engagement australia
leading, developing and promoting university-community engagement

THE AUSTRALASIAN JOURNAL OF UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Vol 7, No 2 Spring 2012

Published by
Engagement Australia
c/- Southern Cross University
PO Box 157
Lismore NSW 2480

Editors:
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ISSN 1833-4482

The Australasian Journal of University-Community Engagement. Vol 7, No 2 Spring 2012

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Preface

The Australian Journal of University-Community Engagement is a refereed journal published twice a year by Engagement Australia (formerly AUCEA - the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance), a not for profit organisation dedicated to enhancing the engagement capabilities of staff and universities by developing expertise, fostering collaboration and building their communities across Australia.

The Engagement Australia E-Journal strives to be inclusive in scope, addressing topics and issues of significance to scholars and practitioners concerned with diverse aspects of university-community engagement.

The Journal aims to publish literature on both research and practice that employ a variety of methods and approaches, address theoretical and philosophical issues pertinent to university-community engagement and finally, provide case studies and reflections about university-community engagement.

The Journal aims to stimulate a critical approach to research and practice in the field and will, at times, devote issues to engaging with particular themes.

All manuscripts will be subject to double-blind peer review by three (3) professionals with expertise in the core area. The three (3) reviewers will include at least one (1) editorial board member.

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Papers published in this edition were received in 2012. The online edition was uploaded in February 2013.

Guidelines concerning the preparation and submission of manuscripts are available on the website www.engagementaustralia.org.au

Editorial Comment

In this edition the benefits of learning based in different situations in diverse communities is highlighted. Several models to build collaboration and communications to promote learning and social accountability in the community are proposed.

Paper 1 Faculty Views on Community Based Learning as a Teaching Tool: Benefits, Barriers and Policy Imperatives for Future Engagement begins by providing an overarching view of the perspectives of faculty members teaching community-based learning (CBL). Differences across disciplines are highlighted and reasons for the commitment of faculty members to engage their students in community based learning are discussed.

Paper 2 A University-Sport Partnership: Towards a Sustainable Knowledge-Transfer Model. In the 1980s Victoria University (Australia) and the Western Bulldogs Football Club begins the discussion around models to connect teaching, research and/or community engagement. The paper reports how a model that has been piloted with a sport organisation and incorporates business, science and community has formed a template for other university-community partnerships. The paper highlights lessons learnt from the choice of a sport organisation to implement the model and its role in shaping university-community partnerships.

Paper 3 Personal Agency as a Primary Focus of University-Community Engagement: A Case Study of Clemente Australia discusses developing and implementing a model for community-embedded, socially-supported university education for persons from backgrounds of disadvantage. The paper presents insights into the personal narratives of participants through reflection on their experiences in the program, competencies and changed expectancies. Changes in personal agency and social inclusion are used to show how the model can be used as a lens for understanding the benefits of community-embedded, socially-supported university humanities education.

Paper 4 The Cube: an approach to social accountability in an urban community-based medical education program with a reflection on the benefits, barriers and opportunities describes the early stages of a program of social accountability based in an urban area of lower socioeconomic standing involving a service-learning type model of interaction between medical students and adolescent secondary school students. The paper provides a background to the program, a description of the early stages of building a relationship between the two institutions, and a vision for the future.

The final paper Learning from the floods: lessons for understanding community resilience in the town of Theodore. This paper reflects on an engaged research journey aimed at better understanding how a community response to a natural disaster

contributes to learning from both a community and researchers' perspective. It highlights the importance of outcomes such as learning patience, social connectivity, mutuality and consideration of the research as being part of community learning.

I hope you enjoy reading papers included in this edition of the journal.

Sincerely,

Professor Marie Kavanagh.
Editor.

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Faculty Views on Community-Based Learning as a Teaching Tool: Benefits, Barriers and Policy Imperatives for Future Engagement

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Abstract

Semester-end perspectives of faculty members teaching community-based learning (CBL) courses were analysed over nine semesters using factor and regression analyses. Faculty were surveyed on why they participate in CBL and their perceptions of the benefits and barriers for themselves and their students. Results indicate that CBL can be apportioned into several distinct categories that are stable over time. Unique differences across disciplines exist with faculty in the social sciences and arts and humanities experiencing the most negative aspects. Faculty members with greater years of university service realise greater connections with career skills for their students than those with fewer years of service. Those who engaged in CBL to enhance course relevance and practical experience scored higher on cultural competency and career development, but also experienced greater negative aspects from their experience than those who engaged in CBL for other reasons. The authors recommend that assessment and rewards strategies should be tailored to academic status and disciplinary outcomes. University supports for CBL should be matched to the motivations and needs of participating faculty members.

Key words: *Community-based learning; faculty views; community engagement*

Introduction

In the twenty-two years since *Scholarship Reconsidered* (Boyer, 1990) was published, new paradigms of learning in the field of higher education have advocated both commitment to community engagement and the sharing of knowledge among multiple stakeholders (Gordon, 2009; Kuhn, 1970; Sandmann, 2008). A constructionist approach moves beyond earlier models of pedagogy that took knowledge as fact to knowledge as both fact- and value-based, produced through the

contributions of multiple stakeholders with diverse goals (London, 1999). This new paradigm sees knowledge as constructed from experience and scholarly participation, challenging faculty[1] members to expand the notion of 'peer review' to include community partners in a "continuum of scholarship" (Ellison and Eatman, 2008, p. iv) that also broadens students' roles (Konwerski & Nashman, 2002).

Community-based learning (CBL) provides the means by which students work with faculty and community partners to develop a product, project, or presentation that enhances students' classroom knowledge, while meeting an identified community need. Control over the project agenda and outcomes transfer to community (Holland & Gelmon, 1998) and students become more responsible for their own learning and that of their fellow students (Konwerski & Nashman, 2002).

Contribution of this study

This paper is an empirical study of how faculty members view their roles as they participate in CBL projects. We expand the existing body of knowledge by considering a full array of faculty perspectives and factors that influence faculty participation in CBL. We first consider a set of four possible outcomes developed through factor analysis that capture separate dimensions of faculty views about CBL: 1) the extent to which faculty believe CBL enhances students' cultural competency; 2) the extent to which faculty believe that CBL helps students develop skills related to future careers; 3) the extent to which faculty report that

[1] The term faculty has both a collective and individual definition. In one sense, it is the collective of all full time academically ranked employees in a particular discipline or at a university. In a second sense, the term denotes an individual person who holds a full time academic appointment. Given the U.S. setting for this study and the Australian audience for this article, it is necessary to define terms used to describe the study's participants, herein referred to as "faculty". In the U.S., the term "faculty" describes full-time, tenured or tenure-track academic employees of the university. This term is most akin to "academic staff" in the Australian system of higher education. "Academic staff" in the U.S. are temporary instructors hired solely to teach specific subjects. In the context of this paper, they will be referred to as fixed term instructors. These instructors are hired on a yearly basis and may offer CBL in their courses. Their responses are noted in the discussion of this paper when they differ from those of faculty. In most cases, however, all instructors, i.e., faculty and fixed term instructors are referred to as faculty.

CBL has promoted their own professional development; and 4) the perceived negative aspects of faculty participation in CBL. Then, we consider the relative importance of predictors, focusing on various reasons for faculty participation in CBL, academic discipline, type of position in the institution, and the extent to which faculty use a centralised support system. In pursuing this comprehensive approach, our research questions are these:

1) What are the various dimensions of outcomes for CBL as perceived by faculty?

2) What are the strongest motivators for engaging in CBL and how are they related to outcomes?

3) What is the relative impact of motivators, position in the institution, discipline, and faculty use of a centralised support structure?

Literature Review

Benefits and Challenges of Community-Based Learning for Faculty

While there is a growing literature on the benefits of community-based learning, especially for students (Antonio, Astin, & Cress, 2000; Peacock, Burr & Schenk, 2001; Delli Carpini, & Keeter, 2000; Schleiter & Statham, 2005), there are far fewer empirical studies, meta-analyses or international research studies that explore CBL experiences of faculty and community partners (Sandmann, 2008; Stoeker & Tyron, 2009). Given the growth of CBL on university campuses, it is important to understand its benefits and challenges for faculty, since they are key to developing collaborative and mutually beneficial partnerships (Moxley, 2004).

The current body of research exploring faculty reactions to CBL suggests that student learning outcomes are the most critical motivators for faculty to engage in CBL. Faculty cite a number of benefits for their students, among them empowering students to understand and accept responsibility for solving critical problems facing society (Banerjee & Huasafus, 2007; Abes, Jackson, & Jones, 2002), an improvement in student learning and problem-solving skills

(Hesser, 1995; Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002) and the enhancement of course materials by connecting everyday experience with theory (Bowen, 2010; Holland, 2002). Additionally, some faculty report benefits for themselves -- meeting their need to vary teaching by trying something new to solve pedagogical problems through experiential learning (Palmer & Collins, 2006) and fulfilling a commitment to social activism that enhances student learning while achieving larger university goals (Freeland, 2009).

While faculty members see many benefits of community engagement, they also cite challenges that must be overcome, including dealing with unpredictable timelines and time commitments (Banerjee & Hausafus, 2007; Crowley, 2005; Harwood, et at. 2005; Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002; Rice, Sorcinelli & Austin, 2000), complex teaching/learning situations and overlapping responsibilities of multiple stakeholders with varied interests (Butin, 2007; Colbeck, O'Meara, & Austin, 2008). Moreover, faculty must provide onsite supervision and training and still make time in class for student reflection (Gray, Ondaatje, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000).

Institutional Support for Faculty Doing CBL

A serious mismatch between the demands of CBL and faculty reward structures is one of the most compelling challenges to be met if CBL is to grow or be sustained. Many faculty members accept the importance of having civic components in the curriculum, but feel they lack support and incentives for doing this work (Banerjee & Hausefus, 2007; Harwood et al, 2005; Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002). Many feel they must choose between traditional modes of teaching and research, the most common path toward achieving tenure and promotion, and adoption of innovative modes such as CBL, not typically tied to promotional rewards but more often seen as a service activity (Morton & Troppe, 1996).

To respond to these issues, there has been a call to revise faculty reward structures to promote and facilitate involvement in community

engagement more generally and CBL in particular (Boyer, 1990; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996: Diamond, 1999; Holland, 1997). Palmer & Collins (2006) argue that faculty rewards may come in different forms, such as offering access to new opportunities as well as salary/financial rewards. Reducing teaching loads may be the most effective strategy for increasing faculty involvement (Harwood, et al, 2005), although other studies suggest grants and awards may also be effective (Forbes, at al, 2008). Not only is such recognition important to faculty on an institutional level, but also on a community level, where community organisations view crediting faculty as a commitment on the part of the university to supporting faculty service to the community.

Others argue that a more centralised institutional support system that encourages CBL is essential. Bringle and Hatcher (2000) argue that academic legitimacy is reinforced through establishing a centralised office that assists faculty in service learning. Such an office expands the focus of partnerships beyond individual relationships, identifies and matches projects and extends the network of relationships for collaboration. Eaton (2002) argues that faculty members require increased instructional support for teaching in active learning environments, working in small group situations, and collaborative environments that include community partners. Toward this end, faculty development in the form of workshops, support for instructional design and ongoing seminars to discuss issues could be helpful (Welch, 2009; Forbes et al., 2008).

Current research indicates a direct relationship between institutional support for CBL and the number of CBL courses offered (Spiezio, Baker & Boland, 2006), but resistance to conferring academic rigour with community practice still exists at top research universities which are steeped in the traditional silos of teaching, research, and service (Fish, 2008). O'Meara (2011) argues that this tradition socialises faculty to be accountable to academic peers outside the university who judge research on the standards of the discipline and require faculty to be accountable to students (and dependent upon teaching evaluations) for teaching validation. This encourages faculty commitment to internal

interactions between faculty and peers and faculty and students, instead of moving faculty work into a public arena that expands accountability to community partners and public interests. More research is needed to explore policy and organisational strategies that better connect teaching, research and civic engagement into meaningful and rewarding academic career paths.

Methodology

This paper examines faculty perceptions of CBL across nine semesters, in a setting where an infrastructure exists to support CBL. Past studies inform this study in that the research examines the influences on faculty that motivate or deter them from participating in CBL, including their discipline, tenure and status (Abes, Jackson & Jones, 2002), and provides an opportunity to expand current literature by gathering data across disciplines previously not studied. We consider the reasons faculty members give for becoming involved in CBL, the benefits they perceive for students and themselves, and the barriers they face doing their projects. In addition, we examine the extent to which faculty rely upon institutional supports to arrange for placements in our particular setting and ask if this professional development seems to help faculty improve their outcomes.

The Study Sample

To explore these issues, we collected data from faculty and fixed term instructors at a comprehensive state university in the Midwest of the United States who participated in CBL projects from spring, 2005 through spring, 2009. Faculty completed surveys in the classroom at the end of each semester as their students were also completing surveys.[2] Student workers from the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) contacted faculty to set up convenient times to administer surveys, but sometimes, faculty could not be reached or were too busy to set up appointments late in the semester. One hundred nine surveys were

[2] Please contact the first author for a complete copy of the survey.

completed by faculty members, representing 53% of the total number faculty who supervised CBL classes (N=206) offered over the nine semesters.

We used regression analysis with the sample of faculty responses summed across the nine semesters. Hence, there are faculty members who are represented more than once in our sample. Therefore, response bias from faculty who completed surveys more than once may impact the overall findings. To assess the severity of this problem, we conducted an analysis of variance between our outcome measures and the total responses for each faculty member in the data. We found no significant relationship between each faculty members' responses and any dependent factors, suggesting that the repeating participants varied a good deal in their responses across semesters.

The Survey

The survey instrument consisted of an introduction, describing the purpose of the survey and offering assurances of confidentiality. Faculty respondents were asked to rank the reasons they include CBL in their classes, and their perceptions of the benefits and barriers for their students and themselves. They were asked how their partnerships were arranged, if the CCP or Volunteer Center aided them or if they made arrangements on their own. They were asked about their involvement in the CCP and their utilization of centralized support services and if they attended any workshops on community engagement or CBL. At the end of the survey, faculty were asked about their field of study, the number of years they have taught at the university and whether they are faculty or fixed term instructors.

Measures

Dependent Variables We created scales representing four dimensions from faculty responses across the nine semesters. Varimax factor analysis with orthogonal rotation was applied to the original 22 attitudinal items in the survey, resulting in four, non-redundant

dimensions that accounted for 36% of the variance in the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The four dimensions reflected the following concepts: cultural competency of students (4 statements), career development of students (5 statements), benefits for faculty (6 statements), and challenges of CBL (7 statements). Table 1 lists the four dimensions (scales) derived from the factor analysis, the survey statements that comprise each, and the factor weights for each scale item. Chronbach alphas performed on these scales indicate moderately strong reliability for each scale.

