”, third “communicating, time management planning” and lastly “how to manage people and situations”.

The item ranked first by the second group was “plan and organise effectively”, the second rank was tied between “understanding your clients” and “need good leadership plus good follower skills”. Third was also a tie between “adapt to different circumstances” and “self-confidence”. The fourth ranked item was shared between “put theory into practice” and “need to know when change is needed”. Lastly “interpret feelings to understand what the clients want and need”.

Question two brought forth a greater number of common responses. Group one ranked “research” as their first item, this can be linked to group two’s “plan and organise effectively”. The research that the participants in group one ranked first, is needed in order to plan and organise effectively. An item that should be highlighted is understanding the client. This item was ranked by both groups on two occasions. Group one had their second rank as keeping the clients in mind and implied this under the “research” item, which was ranked first. Understanding your clients and needs (ranked second) as well as interpret feelings to understand what the clients want and need were ranked by group two. Time management planning and to plan and organise effectively were additional common elements shared by both groups. The final item that can be linked between both groups was to manage people and situations with good leadership plus good follower skills.

Chapter two identified communication, leadership, management (planning, organising, implementing, control and staffing aspects) and people skills (working with others) as core competencies required by a recreation specialist. All these competencies were perceived by the students as competencies that they gained during the CSL module.

5.3 REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

Two reflection activities were utilised for data analysis. The first activity comprised structured reflection reports where students were given set themes to reflect upon. The second type of reflection was unstructured reflection, where students were asked to comment on their feelings and what they felt they had learnt during the module. When reviewing data from the two reflection data sources it became evident that a number of themes surfaced in both techniques. The results will therefore be presented together and only where significant differences occurred between the structured and unstructured reflection will these be highlighted.

Following the results of the prenominal group, students were given guidelines on the structure of their reflection reports. The a priori themes (communication ability, management skills, group dynamics, and self-evaluation) were utilised as well as responses sought during the content analysis.

The responses that were obtained from the unstructured reflection (journals) were not as forthcoming as the structured reflection (reflection reports) because the requirements were unstructured and the students therefore had more freedom to write what they wished. Due to the nature of the unstructured reflection most of the entries were about what had happened and what students felt. When students noted something they had learnt these statements were used for the content analysis.

5.3.1 A Priori Themes (Predetermined)

Themes that were identified for the structured reflection were used as a priori themes. These themes will be discussed in the next sections.

5.3.1.1 Communication

Communication was a requirement for students to reflect on in the structured reflection. However, communication skills featured prominently in the unstructured reflection as well. Due to the number of statements that were made with reference to the skill, it was subdivided into a number of categories. The categories included

communication problems, nonverbal communication, being understood, learning to communicate better, listening skills, awareness of the importance of communication, as well as the importance of communication for planning/effect of communication on planning.

Communication problems and nonverbal communication

Communication was identified as a competency that was challenged in this module as the students were working with different cultural groups and therefore different language groups. The problems that were experienced by the students were related to communication barriers. Two of the centres visited catered for Southern-Sotho-speaking children, the third catered for Afrikaans-speaking children. The students were dominantly Afrikaans and English-speaking resulting in a challenge for all participants (students and children alike). One student commented: *“it was a battle to communicate with the children as very few of them understood English or Afrikaans”*.

The students experienced frustration when they were unable to communicate verbally with the children. This, however, aided in the perceived development of nonverbal communication. The reflection reports indicated that the communication challenges gave the students the opportunity to discover other ways of communicating with the children. The use of demonstration and nonverbal skills to convey messages to the children stood out as an aspect many students felt they developed in. The students indicated that they felt that this had made them more aware of other means of communicating and that this skill had improved. The realisation that it was still possible to communicate although they could not understand each other had a positive effect on many students. *“If the children don’t speak your language and you don’t understand theirs, it is difficult to communicate. But luckily there are other ways besides verbal communication to communicate. We had to explain things to them by physically demonstrating or using hand gestures. By being friendly you immediately attract the children to you.”*

Being understood

As students had experienced communication problems during programme delivery they became aware of the convenience of being understood by people. Students also realised how communication affected the programme delivery when they

presented activities to children who could understand them. *“It made a huge difference to be able to communicate with the children.”*

Learning to communicate better

In general, students reported an improvement in their communication skills by talking to the children, their group members and the translators in the course of the programmes. *“I think my communication skills have improved because you need to maintain discipline that each child waits for their turn ..., you need to communicate with your group members and so need good communication, and I think it is improving each time.”*

Communication within the group was emphasised as an important aspect that affects many other aspects of the students’ experience and the success of the programme being offered. *“The co-operation aspect in our group goes hand-in-hand with the communication in our group.” “I have discovered that it is only through effective two-way communication that any event can take place successfully. It is essential for all members of the group to understand each other and not to misinterpret each other’s points of view.”*

Listening skills

An element of communication is listening skills (Watkins, 1991: 267) and students reported an increase in this skill as well. *“Well, I have learned to listen more. Not only what the kiddies wanted to tell me, but also in the team meetings. I always listened to people, but not really to see in (sic) their opinion. Everyone has their own opinion. But, I don’t have to agree with everything they has (sic) to say.” “It is important to listen to each other in the group. I realised that even if I consider something to be obvious, someone else may have a totally different opinion about it. By listening to each other one also learns more from each other. It is not always necessary to speak, sometimes it is good to listen for a change.”*

Awareness of the importance of communication and the importance of communication for planning/effect of communication on planning

Many students not only perceived an improvement in the skill, but became aware of the importance of communication. Students also noted the importance of

communication for planning or the effect it has on planning. *“I once again realised that communication is one of the most important aspects to make a day successful. You also communicate with your group the whole time to maintain order and to keep the children busy all the time.”*

5.3.1.2 Management Skills

Management skills in general were perceived to have developed due to the decision-making and accountability experienced by students. They also mentioned the following management competencies specifically: planning, organising and control.

Planning

As planning has many facets, the following sub-themes were identified during content analysis: understanding the importance of planning, improvement of skills, having a plan “B”, learning from past experiences and using it in planning and finally time management.

