

**LEARNERS' VIEWS OF THE CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY  
SERVICE WITHIN THE CURRICULUM OF THE  
VAAL TRIANGLE TECHNIKON**

by

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**RESEARCH ESSAY**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree**



in the

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND NURSING**

at the

**RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY**

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**November 2002**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to the following people without whom this research report would not have been possible:

- The participants for their valuable contribution in terms of time and discussion
- The Vaal Triangle Technikon for allowing me to undertake the research
- Prof Gravett, my supervisor, for her guidance, constructive criticism and knowledge of the field of study
- Ravi, Keshiv and Mishka, for their unstinting love, support and strength throughout my studies
- My parents, who have encouraged me to accomplish so much through their unconditional love, support and understanding
- My dearest friends, Sulosh and Burnell for their encouragement and willing shoulders every time I needed their support

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>TITLE PAGE</b>	
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	3
<b>SECTION ONE: CONTEXTUALISATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT</b>	
1.1. Introduction	4
1.2. Problem statement and research question	5
1.3. Aim of study	7
1.4. Assumptions and Presuppositions	7
<b>SECTION TWO: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE</b>	
2.1. Introduction	9
2.2. The Concept of social responsibility	11
2.3. Current Trends in higher education	13
2.4. What should the role of higher education be in the development of social responsibility?	19
2.5. Conclusion	23
<b>SECTION THREE: RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODS</b>	
3.1. Research Paradigm	25
3.2. Sampling	26
3.3. Context of data collection	27
3.4. Data Collection Method	28
3.5. Data Analysis	31
3.6. Ethical Considerations	31
3.7. Validity and reliability	32

**SECTION FOUR: PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

	Page
4.1	Presentation of Data 35
4.2	Findings 38
4.3	Discussion of findings
4.3.1	Exposure to a holistic learning experience 41
4.3.2	Supporting community service and developing social awareness 44
4.3.3	Interaction with peers and lecturers 47
4.4	Recommendations 49
4.5	Conclusion 51
<b>5.</b>	<b>LIST OF REFERENCES</b> 54
<b>6.</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
Appendix A	58
Appendix B	59
Appendix C	60
Appendix D	61
<b>7.</b>	<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>
7.1	Example of provisional category with units of meaning and rule for inclusion 37
7.2	Categories and subcategories as they emerged from data analysis 39

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this enquiry was to determine learners' views on community service and to establish to what extent the curriculum of the Vaal Triangle Technikon plays a role in developing the civic responsibility of learners towards community service. This was done by analysing the notions of learners' experiences within the curriculum in terms of community service and social responsibility. It is argued that curriculum should provide a holistic learning experience, which not only promotes academic excellence and vocational training but integrates a civic component as well. The learners' experiences should include social skills, a key ingredient of growth that contributes towards the development of an evolving democratic nation such as South Africa.

In the light of the above argument, qualitative research was conducted using interviews as a method of data collection. Participants were purposefully selected by maximum variation sampling to represent a wide range of experiences. They were then interviewed to gain insight into their experiences of the notions of social responsibility and community service within the curriculum.

The findings of the research shows that the learners interviewed experienced forms of learning that did not encourage or influence the development of skills which promote social responsibility and community service. The learning environment was also not conducive to the promotion of social integration and intercultural communication. Programmes that support social awareness or community service were minimal.

## **SECTION ONE: CONTEXTUALISATION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The research reported in this essay focuses on the views and experiences of learners regarding the concept of community service and social responsibility within the technikon curriculum.

This report addresses the concern of whether the Vaal Triangle Technikon provides a holistic educational experience which allows the learner to develop not only academic and vocational excellence, but also attitudes and perspectives that are supportive of social responsibility and community building. Part of such research should determine the status of the concept of community service in the minds of those who would take the implementation process of community service initiatives further at grassroots level, namely the learner. I believe that part of the responsibility of higher education is to help learners cultivate critical skills; acquire authentic information about their society and create the opportunities which allow them to develop constructive perspectives and attitudes about that society. Even within the corporate sector of South Africa, socially responsible citizens are a critical factor of the industry. Furthermore, I believe that the concept of social responsibility should be interwoven within the standard curriculum. My investigation therefore focuses on whether the component of social responsibility is realized within the educational experience of learners in higher education.

The first part of this essay focuses on the research orientation that informed the study and statement of the problem, followed by the aim of the study. Thereafter, I state my assumptions and presuppositions prior to the enquiry. This is followed by a literature study which provides important argumentation on the role of social responsibility and

community building within the curriculum of higher education. The third part of this essay describes the research strategy and methods employed in this study. Thereafter, the findings are presented and discussed. The report concludes with a discussion on possible implications of this study for educators of learners in higher education.

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTION**

As its pledge to community service, the mission statement of the Vaal Triangle Technikon states "to empower our communities by sharing knowledge, skills and resources". Although this statement provides some insight into this institution's orientation towards responding to community needs, there is no further indication as to how the concept of service and its responsiveness to society's needs are actually realised within the curriculum. Therefore, although official documents of the Technikon boast of its benefits to learners, communities and institutions, the contribution and involvement of the technikon at academic departmental level provides grounds for concern. The emphasis of the curriculum seems still to be only on professional competence and career development. It is therefore my contention that the notion of community service and its role within the curriculum needs to be researched.

A bureau of community service was set up at the Vaal Triangle Technikon, in 1996, to serve as a link between the departments of the Technikon, as well as communities that have specific needs outside the Technikon. The function of this bureau was to identify particular community problems and utilise the resources of the Technikon community to address the problem. The bureau has various community service projects in operation such as, the street children project, adult basic literacy programmes and the empowerment of women programmes. The bureau also offers short courses and workshops ranging from computer literacy to flower arrangement. The bureau prefers to work with groups in the community rather than on individual

needs. Student participation is mostly voluntary, and therefore limited to a small percentage of the Technikon community.

In the light of the above, various concerns regarding the notion of community service at the Vaal Triangle Technikon comes to the fore. Voluntary learner community development programmes are not generally linked to the curriculum at the Vaal triangle technikon. Although some learners use the knowledge gained in their professional studies for community work, many of these programmes do not require specialist knowledge on the part of participating learners. The key aims of these community development programmes are related to the development of social awareness among the participants through their service to disadvantaged communities. I argue that this valuable attribution could be extended to more learners if the notion of community service and social responsibility were incorporated into the general curriculum of every discipline.

My enquiries into community service initiatives, at the Vaal Triangle Technikon, has led me to believe that there is a need for research into the notion of community service and its role within the curriculum of every discipline. Although literary evidence presented by authors such as Perold (1998:22-47) and Kahne *et al* (1996:595), put forward the view that community service benefits learners, communities and institutions, the lack of contribution and involvement of academic departments with regard to the development of social responsibility and community building provides grounds for concern. It appears that the emphasis of teaching and learning at the Vaal Triangle Technikon continues to focus on professional competence and career development.

In view of the background sketched above, the need to acquire an understanding of Learners' experiences of the notion, "community services in higher education" becomes very important as this could shed light on the way in which the curriculum could be adapted to address the issue of community service. This knowledge could be useful when determining the measures could be taken to address the



deficiency of community service initiatives within the curriculum of higher education.

The primary question that guided this investigation can thus be stated as follows:

- What are the learners' experiences (in terms of exposure and sensitising) of the notion of social responsibility and community service within the technikon curriculum?

### **1.3. AIM OF THE STUDY**

The study aimed at determining learners' views on the concept of community service and to establish whether the curriculum of the Vaal triangle technikon has impacted on their perspectives of community service.

### **1.4. ASSUMPTIONS AND PRESUPPOSITIONS**

As we register the new intake of learners, who make the transition from secondary to higher education, I often ask myself what are we going to do for them, and what should we expect to be doing. These learners will acquire vast amounts of information, improve skills they possess and learn new ones. They will become technically proficient in a host of ways in the hope of acquiring sufficient tools for a successful professional life.

However, I believe that this is not the sole or even the most important role of higher education. I believe that higher education should enable learners to make a connection between their personal and professional lives and the quality of social life in their communities. Social responsibility is also becoming an increasingly relevant ingredient to having a successful professional life. Corporate social responsibility is being emphasised in all sectors and via varying degrees of legislation. Although we

may be successful at equipping learners technically and professionally and many may reach high levels of accomplishment in their chosen fields of study, my assumption is that the educational experience we offer, through the curriculum, does not adequately encompass the notion of community service and social responsibility. The exclusion of learning activities, which expand the necessary skills such as those required for the development of attitudes that support social responsibility and community service, inhibits the readiness of the learners from having a successful professional life.