Table 1: Weights of Survey Statements used for Dependent Factors

Factor Name	Chronbach Alpha	Survey Statement	Weight
Cultural Competency	.63	Make students more aware of their prejudices and biases	.637
		Increase students' commitment to civic engagement	.608
		Increase students' comfort in working with cultures other than their own	.598
		Improved my relationships with students	.454
Career Development	.72	Help students clarify their career plans	.715
		Help students develop problem-solving skills	.695
		Establish connections for current or future job searches	.689
		Enhance students' ability to present their ideas in a 'real world' situation	.523
		Enhance students' leadership skills	.441
Faculty Development	.63	Encouraged me to use CBL in my teaching	.565
		Increased my comfort in working with people outside of academia	.541
		Helped with achieving tenure or promotion	.526
		Provides support for my research or creative activity goals	.512
		Helped me better understand communities outside this university	.511
		Helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses	.488
Negative Aspects of CBL	.66	Takes time away from other professional activities	.620
		Extra time it takes to prepare for and teach the course	.565
		Supervision of students off-site	.534
		Keeping everything organised	.530
		Unpredictable nature of coursework	.520
		Coordination of placements	.484
		Communication with community partners	.446

We anticipated that dependent scales might be nonlinear over time. To test for this, a one-way ANOVA was performed on each dependent scale over the nine semesters. None of the ANOVAs was significant. Therefore, we concluded that these variables could be used in linear regression models.

Independent Variables: To tap into the impact of position within the institution, we included measures of faculty status (coded 1 if faculty and 0 if fixed term instructors) and length of time at the institution. To tap the impact of centralised support, we included two variables that were coded 1 for those who arranged projects on their own (rather than developing projects with the assistance of the CCP) and those who attended CBL faculty development workshops.

We also included a measure of academic discipline, where the reference category for discipline was social and behavioral sciences, as we had hypothesised that these disciplines' subject matter fit well with CBL, and so these faculty would likely perceive greater benefits and fewer challenges. Number of projects included in each CBL course serves as a measure of course complexity. We also included measures of motivation for doing CBL. Five separate variables measure the ranks given to these possible motivations: desire to try something new, desire to provide students with increased relevance and practical experience, encouragement from the institution, professional recognition, and increased student learning.

Table 2: Means for Independent Predictors and Dependent Factors by Discipline

	Arts/* Humanities (N=33; 37%)	Business (N=27; 25%)	Natural/ Computer Sciences (N=9;8%)	Social Science (N=40; 37%)	Total (N=109)
Predictor					
Years at University	8.29	5.45	9.17	7.85	7.50
Teaching status (0=fixed term instructor; 1=faculty)	.73	.89	1.00	.85	.84
Attend workshops? (0=no; 1=yes)	.58	.71	1.00	.60	.65
Placed by oneself	.55	.26	.78	.30	.40
Number of projects	7.48	5.00	2.33	3.61	5.02
Need to try something new	4.10	3.63	3.89	3.70	3.82
Desire for increased relevance and practical experience	1.42	1.85	1.56	1.85	1.70
Encouragement from the institution	3.06	3.34	3.00	3.15	3.12
Professional recognition	3.97	4.03	4.11	4.13	4.06
Increase student learning	1.61	1.63	1.44	1.83	1.68
Dependent Factor					
Cultural Competency	-.34 (1.79)	-.18 (1.44)	.27 (2.33)	.34 (2.48)	0 (2.00)**
Career Development	.41 (3.70)	-.18 (3.41)	-.29 (3.22)	-.15 (3.03)	0 (3.34)
Faculty Development	-.22 (2.64)	-.21 (2.44)	.46 (3.00)	.22 (3.45)	0 (2.92)
Negative Aspects of doing CBL	.39 (4.55)	-.74 (3.11)	-.49 (2.78)	.29 (4.63)	0 (4.07)

*Not all departments participate in CBL. The following details the departments included in each discipline category

Arts and Humanities: Communication; Art and Graphic Design; English; Women and Gender Studies

Business: Business

Natural/Computer Sciences: Environmental Studies; MIS

Social Sciences: Sociology/Anthropology; Psychology: Political Science; Geography: Geosciences

**Values in parentheses represent the actual scale values for each dependent factor

Table 2 lists mean values for independent predictors and dependent factors for each discipline. Most who responded regarding their projects were faculty (84%) and were at the university an average of 7.5 years. This suggests that participating faculty who are likely tenured are willing to take more risks given that their jobs are secure. Natural and computer sciences took on the least number of projects, while faculty in the social sciences and arts and humanities did the most. Those in the natural and computer sciences tended to find community partners on their own, while business and the social sciences relied most on institutional supports. This reflects the capabilities of institutional supports to develop partnerships in the community for these disciplines. A majority of respondents in all disciplines participated in workshops, although faculty in business and natural and computer sciences attended the most workshops. Faculty members across disciplines are fairly consistent in their ranking of why they included CBL in their courses. The desire for increased student learning and increased relevance and practical experience were ranked highest.

Dependent Factors Reported means for dependent factors are standardised scores. The natural and computer sciences and the social sciences had positive mean scores on cultural competency and faculty development/benefits, while arts and humanities and business faculty scored below the mean. This supports, in part, our hypothesis that the social sciences would fair better than other disciplines in the areas of cultural competency and faculty development, although the natural and computer sciences faculty report the highest mean scores for faculty development. Relative to those in the arts and humanities, faculty in all other disciplines do not believe they do as well in developing skills for

students related to their careers. Finally, those in business and the natural and computer sciences report fewer negative aspects of their CBL involvement than do faculty in the arts and humanities and social sciences. This is counter to our expectations that faculty in the social sciences would report fewer negative aspects as part of their community engagement. It seems that faculty in each discipline garner different rewards and problems when they engage in CBL and that differentiating outcomes by discipline is important to understanding faculty perceptions of benefits of CBL.

Analysis Procedure

Independent measures were entered into a regression analysis for each dependent factor. Across all analyses, semester and whether faculty arranged their community project on their own or with the help of the CCP did not approach significance. Therefore, for our final analysis, we removed these two variables and ran regressions on the remaining 11 independent variables (with social sciences as reference group for discipline).

Results

Table 3: B and Beta Weights for Predictors of Four Factors

	Cultural Competency			Career Development			Faculty Development			Negative Aspects of CBL		
Predictor	B	Beta	Sig	B	Beta	Sig	B	Beta	Sig	B	Beta	Sig
Constant	1.10			-.69			-.93			.86		
Arts & Humanities	-.57	-.27	.02*	.50	.23	.04*	-.16	-.07	.51	.10	.04	.67
Business	-.42	-.18	.08	.03	.01	.92	-.46	-.20	.05*	-1.08	-.47	.00*
Natural and Computer Sciences	-.12	-.03	.75	-.01	-.00	.97	.17	.05	.63	-.62	-.17	.06
Years at University	.02	.13	.21	.03	.22	.04*	-.03	-.23	.02*	-.01	-.08	.42
Teaching Status	-.14	-.05	.62	-.56	-.21	.04*	.85	.32	.00*	-.59	-.22	.02*
Number of Projects	-.03	-.20	.04*	.01	.09	.34	-.04	-.26	.01*	.01	.07	.45
Need to try something new	.03	.03	.78	.02	.02	.83	.05	.05	.61	-.08	-.07	.43
Desire for increased relevance and practical experience	.18	.18	.08	.18	.17	.09	-.03	-.03	.74	.22	.21	.03*
Encouragement from the institution	-.13	-.10	.30	.13	.11	.27	.05	.04	.65	.01	.01	.95
Professional recognition	-.14	-.13	.20	-.03	-.02	.82	.04	.04	.68	-.01	-.01	.94
Increased student learning	-.09	-.08	.43	-.02	-.01	.89	.19	.18	.08	-.07	-.06	.51
Model Summary	R^2=.20		.02	R^2=.18		.04	R^2=.24		.00	R^2=.34		.00

*p<.05

Predictors of Outcome Scales

Significant predictors for each scale shed light on why faculty engage in CBL and who, among faculty, benefits most from this engagement. Cultural competency reflects faculty perceived ability to increase students' commitment to community and civic engagement and improve their relationships with students, while at the same time making students more aware of their own prejudices and biases. Faculty in the social sciences believe that they accomplish this better than others, but this finding is only significant when comparing the social sciences with arts and humanities, although nearly so compared to faculty in business. The motivation to provide students with increased relevance or practical experience is important to cultural competency, but only approaches significance. Additionally, the number of projects that faculty take on seems to impede the development of cultural competency.

On the other hand, faculty in the arts and humanities believe they do best in helping students with career related competencies such as developing leadership, problem-solving and presentation skills. Fixed term instructors believe they do better than faculty with career development, as do those who have longer tenure at the university. The motivation for increased relevance or practical experience is important to career development as well, but again, not significantly so.

The dimension of faculty development consists of statements that reflect professional achievement (achieving tenure and support for research), personal development (identifying personal strengths and weakness) and community connections (continuing to do CBL, understanding communities and comfort in working with people outside the university). Business faculty score lowest on this compared to other disciplines and are significantly different from social science faculty. This indicates that when it comes to CBL, business faculty do not see these benefits for themselves as much as faculty from other disciplines. Faculty with fewer years of service perceive more benefits themselves than do faculty with more years at the university. Similarly, those who take on fewer projects believe they derive more benefits.

Faculty, in contrast to fixed term instructors, feel they derive more benefit from faculty development.

Those in business ($p<.01$) and the natural and computer sciences ($p=.06$) see fewer negative aspects to their CBL participation than do faculty in the social sciences. Fixed term instructores report more negative aspects to their participation and faculty who ranked the desire for practical experience and increased relevance as the primary reason for engaging in CBL were significantly more likely to report negative aspects in doing CBL.

Discussion

These results suggest that faculty reactions to CBL can be apportioned into several distinct categories and are fairly stable over time across the entire sample. Academic discipline is important to understanding the various benefits and costs faculty derive from CBL. The social science faculty report that they do well in developing cultural competency in students, more so than others, and are also more likely than most (except the natural and computer sciences) to perceive that CBL helps them with their relationships in the community and professionally. On the other hand, business faculty score lower than the social sciences on the above dimensions, yet also perceive significantly fewer negative aspects to their CBL participation. One reason for this may be the types of projects done by the two faculties. Business faculty and students are more accustomed to working on projects with more straight-forward applications in the community, such as technology projects, where they may not interact directly with organisational clients, while social science students more often work with nonprofits and their clients, and so these faculty must negotiate with agency staff, train students on 'soft skill' interaction and manage issues that invariably arise when working with organisations which serve vulnerable populations. The fact that social science faculty report the most problems fails to support our original hypothesis that they would perceive fewer problems with their projects than faculty in other disciplines.

Humanities and fine arts faculty are most likely to believe that CBL projects help their students with career development. While a major goal of CBL is to connect faculty and students to the community, CBL can also serve as an experience through which students can explore possible careers and networks for future employment. In fact, it is fixed term instructors, rather than faculty who believe they are most effective in furthering career development with CBL and this may be seen as part of their job more so than that of faculty. Despite this, faculty, who are at the university longer, come to believe that they provide this type of support also.

Position within the university is also a significant predictor of problems that may arise with CBL. Those who are fixed term instructors on this campus are more likely to report challenges and are less likely than faculty to see positive outcomes for their own professional development. Perhaps the higher course load of fixed term instructors makes it harder to meet the increased time demands of CBL. Additionally, they are not eligible for many of the long-term rewards from their engagement as faculty receive. Also, support from the infrastructure, as measured here, does not have a significant impact on any of these outcomes, net of the other variables in these equations.

Faculty who take on more projects believe they reap fewer benefits with regard to developing cultural competency in their students, but also in terms of their own development. It may serve faculty and students better to focus their efforts on doing a few comprehensive projects with their students rather than the breadth of engaging with many community partners for a single class. Faculty who state that they wish to engage students in projects that increase the relevance of their coursework and practical experience report better outcomes with regard to cultural competency and career development, (although not significantly so), but also report more negative costs when doing CBL. Perhaps a focus on training faculty to resolve these issues will alleviate some concerns while reinforcing other benefits.

Conclusions

Data suggest that faculty perceive that their work with CBL helps students develop cultural competency, career skills and networks and advances faculty development, but come with some costs. However, these outcomes depend upon the respondents' specific academic discipline, status within the institution and motivation for becoming involved in CBL. This suggests that infrastructures designed to enhance CBL within universities and across communities (to both advance positive outcomes and counter issues and barriers) ought to tailor support and assessment measures to specific disciplines and also types of institutional status, since CBL is applied in different ways across them. We should be asking what types of supports faculty truly need to help them gain benefits from CBL in order to implement the most effective infrastructure possible. Since faculty with more years of service see the benefits of career development for students, they can be viewed as possible mentors for faculty who are just beginning work with CBL, since making career connections is an important complement to the academic and community learning that occurs with CBL but is not always realised. Finally, we must ask how fixed term instructors who do not see the rewards of CBL for themselves, yet continue in this work for the benefit of their students and community, might be rewarded for their efforts.

We must note the limitations of this study and encourage future research that would overcome these limitations - studies that would examine these relationships in a larger sample of faculty that would permit repeated measures analysis for the same individuals across time and across more than one institution.

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A University-Sport Partnership: Towards a Sustainable Knowledge-Transfer Model

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Abstract

In the 1980s Victoria University (Australia) and the Western Bulldogs Football Club (Australian rules) jointly initiated a range of projects which connected to teaching, research and/or community engagement. The initial *ad hoc*, informal and project-focused approach has subsequently progressed to more formal engagement with a clear strategy and implementation plan. This case study reports how a model that has been piloted with a sport organisation and incorporates business, science and community has formed a template for other university-community partnerships. The model builds collaboration and communications and provides a centralised referral point and templates which minimise duplication of effort. The paper highlights lessons learnt from the choice of a sport organisation to implement the model and its role in shaping university-community partnerships.

Keywords: *University stakeholder partnerships, partnership-focused model*

Introduction

The rapid growth of relationships between universities and community organizations has been widely documented - from engagement involving mutually beneficial exchange of competencies, to more formalised partnerships where two independent bodies form a collaborative arrangement in the pursuit of commonly agreed objectives (Audit Commission, 1998). Growth has been prompted by the realisation that collaborative advantage is achieved where the relevant

outcomes cannot be achieved by working independently (Lee, 2011). In the choice of potential partners, sporting organizations satisfy a number of relevant criteria because they combine a community dimension (drawing upon a community supporter base), business (many larger-scale sporting organisations are substantial commercial ventures in their own right), brand consciousness (a growing concern for universities) and science (as a support to player performance). Though sport is not immediately associated with scholarly university activities, the sporting prowess of elite institutions such as Oxbridge and the US Ivy League demonstrates that education providers appreciate the association with elite athlete performance.

