



**Community perceptions of the impacts and benefits of a service learning
project for small, medium and micro enterprises in a department of tourism
management at a university of technology**

by

PAVLA PHITLHELELO MOKOENA

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Supervisor: Professor J Spencer

Professor J Nduna

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Community engagement in universities of technology is evolving to become a game-changer in addressing the economic challenges of the country (Erasmus, 2005:4). Service learning (SL) as a form of community engagement is promoted in higher education, as a learning paradigm. Conway, Amel and Gerwien (2009:238) encourage enquiry into the benefits of this pedagogy and the partnerships involved, as faculties curriculate and adopt the service learning model into current programmes (Lazarus, Erasmus, Hendricks, Nduna & Slamati, 2008:60-61). The SL project of the Tourism Management Department at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) is distinctive in design from the generic social-change focussed projects within Universities of Technology (UoTs). Its outcomes are based on the development of business plans for small and medium enterprises for implementation. The assessment of this interactive learning process was essential to determine whether it yielded any positive change in the participants. Thus the aim of the study is to determine the success or otherwise of the service learning project, so as to ensure that the small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) community and students benefit from the Tourism Management project. The study sample included nine small and medium tourism entrepreneurs (SMTEs) and 178 third year tourism management students. From the sample two SMTEs participated in one-on-one interviews and six students participated in a focus-group interview.

Action research was undertaken for this study, and census sampling was adopted to collect quantitative and qualitative data from project participants. The ATLAS.ti 7 data analysis programme was employed to process the qualitative data, and SPSS 22.0 software was utilised to develop frequency tables from the quantitative data. All data was triangulated to obtain conclusions. Fifty-two percent (52%) of student participants learnt leadership skills, with 64% indicating essential benefits on business skills. Company visions were shared throughout the collaborative process, and 76% of SMTE responses, directed to the students' solutions, being highly innovative for their businesses; and these were implemented to improve business processes. The findings of the study attested to the SL model improving reciprocal learning, and having positive benefits for all partners involved. In continuing the essential dialogue on implementation of SL in higher education, sustainable partnerships in SL projects are essential to ensure continued positive results. The majority of participants responded positively to a willingness to participate in a similar project, which is a positive indicator of the benefits of the project. Implications for future studies point towards a need for continued monitoring of growth performance in the participating small and medium enterprises.

Keywords: service learning, community engagement, learner attributes, partnership

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

B&B	Bed and Breakfast
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
CATHSSETA	Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality, and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority
CCFOs	Critical Cross Field Outcomes
CE	Community Engagement
CHESP	Community Higher Education Services Partnerships
CO	Community Outreach
Co-op	Cooperative Education
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
DACUM	Design a Curriculum Workshop
JET	Joint Education Trust
NSA	National Skills Authority
SAA	South African Airways
SAHEI	South African Higher Education Institutions
SETA	Sectoral Education and Training Authority
SL	Service Learning
SME	Small and Medium size Enterprise
SMME	Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
SMTE	Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises
SREB	Southern Regional Education Board
TSA	Tourism Satellite Accounting system
UoT	University of Technology
WESGRO	Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency of South Africa
WIL	Work Integrated Learning
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The Tourism Management National Diploma programme at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) is a three year course, during which the student completes six months in industry as part of the learning programme to gain industry insight. During this period, the students are required to join various tourism and government enterprises for six months, starting in September of their second year of study, to return in April of the following year. In the third year of their study, after returning from their experiential training, the senior students become involved in a collaborative project with industry, called service learning (SL). The service learning project is a curriculum-based project linked to one or multiple subjects that run parallel to the final academic year programme.

During this phase students get an opportunity to put into practice what they have learned in the three years of study, including their six month in-service training period, to assist small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) by conducting a needs analysis of the business. This is to develop improvement strategies for a business, and share and document business improvement ideas while collaborating with a representative from the specific SMMEs.

This process starts when a company representative of the SMME who, by continuous engagement through briefings and information sessions, accepts an invitation to participate with CPUT and a governmental partner, the Western Cape Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency of South Africa (WESGRO). The SMME representative volunteers their time for the project. The project in the Tourism Management Department has been running for five years with various community partners yet, there is uncertainty about the social benefits of the project for the communities involved.

The CPUT community engagement draft policy defines service learning as '*...student learning that takes place within or through a community development project; it is fully curriculated, including monitoring and assessment of student progress...*' (CPUT, 2008:3). As stated in the policy, throughout their collaborated project period, the students' performance is monitored and assessed by lecturing staff through reflective submissions of their progress. The programme has evolved from different subjects within the Department with various community partners each year, who will be able to provide feedback on the benefits for students and the community partners involved in the project.

The service learning project of the Tourism Management Department at CPUT is unique in design in that the tangibility of the outcomes of the project are based on paper results in the form of business plan proposals for companies to implement. The project is not based on solving community psychological ills, or tangible structural changes to the immediate surroundings or physical structures of the business, as is the case with the majority of the projects in other departments in the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences. Many of these projects for example, focus on and from assisting impoverished communities through door-to-door education campaigns about social ills, or by approaching non-profit organisations to help improve buildings structures (Keating, 2014).

The concept of the Tourism Management service learning project is based on educating and collaborating with business representatives, and on creating proposals that a business will be able to independently implement and improve on after the service learning project is completed (Easterling & Rudell, 1997:60-61). Thus the purpose of the programme is not to step in and have the students create ideas for the business, but rather the purpose is to build partnerships based on mutual learning and skills development (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002:509-510).

1.1.1 The role of the service learning (SL) module

The role of service learning in business studies, as Easterling and Rudell (1997:59) point out, is to broaden the students' learning by allowing them to apply practical business solutions to problems experienced in the business they are paired with during the project. A study conducted by Conway, Amel and Gerwien (2009:237-240), indicates that service learning as a teaching mechanism yielded positive change in the participating students, even with no feedback or reporting provided on the social environment from the community partners, in this case the SMMEs. Nduna (2007:74) states that it is essential to document the impact of the service learning projects on and from various stakeholders to be able to build a strong case for inclusion in the curriculum.

1.1.2 Desired benefits of the project for all stakeholders

For CPUT and the students, service learning is an integrated student-community engagement project. Service learning is a course-based credit-bearing educational experience, constructed in a way that the project is linked to one or multiple subjects with a weighting of 20% that is set aside for this project in each participating subject. The students participate in an organised service for the purpose of understanding the course content, linked with industry experience, for the purpose of enhancing academic learning (Nduna, 2007:73-74).

The intention of the service learning project is for venture improvement of the participating SMME community. It is meant to bring about positive social change, provide new ideas for businesses, and build future plans to cement the success of the business. Students integrate information learnt from the classroom, to help develop well-documented business or marketing plans for the participating ventures. The students need to document the new ideas into business plans that are handed over to the business owners (communities) after the completion of the project.

During this period the students gain considerable practical industry insight, learning how these businesses function from an operational stand-point, while applying what they learn in theory to real-life situations. The students' performance is monitored through feedback sessions in class and through presentations of their final products. Although feedback is obtained from the students, there is limited feedback or reflection from the communities on the final business documents they receive after the project, as well as their perception of the service learning process.

The intended benefits of the project for the communities is in the students using the information they gain in the class room to assist new tourism enterprises that do not have business plans or well-documented marketing plans. The students advise the businesses on what strategies can work, documenting this information in business and marketing plans for the tourism enterprises. To date, the intended benefits of this project cannot be proven as there is no documented feedback from the communities involved of their perceptions of the service learning project. Osman and Petersen (2013:231) identify community partners in the service learning context as "a sector of a local community with whom the university establishes a long-term relationship in order to collaborate with". Throughout the study, the Tourism SMMEs will be referred to as community or communities.

1.2 Problem statement

There is no long-term study that measures the benefits of the Tourism Management service learning project. What is needed is to establish whether the concept of service learning benefits communities such that it warrants the project's continuation.

1.3 Research aim

The aim of the study is to determine the success or otherwise of the service learning project, so as to ensure that the SMME community and students benefit from the Tourism Management project.

1.4 Research objectives

The research objectives involve establishing how effective the design of the project is in providing benefits for all stakeholders. These objectives are as follows:

1. To identify the benefits of the service learning project for the communities involved;
2. To assess the impact(s) the service learning project has on the participants of communities involved;
3. To establish if the benefits experienced are aligned with the desired aims of the service learning project for the communities involved;
4. To gauge the level of community interest in participating in service learning projects in the future;
5. To determine the efficiency of the service learning project design;
6. To ascertain the benefits of the service learning project for the Tourism Management Department and CPUT, and
7. To determine the beneficial work-placed learning skills students attain by partaking in the service learning project.

1.5 Research questions

This research project generated the following questions that needed to be answered:

1. Is the service learning project in the Tourism Management Department at CPUT yielding any benefits for the community involved?
2. Are there any significant social impacts for the communities involved in the service learning project?
3. Are these benefits aligned to the intended aims of the service learning project for the communities involved?
4. Will there be a continued interest by the community in the service learning project in the future?
5. Is the design of the service learning project in the Tourism Management Department structured efficiently?
6. What are the benefits of the service learning project for the Tourism Management Department and CPUT?
7. Do the senior students in the CPUT Tourism Management Department benefit by gaining skills through the service learning project?

1.6 Significance of the study

Howard (2003:7-9) indicates that for the continued participation of stakeholders in service learning, the processes of these projects need to be recorded, and best practices need to be shared, a statement that was also enforced by Stanton (2015). This study will add to the SL body of knowledge in assessing various engagement models in the African context (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo, & Bringle, 2011:217). Models and clear reports will also impact on future plans for the Tourism Management Department and government partners, who are the custodians in this respect. The feedback from this study will help decision making in this project's future. The data will further be used to inform the planning of future projects, and to guarantee continued participation from tourism enterprises. An important benefit of this research is to improve research outputs in the CPUT service learning field.

1.7 Research design and methodology

This research involves the Tourism Management Department at CPUT, Tourism SMMEs, who are the project community, a representative of WESGRO, the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) centre at CPUT, and University students and alumni. The study focuses on the projects conducted during 2012 and 2013 constituting 36 companies which participated in the project over the two year period. A literature review linked to service learning and Tourism SMME structure in South Africa was conducted and various sources, including the South African Council of Education Reports and various South African tourism destination marketing agency reports were consulted. Various forms of engagement activities with communities are highlighted, including Howard's (2003:2) definition of service learning and its role in higher education. Information drawn from this literature review was used in the design of the questionnaires for data collection.

1.7.1 Study population and sample

There were a total of 200 tourism SMMEs registered on the WESGRO database between 2012 and 2013, of which only 36 responded to an invitation from CPUT to take part in the Tourism Management Department's service learning project during 2012 and 2013, despite numerous requests to take part in the study. Thus the primary population of the study is the 36 tourism SMMEs, and are referred to in this study as participating communities. Student perceptions were also assessed, and the secondary sample was made of 176 students who participated in the project. Due to the small size of the population, a census study of this entire population was conducted in order to gather reliable data, referred to as a convenience sample by Marshall (1996:523). Kothari (2006:14-16) notes that the census enquiry was

important for this study as the sample is small and limited to the participants of the service learning project.

1.7.2 Research tools and data collection

Questionnaires containing closed and open-ended questions were sent to all participating SMME representatives who responded to the CPUT invitation. The design of the questionnaires focused on gathering both quantitative and qualitative data from the sample. The purpose of the instrument is to determine the benefits of the service learning project for communities, as well as their perceptions of the service learning project. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants from the 36 responding participants, to gain detailed clarity on the communities' understanding of the role of the service learning project. The SMME representatives submitted SL comments at the end of each project, and these also form part of the tools used to collect data on the SL project.

The secondary population are the students or graduates who participated in the service learning project during 2012 and 2013. Survey questionnaires were posted to this group in the hope of gaining knowledge pertaining to their general perceptions of the service learning process, as well as the perceived learning that took place during the project. Focus group interviews were conducted with the student respondents as a validation process of the data collected from the questionnaires. As part of their learning process, student-groups were required to reflect on their SL experiences using PowerPoint. These student reflections are also included in the data to be analysed as they contain relevant information for this study. Creswell (2003:16-23), alluded to the importance of the types of learning that take place during service learning projects, some of which was investigated in the various sources of data collected for the study.

1.7.3 Data analysis

The collection of data aims to use both qualitative and quantitative methods in a complementary way, as the quantitative methods focus more on factual data, while the qualitative methods allow for detailed understanding of context (Steckler, McLeroy, Goodman, Bird, & McCormick, 1992:3-5). The varied approach to collecting data is used to draw meaning from the respondents' answers about their service learning experiences (Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002:46-48). Data collected through qualitative and quantitative research tools is analysed and triangulated to assess the perceptions of the participants from the SL project.

This feedback from the communities provides information on the design of current service learning projects within the CPUT Tourism Department, as well as providing vital curriculum data/information on requirements for future projects. Data of perceptions of the community involved in the service learning programme is vital in this step to determine the future planning process of the service learning project.

1.8 Ethical considerations

Participation in this study was on a voluntary basis, which was clearly stated in a covering letter attached to each questionnaire. In addition, at the start of each interview, all respondents were informed that the interview is voluntary. Ethical clearance from the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences was sought and obtained, to conduct this study (2014 FBREC 209). Approval for conducting the interviews and distributing questionnaires was obtained from WESGRO, the organisation that extended the invitation for participation in the service learning project and with whom the participants are affiliated. Individual participants were sent notification for their approval to participate in the research. Approval for interviewing the students was obtained from the Head of the Tourism Management Department and complies with CPUT ethical requirements. All questionnaires and interview information were treated with strict confidentiality and no personal names were used in the reporting of the results of the study.

1.9 Directions for future research

The current study deals with the benefit and importance of community engagement in the project, and aims to establish whether there is learning taking place outside of the academic framework, and/or whether community engagement skills are gained throughout the project.

The project assesses the level of achievement of all critical cross field outcomes (CCFOs) identified in the subject guides of related subjects for the students of the Tourism Management Department who were involved in the service learning project. These CCFOs, which include effective team work, will be clearly outlined in Chapter Two of the study. As a prospective continuing study, answers from this survey may confirm the importance of service learning projects within the current and future curriculum.

A secondary study objective would be to show if there is any evidence of improvement for the involved students in terms of the identified student attributes linked to this project, which could increase students' employability levels.

1.10 Study outline

Chapter One: General orientation of the study. This chapter provides an overview of the study. It includes the problem statement, the study aim and objectives, the study questions, and the significance of the study. The chapter also provides direction for future research that may arise from this particular study.

Chapter Two: Service learning modules. This chapter focuses on the international models of service learning. It provides background information of the development process of service learning in South Africa, and pinpoints the service learning models that are suitable for the tourism industry. An in-depth review of perceived benefits of service learning programmes for students and tourism entrepreneurs, who are the communities, will be referred to in the study. An observation in some of the literature sources used in defining service learning and its developments may be outdated. This was due to a limitation in recent sources and in an effort to refer to original text on the subject matter, while recent sources are also used.

Chapter Three: This chapter looks at tourism SMMEs operating in South Africa, offering a brief view of the developments of the industry prior to and after democracy, and policy developments that have affected the growth of tourism in the country. This chapter assesses the scope of SMMEs operating in the tourism industry in South Africa, while focusing on the challenges facing these organisations. Current skills and entrepreneur qualifications of tourism entrepreneurs are also assessed.

Chapter Four: This chapter deals with the research design and research methodology of the study. Qualitative and quantitative research methods are used. The piloting process of the research questionnaires is explained. The population of the study is explored, which includes the following summary of the projects from 2012:

- 2012 - Marketing 2 (level 3) partnering with WESGRO (12 SMMEs)
- 2013 - Marketing for Tourism 2 and Tourism Management 3 partnering with WESGRO (26 SMMEs)

Chapter Five: A discussion of the study findings is offered in this chapter. The chapter starts with the analysis, comparison and discussion of questionnaires from Tourism SMMEs and from students, followed by discussions from the one-on-one interviews with the Tourism SMMEs and the student focus group interview. This discussion is followed by the student reflections and a comment from the SMMEs who participated in the SL project.

Chapter Six: This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations. A review of the main points of the study is undertaken. The conclusions reached from the collected data are outlined and recommendations are provided.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW: SERVICE LEARNING AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines forms of community engagement, while clearly defining SL and the design thereof as a form of community engagement in South Africa. Phases of the Tourism Management SL project in this study are clearly stated, and a definition of SL stakeholders is provided. Benefits and limitations of SL participation are also discussed.

2.2 Rationale for service learning in South African Universities of Technology

Even after 20 years of democracy, South Africa needs more interventions to move communities from a position of need to one of self-sustainability (Mahlatsi, 2007:1-2). In addition, there is a dire need for a shift in the education agenda in South Africa (Erasmus, 2005:4). Lazarus, et al., (2008:61) clearly outlines the SL conceptualisation process which started with the release of the Education White Paper Number 3 in 1997.

The concept of service learning in South Africa developed in 1999, when South Africa's Joint Education Trust (JET) launched the Community Higher Education Service Partnerships (CHESP), to assist South African Higher Education Institutions (SAHEI) to conceptualise and implement Community Engagement (CE) as a core function of university academic programmes (Lazarus et al., 2008:57-60). Community engagement is a cluster of activities that include service learning, volunteering and problem-based teaching (Hall, 2010:6-7), which assists in promoting and developing social responsibility and social awareness among students.

This process was followed by debates and the realignment of policies and terminology by higher educational institutions like JET and CHESP to differentiate SL from community engagement (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005:121-123), which allowed for the development of a multi-faceted approach to community engagement, and improved participation by universities in the country (Lazarus et al., 2010:7).

The centre for Work Integrated Learning (WIL) at CPUT identified three main forms of community engagement: *community outreach (CO)*, which was more focused on short-term volunteer programmes, focusing on benefits only for the communities; *cooperative education (Co-op)*, based on students spending a period of time in industry, with a focus on learning professional skills for students; and *service learning (SL)*, the curriculum-based community

interaction programme, which is a practical two-way learning and production process aimed at benefiting both community members and students (Scheepers, 2015).



Figure 2.1: Forms of community engagement vs results of community engagements (Ohlhoff, 2014)

The three forms of community engagement play an integral part in the education process of Universities of Technology (UoTs) in South Africa, and were implemented at strategic levels within the academic structures of UoTs. As depicted in Figure 2.1 SL, which is the focus of this research project, was seen as the programme that offered a win-win outcome for both the students and the community involved. The structures of the SL partnerships will be discussed further in Section 2.6 in this Chapter.

2.3 Definition of Service Learning

The Southern Regional Education Board (Stanton, Giles & Cruz, 1999) defined service learning as ‘...the accomplishment of certain tasks or activities that meet genuine human needs, while consciously improving educational growth of students...’ (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999:2).

Service learning, as a form of community engagement, was defined as a learning experiential programme (Matthews & Zimmerman, 1999:384-386) that was credit bearing and took place in an organised service activity (Fourie, 2003:32). In these engagement activities, reflection on service activities, improved learning and understanding of service actions by all parties involved is essential (Council on Higher Education, 2006b:16-18; Smith-Tolken, 2013a:50-51). Additionally, the experiences of SL foster students’ learning and improve civic responsibility (Sandmann, Kiely, & Grenier, 2009:24).

The CPUT community engagement draft policy defined service learning as ‘...*student learning that takes place within or through a community development project; it is fully curricularized, including monitoring and assessment of student progress...*’ (CPUT, 2008:3). As noted by Nduna (2007:70) SL could be considered as the one form of community engagement that offers an opportunity for structured collaborative work between communities and students, with reciprocal learning (Osman & Petersen, 2013:7).

The process of service learning occurs in cycles where students learn theoretical knowledge in the classroom that is reflected on and applied within a particular problem in the community in which they are working (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005:118). These values are reflected in the CPUT policy on community engagement as it is a structured goal-orientated community engagement programme that is credit-bearing and closely monitored for progress (CPUT, 2008).

2.3.1 Models of service learning

SL could be viewed in various types of modules, namely service-orientated modules and content-orientated modules (Morton, 1996:277-278). The Council on Higher Education (2006a:22) differentiated the SL models as community-based, discipline-based and problem-based. The SL project within the context of this survey lends itself to being discipline-based, as it was constructed from the curriculum outcomes of integrated efforts between marketing and management focused subjects.

Mouton and Wildschut (2005:120-121) further highlighted more international models of SL, which might not necessarily be adopted by South African universities. An example of these is the capstone service learning programmes which were designed for post-graduate programmes. In South Africa SL projects in UoTs are conducted at undergraduate level (Osman & Petersen, 2013:4). In these projects students are required to draw on previous community engagements and use their past experience.

Osman and Petersen (2013:6-11) indicate two typical paradigms of SL: the charitable or philanthropic form, and the form that is geared towards social change. These authors further state that lecturers and their students tend toward a particular paradigm based on their understanding of SL, as well as on the structure of their field or discipline. In order to understand the SL project highlighted in this study, it is necessary to discuss the curriculum foundations of this project, the envisaged aim of the project, as well as the partners involved in the project.

Philanthropy mainly occurs in environments where parties or corporates with a form of power, either in monetary resources or innovation, step into a needy community. They offer the type of support based on limitations experienced by the local communities. Assistance may be on a long-term or short-term basis. External help is acquired to implement or coordinate the resources offered to the needy community. Organisations get involved in philanthropic work to improve their social standing (Porter & Kramer, 2002:8)

Unlike philanthropic activities, social change programmes also include benefits for communities, and social change programmes are those projects that occur in environments which have a need, and have the opportunity to solve their own challenges. The forms of programmes are not popular as they demand more training, and encourage a different thinking by communities, to enhance their lives (Speck & Hoppe, 2004:8, 14).

2.3.1.1 The curriculum-based service learning model

The CPUT Tourism Management Department's SL project is linked to marketing and management subjects, which equips students with entrepreneurial management and venture marketing skills at third year level. The main goal of the service learning project is to assist upcoming small, medium and micro tourism enterprises (Van Zyl & Mathur-Helm, 2008; Vallabh, 2012) to develop business planning ideas, and to document these ideas in the form of business plans. This form of service-orientated approach to the SL project allows students to perform a service together with community partners, which is directly linked to their subjects (Council on Higher Education, 2006b:15), and by reflecting on their experiences they could connect learning with practice (McElhaney, 1998:13; Osman & Petersen, 2013:16).

Suitable approaches in this model for the purposes of this study are discipline-based service learning and problem-based service learning. Discipline-based service learning is more suited to the social sciences fields like nursing or psychology, where students are expected to perform some work in the community on a more regular and organised basis. The problem-based service learning approach, which this study uses, lends itself to the community viewing students as consultants. Both students and communities conduct a situational analysis from which recommendations are chosen for the community to improve upon (Council on Higher Education, 2006a:39). This process is explained in section 2.3.2 of this chapter.

2.4 Defining the forms of community engagements within the tourism management course

As identified in Chapter One of the study, the Tourism Management National Diploma is a three year under-graduate programme, which incorporates the three forms of community engagement depicted in Figure 2.1 within the three year structure. The first year of study is structured as an introductory phase, focusing on principles of the tourism industry. Basic structures of the industry are outlined and links are made between various aspects such as management and tourism development principles. This level incorporates volunteer activity

work, where students' efforts are aimed at raising funds for selected beneficiaries through a series of organised events.

2.4.1 Co-operative learning

The second year of study incorporates the six-month long co-operative education programme in order for students to gain industry insight and experience. During this period, the students join various tourism and government enterprises as trainee employees. This time spent on site begins in September of their second year of study, and concludes in April of the following year. This phase is student-centred, with a focus on gaining professional industry skills and putting into practice the theoretical work learned in the classroom (Collier & Morgan, 2002:186).

2.4.2 The Service Learning project

In the third year of their study, after returning from their experiential training, the senior students enrol in a collaborative project with industry, called service learning (SL). The service learning project is a curriculum-based project linked to one or multiple subjects that are offered in parallel to the final academic year programme (Osman & Petersen, 2013:6-7).

During this phase students have the opportunity to put into practice what they have learned in the three years of formal study, including their six month in-service training period. They set out to assist small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) by conducting a needs analysis of the business to develop improvement strategies for the business, and share and document business improvement ideas while collaborating with a representative from the specific SMMEs. This experience, rather than being focused on the students' work experience, is focused on the students gaining knowledge around community needs (Collier & Morgan, 2002:186).

This study did not focus on the critical cross field outcomes (CCSFs) of the subject Marketing for Tourism 2, which include the personal attributes to be gained in relation to the subject at hand. It is essential to highlight the skill sets taught in this module, as they are closely linked with the skills a socially responsible employee within the tourism industry needs to possess, in order to succeed (Tourism Business Council of South Africa, 2013:18). The aim of critical cross-field outcomes are to direct educational activities towards development of the learner within a social and economic environment linked to the tourism industry. The critical cross-field outcomes for this subject aim to develop the following competences:

- Identifying and solving problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made;

- Working effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation or community, managing oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively;
- Collecting, analysing, organising and critically evaluating information, and
- Communicating effectively using visual and language skills in the modes of oral, written persuasions and electronic means (CPUT. MTR200S, 2013:4).

Full personal development of each learner is linked to their awareness of social and economic developments within the tourism industry (CPUT. SL Student Brief, 2013).

Although the focus of this study is not based on the critical skills or outcomes of this SL project, elements of these critical skills are embedded within the skills acquired by taking part in SL projects. Merely by participating in the project, students are able to develop interpersonal knowledge (Zlotkowski, 1998:J-1). Data collected from this study will help to determine if any of the critical skills laid out in the SL project are acquired by students.

2.5 The structure/flow of service learning projects at Universities of Technology

Successful service learning projects are based on a number of principles, which ensure that activities include responsible and challenging actions for a common good. Prior interactive meetings were held with prospective participants. In the information sharing sessions, clear responsibilities of all parties involved, continuous monitoring of the project, and continued commitment to this SL project as well as any other relevant information is communicated (Eby, 1998:7).

To further guarantee the quality of SL projects, Carter, Rivero, Cadge and Curran (2002:160) recommend asking five important questions before planning any project. These are:

- Amongst the goals for the project, will there be primary and secondary SL project goals to be achieved?
- Is project participation mandatory or compulsory?
- How many sites/ companies can be taken on-board for the project?
- What are the roles and levels of participation of individual students?
- On what basis and how often should student and company meetings take place?

2.5.1 Planning phase

It is vital for the planning and success of the project to include input from the SMMEs who volunteer their time to the project. This input included time frames, the envisaged plan of the project, and roles to be undertaken (Giles & Eyler, 1998:69). SMMEs were invited to a

planning meeting at CPUT, together with representatives from government partners and the Centre for Cooperative Learning at CPUT. Not all volunteers attended the meeting, but those who did added value with regard to logistical arrangements of the project. Communication from that meeting was disseminated to all partners.

It is vital that students are also orientated to the process of the project, including their involvement, and the prospective benefits of such a project for the community involved (Berle, 2006:43-48). This process facilitates greater participation by the students, when they know what they are going to do, who is involved, how it affects their progress in the course, and most importantly, why they are doing the project.

2.5.2 Implementation phase

To implement SL at CPUT, the students and company representative met in July 2012 and the following year for each respective project, upon returning from the university recess. The meet-and-greet session was coordinated by the SL coordinator who explained the reason for the SL project and outlined expectations from both parties at the meeting, including timelines and projected outcomes. It is important to mention that students were also made aware of the sensitive nature of information they would be made privy to once the project started, and were dissuaded from sharing classified information with competitor businesses.

Since there were competing companies participating in the programme, sensitive information was bound to be shared in each session. To ensure that business representatives felt this company information would not be compromised, all meetings with individual companies were arranged in private. Follow-up consultations from July to September 2012 were arranged between students and businesses, without the influence of the SL coordinator, who was only responsible for transport and other logistical requirements at this stage. Although there was not much interference by the SL coordinator during this phase, all communication between students and businesses was closely monitored, to ensure guidance where problems might arise.

The SL coordinator arranged continuous progress meetings with all groups. The meetings took place in two phases:

- The first phase was the general weekly meeting where content-related matters were discussed in a 40 minute class session. The purpose of this meeting was to relate subject content to the different stages of the programme.
- The second phase was private group meetings set once a month where individual group well-being and progress reports were required.

2.5.3 Project reflections

Reflection in SL is considered as an integral part of converting learned information about subject matter, practical and theoretical combinations, and most importantly personal development, into meaningful results (Selener, 1997:104-105). Feedback sessions were arranged towards the end of October 2012 and October 2013, which was before the beginning of the year-end examinations. A programme was sent out to organisations in order for them to select a suitable slot to attend. As with all meetings, feedback to participating businesses was done in closed sessions which were moderated by two other department staff members and a government partner from WESGRO. In these sessions student groups receive 40 minute periods to present their marketing or business plans, as well as a five minute reflection presentation of lessons learned from the project, and question/answer time.

From the perspective of the community, the benefits of this reflection process included an opportunity to listen critically to the presentations and pose questions on practical aspects of the finished marketing and business plans. This process allows for constructive criticism to take place, and allows for the students to clearly explain their recommendations to the businesses. These feedback sessions ensured that all student groups completed their tasks and provided professional feedback (Eby, 1998:2).

2.6 Partnerships in service learning projects

Partnerships in SL are based on collaboration where all parties involved have some form of knowledge to teach and learn from each other, as well as new knowledge where all parties involved could investigate together (Mitchell & Rautenbach, 2005:104). Jacoby (2003:4) describes this process as the exchange of knowledge and resources at a local, regional, national and global level, highlighting the growth potential for such collaborations.