I argue therefore, that an understanding of the learners' experience of the concept of community services within the curriculum will enable educators to provide a holistic educational experience, which includes professional development and also the development of healthy attitudes towards social responsibility and community building. I believe that a holistic educational experience should not be purely scientific and academic but must be socially relevant in its context.



## SECTION TWO: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

*"The younger generation is our future hope. On them depends the progress of the country. The way their faculties are developed and minds moulded will make or mar India's destiny. Hence the need to give top priority to the educational needs of the growing generation."* Nehru, (as cited in Scrace. ed., 1997:35)

### 2.1 Introduction

As mentioned before, this research focused on exploring learners' views on community service. To this end this research was conducted to establish whether the curriculum of the Vaal Triangle technikon has impacted on their perspectives of social responsibility. This was done to arrive at an informed understanding of such experiences. This study therefore requires an understanding of learner experiences of the notion of community services within the curriculum of the Vaal Triangle Technikon. In order to place this aim within a theoretical framework, literature relevant to higher education and community service was consulted.

The literature consulted has revealed that the concept of community service is also referred to as community building, civic responsibility, social responsibility, and education for citizenship. Although various expressions are used to refer to the idea of social responsibility, the meanings and contexts within which they are used are very similar and overlap frequently. Furthermore, I have found in the literature that terminology, such as, school, university, technikon and college have been used within the universal context of higher education. For the purpose of this research, the expressions mentioned above are used interchangeably.

In this investigation, I argue that higher education should play a significant role in developing learners' notion of community building and social responsibility, thereby enabling them to become involved citizens within a democratic society. While we

need the services of highly skilled professionals, vocational training alone will not develop a society committed to the principles of transformation. A holistic educational experience would ensure that learners not only provide service of an excellent standard as employers or employees but also do so within the context of being good citizens within a highly professional environment. On this basis, I argue that the curriculum of higher education should embrace the principle of social responsibility and service within the core curriculum utilizing service learning as an integrated aspect of their instructional method. In this way, I believe that educators would encourage the development of positive attitudes towards community upliftment, social responsibility and the practice of democratic principles. These are vital values, which contribute towards the development of a healthy, stable community whose citizens are committed towards the upliftment of all.

The first part of this section provides a broad understanding of the concept of social responsibility with the intention of identifying its role in higher education today. Thereafter, various theoretical perspectives on the issue of social responsibility in higher education are explored to determine current educational trends in modern society and the role of education towards community building and social responsibility. This discussion includes issues of economic influence and globalisation as factors that determine the principles behind curriculum development and educational practice. The role of the hidden curriculum is highlighted as an element in education that perpetuates political ideology in a covert manner.

The final part focuses on the role higher education should play in the development of social responsibility and community building. The perspectives of various authors are presented to support the view that the inclusion of the concepts of social responsibility and community building in the higher education curriculum play a crucial role in the development of any society. Some guidelines are provided to indicate fundamental issues that should be addressed to ensure that higher

education does encompass the development of positive attitudes towards social responsibility and community building.

## **2.2 The concept of social responsibility**

As indicated earlier, the various terminology in the literature referring to the notion of community services are similar in their reference and their meanings often overlap. For the purposes of this report, the terminology has been used interchangeably to accommodate the various interpretations and views on the concept.

A description of social responsibility includes qualities such as an appreciation of the role of service, ethics, values, diversity and a sense of the common good. Nemerowicz *et al* (1997:129) describe the concept of social responsibility as including attributes such as: knowledge of, and the ability to, collaborate with those who are socially and culturally different from oneself; an understanding of how to define and promote the collective well being and the values of justice and equality; and the understanding and use of ethical analyses to evaluate political and personal actions.

Klaasen (2000:227-228) refers to developing social responsibility as developing citizenship. He concurs with Nemerowicz *et al* (1997:129) and adds that to stimulate citizenship means that adults must learn to cope with different social and political viewpoints and must learn to apply principles of democracy to their daily lives. This entails not only learning about democracy with its civil, political and social components, but also deals with the possibility of inspiring an autonomous and self-reliant person who knows how to interact with others who have different values and opinions (Klaasen, 2000:229). This implies that any learning experience that encourages the development of social responsibility should include critical discourse on social issues which activates a multitude of viewpoints and is designed to empathise and to cope with conflicting viewpoints. By participating in

value oriented discussions which take into account the way other groups of people, cultures, nations and ethnic groups see things, learners can develop their own political and moral personalities thereby preventing ethnocentric, euro centric or chauvinistic attitudes and perspectives from developing.

Perold (1998:30) defines the concept of community service within the context of social transformation. She (Perold, 1998:30) indicates that the notion of service in higher education could be broadly defined as social responsiveness to the development needs of South African society. This implies that if institutions of higher learning are to serve society through their key functions of teaching and research, they would have to provide expertise and infrastructure to satisfy local and national community needs and also bring about changes to what is taught, learnt and researched as well as changing the ways in which these activities take place. Perold (1998:30) further makes reference to the notion of 'National community service'. She (Perold, 1998:30) identifies it as, "...the mobilisation of individuals, often on a large scale, with the aim of making a significant impact on social and national development." This perception views community service as a means of redressing social inequality through programmes of higher education which involve participants in activities which deliver social benefit and teach them to work jointly towards a common goal. These activities include learner involvement in collaborative learning techniques, project based learning and integrative learning. I believe that the integration of the notion of social responsibility into the curriculum at the individual and corporate levels of an evolving nation – such as South Africa – is a key ingredient of growth. I am not suggesting that vocational training or academic excellence should play a lesser role in developing professionals, but I am saying that the development of socially responsible citizens should be a part of a holistic learning experience in order to ensure that learners are better equipped to be successful in the real world.

If such an understanding is applied to the notion of social responsibility within the curriculum of higher education, then it clearly indicates what the function of

education should be in the growth and development of a society. It is within this broad understanding that this investigation is conducted. On closer examination of the literature and the current practices of the education system, it seems that the learners' experience of the notion of social responsibility within the curriculum of higher education is sadly lacking of activities that cultivate virtues such as ethics, values, moral debate, democratic principles, community service and the common good for citizenship.

### **2.3 Current trends in higher education**

In raising the question of how learners experience the notion of social responsibility and community building within the context of higher education, I thought it essential to identify the salient factors that impact on teaching and learning. An understanding of the current context of the teaching and learning environment in higher education would also help to shed light on issues that mould Learners' perceptions of the notions of civic responsibility and community service.

In 1997, The Government Gazette of the Department of Education published a white paper entitled, *A Programme for Transformation in Higher Education*, which clearly outlines their view that transformation is the greatest challenge facing the Education sector in South Africa (Government Gazette: 1997). The paper spells out a transformation strategy which is intended to redress the inequalities and deficiencies of the prevailing social order. It comprises three components: "achieving equitable participation in higher education; increasing responsiveness to societal needs through the diversification of curricula and improved learning and teaching practices; and creating partnerships between government and civil society to meet the challenges of modern society" (Perold, 1998:27). The White Paper also lays down the basis for change within institutions of higher education by identifying four major deficiencies which need to be addressed. Two of these deficiencies, which relate directly to social reform, are the inadequate response by

higher education to the development needs of society and the failure of higher education to lay the foundations for a critical civil society.

Although transformation in higher education is imperative because of South Africa's apartheid history, it also forms part of the global quest for higher education systems to become more receptive to society's needs. Transformation of South African society, particularly the drive towards nation building and the redress of inequality, provides a strong motivation for developing community service which includes a civic component combined with service delivery and academic training.

On examining the literature (Jonathan, 1986:136; Nemerowicz *et al*, 1997:2-3), comments on current trends and practices in higher education, and education in general, come strongly to the forefront. Economic growth and stability emerge as a key factor and can be seen to permeate the objectives behind the planning initiatives of the curriculum. This has led me to question the importance that higher education has attributed towards the development of learners as socially responsible citizens within their societies. It therefore further strengthens my argument that the curriculum of higher education should play a more meaningful role in developing Learners' notion of community building and social responsibility, thereby enabling them to become involved citizens within a democratic society.

Schooling and higher education, within the South African context, had traditionally been viewed as a means of acquiring a qualification rather than as a means of becoming educated in the broadest sense of the word (Perold, 1998:33). Perold (1998:33) adds that the struggle for apartheid should have laid the foundation for civic awareness and social responsibility amongst South African youth. However, social responsibility and community building is not amongst the main motivations of learners who seek higher education. Learners tend to judge the relevance of qualifications and learning in terms of accessibility to jobs and fulfilling their material needs (Perold, 1998:33). As a result, the majority of learners tend to shy away from activities which are not a requirement of their course of study and view



their learning experiences from a very narrow perspective. There are some voluntary service programmes within some institutions of higher learning that have the development of civic awareness and social responsibility as an explicit aim. As mentioned earlier, the Bureau of Community Services department at the Vaal Triangle Technikon also has voluntary community service programmes and as a result of being voluntary in nature, only receives minority learner participation.