The sharing of power between universities and the community in collaborative activities is consistent with contemporary principles of liberal democracy where civil organizations are expected to be transparent in their dealings, including with other parties (Pusser, Kempner, Marginson & Ordorika, 2012). Traditional one-way interactions between "expert" universities and "recipient" communities do not produce longer-term sustainable relationships. In response more universities are partnering with community organisations in the pursuit of mutual benefits, and to exchange information which both addresses community needs and supports university research, teaching and learning (Holland & Ramaley, 2008; Le Clus, 2011). The interest and desire to be associated with sporting organizations is most evident in the case of universities which are active in sport, through research and education programmes and in the university name for example Beijing Sport University and German Sport University Cologne. Universities are increasingly expected to address the issues that most concern communities and society, spanning the realms of politics, society, economy, culture and environment (Gonzalez-Perez, 2010). Though expectations about improved performance have been high, the use of performance outcomes and on using standardised tools has been modest (Le Clus, 2011).

This paper documents the shift from a relatively *ad hoc* relationship to an engaged and sustainable university-community partnership with a major sporting organization. It then provides a case study of the progress made by Victoria University (VU) to establish and implement a strategic university-community partnership model by applying resources such as standardised templates. In doing so the paper explores sport as an activity that has university-wide relevance and a special resonance with the specialist school/faculty. It discusses the partnership-focus in an applied setting (research and teaching about sport) and evidence of the mutual benefits of the model. The model is in its second year of implementation at the time of writing.

Moving to an Engaged Partnership

Universities and communities are neither natural nor traditional partners and collaborations take time (Sandy & Holland, 2006). This is equally the case when the "community" is manifest as a sporting club. When progressing engaged university-community partnerships challenges have included inadequate investment in the partnership, a lack of systematic data for management reporting and decision-making, the nature, scope, and importance of industry and an over-dependence on personal contacts rather than organisation-wide relationships (Shadbolt & Kay, 2005). These challenges demand a cultural shift amongst staff in the university and in the community organization. To collaborate effectively, a re-orientation may be required amongst university staff to the outcomes being sought by community bodies and community staff may need to learn flexibility in dealing with apparently cumbersome university processes and procedures. To enhance the prospects of forming sustainable relationships it will be important to overcome the engrained behaviours of both organisations, to develop relationships, trust and new skills, and to foster the sharing and evaluation of experiences (Holland & Ramaley, 2008). The prospect of obstacles should be acknowledged such as changes of personnel and leadership at central university level. These may influence the commitment to engagement activities within universities (Gander, 2009). Another challenge is fluctuating club performance on the

sporting field. The highs and lows of winning and losing are different from the longer term view that has been associated with the older established universities. Neither type of organisation is immune to the forward march of corporatism, but the cultures are very distinct as well as having obvious commonalities.

Formulating guidelines offers a means of addressing the challenges associated with university-community partnerships. Hogner and Kenworthy (2010) have proposed guidelines to build a capacity for effective communications and have argued that the two parties should have an equal voice and though contributing differentially, should do so in ways that are equally valued. Other researchers have proposed building a capacity for communications through university boardroom involvement in the relevant community organisation over a fixed period. Such an approach can foster mutual understanding and strengthen joint decision-making to foster the depth of the partnership in the eyes of community representatives (Ferman & Hill, 2004). Documentation may be useful to frame the partnership, including terms of reference, partnership agreements, rules of engagement, contracts, decision-making guidelines, checklists and a Memorandum of Understanding (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Hogner & Kenworthy, 2010). Investments in foundation-type arrangements should reduce the risks associated with potential financial pressures, differing timeframes, university political pressures and changing funding priorities (Hogner & Kenworthy, 2010). Finally, mapping is needed as a guide for internal and external stakeholders to monitor the various engagements and where and when they are occurring (Hutt, 2010).

The approaches adopted by universities and community partners vary, depending on the type and level of engagement. Some focus on engaged learning, whereas others promote engaged scholarship. In the case of sport, there are more obvious prospects for scholarly engagements where the university has an active interest in sport science, particularly where laboratory based research is a credible means of attracting competitive external research funding. In addition sport offers community, business and scientific dimensions and

opportunities (eg, the Australian Sports Commission) that may strategically align with the vision of universities. A further approach involves universities engaging with the community as a whole. Some universities embrace the full range of engagements that have been mentioned, whilst others increase their commitment progressively (Holland & Ramaley, 2008). Engagements may also operate at a variety of levels, depending on the type of partner. One approach to capturing the progressive levels of engagement is a partnership continuum (VicHealth, 2005). The four levels of engagement progress from informal networking, to coordinating, cooperating and finally to formal collaborations. Rapid progress is most likely where the partner has the advantage of propinquity (ie. located in the neighbourhood of a teaching campus). This was the case with the WBs and Victoria University.

Sustaining an Engaged University-Community Partnership

Ellis and Leahy (2011) view sustainability as "an active, ongoing, positive process that involves evaluating and developing aspects of the partnership as needs vary and new participants become involved" (p.155). In view of the time commitment involved in developing university-community partnerships, it is important to pursue longevity and sustainability. Partnership momentum should extend beyond the initial vision and enthusiasms of a core group of protagonists. The formation of lasting and reciprocal relationships between university and community partners has the benefit of building resilience through financial and economic uncertainty and social change (Northmore & Hart, 2011). However, universities often have few discretionary resources to deploy on activities outside the core activities of teaching and research. Periodic organizational restructuring may also limit the receptiveness to employing non-traditional practices (Shea, 2011).

Sustainable relationships will require ongoing funding and stakeholder willingness to instigate meaningful change (Spiro, 2009). Participation will need to be genuinely reciprocal with a sense of ownership amongst both partners (Shea, 2011). The case of a sporting club has the complexity that staff in the university may be passionate

supporters (e.g. as club members and hence advocates) whereas other staff may support rival teams. In addressing influencing factors, effective leadership should be cross-organisational, sensitive to the cultures of partners and energetic in the promotion of trust (Reardon, 2006). An examination of a sustainable community-university engagement by Shea (2011) highlighted several factors which help to ensure sustainability. These include strong individual working relationships built on trust and communications, a commitment to the shared vision, collaborative leadership practices, wide-reaching participation, a commitment to shared learning and reciprocity and finally an infrastructure that can withstand leadership changes. In addressing the various challenges, the respective partners should engage in practices that are reflective, ongoing and are reciprocal learning processes (Shea, 2011). Universities are commonly viewed as "learning organisations" and should be well placed. Sporting clubs must not only survive but demonstrate a capacity to learn from both victory and defeat, thereby stimulating enhanced performance.

A variety of scholarly publications have documented case studies of university-community partnerships. These have addressed the university role in forming engagement partnerships with community organisations, the culture changes that are required, prospective supporting resources and the varieties and levels of engagement (e.g., Gander, 2009; Gonzalez-Perez, 2010; Hogner & Kenworthy, 2010; Shannon & Wang, 2010). Though various case studies have addressed the opportunities and challenges associated with sustainable community-university engagements, modelling of the relationships and documenting the necessary resources has been scarce, particularly where the special features of sporting organizations need to be taken into account. The present case study documents the development of such a model between VU and the Australian Football League's Western Bulldogs (WBs).

The Context of the Case Study

Victoria University's main campus and the WBs headquarters are located about two kilometres apart in Melbourne's Western Suburbs and thus have the advantage of proximity. The inner-urban locality was previously heavily industrial and both organizations have a strong working class history. The origins of the university (it was established in 1916) were in a working men's educational facility. The initial engagements between the two organizations occurred during the 1980s through project initiatives formulated at local (i.e., School or Faculty) level. The major point of contact within Victoria University was the School of Sport and Exercise. When a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was finally drawn up (in 2005), no project objectives or expected outcomes were specified. However in light of the shared backgrounds of both organisations and their proximity, the formation of an engaged partnership around the potential achievement of key outcomes was a genuine prospect. This would involve an MOU incorporating project-focused activities for both parties. When it was finally agreed that a focus was needed on projects designed around a collective vision a document was formalised. An enthusiastic Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and University Vice-Chancellor headed the respective organisations and these two leaders were strong advocates for a comprehensive partnership-focused model. The relevant CEO was a former Australian Olympian (in sailing) and the Vice-Chancellor was a self-confessed sport enthusiast. Given this background the ongoing momentum of the partnership was tested when a new CEO and University Vice-Chancellor were appointed in a single year. It was fortuitous that the incoming senior leaders proceeded to ratify the partnership promptly, albeit with additional flexibility to accommodate an alignment with the new strategic directions of both organisations. Momentum has built quickly and there are over 15 teaching and research-related VU/WB projects in progress. Ongoing projects include sport science cadetships; work integrated learning within teaching units (commonly though not exclusively in the field of sport); cross-promotional activities at key events; and sharing of facilities (VU, 2012). When assessed according to

the VicHealth partnership continuum (VicHealth, 2005), these projects are generally at the more formalised level of collaborative engagement.

Consistent with the partnership ethos, the University is committed to achieving Boyer's (1990) vision of universities as organizations which address fundamental societal needs and pursue the greater good. The VU/WBs partnership model combines aspects of pursuing "core business" and of ensuring sustainability. There is an implicit assumption that the activities of a sporting club are integral to the needs of society and to pursuing the greater good.

Progressing from Informality to a Strategic University-Community Model

A successful VU/WBs partnership model depends on an active, ongoing and positive process that evaluates progress to date, whilst acknowledging an evolving relationship as requirements change and new participants became involved (Ellis & Leahy, 2011). To evaluate this success, interactive inquiry has been undertaken to balance problem-solving actions performed in a collaborative context with data-driven collaborative analysis or research to understand underlying causes and enable future planning (Reason & Bradbury, 2007). The action-based research approach that has been adopted is cyclical and typically comprises an examination of the situation, implementation of change and evaluation of any changes brought about (Piggot-Irvine, 2002).

Examining the situation. Since 2008 VU has reviewed its existing partnerships to align key strategic partnerships more closely to its core business of learning and teaching, research and knowledge exchange. Sport and exercise science was identified as the University's first area of research excellence with an assumption that it would continue to play a lead role in the centenary year of 2016. However it quickly became apparent that VU lacked standardised resources to measure community engagements and outcome-focused partnerships which could form the basis for a sustainable partnership model. In taking stock of the prevailing situation and guiding the establishment of a model to frame

strategic partnerships, a leadership seminar was conducted, an external consultant appointed and partnership workshops were held. Since sport had been identified as a research priority, there was widespread support for the view that the initial piloting of a partnership approach should have a focus on sport and a prominent local partnership.

A VU Staff Leadership seminar was conducted whereby key staff members from functional areas such as Finance, Information Technology, Business Development and Work Integrated Learning reflected on the VU project-based partnerships and brainstormed key elements for supporting partnerships. To better understanding the relationship with one group of stakeholders, the VU *Government Relationship Plan* was commissioned. One of its recommendations was the appointment of so-called Partnership Managers. These were to provide a 'go-to' person for all interactions with the relevant partner (a business, a community group or a Government Department). Meanwhile a series of internal VU partnership workshops were conducted to map current and potential partnerships. Through this exercise the VU/WBs partnership was viewed as being central. This was significant given that the stakeholders came from a wide range of discipline areas, many of which would not have an immediate association with sport or football. Partnership workshops were also conducted with a combination of internal and external stakeholders with a view to reviewing the effectiveness of existing partnership strategies. Data collected from the leadership seminar, external consultant and partnership workshops identified four resources as critical for assisting the establishment of a partnership-focused model. It was recognized that a balance was needed between the generic (the wide ranging concerns of both organisations and a template that could accommodate multiple disciplines and organisational types) and sport specific issues.

Implementing the change. The four resources were: a framework for engaging and partnering with external organisations; an engagement toolkit; a strategic partnership annual cycle and the appointments of an Associate Director of Engagement and Partnership and Partnership

Managers. The resources address the various challenges associated with the development of engaged university-community partnerships (Shadbolt & Kay, 2005). The guidelines have a strong focus on the role of communications (Hogner & Kenworthy, 2010). The following summarises the aims and intentions of the resources.

The VU Framework for Engagement and Partnerships with External Organisations provides guidance to university staff. The document addresses the challenges identified by Shadbolt and Kay (2005). For example, the framework provides definitions for partnership and engagement activities, a mechanism for approving and developing engagement activities based on four tiers of partnership, governance based on a "hub and spoke" approach (to define relationships between central administration and local areas such as faculties and schools), and guidance on the appointment of relationship managers. In the WBs case, the designated relationship manager was the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) who is a sport scientist and has a natural empathy with the relevant discipline as well as with university-wide concerns.

The establishment of an Engagement Toolkit was guided by the previous work of the UK-based fdf Employer and Partnerships (fdf innovating workforce development, 2007). The toolkit focuses on the operational stages of building and managing partnerships. Each section incorporates relevant checklists and identifies prospective questions and issues during the expansion phase. The strategic partnership annual cycle was developed to model principles of sound practice for the management of partnerships. This process provided a starting point to contextualise the strategic partnership management model. Feedback on the annual cycle was gained from the VU Industry and Community Engagement Management Advisory Committee (comprising academic and industry representatives) and from the University Community.

An Associate Director of Engagement and Partnerships was appointed to provide internal management of key partners and implement partnership practices. The reflective responses emphasised

that consistency was essential for ensuring sound management practices. This is consistent with commonplace practice in many universities to create senior engagement roles which have carriage of university-community partnerships (Le Clus, 2011). Partnership Managers were appointed as the central VU point for interactions with each significant partner organisation including the WBs. These managers have responsibility for implementation and significant inputs into the client engagement plans (Nous Group, 2010). Table 1 summarises how these resources were applied and what resulted in the move towards a VU/WBs partnership-focused approach.