Understanding the importance of planning

Students reported becoming more aware of the role that planning played and how it helps to lead to successful delivery of the programme. Students stressed that they learnt how important thorough planning was. It was noted that poor planning led to poor performance, and good communication within the group aided good planning. *“I very quickly became aware of how important planning is in these situations. I was never one who plans things beforehand, but if you don’t do it you make things much more difficult for you and your group.”*

Improvement of skills and having a plan “B”

Most comments indicated an improvement in planning skills and a realisation of the importance of planning for success. It was also mentioned that although good planning was an essential requirement it was also important to stay open-minded to the possibility that the plan may not work out exactly as planned. To this effect it was emphasised by students that they learnt the importance of “having a plan B”, even if it was not used on the day. *“I have developed a lot as a person in my planning abilities, which only has benefits for me in the future.” “Today’s session showed once*

again that you should always have a back-up plan in case things don't work out as planned."

Learning from past experiences and using it in planning

Students also commented on learning from past experiences and using it in planning. When activities did not work, or children did not respond as required/expected they used this information for the next session to try and improve the result. *"We noticed from the previous visits that it is easier to let the children participate in group activities where everyone can participate simultaneously otherwise they get bored waiting for their turn."*

Time management

With regard to time management students felt that the demands placed on their time due to the work requirements of the CSL encouraged them to plan the use of their time and manage it accordingly. *"This week was really very busy and it was essential for me to manage my time correctly especially if I was going to see it through to the end of the week."*

There was a close relationship between planning and organising, with a number of students mentioning the two aspects together and the influence that they have on each other. Planning and organising are both elements of management. According to Chelladurai (1991: 137) planning is setting of objectives, selecting activities in order to achieve the set objectives and allocating resources to each set of activities. Organising takes the planning and breaks it down into specific jobs, assigning these jobs to appropriate personnel and coordinating these efforts.

Organising

Students felt that organising was an important element towards achieving success. Comments on organising that were received focused mainly on general improvement or organising skills; that being well organised assisted with presenting activities; and also the realisation of the importance of organising.

“I saw again today how important it is that you must be organised and know what and when things must get done. As soon as you don’t know what is going on, you lose control and then it is chaos.”

Leadership

Comments on leadership that surfaced in the unstructured reflection centred on an increase in leadership skills or an awareness of the skill. Students commented on needing to take leadership and delegate either to the children or to fellow group members. *“I felt that I needed to step up to the plate today. Order needed to be maintained and I had to take responsibility to ensure that it happened. It certainly improved and developed my leadership skills.”*

Control

While the standard definition of control has to do with monitoring performance (Torkildsen, 2005: 381) or looking at organisational effectiveness and performance appraisal (Chelladurai, 1991:142), the control the students mentioned in their reflection was more focused on the control of the situation. Students’ statements showed a realisation of the influence that control had on the activity being presented. Students also realised that there were a number of uncontrollable elements during programme delivery. *“I learnt that one cannot always control everything around you, there will always be something that is out of your control like a fight.”*

5.3.1.3 Group Dynamics and Cultural Diversity

People skills

The competency “people skills” was perceived to have increased. Students did not have a choice as to whom they were working with in their group. They felt that this helped to improve their people skills as they had to interact with people they may not have interacted with before. Thus, the group work itself led to a perceived increase in people skills. *“I think the fact that I worked with so many different people, with different personalities, within and out of our group, made my abilities to communicate effectively develop a lot. To listen to everyone’s opinions and to then talk about it helped me a lot.”*

Many students commented on the matter of working with children and how this in itself had improved their people skills. Working with children was a new experience for a number of students. Comments were made that students felt uncomfortable with this aspect in the beginning, but at the end they felt much more competent to work with the children. On completion of the module students felt they had developed skills to work with children. A student commented: *“My people skills have improved greatly over what they were. I never knew how to handle children. I felt so uncomfortable with them around me, but now it is the opposite of what it was.”*

Students learnt to express themselves better within the group, be more aware of others in the group and to work with other people. A comment that surfaced regularly was that working with such a variety of people (different ages and cultures) had a positive effect on gaining people skills. *“My people skills have certainly improved. The past two weeks have taught me to get along with all types of people including race, age, gender and culture.”*

“I really think my people skills developed a lot. At the beginning you are a bit unsure of yourself and you don’t know what to do when, but these six weeks have really been a life lesson, that I will remember for the rest of my life and that I have become more comfortable with myself and to work with other people.”

Understanding others

Understanding others was also indicated by some students as something they perceived to have learnt from CSL. The following aspects were highlighted by students: compassion, human dignity, humility, “walking in others’ shoes” and seeing matters from the other person’s perspective. *“I had to learn to treat the children, healthy or sick, with human dignity. Just because they are sick does not mean they don’t want to play and have fun.”*

Working with people of diverse cultures

Many positive statements were made with regard to working with people of diverse cultures: *“I have bumped my head here a few times, I am not always so sensitive towards other cultures and beliefs and others feelings, but the community service has helped me really lots to be more sensitive and observant.”* *“I learnt a lot to work*

with different people of diverse cultures, as well as different age groups within the culture, and it has been a good learning school for any person to get involved in something like community service at least once in their lives ...”

Students perceived that learning took place about people of different cultures. There were two sides to this argument. On the one hand, some students felt that there were obvious differences between them and the children they were working with, but that they gained a greater understanding of the differences. *“We learnt to do things differently and to get along with a problem. Other cultures do things differently and it was very interesting to see how our cultures actually differ.” “There are obviously very obvious cultural differences, e.g. language use, etc., but it was a very enriching experience to be exposed to it.”* Students commented that they were aware of differences in culture, but that this did not have a negative influence on them in any way. The opposite effect was experienced: *“I learnt that us whites can learn A LOT from the people of the community where we were.”*

Other students felt that they discovered that there were fewer differences between the cultures than they had expected. These students focused on the similarities between themselves and the children. *“I learnt that when you work with people, it makes no difference what race or culture, they experience the same emotions as you. Conclusion? If I move differences to one side and look past skin colour and culture, we are all the same on the inside.”* Students not only expressed an increased understanding of the different cultures, but a desire to learn more about the similarities and differences. *“It was very nice to learn about another culture group. Every day that I was there I was inspired to find out more.”*

Students felt that culture linked closely with respect: *“I think the most valuable thing that everyone learnt during community service is respect for each other and for the races and cultures we worked with.”*