Apart from the Learners' perception of learning as being more vocationally orientated, institutions of higher education are also inclined to lean towards the perceived needs of society, which determine the orientation, and principles that motivate their curriculum. Jonathan (1986:136), who criticises institutions of higher education for their approach, explains that the compulsion towards vocationalism in education presupposes that the needs of society are to be synonymous with the needs of industry, and that the needs of each individual are best served by preparing him or her to serve the needs of society as understood in economic terms. Jonathan (1986:136) adds further that educational reforms, which are aimed at serving the employer as well as the interests of social development, conceal the fact that the interests of labour and capital may not always coincide. This implies that the issue of linking academic study and research to the concept of development with the view to influence values and attitudes, and inculcate a sense of civic mindedness in learners towards community service, would be at the bottom of the list in terms of the priorities to be met by the role of higher education. Nemerowicz *et al* (1997:2-3) comment that issues such as how to get better value for money or how to relate education more closely with industry, become the central focus of policy planning and implementation. Professionals in the field, teachers, learners and the public in general have no part in the debates about the outcomes, objectives, purpose and nature of education. The state, its advisers and top civil servants decide what the output of education should be (Nemerowicz *et al*, 1997:2-3).

Barnett (1994:13), in his criticism of economic factors determining the role of education, adds that institutions of higher education have become less a place of broad educational and personal development, and more a place in which knowledge is viewed as a commodity, picked by those who pass through acquiring the latest technical competencies and analytical capacities. The critique that more or better education leads to more or better technological capabilities and better jobs is also made by Altrichter *et al* (2000:14), who comment further on the close link between education and economic factors. Jonathan (1986:142) also observes that graduates are often described as, "products of the system" and "industries as consumers of these products." This observation implies that learners are viewed as part of the statistics of higher education and are perceived from a scientific, technological perspective. Therefore, terminology such as products and consumers are used in discussion regarding the value of employees. Altrichter and Elliot (2000:14) also comment disapprovingly on how economic concepts and metaphors permeate educational thinking. They site examples of how concepts and imagery of markets and productivity have been applied to schools, urging educators to use the corporate structure as a model for school governance (Altrichter *et al*, 2000:14).

The above criticism of the technicist perspective of the role of education is further supported by Barnett (1994:14) who comments on how intellectual life and higher education reinforces a one-dimensionality of thought and action. He (Barnett, 1994:14) quotes Ben Aggar (1994:14), "In this society the more we rely on canned computer knowledge and culture, the less we can think, speak and write critically about the social totality." This implies that the more that computer and other forms of electronic communication become widespread, the lesser we value human capabilities and contributions. This view further emphasises the dominant role that science and technology play in the way education is perceived in society today.

However, despite the great influence that economic factors, vocationalism, science and technology play in determining the factors that inspire education authorities in

their planning, there is a call from educationists to provide individuals with a more holistic learning experience enabling learners to operate more effectively in society. A holistic experience refers to the ability to put knowledge and expertise to work in unfamiliar circumstances and in line with this is the demand for skills such as flexibility in thinking, adaptable communication skills and teamwork (Barnett, 1994:15). Barnett (1994:15) adds further that a significant deliberation emerging in higher education is for operationalism, which includes the development of skills such as insight, understanding, reflection, wisdom and critique (Barnett, 1994:15). However, the distinct perception that influences current education practices within higher education even more significantly, appears to include practical interests such as competing successfully in global economic trade and being able to control the social, technological and human environment successfully. The foremost motivation of curriculum planners and stakeholders appears to be their interest in producing and maintaining a harmonious allegiance across the diverse social groupings to the undertaking of the state.

Weingartner's view (1999:9) on the role of economy in educational practice explains how grants and subsidies affect the trend of educational practice. Most institutions are partially dependent on subsidies or grants for financial survival. He (Weingartner, 1999:9) indicates that the act of accepting grants or donations for a specific purpose resembles a purchase. He (Weingartner, 1999:9) further explains that the person who accepts the money is obligated to perform the service or provide the item. In the case of educational institutions, that obligation could mean providing education required by the industries. This would entail a suitably qualified and trained labour force. For example when a private donation or a governmental allocation is made for the building of a chemistry laboratory, or for the provision of scholarships to aspiring engineers, or for the renovation of the weight room for a soccer team, the institution's obligation is to deliver the goods. This view holds true for the Vaal Triangle Technikon. Academic departments within the Technikon are in regular liaison with the industries within the community because they provide the necessary financial support. These academic

departments determine whether the needs of the industry are being met with respect to learner training and knowledge acquired. Academic programmes are regularly evaluated by advisory panels that include experts in the related fields as well as various stakeholders. Evaluation is undertaken to determine in order to determine the relevance and applicability of academic programmes in relation to the needs of the industries that offer employment to the learners.

Another vital dimension which identifies education as a socialisation process that involves the transmission of socially approved knowledge, norms and values, is the role of the hidden curriculum. Most sociologists use the term, "hidden curriculum" to refer to the various characteristics of schooling that are unquestioned or 'taken for granted' (Rouncefield, 2002). Whitty and Young (as cited in Rouncefield, 2000) describe the hidden curriculum as, "values and beliefs such as conformity, knowing one's place, waiting one's turn, competitiveness, individual worth and deference to authority. The hidden curriculum teaches pupils 'the way life is' and that education is something that is done to them rather than something, which they do. The prevailing values of society are 'picked-up' by pupils." The hidden curriculum is seen as a necessary part of schooling, but it is more of an approach than a 'thing'.

The concept of the hidden curriculum refers to the way the learning process is organised by the informal rules that are applied and the way that beliefs and attitudes are perpetuated through the socialisation process. Klaasen (2000:229) indicates that the continued existence of the socio-economic system depends largely on the loyalty created through the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum, which acts as an extension of the official curriculum, is mostly responsible for the transfer of values, norms and opinions, which mainly guides the construction of knowledge and skills. It is therefore vitally important to thoroughly investigate the sources and possible impact of the hidden curriculum with regards to the value component of education. Klaasen (2000:229) adds that

the hidden curriculum portrays education as a political institution, which is inextricably bound to the aspects of power and control within the dominant society.

The quotation by Nehru (as cited in Scrace. ed., 1997:35 on page 9 of this section) accurately sums up the role that education should play in the creation of a fair and just society. However, as highlighted in the discussion above, the hopes of leaders like Nehru, who saw education as the force for uplifting the masses, have their vision challenged by the factors that currently influence the practice and implementation of curriculum planning and implementation.

#### **2.4 What should the role of higher education be in the development of social responsibility?**

As educationists we shoulder the responsibility to ensure that the principle of education for social change is not a mere catchword. The sincere application of this philosophy finds very fertile ground under the current socio-economic climate we experience in this country. I agree with the view of Daniels (2001:19) who indicates that well designed and implemented service learning activities could help address community needs and simultaneously provide learners with the opportunity to gain academic knowledge and skills. Service learning differs from community service in that the primary focus of community service is on 'service' whereas the focus of service learning is on 'learning'. However both the concepts contribute towards the development of social responsibility and community building. According to Perold (1998:36), service learning occurs, "when there is a balance between learning goals and service outcomes, when the service enhances the learning and the learning enhances the service, when the benefits to the providers and recipients are equal". The following extract from the University of Natal also explicitly describes the role of service learning within the context of higher education, "Service learning is a new form of teaching/learning which is

designed to make the university responsive to its context and to promote responsible citizenship among learners by producing graduates who are socially aware and feel obliged to contribute to the improvement of their communities” (University of Natal: 1998).