Table 1: Factors to Assist in the Move Towards a Strategic Partnership with the WBs

Resource	Application	Outcome
VU framework for engagement and partnerships with external organisations	Stakeholder audit of the WBs, to consolidate partner intelligence and establish a system for collating information on partnerships	A template to gather information from both parties.
VU engagement toolkit; Strategic partnership annual cycle	Partnership workshop. To annually review the partnership and set priorities for projects and investment of resources. This workshop also served to confirm (i) mutual commitment to the partnership, (ii) intersection of values, mission, and core business, and (iii) a shared understanding by stakeholders.	A joint vision statement, individual purposes aligned with the vision and complement the other party's purposes and jointly agreed timelines.
Partnership managers	Appointment of Partnership Manager to act as the central person for related VU/WBs.	WBs Partnership Reference Group to act as a mechanism for managing the partnership, identifying issues, prioritising projects and gathering intelligence. The group identified the need for (i) terms of reference, (ii) to define communication between the organisations, (iii) an operational plan and (iv) a tool to assess projects within the partnership.

As a result of applying the resources to a VU partnership four templates to support the partnership evolved and these contributed to the formation of a model. These included a Terms of Reference (ToR), an Operational Plan, a Communication Matrix and a Project Assessment Tool. The importance of incorporating such documents within a partnership is consistent with the literature (Ferman & Hill, 2004; Hogner & Kenworthy, 2010).

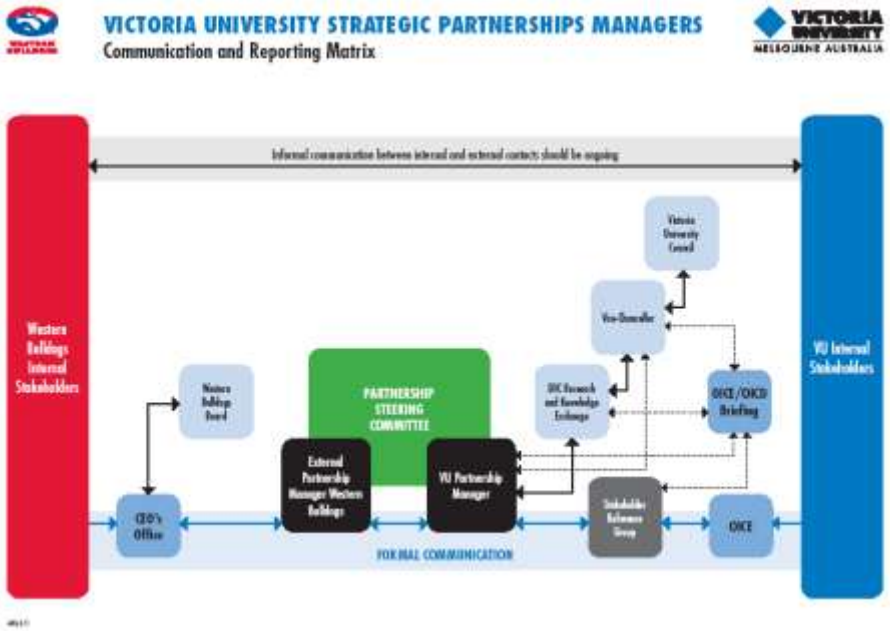
Terms of Reference. These were established to provide guidance for the WBs University Reference Group and to ensure the development, implementation and future direction of the management of the WBs partnership. The Group responsibilities, composition, frequency of meetings, powers and reporting line are identified. For the most part the ToRs are generic, but it was important to take full account of the different dynamics of a football club and of a university.

Operational Plan. The plan was created during a VU/WBs partnership workshop which established the importance of mutual benefits and the exchange of information catering to organisational needs (Holland & Ramaley, 2008; Le Clus, 2011). Mutual benefits arose from an exchange of information that jointly addressed WBs needs, whilst supporting VU research, teaching and learning goals. The operational plan incorporated issues, strategies, associated actions, expected outcomes, responsibility and a timeframe. The recognition of these components provides insights into the challenges encountered when establishing and maintaining a partnership (Hogner & Kenworthy, 2010; Shadbolt & Kay, 2005).

Communication Matrix. The sizes of the two organizations differ substantially with the University workforce consisting of over 3,500, whereas the WBs employs approximately 150. The prospect of numerous project invitations from VU staff to WBs employees could quickly become overwhelming. In this context, managing communication flows is critical (e.g., Beehr, Glazer, Fisher, Linton & Hansen, 2009; Hogner & Kenworthy, 2010). To ensure that the proposed system was streamlined, a Communication Matrix (Figure 1) was designed with provision for formal and informal communications

between the partners. Informal invitations such as requests to place students in internships could be made directly by staff. However a formal process of communication through the WBs University Reference Group is required for larger scale project initiatives such as submissions for large research grants. The channel involves the respective VU Partnership Manager and ultimately to the VU/WBs Partnership Steering Committee.

Figure 1: VU/WB Communication matrix



Project Assessment Tool. To accommodate the ongoing development and evaluation of partnership-related projects (Ellis & Leahy, 2011), a template was developed for use by each partner. It was incorporated within existing decision-making processes with a view to determining the merit of prospective projects. The questions within the tool are stable, with a capacity for subsidiary questions tailored to the needs of the project. Key themes include whether the project aligns with organisational goals, core business and branding, and its prospective impacts and effectiveness. Victoria University and WBs complete a project assessment independently before meeting to discuss the results. Discussions generally revolve around project feasibility and the potential for mutual benefits.

Evaluating the implementation of the partnership-focused model. Presentations, reports, workshops and audits were conducted with stakeholders involved in the VU/WBs partnership. The focus was on the

effectiveness of the partnership, resources deployed and associated templates.

In the partnership. Feedback was gathered from VU/WBs Partnership Managers and from annual cycle workshops where the benefits were identified, both tangible and intangible.

Feedback from VU and WBs Partnership Managers confirmed that the design, templates and implementation of the model was viewed as effective. The annual cycle workshops provided formal stakeholder feedback from within each organisation about the extent to which the partnership objectives were being achieved through the operational monitoring, management reviews and strategy assessment mechanisms. The operational monitoring comprised an audit and confirmation of projects assessed against the Project Assessment Tool, ensuring commitment to clearly articulated project deliverables and activation of an agreed operational plan for the partnership within a defined timeframe. The management reviews involved filtering new projects through the VU/WBs Stakeholder Reference Group and the Partnership Steering Committee. These two groups conducted an annual project review and identified trends associated with the "key deliverables". Finally, the Partnership Steering Committee undertook an annual review and assessment using the key performance indicators that apply to the partnership. The assessment of outcomes confirmed that the partnership model was sustainable. Data collected from the Partnership managers and obtained during workshops included tangible and intangible benefits that flowed from the collaboration. For example one tangible benefit was the implementation by the WBs of a market design that was created by VU marketing students, and the intangible benefits created were trust, bi-directional knowledge transfer, loyalty, mutual benefits, and equal power balance in the relationship. These intangible benefits support Holmes and Moir's (2007) research that found positive outcomes in a partnership then evolved. As a consequence of the feedback a revised Strategic Partnership Agreement and associated sponsorship was drawn up. It was agreed that mutually agreed projects should be targeted towards the vision of each organisation and enhance

the branding and reputation of both parties. A prime example of the sponsorship is where WBs will donate $1(AUS) for every club member, annually to support the VU Achievement Scholarships where funding is provided to students from the West to study at VU (VU, 2012).

External to the partnership. With a view to disseminating the learning derived from the partnership, the intent of the Partnership Manager position was jointly presented by VU and WBs representatives and was outlined at a national partnership conference workshop comprising attendees who were actively involved in university/community partnerships (Orbell, 2011). The data obtained from the evaluation forms confirmed the viability and importance of the role of the Partnership Manager. The Partnership Project Assessment Tool was presented and discussed during a workshop session within the same conference (Orbell, 2011). Attendees gave a 94% positive rating on content and strongly confirmed that the template is a useful and appropriate tool for tertiary/community partnerships.

Lessons Learnt

This case study offers a means of informing readers about experiences to date and providing insights for the proponents of other emerging university-community relationships, with particular reference to collaborations with sporting organizations. The learnings to date from the VU/WBs partnership include recognition of the need for shared vision and trust, an outcomes-based focus and standardised tools, university representation on the board of the relevant community organisation, and the identification of a key person to manage the sustainable partnership-focused model and internal university engagement and partnerships. The following section outlines the opportunities and challenges associated with each recommendation:

A shared vision and trust between the CEO and University Vice-Chancellor and shared enthusiasm for sport were major contributors to the transformation of the partnership from a project-driven to a partnership-driven approach. They also helped to ensure the implementation and sustainability of the partnership at the most senior

levels (including on the respective boards/councils). Consistent with Shea (2011), a resilient partnership infrastructure was built to address the prospect of turnover in the key leadership positions. Despite the adoption of new institution-wide strategic directions by the newly appointed Vice-Chancellor and CEO, the partnership has adapted successfully to the changes (consistent with Spiro, 2009). As a result, collaborative leadership practices were evidenced and support the success of a university-community partnership (Shea, 2011). The model was flexible enough to allow for the evaluation and development of aspects of the partnership as new participants become involved (Ellis & Leahy, 2011). This typifies the need for clarity and for sufficient flexibility to withstand a changing and sometimes hostile environment. Evidence shows that this has been achieved in the present case.

During the course of the initial VU/WBs partnership review, it became apparent that the aims and benefits of the collaboration were complex and that this exacerbated the challenges associated with assessment and measurement. This validates the deployment of predictable, outcome-focused and standardised tools (Le Clus, 2011). The VU/WBs experience has championed a consistent approach to partnerships across the University. To emphasise the importance of sharing good practice a VU Community of Practice group has been established. University staff who are interested in industry and community engagement, have an opportunity to test the sustainable partnership-focused model for engagement and managing partnerships and discuss relevant templates and processes with their peers. Such peer-to-peer discussions about good practice build engagement capacity and address Le Clus's concerns (2011) about the paucity of standardised tools to measure university-community engagements. The discussion also helps to reinforce the centrality of the sporting partnership as a reminder that sport is a beacon for research excellence within and beyond the University.

The partnership has stimulated knowledge exchange between the two organisations. As previously noted involvement by a university representative on the board of the relevant community organisation for

a defined period can assist joint decision-making and reinforce the solidity of the partnership (Ferman & Hill, 2004). The participation of a VU Partnership Manager on the WBs board provides advice from a research, learning and teaching perspective and the various VU/WBs workshops have disseminated the outcomes of sport related research. Research into the performance of Australian Rules players has exemplified knowledge exchange. The commitment to information exchange also supported the construction of a VU learning and teaching facility within the redeveloped WB stadium precinct. Though the applicable education programs range widely across the field of health and wellbeing, sport remains the focus. Meanwhile the creation of a wider stakeholder grouping, known as SportWest, anchored around the VU/WBs relationship to promote sport within Melbourne's West has attracted active participation from partners such as the Maribyrnong Sports Academy (specialised training delivered at secondary school level and the Victorian Racing Club (which operates the adjacent racing stadium). This is indicative of a context which is not confined to a single sporting code, thereby opening up wider stakeholder prospects.

In addition to appointing a university representative or Partnership Manager, this case study has underlined the critical importance of appointing a person to manage internal university engagement and partnerships. This person should drive the model from a university perspective with a view to activating the partnership and ensuring the deployment of resources. This appointment exemplifies the merit of a leadership team that builds trust between partners by promoting understanding within their organisation (Reardon, 2006). The four templates within the partnership-focused model ensured that clear information was available to both parties and provided overall direction. The use of these documents has encouraged the Partnership Managers to pursue the objective of sustainability. Such action mitigates potential threats to sustainability (Shea, 2011).

Opportunities for Research and Implications for Practitioners

The sustainable partnership model was intended to provide a strategic process for VU and the WBs to progress their collaborative vision around sport and the community and to provide resources to ensure viability. The model is innovative in its resilience to leadership changes and to the fluctuating resources which may impede the continuous development and evaluation of the partnership. These include appointments to key leadership roles, a Terms of Reference, Operational Plan, Communication Matrix and a Project Assessment Tool. Although the strategic partnership-focused model is in its infancy, the benefits have become increasingly evident over the two years of implementation. For example, the partnership has helped build an engagement throughout VU's dual sector of 50,000 students (further and higher education) with increasing enrolments by WBs players and administrators in VU courses and an increase of VU staff and students taking advantage of WBs offers of attendance at football games at reduced rates and special membership offers.

It is important to note that not all partnerships will be sustainable. As well as examining examples of best practice, it would be equally helpful to research university-community partnerships that have proved unsustainable and to identify the contributing factors. In the case of VU, the four templates developed as part of the VU/WBs model have been incorporated into other VU community partnerships. There is an evident opportunity for other universities contemplating stronger community engagements generally and with sporting bodies in particular to adopt a version of the sustainable partnership model that has been proposed in this paper. This could support their quest to establish and maintain mutually beneficial, sustainable partnerships with their local communities. It can also highlight the merits of a partnership model at institution-wide level to advance the field of sport research and education.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Professor Warren Payne for his review of the article and Emma Hall in her endeavour to search for relevant literature.

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Personal Agency as a Primary Focus of University-Community Engagement:

A Case Study of Clemente Australia

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Abstract

Clemente Australia is a collaboration of Australian Catholic University (ACU) with not-for-profit agencies, other universities and the broader community directed to developing and implementing a model for community-embedded, socially-supported university education. It involves people from backgrounds of disadvantage taking semester-length university courses in the humanities for credit.

The paper presents an integrative model explaining the development of personal agency through the Clemente Australia program. In terms of the model, Clemente Australia builds ideas of hope, meaning, and identity into the personal narratives of participants through reflection on their experiences in the program and the competencies and changed expectancies that these bring. This integrative model can both shed light upon participants' reports of the program and suggest ways of making it more effective.

Data drawn from Clemente student case studies are analysed with respect to changes in personal agency and social inclusion to show how the model can be used as a lens for understanding the benefits of community-embedded, socially-supported university humanities education.

Keywords*: Clemente Australia; community engagement; personal agency; hope; personal narrative*

Introduction

Universities through their community engagement programs and research are well positioned to make significant contributions to social change at local, national and international levels. Such contributions are based upon an approach to community engagement which is differentiated from community service and includes generating new knowledge about social issues and problems.

> Engagement is a reciprocal process whereby communication is backed up, if possible, by interaction in ways that can effectively alter the way the problem is perceived by oneself and others. Genuine engagement moves beyond the level of mere service and allows the opportunity for societal response to help redefine the nature of the problem itself and perhaps forge new solutions (Sheehan, 2002, p. 136).

This change in perceptions includes changes in perceptions of ourselves as individuals. This change in perceptions of oneself is integral to moving from a stance of service where the recipient is dependent upon services provided by another(s) to the process of engagement where both parties are involved with equal dignity and sense of agency in the engagement.