Group work

As students were expected to work in groups it was to be expected that they would raise some issues concerning this theme. Although no negative comments regarding group work surfaced during the structured reflection, negative comments were

received during the unstructured reflection. This was mainly due to ineffective group functioning. Frustrations were experienced when some group members were not putting in the same amount of effort as others: *“I am tired that only some of the people in the group do something and put in effort to play with the children, to participate in the activity and to work together as a group.”*

Students noted that the relationships within the student group influenced how effectively the group worked. Most students commented on a positive relationship between group members and how this relationship aided in the group working well together. The few negative comments that were given were about a student not getting along with another. They noted the need to put their negative feelings aside in order for the group to reach its goal. *“I battle with one group member because it is someone who under normal circumstances I would avoid and would not be friends with, but I have learnt to put my personal feelings aside, and to accept her for group cohesion.”*

Working as a group was a concern to a number of students on the commencement of CSL. Students commented that they would often prefer to work alone and not in a group context. The reflection reports, however, highlighted that students discovered many positive attributes to working in a group. For example *“normally I don’t enjoy working as a group; I like things done my way. But putting different opinions together and choosing different ones and developing them is much more fun”*.

In the beginning students were hesitant to make contributions due to the fact that there had been little interaction amongst the group members. They experienced feelings of apprehension as they did not know what to expect from one another. Once the group had the opportunity to work with each other the members displayed more co-operation. Students reported that they became aware of how important working together was. It aided in making the work less, it increased the enjoyment of the activity, the success of the activities, as well as the success of the group as a whole. *“I had to learn to work as a team and not always want to take charge of everything. I had to take a back seat and not take over from the leader.”* *“There is no I in team. You get put in such a situation that half forces you to work with the people*

in the group even if you don't really like them. One day in the workplace it will have to be done and it is never too early to learn."

"This week the importance of group work really stood out for me. I realised that if our group didn't work together our "Boere sport" activities would've been a big flop. In order to make a success of the whole community service experience we have to pull together, and I think everyone realised it this week and it was great." Students came to the realisation of the importance of group work. In some respects they learnt how to work better as individuals and other situations forced them to work better as a group because they realised this would aid the task at hand.

"Other" aspects that were highlighted by students were that support for and from group members helped a lot. Remarks on how to trust others and that group work was often better than they had expected were made. Additional positive attributes to group work identified by the students were that it made the work easier, that it was fun, it increases confidence, it helps to get everything to work, sorting out problems quickly, making friends, handle the kids better, achieve more, create more ideas, lower the workload, improvement of people skills and learning new ways of doing things.

5.3.1.4 Self-evaluation

When looking at themselves more closely students felt that growth had taken place. Comments on discovering aspects of the self came to the fore. Most comments came from those who classified themselves as shy people. These "shy" students felt that they had been given the opportunity to step out of their comfort zones a little and had been able to try things that they had not felt able to do before. Personal developments like feeling comfortable about speaking in front of others and leading the activity were focused on. Other areas where students perceived growth had taken place were aspects of leadership and self-reliance.

Students stated that they had learnt a number of things about themselves. Self-esteem, self-control, self-discipline, and spontaneity were some of the aspects highlighted. *"My self-esteem improved and I felt better about myself knowing that I*

could make a child smile and laugh and I learn and I (sic) was further highlighted that there is more to life than materialistic possessions.”

Self-confidence

There was also a perceived building and strengthening of self-confidence. Students identified the ability to present a recreation day, speak their mind or just display self-confidence in general abilities. A number of positive statements were made about the perceived gain in self-confidence. Students noted that the CSL experience increased their self-confidence in general and more specifically with regard to working with children. Students noted that with each visit self-confidence was gained, this included confidence to work with the children, talking to the children and the members within the group. One student commented: *“The CSL most certainly played a role in building and strengthening my self-confidence. It is now much easier for me to do things that previously had me scared stiff. It was certainly a progressive process that I mastered with time.”* Once relationships were established within the group, students reported an increase in feeling the self-confidence to express thoughts and feelings to group members. Students also reported that the confidence they gained to work with the children was vital. It was felt that the children could sense when they did not have self-confidence and this affected the programme negatively. Another student had the following to say about self-confidence: *“CS is a very good tool to improve your self-confidence, as you have to do with so many people and other things outside your comfort zone, this develops you optimally.”*

Self-expression

Students reported in the structured reflection reports that there was an improvement in self-expression (no mention was made in the unstructured reflection). Again other students noted that they became aware of the importance of self-expression. Self-expression was also linked with the previous theme of confidence, as students reported that an increase in self-confidence aided self-expression. One statement reads: *“This keeps developing as I get more and more involved. I am very different from people and therefore my self-expression is important in being understood and not judged, especially because I don’t have a great self-image. Interacting with the people in my group and even just the kids have (sic) helped a lot with this.”*

Dealing with pressure

Skills to work under pressure were mentioned as a competency that had increased. Many students felt that the CSL and the work that it entailed, as well as other modules and the pressure of working with unpredictable children, created pressure. Many were also surprised at how well they handled the pressure situations and added that they learnt how to deal with the pressure and to adapt to it to perform better. *“I am not one of those people that flourish under pressure. I am one that hits a panic and want to do everything together. These two weeks I realised that it is totally unnecessary. One must just keep your head wrapped around what you must do first and then just keep on.”*

Things that students felt went wrong mostly concerned difficulties in communication with children who spoke neither English nor Afrikaans and children losing interest in the activities. Most comments indicated that students perceived that they had learnt to adapt to the pressure situation. The pressure was relieved using innovation and creativity.

The ability to stay calm during times of pressure was developed. One comment indicated the connection between this theme and a previous theme of control: *“... it showed me that I have certain skills that I never realized I had one of them is that I am able to keep control of a situation under pressure”.*

Patience

Most students commented on patience to some degree. In the unstructured reflection the students focused more on the distinction between the types of patience that were perceived to have been developed. This theme was therefore divided into three subthemes: general patience, patience with the children and patience with group members.