An article by Jackson, Nchu, Rangongo, Pifold and Mokoena (2013:3) defines partnerships as the close connections between the university and community, who hold common interests and responsibilities, and who share similar privileges and powers. Although the term partnership in SL focuses on the community-university connection, it is essential to identify the role of service providers and receivers within the partnership. All partners must have equal influence in the process of SL they are taking part in (Smith-Tolken, 2013b: 58-59).

In order to ensure the success of the partnerships, it was necessary to clearly describe the role each partner would play. For the successful continuation of SL projects, communities need to take as much ownership of the SL project as the university. Many SL projects have experienced a distinct lack of success when university departments move in to a community,

conduct their research, gather marks, and return to their institutions without leaving behind any concrete benefits to those communities (Dorado & Giles, 2004:32-33).

2.7 Stakeholders of the service learning project

In each SL project it is essential that every stakeholder's role is clearly explained. Section 2.7.1 below outlines the roles of the project stakeholders.

2.7.1 The community and its role

SL is based on the concept of a community being a collection of residents within a certain geographical location, who have a community representative. The World Health Organization (1987) defines this community as *"specific, local, collective interest groups that participate in the service-learning activities of the institution"*. For the South African context, this definition is limiting in that many communities are viewed as disadvantaged and materially poor, being located in rural or semi-rural settings (Council on Higher Education, 2006b:16). In these situations, the universities and students tend to view themselves as fulfilling a superior role, and neglect to view the participating communities as true partners with real value to bring to the relationship.

During the SL project orientation, great care was taken to highlight the dangers of these kinds of assumptions, and to remind students of the wealth of experience and tacit knowledge that business owners possessed (Le Grange, 2005:1212). At the same time, the role of the university in the SL project is not to spoon-feed the students, but to monitor the students' formation of company mission and vision statements for the organisations where there is a need. The community members committed to providing students with relevant information which would guide the development of these documents, as well as to provide previous information on the operations of the businesses, to guide the application of forecasting strategies. It is essential to indicate that for the purpose of this study, the SL community refers to the various SMME representatives who participated in the SL project as they were the main beneficiaries of the project.

2.7.2 Students and their role

A basic brief of the SL project has already been outlined by the lecturers involved and discussed with community members at information sessions prior to the commencement of the project. The brief outlines that students are to use the marketing and venture management skills from their course to assist developing tourism business ventures with their business and marketing plans.

At the initial stages of the project, the concept of service learning is explained to the students, before the project brief is handed to them. The responsibilities and roles of the student in the project, and the students' roles within their respective groups are explained at this stage. 40% of the class time in terms three and four of each year are dedicated to discussions around the project regarding:

- The role that the students would play in the programme;
- The project brief and the timelines involved;
- Mark allocations awarded to the different sections of the project;
- The role of the community in the project;
- Relationship to theory learned in the classroom, and
- Prospective end products and submission dates (CPUT, SL Student Brief, 2012:1-3).

Mouton & Wildschut (2005:121) describe how students participating in similar SL projects are afforded the opportunity within the process to act as consultants. Kelliher, Foley & Frampton (2008:82-83) describe the service learning groups as operating in the same way as small learning networks, in which ideas are developed and improved upon, and in which both students and business representatives play a significant role.

2.8 Benefits linked to service learning projects

Service learning projects link students' learning to life lessons while solving dynamic community problems or effecting social change (Kowalewski, 2004:131). From the perspective of the students, SL offers a mentorship-type relationship in which students are able to learn entrepreneurial skills from the partnered business owners. As they work closely with communities on the project, they may gain courage to start their own enterprises after graduating from a university, due to the first-hand experience provided by such projects (Basardien, Friedrich & Parker, 2013:287).

On a personal level, SL may help boost students' confidence in building relationships within the working environment and may also increase their sense of social responsibility (Giles & Eyler, 1998:65).

2.8.1 Perceived modes of learning deemed as beneficial to students

Strage (2004:259), in a study conducted on a control group of students who participated in service learning, concluded that their participation in the programme improved their academic performance in the application of their learned skills to academic and industry situations. Students were more motivated by taking control of their own learning (Matthews

&Zimmerman, 1999:390-391). In addition to the knowledge they disseminated to the broader community, the tacit or informal learning they were exposed to during site visits, at business meetings, and while interacting with the community all became part of their life-long learning (Hall, 2010). SL participation fostered by group work allowed students to create friendships and increase interaction among peers (Gallini & Moely, 2003:6).

2.8.2 Perceived benefits for communities

Historically, evidence of the benefits of service learning to students has outweighed the benefits offered to the community and the service provider (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005:135). Currently, SL advocates keeping well away from self-serving projects which leave their communities feeling abandoned and kept out of the loop of the outcomes of the SL projects. (Watson, 2007:22-23).

One of the factors adding to the exclusion of communities in the ongoing process of SL is the failure of project leaders and universities to collect feedback from the participating communities themselves, and not just from the course lecturers and students. This lack of community-centred data has been blamed on practical issues such as limited time to collect data for research (Cruz & Giles, 2000:28), as well as political and intellectual issues.

Cruz and Giles (2000:30) also make a clear distinction between key findings of SL benefits for communities and key claims that have been recorded in the literature (Marullo, 1998:262-265; Morgan & Streb, 2001:160). The latter authors state the following benefits as proved through research:

- SL communities appreciate student enthusiasm and skill expertise;
- SL communities take pride in assisting with preparing future professionals;
- Community members gain access to knowledge within the university;
- Potential working relationships are formed with staff and students, and
- Networks are developed amongst partner communities.

2.9 The need for a community voice

A large amount of reporting, albeit somewhat dated, on SL projects and benefits are reported from the perspective of the students (Eyler, 2000; Alperstein, 2007:65-66), largely to assess the level of skill gained from SL participation. The voice of all partners involved, which should include the selected communities in the various projects, as well as government partners, should be recognised in validating the quality of the SL projects in order to prevent one party

claiming greater value over another (Cruz & Giles, 2000:30; Vogelgesang, & Astin, 2000:33). With regard to tourism SMMEs, who are considered as the community of the SL project in this study, the fresh ideas that students generated during the process may be beneficial (Easterling & Rudell, 1997; Martinez, Mora & Vila, 2007:104-106).

2.10 Limitations facing service learning projects

For SL activities to be truly beneficial, long-term project blue-prints must be developed and monitored (Eyler, 2000). One challenge preventing SL projects from reaching their full potential is the expectation a community may have of receiving charity work from student groups, and expecting hand-outs without providing any constructive input (Mitchell & Rautenbach, 2005:109).

Other challenges that may arise include business representatives seeing the ideas provided by the students as lacking in substance, thus preventing them from acting on the recommendations. In these cases, students would feel as if they are in a constant battle with community members who are less than welcoming of their business recommendations. These challenges need to be effectively dealt with to ensure that all parties would benefit at the end of the project.

Time limitations of SL projects are a major concern as groups of students who work with communities do not always get an opportunity to get first-hand feedback from the community representatives. In groups leaders are chosen by students and these individuals would benefit more than other students as they are more responsible for the actions of the group, including planning meetings with communities (Tryon, Stoecker, Martin, Seblonka, Hilgendorf & Nellis, 2008:18).

2.11 Benefits of the service learning experience

As university programmes are designed to prepare students for the workplace, problem-based projects like SL assist in building student technical skills, including problem solving and critical thinking (Bringel & Steinberg, 2010:430-431).

Although university programmes promote the technical skills of students, the aim is also to promote the real world experience of running a business while completing their studies. The SL experience that the students receive before graduating assists them in gaining the know-how of running a business (Lerner & Haber, 2000:82-83) from first-hand experience of the daily operations of a business, to the tacit knowledge shared with company partners (Smith-Tolken, 2013b:7).

Socially responsive graduates will be more equipped to identify and solve community needs as they arise (Bringle & Steinberg, 2010:429; Morton, 1996:281-282). Being able to identify gaps within communities could create a culture amongst new university graduates to seek change and find ways to improve their communities (Pickernell, Packham, Brooksbank & Jones, 2010:261-262).

2.12 Benefits of service learning as networking opportunities

The survival success of small companies is built on a strong networking framework. The functioning of the tourism industry is built on a strong foundation of networks and partnerships. Networks developed early on during community engagement initiatives might benefit students when it comes to job-hunting later on. For the educational institution, SL projects allow communities direct access to knowledge and teaching processes present in institutions of higher learning, which improves the communities' view of universities (Cruz & Giles, 2000:30).

While working with existing companies students developed relationships with industry professionals which could assist them when entering the workplace after graduation (Pang, Wong, 2013:14).

2.13 Summary

SL is considered a very good vehicle for knowledge sharing, where both the communities and the students teach and learn from each other (Du Plessis & Van Dyk, 2013: 62). Although communities are not involved in the planning process of the SL projects, the learning, personal experiences, and lessons taken from the collaborative projects allow them to assess their businesses more critically, and recognise the gaps that exist (Naidoo & Urban, 2010:236-237). Although the study focuses on the benefits linked to SL for communities, related challenges and limitations need to be highlighted as well, which would assist in the development of future projects (Miron & Moely, 2006:27-28).

This Chapter outlined the definition of SL as a form of community programme, considered generally accepted benefits of SL participation, as well as how the SL project in the Tourism Management Department at CPUT is structured. Chapter Three focuses on the background of tourism SMMEs in South Africa, highlighting the difficulties facing the tourism industry and its SMMEs, as well as exploring possible relationships of industry training with SL practitioners.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW: THE TOURISM SECTOR AND CHALLENGES FACING TOURISM SMMEs in SOUTH AFRICA

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter offers a brief assessment of the categories and scope of the sector, within which tourism SMMEs operate in South Africa, with a brief view of the developments of the industry prior to and after democracy. This chapter also focuses on the challenges facing these organisations, regarding policy developments and skills requirements. The possible interventions regarding skill gaps are briefly discussed.

3.2 What is Entrepreneurship?

Historical social scientists like Max Weber identified entrepreneurs, as “*charismatic individuals who made people want to follow them by virtue of their extraordinary personalities*” (Swedberg, 2000:25). Many of these views of entrepreneurship or characteristics of entrepreneurs evolved from Schumpeter’s (1951:151) work, where he identified entrepreneurship as “*the doing of new things or the doing of things that are already being done in a new way [innovation]*”. He also stressed in his works that innovators, or inventors as he labelled them, are not necessarily entrepreneurs or vice versa. Booyesen, (2014:4-5) extends this definition of entrepreneurship, as the process of developing an innovative idea into a sustainable business. Casson (1982:23) on the other hand characterises an entrepreneur as “*someone who specialises in judgemental decisions about the coordination of scarce skills*”. Entrepreneurs are able to make better decisions on aspects of business that other people are not aware of, and are able to generate viable new ideas and turn existing businesses into profitable entities.

3.2.1 Entrepreneurship in South Africa

Page and Connell further (2014:208-209) define entrepreneurship as being characterised by individuals who wish to have some form of control over their daily working life, with the aspiration of seizing economic opportunities. The major reason for seeking out these opportunities was defined as financial freedom (Burns, 2001:30).

An interesting observation is made by Burns (2001:26-38), who sought to differentiate the terms entrepreneurship and small business ownership. The author argues that although managers need independence to achieve certain goals, it is the entrepreneurs who turn these goals into innovative opportunities that have a greater chance of success. Success for many businesses is realised through well-executed risks. In his study of the emerging Bed

and Breakfast (B&B) economy, Rogerson's (2004:273) research also highlights the emergence of small businesses whose managers are not primarily financially driven. The study showed that the majority of these establishments were viewed merely as a source of extra income, something that has been referred to as a "lifestyle" motive.

Lifestyle entrepreneurs in the tourism sector are described as small operations, the majority of which run accommodation establishments (Saffu, Apori, Mensah, & Ahumatah, 2014:278). These business owners regard the success in their business as being able to continually offer their preferred tailor-made products to their own preference for interested tourists with similar interests (Ateljevi, & Doorne, 2010:380-381). This form of operation is a positive for a country which promotes diversity of its people and offerings.

Entrepreneurship has been earmarked by the South African government as one of the major drivers of economic development, although entrepreneurial activity in South Africa is low when compared to international standards among developing countries (Tassiopoulos, 2011:8). Entrepreneurship is the economic practice of individuals creating employment with the primary purpose of making a profit from the activity in order to survive (Botha, 2009:30). Private enterprises and small businesses contribute roughly 39% of the country's GDP annually, as well as an employment contribution of approximately 54% between the 2006 and 2010 period (Brand, Du Preez, & Schutte, 2007:189; Mahembe, 2011:13-14), from an average of 27% to 34% during the 2001 to 2006 period (SA. DTI, 2008:xxix). The contribution to GDP increased to 45% in 2014 (Zulu, 2014:1).

This growth in employment opportunities in the economy indicated initially that there is an upward swing in development, although big franchises tend to predominate (Rogerson, 2004: 273). It is vital to determine whether the South African small business sector has the type of entrepreneurs who could turn these small businesses into great ventures. In the case of family-run businesses it would mean the potential of these enterprises surviving beyond one family generation (Gerts, Carlsen & Morrison, 2004:242).

3.2.2 The role of education in entrepreneurship development

Education in South Africa can play a vital role in helping both struggling entrepreneurs and young graduates to develop innovative thinking skills (Agbenyegah, 2013:80-83). Service learning programmes, as discussed in Chapter Two, can assist in this regard by training existing SMMEs on how businesses evolve, and most importantly by equipping prospective graduates in the skills of innovative business practice (Jennings, 2015).

3.3 Definition of the term SMME

The 1996 Tourism White Paper defined the term emergent SMME as small, medium and micro-sized enterprises owned and/or operated by the previously neglected population groups that were entering the market (South Africa, DEAT, 1996:5).

International definitions refer to SMMEs as small and micro enterprises. In the United Kingdom the term used to define small businesses is SMEs, meaning small and medium-sized enterprises (United Kingdom, European Commission, 2008: 1-3). Lynch, Baty, Abdullah and Seaman (2005:643) define small enterprises as employing six to 49 employees, and microenterprises employing one to five employees. American legislation uses the same definitions and explanations that relate to firms employing up to 500 employees (United States International Trade Commission, 2010:viii).

Within the South African context there are too many entities within the small to medium enterprise performance bracket to group them under one umbrella definition. Table 3.1 clearly indicates the differences between the classifications of micro to medium businesses.

The mix of direct and indirect contributors to tourism are categorised as small businesses. These SMMEs are differentiated according to certain structural aspects of the businesses, including size and number of employees. Table 3.1. depicts the categories of tourism and hospitality SMMEs according to the South African National Small Business Act (South Africa, 2004):

Table 3.1: Classification of SMMEs in the tourism industry

Sector or subsector in accordance with the Standard Industrial classification	Size of class	The total full-time equivalent of paid employees	Total turnover	Total gross asset value (fixed property excluded)
Catering, accommodation and other tourism trades	Medium	200	R13m	R3m
	Small	50	R6m	R1.5m – R2m
	Very Small	20	R5.10m	R1m
	Micro	5	R0.20m	R0.10m

Source: South Africa: National Small Business Amendment Bill of the Republic of South Africa, 2003:5

The Entrepreneur's Toolkit (Anon, 2014) classifies small businesses within the following categories:

- Medium enterprises employing 200 employees operating from fixed premises with all formal requirements;
- Small enterprises employing less than 100 employees. The business is formally registered, is owner-managed and operates from fixed premises;
- Very small enterprises employ less than 10 paid employees, including self-employed professionals;
- Micro enterprises employ between one and five employees, and the business is usually family owned. It is informal with no business licensing. Basic business skills will provide the potential to develop into a viable formal small entity, and
- Survivalist enterprises operate in the informal sector, and are run by unemployed individuals with not much training. Income is generated under the poverty line.

The above-mentioned definitions of small organisations clearly indicate the absence of international or national agreed upon band sizes when it comes to categorisation of employment numbers of SMMEs (Thomas, Shaw & Page, 2011:965). In the absence of these standards, questions arise as to the sustainability of the survivalist enterprises (Mahembe, 2011:66). If the motivation for starting a business is the improvement of the economic standing of the business owners, then these motivations need to be examined in order to understand how SMMEs can be made more sustainable (Galloway & Cooney: 2012:77&79). This lack of clarity over the definition of SMMEs reveals a need for further investigation into the nature of entrepreneurship in South Africa within the tourism industry. South Africa is driven by an increasing need for financial independence. The role of entrepreneurship in South Africa can alleviate the problem of unemployment and improve the socio-economic stature of the country (Kalitanyi & Visser, 2010:378).

3.4 An assessment of the South African tourism industry

To better understand the economy of the tourism industry, it is essential to look into the historical developments of tourism in South Africa over the last two decades, and to evaluate the current structure of the tourism industry as indicated in Figure 3.1 on page 30.

3.4.1 Tourism in South Africa pre-democracy

Although a number of publications, like the tourism 10 year review publication, and an article by Sharpley and Roberts (2004:119-121) focus on the tourism industry in South Africa from the 1990's and after democracy, the industry in South Africa was well established before this point. Grundlingh (2006:104-107) explores the beginnings of tourism in South Africa,

indicating that it was begun in an atypical manner through military movement to the country and exploration.

Tourism during the National Party's rule in the 1950s experienced a decline in international travel, but a growth in regional travel, with travellers from Rhodesia and Mozambique, as well as certain international countries like Germany. This increase was attributed to migration due to the increasing South African economy (Turok, 2012:8-11). This was also a time in South Africa when segregation was heightened and tightened, and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, (Act No 49 of 1953) was introduced. The Act aimed to separate the use and allocation of resources, education and jobs, as well as to offer higher quality of these resources to the white population of the country (South African History Online, 2014). As Burger (2004:205-215) states, this time saw the increase in boycotts and activities in the country mainly motivated by the African National Congress (ANC) for social change, as many of the acts passed in the 1950's excluded black South Africans from economic participation in this decade.

The world was going through a change during this period resulting from increased levels of manufacturing, which affected how countries interacted and conducted business. The introduction of Boeing 747 aircraft in the late 1960s reduced cost and time of travel. Global demand for air travel was increasing, and it was at the time when international tourist arrivals in South Africa saw a spike (Noland, 2015). The type of tourism that was increasing at this time was retailers mostly travelling to major cities (Lubbe, 2000:29). In the period between 1963 and 1964 the Department of Tourism was established, focusing on policy development and increasing interest in South Africa as a tourist destination. To improve quality of the tourism and hospitality offerings, a Hotel Board was also established, which focused on grading lodging establishments for standardising services in the hospitality sector (Lubbe, 2003:27-28).

In the 1970s technological advances which helped improve the transportation industry, resulted in a boom in the international tourism market (Gartner & Lime, 2000:5). This upward trend in South Africa suffered from policy resistance movements, like the 1976 turbulent Soweto uprisings and 1980s states of emergencies (Grundlingh, 2006:114; South African History Online, 2014). The Labour Relations Acts introduced a different climate in 1987 to 1988, during which the first black women qualified as air hostesses on South African Airways. This phase in the country was critical as there was a move to deregulate the Group Areas Act in order to allow black individuals to operate businesses in the then African residential areas (Cooper, Shindler, McCaul, Hamilton, Beale, Clemans, Kruger, Markovitz, Seimon, Brouard & Shelton, 1998:68 & 589).

3.4.1.1 Political impact and racial discrimination effects on tourism

Under the apartheid rule, tourism in South Africa was considered as “anti-developmental” (Rogerson & Visser, 2004:4). As racial segregation escalated, access and the experience of tourist attractions, national parks, and SAA remained exclusive for white South Africans. Policies were adopted in which black South Africans were labelled a “threat to wildlife” (Rogerson & Visser, 2004:4). Communities were uprooted from the traditional homelands, which were earmarked for national parks, which would later operate as tourist attractions (Carruthers, 2007:294). As laws were put in place to regulate land and business ownership, it prevented the black population of South Africa from participating in business opportunities or accessing tourist attractions. These segregation laws coupled with the lack of business skill transfer over the years delayed the entry of previously disadvantaged individuals into the tourism business arena (Rogerson & Visser, 2007:63).

3.4.1.2 Tourism education

At the 1998 Job Summit (Rogerson & Visser, 2004:4), real developments in tourism education and awareness in South Africa began to take place as the tourism sector emerged as a possible solution to the unemployment crisis. Tourism education leading to higher education needed to strike a balance of educating prospective graduates on their own venture management, while training future employees, as the latter is the status of tourism education in South Africa (Pinar, 2010:57).

Previously disadvantaged citizens are new entrants into the service industry in terms of venture ownership. They struggle to develop and grow successful tourism ventures due to a number of reasons, with the main one being the legacy of apartheid on the tourism and hospitality industry where previously there were policies put in place which strictly controlled and prohibited black ownership of business ventures (Binns & Nel, 2002:236-237).

3.4.2 Developments in the tourism industry post democracy

At the 2014 Tourism Indaba, the then Minister of Tourism, Marthinus Van Schalkwayk, highlighted developments that the country had seen in the tourism industry 20 years into the country’s democracy; most importantly, the increase in the number of tourist arrivals having tripled from 3.6 million in 1994, to 9.6 million (Indaba Daily News, 2014b:1). This growth reveals a shift of traveller preferences in accommodation establishments from traditional large hotel groups, to B&B’s and guesthouses, which big role-players in the industry are helping to coordinate (Indaba Daily News, 2014a:15).

Even with these developments, SMME structures have not improved greatly since 1994, and policy implementation is lacking in assistance of start-up businesses, especially for the previously disadvantaged (South Africa, 2014a: 97-98), where limited access and knowledge of creating business start-up funds exist (Cumming, 2012:690). There is hope, however, as local communities are beginning to realise the potential of tourism for business, which in time will provide work and training opportunities not only in major cities, but in smaller communities across the country (Morning Live, 2014).

3.5 Evolution of the tourism industry and terminology

Rogerson (2005:5-12) argues that just as the definitions of generic small businesses are diverse, the term “Tourism SMME” is also open to debate. Rogerson believes that “Tourism SMME” should be broadly defined as the businesses that operate within the travel and tourism industry, as well as those operating within the scope of the travel and tourism economy. As indicated in Figure 3.1 the tourism SMME could also mean all other small enterprises that act as suppliers to the primary business that offer tourism products or services.

A wide range of criteria is used to classify enterprises for the travel and tourism industry as depicted in Figure 3.1. Small and medium tourism enterprises SMTEs is the term that is used in this study. Quantitative definitions consider the number of employees, annual turnover and number of bed-nights. The qualitative definition identifies organisational structures, financial strength, operational procedures, recruitment and training, family domination in running a tourism business (Tassiopoulos, 2011:6) and internationalisation of the business (Buhalis, 1993:367-371).

The definition of SMTEs as followed in this study is adopted from the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Research (CRC for Sustainable research) as:

“Small and Medium tourism enterprises comprising of all businesses, which by their own definition, operate in the tourism industry and employ up to 100 employees and include sole operators not employing any staff. Specifically, micro businesses and medium businesses are those that employ between 1 and 4 workers, small businesses employ between 5 and 9 employees and medium businesses employ between 20 and 100 employees.” (Breen, Bergin-Seers, Jago & Carlsen, 2005:vi).

Relating to the broad definition of SMTEs above, the organisations related to in this study are characterised between micro and very small class definitions.

3.5.1 The current structure of the South African tourism economy

The tourism industry in general is diverse, as it creates interchangeable relationships between other industries to complete the experience of travelling. In the South African context the definition of the tourism sectors has been greatly influenced by the work of the Tourism Satellite Accounting (TSA) systems, following international guidance from the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), which make a clear distinction between the travel and tourism industry, as well as the travel and tourism economy (Rogerson, 2005: 2-6).

Nemasetoni and Rogerson (2005: 196-199) further explain the structure of the narrow travel and tourism industry, which is the top of the pyramid in Figure 3.1, Within the travel and tourism industry the greater number of industry players are the hotel and car rental businesses, many of whom are at the top half of the pyramid, being SMTEs in different categories. The industry is supported by other industries from manufacturing and retail sectors, which helps the tourism economy to function.

Page and Connell (2014:279-280) view the phenomenon of tourism in terms of direct and indirect effects. They view the direct contributors of travel and tourism demand as based on the need for accommodation, transport, recreation, attractions.

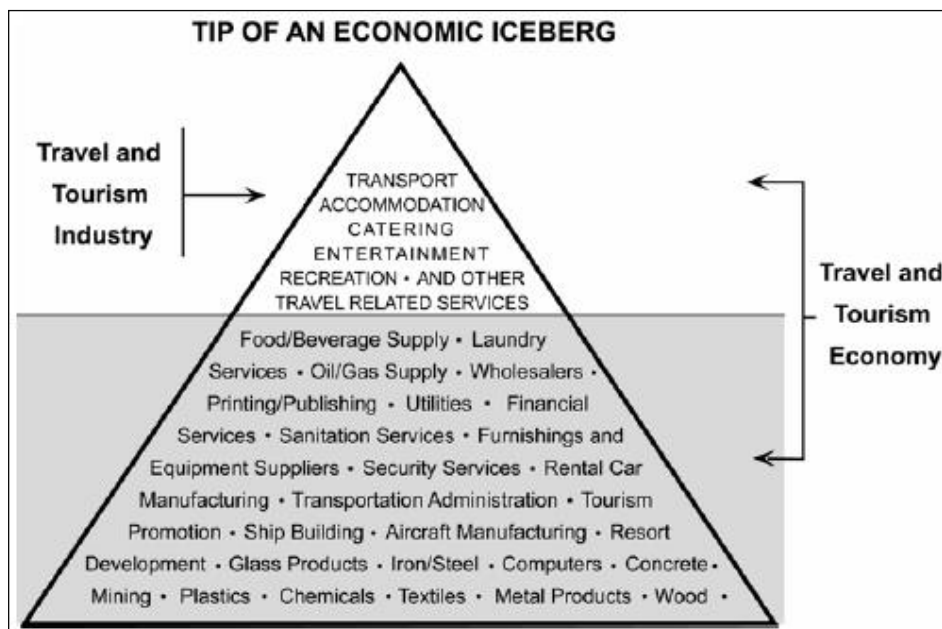


Figure 3.1: Two dimensions of tourism: 1) the travel and tourism industry, and 2) the travel and tourism economy

Source: Rogerson, 2005:5

The bottom half of the pyramid is regarded as indirect contributors or support systems for the direct contributors. These include public transport, manufacturers and maintenance service

providers, contract companies for food and cleaning supplies, and essential services like electricity and water. These other sectors are not classified within the travel and tourism cluster, but have a major role to play in how the tourism enterprises operate. This activity of the tourism sector directly contributes 3% of the county's gross domestic product (GDP), translating to R67 billion, with a targeted growth of R188 billion in 2020 (South Africa, 2014b). International benchmarks conducted in 2011 indicate direct contribution of tourism being US\$2 trillion to the world economy, while indirect contribution was US\$6.3 trillion (Blanke & Chiesa, 2013:66).

Saayman & Olivier (2005:117-118) further explain the industry as consisting of direct suppliers, which are those enterprises visible to the tourist, depicted as the tourism industry at the top of the pyramid in Figure 3.1, and support services, which support the direct suppliers. They further make reference to the development agencies, explained as government agents, financial institutions and estate developers, indicating the larger scope of the entire tourism economy. Although the big picture of the industry network is impressive, it does not show some of the underlying issues which need to be addressed.

3.5.2 Challenges that face SMTEs

The tourism sector is viewed by many aspiring business owners as having low barriers of entry: people view it as a straightforward entrepreneurial venture, which is easy to start and run (Becton & Graetz, 2001:110-112; Lyons, Young, Hanley & Stolk, 2015:1-2). The lack of understanding of the complexity of the sector has prevented many start-ups from succeeding (Page & Connell, 2014:216).

Many tourism businesses manage to survive and become tourism industry players with a significant contribution to the country's economy. Still these enterprises face a large number of obstacles. In his study, Vallabh (2012) highlights the following challenges facing SMTEs in South Africa:

- Lack of key or focus market knowledge and marketing skills;
- Lack of education and training skills regarding low formal qualifications;
- Insufficient business management skills, and
- Poor financial management and background.

There are a number of demands that fall on the shoulders of those who own tourism enterprises, from requirements of clients, the ability to report on developments of the business, understanding the financial standing of their business, and communicating to the

right clients. All these responsibilities require business management skills (El-Kassar, Messarra& Elgammal, 2015:506-507).

Studies of the causes of business failure reveal that a lack of management skills, little financial knowledge, and the unwillingness of business owners to develop and change are the most common reasons businesses fail (Solomon, Frese, Friedrich & Glaud, 2013:256). Brand et al. (2007:190&194) add that silo operations and lack of business infrastructure are additional reasons for business failure.

Government recognise challenges which limit improvement of the industry as:

- Fragmented planning of tourism amongst all spheres of government;
- A lack of compliance with the tourism black economic empowerment (BEE) charter;
- Weak systems of tourism skills development;
- Insufficient budgets for domestic tourism;
- An inadequate database of the tourism supply side, and
- A lack of sufficient incentives for tourism product diversification and enterprise development (Rogerson, 2004:23-24; Thomas et al., 2011:268-271).

These challenges are not only based on lack of coordination between the tourism structures, but also the lack of coordinated effort between all spheres of government (Mahembe, 2011:70-71). Another challenge facing SMTEs is the on-going policy reform within or external to the sector. This has a huge impact on tourism operations (SA. DTI, 2004:28-31, 50-51). An example in 2015 which highlights this lack of coordination is the ongoing deliberation of the amendment of Section Seven of the Immigration Act Regulation 2002, No13 (South Africa, 2014b:13) and the implementation of biometric visa applications, between the Tourism and Home Affairs Departments (Mahlatsi, 2007:25).