This paper shows how a commitment to personal agency as a foundation for university- community engagement has contributed to participants in the Clemente Australia program developing a new sense of efficacy, outcomes, and personal identity and meaning. The participants created life narratives, which expressed new goals and capabilities for personal and social wellbeing. The theory underpinning this personal agency approach within the Clemente Australia program has implications for the consideration and structuring of university-community engagement focused upon social change for enhancing personal and community wellbeing. The benefits of the integrative theory for understanding the journeys of participants in Clemente Australia are shown through the use of case study methodology and the analysis of a participant's self report data.

The Clemente Australia Program

Clemente Australia is a collaboration of Australian Catholic University (ACU) with not-for-profit agencies, other universities and the broader community directed to developing and implementing a model for community-embedded, socially-supported university education (Howard, Butcher and Egan, 2010). The program seeks to assist individuals in making personal life choices through participating in education and fostering community connectedness. It has evolved from a project begun in New York by Earl Shorris (1997, 2000), who proposed that tertiary-level education in the humanities could assist socially marginalised people in their breaking away from cycles of poverty and homelessness.

In Clemente Australia, students typically attend a two-hour lecture and a two-hour 'shared learning' tutorial session each week of a 12-week university approved course. The lectures are taken by university staff selected on the basis of their scholarship, their teaching capabilities and their willingness to engage with homeless people in a community setting. The shared learning sessions are staffed by volunteers from the business and corporate sectors, known as 'Learning Partners' who work with the students. For each community site, there is a community-based coordinator who responds to the social support needs of students, liaises with the university academic coordinator in managing the everyday issues related to the program, and oversees the weekly lecturing and learning partner sessions. Reflective practice is a structured component of scheduled classes and learning partner sessions, providing conversational opportunities for students to conceptualise and synthesise their thoughts and ideas (Howard et al., 2008). Such purposeful reflection enables the students to share their life experiences with others and to locate the thinking provoked by their studies in a personal context.

Students enrolling in Clemente Australia must express within a personal interview with Clemente staff a desire to learn, a willingness to commit initially to a 12 week program, a literacy level sufficient to read a newspaper; and some degree of ongoing stability in their lives.

Since its inception in 2003, Clemente Australia has enrolled 852 students, almost 10% of whom have now completed four units and been awarded a Certificate of Liberal Studies by ACU. Core findings to emerge from ongoing reviews of the program for the participating students show: increases in self-esteem, confidence and personal development; desire for increased social participation with others; improved relationships with family and friends; overcoming what had often been an alien experience of education; increased community participation; seeing new possibilities and taking positive steps for their futures (Mission Australia, 2007).

Theorising Clemente Australia

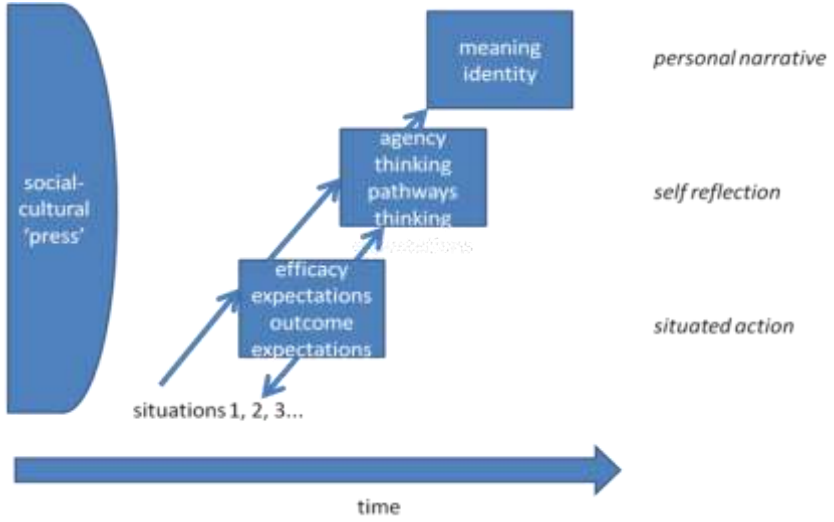
Clemente Australia has been theorised about in various ways since it began. Among these have been (a) conceiving it as an exercise in empowerment or engagement, (b) disturbing the taken-for granted habits and dispositions of participants (the habitus in Bourdieu's terms) (Grenfell, 2007), and (c) as a means of conferring hope (O'Gorman, Butcher, & Howard, 2012). All have merit and we have sought to integrate them in a model of what might be happening in Clemente that draws heavily on the *social cognitive theory* of Albert Bandura (1977, 2006) and adds, as a focus, *hope theory* as developed by Charles Snyder (1995), and the idea of *personal narrative* as discussed by Dan McAdams (1993, 2008).

In the model, we assume that people attempt to make sense of the world around them and their place in it. This 'sense making' takes the form of the story that individuals tell themselves about themselves, their personal narratives, and is constructed and reconstructed on the basis of their actions in various situations and reflections on those actions by themselves and others. Clemente helps shape a personal narrative for participants that is positive and future oriented. It does this by stimulating action and self-reflection which changes expectations about what they, as individuals, can do and the effects their actions have. These expectations about behaviour in the everyday situations that are part of the program lead in time to generalisations of

beliefs participants have about a sense of agency and pathways to achieving outcomes and in turn to changes in the personal narrative.

Figure 1 is an attempt to bring these ideas together in a model of what is happening in Clemente Australia. There are three intra-individual processes that are considered critical: situated action, self-reflection, and the personal narrative. More will be said about these subsequently, but it is important to note that they are bounded in the figure by two contextual factors. One is time. Changing behaviour, expectations, and personal narratives all take time, and the pace of change is idiosyncratic. Less experience may be required for one person than for another because gains need to consolidate before further change is possible and this differs among participants, and gains can be lost as the result of new experiences specific to individuals. These processes occur in time and so this appears as a dimension in the model.

Figure 1. A model of processes proposed for understanding Clemente.



The second contextual factor is what is labelled in the figure as 'social-cultural press'. The processes assumed to be at work in Clemente are located in the individual but are influenced by what the participants in Clemente see about them, their physical environment and the people in it, and importantly too by social norms and cultural practices of

families, workplaces, and communities. This social world affects expectations, self-reflections, and the personal narratives that people construct. We use the term 'press', borrowed from Henry Murray (1938), to characterise the social world as it is and as it is perceived to be by the individual, which may not always be one and the same. Press conveys the idea that it is not a neutral factor but one that exerts a force that can support or impede change.

The critical processes in the model take place at different levels, with one level scaffolding the next, which begins somewhat later on the time dimension. The first level involves what is termed here as "situated action", and is based on Bandura's theory of human agency (Bandura, 2006). Participants, in the course of the 12-week program have to respond in a number of situations, designated s1, s2, s3 and so on in the figure. These might be getting to the first session of the program or returning for the next, but in time will involve, among other things, reading a quantity of material or submitting an assessment, or venturing an opinion in a group, or disclosing aspects of one's life to another over a cup of coffee. These relatively simple behaviours can be problematic because of expectations participants have about the likely consequences of their behaviour on themselves and others (the outcome expectancies in the model) or about their capacity to actually carry them out (their efficacy expectations) or expectations that come from their own previous experiences in similar situations. A supportive environment and exposure to others actually performing successfully can lead to successful performance and with it a change in expectations. What might be thought of as small changes accumulate over time. A university course provides a rich variety of challenges and opportunities for new learning that can be graduated in their difficulty by lecturing staff and supported in their accomplishment by learning partners as well as the ongoing social supports provided by community agencies.

The next level involves self-reflection, where sense is made of new experiences in the light of previous ones. It is based partly on Bandura's social cognitive theory (2006) and partly on Snyder's hope

theory (1995). Important here are the causal attributions that people make in accounting for their actions, including whether outcomes are attributed to characteristics of oneself or of others. Success can be attributed to the actions of others (e.g., soft marking by the staff member, the good ideas of the learning partner) or to oneself ('I did work hard on that'). In the same way, failure can be blamed on adopting a poor strategy or on personal lack of ability. Reflection needs to involve correct attributions from current behaviour. Getting the attributions right is assisted by feedback from other participants, staff, and learning partners whose judgments come to be respected in the course of the program. Important too in reflection is goal setting, projecting what might be possible in the future from what has happened in the past. As efficacy expectations build for behaviour in a given situation, then 'tougher' goals can be set or extended further in time ('I'll try for a credit on the next assignment'; 'Once I have completed this course I will come back next semester').

As expectations broaden across a range of discrete situations, academic and interpersonal, a changed outlook on self and the social world can develop. Bandura maintains that outcome and efficacy expectations necessarily entail specific situations. One may feel efficacious in one context but not necessarily in another. Reflection allows experiences to be aggregated and broader beliefs to be formed that transcend particular situations. These broader beliefs or ways of thinking have the same characteristics as expectations in Snyder's theory about agency thinking and pathways thinking. Agency thinking refers to 'a sense of successful determination in meeting goals in the past, present, and future', and pathways to 'a sense of being able to generate successful plans to meet goals' (Snyder, 1995 pp. 570-571). Together, agency and pathways thinking constitute hope, a disposition of mind in which there is a positive orientation to the future and in which setting goals and forming plans makes sense because there is a conviction that ways will be found to meet them. We see the development of this disposition as the result of the accumulation of

successful experiences and the change in expectations that these produce. Hope is the culmination of the first and second levels and vital to the third in which the writing and re-writing of personal narrative takes place. This third level is based on McAdams' theorising (1997).

Meaning (why the world is as it is) and identity (who I am) are constructed on the basis of past and present experiences, social-cultural press, and conversation with others. Conversation is important in hearing what parts of the story sound like and in recognising consistencies that might otherwise have gone unnoticed. The result is captured in the story of self -- the personal narrative. This is not simply a read-out from the memory banks but a synthesis and interpretation of events aimed at organising a reasonably coherent view of the world. Not all available information is included, some information receives more weight in the account, and sub-plots are used to maintain themes that seem important but do not presently fit. The personal narrative is updated from time to time with, for example, major change in life circumstances or transition from one stage of life to the next.

Clemente presents an opportunity for participants to revise their personal narratives in a radical way. The key to this is hope - in the form of agency - and pathways thinking, which can reframe past experience and reinforce positive themes at the expense of negative ones. Through an accumulation of experiences, Clemente provides opportunity for new meaning and enhanced identity in a new edition of the personal narrative.

We make no claim for great novelty in this model, which brings together existing theories to provide an integrative account of what is happening in Clemente. We rely on evidence for these component theories as support for integrating them into the model. There is considerable empirical work supporting social cognitive theory as it is applied in an educational context. Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994) used social cognitive theory to model vocational choice and, in a series of studies, Lent and colleagues (e.g., Lent et al., 2001; Lent, Lopez, Lopez, & Sheu, 2008) have provided data in support of the central constructs in the model of self- efficacy, outcome expectations, and goal setting in

predicting choice, persistence, and performance in university students. The meta-analysis of over 100 studies by Robbins et al. (2004) of psychosocial factors predicting performance and retention in tertiary education settings points to the importance of self-efficacy and goal setting in these situations. Although Clemente provides an academic learning environment, it is primarily focused upon enhancing well-being through a community based university experience. It is relevant, however, that key constructs used in the Clemente model are supported by empirical work on what is important in these settings.

Hope theory is not as well supported as social cognitive theory, understandably so given the shorter time since it was first published. There are, however, studies that support its relevance in academic settings. Measures of hope, as Snyder conceives it, have been shown in longitudinal studies with adolescent samples in the United States of America and Australia to predict academic achievement, emotional well-being, and general life satisfaction (Ciarrochi, Heaven, & Davies, 2007; Valle, Huebner, & Suldo, 2006). A longitudinal study of university students by Rand, Martin and Shea (2011) showed that Snyder's hope measure predicted both performance and life satisfaction better than a measure of optimism did. What has not been tested is the idea that hope mediates the effects of efficacy and outcome expectations in determining outcomes in educational and vocational settings, as implied by our model of Clemente.

What research on hope theory to date does show is that hope is not easily changed, which is consistent with it being a disposition of mind rather than a short-term emotional state. A recent meta-analysis (Weis & Speridakos, 2012) of 27 studies directed to increasing hope in people in a range of clinical and community settings indicated that in general these interventions produced only small changes (of the order of a quarter of a standard deviation) and point to the importance of being cautious in claims about increasing hope. Studies undertaken in group settings and involving community samples rather than special groups or clinical samples returned best results. The authors raised the possibility that hope may be an effect rather than a cause: good

outcomes increase hope rather than the other way round. In the model proposed here, hope is the product of situated action over a period of time and self- reflection on the changes in expectations that it produces. Increases in hope in turn energise changes to the personal narrative that Clemente leads to. Hope grows, but only slowly, in a shared and supportive environment through personal action and reflection upon it.

As for the third component of the model, the idea of personal narrative is now widely used in qualitative research in the social sciences (e.g., Czarianwaska, 2004; Orbuck, 1997). Studies by King and colleagues (2000) of life transitions and by Pennebaker and Seagal (1999) of recovery from traumatic events indicate the importance of rehearsing life experiences in the form of personal narratives for self-development and well-being. The causal link between increasing hope and change in personal narrative has, however, yet to be demonstrated. In attempting to build a model for Clemente Australia, we are seeking to achieve three things. First, we are seeking to simplify what is a complex set of processes so that all participants in Clemente Australia - students, staff, learning partners, and community members - can have a better understanding of it and talk about it in a shared language. Second, we want an account that sensitises us to the processes that lead to change, so that all involved can be more deliberate, more aware about what is happening in the course of the program. Third, we need an account that can guide and develop a more analytical examination of the program. From the outset, evaluation has been part of Clemente Australia, though this has been more in terms of process, where feedback is sought from participants through surveys or interviews. A useful theoretical model of Clemente Australia is one that points to particular factors that need to be studied as it unfolds in the lives of participants.

Applying the Model

The integrated model of Clemente Australia provides a basis for understanding student outcomes identified in research studies to date (Howard & Butcher, in press). These outcomes include:

- improvement in sense of self and well-being;
- change in bodily comportment;
- improvement in social engagement;
- new skills and knowledge;
- positive attitudes to learning; and
- developing hope and belief in one's future.

Equally important, however, the model provides a lens for understanding what is involved in each Clemente student's journey. A case study in the form of self report data from John, a Clemente Australia graduate, from welfare recipient to active participant in society provides an illustration. The case study provides comprehensive and rich data provided by a particular Clemente Australia graduate with no structuring by researchers. This methodology allows for the different perspectives or explanations incorporated in the integrated model for Clemente Australia to be examined from within the rich, un-structured reporting of the graduate. The case study provides a context for the analysis of the research data and the identification of salient factors in the case study. John shared his story as a Clemente student at the 2009 launch of the St Vincent de Paul Society's annual door knock appeal for a Catholic Diocese. John's account of his story was then reported in the Society's publication, The Record (Lusty, 2009). John begins the account of his story with a statement of what he expects to accomplish in the coming four months:

'I've been a student in the Clemente Program, and next week I will be commencing my fourth and final semester. So, all going well, I will obtain a Certificate in Liberal Studies in four months time.'