Students remarked that through the CSL their patience had been tested and improved. They realised that working with the children made different demands, one of which is patience. Being patient with the children aided in presenting the activities. When it came to patience with the children, some students indicated a lack of patience and a need to develop patience. Others noted that patience is needed when

working with children and this skill improved due to the challenges that the children posed. *“I realised that these children were just like any other children. They are active and enthusiastic and one must just be patient with them and realise that they are just small.”*

Students did not only perceive an increase in patience due to working with the children, but also due to the group work. Having to work with the other group members on a continual basis tested the students' patience and they found that they had to develop patience with their fellow group members to avoid conflict within the group. In general, students came to the realisation that it did not help them to become impatient, *“I learnt that one must approach everything with patience, because it does not help if you get cross and try to force your authority, you just make it unpleasant for yourself and those around you.”*

Think quick/improvise/creativity

Inductive coding identified to think quick/improvise/creativity as an additional theme that emerged from the structured reflection. Although students were not required to write on this topic it was, however, highlighted by a number of students. It stemmed from the theme “coping when things go wrong”. Many students found that when things did not go as planned they were required to improvise in order to keep the children interested in the activities. There was often little time available and decisions needed to be taken swiftly to adapt activities to make them suitable for the situation at hand. *“We needed to improvise every time with certain activities to adapt to the children's needs and abilities.”*

Adaptability was something that students felt was necessary to successfully implement programmes and it featured in the unstructured reflection. Activities did not always work as the students had planned and they therefore needed to adapt the programme to suit the situation. In order to adjust to circumstances it was necessary for students to think quickly or improvise. *“How to make something out of nothing – or using something and coming up with something else simply to be able to do something that makes sense when all sense was lost!” “I learnt to think on my feet. To change games if everything was not available or if the activity finished quicker than expected and the kids needed to be kept busy.”*

Students expressed that their creativity had increased by having to help the children with the activities at times, as well as to think creatively when they needed to change activities and improvise. *“I needed to learn to think creatively on the spot to build figures out of clay for the children.”*

Perseverance

Perseverance was highlighted by some students in the unstructured reflection. *“I also learnt not to throw in the towel after the first try. I must keep trying, eventually you will achieve something.”*

Respect

Students reported in the unstructured reflection that respect for other people was gained. The realisation that one needs to show respect to gain respect was also highlighted by students. *“This week I realised that one will only get respect if you yourself show respect. The children respected me because I respected their ideas and thoughts.”*

General attitude

The attitude with which an activity is approached was considered important by some students in their unstructured reflections. The students reported that a positive attitude positively influenced their CSL experience. *“I also learnt that if you enter a situation with a positive attitude that it will go ten times better than you expected, and you influence those around you to be in a better mood. Your attitude rubs off on the kids as well and if you are negative they will not enjoy the activity.”*

Motivation and goal achievement

Motivation and goal achievement were also perceived in this CSL module. *“I also learnt that the more you put in the more satisfaction you will get with the results. The more satisfaction you get, the more you want to do.”* *“After today I am even more motivated to put in more effort, even with the admin which has to be the worst part I will do with a smile.”*

To be grateful/appreciate what I have

To be grateful/appreciate what I have was mentioned more frequently in the structured than in the unstructured reflection. It was expressed that *“CSL compelled me to look at my life with genuine appreciation and thankfulness for everything and everyone in my life.”*

Students felt that they were made aware of how they were taking many positive aspects of their lives for granted. Numerous comments were made on how thankful they were for what they had. *“We are inclined to moan about the smallest things in life and walk around with it on our faces. These children physically have nothing but smile from ear to ear! They have so much appreciation for the smallest things. It is an inspiration for me to be around them.”* *“We actually have so much to be thankful for and we don’t always realise it, that is exactly one of the things that I realised during the community service.”*

5.3.2 Unintended Themes

The “new” themes that were identified during the inductive coding are considered “unintended” themes.

Connection between theory and practical experience

Students were not requested to write on this theme in the structured reflection and therefore no comments were made in this regard. Students were exposed to practical service delivery and they were therefore expected to gain practical experience. *“The practical experience was invaluable and it certainly had a positive effect on my self-perception.”* *“The knowledge and experience that we got cannot be gained from books.”*

Not only did students gain practical experience in recreation, but also became more aware of the connection between the theory that had been learnt in the classroom and the actual delivery of activities as illustrated in their unstructured reflections. “Putting theory into practice” was a theme identified by the researcher to describe students’ thoughts on how they used certain aspects of the theory when presenting the activities. Students commented on the realisation of how theory can be used in

practice and how helpful this could be. This elicited the most responses from students in this theme. Specific techniques taught in class (e.g. animation plan) were used in practice and a greater understanding of the technique was gained: *“...the animation plan makes much more sense to me now that we have finished presenting the activities this afternoon. It is a very reliable way to plan and organise the day”*. Another student commented *“After today I realised why it is so important to write out the animation plan. It serves as a guideline and it helps with the application of the activities.”*

Students noted that the theory they had learnt was useful and it aided them in the success of the activities. The CSL did not only offer the opportunity for practical experience and the realisation of the use of theory, but also helped students understand the theory better. *“In the past I struggled to draw up an animation plan, but now I know exactly how it works.”* *“We could practically apply the knowledge we got from books, which made it easier to learn, understand and remember.”*

Importance of safety

Safety aspects were highlighted as students commented on the necessity of safety. Students learnt that it was important to ensure that an activity was safe in order to prevent injuries. *“I learnt that it is important to make sure that the game is safe so that no serious injuries occur.”*

The overall experience of CSL

A theme that could not be sorted into the a priori codes was that of the CSL experience. When reflecting on the experience, the students' feedback was positive and they felt that they had learnt a lot from it. The comments indicated that the CSL had somehow helped the students become better people and that they had experienced an increase in the awareness and understanding of others and their circumstances. Some of the statements follow: *“I will be the first to admit I was probably one of the students who was really not looking forward to the whole CSL thing, it was a big challenge for me, but now I can honestly say that it was really nice and that I learnt a lot about myself, other people and cultures, etc.”*. *“I learnt and grew so much as a person during the community service.”*

“I am really a new person after this community service and will never forget the experience, I want to say thank you for the privilege to experience it.”

Other skills

Other skills that students mentioned in their unstructured reflections (only one occurrence noted) were problem solving, handling stress, social skills, to be strict, to make the best of a situation and to pay attention to a few things at the same time. Sole mention was also made of: to compromise, acceptance, helpfulness, structure, friendliness and that fun and laughter is a universal language.