Perold (1998:31) identifies a threefold mission of higher education within the South African context - teaching, research and service – as assuming the responsibility for developing public citizens as well as individuals with the appropriate skills required by a changing economy. This view is upheld by literature which defines this role as one that reinforces moral and civic values, and prepares individuals to participate actively in a democratic society. Mattson *et al* (1997:16) quote Mary Stanley of Syracuse University who writes:

*“... both ideas and actions have consequences. In a democratic society, those consequences play out as the responsibility of all citizens, not just policy makers and think tank number crunchers. ...We live within a political structure that affirms citizen’s stake in their nation and their capacity to meet the problems with pragmatism, intelligence and a commitment to the well-being of their fellow citizens.”*

These words echo the views of authors such as Kahne *et al* (1996:595) who claim that in order for learners to be properly educated in a democracy, they must experience learning circumstances that demonstrate the values of altruism and the dangers of exclusive self-interest. They also stress the importance of civic duty and the need for responsive citizens and call for a curriculum that emphasises critical reflection about social policies and conditions (Kahne *et al*, 1996:595). Hommel (1987:4) comments that, "in order to preserve human kind, universities must not only mirror the dominant currents of society, but they must also become beacons of enlightenment so that society can become more rational and more humane". I concur with the sentiments of the above authors and that of Simon (1994:3-5) who claims that higher education should inculcate values such as

concern for truth, willingness to consider evidence in scholarly inquiry and the appeal to reason rather than force in debate, which are all the attributes that contribute towards a participative democratic society and citizenship. Ideals, such as, impartiality, honest evaluation of evidence and objectivity, have long been thought to be among major values that govern scholarship and make up the core values of academic ethic (Simon, 1994:2-3). The development of such values would eventually eliminate attitudes of sexism, racism and anti-Semitism.

Bacchus (1997:25) is of the view that the function of education is to develop critical, emancipatory knowledge in learners. He believes that the major objective of education is to help develop in individuals a greater and more perceptive understanding of the phenomena that surround them and sharpen their awareness of the relationships of dominance and submission that affect their lives (Bacchus, 1997:25). Bacchus (1997:25) adds further that education should aim at increasing people's awareness so that they can develop a consciousness of their own reality and, where necessary, make them better prepared to transform that reality. Bacchus (1997:25) suggests that educators should ask themselves some of these questions:

- How can education help to raise the sensitivity or consciousness of learners and later, the population, in general to the realities of their own social existence?
- How can education contribute to helping the population play a more effective role in the social transformation of their own societies as a first step toward improving the levels of living of the population as a whole and not only the more privileged sectors?
- How can teachers and other stakeholders involved in the educational process help to overcome the barriers that interfere with the emancipatory possibilities of education?
- In what ways have the internal, social, economic, and political structures of their societies been exerting a negative influence on the contribution that education has been making and what can be done to change that?

These are vital questions that any individual involved in the education of the youth should consider. The process of finding these answers could in itself be an experience which enables people to increase their awareness and develop an understanding of their role in contributing towards social awareness and community building.

An educational experience, which is intended for growth and development, should provide the environment that enhances critical dialogue. Wildemeersch (2000:228) refers to Habermas, who maintains that communicating about values also presupposes that people have learned to critically examine the reliability and consistency of an argument. With regard to social and political problems, different groups have different interests based on a particular set of principles or values. Education for citizenship implies the need to ensure an environment that stimulates learners to discuss dilemmas, form their own opinions and seek solutions.

Institutions of higher education can ensure that they do include the components of social responsibility by incorporating the following principles not only into their policy planning and implementation, but also into the various aspects of the curriculum, which are experienced by learners at grassroots level. These principles are outlined by Ladner (1996:20-22.)

- The institution recognises a responsibility to promote social change.
- Knowledge should be used where possible to solve social problems.
- The institutions should be diverse and flexible enough to allow individual interests to co-exist peacefully even as we define collective responsibility.
- We should not and do not sacrifice good scholarship in the process of carrying out our social responsibility.



- Higher education should take the leading role in defining critical issues in a proactive way. Social problems that face communities today must be addressed with resources in higher education.
- The responsibility of higher education is to ensure that every learner is given the tools to enable each to overcome disadvantages, whatever they might be.
- Higher education community must provide a haven where all are welcomed, regardless of culture, history, sexual preference, ethnic origin, or beliefs.
- All institutions of higher education have to redefine their missions to include the needs and problems of the communities and societies of which they are a part. We can no longer ignore the problems around; we must become good neighbours and give something back to the communities around us in order to justify our very existence.

## 2.5 Conclusion



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Given that the traditional goals of higher education are regarded as teaching, research and service, service in the form of community service remains at the centre of contemporary debate in higher education. The latter becomes even more challenging within the South African context where transformation initiatives demand of higher education institutions that they become globally competitive, locally responsive, as well as achieve their goals of teaching, research and service. However, the need to develop awareness of the critical role of social responsibility within the curriculum of higher education, has been supported by the literary evidence in this section. I view social responsibility and community service as a vital components which should complete the learning experience.

I have provided a broad understanding of the concept of social responsibility with the intention of identifying its role in higher education today. Expressions and

terminology used to arrive at an understanding of the concept of social responsibility are used interchangeably for the purpose of this report.

The importance of gaining an understanding of the learning experiences of learners with regard to the concept of community service has been highlighted and supported by literary evidence, with the view to establishing the relevance of such an approach for the purposes of this investigation. By exploring the learning experiences of learners it is possible to determine their views of the notion of social responsibility and community and to establish whether the curriculum has impacted on their perspectives.

Various theoretical perspectives on the issue of social responsibility in higher education are explored to determine current trends in modern society and the role of education towards community building and social responsibility. The discussion includes the issues of vocational training, economic influence and globalisation, as factors that determine the principles behind curriculum development and educational practice. The hidden curriculum is discussed as an element in education that perpetuates political ideology in a covert manner.

Finally, the review highlights the role that higher education should play in the development of social responsibility and community building. The discussion includes the views of various authors who advise on how the concepts of social responsibility and community building can be included in the curriculum of higher education. Guidelines are provided for the stakeholders of higher education to ensure that fundamental issues are addressed, which would then guarantee the development of positive attitudes towards social responsibility and community building within the curriculum.

## SECTION THREE: RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODS

### 3.1 Research paradigm

A research paradigm represents a worldview that defines the nature of the world for its holder and the individual's place in it. It is also referred to as a basic belief system that serves as a philosophical framework that guides the researcher in the choice of methods used for the investigation (Guba *et al*, 1998:200). Guba *et al* (1998:200) add that the beliefs are basic and must be accepted simply on faith as there is no way to establish their truthfulness.

The aim of this study is to determine learners' views on community service and gain an understanding of the participants' experiences of the notion of community service within the curriculum of higher education. My aim is to understand the meaning of learners' experiences from their own perspectives. The study was therefore conducted from a socio-constructivist paradigm which argues that multiple realities are socially constructed by individuals (Guba *et al*, 1998:240). Within this paradigm, the researcher and the respondent investigated are believed to be interactively linked. The findings are constructed as the research proceeds. I therefore used a qualitative approach of enquiry, as these methods are the ones preferred within the constructivist paradigm. This approach is an exploratory and descriptive process. Studies within this approach are designed to discover and learn about some social phenomena of interest where people are the subjects or participants (Maykut *et al*, 1994:2).

The focus of a qualitative research approach is on the participant's perceptions and experiences and the way they make sense of their lives. The emphasis is on understanding people's constructions of reality and requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when collecting and analysing

data. Humans are therefore the best instruments equipped for this task because interviewing, observing and analysing are activities central to qualitative research (Merriam, 1998:1-2).

The emphasis of this research project was on how learners construe (interpret) the notion of civic responsibility from the curriculum, which is presented, to them. Their construction of meaning of the concept was demonstrated in their perceptions and views of their experiences. I was able to gather a rich description of data in the form of the participant's own words and have included direct citations from transcripts of the interviews. The qualitative approach examines people's words and actions in narrative or descriptive ways more closely representing the situation as experienced by the participants (Maykut *et al*, 1994:2).

### 3.2 Sampling



I used purposive sampling in this inquiry. Maykut *et al* (1994:45) describe a purposeful sample as participants or settings that are carefully selected for inclusion based on the possibility that each participant will expand the variability of the sample. These authors add that purposeful sampling increases the likelihood that variability common in any social phenomenon will be represented in the data. I have chosen to use the final year learners of the Vaal triangle technikon as participants, because I believe that they would have experienced the curriculum at the Vaal Triangle Technikon adequately to respond with informed views of their experiences of the curriculum. These learners come from diverse backgrounds and include Afrikaans, English and Sotho learners, mostly from the East Rand. For many of these learners, the medium of instruction, English, is their second language. Their ages vary from 20 to 32 years, which implies various levels of experience (Maykut *et al*, 1994:59).

The department of Electrical Engineering had ten final year learners of whom eight were available to participate in the research. These participants proved to be information-rich cases, who according to Patton (1990:169-172), are those from which the researcher can learn more about issues central to the purpose of the research. Merriam (1998:61) indicates that in order to do purposeful sampling it is imperative that the researcher determines the criteria of the sampling based on the purpose of the research. The criteria I used for sampling are as follows:

Final year learners within the Department of Electrical Engineering who would have experienced the curriculum for at least two years of study

Full time learners who would have been available during the day to participate in community service activities

Firstly, I acquired permission from the Dean of Academic, East Rand Satellite Campus, for the study to be conducted with learners of the department as participants. I then compiled a list of suitable participants who met the selection criteria as outlined above.