John's account provides important information about himself, his journey and his expectations. This information is presented in Table 1as a triptych of three columns – John's initial life narrative, his transitional narrative and his new life narrative. A tabular presentation of the data as a triptych was chosen to convey the sense of a journey and to see the data as a total set rather than directing our attention to the individual elements of the data. Art works have been presented as triptychs and in

this sense the triptych in this paper is intended to show how this story is John's art work, the re-defining of his life. All data in the triptych are taken directly from John's account of his story.

Table 1: The changing personal narrative of John, a Clemente student.

Initial life narrative	Transitional life narrative	New life narrative
Spending money on drug habit	Mum told me about the Clemente program … I decided to investigate	Recovered drug addict
	I've now been clean for several years and I now feel my life is finally getting back on track	I let down my wife and children – terribly I let down my parents and siblings, and I let down my friends.
Hit rock bottom	Taking stock of my life	I won't go back there again
Drug habit out of hand, completely out of hand	Getting life back on track	Everybody does have skills and abilities
Back to Australia and with the wrong people	Pretty tough journey	Gain confidence in "our" skills
Foul of the law	Ready to go back to work	Invited me - Helping to teach senior citizens to use the internet
It is very hard bumping into friends…and having to admit you haven't got a job – that you can't even manage to support yourself. It can be quite soul destroying.	Look elsewhere for work	St Vincent de Paul Society – regular position volunteering in their office… It's not paid work, but it is work!
	(CA) provides structure to my life. It's important to have something to do with your time, or else you fall into a hole.	I feel confident about the future
	(CA) increases your self-esteem. You start to feel like you're more than just a bum.	I finally recommenced paid employment… it's a big step in the right direction.
	(CA) speaks to my stability, my determination and my commitment.	I've gained much from the course. It has truly turned my life around
	You start to build up a network of people who know you and who know your abilities. And that's important!	My six year old son can now got to school and tell his classmates about his dad's job.

The data across the triptych shows John's movement or journey from dependency and low sense of self through reflection, structure in one's life, opportunity for new networks of people, increased self esteem and new self knowledge to new identity, confidence and commitment, formal role and participation in community, family pride, and public statement of his story.

The triptych shows John establishing himself anew with his new life narrative acknowledging how he drew upon the influence and support of key people including his mother, friends, other significant people and his son as well as upon the structure of the Clemente Australia program.

John in his initial life narrative expresses a lack of personal agency and hope with his "drug habit out of hand, completely out of hand" and the "soul destroying" impact on himself of admitting "you haven't got a

job-you can't even support yourself". He had been unable to meet the public expectations of the social cultural "press" which reinforced his being unable to change this life narrative.

John's engagement in Clemente Australia sees him transitioning from the first life narrative to a new life narrative in which he acknowledges the impact of his first life narrative on his wife, children, parents and siblings. In the new life narrative John expresses his new sense of self, his skills and abilities, his confidence in being able to maintain this narrative and how to not "go back there again". The new life narrative conveys John's new sense of himself and his "meaning", purpose and role in life. He is also engaging in a new, positive and constructive way with the social-cultural "press". Integral to this new life narrative is John's positive sense of efficacy and the goals or outcomes he has, is and will achieve, and an awareness of and involvement in new pathways.

John's transitional life narrative comes from his mother offering a new pathway for him to address the impact of the social-cultural "press". John's reflection upon his first life narrative and the lack of meaning he was finding in himself and in his life saw him developing a new sense of outcomes that could be achieved through quite different pathways. John lived through this transitional life narrative in the context of his experiences of Clemente Australia, with the new social-cultural "press" from fellow students, learning partners, lecturers and community agency people. From here he developed a new sense of meaning and identity which saw him as an expression of his new life narrative speaking publicly about his journey, the Clemente Australia program, and his invitation to all to be either a participant in or supporter of the program.

Conclusion

The triptych provided a framework for both presenting John's personal account of his journey through Clemente Australia in terms of his initial, transitional and new life narratives and showing the changes he reported in terms of personal efficacy, agency, meaning, identity and

hope. The narratives also showed differences over time in the social cultural "press" and the ways in which John engaged with it. John was able to effect these changes in life narratives for himself through Clemente Australia, a university-community engagement program of community-embedded, socially-supported university education.

The analysis of John's story provided a case study validation of the integrated model of personal agency as a framework for understanding the impact of Clemente Australia. The wider applicability of this framework, including its role in understanding why the template has or has not been applicable to some participants, will be studied across other cases.

Furthermore, the structure of a triptych can be used for framing changes for people and communities which occur through university-community engagement programs which are based upon a central commitment to the personal agency of the participants with the community engagement contributing to the social-cultural press which assists participants in creating their new life narratives.

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The Cube: an approach to social accountability in an urban community-based medical education program

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Abstract

Medical schools are increasingly responding to the obligation to direct their education, research and service activities towards addressing the health concerns of their community. This paper describes the early stages of a program of social accountability that is being developed as an integral component of an Australian community-based medical education program. Named 'The Cube', the program is based in an urban area of lower socioeconomic standing and involves a service-learning type model of interaction between medical students and adolescent secondary school students. The paper provides a background to the program, a description of the early stages of building a relationship between the two institutions, and a vision for the future.

Key Words: *Medical education, social accountability, community engagement, community-based medical education (CBME)*

Acronyms

CBHS: Christies Beach High School

CESA: community engagement and social accountability

OCEP: Onkaparinga Clinical Education Program

Background

Flinders University has a strong focus on community engagement (Flinders University/ about 2012) and its School of Medicine has an agenda of social accountability and community engagement '…to enhance socially accountable practices within the school…' and a commitment to the development to healthier societies. (Flinders University / social accountability). This is in accordance with the World Health Organisation definition of social accountability of medical schools as 'the obligation to direct their education, research and service activities towards addressing the priority health concerns of the community, region, and/or nation they have a mandate to serve' and more recently is in line with the WHO Global Consensus for Social Accountability of medical schools (WHO 2010).

As part of this agenda the medical school has a number of programs that involve close links with local communities, particularly in rural areas. (Walters et al 2011) More recently, the Onkaparinga Clinical Education Program, an urban community-based program for medical students, has developed a strong community-engaged and socially accountable focus as part of its program, the first stages of which were described in this journal (Mahoney et al 2011).

The third year of the four year course for graduate medical students is a year of clinical immersion, which is traditionally undertaken in tertiary hospitals. In recent years, Flinders and many other medical schools, particularly in Australia, have introduced alternate third year pathways which are predominantly in rural settings, either in rural general practice or in rural community hospitals. (University Departments of Rural Health Program 2011-14).

The Onkaparinga Clinical Education Program (OCEP) is an innovative, year-long third year medicine program which is neither rural nor tertiary-hospital based. OCEP students undertake a 20 week longitudinal integrated program of clinical placements with general practitioners, with local private specialists and allied health professionals, and in the local community hospital emergency department. They spend a further 20 weeks completing five 4-week

specialty placements, three of which are based in the local community. (Due to service constraints, students complete two rotations at a tertiary hospital). Throughout the year students attend twice weekly tutorials where they discuss a broad range of clinical and professional topics.

Community engagement and social accountability (CESA) are integral components of OCEP (Mahoney et al 2012). The program is based in an area of relative economic disadvantage, providing opportunities for learning activities that are also beneficial to the local community. During 2011 a number of activities were undertaken with different community groups (Mahoney 2011). While this approach provided medical students with choices for their activities, it was difficult to ensure that sufficient supervision was provided with multiple activities taking place. It was decided by faculty that it would be more beneficial to concentrate the efforts of both staff and students in one significant, long-term activity, and so in 2012 'The Cube' became OCEP's focus for its CESA activities.

What is "The Cube"?

'The Cube' is the name that has been given to a wellbeing centre that is being developed within a secondary school, where medical students will offer supportive services to adolescents on site at the school. Medical students, as near-peer providers and under appropriate supervision, will offer health and lifestyle- related advice, counselling, mentorship and guidance in a setting that is safe and familiar to adolescents.

The concept of The Cube

The Onkaparinga Clinical Education Program is located in an outer urban area on the southern fringe of Adelaide in South Australia, and is about 20 kilometres south of the main campus of Flinders University and 32 kilometres from the centre of Adelaide. Christies Beach High School (CBHS) is a large school of about 1200 students, located across the road from OCEP. Many of its students are socio-economically and educationally disadvantaged. Nearly 10 per cent of

the students are Indigenous, and 70 per cent of families receive Government assistance for education (Christies Beach High School, 2012). Faculty from OCEP approached the school with the social accountability agenda in mind saying 'We are here, this is who we are and what we do; is there anything we could do that could be helpful to you?'

The school's then-principal and school counsellors described their vision of a wellbeing centre for the school. The concept was based on models that have been developed in other secondary schools in South Australia, the Paralowie Reception to Year 12 School Wellbeing Hub, (Paralowie R-12, 2012) and the Victor Harbor Doctor on Campus program (Victor Harbor High School 2012). These centres offer supportive services on site at the schools and their students can obtain health and lifestyle- related advice, counselling, mentorship and guidance in a safe and familiar setting. The vision for The Cube is to build on to these models by involving medical students as near-peer providers of advice, support and counselling. This fits well with the CBHS purpose as stated by current principal Sharon Goldman of providing '… a safe, supportive, caring environment that optimises learning and self-development opportunities that engage with the lives of our students … encouraging all students to strive to do their best at all times' (Christies Beach High School 2012). It is also inn line with the South Australian Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) Learner Wellbeing Framework (DECD Learner Wellbeing 2007). Physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual health is integral to effective learning. Educational achievement, socio-economic status, employment, physical and mental illness and poverty are all inter-related. (Parliament of South Australia *Poverty Inquiry 2003)*. The issues faced by adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds may be diverse and compounded by poverty, homelessness, pregnancy and mental health issues. The aim of The Cube is to provide a resource for school students that may help to offset some of these issues.

The aim for the Cube resembles the service-learning described by Caspersz and colleagues (Caspersz, Kavanagh & Whitton 2012) in its goal

to create '…sustainable positive social change' and to encourage medical students to learn '…civic and social responsibility.' From the OCEP medical students' perspective, The Cube offers an opportunity to make an impact before they graduate. Undertaking activities that have a positive impact on the wider community ensures that medical studies are not just centred on the education and needs of the medical student, but also reflect the health needs of the community.

A significant need…

School has a major influence on adolescent development and can strengthen social and cultural capital, however poor school performance can be associated with poor health, chronic disease and fatigue. A 2011 review of the literature on the psychological and emotional wellbeing needs of children and young people for the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (Urbis 2011) discusses the relationship between addressing the social outcomes of children and subsequent positive academic outcomes (Urbis 2011), while Jorenen has shown that support from teachers and a peer is important for adolescent health and wellbeing (Joronen 2005), and that general subjective wellbeing is more positive when social relationships are developed both inside and outside the school.

There are many anecdotal reports that a large proportion of adolescents do not seek healthcare when they have health concerns (Quine et al, 2003).The aim of The Cube is that, by providing support, mentoring, and advocacy from near-peers (i.e. medical students), secondary school students will be encouraged and assisted to access mainstream medical professional and allied health services. Medical students can provide links to existing community services and become part of the school students' support network. There is good evidence that school-based medical education programs which include student-led activities and peer leadership have a positive influence on health and wellbeing. (Australian Guidance and Counselling Association 2007)

Students from a low socio-economic background are at a much higher risk of leaving school early. While an individual's decision to

drop out is often complex and interrelated, the effects are cumulative. Early drop out can lead to academic failure and low self-esteem, leading to continued failure and ultimately to disengagement from school and society. (Lamb et al 2004) Student counsellors at Christies Beach High School have found that their students often have a very limited adult or near-peer support network outside their parents and teachers. Some young people engage in risky behaviours that may affect their health, and while peers are a significant influence on youth health risk-taking behaviour, families and communities are also important. Young people from 'healthy' communities with access to warm and supportive schools and adults have more positive academic, social, behavioural and emotional outcomes and reduced risk-taking behaviours (Sorhaindo 2007). By becoming part of CBHS's supportive network it is hoped that OCEP medical students will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing of CBHS students. Near-peer mentoring from medical students could offer school students a young adult who can provide an unbiased ear and a positive role model. Male adolescents access health care less often than females in all adolescent- specific programs, while school-based clinics see a higher proportion of males. (Marcell 2002). Another potential benefit of The Cube is therefore to assist adolescent males to access mainstream health services.

... and a learning opportunity:

There are two groups of students who will gain from The Cube, high (secondary) school students and (tertiary) medical students. Positive Psychology theory (Seligman 2009), which focuses on improved understanding of how to sustain and improve the wellbeing of young people, will provide key principles for The Cube in promoting the health, wellbeing and success of secondary school students. Medical students involved in The Cube will experience the 'four Rs' of service learning: reflection, reality, reciprocity and responsibility. (Caspersz 2012) The Cube will enable medical students to develop skills in communicating with adolescents and to increase their understanding of adolescent health need. They will increase their understanding of the

local epidemiology and demographics of the community, the services that are available in the community and the barriers to the use of those services by adolescents.

Medical students' involvement in The Cube even at the current development stage allows them to work with a diverse team of secondary school staff and students, community health organisations, general practitioners, and university staff, and to gain a sense of responsibility as they develop professional relationships early in their medical careers. Within a medical course requiring students to acquire vast amounts of knowledge in a short period of time, working with The Cube will enable medical students to understand the importance of bio-psychosocial elements in the overall care of adolescents while providing a valuable resource to the community.

What might The Cube look like?

In a future that we hope is not far away, The Cube will be a youth-friendly space in the heart of the secondary school environment at CBHS. It is vital that school students feel they have some ownership of The Cube, and they will have a strong voice in its design and furnishing to ensure that it is well accepted. Located adjacent to the offices of the school's counsellors, The Cube will focus on health and wellbeing. Health and lifestyle information will be available, and school students will undergo activities that help to develop the space. For example - and all with teacher and/or other professional oversight - art students may provide paintings and sculptures to decorate the space, health science students may contribute to the development of the information materials that are provided, legal studies students could ensure that necessary medico-legal issues are covered, and so on.