5.4 CONCLUSION

There are a number of similarities when the perceptions students had about the competencies they had attained through the CSL module as identified in the postnominal group and the structured and unstructured reflection are compared with competencies required by a recreation specialist as identified in Chapter 2. Students' perceptions of competency development corresponded with four main themes, i.e. communication, management skills, group dynamics and cultural diversity and self-evaluation. These will be highlighted in the final chapter.

Chapter 6

Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.2.1 Student Perceptions

6.2.2 Competencies

6.3 LIMITATIONS

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.5 CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to determine how the perceived competencies gained by students through the CSL module relate to the competencies needed by a recreation specialist. This was done by determining the competencies required in recreation. Subsequently, the initial perceptions that students had regarding the competencies they could *potentially* gain through the CSL module were determined. The perceptions students had regarding the competencies they *had* attained through the CSL module were determined. This chapter highlights how the perceived competencies gained by students through the CSL module relate to the competencies needed by a recreation specialist.

The various competencies needed for a recreation specialist were investigated in both the literature and in advertised job descriptions. A number of competencies were identified, however, the following were seen as core competencies as they were observed in both the literature study and the job description analysis:

- communication
- leadership

- management (planning, organising, implementing, control and staffing aspects), and
- people skills (working with others)

The discussion that follows will highlight the student perceptions from the perspective of the competencies required by a recreation specialist.

CSL is considered a form of experiential learning (HEQC, 2006a: 14). As CSL is not centred on only service or only learning (as depicted in Furco's 2000 typology) students were not only offering a service, but were expected to learn something from the process. Through the opportunity to experience the planning and facilitation of recreation activities first hand, students were given the opportunity to develop necessary recreation competencies.

The research was undertaken from a phenomenological viewpoint. The students' interpretation of their own learning therefore forms the core of the study.

6.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The question may be asked why so few of the students' negative comments were included in this study. During the content analysis the researcher looked for statements of learning or of increased competence. The students perceived learning and increase in competence to be a positive experience and seldom made mention of learning taken place from negative experiences. It cannot be concluded that no negative feelings were expressed by students. The negative comments were not relevant to the study and so do not feature in the results or discussion.

6.2.1 Student Perceptions

The prenominal group required students to identify competencies they could learn through the CSL module. Statements made by the two participating groups had several similarities. Both prenominal groups identified teamwork as a competency that they felt could be developed during the module, aspects about applying the

theory practically were also noted by both groups as well as working with people (building relationships with a group and gaining knowledge of people).

Communication ability, management skills, group dynamics, cultural diversity, and self-evaluation were perceived by students during the prenominal group discussions as competencies that could potentially be gained during the CSL module. The students reported a perceived increase in all of the identified competencies. The structure given to students (based on the prenominal group discussions) to reflect on was broad in nature thus allowing students to reflect widely on the topic. The large scope given to students allowed for competencies like “communication ability” to elicit many responses. The responses were far reaching and could be placed into subcategories. The categories included communication problems, nonverbal communication, being understood, learning to communicate better, listening skills, awareness of the importance of communication, as well as the importance of communication for planning/effect of communication on planning. During the data analysis responses were obtained in all of the a priori themes. This indicated that the competencies that students initially perceived to have the potential to increase, improved according to the students.

Other competencies that were not required of students to reflect on also came to the fore. The application of theory was identified in the prenominal group although not included as a competence in the structured reflection. This was again emphasised by students in the unstructured reflection. This indicates that the students found the CSL module to be beneficial for practical experience in recreation.

Postnominal group participants perceived that their competencies in management, planning and dealing with customers developed the most. Not all the management competencies featured in the reflection. Planning, organising and to a small degree control was mentioned. Due to the nature of a nominal group students could not be questioned further during the discussions to ascertain what management skills they perceived to have developed.

Table 6.1 illustrates competencies needed by a recreation specialist (as identified in literature and job descriptions) as well as the student perceptions about the

competency attainment through the CSL module. The results of the postnominal group, structured and unstructured reflection are included in Table 6.1.

6.2.2 Competencies

All of the competencies noted by students were also identified in the literature and job description analysis. Communication was identified in the job descriptions as a skill that is desired for persons in the recreation industry. This skill was also considered the “most important knowledge and skill category for all managers” by Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23). Communication skills can be considered a multi-faceted skill, which was mentioned extensively in unstructured as well as structured reflection as a competence that was perceived to have improved during the CSL module. Various communication skills were identified by Watkins (1991: 264-270). Skills included: communicating clearly (writing and speaking), small group communication, and listening. Chelladurai (2006: 59) identifies listening skills, oral communication, public presentation and written communication as communication competencies that are required in the recreation industry.

Students felt that speaking skills and small group communication skills improved. Watt (2003:121) identifies that clear communication between staff and customers is essential for quality recreation programme delivery. Students indicated that this aspect of communication increased as they learnt how to verbally communicate with the children. This would indicate that Chelladurai’s (2006: 59) concept of public presentation, as a requirement for service delivery, was also perceived as an increased competency.

Planning featured prominently in student reflections. Chelladurai (1991:137) identified planning as a requirement in the recreation field. Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23) found planning to be considered as the most desired management skill for recreation specialists.

Table 6.1: Comparison of Student Perceptions regarding Competency Attainment through the CSL Module with Competencies required by a Recreation Specialist

Literature	Job Description (Tasks, Duties and Competence)	Competencies Perceived in Postnominal Group	Competencies Perceived in Structured Reflection	Competencies Perceived in Unstructured Reflection
Communications ability	Communication	Communication ability	Communication ability	Communication
Management	Planning Organising Leading Supervising Control Staffing	Management planning	Planning Organising	Management Planning Organising Control of the situation
Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning
Leadership	Lead	Leadership		Leadership
Group dynamics	Working with others	Work with people/ participants in recreation	Group dynamics	Group interaction
Group/individual dynamics in recreation			Learning to work in a group	Working as a group/co-operation
Work with people/participants in recreation				Working with children
People skills		People skills	People skills	People skills
Dealing with customers		Dealing with customers	Gaining knowledge to work with people of diverse cultures, age groups	
Customer service	Customer service	Customer service		
Concepts of society and community			Gaining knowledge to work with people of diverse cultures, age groups	Culture