### **3.3 The context of data collection**

The East Rand Satellite Campus is based in Birchleigh, Kempton Park. The campus is housed in a leased portion of a business premise, which was intended to cater for small business only as such learner facilities are minimal to none. There is no learner cafeteria or common learner room for socialisation or any other normal learner activity. All the satellite campus offers are lecture rooms and limited access to computer laboratories that do not have internet access. There are no laboratories for research or practical application. Due to a lack of facilities and equipment at the satellite campuses all practical application and evaluation is done at the main campus in Vanderbijlpark,. The majority of the learners are

black males who come from former DET schools. This implies that many of these learners still face the legacy of inferior education.

### 3.4 Data collection method

Data collection in qualitative enquiry involves people's words and actions. This requires methods such as in-depth individual interviews and group interviews as they allow the researcher to capture language and behaviour (Maykut *et al*, 1994:46). As the aim of this study was to gain an understanding of Learners' experiences of the notion of community building, I conducted in-depth interviews to probe the interviewee's interpretation of their experiences of the curriculum in an attempt to understand the interviewee's perspectives on the issue of community service and social responsibility. Characteristics of in-depth interviewing include the depth of conversations, which move beyond surface talk to a rich discussion of thoughts and feelings. Questions in this type of interview are open ended and designed to reveal what is important to understand about the phenomena under study (Maykut *et al*, 1994:79).

An interview guide was drawn up consisting of open ended, in-depth questions to guide the interviewer. The in-depth interviews, which were conducted individually with the participants, were done with the objective of eliciting truthful responses. The length of the interviews varied from individual, to individual with the shortest lasting approximately twenty minutes. Other criteria required of the in-depth interview include: determining the meaning and impact of specific elements in order to prevent the interview from remaining on the level of general statements and covering as many aspects as possible of the topic, relevant to the research question, while striving for depth and personal context by going beyond emotional responses and descriptions of experience (Flick, 1998:78-79). I also used probing questions which, according to Patton (1990:324), help to clarify what the

interviewee is talking about, and also elaborate or give more information. Probing questions were also used when I needed the interviewees to give me specific examples of what they were talking about.

A tape recorder was used as a research tool to enable me to be more attentive during the interviews. I was also able to record accurately all the information received during the interview. This enabled me to talk to learners within their familiar learning environment. Maykut *et al* (1994:45) suggest that when data collection is done in the natural setting, it enhances the understanding of people's experiences in context.

The focus of this enquiry was based on the views of final year learners on the notion of community services and their experiences of this concept within the curriculum. As such, I identified the following provisional areas of inquiry to be addressed.

- Learners' exposure to a holistic learning experience.
- Supporting community service and developing social awareness.
- Learners' interaction with peers and lecturers.

I initially conducted a pilot interview before conducting the individual interviews. This enabled me to determine whether the questions I intended to ask were understandable and not ambiguous, and also whether the questions would derive the relevant data in their responses. The pilot interview also enabled me to prioritise my questions in terms of sensitivity. Merriam (1998:82) suggests that less sensitive questions should be asked first, followed by the more sensitive ones. Towards the end of the interview the interviewees were more relaxed and comfortable to answer such questions. I followed the suggestion of Patton (in Maykut *et al*, 1994:98) who indicated that by establishing and maintaining a

positive interview climate, one could obtain good quality information from interviewees.

I started the interviews by introducing myself and outlining the purpose and procedure of the interviews. I confirmed that learners were comfortable with the use of the tape recorder and explained my reasons for having to use the instrument. I also reassured learners of the confidentiality of the interviews and indicated that real names would be left out of the report. I asked participants to sign a consent form containing the above points, their consent to participate in the interview and permission to use their input in the investigation. The next phase of the interview was introduced by asking participants to tell me about their experiences regarding community services within the curriculum. Thereafter, the interview questions developed spontaneously as part of the interaction. As the interviewer, I had an interview guide with a list of issues at hand to refer to. I used probing questions when answers were not satisfactory, if elaboration was required and when clarification was needed or further explanations and reasons were necessary. The last phase of the interview involved thanking the participants for their contribution and willingness to participate in the research.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

The interviews were transcribed and analysed using the constant comparative method of analysis as suggested by Maykut *et al* (1998:126). Qualitative data analysis is a process of making sense of the data (Merriam: 1998:193). Maykut *et al* (1994:121) add that qualitative data analysis is the examination of people's words and actions and that data analysis should be an ongoing inductive activity. This implies that data analysis begins when one has accumulated a subset of the data, providing an opportunity for the salient aspects of the phenomenon under study to begin to emerge. Outcomes of the research study evolve from the



systematic building of homogeneous categories of meaning inductively derived from the data (Maykut *et al*, 1994:49). The constant comparative method of data analysis implies that there will be a continuous comparison of the information retrieved from the data.

After I had transcribed the first interview verbatim, I began the systematic process of searching for meaning by firstly organising and coding data, then grouping the data into categories and developing rules of inclusion which encapsulated the meaning of all units in the category. I read through the transcriptions a number of times in order to familiarise myself with the nuances in the data and to gain a holistic understanding of the participants' experiences. I then noted concepts feelings and ideas that were repeated in the data. As part of data management, I coded and numbered each page of the transcription. An example of such a code is T/OI-1. The (T) refers to transcript, the (OI) to Olivia and the (1) to page one. By using the cut and paste function on the computer, I was able to transfer recurring words, phrases and topics which could be categorised together. Each unit of meaning was coded according to the page where it could be found on the transcript.

Meriam (1998:179) describes these units of data as bits of information. Once I found these units of meaning, I drew a line under each to separate them from each other. I then wrote a word or phrase on the left hand margin to indicate the meaning I drew from them. Thereafter, I used the Ms Word function on my computer to create index cards on which I recorded the unit of meanings and all the common bits of data that had the same or similar meaning. This then formed the first phase of the subcategories. After sifting through the data and provisional categories several times I then referred to the research aim to focus the data analysis on the research problem. The same procedure was applied to all transcripts.

Data collection and data analysis was done simultaneously. Data analysis was done after each interview. Data analysis was complete when the information was saturated (Merriam, 1998:156-197). This implies that no new information could be retrieved from the data.

### 3.6 Ethical considerations

I was aware that some of the information that I had sought was of a sensitive nature and that learners would feel wary of divulging such information. Some of these questions related to learner experiences and perceptions of their lectures and lecturers. I took cognisance of the fact that learners would feel afraid when divulging information related to negative experiences. Merriam (1998:132) suggests that the researcher should respect the privacy of the participants and keep them as anonymous as possible. Participants were therefore reassured that their identities would be kept confidential and that all information offered would be treated with discretion and anonymity.

Patton (1990:356) suggests some further ethical and reactivity issues which should be considered when designing and implementing qualitative study. The first of these was *promises and reciprocity*. I promised learners that they would have access to the findings of the investigation as soon as they were finalised. I intend to make the findings of this study available to participants for their comments. *Confidentiality* was another issue highlighted by Patton (1990:356). I protected the Learners' identities by using pseudonyms when quoting their comments in order to protect their identities. The next issue was *informed consent*. Interviews were only conducted after each participant signed a written consent with full understanding of their role in the process.

### 3.7 Validity and Reliability / Provisions for trustworthiness

I conducted the research in an ethical manner to ensure validity and reliability. As ethical concerns have already been addressed above, the issue of trustworthiness is addressed in this section. Merriam (1998:198) contends that all research should be concerned with, "producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner." The matter of validity and reliability will be approached by providing a closer look at how internal validity, external validity and reliability were dealt with in this research.

Merriam (1998:201,207) distinguishes between internal and external validity. Internal validity deals with the coherence between the results and the dynamic reality. Merriam (1998:204) proposes six basic strategies to enhance internal validity. In order to ensure the internal validity of this research project, I have applied the following strategies as recommended by Merriam (1998:204):

- Member checks: People that served as data sources were consulted to clarify uncertainties. An open communication channel was established between the researcher and the participants, which enabled regular member checks.
- Peer examination: I had regular consultation with my colleagues at the technikon who were able to provide insight and help to ensure validity of interpretations.
- Researcher's biases: was able to clarify my initial biases after conducting my first individual interview.