In a paper assessing further education and training, McGrath (2000:79) and Makokera (2015:2-7) refer to the fact that government sectors have similar goals when it come to the development of the South African economy, but lack autonomy and cohesion in achieving these goals.

3.5.3 Entry barriers and regulations

Many entrepreneurs who enter the tourism industry do so because they are attracted by the life-style or the glamour, and not necessarily because they have the skills or experience required to start a business. Because entrepreneurs do not anticipate the struggles and stresses associated with starting and running a business (Peters, Frehse & Buhalis,

2009:396-397), many SMMEs in South Africa fail in the first three years of operation. (Mahembe, 2011:70). Added to the complexities of daily operations, compliance must also be adhered to, like completion of financial undertakings of the business on a daily basis and staff management.

3.5.4 Policy structures affecting tourism

The new minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, has in a number of interviews highlighted two main requirements that face the tourism industry currently, which are responsible and sustainable tourism. Discussions and decisions taken at national government level mean that businesses must ensure that they will comply (Turok, 2015:21-23). Preceding this, the previous Minister of Tourism, Marthinus Van Schalkwyk in an interview on Morning Live (18 August 2014) highlighted some of the stumbling blocks created by the plethora of policies in the country. These policies, such as the employment policy, hinder quick economic growth.

Two of the most recent policies to affect the tourism industry include immigration requirements which compel travellers to complete biometric data, and the highly controversial issue of those travelling with minor children having to possess unabridged birth certificates, meaning certificates that parents have to apply for personally at Home Affairs offices and not those applied for by middle parties or maternal agencies (Donnelly, 2014; Reinstein & Reed, 2014:1). Tourism industry role-players are joining forces to apply for a delay (since 2014) with the Minister of Home Affairs, as well as to communicate the potential danger the amendments pose for the industry (Eliseev, 2014; Reed, 2014). Although these regulations are implemented due to the Government's good intentions of protecting children, the abrupt manner of implementation has resulted in large numbers of travel and holiday cancellations experienced by the industry, which for many small enterprises mean profit losses and potential loss of employment (Barron, 2015:21; Vos, 2015).

Not all policy structures are detrimental for the functioning of SMTEs. The Department of Trade and Industry reports (SA. DEAT, 2003:47) show that policies on black economic empowerment and improvement have been fast-tracked to meet compliance levels for working with and improved ownership for emerging black owned business (SA. DTI, 2003:4). Policies aimed at the development of staff skills training and environmental conservation will help to improve the economy and longevity of the country's tourism product (Reddy & Wilkes, 2015:7& 11).

3.5.5 Skills required by tourism entrepreneurs

Skill required for the tourism industry include the operational skills encompassing, travel skills, analytical skills, human resources management, operational management skills, and communication skills. Links with other related industries like sport, medical, and the arts industries to highlight a few, demand more specialised skills from each industry employee and venture manager (Baum, 2015:208-209).

A study by Basardien, Friedrich and Parker (2013:285-287) clearly states that visionary long-term planning leads to the success of many start-up enterprises. Knowledge of project management, and solid management skills coupled with financial management, accounting, marketing and sales skills are critical for successful entrepreneurs to operate as SMTEs (Lerner & Haber, 2000:83). Personal characteristics including decision-making and risk-taking are also important.

Many small businesses fail to access or manage funding due to a lack of management and marketing expertise. Mahembe (2011:70) suggests that training programmes provided by SETAs should be geared more towards:

- Accessing loans toward business development;
- Mentorship or incubator programmes;
- Financial literacy and education;
- Marketing and awareness campaigns, and
- Monitoring and evaluation of business performance.

3.6 Entry level requirements for the tourism industry

Many industry entry-level work advertisements indicate a need for an individual who can communicate well, possesses a matric certificate and is well-groomed. There is no indication of particular work skills-sets required. At middle management the specifications become more pronounced, like the ability to cost a menu, or the ability to negotiate with contractors. These skills sets become specialised according to the industry the prospective employee will enter.

A process of identifying skills requirements for entry level students was addressed through a consultation between a range of tourism industry professionals and senior academics of the CPUT Tourism Management Department. This Design a Curriculum exercise (DACUM), highlighted important graduate attributes which students should be able to apply on entering the industry. These attributes include:

- Professional ability to communicate effectively, through verbal and written consultation;
- Computer skills and knowledge of tourism related packages;
- Organisational skills relating to problem solving and *on-the-feet* thinking, to be able to handle travel logistics of tourists;
- Financial literacy knowledge and the application thereof;
- Sales and marketing skills, by being able to adapt tourism products to suit individual tourist preferences, and the ability to close a sale, and
- Self-management with the ability to adapt and be innovative (DACUM, 2012).

Kruger (2003:214) adds that the ability to work in teams by collectively identifying goals and working in unison for their attainment is also an essential skill for graduates. Although there are numerous training and development activities at institutions of higher education, there is still a gap in performance of entry level students to the industry (Badat, 2004:34), which was a point also highlighted at the DACUM. Many attribute this to a disjuncture between curriculum theory and industry practice (Fowler, 2014).

3.7 Possible interventions for skills shortages in small businesses in South Africa

University involvement within communities can improve the social and economic welfare of the communities involved (Pickernell, et al., 2010:266-267; Warren, Kitagawa & Eatough, 2010:295). The national tourism sector strategic plan, which is a government strategy implementation planning document, takes cognisance of the SL projects within universities as part of capacity building for SMMEs. These projects can be regulated into the “one-stop-shop” systems that the strategy has highlighted in its action plan.

Leadership at the National Skills Authority (NSA) could also adopt this viewpoint, and assist with partnerships and funding the community-university collaborations, as additional and more cost-effective tools to existing institutions like Sectoral Education and Training Authorities (SETA) (Basson, Christianson, Dekker, Garbers, Le Roux, Mischke & Strydom, 2009:405-407). With dedicated funding structures within government, like the skills levy from CATHSSETA, SL-type projects can become not only great knowledge-sharing vehicles among communities, but also excellent research focal points for sustainable solutions (Clifford, 2010:333).

3.8 Summary

The tourism industry is one of the core industries in the country, as well as being a key economic driver and contributor of the country’s GDP. National government has recognised a wide range of support services offered to SMTEs at private and public sectors, including

collaborative projects like the Tsogo Sun, and University of Cape Town's "Book a Guesthouse programme" (Maqutu, 2014), as well as the SME Toolkit online course offering essential business skills (SME Toolkit South Africa, 2014).

Even with all these important initiatives there is still a lack of focus on the formal higher educational institutions role in training and development for the SMTE sector to be able to develop from lower bands of operation as indicated in the classifications in Table 3.1. Efforts by higher education institutions and government training initiatives have not been able to effectively address the issues that plague the industry. Due to the low levels of entry into the industry SMTEs, which are regarded as survivalist enterprises, are staffed by owner/managers who are inadequately trained to run their enterprises and in turn run a higher risk of failure. Limited knowledge of development and training initiatives also hinder the growth of SMTEs (Mahembe, 2011:42).

SL projects that are coordinated by UoTs could play a major role in developing small businesses as well as properly preparing future professionals adequately for the industry. University graduates are viewed as not adequately qualified to run enterprises or occupy top positions upon graduation (Hinck & Brandell, 2000:870). Rather than being viewed only as philanthropic objectives without long-lasting benefits for the beneficiaries (Osman & Petersen, 2013:8), UoTs need to place more attention on institutionalising SL. The participation of academics needs to be more directed toward bridging the skills gaps in the country (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000:273-274).

SL as a learning approach and community engagement initiative could be viewed as a key to solving the two mentioned dilemmas that face the industry currently. It is a way of providing much needed industry experience to students, while assisting the SMTEs to objectively view their business structures and operations linking new ideas through a cost effective process.

The methodological approach in the next Chapter focuses on the participant's perceptions of the SL project regarding the benefits and limitations of the *mutual learning labs* for communities and students, and assesses the environment where reciprocal learning is thought to take place.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter focuses on the research design in service learning practices, as well as on the participatory process of SL projects. It interrogates the variety of research methods used, including qualitative and quantitative design, and examines their role in this study. Study limitations and possible areas of bias are noted, and the data triangulation process is outlined, based on the perceptions of SL by the community and the students involved.

4.2 The research approach

The purpose of exploratory studies using action research is to determine whether a phenomenon exists within a certain setting where little or no information exists (Welman & Kruger, 2002:12-19). The aim of this research project was to determine the success or otherwise of the service learning project, so as to ensure that the SMME community and students benefit from the Tourism Management project. The study also investigated reciprocal benefits of SL as a teaching pedagogy (Groenewald, 2004:7) and examined the learning experience of students as well as the perceived business improvement benefits from the student involvement. The choice of action research allows the researcher to recommend and make improvements to the current programme limitations, from research findings. The process of identifying perceived benefits of the SL project will inform planning of future SL projects undertaken within the Department, based on two key areas:

- There is reciprocal learning in SL projects for all participants, and that
- SMTEs benefited from the SL project.

The action research followed in this study, may lead to answers for SL research, which could be adopted in future projects. The process of this study lent itself to participatory research, as the participants of the research had been included in the SL process, planning and implementation phases, of the project (Rearick & Feldman, 1999:339-342).

4.2.1 The action in service learning research

Action research is a term used to refer to a cyclical system where researchers are involved with participants in identifying a problem, collecting data, and collectively taking action to resolve the problem (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:4). The coordinator of the SL project was involved in the project planning, process monitoring, progress of the students and partner companies,

managing of relationships during the project, logistical arrangements for meetings, assessment of the project results, and reflections from the student groups. The high level of interactions between the SL coordinator/researcher and various stakeholders enabled a close relationship between all participants in the project (Welman & Kruger, 2002:190-191). Action research works well in this context as it attempts to assess the current status of the SL project, while looking ahead to the improvement of future projects (Kothari, 2004:3), forming a common goal for all the participants (Huan, 2010:98). The approach is the most suited for collection of data in this instance (McNiff, 2013:3).

Huan (2010:95) states that action research and qualitative research are similar, with the difference being that qualitative research focuses on practitioners, while action research focuses on knowledge created with the practitioner.

As stated in the Action Research Journal Manifesto of Transformation of Knowledge Creation, the principles of action research include:

- The researchers' view of their role as providing benefits for the wider society;
- Evolving relationships with all stakeholders beyond just the reason for data collection;
- A flexible process which allows all stakeholders to change within the process, and
- Reflective learning process that is clearly communicated and made evident (Huan, 2010:98).

Action research works best when focused on the parties involved in the research (Huan, 2010:103), exploring their feelings toward change or the lack thereof, as well as their experiences. As the SL project is ongoing, the impact of the project on the communities involved must be evaluated in order for both communities and the faculty to benefit equally from the process

4.2.1.1 Advantages, disadvantages and limitations of action research applied to this study

The time frame from the end of the project to the time of data collection, posed both advantages and limitations. The advantage of the time frame on the data collection was that the company representatives were afforded time to reflect on their experiences of the SL project (Cruz & Giles, 2000:29-31), consider the outputs of the project, and review what they would had done with the outcomes of the project, thus enabling valid data collection (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood & Macquire, 2003:25).

The limitations of the time frame included non-compliance to response due dates and a lack of accountability for the project and responses to the questionnaire (Bailis & Melchior, 2003:136). Typically, e-mail questionnaires exhibit a low response rate, but in this instance, the poor response rate was exacerbated by the tendency among tourism industry

professionals to ignore communication that does not bring direct business. (Jogarathnam, McCleary, Mena & Yoo, 2005: 356).

4.2.1.2 Impact of participation in action research

Participatory research philosophers hold the view that action and research complement each other, as in the cases pointed out by Selener (1997:102-103). The literature review provided an example of teachers who undertook research to improve their programme curriculum. The teachers, as researchers, were not outside of the teaching experience and thus had first-hand experience of the problem areas. As they were involved with both the teaching as well as the research components, they were able to interpret results and implement them effectively.

In this particular research, although the researcher was closely linked to the SL project, the difference was that the work on the marketing and business plans occurred between the student and the SMTE representative. The coordinator (also the researcher) was there to monitor progress, arrange transport to sites, and arrange the reflection programme. The involvement of the coordinator was also on a curriculum advisory level. Although advice was offered from a theoretical aspect, the coordinator did not have first-hand input on the contents of the marketing and business plans, and how recommendations to these were applied. Based on the principles of participatory action research, this study cannot be categorised as such.

Continuously reflecting on SL activities is essential for every individual participating in the process (Fourie, 2003:35-36), as reflection is central to learning from the process, both as a research tool and as a corrective action for future SL projects (Selener, 1997:17). These processes were adhered to in this study.

4.3 Research methodology

Qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were both employed in this study for the purposes of data collection. Qualitative research methods were used to gather insights from the participants regarding their participation in the SL project. The quantitative research methodology was used to establish statistical reliability of the data (Ahmad, 2015:23).

Tools used to gather this data included one-on-one and focus group interviews, reflection comments from students and SMTE representatives, as well as self-administered questionnaires for students and SMTE representatives. The design of all the research tools is further elaborated on in section 4.4.

4.4 Data Collection methods

The objectives of this study required varying information that could not be collected from one source, which thus informed the choice of data collection tools. These included evaluations of the students' SL participation (mark rubrics and reflection presentations) immediately after the SL projects, as well as perceptions of the documents received by SMTEs at the end of the SL project, which were assessed for effectiveness in the businesses one year after completion of the SL project. The latter data was collected by way of interviews and questionnaires. The data collection tools, which were both qualitative and quantitative in design, are depicted in Figure 4.1.

4.4.1 Qualitative research methods

The benefit of qualitative research is the option to adapt data collecting procedures and to be able to collect data that may present itself during and after the research process (Welman & Kruger, 2002:182). This adaptability to draw on data produced during the SL project and during stages of the research was essential for this study (Banks, Monday, Burgess & Sellitto, 2010:313-314). Shelley (2000:662) highlights the need for more qualitative research in SL, to support the use of various data produced during the enquiry and to add more texture to SL knowledge production processes. The qualitative data sources in the study included focus group interviews with students, one-on-one interviews with SMTEs, mark rubric comments by SMTEs, and SL project reflections by students (Onwuegbuzie, Leech & Collins, 2010:699).

4.4.2 Quantitative research methods

The inclusion of a quantitative methodology in the study provided some advantages including the ability to scientifically assess larger data from the SL project participants in varying situations (Billig, Root & Jesse, 2005:13). A large volume of research dealing with feedback from students in SL projects was mainly quantitative (Machtmes, Johnson, Fox, Burke, Harper, Arcemont, & Aquirre, 2009:156), and data gathered from post graduate students and alumni was also quantitative in nature. The quantitative data was gathered through questionnaires which were designed to collate background data of all respondents, as well as to quantify the use of the submitted business plans by the businesses.

Figure 4.1 depicts the forms of data that were collected from the SL participants, as well as indicating the data as it will be discussed in Chapter Five. The information in the first row shows questionnaires and interviews that were conducted with the businesses or SL communities. The second row indicates data collected from questionnaires and focus group

interviews with the students, while the last row depicts the reflections from both sets of participants. The arrows indicate the comparative analysis process that was followed when the data was analysed, which is also explained in Table 4.2 on page 50.

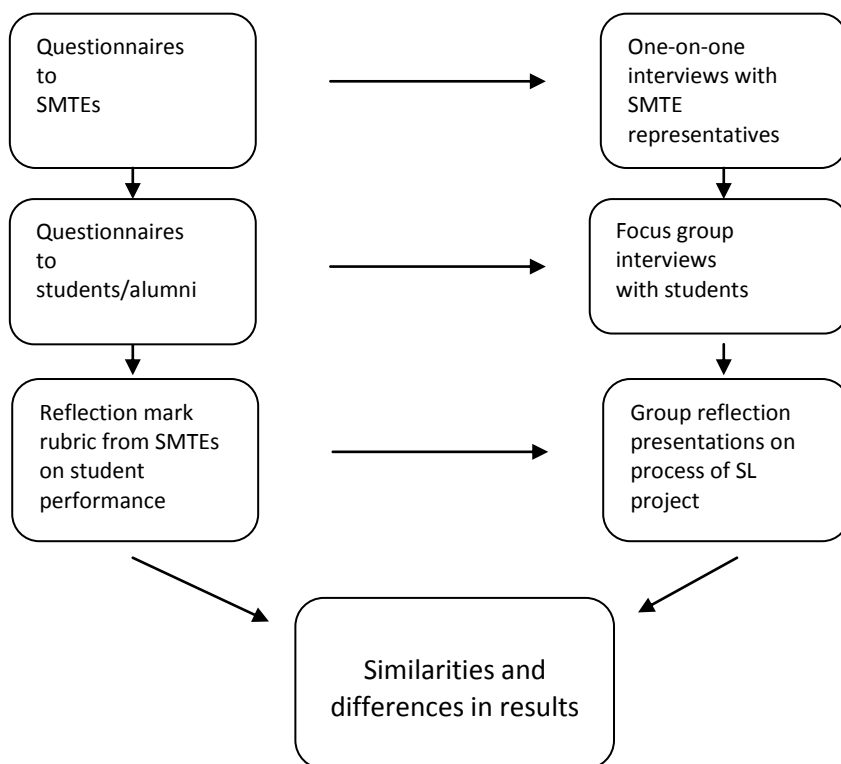


Figure 4.1: Data sources of SL project

Source: Researcher’s design

Rather than rely on one particular research tool for data collection, various methods were employed to assess the reflections and presentations, as well as the after-service perceptions of the SL participants, right from project conception to completion (Jick, 1979:604; Denscombe, 2010:351). Data collected also included SMTE perceptions, their ideas and motivations for participating in the project.

4.4.3 Research tools

Various research tools were used in this study. These are discussed below:

4.4.3.1 Self-administered questionnaires

Two different sets of questionnaires were designed, one for the students and one for the business representatives to assess each groups’ reflections and perceptions of their SL experiences.

To ensure that the data collected using these tools was credible; face validity of the questionnaires was employed, meaning that the questionnaire was designed to ensure that it was both practical and user-friendly. The questionnaires were designed to incorporate input from colleagues within the Tourism Management Department who had worked on prior SL projects, from a representative at the Work Integrated and Service Learning Unit (WIL), as well as from the senior statistician at CPUT. Due to time constraints a small pilot study was undertaken (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001:3). Working terms, relating to validity, reliability and objectivity of the process of and ensuring credibility of the research tools for this study are explained in Table 4.1 on page 48.

4.4.3.1.1 Self-administered questionnaires for SMTEs

Questionnaires for SMTEs which followed both the quantitative and qualitative methodologies were drawn up. The questions were probing, with many close-ended, and each was followed by an open ended motivation section for further probing of the answers provided (Oppenheim, 1996:114). From an ethics perspective, the questionnaires included a cover page stating the reasons for the research, and communicating that participation was voluntary (Denscombe, 2010:332-334).

The questionnaire started with a demographic background enquiry to profile the SMTE respondents. This was followed by three main sections covering SMTE perceptions of the SL project, perceptions of the students' performance, as well as perceptions on the final business and marketing plan submitted by the students. A study by Cruz and Gilles (2000:160) assessed the perceptions of the participating communities on the development of students. Similarly, sections of the questionnaire for this study were designed to assess SMTEs perceptions of the students' development during the SL project. The questions used to determine the SMTEs perceptions of the students' development were designed around the claimed benefits of SL (Marullo, 1998:262-265; Morgan and Streb, 2001:160).

The sections dealing with perceptions consisted of attitudinal scales following a five point Likert scale, which was varied with statements including strongly agree to strongly disagree, very bad to very good, and a five point percentage weighting scale (Welman & Kruger, 2002:149-151).

The second form of questioning was based on a series of Yes/No answers relating to perceptions of the process of the SL project from start to conclusion. Each Yes/No question was also coupled with a motivational question to allow respondents to clearly support their answers (Oppenheim, 1996:114) (Appendix E).

4.4.3.1.2 Self-administered questionnaires for students

The student questionnaires followed a quantitative approach aimed at probing skills requirements of SL projects for participating students. The question of underdeveloped operational skills amongst small business start-ups was highlighted in the literature review (El-Kassar, Messarra & Elgammal, 2015; Vallabh, 2012). It was essential in the design of the questionnaires to assess the development of these set of skills by students during the SL project. The questionnaire aimed to enquiry on the development of essential skills for small business management of SL participants.

The questionnaire section included the geographical data section, followed by close-ended question sections, asking about the students' perceptions of the SL experiences. The question design in the later sections of the students' questionnaire included a 5-point Lickert scale. The scales ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire also included a cover page explaining voluntary participation in the study (Appendix F).

4.4.3.2 Interviews

The second phase of data collection was the participant interview. SMTEs were invited to participate in one-on-one interviews, while students were invited to focus group interviews. The interviews are discussed as follows:

4.4.3.2.1 In-depth interviews with SMTEs

The semi-structured interviews were conducted after the questionnaires were collected. Prospective participants were invited to take part in the interview via e-mail. The venue choice for the interviews was left to the interviewees, with some guidance provided as to the type of setting that would be suitable to avoid background noise. The participants who responded to the call were contacted for appointments. The interviews were conducted with permission to record each session from the interviewees. The cover page of the interview schedule was also read out to the interviewees reminding them of the aim of the study and their voluntary participation (Appendix G).

4.4.3.2.2 Focus group interview with students

A period of a month, from mid-August 2014 to mid-September 2014, was set aside to conclude the interviews with students. The semi-structured interview followed a list of topics which were covered in the questionnaire, to probe the students' reasoning on the answers that were provided in the questionnaire (Bryman, 2012:471). The topics focused on benefits of SL for students and communities and skills learnt by the students during the SL project.

The flexible approach of the focus-group interview allowed for questions to be added during the process arising from new themes that developed from the conversation (Appendix H).

The focus group interviews were hosted in a boardroom at the Cape Town CPUT campus and the venue was well known to the participants and was easy to access. The venue choice was made due to a need for a noise-free venue, which allowed for clear recording of the interview process. After arrival and introductions, approval was requested from all participants to record the interview session. Once this approval was granted, participants were introduced to one another, and a brief explanation of the study and procedure for the focus interview was provided.

Data from the focus group interviews was analysed by following the Krueger and Casey (2010) focus group interview process. This method assesses each line of the written text to draw out developing theories. Although themes of the interview were also teased out from the study questions, each line of the interview transcript was analysed to make note of essential data that arose from the interactions (Berg, 2004:127).

4.4.3.3 Reflection comments

The final day of the SL project was designed as a presentation day where the student groups presented the marketing and/or business plans to the panel of assessors. The reflection tools are discussed below.

4.4.3.3.1 Mark rubric comments from SMTEs

Qualitative research allows for collection of people's perceptions of events as they occur (Burton & Steane, 2004:160). Once the SL project was concluded, students were expected to present the Business Plans and Marketing Plans to a panel of assessors and community members. The presentations were assessed by all panel members including the community members. The comments from the rubrics were submitted on the day of the presentations and provided insight into the SMTE representative's perceptions, as well as serving to gather recommendations that were presented by the student groups. Although the companies had worked closely with the students on the project up to this point, it was only in the final document that students disclosed their own observations on the state of the business, and provided strategies for business growth.

The panel reviewing the business plan presentations included one representative from WESGRO, one or two SMTE representatives, and two academic staff members from CPUT lecturing in marketing and management. The SMTEs scored students based on the categories included in the business plan, and on their perceptions of the presentation skills of

the students. Although the marks section does not form part of this research, the comments of the SMTEs on the mark rubrics are essential pieces of data for the research.

4.4.3.3.2 Student reflection presentations on service learning

Selener (1997:7) emphasises the importance of using a combination of appropriate research tools within qualitative research to gather valuable data. At the end of the SL project, as part of the learning experience, students presented their SL experiences based on the following framework: SL reflections, learning experiences, and students' perceptions of the influence of SL participation on their life experiences. For the purpose of this study the presentations provided a deeper view into the students' experiences of their involvement in SL projects, and how beneficial they thought the project was. This data will be used to inform the type of learning that occurs during future SL projects.

Student groups participating in the SL project were informed of the reflective group presentations on the day, and expectations as well as lessons learned from the SL project were outlined. These presentations did not form part of the marking structures, but gave students an opportunity to share their personal experiences, and make recommendations for improvement concerning the SL project

4.5 Study sample

To ensure transparency within the research process, the sampling and data collection process must be made clear to all stakeholders (Bryman, 2012:406). WESGRO, as the SL partner, was the link to CPUT to gain access to the SMTEs for participation. The agency has over 200 registered SMTEs on its database, all of whom were invited to participate in the SL project conducted during 2012 and 2013. Over the two-year period, 36 of the 38 participating SMTEs responded to the invitation to participate in the SL project, the remaining two participants were not available to accept the invitation. The SL project was characterised by a partnership between the Tourism Management Department at CPUT, SMTEs who were referred to as the SL community, a representative of WESGRO, and the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Centre at CPUT.

Although the SL partnership had many role-players, the actual parties involved in the SL project were 36 SMTEs and 178 third year students. Due to the small size of the population, a census study was conducted of the entire population of SL participants, to be able to draw reliable data (Marshall, 1996:523; Bailis & Melchior, 2003:133-134) from the study. A census enquiry was important for this study as the sample was small, which was limited to the participants of the service learning project (Kothari, 2006:14-16). The community sample

constituted 36 SMTEs' participating representatives, while the student sample constituted 178 students and alumni, who were registered as final year students for the Diploma of Tourism Management during 2012 and 2013. Nine SMTE questionnaire responses were received, which made up 23% of the sample, and 25 of 178 student questionnaires were received, making the response rate 14%. Two SMTE participants volunteered to participate in the one-on-one interviews, and five students made up the focus group panel. The low response rates were attributed to a number of factors including the unavailability of students due to final examinations and employment requirements. The tourism season peaks in October in anticipation of the festive season when tourism activities peak in South Africa. This period was also immediately after the end of the SL project and was earmarked as the time data would be collected from participants. As a result of the peak in business it meant that the SMTEs did not have time to be away from their business.

4.5.1 Recruitment of research participants

All invitations for participation to students and SMTEs were sent out via e-mail. Emails to students and SMTEs were different from each other in order to avoid confusion, and were sent out as blind copies (Appendices C and D). The invitation indicated the intention for participation in the research, outlined the focus of the study, and announced that the questionnaires would be sent out at a later stage.

The invitation was sent out first to allow for the prospective participants to consider the SL project, and its potential outcomes for them. The e-mails also communicated the voluntary nature of the research, and an anonymity statement was included. The latter statements were deliberately included in the e-mail as a strategy to increase response rates, as well as to ensure participants of non-bias, and to receive feedback which was meaningful and trustworthy from participants.

Before the end of the SL project, some of the SMTE participants indicated that they would not have time available to participate in the research, if the data gathering process was forced on all the companies that participated in the SL project, it might have affected the results of the study in a negative way.

Follow-up e-mails to students and SMTEs formed the final invitations, which included the research questionnaires as attachments in MS word format. This e-mail indicated that those SMTEs who wished to have follow-up interviews were to send through their contact details, and invited students who wished to participate in the follow-up focus group interviews to send their confirmation. To avoid the possibility of obtaining biased results during the focus group interviews, more students were invited after the final call was sent out, to obtain a response

from those students who did not show an interest in the first call (Krueger & Casey, 2010:391).

4.5.2 Approaches to improving responses

The problems arising from the non-response of companies seemed worth investigating further, and the researcher looked into the existing SMTE culture of communication and data collection to see if there may be benefits to adapting their style of communication (Khalil, 2014:2-5). Certain approaches, like using short message services (SMS), were used to continually remind the SMTE sample group of the questionnaires, with the primary aim of improving the response rate (Sivo, Saunders, Chang & Jiang, 2006). An informative e-mail was also sent out a month in advance informing the sample group of the planned research and the requirements for them to respond to the questionnaires. A month later, follow-up e-mails with the questionnaires attached were sent to all SL participants, after-which a week later a follow-up SMS was sent to all participants as a reminder to complete and return the questionnaires. At the end of the first semester of 2014 the WESGRO representative assisted by sending a reminder e-mail to all respondents. All these steps were taken without any attempt to coerce participants into responding (Oppenheim, 1996:103-106).

4.6 Validity, reliability and trustworthiness of research tools

With a background in quantitative research methodology, it was daunting to begin integrating the qualitative data into the research process. Concerns from the researcher's viewpoint ranged from ensuring the credibility of the research, building a strong case from the research, and the need to include all forms of reflection on the perceptions of the SL project; students and communities (Machtmes et al., 2009:159). The researcher's drive to prove the trustworthiness of the research findings led to the detailed capturing of all steps followed in the research process as discussed below.

The term research validity is used in quantitative studies, whereas the term credibility is used in qualitative studies (Tracy, 2010:840). This measure of research quality is essential because it relates to how accurate the research tools are, and if the results are a true reflection of what the respondents meant to report in the study (Quinlan, Babin, Carr, Griffin & Zikmund, 2015:24). All measures to ensure validity of research tools were followed in this study.

Table 4.1: Study validity and trustworthiness terminology

Qualitative trustworthiness	Vs.	Quantitative	Meaning
Credibility	=	Internal validity	How believable are the research findings?
Transferability	=	External validity	Can the findings be applied to other contexts?
Dependability	=	Reliability	Can the findings be applied at a different time?
Conformability	=	Objectivity	Have the researchers' values highly influenced the data?

Source: Researcher's design

For quality assurance and credibility, descriptive validity was ensured by the researcher making audio recordings of each interview to prove that transcripts of the interview were not manufactured, and that no false information was recorded. The recordings were done with prior request of and approval from all participants. During the interviews the interviewer also made notes of all the unspoken gestures to add to the transcripts. Factual accuracy is essential in qualitative studies (Maxwell, 2002:45).