Table 6.1: continued

Literature	Job Description (Tasks, Duties and Competence)	Competencies Perceived in Postnominal Group	Competencies Perceived in Structured Reflection	Competencies Perceived in Unstructured Reflection
Self-evaluation			Self-evaluation Working under pressure, coping when things go wrong	What I learnt about myself Perseverance Respect Attitude Skills to work under pressure Being grateful/ appreciating what one has
Self-confidence		Self-confidence	Self-confidence	Self-confidence
Patience		Patience	Patience	Patience: general, with the kids and with group members
Creativity	Creativity	Creativity	Creativity	Creativity
Entrepreneurship and initiative		Initiative		
Flexibility	Flexibility	Flexibility	Thinking fast/improvising	Adaptability, thinking fast/improvising
Motivation and performance	Motivation	Motivation		Motivation
Self-motivation		Self-motivation		Motivation and goal achievement
Empathy				Understanding others
Integrity	Ethics and respect			
Energy	Energy	Energy		Self-initiator, and generating alternative solutions
Vision		Vision		
Practical experience in recreation		Practical experience		Practical experience

Respondents in the Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23) research rated marketing and human resource management second. These skills did not surface in the student reflections as the nature of the module did not promote the development of such skills. Leadership and controlling were shown to be of importance in the Tait *et al.* study, but to a lesser degree. This corresponds to the results of this study. The students, however, placed greater emphasis on their development of organising skills than the results of the Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23) study indicated.

Group dynamics played a role in the perceived acquisition of skills, as well as students gaining skills of how to work within the group context. As indicated in Chapter five's presentation of results, students were hesitant to make contributions in the beginning as they did not feel comfortable with the group. As the group members became more familiar with each other, the cooperation within the group increased. This conforms to accepted theory on group development. Martin, Cashel, Wagstaff and Breunig (2006:138-139) identify the following stages of group development: forming, storming, norming, performing and transforming. Students' comments on what they learnt and how they felt their competencies developed corresponded to the various stages in group development.

During the forming phase students were apprehensive and superficial in their working together. One student commented *"I don't know my group members so well so I am worried about how I will behave in front of them and what they will think of me."* Storming was evident when students expressed their frustrations and when conflict occurred. *"I am battling with one of the group members because it is someone who I would avoid under normal circumstances."* *"There are quite a few problems in our group that have just gotten worse."* Norming was experienced when each group member was appreciated for who they were and what they could do to help improve the group's performance. *"For a group to be dynamic members must work together. This requires role clarity and a mutual understanding of one another's ideas. All members must be involved to do their part."* *"It is no secret that different people do things differently, and in some situations where there could have been a mix-up, we have either compromised or worked around it."* Performing took place once norming was complete and students were more willing to share responsibility. *"I enjoyed the division of tasks and learnt to put my trust in others, and to give them*

responsibility. In the past I tried to do everything myself to prevent people from not participating and letting the group down.” Finally transforming occurred, for some groups this was during the CSL when they re-set their goals to try and improve their presentation of the activities to the children. For other groups it was at the end of the CSL when the group no longer had a need to function. Students therefore not only felt that their competence to work in the group situation had improved, but through the interaction in the group their people skills, understanding of others, and ability to work with other cultures improved.

Group dynamics was also identified by Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23). All of the respondents in this study rated group dynamics as a skill priority in the recreation industry. Students obtained first-hand experience of group dynamics. They experienced the typical stages of group development and came to the realisation that group dynamics had an influence on the group.

People skills was a competency that was highlighted in the literature (Tait *et al.*, 1993: 19-23) and featured strongly within the job descriptions. People skills featured convincingly in student reflections as a competency that increased due to working with others.

Working with people of diverse cultures is important in the South African context. Many students had not been involved at this level with a culture different from their own. The CSL module afforded them the opportunity to do so. Students became aware of differences as well as similarities between the cultures and in general a positive effect with regard to working with people of diverse cultures was obtained. The researcher linked this theme to that found in the literature of understanding concepts of society and community. Edginton *et al.* (2005: 53) comment that “an appreciation of other cultures can broaden an individual’s horizons and perspectives on life.” One of the criteria for CSL is that it should be purposeful civic learning. Purposeful civic learning “is the knowledge, skills and values making an explicit, direct and purposeful contribution to the preparation of students for active civic participation and therefore social responsibility” (HEQC, 2006a: 25).

The reflection activities encouraged students to look more closely at themselves. This elicited a number of responses on how students perceived themselves to have developed. Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23) identified self-evaluation as an important skill needed by recreation managers. Students evaluated themselves during the CSL module and became aware of various aspects about themselves as well as growth that had taken place. The following areas were identified by students: self-confidence, dealing with pressure, patience, self-expression, think quick/improvise/creativity, perseverance, respect, attitude, motivation and goal achievement and to be grateful/appreciate what I have.

Some of the areas identified by the students conform to the work of Crossley *et al.* (2007: 309-310) where they maintain that certain personal skills should somehow be imparted to recreation students. The following skills were highlighted by Crossley *et al.* (2007: 309-310) and came to the fore in student reflection:

- self-confidence,
- flexibility,
- people skills,
- self-motivation,
- creativity and
- patience

They added that it is difficult to teach these through the academic curriculum. It therefore seems that the CSL module is a good method to provide students with the opportunity to gain such skills.

Russell and Jamieson (2008: 24-25) identify empathy, integrity, energy and vision as personal qualities of a successful recreation programmer. These qualities were perceived to have been developed by some students. Students felt that they understood the community better by focusing on the needs of the children. Students said that they had developed respect for the people they worked with. Integrity includes treating participants with dignity and fairness, being forthright, truthful, ethical and responsible to participants. These qualities seemed to come to the fore in student reflections. Energy includes being a self-initiator and many students felt that

they handled difficult situations with creativity and generated alternative solutions. Students did not mention vision in reflection reports.

Creativity is a skill identified in both literature (Crossley *et al.*, 2007: 309-310) and job descriptions and although it was not a predetermined theme of the research, students identified an increase in creativity in both the structured and unstructured reflections. This competency links up with that of being a self-initiator identified by Russell and Jamieson (2008: 24-25).

The majority (87.5%) of the respondents in the Tait *et al.* (1993: 19-23) research identified practical experience in recreation as being important. This is a competence that cannot be taught in the classroom only. Applying the theory taught in class during the CSL module offers the student the opportunity for experiential learning. Students felt that they had learnt how to practically apply the theory as well as the usefulness of theory.