Guba *et al* (In Merriam, 1998:207) argue that the study must be first internally valid before external validity can be established. According to Merriam (1998:207), external validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings of

one study can be applied to other situations, that is, how generalisable are the results. Researchers should therefore provide the reader with sufficient information to prove the external validity or transferability to other situations. The qualitative researcher is obliged to provide a detailed description of the research project so as to enable readers to compare the “fit” with their own situations (Merriam, 1998:211). I have aimed at providing a detailed description containing information rich data of the background context of the research, the research methodology, as well as the findings to enable readers to compare the findings and situation to their own.

The traditional definition of the term reliability, which refers to, “the extent to which research findings can be replicated”, does not fit in with the principles of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998:205). Guba *et al* (in Merriam, 1998: 206) further indicate that the goal in qualitative research is not that outsiders should get the same results but rather to agree that the results make sense and they are dependable and reliable in relation to data collected. In understanding reliability, Guba *et al* (as cited in Merriam, 1998:206), suggest the use of the terms, “dependability” and “consistency”. I therefore aimed at ensuring that the results of my study were in keeping with the data collected by providing a comprehensive, informative description of the research strategy and a supporting example of an interview.

## SECTION FOUR: PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 4.1 Presentation of data

Qualitative data analysis is viewed as, “fundamentally a nonmathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people’s words and actions” (Maykut *et al*, 1994:121). For the purposes of this research, I have used the constant comparative method to construct meaning from the data. The constant comparative method implies that categories and subcategories are constantly derived from the data, which are constantly compared with incidents, respondent’s remarks, and so on (Merriam, 1998:179). These categories should reflect the purpose of the research.

One of the requirements of the constant comparative method is that data analysis is done simultaneously with data collection. Therefore, after I conducted my first interview, I started the process by reading through the transcript several times in order to identify units of data, which Merriam (1998:179) described as bits of information. Once I found these units of meaning, I drew a line under each to separate them from each other. I then wrote a word or phrase on the left hand margin to indicate the meaning I drew from them. Thereafter, I used the Ms Word function on my computer to create index cards on which I recorded the unit of meanings and all the common bits of data that had the same or similar meaning. By using the cut and paste function on the computer, I was able to transfer recurring words, phrases and topics which could be categorised together. Each unit of meaning was coded according to the page where it could be found on the transcript. An example of such a code is T/OI-1. The (T) refers to transcript, the (OI) to Olivia and the (1) to page one. This then formed the first phase of the subcategories. After sifting through the data and provisional categories several times, I then referred to the research aim to focus the data analysis on the

research problem. The same procedure was applied to all transcripts. The following provisional categories emerged from this exercise:

- Formal lectures
- Inadequate group assignments
- Individual application of learning
- Community service programmes
- Focus of the curriculum
- Learner plans for the future
- Learning environment
- Attitudes of lecturers
- Social interaction

I created an index card for each provisional category and selected the units of data from all the transcripts that could best fit under these provisional categories. I applied the *look/feel alike* criteria as described by Maykut *et al* (1994:137,138). After I grouped together the units of data according to the *look/feel alike* criteria, I then reread them in order to establish the meaning they conveyed, and to write a rule that would serve as a basis for including the bits of data or excluding them from the provisional category. Lincoln *et al* (in Maykut *et al*, 1994:139) suggest that these rules for inclusion be written as propositional statements which best convey the meaning contained in the units of data clustered together under a category name. I then revised each category to ensure that the data included was appropriate according to the category rule. An example of these categories and rules is displayed in Table 4.1.

I then examined the propositional statements closely in order to determine whether they contributed to my focus of enquiry. I systematically combined propositions that were related, left those that could stand alone and formulated outcome statements for each category, as displayed in Table 4.2. Maykut *et al* (1994:144) refer to these statements as outcome propositions. These outcome propositions form the basis of my findings, which will now be discussed.

**Table 4.1 An example of a provisional category with units of meaning and the rule for inclusion.**

Category	Rule for inclusion
<p><b>1. Exposure to a holistic learning experience</b></p>	<p><b>Learners experience mostly one form of learning in the classroom context, which indicates a lack of collaborative enquiry, experiential learning, project based learning and integrative learning.</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning environment</li> <li>• Focus of the curriculum</li> <li>• Formal lecturers</li> <li>• Inadequate group assignments and projects</li> <li>• Individual application of learning</li> </ul>	<p><i>TS.Mpho/1</i>  <i>They stand and talk for the first forty-five minutes – a formal lecture from the book. We sit at the computer. They give us the work; they lecture ...they then ask us if there is anything that we do not understand. We sit on our own and complete the work. We are given more individual assignments.</i></p> <p><i>TS.Mike /3</i>  <i>Are you given group assignments?</i>  <i>No, no. It would be nice if we were.</i>  <i>How do you prefer to work?</i>  <i>Actually I prefer working in a group. We can learn a lot of things that we didn't know. or not aware of from each other.</i></p> <p><i>TS.OI/3</i>  <i>The lecturer might come to class and discuss 3 chapters for 20 minutes and go. And then we as learners we sit down and discuss some other things. Like we decided that if you don't understand something you don't have to work on your own. We work together and discuss. The only thing that helps at the end of the day is the group that we made....</i>  <i>I am the one that decided to start that group. Like</i></p> <p><i>physics, we are the guys that are doing it for the fourth time now, so I think that group helps. I cannot understand some of the things but if we work as a group it is going to be much better.</i></p> <p><i>Ts. Kel/3</i></p>

	<p><i>There are others who walk in and say we are looking at this page today and open the textbook and talk. They are different. There are some of them who will only read, read, read... We listen. We have to read whatever is written in the book. Some of them don't even write on the board. Sometimes we can't ask what is this or what is that.</i></p> <p><i>Ts. Fox/2</i>  <i>I have two lecturers at the moment. The one lecturer just summarizes the notes. Unlike the other lecturer who is writing everything down, this one just talks. We just listen and then write.</i></p>
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#### **4.2. Findings**

The aim of this study was to gain an understanding of learners' views of the concept of community services and their experiences of the notion of community services within the Vaal Triangle Technikon curriculum. The questions asked during the interviews were designed to enable me as a qualitative researcher to understand and experience the world of the participant in an indirect way. Maykut *et al* (1994:25,26) refer to this phenomenon as "indwelling".

I then transcribed and analysed these experiences and constructed subcategories and categories. Outcome propositions were formulated for each category and were further prioritised in accordance to their contribution towards the focus of the study



Maykut *et al* (1994:159) are of the opinion that by weaving together the outcome propositions and the illustrative data, the findings are intended to be an informative narrative of peoples' thoughts, feelings and experiences. Each category and subcategory will be discussed by using the quotations from the interviews which best illustrate the outcome propositions.

**Table 4.2: Table of categories and subcategories as they emerged from the process of data analysis**

Category and subcategory	Outcome statements
<p><b>1. Exposure to a holistic learning experience.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning environment</li> <li>• Focus of the curriculum</li> <li>• Formal lecturers</li> <li>• Inadequate group assignments and projects</li> <li>• Individual application of learning</li> <li>• Learner plans for the future</li> </ul>	<p>The learning experience is not a holistic one as it does not provide a conducive learning environment for the development of social awareness. The focus of the curriculum is mainly on academic development and vocational training. Approaches to learning are mostly in the formal lecture format, which restrict meaningful engaging dialogue. Finding a job and acquiring material articles such as a house and a car, was high on Learners' lists of priorities once they qualify.</p>
<p><b>2. Supporting community service and developing social awareness.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community service programmes</li> <li>• Promoting social change</li> </ul>	<p>The curriculum fell short in providing adequate community service opportunities and programmes, which lend themselves to promoting social change and developing positive social responsibility attitudes. There is little evidence of opportunities that</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solving social problems</li> <li>• Recognising individual interests and collective responsibility</li> <li>• Definition of critical issues in a proactive way</li> </ul>	<p>encourage discussion on issues related to solving social problems and defining critical issues in a proactive way. Individual interest and shared responsibility was neglected as part of the teaching - learning interaction.</p>
<p><b>3. Interaction with peers and lecturers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of environment on social interaction</li> <li>• Intercultural communication</li> <li>• Safety with known 'friends'</li> <li>• Learners' experience of their lecturers</li> </ul>	<p>Social interaction was hampered by the physical arrangement of the campus and lack of learner social facilities. Intercultural communication was minimal as there was not much opportunity to associate with people of other cultural groups, and also because participants felt safer to associate with people of their own culture whom they knew and understood. Lecturers were perceived to be disinterested in other issues other than their subject matter and did not encourage open debate and critical dialogue.</p>

### 4.3 Discussion of findings

#### 4.3.1 Exposure to a holistic learning experience

Participants do not consider the learning environment to be conducive in promoting social awareness. As mentioned earlier, education, which is intended for growth and development, should provide the environment that enhances critical dialogue.