The varying quality assurance aspects of qualitative and quantitative research methods, analysis and data interpretation are essential. Bryman (2012:49 &390) notes that it is vital to use the correct terminology for the varying research designs to ensure accurate descriptions for both methodologies. Because this study employed both qualitative and quantitative data methods, these processes were to be followed to ensure quality (Machtmes et al., 2009:157). Table 4.1 on page 48 indicates the various terms used to determine the trustworthiness of qualitative research and validity of quantitative research, which were essential aspects to consider for this research.

To ensure that the results of this study and research tools can be adapted to similar studies, reliability testing and external validity of the research tools was ensured and meticulously reported in the research. All questionnaires were assessed by two different staff members in the CPUT Tourism Management Department, as well as being reviewed by an administrator at the WIL centre, to assess the difficulty of questions and degree of understanding of the questions. A statistician at the CPUT research centre assessed the questionnaires in comparison to the objectives of the study. These processes were completed in preparation for the questionnaires being sent to the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences Ethics Committee for approval to continue with the study.

Conformability and objectivity relate to the honesty and transparency of reporting research data. Tracy (2010:841) refers to the researcher reporting sincerely about their biases, goals, and mistakes during the research, and how these affected their data. In this report, the researcher made an effort to be open and to honestly report all processes and learning during and after collection of the research data. All this was done to avoid being viewed as biased.

4.7 Data analysis and triangulation

With reference to the research problem statement and objectives, the grounded theory approach arose as the most suitable to analyse data from interviews and the open ended questions from the SMTE questionnaires (Bryman, 2012:578). Raw qualitative data was analysed and coded using the ATLAS.ti 7 software. All the quantitative data from the questionnaires was analysed using the SPSS 2.0 analysis software. In this process, unlike in traditional quantitative research, recurring data from the research tools derived from the analysis was captured to develop data themes which were compared with the qualitative data (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:77).

Methodological triangulation means that different data collection methods were used to investigate a single problem. In this study, responses from the interviews, questionnaires, and reflection statements were compared. The data triangulation process is depicted in Table 4.2 below. To avoid bias, which could develop from a single observer, the researcher enlisted the assistance of neutral observers and data analysts to assist with the data triangulation process (Machtmes et al., 2009:160). All the results of the study, corroborative and non-corroborative, should be reported on to represent a true account of the research results (Denscombe, 2010: 346,350).

Comparative analysis of respondent feedback was conducted between the data collected from the SMTEs about the SL project, and the students' performance. Data triangulations were completed by assessing all forms of data from SMTEs to extract the underlying themes from this data, as well as all forms of data from the students to denote SL experience of learning. All the qualitative data was processed through ATLAS.ti 7 software. The study objectives were used to develop primary codes with which the qualitative data was coded. Other important themes that arose from the data as it was being analysed were also coded. These developing themes were identified as a pattern of information emerged over a number of data sources.

Table 4.2: Process of data triangulation

Data identification table		
	1 SMTEs data	2 Student data
A	1. Self-administered questionnaires	2. Self-administered questionnaires
B	1. One-on-one interviews	2. Focus group interview
C	1. Mark rubrics	2. Reflection presentations
Steps in data analysis		
<u>Step 1: Data analysis</u>	$\left. \begin{array}{l} A1+A2 \\ B1+B2 \\ C1+C2 \end{array} \right\} \text{results}$	
<u>Step 2: Data triangulation</u>	$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{SMTEs} \\ A1+B1+C1 \end{array} \right\} \text{results}$	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Students} \\ A2+B2+C2 \end{array} \right.$
<u>Step 3: Comparative analysis</u>	Step 1 Results + Step 2 Results	

Source: Researcher's design

Table 4.2 indicates the data identification and process of analysis. The process of analysis is discussed as follows:

Step 1: Data analysis – Three categories of data were identified: The first category A1 consisted of the SMTE questionnaires and A2 the student questionnaires. The second category, B1, was one-on-one interviews with SMTEs, and B2 was the focus-group interview with students. The third category of data was the reflective comments, of which C1 made up the SMTE rubric comments, and C2 was the comments from student group reflections. Each category of data is analysed and discussed separately in Chapter Five. Quantitative data is presented in forms of graphs and tables, and qualitative data is descriptively discussed.

Step 2: Triangulation – All data sources from student participants were compared for similarities or contradictions. The SMTE data was also compared for themes. A complete assessment of themes was prepared, and conclusions are drawn at this stage and compared to the objectives of the study, examining similar or contradicting themes. At this stage the results were put through a comparative analysis, where all themes developed from the SMTE and student data were assessed and compared.

Step 3: Comparative analysis - The data themes are presented in Chapter Five, sections 5.5 to 5.7. The study objectives are grouped into three themes under which all the assessed data is discussed and presented.

4.8 Study ethical considerations

Ethical considerations in research exist right from the conceptualisation phase, through to data collection and data analysis phases (Miller, Birch, Mauthner & Jessop, 2012:18). Following up examples from studies in the health sciences and the Helsinki Declaration, individuals who participate in any form of research are to be made aware of the aim, benefits and potential dangers of the research (Benatar, 2002:1135). Any study which involves stakeholder participation must be submitted to the research ethics committee to ensure ethical compliance (World Health Organisation, 2012).

For this study, questionnaires were submitted to the Research Committee of the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences at CPUT, for ethical clearance, which was granted (2014 FBREC 209) (Appendix J). Letters requesting participation in the research were sent out to all SL participants. Equally important, the understanding of voluntary participation in the study was essential for each participant. Based on these guidelines, statements regarding confidentiality and voluntary participation in the study were included in each questionnaire and interview schedule cover page (Denscombe, 2010:330-340; Bryman, 2012:134&146), which were highlighted section 4.4 in this chapter.

As the interviews were recorded, interviewees were asked for approval at every stage, stated as:

- Recording of interview;
- Transcription of interview, and
- Permission to publish results of interview

4.8.1 Identifying possible areas of bias

Being the SL project coordinator as well as the researcher there were possible areas of bias to be considered:

Conflict of interest – as the researcher was also the coordinator of the project, there was a possibility of conflict of interest by desiring all results to be positive. For research purposes this would be breaking the code of ethics and would constitute false reporting (Nieuwenhuis, 2011:114).

Ethical compromise – due to the coordinators background in the project the question arose as to whether having the goals of the SL project in mind would influence the objective view of the results (Sadler, 2002:125). The following actions were taken during the various stages of

data collection and analysis by the researcher to try to eliminate possible areas of bias arising from the study:

- Personal interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions of the interviews were sent back to the interviewees to identify any errors arising from the interviews;
- A qualified moderator was appointed for conducting the focus group interviews, to ensure that the interview was conducted fairly and reported truthfully;
- Audio recordings of all sessions were made, and as with the interviews, recordings were sent to all participants to assess and provide feedback, immediately after the focus group interviews were concluded;
- Triangulation of data collected from various sources was used to eliminate errors, as depicted in Table 4.2. The ATLAS.ti 7 data analysis programme was employed to process the qualitative data, and SPSS.20 software was utilised to analyse the quantitative data, and
- Comparative analysis and data triangulation were conducted and all results were placed under scrutiny to ensure that all possible themes, positive or contradictory to the study objectives, were assessed to arrive at a conclusion.

4.9 Summary

This Chapter highlights the importance of employing various data sources of the SL project in the research to ensure credibility of the study. The use of qualitative and quantitative methods was clearly described for the reader to understand how the triangulation process followed. The use of action research in the SL research was justified. The researcher's primary aim was for the results of the study to be rendered trustworthy. This prompted the clear outline of all processes followed in the research to ensure validity and reliability of the results, as well as highlighting possible bias areas to avoid.

In the following Chapter the data collected is interrogated and analysed based on the study objectives, using the research tools that were described in the research design.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The data analysis chapter, as illustrated in the methodology section, followed the stages of comparative analyses that outlined similarities and contradictions of selected topics from the various data sources that were collected. The data sources that were included in the enquiry, as depicted in Table 5.1, included questionnaires (A1) which were completed by SL communities (SMTEs), and separate questionnaires (A2) also completed by the students. Following the collection of the questionnaires, one-on-one interviews (B1) were conducted with community participants, and focus group interviews (B2) were conducted with the students. SL reflection presentations were assessed by community mark rubrics (C1) and student reflections of the SL project (C2) also formed part of the enquiry. The analysis process as discussed in this Chapter followed a sequence where the data from the questionnaires investigating the benefits of SL, was compared to the feedback from the interviews which evaluated correlations or dissimilarities from the various sources of respondent data. Student performance during the SL project was assessed from the reflection presentations and comments from the mark rubrics. Sections 5.5 to 5.7 discuss triangulated data.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the study was limited to participants of the SL study. Samples were relatively low, which could introduce bias into the study. To avoid bias as a result of the small study sample, various data collection sources, such as questionnaire, interviews and focus groups were included to provide in-depth data (Marshall, 1996:523). It must be noted that efforts were sought by the researcher to increase response rates. Due to time limitations non-responses of SMTE participants in particular could not be avoided. This was attributed to the fact that the tourism industry in the Cape region is at its peak in October. Tourism organisations are at their busiest during this period, and the SMTE participants needed to focus on their organisations.

According to the project plan the SL data collection period was exactly twelve months after the completion of the SL project. This was deemed the perfect opportunity to collect reliable data on the use of or implementation of the business plans received after the completion of the SL project in the previous year. Any earlier the SMTE may not have had enough time to implement the business plans and develop feasible results from their work with the students. While the question could be asked as to whether another time for data collection could have

been selected. According to the project brief SMTE participants were required to still be in contact with students at this point, any time later communication links might have been lost.

All participants' information were kept anonymous. The respondent's identities were converted into codes which are identified in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Respondent codes used in the analysis chapter

Data Source	Respondents	Code representations
A1	SMTEs self-administered questionnaires	SMTE1 to SMTE9 represents the nine questionnaire respondents.
A2	Students self-administered questionnaires	Data from these respondents is explained in frequency tables and there was no qualitative data to record. Codes were not provided for these respondents.
B1	SMTE business one-on-one interviews	The interview participants were coded as Resp1 and Resp2
B2	Student focus group interviews	FP1 to FP4 represent the four focus group interview participants.
C1	Mark rubrics	Mark rubrics completed by the SMTEs at the end of the SL project assessing the students' performance. This data was not coded. All comments from the mark rubrics were represented anonymously in the chapter.
C2	Student group reflections	Comments from student reflections were recorded anonymously in the chapter. Respondent codes were not provided for this data.

Source: Researcher's design

Collected data was assessed in qualitative and quantitative form where the student questionnaires were analysed through the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 2.2). Results are presented in the form of graphs and tables and are discussed in this Chapter. Data from the SMTE questionnaires was processed through the statistical programme Microsoft Excel as it contained large and somewhat equal amounts of qualitative and quantitative data. Comparative analyses were conducted on the interview transcripts, mark rubric comments, and student presentations.

The qualitative data from interviews and student SL reflections were assessed with the data codes that were developed through the ATLAS.ti 7 programme which is explained in Chapter Four. The data was encoded into themes using the qualitative analysis programme ATLAS.ti7. The study objectives formed the basis for the themes developed for the qualitative data analysis in Table 5.12 on page 83. These objectives are:

1. To identify the benefits of the service learning project for the communities involved;
2. To assess the level of impact the service learning project had on the communities involved;
3. To establish if the benefits experienced were aligned to the desired aims of the service learning project for the communities involved;

4. To gauge the level of community interest in participating in future service learning projects;
5. To determine the efficiency of the service learning project design;
6. To ascertain the benefits of the service learning project for the Tourism Management, and
7. To determine the beneficial work-placed learning skills students attain by partaking in the service learning project.

Codes that were drawn up during the analysis stage were grouped within the overarching themes which are discussed in this Chapter. The analytical programmes used in this study were provided for and licensed by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

5.2 Questionnaire analysis

Questionnaires assessing SMTE perceptions of the SL project were distributed to the SL community representatives also referred to as small and medium tourism enterprises (SMTEs). Another set of questionnaires assessing student reflection on their experiences of SL participation were distributed to students. The main focus of the questionnaires was to interrogate the benefits of SL participation for students and communities, to assess their perception of how the SL project was coordinated, as well as to assess the skills acquired through SL participation. This following section starts with the analysis of the SMTE questionnaires and is followed by the student questionnaire analysis.

5.2.1 SMTE questionnaires

Marketing plans and business plans are written documents that set out to plan the running of a business over a set period of time (Tassiopoulos, 2011:186). Operational plans are set for assessing business performance for a period that could differ between one to three years. These operational business and marketing plans, which were developed during the SL project with the SMTEs, were operationalised over a one year period. The SMTE questionnaires assessing the SL documents were completed twelve months after the conclusion of the project. This process was purposefully followed to allow the companies to assess the practicality of the SL projects that they received after the SL period. Entrepreneurs needed to be allowed time to implement any aspects of the business plans and/or marketing plans they deemed essential for their enterprises.

The questionnaires were posed to reflect on the business and marketing plans that were submitted to the communities at the end of the SL project-period. The main focus of this investigation was to assess whether the expectations of the participating communities were met with the documentation they received at the end of the project, as well as to assess the quality of this documentation. These questions will provide clarity into study objective 1,

assessing if the benefits experienced through SL participation were aligned to the desired aims of the service learning project for the communities involved.

The assessment of the SMTE data starts with a focus on the demographic characteristics of the participants. This data can be used as a tool to compare similar projects that were conducted, including SMTE owners in the Western Cape (University of Stellenbosch Business School, 2014:4). The SL questionnaires included demographic data of the SMTE representatives following on the assessment in the literature review. This data is discussed below.

5.2.1.1 SMTE representatives demographic and background data

The first data on the perceptions of SL projects was from the SMTEs. For purposes of profiling the SMTE participants of the SL project, it was essential to investigate the demographic backgrounds of these SL participants to be able to do data comparative studies resulting from the data collected. The demographic data of the SMTE respondents constituted 56% male respondents and 44% female respondents ($n=9$, 100%), and is depicted in Figure 5.1. Two of the respondents were aged between 30 to 39 years, three between 40 to 49 years and four respondents between 50 to 59 years. To better understand the small business climate in South Africa, and more specifically the Western Cape, assessing the business environment is a crucial process. This data will help to ascertain the profile of existing small business owners as well as to track the types of new entrants. The questionnaires which were received after completion, were coded as SMTE participant one (SMTE1) to SMTE participant nine (SMTE9). For easier identification, the codes within the brackets were used to identify the responses from the various questionnaires.

Section A of the SMTE questionnaires included background data on the owners of the tourism organisations. The discussion on this data provided clarity into the profiles of those running small businesses, as well as the profiles of the participants of the SL project who responded to the questionnaires. In the literature review a question on the low levels of entry into the tourism industry was raised (Rogerson, 2008:58). The background data on the SMTE profiles will attempt to provide an answer to the question, by focusing on the qualifications of those participants who responded to the questionnaires. Gender representation of entrepreneurs in South Africa was also touched on in the literature review in section 3.4.1, and of those who participated in the SL study. The South African Government considers female participation and representation in small and medium business ownership as an essential catalyst to combat unemployment not only in the country, but also in the SADC region (Mathonsi, 2013:44; Chibba, 2014). For this reason it was essential to investigate the number of female SMTE owners who participated in the

research. Data on the demographic backgrounds of the SL participants is presented in Figure 5.1 and Table 5.2.

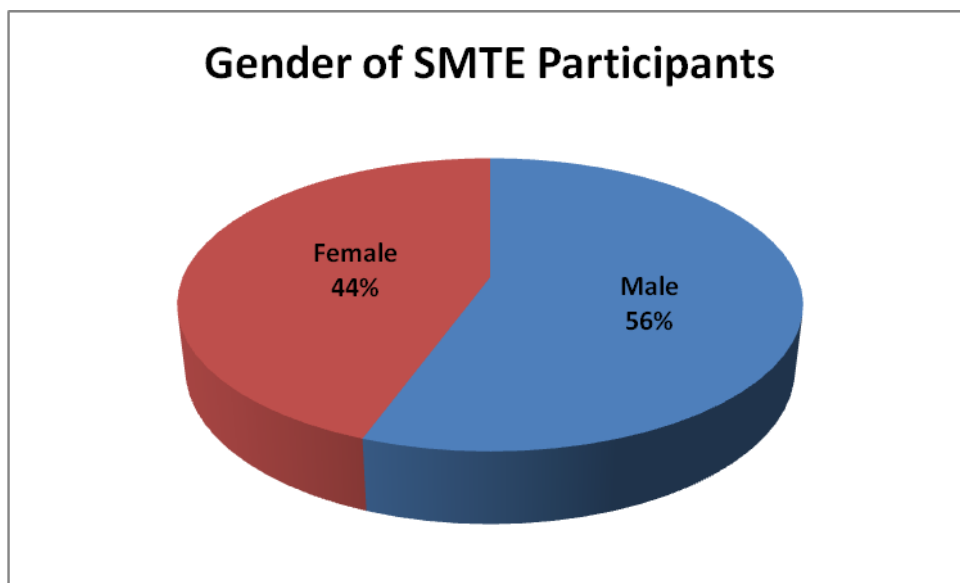


Figure 5.1: Gender of the SMTE respondents ($n=9$, 100%)

As an attempt to respond to the discussion in Chapter Three on the participation of black individuals on the tourism industry, ethnicity of participants was investigated. The ethnic background of the respondents shown in Table 5.2 indicates that of the SMTEs that participated in the SL project and answered the questionnaires, two were Africans, six were Coloured representatives and one of the respondents did not specify his/her race. Although the gender and ethnic-specific questions were included in the questionnaires, they did not have any influence on the perception views of the respondents. For this reason, the responses in which the race of the respondents was not specified were also accepted.

Data on gender and ethnic profiles of SMTE participants was not collected to conduct a comparison between project participants and what the literature defines as contributors to the tourism economy (Page & Connell, 2004:279-280). While this data collected can add to the body of knowledge relating to characteristics of men and women entrepreneurs in South Africa (Botha, 2009:39) gender or race-related objectives were not highlighted in the study objectives, thus correlation tests were not conducted between the demographic background data and the perceptions of the respondents in this study.

Table 5.2: Ethnic demographics of SMTE representatives (n=9, 100%)

Race of Respondents	Number
African	2
Coloured	6
Not specified	1
Total	9

Added to the SMTE profile data, highest qualifications of SMTE participants was also collected. The qualifications of the respondents indicated that two of the respondents completed their Matric qualifications; one respondent completed a Higher Certificate, three of the respondent's possessed a National Diploma, while one respondent qualified with a Post Graduate Diploma and two respondents' completed Bachelor's Degrees. Although research on small enterprises indicates that the owners of businesses lack qualifications, or rather are not qualified (Yang, 2007:13), these statistics could indicate a trend towards enterprise-owners taking the initiative to improve their skills or qualifications.

Conversely the data also highlights the limitations of the SMTEs business management skills such as financial knowledge, awareness and understanding of the tourism industry. Although a large number of respondents obtained under-graduate qualifications, it would be essential to assess in which fields of study the higher education qualifications were obtained. to assess the types of operational skills they would have obtained from their prospective qualifications.

The next demographical information detailing work experience was also assessed. Figure 5.2 illustrates that 78% of the SMTE respondents had prior work experience, while 22% had no prior work experience before they started their tourism venture.

Experience in a business over a long period of time allows business owners to gain greater operational knowledge which can then be shared between mentors and trainees, as the sharing of tacit knowledge is essential for SL projects to succeed (Silva, 2007: 122). On-the-job training is a concept that is operational in South Africa, but still needs to be fully acknowledged. This is knowledge that is planted into the organisation and implemented for success (University of Stellenbosch Business School, 2014:1).

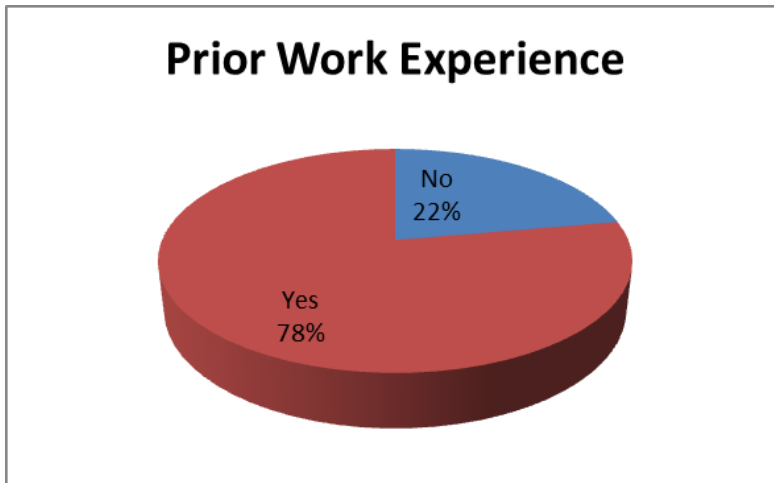


Figure 5.2: Prior work experience of participating SMTE representatives

Of those respondents who possessed prior work experience, one had more than 20 years' experience in the teaching industry, five respondents had between six and 15 years prior work experience, and one respondent had less than five years work experience. The problem with this set of results is the limited information of specified work experience which could shed light on the amount and type of prior work experience the representatives possessed.

Added to the respondents prior work experience, tenure in the current position and the specific sectors the SMTEs participated in were also investigated. Having been able to successfully operationalise their businesses over a period of time is an indication that there could be important trial-and-error lessons to be learned from their experiences, which would be essential for student learning in the SL project. Positions held in the business range from manager, partner to owner. Six of the respondents (66%) indicated that they have been in their current position for five years or less, after having left their previous employment, as shown in Table 5.3.

Rogerson (2005:5) identifies the tourism industry, within the larger travel and tourism sector. SMTE participants of the SL project are all clustered in the travel and tourism industry. Four of the respondents own accommodation establishments, four are travel operators, with two of these respondents indicating that they are also qualified tourist guides, and one of the respondents operates as a qualified tourist guide. Table 5.5 on page 63, responding to objective 1 of the study, assessed the benefits of SL participation for the business owned by the respondents. The section discussing the SMTE interviews in the chapter discusses the representative's perceptions on the knowledge gained by students from the SL project, which is linked to objective 7. The discussion on the students' focus group interviews later in the chapter shares their experiences and perceptions of the knowledge they gained during the SL project.

Table 5.3: Number of years working at the current tourism organisation

Number of Years in Current Work	Number
0-5 yrs	6
6-10 yrs	2
11-15 yrs	1
Total	9

5.2.1.2 SMTE representative perceptions of the SL project

Although at this point of the discussion the enquiry is on benefits for SMTEs, the intention of the study focusing on study objective 7 was also to assess the benefits for students in terms of investigating work integrated learning that students experienced during the SL project. Section C of the SMTE questionnaire focused on the SMTEs perceptions of the SL project, including the discussion on perceived benefits for students. The questions in this section focused on the following study objectives 7, 1 and 4, based on the design of the questionnaire and the bullets below:

- Was the SL project beneficial for the students?
- Was SL participation beneficial on a personal level, or more for the business?
- Would the participant recommend participation in SL projects to other SMTEs?

The first two bullets above attempted to provide answers for objective 7 of the study, in assessing the benefits for students who are involved in the project. The last bullet provides clarity, and establishes explanations for objective four of the study by gauging the SMTEs interest in future SL projects. Data from these questions is also compared to feedback from the interviews in Table 5.12 on page 83.

Figure 5.3 illustrates the responses from the sample population on viewing the SL project as a worthwhile exercise for students, linking to objective 7. To assess the benefits of the SL project the perceptions of the SMTE community representatives were sought. Feedback on the value of SL indicated that the SMTE representatives considered the SL project a worthwhile exercise for students, as 56% of the respondents stated that they strongly support the SL project experience for the students.

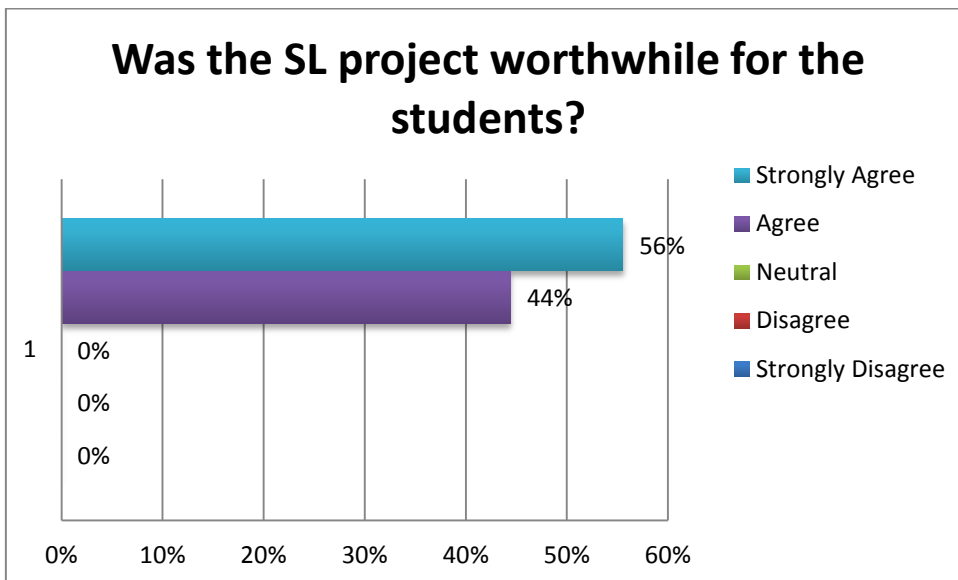


Figure 5.3: Perceptions of the value of the SL project for students

The most stated reasons for the SL support is the exposure to industry students received from the project, as representative SMTE 5 stated:

“...it offers learners a real life experience which is not an academic exercise. They have to learn to work in teams. They get an opportunity to present their project hence the project affords them the opportunity to learn many different skills”.

Added to the benefits for students, communities also responded to question 16 on benefits of SL participation for them, answering objective 1 of the study. On assessing whether SL participation was beneficial on a personal level, eight (89%) of the nine SMTE respondents said “yes”, while one responded “no”. On assessing the answers to this question a trend appeared that revealed that although the SMTE representatives were answering in a personal capacity, the business benefits also featured prominently in their answers. This is based on a view that with small and medium organisations, owners find it hard to separate themselves from their business (Morrison & Teixeira, 2004:167). All the comments were tabulated rather than selecting a few, addressed in Table 5.4 on page 62.

Business owners personalising the management of their business emerged as one theme during the SL project, and it seemed that those SMTE representatives who were resistant to change did not allow students any room to advise them on any aspects of the business. Based on experience from previous projects of this nature, this type of behaviour from the participating SMTEs was anticipated. Project coordinators would then mediate in these situations to find harmonious solutions for all parties, as students worried about how these actions would affect their performance at the end of the project.

Table 5.4: SL project benefits for individual SMTE participants

16. Do you think SL project is beneficial to you as an individual?			
	YES	NO	Please motivate your answer
SMTE1	1		<i>"it brings change to an individual which is necessary because you will change for the better as you gain knowledge which is power"</i>
SMTE2	1		<i>"allowed me insight from the perspective of an outsider"</i>
SMTE3		1	No comments received
SMTE4	1		<i>"It motivates me to educate myself and stay afloat of trends and developments with the industry."</i>
SMTE5	1		<i>"I enjoyed the interaction with the students-they were a pleasant bunch. Some of their questions posed got my own thoughts going. I enjoy the youth and one of the learners still keeps in contact via Facebook."</i>
SMTE6	1		<i>"It has allowed me the time to focus on other aspects of the business, but also to encourage those to use their creative minds"</i>
SMTE7	1		<i>"It helps one to get to know more people with a view to the future of building up strong relationships"</i>
SMTE8	1		<i>"The work place is an evolving place and new blood brings with it new ideas! Which are beneficial for the individual."</i>
SMTE9	1		No comments received

It was important to ask the SMTEs a question about any personal benefits experienced to assess their satisfaction. Referring to feedback in Table 5.4, only three of the "yes" responses were directed to individual benefits; SMTE1 indicated knowledge gained during the project; SMTE5 enjoyed the interaction with the students on a personal level; and SMTE7 indicated the benefits of future relationships from the SL participation. Responses from SMTE2, SMTE4, SMTE6 and SMTE8 focused on how beneficial the students' participation was to their business in terms of new ideas that were formulated during the project.

Question 17 asked whether SL participation had any impact on the business. Seven (78%) participants answered "yes" to the SL benefiting their business, while only two (22%) respondents answered "no" (Table 5.5). A theme evident in the responses was that external participation from the students allowed for new business ideas to be formulated. The respondents highlighted that an outside view allowed them to place aspects of their business into perspective, and this is true of the outcomes of SL-reflection that external mentoring improves business focus (Garcia, Nehrling, Martin & SeBlonka, 2009:82).

SMTE5 indicated with question 16 that the benefits of personal interactions with students were enjoyable while the benefits for the business were negative.

“I don’t believe that the learners did much research as most of the information presented was what I actually gave to them. I don’t believe the project was interactive enough i.e. between them and I, as we didn’t meet often. Perhaps the individuals did not understand me or perhaps they didn’t understand the market sufficiently enough to make a meaningful contribution to my business.”