Safety is not emphasised in any of the modules within the HMS programme. It was a skill mentioned in the job descriptions as a desired skill of applicants. It did, however, not feature in the literature. Several comments about safety were made by students in the unstructured reflection. Spengler, Connaughton and Pittman (2006: 9) feel that “decisions pertaining to safety are the most important decisions that sport or recreation managers face”.

Financial/mathematical aspects and current issues and trends in recreation were competencies identified in the literature and job descriptions. These, however, did not feature in any of the reflection activities or nominal groups. Table 6.2 lists the competencies that were identified in Chapter 2 that students felt did not improve during the module. Some of the competencies would be expected to fall under this categorisation as the module does not provide the opportunity for their development. For example, students do not participate in marketing activities and they are not required to prepare financial statements.

Table 6.2: Competencies identified in Literature and Job Descriptions that were not perceived to have increased in the CSL Module

Marketing/promotion
Understanding financial statements/mathematical principles
Current issues and trends/philosophy and principles and practices of recreation
Age-related needs/knowledge of specific activities and a specific programme area
Human resource development
Negotiation skills
Effective writing skills/administrative
Negligence
Conflict resolution
Work with customers in tourism
Empowerment
“Big picture” vision
Attention to detail
Stability
Placement skills

As the students are placed in peer groups there is no need for human resource development or placement skills. The stability of staying in one organisation for any length of time is also not addressed due to the nature of the module.

Competencies that were not perceived to have increased, but would have been desirable to increase, were leadership and management competencies that were only briefly mentioned by a few students. Despite the fact that students were required to submit a number of written tasks they did not make any mention of any improvement in writing skills. It was only vaguely inferred by some students when commenting on the connection of theory to the practical. It is not possible to determine why they felt this competency did not increase. The improvement of this competency can, however, be addressed in future developments of this module.

Other competencies were perceived by the researcher to have increased, but were not mentioned by the students. These competencies were conflict resolution, negotiation skills and age-related needs/knowledge of specific activities and a specific programme area. The researcher believes that if students experienced

problems within their group (as identified by the students themselves), they must have participated in conflict resolution and negotiation skills. In order to design a recreation programme plan for the children, they must have gained knowledge of specific activities and a specific programme area. Although the students did not mention these aspects directly in their reflections it was felt that the module offered the opportunity for the potential development of these competencies. A possible restructuring of the module based on this and other research may enhance the development of these competencies.

6.3 LIMITATIONS

Various limitations can be identified in the research. As the researcher is the lecturer for the module this could have influenced student responses. In an attempt to address this, it was endeavoured to include another researcher. An external researcher conducted the nominal group discussions in an endeavour to overcome this potential barrier.

The nominal group composition could have influenced the initial data on which the structured reflection and a priori themes were based. The difference in composition (language) of the pre- and post nominal groups could also have affected the responses within the groups.

The reflection performed by students could have been strengthened by asking students to reflect on what competencies they felt they needed but did not develop. This would have indicated perceived possible shortcomings of the module according to the students.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research should focus on:

- Determining if the competencies of students do indeed increase and not only looking at student perceptions of increase in competence.
- What influences the increase or perceived increase in competencies

- How the module can be adapted to impart additional competencies required in the recreation industry.

6.5 CONCLUSION

The various competencies needed for a recreation specialist were studied in both the literature and in advertised job descriptions. A number of competencies were identified, however, the following were seen as **core competencies** as they were observed in both the literature study and the job description analysis: **communication, leadership, management (planning, organising, implementing and control and staffing aspects) and people skills (working with others).**

Communication, management skills (especially planning and organising), creativity, working as a group and people skills were identified in the postnominal group and structured and unstructured reflections as competencies students had attained through the CSL module. **All these competencies that students perceived to have acquired were also identified as core competencies required by a recreation specialist.** Through CSL, the students were provided with an experiential learning opportunity. The results obtained from the study indicated that the students perceived the CSL module to be fostering the acquisition of these and other competencies.

However, competencies needed for service delivery were identified that were not perceived to have increased as desired. These include leadership, as well as management skills of implementing, control and staffing aspects. The findings therefore suggest that **this module needs to be investigated to determine whether it will be possible to adapt it in such a way as to address these competencies.**

The findings also indicated that **CSL should be considered by lecturers in recreation as a pedagogical tool to impart competencies that are difficult, if not impossible, to teach to students in the normal classroom set-up.** When selecting CSL as an educational mode during the planning and conceptualisation of

a module, it should be ensured that the module is designed in such a way that it imparts specific competencies that are required in the recreation industry.

In conclusion, **CSL** is gaining status within the academic sphere. It has been included in missions (UFS, 2010) and policy (UFS, 2006) and rightly so, **as it presents academics with the opportunity to not only serve the community but also to assist in the development of the total student.**

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Appendices

- A. Table of contents of module guide
- B. Consent form
- C. All the responses provided by all participants in both prenominal groups for question 1
- D. All the responses provided by all participants in both prenominal groups for question 2
- E. All the responses provided by all participants in both postnominal groups for question 1
- F. All the responses provided by all participants in both postnominal groups for question 2
- G. Language editing certificate: Marianne Drennan
- H. Language editing certificate: Corrie Geldenhuys

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Student Nominal Group 24 April 2008

I agree to take part in the nominal group discussion. I have had the technique explained to me, and the reasons for my participation. I understand that the data gathered during the nominal group will be used for research purposes.

I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to

- participate in the nominal group discussion
- allow information to be used for research purposes

I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I can choose not to participate, and that I may withdraw at any stage without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I understand that all information that I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports or research findings, or to any other party.