Wildemeersch (2000:228) refers to Habermas who maintains that communicating about values also presupposes that people have learned to critically examine the reliability and consistency of an argument. Education for citizenship implies the need to ensure an environment that stimulates learners to discuss dilemmas, form their own opinions, and seek solutions.

As indicated earlier, the satellite campus is situated in a leased portion of a building, which was intended for business premises but has been temporarily modified to accommodate lecture rooms and administration functions. The front face of the building boasts a liquor store, a bar restaurant and a butchery. A library, which hosts only books, was established in June 2002. The fact that the property is leased implies that in terms of improving the physical environment, no changes could be made to improve learner facilities. The following comment provides an insight into Learners' views about their learning environment.

*"This place is not good for the learner life. We just come here because we have to study."*

Participants indicated that the curriculum focussed mostly on academic performance and excluded other important aspects of learning. This was a common view of participants:

*"They just want us to pass. Get some good marks. Employment in a company...Better performance... good marks so that we can put the name of the technikon on the map."*

Like any business institution the success rate of the Technikon as well lies in the marketability of their product. As mentioned earlier, the product of the Technikon is the learner, and its success lies in achieving excellent learner performance in order to provide the most suitable prospective employees for the labour market as required by industries. Altrichter *et al* (2000:14) criticised the close link between education and economic factors. Jonathan (1986:142) observed that graduates are often described as "products of the system" and "industries as consumers of these products." Learners become part of the statistics of higher education and

are viewed from a narrow scientific, technological perspective. It was evident that participants did not perceive the focus of the curriculum to include the notion of social awareness or community services. The focus of this curriculum appears to be one dimensional, mainly on academic excellence in terms of examination results. I feel that the underlying principle of education should be to provide individuals with a holistic learning experience, which would enable learners to perform more effectively in society.

The participants further indicated that they had experienced mostly formal lectures during their stay at the technikon. Views such as the following were expressed.

*"We sit at the computer. They give us the work; they lecture ...they then ask us if there is anything that we do not understand. We sit on our own and complete the work. That's it...we just cope."*

*"There are others who walk in and say we are looking at this page today and open the text book and talk. They are different. There are some of them who will only read, read, read.... We listen. We have to read whatever is written in the book. Some of them don't even write on the board. Sometimes we can't ask what is this or what is that."*

These descriptions imply a one-way, passive learning mode where little or no deliberation takes place over what is learnt or how it is learnt. These learning experiences are in contradiction to the views of Perold (1998:30), who indicates that if institutions of higher learning are to serve society through their key functions of teaching and research, then they will have to bring about changes to what is taught, learnt and researched as well, as the ways in which these activities take place.

Participants indicated that they were not given group assignments but they preferred to work in groups because of the benefits to them. When asked about group assignments, all participants concurred that only one lecturer had encouraged them to work in groups but did not herself set any group assignments. In response to the question on group work, one participant commented:

*"No, no. It would be nice if we had groups. Actually I prefer working in a group. We can learn a lot of things that we didn't know. Or not aware of from each other".*

A vital aspect of the learning experience that encourages collaborative inquiry in the form of teamwork, collective responsibility and problem solving is overlooked. Participants indicated that most of the projects or tasks given are individual projects or assignments. This further implies that learners are not encouraged to practice or develop skills for collaboration and teamwork. This practice is in contradiction to the views of educationists like Barnett (1994:15), who recommends that the learning experience should develop skills such as flexibility in thinking, adaptable communication skills and teamwork.

The learning experience of participants, up to the point of the interviews, had not convinced learners of the urgent need to give something back to their communities in terms of community services. Many of the participants indicated that getting a job and acquiring material assets would be a priority once they qualify. Although participants mentioned that they would try to do something for their communities, it was evident that this gesture did not fall high on their list of plans. Comments such as the following are evident of this:

*"...get work and work. And like giving my parents some money, and then I want to buy my own car and my own house."*

*"I am going to get a job with a good company, and then I will just decide what I need in my life. Within the first six months, I want to have a car. Thereafter, maybe in about 1 or 2 years I plan to buy a house"*

*Well, basically to find a good job, work and to develop myself further, find someplace where I can improve myself in a working environment, climb the ladder, sort out my own independence and the route of life I want to take basically. My main priority is to find work."*

Perold (1998:33) commented that learners tend to judge the relevance of qualifications and learning in terms of accessibility to jobs and fulfilling their material needs. As a result the majority of learners tend to shy away from

activities, which are not a requirement of their course of study, and view their learning experiences from a very narrow perspective.

#### 4.3.2 Supporting community service and developing social awareness

Participants indicated that they were unaware of any community service programmes or initiatives at the satellite campus. Comments like the following were common:

*"No I have not heard of any of that sort. I have not seen any thing."*

Another participant indicated that she had not heard of anything but if she had she would have participated. The same response came from other participants:

Participants recalled only one programme during all their years of study, which was the Women's Day programme that promoted the notion of social change. One participant said:

*"there was this woman (a guest speaker) who was encouraging us to get involved in our communities. She said we don't have to have money to help. She said we could do something to help them."*

Another participant recalled an instance before the learner representative elections when candidates were canvassing for learner votes. He said:

*"Yes, there was this one guy, I am not sure from BMF or SRC. Yes he was also encouraging us. He said we have to wake up... Not forget where we are from, and give something back... Just the one time."*

These were the only two references made to the notion of social change.

However, despite the lack of exposure to the notion of community services and social responsibility, participants indicated a positive attitude towards the notion of social responsibility. They also indicated that had they been aware of community service initiatives at the Technikon they would have participated. Comments such as the following were encouraging to note:

*"Particularly I wanted to help the learners...to go back to the matrices...If I can have that chance, I can go and share everything I have I learnt here. In our area the primary and the high schools don't have computers and the matrices don't know what to do."*

*" want to support my parents first. And the people in the community, you know the ones who are suffering, if I can help."*

It was also evident that classroom contact time did not include any other discussion other than specific subject related content, as specified in the learning guide. Issues such as the role of engineers in community development or solving social problems were neglected. Participants implied that lecturers were not keen to venture into discussions or probe areas out of the recommended learning programme. Comments such as:

*"No, No we don't talk about all that...(giggle).... there is no time"*

*"No, we don't talk about anything else. Nothing else but the subjects we study and exam papers, tests, and so on..."*

Another participant had the following to say when asked about general discussion in the classroom:

*"No. I read my books and I search for information myself. That's when I become aware of what's going on in the world but the Technikon, ... no, not really."*

The authors Kahne *et al* (1996:595), claim that in order for learners to be properly educated in a democracy, they must experience learning circumstances that demonstrate the values of altruism and the dangers of exclusive self-interest. These authors also stress the importance of civic duty and the need for responsive citizens, and thereby call for a curriculum that emphasises critical reflection about social policies and conditions (Kahne *et al*, 1996:595). Concerning the experience of this curriculum, participants indicated a lack of exercises that encourage the development of social responsibility.

Participants also implied that individual interest and shared responsibility were not treated as part of the learning experience. The group of learners were addressed as one gathering in a formal lecture. Little or no recognition was given to individual interests or collaborative enquiry. Due to the lack of discussion on other issues other than specific subject-related content, we can assume that critical issues such as social responsibility or community service could not be discussed in a proactive way. Learners acquired their experience and attitudes in this regard from their own initiatives outside the Technikon curriculum.

I concur with the sentiments of Hommel (1987:4) and Simon (1994:3-5) who claim that higher education should inculcate values such as a concern for truth, a willingness to consider evidence in scholarly inquiry, and the appeal to reason rather than force in debate, which are all the attributes that contribute towards a participative democratic society and citizenship. If we are to strive towards developing a democratic society, ideals such as impartiality, honest evaluation of evidence and objectivity should be among major values that govern scholarship and make up the core values of academic ethic (Simon, 1994:2-3). The development of such values would eventually eliminate attitudes of sexism, racism and anti-Semitism.