Medical students will be available for group educational sessions and for one-to-one meetings with school students if requested. Medical students will be guided by very clear policies that enable them to seek professional support when it is required, and will have regular de-briefing sessions with a general practitioner and a school counsellor. They will be able to contact an appropriate health professional if a

school student needs referral to a mainstream service, and will help the student to access the service. This might be as simple as walking across the road with the student and entering the service's premises with them.

Both OCEP and CBHS will have an administrative assistant who manages the communication, timetabling and other administrative issues between the two organisations. Medical students will have close links with youth-friendly general practitioners and the range of health services that are available to provide formal care when needed.

Where are we now? - Building capacity along the path to The Cube

With the support of funding from the Flinders University Southern Knowledge Transfer partnership and from the School of Medicine, OCEP staff and students have worked with CBHS staff and students and a wide range of services and stakeholders to develop the groundwork for The Cube. Working with organisations such as the South Australian branch of the Australian Medical Association and their Youth Friendly Doctor program, Sexual Health information, networking and education, (SHine), Australia's National Youth Mental Health Foundation Headspace, Uniting Communities, the South Australian Department of Education and Child Development, the South Australian Postgraduate Medical Education Association (sapmea), the Colonnades branch of the Bendigo Bank, the Southern Adelaide Fleurieu Kangaroo Island Medicare Local and other agencies in OCEP and CBHS's immediate geographic area, a core group of stakeholders has been established. While OCEP and CBHS have been working to establish the funding and site for a dedicated space for The Cube, students from the two organisations have been engaged in interim activities to help develop the relationships between the organisations and their students. Students from both OCEP and CBHS have been able to develop leadership skills and confidence through being engaged with these activities.

Developing trust, rapport and mutual respect

OCEP students met with the CBHS student leadership group early in 2012 and followed this up with a survey of school students to try to gain an appreciation of what the school students felt would be of most interest to them. This enabled OCEP students to develop student- led activities, presentations and workshops on topics that were identified by school students. The first such activity was a presentation to CBHS students about what it was like going to University, rather than focussing on medical issues. While OCEP students were aiming to give useful information and to demystify the university experience, they learned of some of the significant barriers that some CBHS students face. These included financial limitations, lack of self-esteem and lack of social support. University was seen as unattainable by some of the CBHS students. Just as importantly, CBHS students provided the medical students with honest feedback that helped to improve the delivery of subsequent sessions.

CBHS students' responses to the survey provided a list of health-related topics that interested them: these included skin health, contraception, sexual health, body image, and drugs and alcohol. A group of OCEP students then designed and developed a multi-station set of workshops that included each of these topics. The workshops were designed to immerse the school students in small group- based learning environments where they could ask questions and discuss issues. Each workshop had a group of two or three OCEP students leading the group, and several of them also included a representative from an external body such as SHine, The South Australian Police Department, and Headspace. School staff monitored the overall function, which was held as an 'Expo' during an afternoon at the school. School students also contributed to the afternoon by providing posters, information leaflets, and running a post-event evaluation among the school students. CBHS students were mentored by and worked with OCEP students to develop these resources, and they also assisted OCEP students with running the

event. The work of the CBHS students gained them credit towards their final South Australian Certificate of Education.

In the lead up to the Expo, one OCEP student commented that '…having met the (school) students and spent time developing the (skin) workshop I am excited about engaging with the students in the coming months when the workshop is rolled out …. presenting and working with a group of school students will present a range of challenges, notably gaining their attention and trust, sparking the school student's interest in medical topics and keeping them actively involved. (OCEP students) believe such problems will be overcome through a well-structured workshop, with prizes for interaction, and multiple rehearsals with presenting partners before the final day'.

For OCEP students these capacity-building activities have reinforced other aspects of their clinical learning experiences. As part of their learning program, OCEP students work with General Practitioners up to two days a week. An OCEP student commented that the GP practice they are immersed in

'*…has a wide variety of patients from all walks of life, and I have noticed that adolescent health is quite a common presentation. I often find that engaging, and providing suitable level information and healthcare to these adolescents can be very challenging. The workshop will give me the ability to learn from students how I should approach their healthcare. As the program continues into the future and hopefully flourishes into 'The Cube' I believe future students will have an amazing opportunity to tutor, mentor and guide high school students, which will ultimately build and develop their (medical students) skills in adolescent health*.'

In addition to their direct activities with CBHS, OCEP students have also been able to contribute their experiences to the wider audience of people interested in University-Community engagement through their attendance and presentation at the Engagement Australia 2012 Conference held in Brisbane in July. One student described his experience at the Conference:

'*…it was rewarding to share with other individuals and organisations. I had the opportunity to learn from other fields such as*

Science, Law, Sports and Indigenous Education. Similarly, I believe other medical students can benefit from community engagement from the close interaction with their peers from other fields and the general community. Such benefits include leadership, event organisation, public speaking and counselling skills. It was refreshing to work with youngsters who were passionate about healthy lifestyles at CBHS. I cultivated such skills to improve interaction with younger students and to establish rapport with them'

A project like The Cube also provides the opportunity for medical students to collaborate with external stakeholders and community organisations in other projects. For example, OCEP students have had the opportunity to work with SHine in another arena to support adolescent male health initiatives. Another example is that as part of the Expo workshops on skin care, OCEP students sourced natural soaps that were handmade by a not-for-profit refugee organisation, whose funds are used to assist in a resettlement program.

Not necessarily a walk in the park: Identifying risks and barriers

As with most community engagement activities and relationships, there are potential sources of risks and stakeholders may have conflicting curriculums, timeframes, and/or expectations. It is important to identify and address these in advance wherever possible, to ensure that all parties have a shared understanding of the vision along with the aims and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the partnership. To maintain momentum, partners must be able to sustain their commitment, and keep communications open and frequent. In addition to administrative and management risks, particularly in an undertaking such as The Cube, there are also risks that need to be identified and minimised through setting up strict guidelines, procedures and protocols. Risks to both OCEP and CBHS students' safety must be addressed by developing comprehensive orientation processes and having a specialised support network with appropriate guidance and supervision. Some of the particular risks identified so far include: ensuring that medical students only work within their limitations,

issues surrounding mandatory reporting, attachment issues, inadequate relationship-building between OCEP students and CBHS students, time, funding and maintaining interest and passion.

Where to from here?

The Cube is intended to be a long-term establishment. The process so far has been deliberately measured and careful. We have been mindful of trying to avoid a 'project' mentality of coming in to someone else's space, doing a good exciting thing, and then leaving when the money runs out. Taking part in activities at The Cube will be a core component for all medical students who come to study at OCEP, and each group of students will hand the baton to the next cohort. It will meet Caspersz et al's definition of service learning where learning is 'both experiential and based on engagement', is 'targeted at social issues or needs' applies 'academic content in real world settings' and promotes the 'development of student civic responsibility, and by implication, the engendering of social responsibility'.

As discussed, both school and medical students will gain from the partnership, and OCEP students will use their existing and developing professional skills to improve outcomes for some members of the community in which they are learning.

Acknowledgements

Flinders University Southern Knowledge Transfer Partnership

Paul Wilson, former Principal of Christies Beach High School

Sharon Goldman, current Principal of Christies Beach High School

Chris Leech and Jane Hiatt, school counsellors CBHS

OCEP 2011 students

OCEP 2012 students

Students of Christies Beach High School

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Learning from the floods: lessons for understanding community resilience in the town of Theodore.

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Abstract

Much of the literature around engagement in Australia focuses on service learning and how this contributes towards student learning. To date, not much attention has been paid to community learning or to the benefits and challenges for community partners. This paper reflects on an engaged research journey aimed at better understanding how the community of Theodore responded to the recent floods of 2010-2011. It highlights the contribution made to learning from both a community and researchers' perspective, and outlines the lessons taken from this project along the way.

The paper demonstrates learning from both the community and researchers' perspectives reflected each other in many ways. These include learning patience, social connectivity, mutuality and considering the research as part of community learning as a way of looking toward the future.

Key Words: *engaged research, community learning, community resilience*

Although there is an argument that universities have always existed for the civic well-being of the communities in which they function, in recent years there has been a clear refocusing of energies on direct civic engagement by our higher educational institutions. Indeed, community-based learning and community-focused research are increasingly becoming embedded in the higher education activities (Gonzalez-Perez, MacLabhrainn & McIlrath, 2007). In this context, community engagement provides an avenue to bring research and learning together in a number of innovative ways that benefit both the community as well as the academy. This paper briefly outlines the first phase of a research project that provides an example of a team of CQUniversity researchers actively engaging with a small rural Queensland community, Theodore, after the town experienced extensive flooding in 2010-2011. It looks at how a community-based participatory approach to research helped the community learn from their experiences associated with the flood events, as well as highlight the lessons the researchers learned from their experiences in undertaking this project. As will become evident, the learning from both the community and researchers' perspectives reflected each other in many ways. These include learning patience, social connectivity, mutuality and considering the research as part of community learning as a way of looking toward the future. These synergies demonstrate intimate relationships between community learning, resilience and engaged research. As this paper will argue, engaged research can be a challenging yet satisfying avenue of intellectual and civic activity; one that involves the researchers accepting the messiness of process and outcomes but one that provides plenty of potential for growth as well. In particular, the engaged learning associated with such projects includes the researchers as well as the community in which the research takes place and consequently provides benefits to both parties.

Background to the project

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) emerged as an approach to research in the 1990s, although it could be argued it has its

basis in the work of Kurt Lewin in the 1940s and Paulo Freire in the 1960s and 1970s (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008). By including community members in the mechanisation of research rather than seeing them as 'subjects', CBPR has opened up research to more 'real-world' issues. As such, CBPR is defined as a partnership approach to research that involves the community and university researchers in all aspects of the research process, providing an opportunity to share decision making and ownership (Ramsden, McKay & Crowe, 2010). It is based on principles of emancipation, empowerment and a co-learning process that emphasises systems development and balances research with action (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008). However, CBPR also has some limitations in regards to being undertaken by academic researchers who are constrained by time and budgets inherent in traditional research projects and agendas. Beckman, Penney and Cockburn (2011) have noted that research projects funded through universities and most academically associated funding bodies are focused on short to medium term outputs and outcomes, but that the nature of community learning and development is a much longer term process and may not be evident in the timeframes of research projects, even community-based projects. The longer term impacts may not be evaluated or indeed, may never eventuate because of the premature withdrawal of interventions. This can be frustrating for members who are the long-term residents of communities and who have entered into relationships with researchers with an expectation of seeing such long term results (Head, 2007; McLachlan & Arden, 2009). As such, even though CBPR provides a suitable approach to undertaking engaged research, arguably more so than traditional research methods, its success lies in the ability of researchers to negotiate openly and honestly with community members regarding the benefits and limitations of the research project. This is an ongoing process and one that is based fundamentally on all participants in the research project learning together as the project progresses.

From the perspective of university researchers, CBPR challenges a number of closely held tenets. The interactive nature of communities

learning from researchers and researchers learning from communities creates mutual interdependence of the parties in realising developmental outcomes. In such a framework, it is impossible to know how the community might develop in absence of the 'intervention' imposed by the research process. While traditional research methods have attempted to eliminate such observer effects, the CBPR actively embraces the mutual interactions and joint learning as part of the research process. This process requires researchers to relinquish control and accept the expertise of the community (Buchanan 2000). It requires the researchers shifting their attention away from formulating and testing hypotheses to becoming more self-reflective. For a research project that explores community resilience, CBPR provides a useful avenue to not only investigate and understand community resilience within a particularly community, but also opens up opportunities to facilitate the growth of community resilience as a part of the process. In this way, CBPR forms an important part of the engaged learning that takes place for community members and the researchers.

In recent years, particularly in response to a number of natural disasters that have impacted on various regions throughout the world from Hurricane Katrina in the New Orleans, to the earthquakes in Christchurch to the flood events in Queensland in 2010-2011, community resilience has emerged as a key issue in determining how people deal with stressful situations both in the short and long term (Adger et al., 2005; Aldrick, 2012; Berkes, 2007; Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2009; Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2011; DiGiano & Racelis, 2012; Norris et al., 2007). While much of the research to date has considered community resilience from the perspective of a collection of individuals' resilience, it is becoming evident that collective community resilience is more than a sum of the resilience of individuals (Bava et al., 2010; Hegney et al., 2007; Mukota & Muhajarine, 2005). Colten, Kates and Laska (2008, p. 38) define community resilience as the ability of communities to 'rebound from disaster and reduce long-term vulnerability, thus moving toward more sustainable footing'. Indeed, a number of definitions of community resilience highlight resilience as a

capacity or ability to bounce back in the face of events such as natural disasters (Bava et al., 2010; Norris et al., 2007). Others emphasise community resilience more as a process of learning (McLachlan & Arden, 2009; Monaghan, 2012; Wilson, 2012), and it is this latter take on community resilience that will be focused on in this paper. All acknowledge community resilience as a highly complex, dynamic phenomenon composed of multiple interrelated dimensions that fluctuate over time.

The 'Showing and Growing Community Resilience in Theodore' project is a CBPR project funded by CQUniversity in response to the natural disasters in Queensland in the summer of 2010-2011. Theodore is a small rural town that supports a range of agriculture industries in Central Queensland with a population of just over 400 people. The entire town was evacuated twice and flooded three times between December 2010 and April 2011. Theodore has a reputation of being a resilient community, and it was for this reason the research team decided to focus on Theodore to better understand how communities respond to significant events such as floods. The first phase of the project, which will be focused on in this paper, used Photovoice (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008; Rhodes et al., 2008; Wang & Burns, 1997) to draw out the meaning the floods had for residents in regards to community resilience. Residents provided photographs as a means of telling their stories. Consistent with CBPR, researchers worked with participants to analyse these photographs to draw out a collective meaning for the community. A total of 138 photographs were reduced to 28 by 14 community participants who worked in four groups. These photographs were then considered in the light of what each photograph illustrated in terms of community resilience and to try and come up with a phrase that captured that meaning. This process was recorded and the transcripts were used by researchers to draw out themes but also to supplement the captions identified by the participants. The 28 photographs were enlarged and presented at a community photographic gallery event attended by around 50 members of the community. The preliminary themes were presented at this event to see

how these resonated with the community. Participants at the gallery were also asked to write any comments about the event in a guest book to help gauge their reactions to the photographs.

Themes of resilience from the community

The four preliminary themes presented to the community at the gallery event were: social connectedness; accepting what is but remaining optimistic; learning tolerance and patience; learning from the past but learning for the future. Each of these will be outlined briefly before exploring how these themes also reflected much of the learning associated with this project thus far.