Name:

Student number:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix C: Responses to prenominal group question 1

Group 1	Group 2
New outlook on less privileged children	To be patient
Good teamwork	Work under pressure
New outlook towards less privileged	Building relationships with group members
Creative	Practice knowledge
Patience	Work with people of different cultures
Attitude and outlook	Learn how to respond towards different situations
Development of patience	Learn to work in a group
Benefit thereof	People skills and organising
Positive outlook	Team work
More positive outlook	Do all admin behind the project
Learn to work with children	Develop positive attitude towards CSL
Patience	Gain practical knowledge
Study direction	Learn to express myself in certain situations
Patience development	Professional mindset, preparation for professional world
Group work	Putting theory into practice
People knowledge	Skills to organise events in future
Connection between theory and practice	Teaches us to remain patient
Good team work	Teaches us to work in groups
How to set up a programme	Learn to work in a group
To learn from children	Practical knowledge
People knowledge	Gaining knowledge to work with people of diverse cultures
New attitude towards people	Receive through giving
Improvisation	Learn that you receive more when you give
Change outlook of less privileged	Learning to be patient
Improvising	Building relationships with my group
Good teamwork	Gain skills to work under pressure, coping when things go wrong
Patience development	Effectively and efficiently do all admin
Positive outlook	Hoping to develop a positive attitude
Relation between theory and teamwork	Improvising (coping with things going wrong)
Good teamwork	Building relationships
	People skills, organising and planning

Appendix C: Responses to prenominal group question 1 continued

Group 1	Group 2
	Good opportunity to build up practical knowledge
	Positive experience through sharing
	Building relationship with group members
	Work under group pressure, to keep a cool head when things go wrong
	Building up people knowledge, learn to plan
	People skills, organising and planning
	Learn to work in a group
	Enough knowledge to plan and organise similar events in future
	Building relationships

Appendix D: Responses to prenominal group question 2

Group 1	Group 2
"Issues"	Animation plan helps with the organisation of events
Theory and practical	Overlapping skills
Comfortable/self-confidence	Help in the profession
Diverse groups (handle)	Different problems and situations
People knowledge	Don't believe it will really help me in practice, but working with kids
Diverse groups	Upper hand in dealing with people from different background
To be comfortable	Dealing with different problems
To see the connection	All knowledge will help
People knowledge	People from different backgrounds
Patience and calm	Animation plan help later in life
Diverse groups	Animation plan will help to plan and organise events
Overcome issues	Dealing with different problems and situations
Patience and calm	People of different ages
Experience	Dealing with situation problems
To be comfortable	I don't think it will help me
Practical experience	Overlapping of skills in rendering a service whether in community or profession
Diverse groups	Competent in dealing with people of different ages
Connection of practical and theory	Creation of team spirit, working together
Know what to expect	Animation plan as required here will not be implemented as it is
Patience	To work with problems and difficult situations
Handling of diverse groups	To build up knowledge and experience
Knowledge of people	Having an upper hand in dealing different backgrounds
To stay patient and calm	Dealing with problems and situations
Connection between practical and theory	Animation plan help with planning and organising
Others' needs above your own	Dealing with people from different backgrounds
	Professional person
	Team spirit
	Dealing with different problems

Appendix D: Responses to prenominal group question 2 continued

Group 1	Group 2
	My profession
	Creation of team spirit
	All this knowledge will enrich me
	Competent in dealing with people
	Believe knowledge learned will make me competent
	Team spirit
	Don't think it will help!
	Not be implemented
	Team spirit
	Different backgrounds
	Creation of team spirit
	Animation plan will help with planning

Appendix E: Responses to postnominal group question 1

Group 1	Group 2
Positive attitude	Learning to open up
Innovate	Implementing animation plan
Be patient	Self-confidence
Damage control	Better planning
Organisational skills	Working with different races
Gained knowledge used practically	Group-functioning skills
Learn to innovate according to the situation	New friendships
Learn to innovate	Better leadership qualities
Sacrifice something	Patience with everyone
Patience	Positive mindset
Human skills – communication	Self-confidence in working with people
Learnt patience	Learnt about better planning, having a backup plan
Attitudes and perceptions change	Adapting to clients more than one idea for different clients
Learned more about myself	Appreciate what I have in life
Research is important	Patience with children and group members
Be patient	Diligence – not giving up
Patience, in group, with kids, facilitator, during admin	Self-confidence
Conflict management	Positive mindset
Attitude and perceptions tend to change	Expressing myself better
Positive attitude	To appreciate what I have in life
Confidence	Implementation of animation plan
Conflict management	Having a positive mindset
Use knowledge we gain in theory practically	Appreciate what I have in life
I've learnt conflict management	Group functioning
Research	Feelings and emotions
Innovate	Patience
Damage control	Diligence and keep trying
Learnt to innovate/improvise	Interpret feelings and emotions better
Organisational skills – fitting all things in	Actual implementation of the theory
Innovate	Adapting to different clients
Human skills, communication skills	

Appendix E: Responses to postnominal group question 1 continued

Group 1	Group 2
Sacrifice	
Research and preparation is important	
Work with children of different ages	
People and communication skills within cultural diversity	
Comfort zones	
Learnt to innovate according to the situation	
Learnt more from different cultures	
I've learnt to be patient	
Research is important	

Appendix F: Responses to postnominal group question 2

Group 1	Group 2
Manage people and attitudes	Must be able to plan and organise effectively
Implement plan	Need understanding of your clients
Important to have a backup plan	Self-confidence
It's about your client	Interpret feelings
Overall organisational skills needed to plan and implement	Follower and leader
Keep the client in mind, not yourself	Leadership and follower skills
Research is important, know what your client wants	Know when change is needed
Client very important	Adapt to different circumstances
Positive attitude	Plan and organise
Time management	Need to know when change is needed
I think research is very important	Plan and organise effectively
Keeping up with new methods	Plan and organise effectively
Research is important	Organise effectively
Keeping your client in mind	Knowledge of animation plan
Patience with clients and colleagues	When change is needed
Research	Self-confidence
How to manage people and situations	Will make your job easier – less stress
Patience with your clients	Have the knowledge and experience of applying the animation plan
Communication in culturally diverse situations	Need to have good leadership skills
Knowledge of different cultures	Need to know when change is needed (try something else, customer satisfaction)
New methods	Adapt to different circumstances
Time management	Leadership and follower
Backup plan	Interpret feelings to understand what clients need
Original ideas	Self-confidence
Patience with everything	Know yourself
People management	Understand your client and their needs
Backup plan	Knowledge of animation plan
Different cultures	Adapt to different circumstances

Appendix F: Responses to postnominal group question 2 continued

Group 1	Group 2
Positive attitude and confidence	Plan and organise effectively
Client is important	Team working skills
New stuff	
Research is important know your market segment	
Time management planning	
Positive attitude and confidence	
Backup plan	
Time management	
Research	
Keeping clients in mind	
Communication in culturally diverse situations	
Research is important	

Bloemfontein

25 October 2010

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that I, Marianne Drennan, have edited the dissertation entitled:
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