Table 5.5: SL benefits for the SMTE business

17. Do you think SL project is beneficial for the business?			
	YES	NO	Please motivate your answer
SMTE1	1		No comment received
SMTE2	1		<i>“They made suggestions we hadn't thought of”</i>
SMTE3		1	<i>“The group did not assist me”</i>
SMTE4	1		<i>“I have an updated business and marketing plan to work with”</i>
SMTE5		1	<i>“I don’t believe that the learners did much research as most of the information presented was what I actually gave to them. I don’t believe the project was interactive enough i.e. between them and I, as we didn’t meet often. Perhaps the individuals did not understand me or perhaps they didn’t understand the market sufficiently enough to make a meaningful contribution to my business”.</i>
SMTE6	1		<i>“I used the information in my business quite successfully”</i>
SMTE7	1		<i>“It helps one to see one’s own company from a different perspective and ones flaws is easily picked up”(sic)</i>
SMTE8	1		<i>“The work place is an evolving place and new blood brings with it new ideas! Which are beneficial for the individual”</i>
SMTE9	1		No comment received

Although it is evident that some participants are dissatisfied with the project, caution must be followed as to how to interpret this dissatisfaction. The responses also raised an important point in group maturity and preparedness for SL participation. To follow the question of benefit, perceptions of student performance were also investigated.

5.2.1.3 SMTE representative perceptions on student performance

Study objective 5 aims to evaluate efficiency of the SL project design. Elements that were assessed in section 5.2.1.4 related to preparation of students for the project, level of complexity of SL projects for undergraduate students and other factors like communication. As the students’ performances are linked to their level of preparedness, SMTE representatives were asked to assess their student group performance. The responses to this data will hopefully provide answers on how the structure of the SL design affects student performance. The data on the students’ performance during the SL project indicated a positive outcome, with 78% of respondents being satisfied with the performance of the students. Question 22.2 required the SMTE representative to provide an indication if they thought the students were well informed about what they were expected to do for the SL

project. The answers indicated the perceptions of SMTE representatives were that students' performance was not very strong on tactical aspects of the project, but their attitude during the project was highly regarded.

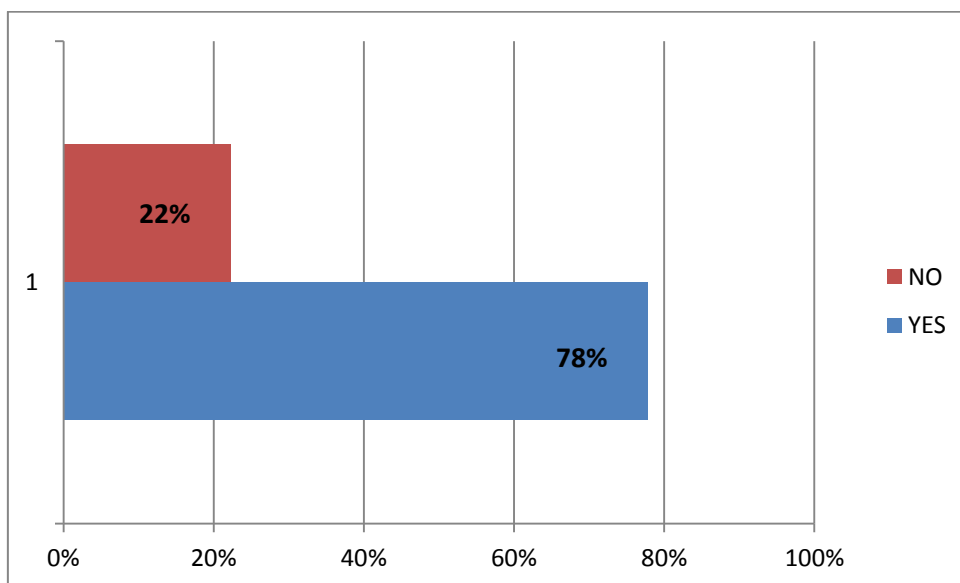


Figure 5.4: SMTE representatives' perceptions of SL information received by students (n=9, 100%)

Figure 5.4 indicates (n=7, 78%) that though a high number of the respondents answered “yes” to students receiving enough information about the SL project, the perception on the level of complexity of the project was not positive, as respondent SMTE5 commented that “...they asked leading questions. I just doubt that they had the ability to deliver. Perhaps the project was too big for them?” Respondent SMTE3 suggested that even though they received information regarding the SL project, they did not seem to understand what was expected of them, “...we did at our session not sure if they fully comprehend” relating to sessions they had to discuss requirements of the project.

The “no” answers in Figure 5.4 (n=2, 22%) had comments that indicated the students were not clear on what was expected of them by the project coordinator. Respondent SMTE8 stated

“...not really the group worked with at the time sounded as though they were not sure on what was expected from them and what they wanted from the company (my opinion anyway)”.

This statement is supported by SMTE2 who states that “...they seemed confused about what they needed to do”.

The above results have raised questions about the type of preparation students received preceding the commencement of the SL project. As indicated in the literature review, discussing the structure and flow of the SL project at CPUT is necessary. Although students have the subject knowledge, they may still not be able to react to challenges facing the business, from the orientation they received before the project. This begs the question of what strategies need to be in place to transform students' thinking about SL (Osman & Petersen, 2013:34; Chapter Two, section 2.6.2.). As introductory information was disseminated to the students in the form of a mini-lecture, the question is whether more scheduled classes with more structured content should be included in the curriculum before any SL project is started.

Question 12 was also linked to objective 5 of the study, and the question asked at what level SMTEs thought this SL project should be pitched. Fifty percent of respondents indicated that it was supposed to be offered at the third year of study, 12% did not respond, and 28% indicated that it must be offered in the second year of study. The students were also asked about the level of the SL project they participated in, and they indicated that the difficulty of the project, even at third year level, is a concern for quality results and an aspect that must be concentrated on for future projects. This raises awareness about curriculum planning and information dissemination for students in order to have a successful SL project.

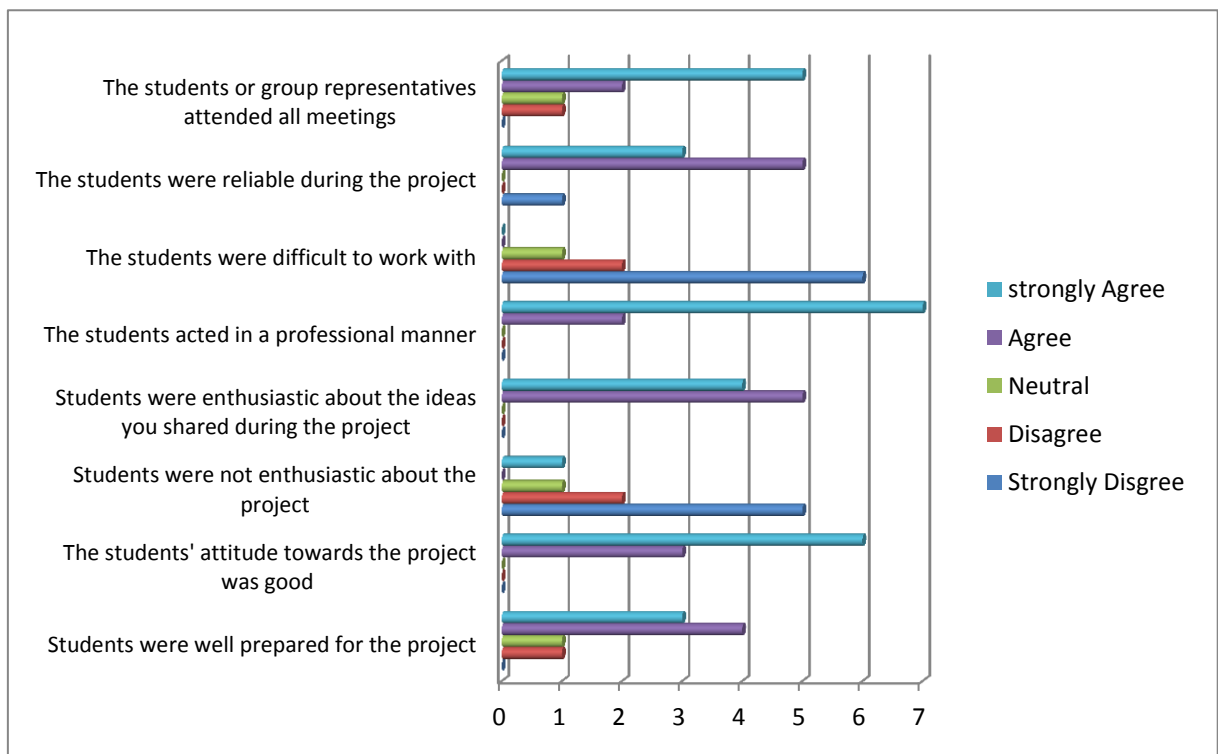


Figure 5.5: SMTE perceptions of student attitude (n=9)

Student attitude-perceptions were mainly positive as indicated in Figure 5.5. The feedback indicated a strong professional perception of student behaviour, with good attitudes and high enthusiasm about the project. When considering the above results and the personal experience of the SMTE during the SL project, the students' positive behaviour could have had an impact on the SMTEs positive feedback on personal benefits from the SL project. More interrogation of this question is done in the SMTE one-on-one interview section.

5.2.1.4 Assessing SL communication with community representatives during the SL project

Managing relationships with communities is essential for any SL project to ensure healthy working relationships that encompass a high level of trust in achieving envisaged results for a successful SL project (Netshandama, 2010:71). Communication is one essential tool for strengthening partnerships. Thus, levels of communication about the SL project were assessed from two angles: firstly, communication about the SL project to all participants prior to commencement; and secondly, communication from the coordinators to all participants during the SL project. The presentation of Figure 5.6 concentrates on communication during the SL project. The discussion on communication prior to the SL project commencement is dealt with in the interview section and results for the preparation of the SL project are discussed in the SMTE interview section, relating to SL project planning.

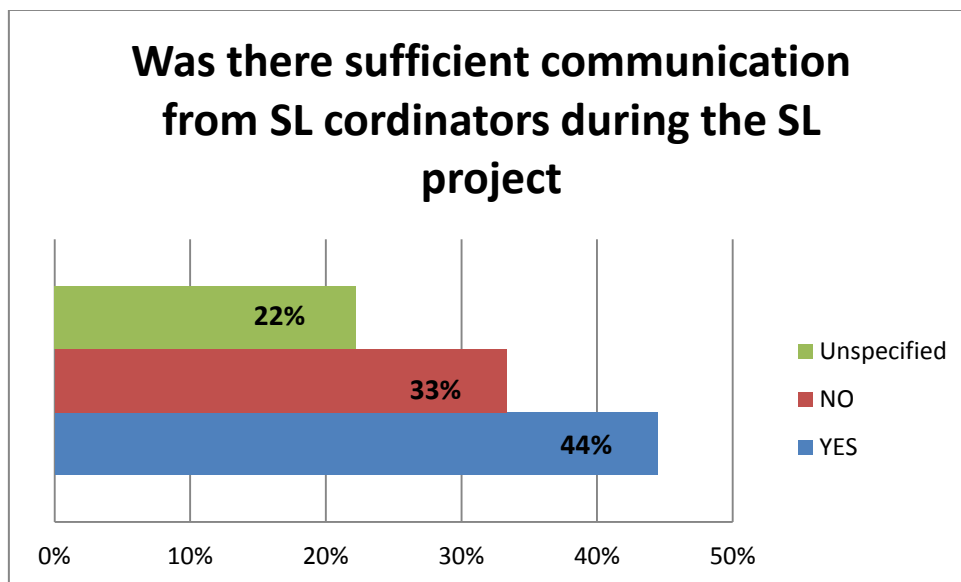


Figure 5.6: Perceived levels of communication from the SL coordinators during the SL project

The question posed was whether there was sufficient communication from the SL coordinators during the SL project. The respondents indicated a perceived lack of communication from the coordinators, as a comment from respondent SMTE8 stated "...perhaps more effort needs to be put in the communication front". On the contrary, respondent SMTE5 does not answer yes or no to the question, but commented that

“...communication from SL coordinator to me YES. But not sure to them, I can’t say”, (indicating communication to the students). This answer indicates a satisfactory perception of information received by the SMTE representative, with a level of uncertainty on communication between the coordinator and the students.

The above observation could be attributed to the fact that subsequent to the first coordinated meet-and-greet, all other meetings relating to the development and improvements of the business and marketing plans were only held between the SMTE representatives and the student groups (Chapter Two, section 2.5.2). The SMTE representatives might have been unaware of the continuous sessions between students and coordinators throughout the project, where the coordinator covered topics on general development of the business and marketing plans. The role of the lecturer/SL coordinator was of a supportive guide, and not of periodically assessing the students’ work, as the work was going to be assessed at the end of the project. The SMTEs reflection of the plans received from the students at the end of the project also provided answers to this question in section 5.2.1.6.

5.2.1.5 Required content for the business and marketing plan outcome

Due to the nature of the SL project plan outline it was essential for this study to also focus on the SMTEs expected outcomes of the business and marketing plans. This discussion and section 5.2.1.6 are linked to study objective 3, which assesses the alignment of SL project objectives to the aims of the communities involved. The responses from this question were compared with the answers to the interview on the results of the SL project which assessed any successes or short-comings of the SL project. The assignment brief of the SL project for both the complete marketing and business plans indicated guidelines for the information that was required in the complete plans, which were the expected outcomes of the project. Although these guidelines were provided businesses had unique requirements, which were highlighted and included in the recommended guideline. The answers on what information was required in these plans were subject to each unique organisation’s requirements.

Throughout the SL project organisations had a chance to provide input into what they wanted to appear in the final document. Question 22.4 on the SMTE questionnaire (Appendix E) required the respondents to elaborate on what they thought was of importance and should be included in the final business and/or marketing plan document. The following are examples of the relevant responses on this question:

- *“The government policies relevant to the specific business you operate”.*
- *“Current trends and latest technology development within tourism. Any legislation that impact the tourism industry”.*

- “Reflect practical and real-time issues, e.g. competitors, strategies, etc”.
- “A digital format of it”.

It is important to highlight that only three respondents (33%) provided information relevant to this question, while other comments were not directly related to the technical expectations of the documents, but raised important issues relating to the quality of the documents they received. The responses above covered the general topics that were also outlined in the project brief, under their relevant headings, and were thus expected to be covered as part of the literature in the plans that were drawn up. Two other responses to this question reflected on the documents they received after the project, rather than on their thoughts of the topic.

The comment from SMTE 3 on this issue raised scrutiny on the current SL planning and knowledge management process for students. The comment read “...*our group did a marketing plan only. And it was summary of my current one*”. SMTE9 commented on the document received by the business as being of insufficient quality, stating “...*I feel the business plan we received was theoretical and did not reflect practical and real time issues...*”. The two questions that arose from this comment were:

- Did the students learn relevant and new knowledge from the SL project process?
- Was there sufficient knowledge-transfer between all groups that participated in the SL project and their participating communities?

Certain conclusions could be drawn from the above statements, which indicate that there was a lack of a collaborative effort between these particular community members and the assigned groups in drawing up the final draft of the business plan. Based on this result, further research is required to establish if various levels of working relationships in SL projects affect the quality of project outputs, as well as satisfaction ratings. This observation also indicates a need for more interventions to be put in place where collaboration tends to decrease towards the end of the project.

The discussion below on assessing the quality of the final SL plans is compared to feedback from the interviews with the students and the community representatives, to assess the different views on the matters discussed above. The following section will focus on the data from the questionnaires that were completed by the students who participated in the study.

5.2.1.6 Assessment of the business and marketing plans from the SL project

Following on the SMTE expectations of the documents received, it was vital to assess how the SMTEs perceived the quality of the documentation they received from the SL project.

This question was also elaborated on in the SMTE interviews, in section 5.3.2.4, the results of which correlate with the statements in the discussion and Table 5.6.

Question 27 of the SMTE questionnaire asked respondents to assess whether the final document they received at the end of the project met their expectations. The answers to this question collaborated with the feedback on the expectations discussed above. To summarise the feedback on perceptions of the documents received, not all respondents answered this question. Eight responses were received on this question, and six (75%) were positive; indicating that the document met their expectations, while two (25%) responded that the document did not meet their expectations. One of the positive responses did not have comments, as respondent SMTE3 chose not to answer both the quantitative and qualitative sections of this question.

Table 5.6: Perceptions of final SL documents (n=8)

27. Did the final document you received meet your expectations?			
	YES	NO	Please motivate your answer
SMTE1	1		<i>"The final document was above my expectations. It was professional, self - explanatory and easy to use"</i>
SMTE2	1		No comment received
SMTE3	-	-	No comment received
SMTE4	1		<i>"This was never supposed to be completely replacing my current business plan and I was expected to fine tune the document into my working format"</i>
SMTE5		1	<i>"I expected a higher level of work and research and more innovation"</i>
SMTE6	1		<i>"In the end, we all (including myself) provided information that was presented in the document and I am satisfied with it"</i>
SMTE7	1		<i>"It is workable and done in a very professional manner"</i>
SMTE8		1	<i>"Well I feel that the group focused on the book/theory approach and struggled to build plans on practical and real time plans"</i>
SMTE9	1		<i>"I was very happy with the business plan"</i>

Respondents SMTE5 and SMTE8, who responded NO to question 27, indicated that they were unhappy with the quality of the work, with one comment stating that the content of the document was not pitched at a significantly high level as it lacked depth in research and innovation. The other comment alluded to the document lacking practical application skills.

A further investigation of the comments related to the question reveal that three of the respondents (SMTE1, SMTE7 & SMTE9) who responded "yes" to question 27 were satisfied with the documents without reservations, constituting 50% of the positive responses. Respondents SMTE4, and SMTE6 clearly highlighted their input in the project building up to the final document, and this ties in with the idea that SL project collaboration should be a

collaboration between all participants as explained in the discussion on stakeholders in SL projects in Chapter Two. The core principle of SL participation is for learning to become reciprocal (Boud & Lee, 2007:509), otherwise the benefits of the project become distorted.

Figure 5.7 indicates the SMTEs feedback on the questions of whether students used their recommendations in the business and marketing plans. Four (57%) of the seven respondents agreed with the statement, with one strongly agreeing, while two (29%) disagreed with the statement. The question of dependency of the SL participants on students was raised in the literature review, and Objective 2 of the study assesses the impact SL participation has on participating communities. Data in Figure 5.7 disputes the notion that students go into communities, without working closely with their communities, sharing some valuable lessons (Kolenko, Porter, Wheatley & Colby, 1996:142). In this study the SMTE organisations make changes with the students to their own environment. It rather points to the fact that reciprocal learning took place in this study where students did not work in isolation from the SMTE representative's guidance during the project. Although the data indicated that not all respondents were in agreement with this statement, more information is required to cement this statement. Feedback from the students' focus group interviews was more in agreement with this statement.

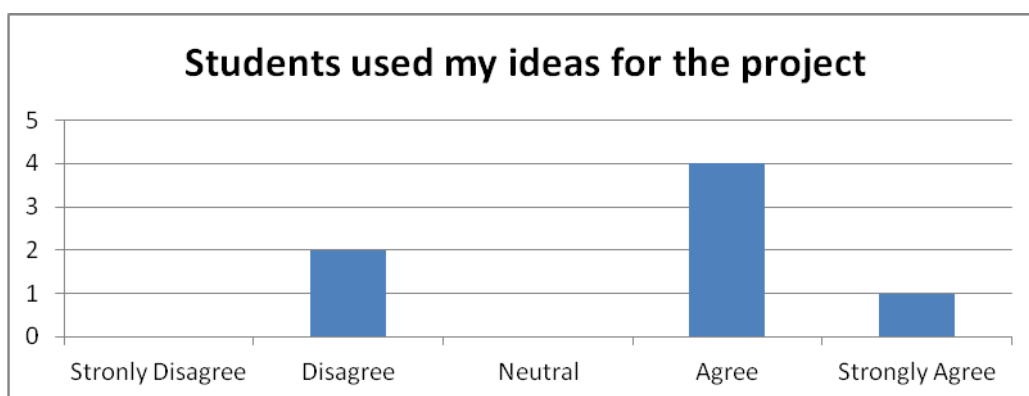


Figure 5.7: Perceptions of SL partnership ideas between communities and students (n=7)

Managing and accessing of community members' expectations in SL projects has proven to be a challenge for a number of SL projects (Eby, 1998:2; Gallini & Moely, 2003:6-8). It would have been interesting to assess how many of the SL participants in this project attended the SL planning meetings, and to have had them assess their expectations of the project and the students before the project began. As an improvement plan for future projects it would be advisable to record the meetings and distribute them to community members who are unable to attend the planning meeting ensuring receipt of the same message (Krueger & Casey, 2001:1).

Once the SL project is complete it is essential to assess whether the final products of the SL project benefited the participating organisations in any way. Data on the comments from the plans received after the SL project strongly correlate with the statements in Table 5.5. Question 24 discussed in Table 5.7 records the communities' perceptions of the technical aspects of the documents drawn up from the SL project. Eight responses were recorded to the top four questions of Table 5.7. One of the respondents chose not to answer all the questions, thus the latter questions in the table total seven respondents. There was a high response which indicated the use of the ideas and implementation of the business and marketing plan ideas that were drawn up during the SL project were agreed.

Table 5.7: Assessing the use of SL Business and Marketing Plans (n=8)

Statement	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Total
Question 2.4 SMTE participants' reflection on the ideas for the business				
The students' ideas were innovative	0	2	6	8
The students' ideas were practical	1	2	5	8
The students' ideas were relevant to the business	1	2	5	8
I could implement the ideas the students suggested	2	1	5	8
The students' ideas were clearly thought out	0	1	6	7
The students' ideas were immature	4	3	0	7
I have used some of the ideas the students suggested	1	2	4	7
I have not used any of the ideas the students suggested	5	1	1	7
I have used some of my ideas in the project	1	1	5	7
The students' ideas were out of context	5	2	0	7

Questions about the practicality and innovation of the documents were put to the respondents. On the returned questionnaires, one of the respondents did not complete questions five to ten, as indicated in Table 5.7. All responses from the questionnaire were recorded and the difference was indicated in the Table. The totals in Table 5.7 indicate the response rates on each particular question. Each statement is discussed below:

- I. Eight respondents answered this question and six respondents (75%) agreed that the document recommendations were innovative, with two neutral (25%) responses.

- II. A positive aspect of these results speaks to the relevance of the curriculum content of the SL project. The question on the practicality of the students' ideas in the SL plans indicated that five (63%) of the eight responses found the students' ideas to be practical for their organisations.
- III. The students' ability to relate their learning to the practical solutions for their respective businesses was assessed. Feedback from the SMTEs indicated that five (63%) of the eight respondents believed the students' ideas were relevant to their business; while two (25%) were undecided; one of the respondents (12%) did not believe the students' ideas were relevant to their organisation.
- IV. Question four (Table 5.7) investigated if the SMTE representatives implemented the students' recommendations in their business. Of the eight responses, five (63%) indicated that they could implement the students' ideas in their organisations after the completion of the SL project; while two (25%) could not implement the idea in their organisation; and there was one (13%) neutral response. The success of the SL project can also be based on this feedback that the majority of the SL participating communities were able to benefit from the SL project by implementing the outcomes of the SL project in their organisations.
- V. On question five (Table, 5.7), of the seven (86%) respondents agreed that the students' ideas were clearly thought out in the plans they received. This answer correlates with the first question on the responses that indicated that the students' ideas were also innovative. Only one (14%) response was neutral to the statement.
- VI. Seven participants answered the question on the immaturity level of the students' recommendations. Four (57%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that the students ideas were immature, while three (43%) respondents were neutral on this issue. As none of the responses agreed with the statement that the students' ideas were immature, thus the perceptions of the students can be deemed as positive.
- VII. Statement seven (on Table 5.7) investigated the use of the students' business recommendations by the participating businesses. Four (57%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that they used some of the students' ideas in the marketing and business plan; while two (29%) provided a neutral answer to this question; and one disagreed with the statement that they used some of the students' ideas. This indicated that the ideas the students raised for the SMTEs made an impact in their business.
- VIII. The question enquired if the SL participants did not use any of the recommendations from the SL business and marketing plans. Five (72%) respondents disagreed with the statement that they did not use any of the students' ideas; while one was neutral to the statement, one (14%) participant agreed with the statement that they did not use any of the students' ideas. Although the SMTE representatives thought that some of the students' ideas were not what they expected to be, they did no dispute using the ideas the students recommended for their organisations.
- IX. Statement nine (on Table 5.7) enquired on the input of the SMTEs in the final business plans by asking if they used any of their ideas to assist students complete the business plans and the marketing plans. This question investigated the trust the SL participants had in the students to make recommendations for their businesses. Five (72%) respondents agreed with the statement that they used some of their ideas in the business and marketing plans; while one (14%) respondent disagreed with the statement that they used some of their ideas. One (14%) participant did not agree or disagree with the statement.

- X. The last question (on Table 5.7) asked if the students' ideas were out of context for their individual businesses. Five (72%) of the seven responses disagreed with the statement, while the other two (28%), did not refute or agree with the statement. The main aim of the SL project was for the collaboration between the SMTEs and the students to benefit the organisations and impact on the business. This discussion indicates that the students did their research into the requirements of the organisations they were working with and related their recommendations to what each organisation required.

The analysis above reveals positive perceptions of students by participating SMTEs. The majority of the respondents used the students' ideas in the business plans and indicated that they thought the students' recommendations for their businesses were innovative and took their business in context. These questions were also discussed in the interviews with the SMTEs.

Relating to the question on the usage of the business plans drawn up from the SL project, it could be concluded that there were benefits for SL communities who participated in the project. There was one community participant who indicated on the questionnaire that none of the students' ideas were implemented in their business. Failure to reach positive results from SL participation may differ between projects (Kolenko et al., 1996:134). Feedback from these company responses must be used as case studies for future SL projects.

The overall feedback from the SMTE questionnaires highlighted the importance of managing community expectations of students before and during the SL projects. During the planning phase, the community's responsibility and their role during the SL project must also be highlighted. A positive observation from the overall feedback is that the knowledge of the students in completing the SL project indicated good coverage of the curriculum, as the students' knowledge levels met industry expectations.

5.2.2 Student questionnaires

Students who participated in the SL project were also requested to complete questionnaires, which focused mainly on their perceptions of the skills and benefits they gained from participating in the SL exercise. The two research questions that this section attempted to address were on benefits of the SL project for the Tourism Department and CPUT, as well as on identifying any skills learned by the participating students during the SL project. Objective seven of the study aims to determine if students benefit by gaining work-based learning skills during the SL project. Objective 6 of the study sought to assess the benefits of SL participation for the Tourism Management Department and CPUT. As with the SMTE questionnaires, background data of the respondents was assessed and this was followed by the key themes from the questionnaires. Data collected from the interview was assessed with the SPSS 2.2 version of the statistical software. Data frequency tables were compiled from

the quantitative data. The questionnaire followed a five point Lickert scale design, indicating frequencies from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A three on the Lickert scale measured neutral answers, which was the middle point of the scale, and the five represented strongly agree responses.

5.2.2.1 Background and employment data

Twenty five (25) questionnaires were completed by students and alumni. Of those who completed the questionnaires, 18 (72%) were female respondents, six (24%) were male, and one (4%) unspecified gender response were received. The average ages of the respondents ranged from 21 to 27 years, with one female candidate who was 38.

Eleven (44%) of the students who responded to the questionnaire were registered as full time students at the time they participated in this study. One (4%) was a registered part-time student, 10 (40%) of the participants were employed on a full time basis, and three (12%) were students who were on their internship at the time, as indicated in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Student state of employment

Full-time Student	Part-time Student	Permanent Employee	Student on internship/candidate	Total
11	1	10	3	25
44%	4%	40%	12%	100%

5.2.2.2 Skills learned during the SL project

Universities of Technology strive to prepare a well-rounded graduate for entry into the industry, through various community engagements (Ohlhoff, 2014). Projects supported by CHESP have increased in UoTs as The Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), and The Central University of Technology and Mangosuthu University (Lazarus et al, 2008:63). The CPUT vision statement from the CPUT Vision 2020: Strategic Plan document (CPUT, 2012:7-8), highlights creating highly qualified, socially responsible graduates as some of its critical future strategies. The inclusion of SL projects in the university curriculum acts as an important vehicle in driving the university to achieve its vision (Lazarus, 2008:65).

Objective 7 of the study focused on assessing the benefits through skills learned by students through SL participation. In an attempt to determine perceptions of skills learned during the

SL project the students were asked a series of questions relating to skills acquired during the SL project. Table 5.9 highlights the set of results for skills learned as follows: 40 % of the students indicated that they learned some life skills during the SL project, while 56% believed that they learned valuable communication and time-management skills. As students needed to reflect on their experiences of SL at the end of the project, there is a correlation with increasing presentation skills learned during the SL project. The SL project exposed the students to tourism business operations as 40% of the respondents respectively agreed, and strongly agreed, with the statement that they became more aware of the business operations after their experiences with the SL project.

Table 5.9: Perceptions of SL experience (n=25, 100%)

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Question 4: Student experiences of service learning						
I acquired important life skills through this course	0	1	10	10	4	25
The facilitation by the lecturer was empowering	1	0	7	13	4	25
The course gave me more communication skills	0	1	3	14	7	25
The course gave me more training on time management	1	0	6	14	4	25
My presentation skill did not improve	8	11	4	2	0	25
The project made me more aware of the operations of a tourism business	0	0	5	10	10	25
The work I performed in the community enhanced my ability to communicate my ideas in a real world context	0	1	8	11	5	25

The results above indicate that SL projects implemented with UoTs could provide answers to concerns raised by industry through programs like the design of a curriculum (DACUM) workshop. This workshop was held with industry professionals to assess the tourism graduates' need for improved communication and for improved self-expression (Chapter Three, section 3.6).