Social connectedness: this theme highlighted both internal and external connectedness; of mates coming together to lend a hand; of volunteers from within the community as well as those who came into the community from elsewhere; of '*kids, parents and strangers. They're all just mucking in to clean up*' (Workshop group 2). This reflected a strong sense of volunteerism within the community, one that many believed forms an important part of the identity of those living in Theodore: '*Just mates getting together lending a hand, just shows a community spirit of – of a volunteer spirit more than anything*' (Workshop group 1). While there was reference to people smiling and laughing during this time, there was also recognition that people provided each other with strength, particularly during times of vulnerability; that this was a time of community togetherness, '*reflective of people in that when someone, someone's strength disappeared, someone else's strength came to the fore, was able to help someone carry one'* (Workshop group 4).

Accepting what is but remaining optimistic: the idea of acceptance was clearly articulated in a caption that went with one of the photographs that read: '*Out in the middle of nowhere, the water remains calm as the acceptance of the situation on their faces'* (Workshop group 1). However, this theme also highlighted a strong optimism that '*life would get back to normal. We would recover*'(Workshop group 4). This sustained the community during the clean-up and recovery efforts.

There was also a strong recognition that humour and laughter played an important role in helping with these efforts. Furthermore, there was a sense that the community could come back stronger as a result of the events, that '*a lot of people were able to clear out a lot of old stuff and start afresh*' (Workshop group 4), and that this could be seen as more than a literal cleansing process, even one of '*letting go of old animosities*' (Workshop group 4). As one participant commented, '*Well at least the dams are full and we've got plenty of grass… so it's not all bad news*' (Workshop group 2).

Learning tolerance and patience: this theme also drew out how the community accepted what the current situation consisted of but also highlighted how they learned to deal with less than perfect conditions. When reflecting on the state of the road, one participant said it reflected '*us putting up with the road but everybody had to put up with things not being fixed for a long time… we didn't crack mentals about it. We just went around the bad bits and got on with things*' (Workshop group 2). Participants indicated they had to learn to approach things in a different way and that this developed individual as well as community resilience. '*I certainly had to learn a patience that I probably have never had to experience… I think the resilience that I, I think part of the resilience was developing that very heightened sense of patience*' (Workshop group 4).

Learning from the past but learning for the future: this final theme captured the idea of social memory and linked together the importance placed by the community on the museum being saved from flooding because it was seen as holding '*the history of the town*' (Workshop group 2) with that of preparing future generations. This latter aspect of the theme was reflected in ensuring children were taught about the reality of living in Theodore, including the need for everyone to get involved in cleaning up. '*They're getting their first view, they should be learning what could happen in the future, a lesson for the future*' (Workshop group 3).

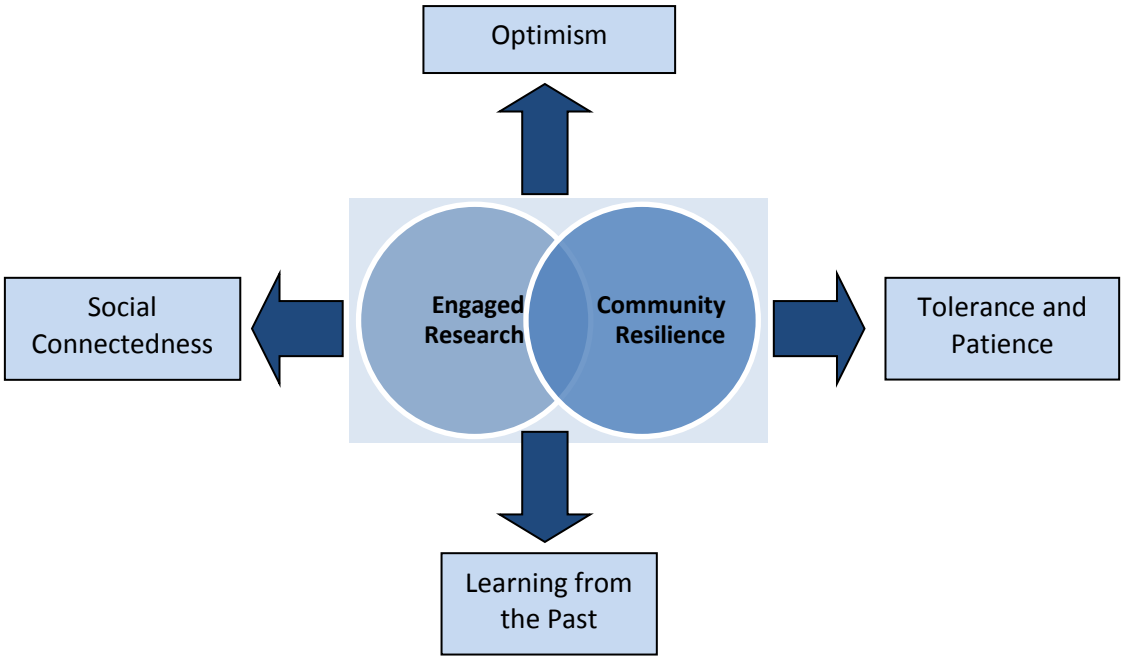
Learning from engaged research: understanding the process

Beckman, Penny and Cockburn (2011) suggest much of the literature around engagement focuses on service learning in regards to the influence these experiences have for student learning, but there is not much attention paid to community learning or to the benefits and challenges for community partners. There is also a tendency within research to focus on the results rather than the learning. The remainder of this paper, therefore, considers the lessons learnt from engaging with the Theodore community to explore community resilience for both the researchers and the community. These focus on the give and take associated with community engagement and the need to approach these types of research projects in an open and flexible manner, an approach that is not always consistent with traditional research projects, or indeed with university research processes which are based on projects having more detail in the planning stages (Stoecker, 2013). For example, ethical clearance processes require details of data collection and analysis prior to collecting any data, yet in order to involve community members in the process of researching issues relevant to the community requires some interaction beforehand, which could be interpreted as collecting data (Stoecker, 2013). This means there is often a need to obtain ethical clearance throughout the project as the various stages emerge (McIntyre, 2008). This was the process followed by this project, whereby ethical clearance was obtained in principle for the entire project, but only specifically for the first stage at the beginning of the project. Therefore, community-based projects often require researchers to adapt and be open to uncertainty throughout the project. In this case where the researchers were dealing with a community that is recovering from a traumatic event, we needed to be especially cognisant of the need to approach this project with sensitivity to the community's needs and situation.

Interestingly, as the research team reflected on their own learning from the first phase of the project, there was a strong resonance with the four preliminary themes associated with community resilience (patience, optimism, social connectivity and learning from the

past). It seemed that the learning that took place within the community could also provide insight for the researchers with respect to engaged research with communities. Figure 1 highlights the overlapping themes between community resilience and engaged research.

Figure 1: Community resilience and engaged research: representation of shared themes.



The first lesson taken from this project related to community readiness and acting in accordance with the community's timetable. Although a member of the community was part of the research team from the beginning of the project, after ethical clearance was obtained, conversations the researchers had with a key member of the community who had been intimately involved in the response and recovery efforts of Theodore, indicated the community was not ready for the research project at that point. The last flood event had been in April 2011 and the research team was ready to start stage one in August. This was disappointing at the time. However, as Bava et al., (2010) have noted, in order for community-based research to be successful, the researchers have to be invited into the community; the community needs to be ready for the research. Trying to force the project to happen according to the researchers' schedules will actively work against building a collaborative relationship with the community. Engaged research needs to rely on building trust and a strong relationship with key members of the community (Head, 2007;

Kilpatrick, Field & Falk, 2003). As such, this first lesson related to the researchers learning patience; to wait until the community was ready to be a part of this project. The value of waiting to fit in with the community's timetable only became evident when the project did start in April 2012. The first workshop had 18 people attend and there was a lot of interest and enthusiasm for the project.

The second lesson learnt related to the first in emphasising building rapport between the researchers and community. This was done in a number of ways. Firstly, the methodology was based on community participation and the community had plenty of opportunity to get what they wanted out of the research; that it was not solely directed by the researchers. In this case, the first stage of Photovoice was determined by the researchers as part of the funding application but also acted to set up an activity to start the engagement process. However, the direction for the remainder of the project was a collaborative effort between the researchers and the community members. McLachlan and Arden (2009) suggest methodology plays an important part in laying a firm foundation for collaboration. Secondly, the researchers were very open and honest in initially explaining what the research was about and what we hoped to achieve, emphasising we were not interested in 'helicopter research', where researchers fly in and out to get data and not meet community needs (Stoecker, 2013); that we were interested in developing a long term relationship with the community if they were interested in this. Openness and authenticity is emphasised by Head (2007) as being another important ingredient in building rapport with a community. Thirdly, the research budget allowed for a meal to be provided to workshop participants and this helped build trust and goodwill, as did staying after the workshops to chat and have a drink with participants. However, the most important step in building rapport was employing someone from the community to organise the workshops and to act as the 'broker'. Arden, McLachlan and Cooper (2009) highlight the importance of using brokers to establish bridging and linking ties between the university and the community. This second lesson therefore reflected the importance of

social connectedness as fundamental to ensuring the success of the project.

The third lesson related to mutuality and picked up on the idea of optimism. Bernardo et al. (2012) suggest both the researchers and community need to have a shared understanding of the outcomes and goals, and learn to trust and respect the needs and requirements of each party in order for engaged research to be effective. Indeed, community resilience is believed to be increased by collaboration between outside and inside stakeholders (Bava et al., 2010). So for this research project, it was clearly necessary that not only was the relationship firmly established, but that all worked towards mutual benefits from the project. While positive outcomes are relatively easy to measure for researchers, such as journal articles and conference presentations, tangible benefits to the community are sometimes less easy to see. However, in this case, the photographic gallery held as part of the Photovoice stage demonstrated many community members felt a sense of healing and were open to new perspectives regarding the flooding events as a result of viewing the photographs and captions. Comments made throughout the evening as well as those left in the visitors' book illustrate how the gallery event was encouraging people to talk in a positive way about their experiences. For example:

> '*Nothing like a healing experience to see ourselves again and again and again, this time only better'* (Visitors' book).
>
> *The choice of photos and the comments were very meaningful'* (Visitors' book).
>
> *'A different perspective is a breath of fresh air'* (Visitors' book).
>
> *'What a great way … to get us talking'* (Visitors' book).

In this way, this research project has contributed in one small way to the community continuing their recovery journey.

The photographic gallery also highlighted this research project as an avenue of community learning; of helping people look at things in a new way (McLachlan & Arden, 2009), which in itself can build resilience (Bourgon, 2010) and contribute to developing an ongoing

dialogue within the community (Bava et al., 2010). This is the fourth lesson taken from engaging with community in a research project such as this; that rather than measuring or examining what community resilience currently exists, the research project has contributed to growing community resilience. A number of people commented that the photographs were just photographs until they read the captions and all of a sudden both held meaning and opened up different ways of considering the floods and the events that occurred afterwards. Such anecdotal evidence, not captured in any traditional research way, may in fact be more valuable than any of the formal analysis that takes place throughout the project. Engaged research needs to be open to the possibility of unexpected benefits that are not able to be measured because community learning is in itself a messy process (Stoecker 2013). In this way, this lesson reflected the theme related to learning from the past, but as the final lesson illustrates, there is a future aspect to this learning as well.

The final lesson is one that is ongoing and relates to sustainability. While the research team have expressed a commitment and a wish to the community to be involved in the long term, this will to a large extent depend on being able to develop and find funding for on-going projects that are mutually beneficial to the community and the researchers. McLachlan and Arden (2009) have noted the limitations associated with government and university projects that have limited funding and vision. From the community's perspective, such interruptions do not contribute to building trust with external collaborators. As such, part of the remainder of this research project will be devoted to thinking about and working towards sustainability of the relationship beyond the life of the current project.

Discussion

Although it may seem like coincidence that the lessons learned from our engaged research project have reflected many aspects of the community resilience themes derived from the Photovoice analysis,

these lessons/themes are emerging as key ideas within the literature reinforcing the notion community resilience and engaged research are fundamentally activities of community learning. Engaged research depends on social connectedness. The increasing literature on social capital, including understanding the importance of bonding, bridging and linking social capital (Kilpatrick, Field & Falk, 2003; Poortinga, 2012; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004; Woolcock, 2010) supports the significance of the relationships within and between individuals and groups within a community and that building social capital is a cornerstone to building community resilience (Wilson, 2012). Universities form a part of these communities, despite the fact researchers have tended to try and study social capital from afar in the past. Engaged research places the university and its researchers firmly within the context of these social relationships and recognises universities have a role to play in building community resilience. This is not about objectively observing community resilience, but about being a part of the solution and activity that contributes to long term impacts within the community (Beckman, Penney & Cockburn, 2011). Engaged researchers also need to be realistic about the communities in which they work and remain optimistic about the impact their work could be having, despite not being able to necessarily see significant short term results. If community resilience is understood in terms of building the collective capacity of a community to learn and adapt and to ensure a more equitable distribution of risks, as envisaged by a number of community resilience researchers (Bourgon, 2010; Monaghan, 2012; Wilson, 2012;), then all members of the community need to be engaged in this process, to contribute to 'active citizenry, empowered communities and a civic spirit that infuses every aspect of life in society and encourages collective action' (Bourgon, 2010, p. 211). Building community resilience is essentially a process of community learning, and like all learning it takes time and patience. Researchers engaged in this process need to work to the community's timetable and to work with the ebb and flow of community activities. Beckman, Penney and Cockburn (2011) note that many engaged researchers need to consider

community-based research projects with a view towards the larger potential, including possible ripple effects. That is, the long-term impacts within a community can take quite some time to become evident. This requires learning a lot of patience. Finally, a number of community resilience researchers advocate that after a traumatic event, such as a natural disaster, communities never return to their pre-event state, that there is renewal rather than recovery (Magis, 2010; Norris et al., 2007;). That 'new normal' can be a more vulnerable or a more resilient state depending on the capacity of the community to absorb and respond to the challenges that have been placed in front of it (Wilson, 2012). From this perspective, it is in the interests of communities and the universities within those communities to actively build the capacity of communities into the future. Engaged researchers can make a significant contribution to that future.

Conclusion

This paper has presented a journey of learning for the researchers as well as the community in which the project took place. As engaged researchers we have had to learn to connect with the Theodore community and to build rapport and trust. We have had to learn to accept situations but look towards taking a positive approach to our experiences. We have had to learn patience and wait for when the community was ready for us to start this project. Finally we have learnt to acknowledge and respect past experiences this community may have had with other researchers but look towards a future in the hope of being able to contribute to building the resilience of the Theodore community. We have found reflecting on this research journey has increased our understanding of not only community resilience, but of engaged research and that both are essentially opportunities for community learning.

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