Students felt the SL project allowed them to make a connection between their learning in the class room and the real-world. They indicated that they could reflect on what they learned in

the Tourism Management course and turn their knowledge into implementable ideas for the businesses involved in the SL project:

- I. In Table 5.9, four (16%) of the students indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement that they learned important life skills through the SL project; while 10 (40%) agreed with the statement. 10 (40%) students did not agree or disagree with the statement; and one (4%) student disagreed with the statement that they learned valuable life skills through the SL project.
- II. Statement two on the Table enquired if the facilitation by the lecturer was empowering. Four (16%) students strongly agreed; and 13 (52%) agreed with the statement. Seven (28%) respondents did not agree nor disagree; and one (4%) student strongly disagreed that the lectures facilitation was empowering.
- III. On the statement whether participation in the SL project taught the students communication skills; seven (28%) students strongly agreed; 14 (56%) agreed; while three (12%) were neutral and one (4%) student disagreed.
- IV. The students had to indicate if the SL project trained them on time management. One student (4%) strongly disagreed with the statement; six (24%) were neutral, while 14 (56%) agreed that they learned more time management; and four (16%) students strongly agreed with the statement.
- V. At the end of the SL project students had to present their business and marketing plans to a panel of lecturers and their SMTE representative. Question five on Table 5.9 enquired if SL participation did not improve their presentation skills. Eight (32%) of the students strongly disagreed with the statement, while 11 (44%) disagreed that their presentation skills did not improve. Two (8%) of the students agreed with the statement that their presentations skills did not improve and 4 (16%) neutral responses were received.
- VI. One of the goals of the SL project is to expose students to how tourism businesses operate on a daily basis. Question six asked if SL participation made the students aware of tourism business operations. 10 (40%) of the students strongly agreed with the statement; and 10 (40%) also agreed; while five (20%) responses were neutral.
- VII. Added to enquiring about the students' learned communication skills, the questionnaire also aimed to establish the students' abilities to articulate their ideas in the real world context. When asked whether the work they performed in the community enhanced their ability to communicate their ideas, 11 (44%) students agreed and five (20%) strongly agreed. Eight (32%) of the students did not agree nor disagree and one (4%) disagreed with the statement that they could communicate their ideas in the real world context.

The analysis indicates a strong perception of students indicating that they learned valuable lessons through SL participation. The frequency of neutral responses suggests that the students might not have wanted to share their perceptions on the questions, or they genuinely did not know how they felt about these issues (Krosnick & Presser, 2010:282-283). The analysis of the students' focus group interviews later in this chapter sheds light on the perceptions of skills learned through SL participation.

A high number of neutral responses were observed in the first statement on Table 5.9, where 40% of the respondents were uncertain about the learning they received directly from the business representatives during the SL project. This finding was contrary to statements by Osman and Petersen (2013:13) that SL forced students to view the community members as “...*knowledgeable enough to learn from*”. Added to this question, students’ satisfaction levels with SL participation were also measured to assess their perceptions of the participation experience. The results are discussed in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10: Satisfaction levels from service learning experience (n=25)

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Question 4: Students’ experience of service learning						
It was satisfying to be able to help others with the tools of knowledge that we have gained in the tourism course	0	0	3	16	6	25
I think it is vitally important that courses include learning outside the university	0	0	1	7	17	25
Taking part in the service learning project is the only way to gain some form of work experience	3	4	7	6	5	25
The chance I was given has definitely taught me a lot about myself and my own abilities	1	0	4	12	8	25
I was awakened to the link between the community and learning	1	0	8	12	4	25
Learning from the business representatives during the service learning project is the best way to learn	1	2	10	6	6	25

Satisfaction with participating in the current SL project could indicate possible interest in future participation of community engagement activities. Objective 4 of this study assesses levels of future interest by participants in the SL project. The following discussion continues to assess skills learned during the SL project, as well as assessing perceptions of students during the SL project, which could provide light into future interest for SL participation. Giles & Eyler (1998:65) indicated that SL projects assist students in building their confidence and self-esteem. The comprehensive results in Table 5.10 indicate a positive perception by students to SL participation.

- I. Sixteen (64%) students agreed that it was satisfying to use their skills to assist others, and six (24%) strongly agreed with the statement. Three (12%) students were undecided on this statement.
- II. When asked whether it is vital for university courses to include learning outside of the university, 17 (68%) students strongly agree with this statement, and seven (28%) students agreed, while one answer (4%) was neutral to the statement.

- III. Students at UoTs have various forms of learning opportunities in industry before they graduate, such as volunteering, experiential training and SL projects. As one of these essential opportunities SL projects expose students to operations of small tourism enterprises. The third question on Table 5.10 asked if taking part in SL projects is the only way to gain some form of work experience; three (12%) students strongly disagreed and four (16%) disagreed with the statement. Seven students did not share their opinion on this point, while six (24%) agreed and five (20%) strongly agreed that SL participation is the only way they can gain some form of work experience.
- IV. When asked if the opportunity to take part in the SL project taught participants about themselves and their own abilities; a strong positive response was received with 12 (48%) agreeing and eight (32%) strongly agreeing with the statement. Four (16%) students were undecided on the statement and one (4%) student strongly disagreed with the statement.
- V. One of the desired outcomes of SL projects is for students to make links between what they learn from their course and their real world experiences during the project. Eight (32%) students did not agree nor disagree, while 12 (48%) agreed and four (16%) strongly agreed with the statement. One student strongly disagreed that they realised any links between what they learned in class and their experience with the community.
- VI. For the SL participation to be valuable for the students they must value the lessons they receive from the participating communities they are involved with. Six (24%) students strongly agreed with the statement, while the same number agreed that learning from community participants is the best way to learn. Ten (40%) were neutral to the statement, while two (8%) students disagreed and one (4%) student strongly disagreed with the statement.

The results above indicated a high level of satisfaction about being part of the SL project; with a higher proportion of the students appreciating the learning received from the SL participation as well as the shared experiences they had with the participating SMTE representatives. Although the students indicated high levels of satisfaction with participating in the SL project, it was essential to investigate whether they realised the type of learning they were encountering, or if they entered the SL project with a mindset of rescuing the business rather than entering into a collaborative effort of improving the organisation's current state of operations. This statement confirms the view that SL projects are designed to be collaborative partnerships that have a common goal (Bringel & Hatcher, 2000:274).

In attempting to answer the question on benefits of SL project participation for students, a series of ten questions relating to acquired skills and interest in future participation were asked and responses are given in Table 5.11.

The first question in Table 5.11 asked if the students viewed their participation in the SL project as a worthwhile exercise. Responses received totalled 25 ($n=100\%$), and 44% ($n=11$) of the respondents agreed with the statement that participation in the SL project was a worthwhile exercise while 36% ($n=9$) strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 5.11: Perceptions of service learning as a learning tool

STATEMENT	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Response	Total
Question5: Students' opinion on service learning							
The service learning project is a worthwhile project for students	0	1	4	11	9	-	25
I learned some leadership skills during the service learning project	0	1	4	16	4	-	25
I managed my time well during the service learning project	0	3	7	10	5	-	25
I learned to rely on my group members during the service learning project	2	3	10	5	5	-	25
I learned some conflict management skills during the service learning project	0	2	6	10	7	-	25
I learned some entrepreneurial skills during the service learning project	0	1	8	11	5	-	25
I learned some skills on starting a new business	0	2	5	11	6	1	25
I learned some business financial skills during the service learning project	1	3	6	10	4	1	25
I will recommend the service learning project for all Tourism Management students	0	1	1	10	12	1	25
I will take part in another service learning project if I am given the opportunity	0	2	6	7	9	1	25

Data from Table 5.11 is discussed below:

- I. The students were asked if they thought the SL project was worthwhile for them. Of the 25 students who responded, nine (36%) strongly agreed and 11 (44%) agreed that the project was worthwhile. One (4%) of the students disagreed with the statement and four (16%) did not have an opinion.
- II. When asked if they learned leadership skills during the SL project, 16 (64%) students positively agreed to the statement, with four (16%) strongly agreeing with the statement that they learned some leadership skills from participating in the SL project. Four students did not refute or agree with the statement, and one (4%) disagreed.
- III. The students had meetings to attend and deadlines to meet during the SL project, and for this they needed to manage their time appropriately. The third question on the Table asked the students if they managed their time well during the SL project, and positive responses were received with 10 (40%) students agreeing with the statement that they managed their time well and five (20%) strongly agreed with the statement. Seven (28%) students did not agree nor disagree and three (12%) students disagreed with the statement.
- IV. SL projects are a group effort and students need to be able to trust and rely on each other for results (Eyler, 2002:518). The students were asked if they learned to rely on their group members during the SL project, and a high undecided response was received for

this question ($n=10$), while five (20%) students agreed and another five (20%) strongly agreed with the statement that they learned to trust their group members during the SL project. Three students disagreed with the statement and two strongly disagreed that they learned to trust their group members during the SL project.

- V. Based on the previous question, group work tends to bring some conflict at certain points of any project (Eyler, 2002:520). Responses to the question whether students learned some conflict management skills during the SL project were as follows; seven students strongly agreed (28%), 10 (40%) agreed with the statement, while six (24%) did not agree or disagree and two disagreed with the statement.
- VI. As students were exposed to entrepreneurs during the SL project it was essential to assess if they gained any entrepreneurial skills during the SL project. Five (20%) students indicated a strong agreement to learning entrepreneurial skills during the SL project, and 11 (44%) agreed with the statement. Eight (32%) were undecided and one (4%) student disagreed with the statement.

One of the respondents did not answer the last four questions listed in Table 5.11, thus the following statements constitute ($n=100%$) respondents:

- VII. There was a high correlation between the feedback in this statement and the previous statement, indicating a positive response to students learning entrepreneurial skills during the SL project; six (26%) strongly agreed with the statement that they learned some skills on starting a new business, and eleven (46%) students agreed with the statement. Two (8%) students disagreed that they learned skills to start a new business while five (21%) students did not have an opinion on this statement.
- VIII. On assessing if any business financial skills were acquired during the SL project, four (17%) students strongly agreed with the statement, and 10 (42%) agreed that they learned some business financial skills during the SL project, whereas one (3%) student strongly disagreed with the statement, three (13%) students disagreed and six (25%) students did not have an opinion to share on this statement. Based on the high positive responses, this is positive feedback for indicating work-based skills learned during the SL project (objective seven of the study).
- IX. To assess students' future interest in the project, the ninth question on the Table 5.11 enquired whether the students would recommend the SL project to future Tourism Management students. Twelve students (50%) strongly agreed that they would recommend the project, and 10 (42%) agreed with the statement. One (4%) student was undecided and one (4%) student disagreed that they would recommend the SL project to future students.
- X. The last question assessed the students own interest in participating in a future SL project; nine (38%) students strongly agreed that they would participate in a future SL project, while seven (29%) agreed with the statement. Two students disagreed that they would participate in a future SL project and six (25%) students were undecided.

Added to assessing perceptions for future interest in SL projects, the results shown on Table 5.11 focused on the levels and types of skills learned from participating in the SL project, as well as students' interest in recommending or taking part in a future SL project, linked to objectives 4 and 7. Although 50% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement that they would recommend a SL project to another student, only 37%

indicated strongly agreeing to the statements that they would take part in a future SL project. These findings will be compared to the interview discussions later in this chapter to assess any correlations to the data, and to investigate a possible reason for this low response.

5.2.2.3 Summary discussion of SMTE and student questionnaires

Data from the SMTE questionnaires indicated a positive perception of students who participated in the SL project in terms of professionalism and willingness to learn.

Relating to participation in future studies, both the SMTE and student questionnaire yielded positive results to future interest in SL participation, while the questions from the students on their experiences of the SL project yielded positive results. Observing the results from the SL coordinator's viewpoint, it would be necessary to establish the reason for the large number of neutral responses from the questionnaires in the student feedback, as this could be used to help assess the design of the SL project from the students' viewpoint. A recommendation for future studies would be to include more open-ended questions in the students' questionnaires, to allow for student narratives on their experiences which would provide more clarity to the neutral response.

5.3 Interviews and Focus Group interview data

The qualitative study provides data collected from interviews, mark rubrics and student presentations. The qualitative data was assessed using the ATLAS.ti 7 analytical programme, using transcribed audio recordings. The transcriptions were sent to participants via e-mail to be assessed for correctness, and were loaded onto the programme for analysis. SL project mark rubrics which formed part of the community feedback, and the students' PowerPoint presentations which highlighted their SL reflections were also loaded onto the programme for analysis.

5.3.1 Data analysis and coding

Qualitative data analysis is based on the premise of discovering patterns in collected data. This process of discovering data patterns is referred to as the grounded theory (Starks & Trinidad, 2007:1373). Auerbach and Silverstein (2003:31) explain the term theory as "...a *pattern that you find in the data*". Coding is a procedure of grouping these theories under similarly named terms that arise from analysing raw data (Wholey, Harty & Newcomer, 2004:424). By adapting the qualitative analysis process of Auerbach and Silverstein (2003:31-46) the coding procedure in this study was completed in the following order:

- All transcripts, rubrics and presentations were read and assessed with the study objectives in mind;
- Texts that related to the study objectives and considered as relevant data were highlighted and notes were linked to these texts;
- Data was grouped into codes and various codes would emerge as the data was analysed;
- Predetermined codes were linked to texts from the transcripts conducted and stored as a project in the ATLAS.ti7 programme;
- Summary of the codes and relevant texts was printed as a report, which was manually analysed for similarities in the codes, and
- Codes that were similar were grouped together to form themes that were linked to the study objectives, as indicated in Table 5.12.

Based on the collected data some of the codes had repeating ideas, which were grouped together to form themes which had links to the study objectives. The first theme, benefits of the SL project, is linked to objectives 1 and 6, with elements of objective 7 assessing benefits of SL participation for the SMTEs, the Department, CPUT and students. The second theme, looking at impacts on the community is linked to objectives 2 and 3 assessing the impact the SL project had on the participating SMTE communities as well as if the impacts were linked to their individual organisations. The third theme grouped under the heading performance of students during the project, is linked to objectives 5 and 7 which assess efficiency of the SL project related to group placements as well as the students personal and work related learning experiences during the SL project. The flow of the project, the fourth theme on Table 5.12 assesses the efficiency of the SL project linked to objective 5, and the fifth theme SL future participation, linked to objective 4 of the study.

Since the format of the interviews was semi-structured, data that emerged during the analysis stage which was not in the original themes was also coded and linked to the main themes. Examples of this data included students' reflections on their own performance during the SL project, as questions on student performance were posed to the communities and appeared mainly in the reflection presentations; students' perceptions of the SMTEs; and benefits of SL projects for universities which were highlighted in the interviews with the SMTE representatives. The flexibility of qualitative data collection allowed for this data to be added into the analysis of the research, otherwise valuable data could be lost if this process was not followed (Tokin & Quiroga, 2004:135).

Table 5.12 SL themes and analysis codes

Main themes	Primary codes
Benefits of the SL project (Objectives 1, 6 and 7)	Benefits for SMTEs Benefits for students External exposure Meaningful partnerships Real world experience Students have limited knowledge Benefits for CPUT
Impact on communities (Objectives 2 and 3)	Build meaningful partnerships Project satisfaction Quality of submitted documents Input for course review Reciprocity in experience Knowledge of SMTE representatives
Performance of students during the project (Objectives 5 and 7)	Positive view of student input Preparation for SL Productiveness of students Skills required by students before SL Skills learned through SL participation Student presentation skills Student professionalism Student readiness Students not ready for SL project requirements Students reflect on documents submitted Students reflect on own performance Teamwork during SL project
Flow of the project (Objective 5)	Researcher as coordinator – lessons Time limitations Time of project Importance of planning team
SL future participation (Objective 4)	Student input Best level for SL SMTE interest in future projects Inclusive planning

Feedback from the SMTEs is outlined first and followed by the focus group interview data in this Chapter. The SMTE feedback addressed information relating to perceived benefits of SL participation for them, benefits for the students, attitudes of the students, and their performance during the project. Feedback on the business and marketing plans was provided during the interviews, as well as interest in future projects.

Feedback from the Focus Group interview concentrated on student experiences during the SL project, lessons learned from SL participation, and skills related to the SL project. Once the feedback on the interviews was concluded the feedback on the students' reflection interviews and the community feedback rubrics were also documented in this Chapter.

5.3.2 SMTE interview feedback

The discussion that follows is based on a question-by-question basis and is not grouped according to the themes in Table 5.12. The themes indicated in the Table were developed from data drawn from the interview transcripts during analysis. The discussion below on SMTE perceptions confirms the SMTE views from the interviews relating to satisfaction of participation in the SL project. It confirms the benefits and impacts benefited by individual participants and organisations, and also highlights the limitations students experienced in the SL project.

Interviews with SMTE representatives were scheduled from August to October 2014 after the last questionnaire collection cut-off date. This flexible scheduling was designed to allow for more participants to take part in the interviews, and the decision was based on the premise that the interview period would take place during the peak season for tourism service-providers. Three structured interviews were eventually secured after numerous invitations were sent out, however only two interviews were conducted as the third participant could not make it due to work requirements. The interview respondents were one male, the owner of a tour operating venture and one female guesthouse owner. The interview respondents are designated as Resp1 and Resp2.

An assertion of non-response error occurring may be raised at this point as the low response rate could be interpreted as sample bias (Sivo, et al., 2006:335). As indicated in the methodology chapter, strategies to improve responses from the sample group were administered which included reminder e-mails sent to the study population, multiple rounds of e-mail questionnaires were sent, and reminder short messages sent to all participants. A counter measure for this limitation was that six different sources of data collection were administered in this study. The results of the study were triangulated and the feedback from the interviews was correlated to the questionnaire responses, which minimised possible response errors (Gummesson, 2005:312).

5.3.2.1 Perceived benefits of SL participation for SMTEs (personal or business)

Objective 1 of this study sought to assess the benefits of SL participation for the communities involved. Objective 2 aimed at further assessing the impact of SL for communities, and objective 3 intended to determine if there were clear benefits for the businesses, and if the benefits were leaning more towards the people than for the business, or if there was a balance for the business and the participants. The main rationale for this study was to obtain feedback from the community participants, so that SL coordinators did not come to their own conclusions about the experiences of the communities for reporting purposes after the

project conclusion (Tokin & Quiroga, 2004:147). The data from the interviews indicated a balance of benefits for community members in raising their self-esteem, as well as visible benefits for the businesses.

The tangible outcomes of the SL project were a business and/or marketing plan that were drawn up through a collaborative effort between students and SMTE representatives. The role of the SMTEs in the SL project was to provide the students with the internal information they required to draw up the documentation. The role of the students was to assist with input on how the business could improve operations. During the planning for the planning phase of the business and marketing plans, business owners or representatives and students set meetings during which situational analyses were discussed, business operational procedures were reassessed, and company future plans for the business were drawn up.

Table 5.13: How does SL participation benefit SMTEs? (n=2)

Was the SL project more beneficial to you on the business level, personal level, or both, or not at all?	
Personal	0
Business	1
Both	1
No benefits	0
TOTAL	2

On relating if the SL project was beneficial for the business or for the person involved, the responses differed between the two respondents. Both participants reported positive benefits to themselves and the business, as Resp1 indicated that “...*personal aspects it was very good, because it builds on oneself from business and management perspective*”. The interview with Resp2 however, highlighted benefits for the business and not on a personal level. She indicated that the students emphasised two essential developments that the business required, saying “...*students highlighted a need for more marketing was pointed out*” and “...*extra facilities that can augment the business*”.

The responses above indicated a positive view of the perceived benefits of SL participation for communities involved. This is true for a number of researched SL projects, as indicated in a report by Mouton and Wildschut (2005:125-126) of five South African Higher Institutions. The limitation to the generalisation in this result is that of being able to adopt the tools or results of this study to other SL projects. The challenge is that most SL projects that are reported deal with NGOs whose benefits are more inclined to indicate increased human

capital benefits to assist with functions on site. Although the results from various SL projects may vary, there is evidence that participation in SL projects yields benefits for communities involved (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002:206; Dicke, Dowden & Torres, 2004:201).

On probing further on the perceived benefits of SL for the business, the participating SMTE members were asked to comment on the planning documents they received at the end of the SL project. Overall feedback about the documents was varied on the professionalism of the documents; the feedback indicated confidence in the students' abilities, but highlighted limitations on their practical applicability of the recommendations in business or marketing plan documents. Starting with the comments on the students' abilities to positively influence changes in companies, the feedback was positive. Resp2 had mixed feedback between the students' performance and level of maturity, indicating "...I think they were on the spot with their suggestions. They were spot on, and it was those small things and not major things [referring to some of the students unrealistic recommendations like the guesthouse having a 100% occupancy rate all year-round]....they had done their homework as a group". Feedback from Resp1 was also varied, stating that "...there was very good points from the business aspect from what they had put forward, which to me was quite good". He added a strong note in the end stating that he had confidence in the students' capabilities "...I have got confidence in them and I have a lot of faith to say they got the ability...".

This form of feedback indicates the maturity of the students to effectively deal with a SL of this magnitude. In the student focus group feedback they responded on whether they thought they were ready for a SL project of this magnitude. The results of the focus group interview, which are discussed later in the chapter, were in line with the views of the SMTE representatives, with the students stating that they were not completely confident and ready to deal with this type of SL project. In terms of effective SL project planning, these comments are cause for concern if the planning of future SL projects is to be successful.

Continuing with the personal benefits of SL participation, the SMTE participants enjoyed the mentorship positions they occupied during the SL project. The concept of giving back to CPUT students resonated during the feedback sessions with the SMTEs. During these information sharing interactions, the community members developed a sense of entitlement to educate the students on the history of their organisations and to share their management tactics with their assigned student groups. Due to this form of mentorship, the participating communities developed a proud disposition in the fact that they were ploughing back knowledge to the students' learning process with industry knowledge (Ramdhani, Jamaluddin & Aulawi, 2012:8).

The participating community members emphasised satisfaction at being able to impart essential knowledge to students, and in allowing the students freedom to express their creativity during the SL project. Feedback from the SMTE questionnaires confirms this statement. Although the main aim of the study was focused on assessing the benefits of SL participation for communities, essential benefits on the impact SL participation had on the participating students was also sought and the results are discussed below.

5.3.2.2 Perceived benefits for students

SL, as a course-based project linked to the curriculum, does not only benefit students gaining marks for their course, but encompasses gaining experience which cannot be performed in the classroom (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005:120). The data in the following discussion is linked to objectives 6 and 7, as indicated in Table 5.12. Benefits for students participating in SL were mainly focused on gaining industry exposure. For this to be realised the SL community members assumed supervisory roles, monitored student performance, and assessed the students at the end of the project (Eyler, 2002:521). To gauge the probability of this statement, the interview respondents were asked to indicate who they felt SL participation benefited most, and the respondents strongly indicated that they believed SL participation was beneficial for both students and communities.

For communities the benefits were more of a realisation of how they were managing their businesses from an outsider's perspective, and for the students gaining first-hand information on how to run a small tourism business successfully. Resp1, on answering the questions, stated that

"...As role players we need to have tunnel vision in how we operate and sometimes we [owners] do not get the broader picture, and to look at students in a certain way [as knowledgeable individuals]. From spending time with the students I could pick-up certain things that were positive from them".

This statement proved true as ideas that students had recommended to the participating business-owners were being taken into account. Most importantly, the community members recognised the students' contributions as positive.

Working closely with communities in this manner creates opportunities for students, as prospective employers and contacts have first-hand experience of how students function, and what their levels of expertise are. The developed partnerships convert to business links once students graduate and start looking for employment (Busby, 2003:326). On highlighting the benefits for students, Resp2 indicated *"...students learn, get practical experience which is not in the textbook"*. This statement was echoed by Resp1 in his interview stating that

“...Here we have students that are passionate, enhance them and give them a strong backbone so that when they go into the real world they have got a very firm foundation from CPUT with the blessing, of course, from WESGRO and the SMMEs.” This statement confirms the strong belief from communities in the students who took part, and the level of skill acquired from the project. As the tourism industry is network-driven, this viewpoint on the tourism graduates places CPUT as one of the preferred providers of a capable workforce.

To add to the perceptions of the benefits of SL, the interview participants were also asked to assess the training the students received from SL participation. The question posed was, “do you think that the SL project offers good training to students?” Both responses to this question were “YES”, although Resp2 did not elaborate on her response Resp1 reiterated that SL participation assisted students in dealing with the real world issues, while teaching them coping mechanisms for the industry. His use of the word “backbone” in the statement above confirms this viewpoint.

5.3.2.3 Perceptions of student attitude and performance during the SL project

Since the benefits of the project were outlined by the SMTEs it was necessary to also assess how they perceived the students who participated in the SL project. Linked to objective 7, SMTEs perceptions of the students’ attitudes were also essential to be able to make conclusions on how the students’ experiences were when they visited their partnering SMTE representatives. Feedback on students’ attitudes was also drawn from the questionnaires and the respondents were positive about the energy that the students brought to SL meetings and interactions, stating the students’ positive attitude towards the project. More data on the enquiry of student performance during the SL project was collected from the SMTE questionnaires. In summarising the feedback from the interviews on student performance the community members scored the students higher on their positive attitude than on tactics and performance. More discussion follows on the perceptions of the final documents that were submitted at the end of the project.

5.3.2.4 Perceptions of business and marketing plans resulting from the SL project

The following discussion follows the enquiry into study objectives 1 and 2. At the end of the SL project, results of the interactions between SMTEs and students were submitted in the form of business and/or marketing plan documents. Two copies of the final documents were required, as was prescribed in the project brief. One copy was to be handed to the community members and one copy to the subject lecturer for assessment. The information in these documents included the students’ interpretation of the six-month interaction with the SL communities. Students would have met with the company representatives as many times as

required during the project period to discuss observations and input, where-after the students would then compile a document based on this process. Resp 2 highlighted this fact in her response indicating that:

“...you know students they have wild [exaggerated] ideas, (laughing) so they will come up with wild ideas but you as a business owner you know what would not work and what will work. Like they suggested something like a spa, you know massage and whatever, whatever”.

This statement emphasised the feedback from the SMTE questionnaires, some indicating the immaturity in the students' recommendations. This observation indicated that the business owners had set plans and targets for their business before participating in the SL project. The second observation was that the community members realised that, although the students had good ideas, they were still not familiar with the history and the nature of the business they were placed in, to make any intelligent decisions.

Resp2 made a follow-up statement which indicated that she did not disregard the students ideas highlighting that” *...it's not a bad idea, it's a good side business, but the practicality of it is just not there yet*". Her view on the probable long term project indicated that she was aware that although the students' recommendations could not be implemented within the short term, these recommendations would become a beneficial improvement on the business over a longer term.

Feedback on the technical aspects of the business and marketing plan documents was varied, where individual businesses had unique interests and perceived outcomes, based on the nature of each business. Respondents alluded to the students being able to highlight some of the business weaknesses they [owners] were not aware of, and some of which they were aware, and required another perspective on. For this reason results on this data, although important to this particular study, are difficult to generalise to other studies to conduct comparisons (Osman & Petersen, 2013:181).

Figure 5.8 highlights some of the technical aspects the students advised the companies on. Resp2, who is the guesthouse owner, indicated that the students conducted a competitor-analysis and highlighted service gaps in her business, saying:

“...and also pricing, there was a comment about pricing, and comparing it to other establishments they had visited around. Also they commented on the pool. There is a pool at the back and there was no water at that time, so they felt why is there no water when there is a resource like that.”

These aspects highlighted the weaknesses which the organisation could address after the completion of the SL project.



Figure 5.8: Graphic representation of student observations for business improvement

Resp1, who is a tour operator, reiterated the same sentiments on his satisfaction with the students' feedback, which directed the students' focus on this business as being more focused on the business situation analysis and financial performance. He highlighted the students' lack of depth in these aspects, saying "*...the students sometimes have a broader mind which makes them not to focus...If they can focus on one point at a time then it will be like a puzzle that will fit in nicely.*" Responding to the technical aspects the students concentrated on for his business, Reps1 mentioned that "*...moving from the company mission to the vision, to the financials, even the swot analysis, it will fit in nicely [referring to the focus students need to master].*"

At the end of the SL project, in addition to the final draft documents the students submitted to the panel, they were also required to compile a PowerPoint presentation outlining the contents of these documents. This presentation was delivered as a pitch to the business and the assessors. After each pitch the SMTE representatives completed a mark rubric, as well as comments based on the perception of the pitch. In view of the data collected, the mark rubrics reflected only what was in the presentation pitch. The SMTE interviews reflected on the marketing and business plan documents that were submitted to the companies after the

presentations. The comparison of the data was interesting, and the comments from the mark rubrics are outlined in section 5.4.1 in this chapter.

5.3.2.5 Assessing future interest in SL project participation

This data has been combined with that from the interviews, as not all comments were received from the questionnaires on the question of future participation, and it was asked again in the interviews to reach a clear conclusion on the views of the SMTEs, to be able to gather conclusive feedback for study objective 4.

SMTE representatives responded positively on the questionnaire, on the future of SL project participation, answering “yes” to interest in future SL participation. The same question was also asked on the semi-structured interview with participants. The participants’ feedback on the follow-up question assessing their interest in any future SL projects was as follows:

- *“...the business has grown, and maybe there would be some things they would do differently, but the business has definitely grown from the time until now.” [Resp2]*
- *“...whatever way of benefiting the students. For me I want to be of service to the students, to build them up and to build a strong foundation. That is a main goal. This is the time to give yourself to the students but also in a symbiotic way, because I am learning from them and I am also giving that input.” [Resp1]*

When compared to the questionnaire feedback, where 78% of respondents indicated a positive response to this question, the study did indicate a positive outlook for future SL projects, more for participating SMTEs, than for students. CPUT and the Department of Tourism Management can assess this outcome as positive for future partnerships with industry. It is essential to assess sustainability of SL projects while building mutually beneficial relationships with the community (Osman & Petersen, 2013:183).

5.3.3 Student Focus Group interview

The focus group interview was conducted on the 26th September 2014 at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) campus. Four of the five individuals who responded to the invitation participated in the interview process. The interview respondents were all female post-graduate students and alumni of the tourism management course at CPUT. Invitations to attend the focus group interview were sent out to the whole population of the study, in this case students, who at the time of data collection were busy with their post graduate studies at CPUT and alumni who had participated in the SL project in the third year of their study.

The proceedings of the focus group interview were recorded to ensure that all conversations would be included in the transcripts. A boardroom at the CPUT campus was booked for this venue, which had little noise interference for the purpose of recording the interview. The interview recordings were later transcribed and analysed according to the themes stipulated in Table 5.12. Moderation of focus group interviews is essential for an independent individual to be able to validate the results of the interaction. The moderator of the focus group interview was one of the Communication Lecturers at CPUT, who is familiar with the correct processes of conducting focus group interviews (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996:76).

The interviewer made notes of her observations on the day of the interview and segments of those notes are also included in the following discussion. Based on the rules of conducting focus group interviews, it was essential for the researcher, before the interviews started, to inform the participants that although the researcher was the subject and SL coordinator, for the purposes of this interview she would adopt a neutral role of researcher (Buchanan, Baldwin & Rudisill, 2002:30). This was done for the purpose of receiving unbiased feedback from the students, and to inform the students again that none of their feedback from the focus group would influence their academic results. The researcher was aware that for transparency and objectivity, she would also have to conduct the interview not as the subject-expert (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003:27).

The focus group interview focused mainly on topics pertaining to the students' experiences of the SL project regarding skills learned, and perceived impact to participating communities. Data collected from the interview was assessed with the ATLAS.ti7 programme, where recurring data was grouped according to relevant codes. For the purpose of this study the ethical clearance procedures indicate that although participants agreed to participate in the focus group interview (Ryen, 2011:416), the cover letter of the focus group interview indicates that participants are entitled to confidentiality. On this premise, the names of the participants were converted to a coding system for data interpretation. The four focus group interview participants were coded as FP1 (Focus group participant one) to FP4 (Focus group participant four). The analysis of the transcribed interview data is discussed below. There is a correlation from the Focus Group interview discussion below to the student interview data that participating in the SL project was beneficial for the students and that essential skills were learnt from SL participation.

5.3.3.1 Student experiences of SL project participation

The discussion on student experiences shed light on study objective 5 assessing the efficiency of the SL project regarding group allocations, and objective 7 investigating the skill experienced by students. Reflections on the student experiences during the SL project are

interestingly varied and not all responses were in line with the expected outcomes. Expected research outcomes on the experiences of students are based on the premise that:

- Students enjoy working with communities;
- Students learn valuable skills during the SL project, and
- Students learn valuable lessons from SL participation.

During the SL project students were split into groups of five to six individuals, but in some cases students were in a group of approximately eight members. The reasoning for the split was two-fold. Firstly, students were placed into groups which included academically strong to academically challenged students. This was purposefully done to allow for an equal spread of skill sets and knowledge in all the groups. Secondly, student groups were limited to the number of businesses participating in the SL project. This meant that the fewer the number of participating organisations the bigger the groups would ultimately become. Students highlighted essential feedback on the SL project group settings:

- *“...I concentrated hundred percent only on my part. I did not involve in any part. So I don't think I was really involved in the project. Because you have to know what the other person is going to talk about. [FP4]*
- *“...working with each other, seeing how far we are to setting things together you did your own part but we helped where we can. And learning...so I actually think we did fine, and what I learned is that you could learn from others. [FP1]*

From the above expected outcomes for students valuable lessons can be learned on how to structure the group work. It is evident from the student feedback that students tend to focus on their sections of the work, without being too involved with the entire project. This could lead to limited learning on the students' part, even though they are working together.

5.3.3.2 Lessons from the SL project

Objective 4 of the study focuses on the efficiency of the SL project, and objective 7 assesses work integrated learning experiences of students. The following discussions on lessons and skills learned from student reflections shed light on these enquiries. The learning process of SL projects relies on reflection as an essential form of learning and development (Moffat & Decker, 2000:32-33). The focus group interaction added to the learning process as part of the contemplation on lessons learned during the SL project, and allowed for more self-awareness by the participants. This learning process is compared to learning leadership traits by Tesone (2004:364), who stated that reflective learning is an inter-connection between gained knowledge and experience, and is supported by Lazarus et al. (2008:62). In the SL process students reflected that, before the project began, they were at first intimidated

to interact with the SMTE representatives as they felt they could not positively contribute to the business and marketing plans.

As the first meetings commenced, and the SL project meetings with the communities continued, students realised that by reflecting on the interactions they had gained confidence as well as an understanding of a tourism enterprise's daily operations. Even at the business and marketing plan presentations to a panel of lecturers, representatives from WESGRO and the community members themselves, the students felt intimidated, as FP4 stated, *"...I think we felt intimidated with our business plans...."*

Future planning of SL projects must aim at combating the sense of unsettledness the students felt before they presented their business and marketing plans to the communities. The students noted during the focus meeting that they would have preferred to perform a smaller SL project prior to the main third-year exercise, *"...I think maybe organise like a report section if you want before the presentation. Like a mini-presentation (FP3)."*

These personal development of lessons link with the critical cross field outcomes of the subject listed in the literature review (Chapter Two, section 2.3.2), which highlights key benefits of SL participation for students.

5.3.3.3 SL associated skills

Preparing students well before a SL project is essential for quality assurance, certainty of knowledge transfer and ensuring that required goals of the SL project are met, as RP2 indicated that *"...I think that was perfect time for us to do the service learning project, and the preparation was also enough, because that was in our third year and we had got enough information on how to do the service learning project"*. High levels of preparedness are essential for the productivity of students during the project.

Table 5.14: Skills learned during SL participation

Identified skill	Comments by students
Interpersonal skills	<i>"...I think I gained interpersonal skills when you learn to work well with other people. Before then I was the type of person who, I like to do things by myself."</i> (FP3)
Conflict management	<i>"...and another thing I was working with groups, when others don't get to do their part and you got to say things..."</i> (FP2)
Leadership skills	<i>" my first year project is used to avoid being the leader because I know as a leader you have to take charge and that you are doing most of the work....it was a bit difficult"</i> (FP1)
Communication skills	<i>"...it was a bit difficult, but I had to deal with everyone".</i> (FP1)

The focus meeting participants pointed out that communication and organisational time management are regarded as essential for prospective SL participants to master. To add to the skills required for SL participation, students were also asked to reflect on the skills they acquired during their SL project. These are reflected in Table 5.14.

5.4 Mark Rubrics and Reflection Presentations

The SL community assessments and inputs from participants are integral components of any effective SL project (Narsavage & Lindell, 2001:7), and at the end of the project term, students presented their final drafts of the business and marketing plans to a panel of assessors which included the SMTE representative(s), a representative from the government partner WESGRO, and two lecturers from the CPUT in the Department of Tourism Management.

The core function of the mark rubrics was to assess the student presentations and provide a mark based on their performance. These marks had a certain weighting towards the SL project report, where the total mark of the SL project weighs 20% towards the subject linked to the project. The total weighting of the SL project was divided into smaller marks for the project portfolio, plan presentation, business or marketing plan document and reflection presentation.

5.4.1 Student performance during the SL project

In effective SL projects, evaluations are also used as tools for enhancing student learning (Billig, 2000:663). This view emphasises the importance of SL evaluations being open and transparent and, most importantly, for the feedback to be shared with students; firstly, when the community members assessed the students on their project presentations, and secondly, when the projects were marked by the SL coordinators and the feedback was discussed with students, it allowed for improved performance.

SMTE comments on the mark rubric forms were more directed towards the impacts of the SL presentations on the perceptions of participating SMTEs. SMTE representatives on the mark rubrics reflected on their perceptions of the students' presentations, and the students' efforts during the project:

“...I would like to state that working with group 4 could have been more successful if we had more communication between the two groups. The amount of pages is also too much (56) and for applications I will have to scale it down to an acceptable amount. However there is still room for improvement.”

“...What transpired according to me is that there was no group cohesion (not working together) which culminated very poor presentation and ultimately they failed to produce something that can be useful to improve the marketing of my business.”

“...I found the students very eager to learn. They were friendly, knowledgeable and professional. They worked together as a team. Everyone participated and this is evident when they did the oral and in this speed point presentation. In my opinion as students they delivered high quality material. However there is always room for improvement and one has to keep abreast of ever- changing technology. Thank you”

“...My compliments to the lecturer as the students were very professional and well advised.”

“...I was somewhat disappointed by the feedback as it seems that the students presentation and study was based almost entirely on my business plan document which I gave to them. The study was based on suggestions which I made to them. I would have liked to have more of their own independent thoughts and research. Otherwise it was great to be part of this project and I thank CPUT for the opportunity.”

“...It was a good experience for students to spend time in real business, in order to be better prepared in-terms of starting a job in the tourism Industry”.

“...Well presented information. Definitely drew attention to some things that we had overlooked. Job well done.”

“...It proved that students have a team effort when working on this assignment. There was a lot of sacrifices for their time, meaning that they had focus to achieve excellent results. I will conclude by mentioning that their performance was above my expectations.”

“...Considering that I only had 3 students in my team, I am impressed with the document produced. One or two more people would have made a huge difference and reduced the workload. Overall, I am quite happy.”

“...More research was needed they lack in working as a group.”

“...The whole document is fine; however need to be more practical. Industry vs Academic.”

The comments above from the community mark rubrics indicate critical determinants of SL project satisfiers and dissatisfiers for participating communities, which is essential for the analysis of study objective 2. The factors which were considered as determinants of SL project participation for communities as indicated in the mark rubric comments are summarised as follows:

- Team effort of students - student groups which indicated high levels of group cohesion were perceived as performing well by the communities;
- Levels of communication – lack of communication between the students and the participating companies, and
- Practical application of knowledge – student groups expressed limited ability to apply their theoretical learning to practical knowledge.

The completion of the mark rubrics was done on the day the students presented their final business and marketing plans to the communities. The comments could also be assessed as alluding to the students' presentation skills of the final documents. Articulation is an essential graduate attribute of a tourism graduate student (Harvey, 2005:15-16). In this aspect the project has led to a reassessment of the level of training prospective tourism entrepreneurs should receive.

Student preparedness for SL participation is an important issue for SL project coordinators and university departments. The comments from the community members did not refer to students being ill-prepared for the SL project. This observation yielded positive results for the question on student preparedness resulting from curriculum knowledge. Previous comments from the SMTE interviews indicated that the students tended to be immature at times and appeared not to be well informed in terms of project expectations. This observation was noted and future planning of SL projects will have to address this issue.

5.4.2 Student performance during project presentations

Reflective learning enhances student engagement with knowledge (Oates & Leavitt, 2003:25-26). The second objective of the SL presentations was for students to reflect on their own experiences of the SL project and to share these experiences as a form of learning through the process of SL participation. This feedback from students' on their own realisation of their learning was essential for their own growth. The following student reflections on SL experiences provide answers for objective 7. Added to benefits for participating communities, it is essential for the department to be informed on how students learn during the SL project, as highlighted by study objective 6. The student group presentations echoed the following sentiments:

“The overall project was a tough and challenging exercise, but we are glad we did it and proved to ourselves that we can work together, under pressure and complete the task. We gained new knowledge and found it interesting to implement our academic knowledge practically.”

“As a group we worked hard and we mastered team spirit. We now know we are able to work in an environment where we don’t know each other and still work together.”

“By doing the service learning experience we realised that in order for your business to be successful you must involve the community.”

“The group got to see and learn how a SMTE is run”

“The group learned how to actually compile a business plan”

The reflective statements summarised that students learned valuable lessons during the SL project. A comparative summary of all responses depicted as step 3 in Table 4.2 on page 50, was then needed to assess the benefits or limitations of the SL project for all participants. The following section will focus on a comparative analysis of the feedback from all sources, covering benefits of the SL project for the SMTEs, the University and the students.

5.5 Impact and benefits of SL project for SMTEs

Comparing SMTE data from the interview, questionnaires, mark rubrics, and focus group interviews as a form of participative process is not only useful for gathering required data, but is an essential learning platform (MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005:51-52). From this interaction the researcher suggests a number of things to follow derived from the learning experiences which were noted during the focus group interview.

Research implies that as mentioned before, there are dangers of SL projects in that communities may become over-reliant on students and not want to take ownership of improving their own (Fourie, 2003:36). Evidence from one of the SMTE interview pointed towards this:

“...I wanted one of them to come and implement whatever they had suggested, but they had placements. But I felt I needed one of them to come and implement what they had started, they had their marketing plan”.

Two ways of viewing this position is that as a researcher one is more prone to see the dangers of SL participation to communities as highlighted in the literature (McBride, Brav, Menon & Sherraden, 2006: 309). An opposing view is that as a SL coordinator, and following the importance of action research in SL, the idea of prospective future SL projects is born from statements such as these. Based on the principles of action research, current shortcomings must be regarded as improvements on future SL projects, to ensure reliable and beneficial results (Eyler, 2002:520).

5.6 Impact of SL projects for CPUT

A comparison of student data, including questionnaires, focus group interviews, and reflection presentations must be considered as critical experience for students, and this needs to be formalised by UoTs (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000: 284-286). The participants of this study indicated gratitude for the close relationships within the SL project, as it allowed community members an intimate view of the students' learning environment and development process. For the students it offered a retrospective view into the daily business operations.

Prospective employers trust students more when they have already worked with them, as they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. As more successful SL projects develop, with communities, closer relationships will emerge, and more opportunities will become available for prospective graduates.

5.7 Impact and benefits of SL project for students involved

Adding the community's voice to the assessment of the students who participated in the SL project, drew attention to the impact the SL project had on students. The reflection presentations of the students revealed their own realisation of their development and learning through the SL project. The students reflected during the focus group interviews on their limited skills prior to SL participation, including lack of group work, lack of productivity, and unclear project goals.

The SL project impacted the students positively as the interviews highlighted, among other aspects, learned skills, time management, conflict management and the realisation of efficient communication. When comparing the feedback from the SMTEs and the students on their preparedness for SL participation, it is clear that more effort needs to be put in place for student awareness projects to be initiated on the importance of SL. The community rubrics completed during the student presentations indicated gaps in the students' levels of preparedness for oral presentations.

The exposure the students received from interacting with businesses allowed for the realisation of practical business idea implementation for the students involved. This conclusion was gathered from feedback the SMTE interviews respondents provided regarding the quality of business and marketing plans submitted. The compared data indicated that responses from businesses on student performance were based on group strengths or limitations. This and other studies have highlighted the lack of maturity of students in the SL projects. The benefit of participating in SL projects like this one is that the

experience can be used as a building block for students to learn about business and how organisational leaders handle their businesses (Garcia et al., 2009: 48).

5.8 Summary

The validity and reliability of the study has been tested through the common threads of responses that developed from the various sources of data that were collected for this study (Golafshani, 2003:601-602). Various data collection tools (questionnaires, interviews and reflection comments) were used to extract data from the SL participants. The analysis of the data collected uncovered similarities in the data and themes emerged from the various data sources. The emergence of the themes indicated the reliability of the data collected from the participants (Morrow, 2005:254). The common themes from the data included the positive outlook on student performance and the perceptions of the students' positive attitude during the SL project. Communities realised benefits of the SL project and the community members highlighted their satisfaction through giving back to the students and being able to impart valuable knowledge.

Limitations of students including immaturity of ideas, limited articulation skills, and narrow knowledge of practical business operations, were indicated by the various sources and from the students themselves. Although the students' practical application skills of their learned theory were also exposed, their growth through the SL project of their academic knowledge was proven. The SMTE interviews indicated that they could see growth in the students during their interaction.

A number of recommendations were highlighted in the study for future department SL projects. These recommendations proposed how SL orientation and communication during the SL process must be handled for all participants. The discussion indicates that participating SMTEs indicated benefits of service learning on a personal and business level. The interviews with participating SMTEs to determine the impacts of SL highlighted two key aspects. They could see their business from an outsiders viewpoint and they could realise opportunities based on the students' recommendations for their business. The interest in potential future SL projects was unanimously positive from students and SMTE feedback interviews and questionnaires, as feedback indicated that long-lasting partnerships can be fostered with communities who have a vested interest in the students' growth. The discussion indicates that study objectives highlighted in Chapter One have been met.

Chapter Six summarises and concludes with recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Service learning in higher education has a role to play in creating sustainable partnerships between communities and university students in a process of shared learning, while developing products or services for the mutual benefit of all involved. The role of action research in service learning (SL) is to search for answers together with the participants of the project, and to evaluate the successes or failures of these projects. Participants reflect on their experiences and advise on the limitations of current projects, after which recommendations are considered for planning future SL projects (Piggot-Irvine, 2012:92).

The aim of this study in Section 1.3 was to determine the success or otherwise of the service learning project in the Tourism Management Department at CPU. The research undertaken aimed to assess whether participating communities in this study, who are the SMTEs within the Cape Town Metropole, and the students in the Department, benefitted from the Tourism Management SL project. A number of factors prompted the need for this study to be conducted and for the data from this research to be compiled as a guideline that could be used in planning future SL studies of a similar type. This action research also sought to advise on study methodologies for SL projects (Berg, 2004:197). The study employed a qualitative and quantitative research methodology to gather data from SL participants, and the data collection tools included interviews, questionnaires, and SL project reflection essays. Data triangulation at the analysis stage allowed for conclusions to be drawn from the various participants of the study (Furco, 2003:23). Recommendations from this study are discussed in this Chapter.

6.2 Research summary

The research is summarised below, referring to the specific objectives identified from the research problem and aim.

Objective 1: To identify the benefits of the service learning project for the communities involved.

In many cases of SL projects the planning phase of the project focuses on providing benefits for all stakeholders involved, but when it comes to the assessment stage, the results favour students rather than the communities who participated (Eyler, 2000; Alperstein, 2007:65-

66). In this study, the majority of participants were satisfied with the documentation received after the SL project, although a question about quality of the content was raised.

Participating SMTEs indicated that SL experiences benefit them personally, like the pleasure they experienced from imparting knowledge to students (Morgan & Streb, 2001:160), while feedback from SMTEs on benefits for the businesses was mixed.

Benefits for participating students were also assessed. SMTE representatives indicated that they believed the SL project had immense benefits for the students as it allowed students a unique experience within the daily operations of SMTEs, as well as exposing them to an existing industry network, which they could use later to create their own business networks after completion with studies (Strage, 2004:259).

Objective 2: To assess the level of impact the service learning project had on the communities involved.

Organisations reported that they were impressed by the level of education of the students, and felt that the students who participated in the SL project were well trained and ready to enter the work environment, even though there was evidence of immaturity arising from some of the student-group performances. In the interviews one of the SMTEs appreciated what the SL project meant to them, like personally being able to impart some knowledge on the students, and being afforded the opportunity to learn what students do at universities in tourism studies.

The study indicated that there was a level of impact for SL communities, measured by assessing the skills learnt during service learning. Questions of whether this impact was sufficient could be raised. This is a question for future studies in this field to answer.

Students revealed a growing understanding of the elements involved in running an enterprise (Lerner & Haber, 2000:82-83), including preparing the business and marketing plans with the SMTEs.

Objective 3: To establish if the benefits experienced were aligned to the desired aims of the service learning project for the communities involved.

In the question relating to the outcomes of the business and marketing plans in sections 5.2.1.5, and 5.2.1.6 only 33% of the respondents expressed positive results based on the documentation they received at the end of the project. Sixty six percent of the respondents reflected on documents not being aligned to what they expected, or having received the same information they provided to students. In the discussions it was observed that the

negative feedback could be linked to the possibility of lack of collaboration between the SMTE representatives and students in drawing up the documents (Kruger, 2003:214). It is thus recommended for future SL projects to require proof of periodic communication between themselves and their respective SMTEs. This is in an effort to determine problems early on in the project and to be able to assist where problems could arise (Berle, 2006:43-48; Giles & Eyster, 1998:69).

Objective 4: To gauge the level of community interest in participating in future service learning projects.

Feedback from the project indicated a lack of interest from some community members towards the close of the project (Kowalewski, 2004:138-139). As SMTEs experienced a spike in business towards the peak of the busy tourism season in the Cape Town Metropole, less time was available for meetings with students. Students pointed out reduced attention from SMTEs during this phase of the SL project.

Students indicated the most interest to participate in further SL projects, if an opportunity arose. This observation is based on the students having realised the benefits they derived towards the end of the project, and the change they have been able to make, and the impact they might have had on participating SMTEs, if they were more prepared at the beginning of the project.

Objective 5: To determine the efficiency of the service learning project design.

Planning of SL is essential, and information relating to SL as well as expectations must be clearly outlined in the planning document (Miron & Moely, 2006:27-28). SMTEs indicated some student groups were not well informed with regard to expectations (Chapter Five, section: 5.2.1.3). There was mixed feedback from the students' reflection on their preparedness for the SL project. FP2, during the focus group interview indicated that *"...I think that it was perfect time for us to do the service learning project, and the preparation was also enough, because that was in our third year and we had got enough information on how to do the service learning project"*. Students had been briefed about the SL project before conception (Chapter Five, section: 5.3.3.3). FP4 reiterated by indicating that *"...I agree especially for us because we were doing a marketing plan and a business plan of which we got a lot of information about the business plan. ...We knew what a business plan was and what we were supposed to do. It was explained and also with the marketing plan, we were dealing with marketing at the time"*.

Feedback from the SMTE interviews indicated that students were ready for the project and eager to learn from the SL experience. At the same time, some signs of immaturity were evident, and there were indications of limited knowledge relating to expectations for the project. The SMTE representatives also felt the students were somewhat under-prepared for the magnitude of the project they were involved in. The feedback indicated that although the students were briefed on SL and on their particular project, they had difficulty comprehending what their role in the project was going to be.

The discussions above indicate that clear SL expectations for participating SMTE communities, as well as for students are essential for the success of the SL project. The results indicate that these expectations may not have been communicated as well as they could have been before the start of the project (Eby, 1998:7). This indicates a need to assess how many of the participating SMTE representatives attended the planning meetings of the SL project, and to investigate what impact this had on their outlook and assessment of the SL project. This will provide clarity on the sufficiency or lack thereof regarding discussions on expectations of all SL participants.

Objective 6: To ascertain the benefits of the service learning project for the Tourism Management Department.

It is beneficial for institutions of higher learning to maintain strong links with their surrounding communities in a bid to give back or collaborate on easing the social issues in communities through collaborative efforts and research (Mouton & Wildschut, 2005:140-141). Throughout this project the communities indicated that they enjoyed the interaction with students, and shared that the opportunity to work closely with students increased the community's trust in the students' process of learning within the university. As prospective employers, the SMTEs feedback on the process of SL was positive. They indicated that it allowed them a view into the curriculum, and showed them the calibre of students who are in training. Resp2 pointed out during the one-on-one interviews that "*...(H)ere we have students that are passionate, enhance them and give them a strong backbone so that when they go into the real world they have got a very firm foundation from CPUT*" (Chapter Five, section: 5.3.2.3).

SL is based on the premise of a process that enables the building of strong long-term mutual relationships or partnerships. Successful SL increases the prospects of creating ambassadors for the CPUT from each successful project (Butin, 2006:475).

Objective 7: To determine work-place learning that took place for the benefit of students who took part in the service learning project.

The first issue of student preparedness yielded different results. Community members based their observations of students on learned knowledge (curriculum) and application skills (business application skills). Some student-groups fared poorly on business application skills, while most student-groups fared positively on knowledge of theory (Zlotkowski, 1998:J-1)(Chapter Five, section: 5.4.1). These results could be due to the following preparation strategies not included in this project, which must be addressed in future SL projects:

- In their feedback students expressed that they would have been better prepared if they had been involved in smaller projects before taking over this integrated activity, as it was complex (Chapter Five, section: 5.3.3.2).
- The view above was supported by some SMTEs in their questionnaire-responses, stating that although the third year of study was suitable for this project, the complexity of the project was more suited for post-graduate students. The question of the SL project design linked to objective five indicated that the students might have been more prepared for the SL project should they have been involved in less complex community engagement activities before embarking on this SL project (Chapter Five, section: 5.2.1.3).

SL projects consist of critical cross field outcomes, which must be achieved by the end of each project. The SL project in this study included the following skills for attainment: decision-making skills, self-management skills, communication skills, and personal awareness. Student feedback from the focus group interviews indicated that students gained essential skills from SL participation, which were directly linked to the critical cross field outcomes. Students indicated (Table 5.14) that they gained interpersonal skills, conflict management skills, leadership skills, and that their communication skills improved (Collier & Morgan, 2002:186).

The conclusion drawn from this feedback was that the project would have been more beneficial if the students had been exposed to community engagement projects during lower levels of study. This earlier community engagement would serve as an excellent opportunity for students to learn people management skills. The project at third year level could have been designed so that the focus of the project addressed certain pre-selected segments of the plans, rather than concentrating on the whole business plan or marketing plan documents, which proved rather challenging for some of the participating student groups (Kolenko et al., 1996: 137).

As students require certain work-place skills before exiting university (, one possible solution is that Tourism Management students participate in community engagement within the industry at the second level of study, as part of the programme's work-integrated learning system. The students as ambassadors of the Department and University, will have a more

beneficial standing in the workplace, thus increasing their chances of being viewed favourably by prospective permanent employers (Clifford, 2010:333).

6.3 Limitations of the study

The primary purpose of this research was to enable the community to highlight factors relating to the successes or limitations of the SL project. Reflections of all participants were vital to obtain a holistic idea of the outcomes. Financial and logistical limitations in a number of studies tended to hamper this process (Seale, Wilkinson & Erasmus, 2005: 215), and the reflections of the SL projects tended to be single sided. In some of the SL projects time limitations and limited financial resources hampered the process of data collection after the project was completed.

In this study, although data was collected from student and SMTE participants, the time for data collection could not be extended after the three months of data collections were completed in August to October 2014. This is due to the fact that the course-based SL project also leans on an academic programme with specific deadlines within the university framework and timelines, which are not flexible. Deadlines for faculty mark requirements on student performance could not be altered.

Feedback on student presentations was collected after the completion of each SL project term. SMTEs were invited to student feedback sessions via e-mail, and responded accordingly. Not all the participating businesses were based in the Cape Town Metropole, and some of the businesses involved travelled in from outside the Western Cape for meetings, which means that not all SMTE representatives were available for the student business and marketing plan presentations. Thus not all groups received feedback from their SMTEs for their presentations.

On the day of the SL project feedback, when students presented their plans to SMTEs, each representative was provided with a reflection rubric with which to evaluate the students' progress during the SL project as well as to score the presentations. These reflections also provided a synopsis of the students' performances during the project. The drawback with this form was that some of the SMTE representatives only scored the students and did not write comments on the students' performance, and thus limited data could only be drawn from this exercise.

The poor participation, especially by SMTE participants is regrettable, as it could introduce bias into the study.

6.4 Recommendations for future SL projects

Action research allows for the project coordinators to tap into procedural and personal lessons learned from the current projects, which can then be translated into an ongoing improvement effort to SL projects within the Department (Furco, 2001:71).

The recommendations discussed first in section 6.4.1 focus on the SL project as well as the stakeholders involved. In section 6.4.2, the recommendations from the study focus more on steps the Department or Faculty could address, and issues that were highlighted from the research. The aim of these recommendations is to advise on building longer-lasting SL projects for the Department in the future.

6.4.1 Recommendations for SL project stakeholders

The fundamental concept of the SL project is to develop mutually beneficial partnerships between multiple stakeholders involved in the project (Jacoby, 2003). The SL project in this study included partnerships between CPUT, which consisted of the students, SL coordinators, and the SL unit; WESGRO who was the government partner in the project; and the SMTEs, who were the SL community invited by WESGRO to participate in the SL project. This section discusses implications of the study for each stakeholder:

6.4.1.1 Recommendations for SL project coordinators and University Faculty

Preparation of all SL participants prior to project commencement is essential. The students' questionnaires included a large number of close-ended questions. It is recommended in future that space be provided in the questionnaire to allow students to include a brief narrative of their experiences.

As with students, community members need orientation into SL projects, and need to be made aware of their responsibilities and the expectations the project has of them. Availability of SMTE representatives for initial project meetings cannot be ensured. It is recommended that future SL project planning meetings be recorded, and disseminated to all prospective partners, to ensure full coverage.

The focus of research on SL projects within the Faculty of Business and Management Sciences is not yet formalised. This results in a number of ongoing missed opportunities that the Faculty could otherwise take advantage of, including project benchmarking and comparison of successes and limitations of the various SL projects that have been previously conducted. For SL coordinators the opportunity to maximise on data collection is lost. SL as

a component of community engagement is an essential part of the University focus, linked with research, teaching and learning (CPUT, 2008).

6.4.1.2 Recommendations for students

Students need to be made aware of the significance of the SL project beyond the marks they will be awarded. The students' focus group interview feedback revealed a tendency among students to focus exclusively on sections of the work they are responsible for, without gaining an overview of the whole assignment or knowing how the other sections fit into their work. SL coordinators need to ensure that future projects assess overall knowledge of business and marketing planning and not just isolated topics. This assessment will ensure that students learn all integral parts of the business plan and prevent them from focussing on only certain sections of the document (Tryon et al., 2008:18).

The ability to articulate themselves well during presentations is an essential skill students need to learn. This skill must also be introduced in the SL project training and orientation phase.

6.4.1.3 Recommendations for SL communities

The literature review has indicated that the results of the SL project are not tangible for the business, except for a business plan that the company can take away at the end of the project. The feedback from the SMTE interviews indicated that businesses would be open to further projects which would be beneficial for them. SL coordinators, together with all partners, could design a new project which runs over a three year cycle. This project would start with a situational analysis in year one. Year two would have a second group of students assess the recommendations from year one and assist in implementing the recommendations based on the business capabilities. In year three the new group of students could assess the level of development that occurred within the previous year, and finalise the business and marketing plans.

This new design will allow for businesses to gain more tangible results from the project. Communities and government partners would need to honour their commitment to the project over the prescribed years.

6.4.2 Recommendations derived from the study

Recommendation one: SL projects should be focused on providing benefits for communities and students involved, and not necessarily on achievements of departments and faculties. Availability of resources and the preparation of students are essential for the success of SL

projects. The recommendation for future SL projects is to tailor the project for post graduate level students, for example B Tech students, as it will be useful for strategic decision making.

Additionally, it is recommended that lower levels of study in the National Diploma should have some form of community engagement project planned to prepare students for more demanding projects at the higher levels of study (Kolenko et al., 1996:137).

Recommendation two: Interactions with industry professionals have highlighted the lack of attention to developing financial skills of community participants in the SL project. The literature review focusing on challenges facing South African small business highlights poor financial management as one of the main challenges facing these small organisations. Some SMTE managers do not have formal university qualifications and this study indicated that none of the respondents (Chapter Five, section 5.2.1.2) hold a tourism qualification. It is thus recommended that at the second year of the tourism studies, SL projects can be linked to the Tourism Management module, focusing on financial management skill development.

Recommendation three: This study also examined the entry of tourism entrepreneurs into the industry. The questions in the SMTE questionnaire did not allow for sufficient data to be collected in this regard. Specific work experiences of the SMTE representatives before entering into the tourism industry was not captured. It thus becomes important for SL projects of this nature to compile an extensive background data of their prospective communities. This data can be effectively used for research linked to SL projects in understanding the backgrounds of SMTEs, as this information will shed light into industry experiences of future participants.

Recommendation four: SL Projects in the Department of Tourism are not of a long-term agreement, as they are currently based on a six month term, due to the short academic periods of the senior students. This implies that the projects might not be sustainable as the relationships with the communities could also end at the end of each project. As each SL project is linked to a particular subject, it is essential that a rotational system of the project is adapted to other modules in the programme within the Tourism Department, to avoid the project reaching a stage of saturation with government partners and communities, due to the focus only being on one aspect of the business.

Recommendation Five: It is recommended that the Department consider a formal preparatory SL tutorial seminar and in-depth workshop to be scheduled in the third year of study, which focuses on orientation and preparation for the SL project. SMTE planning meetings are required to be recorded, and written minutes of the meetings to be circulated to all participants, even to those who could possibly join the project at a later stage. On the

matter of SL preparation the students highlighted a need for participation in a smaller or short-term project before embarking on a larger project like the one which was the focus of this study. A small project during the first year or second year of the programme to prepare students for more complex SL projects in the future is strongly recommended. An in-house SL manual adapted from the Council on Higher Education (2006a) framework should be considered to standardise procedures for students and community participants.

Recommendation Six: The focus of benefits and impacts of SL participation for communities, need to be built into the framework of each SL project. Rigorous research needs to be conducted into assessing the impacts, and where there are limited impacts the reasons thereof must be researched. This form of research will provide more valuable information on how to better implement SL projects (Kolenko et al., 1996:137).

Recommendation Seven: The success of any project is dependent on solid planning, clear goals and strong communication. Results from participating SMTEs indicated that communication on project expectations were misinterpreted by some students and organisations (Chapter Five, sections 5.2.1.5 &5.2.2). Continued communication for participating organisations is essential as some organisations joined the SL project after orientation meetings were concluded and thus did not have full details and understanding of the project. Continued communication is vital to ensure that project expectations are understood throughout the project.

Recommendation Eight: Close-ended questionnaires distributed to students yielded limited data in some instances. The question on whether students would participate in future SL projects returned a large number of neutral answers which could not be explained due to the close-ended type question (Chapter Five, section 5.2.2.3), as opposed to the focus-group interview. SL project questionnaires for students need to include more open ended questions, to be able understand the reasons for recurring themes which have an impact on the improvement of future SL projects.

A further study into this aspect of the research on the participants of SL participation is important; to assess the level of skill and knowledge they have prior to entering into the Tourism industry. Studies can include data collection before and after the SL project (Gallini & Moely, 2003:11), to be able to quantify impacts that the project has on businesses, based on specific needs or requirements.

6.5 Directions for future research

Firstly, universities need to assess the effectiveness of the current orientation systems for preparing students for SL projects. Students felt that they would have performed better, or had a better understanding of their communities' expectations, if they had been involved in smaller community projects prior to embarking on the SL project in their third year of study. A future comparative study of the effectiveness of various SL orientation projects must be considered, to determine best practice in preparing students for SL projects.

Secondly, some SMTE representatives indicated that they were not satisfied with the project outcome. It is recommended that future SL projects include a survey among companies that did not benefit from SL participation to select case studies for these SL outcomes, as well as to document systems to limit such incidences. Community involvement in this process would be critical to ensure unbiased results. Thus scientific studies of SL projects must be considered to assess how project limitations affect community perceptions and partnerships with universities.

Thirdly, the discussion in Chapter Two explains SL as a community initiative and training exercise for students to gain industry related experience. The discussion further distinguished between the learning that must take place during SL projects and learning assumed to take place during work integrated learning (WIL) periods when students temporarily leave the university in their second year of study and join organisations as employees for six months, to learn work-related skills. The current assumption is that WIL learning experience and the SL learning experience are different and yield different learning experiences. The assumed differences in these learning experiences should be explored further with course alumni.

6.6 Summary

The formalisation of SL into the South African Higher Education curriculum has been materialised through policy frameworks, and the creation of community engagement bodies at government level, to oversee implementation of SL programmes in higher education institutions (Osman & Petersen, 2013:4-5). Universities and Faculties have taken on the responsibility to participate and oversee varied forms of SL, unique to Faculty programmes and unique community settings. The continuation of successful SL projects is considered essential for positive social change in communities (Merkel, 2013:21).

The requirements for mutual benefits for students and communities involved must be the driving force for SL coordinators to ensure results of SL projects benefit all involved. Planning

of these projects must be articulated firstly through the needs of the community, and then get integrated into faculty curricula for the benefit of students. Erasmus (2013:31) indicated that institutions of higher learning need to assist organisations within communities achieve their mandate and assist in improving community-based research.

Similarly to this study, SL research should add to the body of knowledge surrounding SL processes, best-practices and innovation sharing, experiences of participants within the projects and community feedback. Since the main objective of SL projects are of a socially responsive nature, community feedback on benefits or drawbacks of any SL project are essential in order for improvements to be made in the higher education community engagement framework of South Africa.

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Appendix A: Letter requesting approval from WESGRO to conduct research with SMTE representatives



Dear Mr Linda Mase,

I would like to firstly take this opportunity to thank you for your continued involvement in the Service learning project with the Tourism Management department. Your vast knowledge and interest in the project has been of great significance to the department.

My involvement in the service learning project has led me to my realisation of the great potential of our partnership, with the SMME's to improving the process and focus of the service learning project for the benefit of our students and communities involved. As the authoritative body of the SMME database in this partnership, I would thus like to request approval from your-self on behalf of WESGRO to conduct interviews with the companies that have been involved in the service learning project since 2012, with the CPUT Tourism Management department.

Data collected from this survey will be used to apply improvements to the structure of the service learning project. Feedback will be published in my research, and I promise that personal information of the companies will be kept strictly confidential.

On completion of my research I will gladly share the published results with the organisations and WESGRO.

To assist me achieve this goal, please indicate your approval for the companies to part-take in this research, by sending an official letter of acceptance on your company letterhead to mokoena@cput.ac.za.

We value your input.

Sincerely


Pavla Mokoena

17 April 2014

Junior Lecturer:
Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Appendix B: Approval letter from WESGRO to conduct surveys with SMTE representatives



5 May 2014

Dear Tourism Partners

SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT SURVEY/STUDY – MS. PAVLA MOKOENA

Wesgro is the official Destination Marketing, Investment and Trade Promotion Agency for Cape Town and Western Cape responsible for promoting the destination as a preferred tourism and investment destination.

Ms. Pavla Mokoena will be conducting interviews with the SMMEs that participated in the Wesgo/CPUT Service Learning Project, as partners in the project we endorse her initiative to get feedback from the beneficiaries in order to improve the programme.

This is to request you as Wesgro partners and beneficiaries to make time and assist Ms. Mokoena in the data collection process and be ensured that your information will be treated as strictly confidential.

Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Kind regards

Linda Mase
Manager: Domestic & SMME Marketing

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The Western Cape Tourism, Trade and Investment Promotion Agency - an independent Agency established under Provincial Law

WES01

Appendix C: E-mail communication inviting students and SMTEs to participate in SL research

Phitlhelelo Mokoena

From: Pavla Mokoena
Sent: 16 July 2014 01:21 PM
To: 'Yalei Pan'
Subject: RE: Questionnaire for Mrs Mokoena

Thank you my dear

You are a STAR!!!!

From: Yalei Pan [mailto:cactus157@gmail.com]
Sent: 16 July 2014 01:16 PM
To: Pavla Mokoena
Subject: Re: Questionnaire for Mrs Mokoena

Dear Mrs. Mokoena,

Thanks for your email!

Please check attached questionnaire for SL.

Best regards,
Yalei

On Wed, Jul 16, 2014 at 12:50 PM, Pavla Mokoena <MokoenaP@cput.ac.za> wrote:

Dear Students, Alumni and colleagues of the Tourism Department at CPUT

This is Mrs Mokoena, hoping that this e-mail finds you in good health and high spirits. I am conducting research on your experiences of the Service Learning project we did in 2012. We would like to get your honest opinion and experiences of the project. Attached is a Word document questionnaire.

Please complete the questionnaire and return to Mrs Mokoena by the 25th July 2014. **HOPING TO HEAR FROM YOU SOON!!!** – If you are in Cape Town and wish to take part in a follow-up interview with me please let me know and we can catch-up over a cup of coffee.

Kind regards

Mrs Mokoena

Junior Lecturer: Tourism and Event Management

Faculty of Business

Appendix D: E-mail communication from a SMTE representative willing to participate in SL research

Phitlhelelo Mokoena

From: Pavla Mokoena
Sent: 31 July 2014 09:36 AM
To: info@therenaissancelodge.com
Subject: RE: SMME Feedback on the service learning project
Attachments: image001.gif; image002.gif; image003.gif; image004.gif; image005.gif; image006.gif

Dear Angie

Thank you so much for your feedback, and for your positive outlook on this project. I think you might have forgotten the attachment.

Regards
Pavla

From: info@therenaissancelodge.com [info@therenaissancelodge.com]
Sent: 30 July 2014 02:34 PM
To: 'Linda Mase'
Cc: Pavla Mokoena
Subject: RE: SMME Feedback on the service learning project

Dear Linda

Here with the SMME feedback on the SLP duly completed. Thank you kindly for offering me the opportunity to be a part of a Life changing experience to impact the Lives of our students and making a difference in our City and Country.

God Bless
Kind regards
Angie Polizi

From: Linda Mase [<mailto:Linda@wesgro.co.za>]
Sent: 28 July 2014 02:08 PM
To: Linda Mase
Cc: Pavla Mokoena
Subject: SMME Feedback on the service learning project
Importance: High

Dear valued Partners

This is to remind you to please complete the attached questionnaire and forward to Ms. Pavla Mokoena via e-mail MokoenaP@cput.ac.za<<mailto:MokoenaP@cput.ac.za>> before or on Wednesday, 6 August 2014.

Your feedback with help Wesgro and CPUT partnership in developing relevant programmes in the future.

Kind regards
Linda Mase

[[cid:image001.gif@01CFAC03.635555D0](#)]

Appendix E: SMTE questionnaire

For Office Use Only

Questionnaire No

**CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY (CPUT)**

Benefits of the CPUT, Tourism Management service learning project for small medium and micro enterprises: a survey of community perceptions.

Dear Respondent

I am a Junior Lecturer at the CPUT. Companies together with students completed the service learning (SL) project and completed it by designing a marketing plan or complete business plan. The students received their assessments and submitted their reflections on their learning process throughout the project. This process has ignited an interest to determine what the benefits of the project were for the companies that took part in the project. The purpose of this questionnaire is to outline successes or limitations of the project. We request your honest opinion on the planning and time frame of the project, as well as your perception of the students as well as final product you received after the completion of the project.

Instructions:

After completion, all questionnaires will be returned to the CPUT, in sealed envelopes and all details of the company will be kept strictly confidential in all publications.

Answering the questionnaire is voluntary. The questionnaire will take less than 40 minutes to complete. Please provide an honest reflection of the service learning project and recommendations for improvement.

Please answer all questions. None of the answers in the document will be used as an assessment for the students' performance.

Thank you for your time and commitment.

Service Learning questionnaire

Section A: Background information:

1.	Identify the business you work in: (Please tick the box that applies to you ✓)	
1.1	Hospitality	
1.2	Travel operator	
1.3	Transport	
1.4	Tour Guiding	
1.5	Travel agency	
1.6	Car hire	
1.7	Accommodation	

2.	Choose the position you hold in the business: (Please tick the box that applies to you ✓)	
2.1	Owner	
2.2	Partner	
2.3	Manager	
2.4	Operations	
2.5	Other: Specify: _____	

3.	Where is your business located? (Please tick the name of the Suburb ✓)	
3.1	Southern Suburbs	
3.2	Northern Suburbs	
3.3	West Coast	
3.4	Overberg	
3.5	Cape Town CBD	
3.6	Other: specify: _____	

Section B: Demographic information:

(Please tick the box that applies to you ✓)

4. How long have you been in this position?

0 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 15 years	Other.....
----------------	-----------------	------------------	------------

5. Indicate your age bracket below:

Age	20-29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60+
-----	-------	---------	---------	---------	-----

6. What is your gender, please indicate in the space below:

Male		Female	
------	--	--------	--

7. What is your racial grouping? Indicate in space below

African	Coloured	Indian	White	Other.....
---------	----------	--------	-------	------------

8. Indicate your highest qualification in the space below:

Matric certificate	Higher Certificate	Diploma	Degree	Other (specify).....
--------------------	--------------------	---------	--------	----------------------

9. How long have you been employed at this company?

0 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 15 years	Other (specify).....
----------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------------

10.1	Were you employed in a different company before?	Y	N
------	--	---	---

10.2 If YES please indicate for how long:

0 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 15 years	Other (specify).....
----------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------------

Section C: Perceptions of service learning

11.	Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements: (Please tick the box best suites your answer based on the following scale) 1-Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3 - Agree 4-Stronly Agree				
11.1	The SL project is a worthwhile project for students	1	2	3	4
11.2	Please elaborate on your response above: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>				

12.	At which level of the students study do you think the SL project must be pitched? (Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)				
12.1	1 st Year		2 nd Year		3 rd Year
12.2	Please elaborate on your response above: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>				

13.	Explain which skills you think the students require for taking part in the SL project? <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>				
-----	---	--	--	--	--

14.	<p>List the two skills you think are most important for the SL project, as listed in question 13, above:</p> <hr/> <hr/>
-----	--

Section D: Reflection on this service learning project experience:

15.	<p>Would you recommend another company to partake in this SL project? (Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)</p>	Y	N
	<p>Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		

16.	<p>Do you think SL project is beneficial to you as an individual? (Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)</p>	Y	N
	<p>Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer:</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		

17.	<p>Do you think the SL project is beneficial for the company? (Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)</p>	Y	N
	<p>Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer:</p> <hr/> <hr/>		

18.	Do you think the six months time-frame of the project is good? (Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)	Y	N
	Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____ _____		

19.	For how long should the service learning project operate? (Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)	1 Year	2 Years	3 years	Longer
	Please elaborate on your response above: (If the longer answer is indicated above, please indicate the number of preferred years) _____ _____ _____				

20	Do you think the start of the project in May is the best time?	Y	N
	Please provide reasons for your answer: _____ _____		
21.	When is the best time to end the SL project? Please elaborate on your answer: _____ _____		

Section E: Your reflection on the information given for the project

22.1	Was the information you received about the project sufficient? (Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)	Y	N
	Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____ _____ _____ _____		
22.2	Do you think the students were well informed about what they had to do?	Y	N
	Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____ _____ _____		

22.3	Was there sufficient communication from the SL coordinators during the project?	Y	N
	Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____ _____ _____ _____		

22.4	Elaborate on what you think must be included in the business plan that was given to you at the end of the project: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		
22.5	Do you think the conclusion of the project is well implemented?	Y	N
	Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>		

Section F: Reflection on the student group assigned to your company

23.	Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements: (Please tick the box that best suites your answer based on the following scale) 1-Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3-Undecided 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree					
23.1	Students were well prepared for the project	1	2	3	4	5
23.2	The students attitude towards the project was good	1	2	3	4	5
23.3	Students were not enthusiastic about the project	1	2	3	4	5
23.4	Students were enthusiastic about the ideas you shared during the project	1	2	3	4	5
23.5	The students acted in a professional manner	1	2	3	4	5
23.6	The students were difficult to work with	1	2	3	4	5
23.7	The students were reliable during the project	1	2	3	4	5
23.8	The students or the group representatives attended all meetings	1	2	3	4	5

Section G: Reflection on the ideas for the business

24.	Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements: (Please tick the box best suites your answer based on the following scale)					
	1-Very Poor	2-Poor	3-Average	4-Good	5-Very Good	
24.1	The student's ideas were innovative	1	2	3	4	5
24.2	The student's ideas were practical	1	2	3	4	5
24.3	The student's ideas were relevant to the business	1	2	3	4	5
24.4	I could implement the ideas the students suggested	1	2	3	4	5
24.5	The student's ideas were clearly thought out	1	2	3	4	5
24.6	The student's ideas were immature	1	2	3	4	5
24.7	I have used some of the ideas the student's suggested	1	2	3	4	5
24.8	I have not used any of the ideas the student's suggested	1	2	3	4	5
24.9	I have used some of my ideas from the project	1	2	3	4	5
24.10	The student's ideas were out of context	1	2	3	4	5
24.11	The student's ideas for the marketing strategy were practical	1	2	3	4	5
24.12	The student's ideas for the marketing strategy were implementable	1	2	3	4	5
24.13	The student's recommended ideas for staff structure(s) which were practical	1	2	3	4	5
24.14	The student's recommended ideas for staff structure(s) which were implementable	1	2	3	4	5
24.15	The student's recommended financial plans which were practical	1	2	3	4	5
24.16	The student's recommended financial plans which were implementable	1	2	3	4	5
24.17	The student's ideas on the triple-bottom-line were innovative	1	2	3	4	5
24.18	The student's ideas on the triple-bottom-line were immature	1	2	3	4	5
24.19	The student's ideas on the triple-bottom-line were relevant to the business	1	2	3	4	5
24.20	The student's ideas on the triple-bottom-line were implementable	1	2	3	4	5

24.21	The student's brought new ideas to the business	1	2	3	4	5
24.22	The student's used my ideas for the project	1	2	3	4	5

Section H: Reflection on the business ideas and marketing plan document

25.	Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements: (Please tick the box best suites your answer based on the following scale) 1-Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3-Undecided 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree					
25.1	The business plan format is written in a user friendly manner	1	2	3	4	5
25.2	I used all the ideas from the business plan that was drawn up during the service learning project	1	2	3	4	5
25.3	I used all the ideas from the business improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5
25.4	I used all the ideas from the management structural improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5
25.5	I used all the ideas from the marketing planning improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5
25.6	I used all the ideas from the triple-bottom line improvement section (financial, social, ecological responsibility and sustainability)	1	2	3	4	5
25.7	I used all the ideas from the financial improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5

26.	Indicate the percentage to which you have used sections of the business plan that was created during the service learning project (Please tick the box best suites your answer based on the following scale) 1 - 100% 2- 75% 3 – 50% 4- 25% 5 – 0%					
26.1	The business plan format is written in a user friendly manner	1	2	3	4	5
26.2	I used all the ideas from the business plan that was drawn up during the service learning project.	1	2	3	4	5
26.3	I used all the ideas from the business improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5

26.4	I used all the ideas from the management structural improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5
26.5	I used all the ideas from the marketing planning improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5
26.6	I used all the ideas from the triple-bottom line improvement section (financial, social, ecological responsibility and sustainability)	1	2	3	4	5
26.7	I used all the ideas from the financial improvement section of the business plan	1	2	3	4	5

Section I: Overall impression of the service learning project

(Please tick the box that best suits your answer ✓)

27.	Did the final document you received meet your expectations?	Y	N
Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer:			

28.	Would you be prepared to take part in this form of project again in future?	Y	N
Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer:			

Thank you for your time.

Appendix F: Student questionnaire

For Office Use Only

Questionnaire No

CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY (CPUT)

Benefits of the CPUT, Tourism Management service learning project for small medium and micro enterprises: a survey of community perceptions.

Dear Respondent

The attached questionnaire surveys your thoughts about the service learning project that you took part in, in your third year of study. The research requests your honest opinion about the project regarding your experiences and opinions.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to outline successes or limitations of the project, to assist with planning future service learning projects.

Instructions:

After completion, all questionnaires will be returned to the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, and all enclosed information will be kept strictly confidential in all publications.

The questionnaire will take less than 20 minutes to complete. Please answer all questions. None of the answers in the document will be used as an assessment for the previous students' performance.

THANK YOU

SECTION A - STUDENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1.	Male		Female	
----	------	--	--------	--

2.	What age did you or will you turn this year? (Please tick the box that applies to you)				
18	19	20	21	22	>22, specify.....

3.	What is your state of employment? (Please tick the box that applies to you)	
3.1	Student	
3.2	Employed part-time	
3.3	Employed full time	
3.4	Internship candidate	

SECTION B: EXPERIENCE OF SERVICE LEARNING

4.	Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements: (Please tick the box best suites your answer based on the following scale) 1-Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3 – Neutral 4- Agree 5 -Strongly Agree					
4.1	I acquired important life skills through this course	1	2	3	4	5
4.2	The facilitation by the lecturer was empowering	1	2	3	4	5
4.3	The course gave me more communication skills	1	2	3	4	5
4.4	The course gave me more training on time management	1	2	3	4	5
4.5	My presentation skill did not improve	1	2	3	4	5
4.6	The project made me more aware of the operations of a tourism business	1	2	3	4	5
4.7	The work I performed in the community enhanced my ability to communicate my ideas in a real world context	1	2	3	4	5

4.8	It was satisfying to be able to help others with the tools of knowledge that we have gained in the tourism course	1	2	3	4	5
4.9	I think it is vitally important that courses include learning outside the university	1	2	3	4	5
4.10	Taking part in the service learning project is the only way to gain some form of work experience	1	2	3	4	5
4.11	The chance I was given has definitely taught me a lot about myself and my own abilities	1	2	3	4	5
4.12	I was awakened to the link between the community and learning	1	2	3	4	5
4.13	Learning from the business representatives during the service learning project is the best way to learn	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: OPINION OF SERVICE LEARNING

5.	Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements: (Please tick the box best suites your answer based on the following scale) 1-Strongly Disagree 2- Disagree 3- Neutral 4- Agree 5-Stronly Agree					
5.1	The service learning project is a worthwhile project for students	1	2	3	4	5
5.2	I learnt some leadership skills during the service learning project	1	2	3	4	5
5.3	I managed my time well during the service learning project	1	2	3	4	5
5.4	I learnt to rely on my group members during the service learning project	1	2	3	4	5
5.5	I learnt some conflict management skills during the service learning project	1	2	3	4	5
5.6	I learnt some entrepreneurial skills during the service learning project	1	2	3	4	5
5.7	I learnt some skills on starting a new business	1	2	3	4	5
5.8	I learnt some business financial skills during the service learning project	1	2	3	4	5
5.9	I will recommend the service learning project for all Tourism Management students	1	2	3	4	5
5.10	I will take part in another service learning project if i am given the opportunity	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your time.

Appendix G: SMTE interview schedule

<p>For Office Use Only SMME Interview <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (CPUT)</p>
<p>Community perceptions of the impacts and benefits of a service learning project for small medium and micro enterprise in a department of tourism and management at a University of Technology</p>	
<p>Dear Respondent</p>	
<p>I am a Junior Lecturer at the CPUT. Companies, together with students, participated in the service learning (SL) project and completed it by designing a marketing plan, or completed a business plan. The students received their assessments and submitted their reflections on their learning process throughout the project. This process has ignited an interest, and to determine what the benefits of the project were for the companies that took part in the project. As a result I ask for your views on the contents of this document.</p>	
<p>The interview is conducted to support the information gathered from the questionnaires, and will concentrate on the structural aspects of SL.</p>	
<p>Instructions: Answering the questions will be on a voluntary basis. This interview will take less than 20 minutes to complete. Please feel free to ask questions if there are any unclear points, or to withdraw from the survey if you so wish.</p>	
<p>Please answer all questions. None of the answers in the document will be used as an assessment for the students' performance, and your participation is confidential.</p>	
<p>Thank you for your time and commitment.</p>	
<p>Pavla Mokoena Junior Lecturer: Tourism and Event Management Faculty of Business Room 3.70 Engineering Building Cape Peninsula University of Technology Tel: +27 21 460 9082 Email: mokoena@cput.ac.za</p>	

1.1 Who do you think the current design of the service learning project, is structure to benefits most?

Students	
companies	
Both	

Please provide a motivation for your answer: _____

1.2 Was the SL project more beneficial to you on the business level, personal level, or both, or not at all?

Personal	
Business	
Both	
No benefits	

Please provide a motivation for your answer. If there were benefits experienced, please elaborate more on those: _____

1.3 Do you think that SMMEs need to be part of the planning team for the SL project?

Yes	
No	
Undecided	

Please provide a motivation for your answer: _____

1.4 If there was any part of the SL project you could change, what would it be?

1.5 Do you think that the SL project offers good training for our students?

Yes	
No	

1.6 Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____

1.7 Please give feedback on the Business plan/ Marketing plan that was presented to you at the end of the SL project.

1.8 Would you consider being part of the SL project in future?

Yes	
No	

Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____

Thank you for your participation

Appendix H: Focus group interview schedule

For Office Use Only

SMME Interview

CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY (CPUT)

Community perceptions of the impacts and benefits of a service learning project for small medium and micro enterprise in a department of tourism and management at a University of Technology

Dear Respondent

I am a Junior Lecturer at the CPUT. Companies, together with students, participated in the service learning (SL) project and completed it by designing a marketing plan, or completed a business plan. The students received their assessments and submitted their reflections on their learning process throughout the project. This process has ignited an interest, and to determine what the benefits of the project were for the companies that took part in the project. As a result I ask for your views on the contents of this document.

The interview is conducted to support the information gathered from the questionnaires, and will concentrate on the structural aspects of SL.

Instructions:

Answering the questions will be on a voluntary basis. This interview will take less than 20 minutes to complete. Please feel free to ask questions if there are any unclear points, or to withdraw from the survey if you so wish.

Please answer all questions. None of the answers in the document will be used as an assessment for the students' performance, and your participation is confidential.

Thank you for your time and commitment.

Pavla Mokoena

Junior Lecturer: Tourism and Event Management
Faculty of Business
Room 3.70 Engineering Building
Cape Peninsula University of Technology
Tel: +27 21 460 9082
Email: mokoena@cpuc.ac.za

1.1 Who do you think the current design of the service learning project, is structure to benefits most?

Students	
companies	
Both	

Please provide a motivation for your answer: _____

1.2 Was the SL project more beneficial to you on the business level, personal level, or both, or not at all?

Personal	
Business	
Both	
No benefits	

Please provide a motivation for your answer. If there were benefits experienced, please elaborate more on those: _____

1.3 Do you think that SMMEs need to be part of the planning team for the SL project?

Yes	
No	
Undecided	

Please provide a motivation for your answer: _____

1.4 If there was any part of the SL project you could change, what would it be?

1.5 Do you think that the SL project offers good training for our students?

Yes	
No	

1.6 Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____

1.7 Please give feedback on the Business plan/ Marketing plan that was presented to you at the end of the SL project.

1.8 Would you consider being part of the SL project in future?

Yes	
No	

Please provide a motivation for your Yes or No answer: _____

Thank you for your participation

Claire Brear
Editing & Proofreading

CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

To whom it may concern,

This letter serves to confirm that the manuscript detailed below was edited by a professional English-language editor.

Date of completion: 14 August 2015

Thesis Title: Benefits of the Tourism Management Service Learning Project for Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises: a Survey of Community Perceptions.

Thesis Author: Pavla Phitlhelelo Mokoena



Claire Brear

Editor: Claire Ann Brear
BA (Hons) Rhodes University
Contact: clairebrear@gmail.com

Appendix J: CPUT Ethics certificate



**P.O. Box 1906 • Bellville 7535 South Africa • Tel: +27 21 4603239 • Email: zouityf@cput.ac.za
Symphony Road Bellville 7535**


Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	Faculty: BUSINESS
--	--------------------------

At a meeting of the Research Ethics Committee on 13 June 2014, Provisional Ethics Approval was granted to MOKOENA, Pavla Phitlhelelo (212292701) for research activities Related to the MTech/DTech: MTech: TOURISM & HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Title of dissertation/thesis:	The CPUT Tourism service learning project for small medium and micro enterprises: a survey of community perceptions of impacts and benefit Supervisor: Prof J Spencer
--------------------------------------	--

Comments:

Decision: APPROVED

	13 June 2014
Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	Date

_____	_____
Signed: Chairperson: Faculty Research Committee	Date

Clearance Certificate No | 2014FBREC209