#### **4.3.3 Interaction with peers and lecturers**

Participants felt that the environment, as described earlier, is not conducive to learner activities and social interaction. The only activity that learners engage in at the campus is the attendance of lectures. Many participants indicated that they were dissatisfied with the social conditions at the satellite campus. The campus lacks a learner recreation centre, facilities for food, and also space for casual conversations. This hinders learner interaction and therefore discourages meaningful dialogue and potential friendships from developing. The following comments are indicative of the limited social interaction:



*"Yes I have made friends here but most of my friends are from my home location. We come here together and we go together. I am friends with the people from my location. So I knew them. I don't really know anybody else. We don't really have a chance to talk. Its class. And then, we go home. There is no time. This place is different."*

As a result, intercultural communication also becomes difficult. Learners tend to associate more with friends they acquired outside the Technikon and those whom they know from their hometowns. The following comments also imply the lack of healthy social interaction:

*" We don't get enough learner activities. I don't know if it is because it is a satellite. We don't have enough things that they at the main campus get. We have to like study and sit separate from others. We can't talk to others because there is no place to go. There must be some place to talk to our friends."*

*"No. I don't have friends outside the class. We don't actually meet others. Here, there is no place to leave your things and just go. There is no place where you can say I am just going to find the learner. Even if you want to talk, there is no place so we don't stay here unless it is class."*

*"On a cultural level there are too many different people here and they stick to themselves. They stick to their own kind of groups."*

Learners mostly associate with friends they know from their home towns and those who attend their classes. From my observation, learners seem to display a preference to interact with members of their own cultural group. This is also indicated by the views of many of the participants. However, a concern to me was that participants appeared to be comfortable with the fact that they only associated with friends from their own cultural groups. The participants' social experience within the curriculum also contradicts the views of Nemerowicz et al (1997:129), who describe the concept of social responsibility as including attributes such as: knowledge of and the ability to collaborate with those who are socially and culturally different from oneself. These authors (1997:129) add that the concept

includes an understanding of how to define and promote the collective well-being and the values of justice and equality; and the understanding and use of ethical analyses to evaluate political and personal actions. The participants' experience of the curriculum as described by them lacks these vital attributes. Social interaction is a vital aspect of learner life as it develops healthier interpersonal communication as well as intercultural communication. These activities enable learners to develop vital attitudes and skills that promote social awareness, tolerance and the practice of democratic principles.

Participants perceived lecturers to be disinterested in other issues outside the prescribed learning programme. They indicated that the only issues discussed were subject related and that lecturers were not keen to deviate from the prescribed teaching material. Participants interpreted the teaching method applied by the lecturers, a formal one-way communication process, as being an indication of the lecturers' attitudes towards them. Many perceived this lecturing approach negatively. They were convinced that the staff were unconcerned as to whether they understood the subject matter or not and also that learner feedback was not important to them.

#### **4.4 Recommendations**

As a result of the findings of the research, the following recommendations could possibly be implemented to ensure that the learning experience of learners is a holistic one.

The general curriculum should provide a sense of community, safety and sense of belonging. The reason for this is that many participants perceived the campus as not learner friendly. Learners should feel a sense of commitment towards their institution. The various components of the curriculum should integrate the common learning goals, which inspire in learners a commitment

towards community upliftment. Issues such as community awareness, social responsibility and civic duty should be integrated into the context of every discipline.

Learners should feel free and comfortable to interact with any individual on the campus without fear of rejection or prejudice. An endeavour should be made to improve relations and communication between staff and learners, as well as learners with other learners. I recommend staff development programmes which could assist in stimulating discussion on teaching styles and classroom practice. It is apparent that staff and learners work under trying conditions. Perhaps it might help if staff were encouraged to workshop their difficulties in an attempt to brainstorm problem solving.

Inadequate learner recreation facilities impede interpersonal and intercultural communication. The physical environment should be conducive to the encouragement of free and easy social interaction. Participants do not freely socialise with persons of other cultural groups. Social programmes should be planned to encourage the integration of different cultures with the view to developing awareness, respect and acceptance of cultural differences.

All learning activities should include criteria for outcomes that prepare learners to live and function in a democratic society. The learning outcomes should include skills such as cognitive complexity, critical thinking and reflective judgement. The following forms of learning which are engaging, action-oriented, and hands on should be integrated into the curriculum:

- **Collaborative Inquiry:** Learners should undertake their learning and problem-solving in group settings, both direct and online. They may work as a team, both in the classroom and outside it. The group should be encouraged to take collective responsibility for defining and addressing a challenging question. The lecturer should facilitate the process.

- **Project-based learning:** Learners should be given opportunities to organise and deal with unstructured problems in collaboration with other learners, in contact with off-campus groups, or other organisations and other issues. Learners should be encouraged to make use of educational technology, in order to experience the excitement and the usefulness of creating new approaches and solutions.
- **Integrative learning:** Learners should be expected to generate links among previously unconnected issues, approaches and sources of knowledge. Such learning is subject oriented and multidisciplinary. Learners should be able to challenge, critique and connect the opposing assumptions and perceptions of other communities within and outside the Technikon.

I support the emphasis on vocational training and academic performance. However, this focus alone does not complete the learning experience. We need to place just as much emphasis on developing learners to be socially responsible so that they can function more efficiently as professionals within a democratic society. I hope that the findings and recommendations made in this research will contribute towards us providing a more holistic learning experience for our learners.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

As indicated earlier, the focus of this investigation was to understand the learners' experience of the notion of social responsibility and community services within the curriculum of the Vaal Triangle Technikon, Satellite Campus. For this purpose I used qualitative methods of enquiry and conducted interviews to collect data. Participants were invited to describe their learning experiences with the view to establishing the focus of enquiry. I made certain presuppositions and assumptions

prior to the study. Some of these assumptions were confirmed during the research. Furthermore, I conducted a review of relevant literature in order to place the research aim within a theoretical framework. Thereafter, I discussed the research strategy I applied and the procedure of the data analysis. This was followed by the discussion of findings.

Learners' responses in the interviews revealed valuable data. This data indicated a shortcoming in the curriculum which was the lack of a holistic learning experience. I found that the learning experience lacked the essential component of social awareness and responsibility. A holistic learning experience occurs through the practice of critical reflection, problem solving, and dialogue, whereby the primary objective of democratising our social world can be accomplished. The data analysis has indicated that the participants' learning experience lacks activities which contribute towards the development of such attributes. From the literature consulted for this investigation, we can summarise that the most significant learning occurs within the communicative arena, and includes ideal learning conditions such as the promotion of critical reflection, the provision for a safe, open, collaborative and democratic learning environment, and the encouragement to explore alternative perspectives.

The forms of learning experienced by the learners lack these vital experiences, as described above. One form of teaching style is mostly practised, the formal lecture format, which allows for basically a one-way communication process. The fact that group learning is not encouraged indicates that there is little practice of collaborative methods of learning. Participants describe a learning environment which does not provide the safety, security and openness required for healthy learning to take place.

The curriculum provides minimal opportunity for the development of social responsibility. There was no indication of initiatives that promote social awareness or community service. It is possible that the participants interviewed were unaware of

such initiatives, but this then defeats the purpose if all learners are not made aware of such activities and given adequate opportunities to participate.

The impact of the curriculum was mostly on academic performance and vocational training. One would argue that this is what the focus of learning should be. However a holistic learning experience should also include aspects that develop learners so that can fit into a realistic social environment. Professional development does not only imply acquiring scientific technical knowledge, but also the social skills necessary to apply that knowledge within a social context. The learning environment was not conducive to social interaction as it lacked the basic learner facilities that encouraged learner interaction. There is no evidence of any initiative made to encourage intercultural communication, which is a vital component for building a society free of bias, prejudice and insensitivity to those who are perceived to be different from them. Evidence indicates that participants associate mostly with peers of their own cultural group.

The final section of the research contains valuable recommendations on how the curriculum could be improved to ensure a more holistic learning experience which will benefit all stakeholders.

In conclusion, I would like to say that this has been a most enriching experience for me as it gave me an opportunity to understand the learning experience from the learners' perspective. I have realised that there are many areas of the learning context which need to be researched. I have found qualitative research methodology to be most useful in understanding the experiences and perspectives of individuals under study.

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## 6. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

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#### INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Dr MD Geldenhuis  
Dean: Academic  
East Rand Satellite Campus

**FROM:** Roshini Nayagar

**DATE:** 09/04/2003

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH FINAL YEAR  
ENGINEERING LEARNERS**

I am currently enrolled for an MA in Adult and Community Education at the Rand Afrikaans University. In partial fulfilment of the degree, I need to conduct research and write a research essay on the findings. The focus of enquiry is to gain an in-depth understanding of learners' experiences of the notion of social responsibility within the curriculum.

I will be required to conduct a qualitative research and interview a few learners who are enrolled for their final year of study for the Engineering Diploma. I undertake to have Learners' well-being and interests at heart. I believe that this research will contribute to a better understanding of the learners' learning experience of the notion of social responsibility and community service. The information that emerges from this research could contribute to us improving on providing a holistic learning experience for our learners.

Your support in this regard would be highly appreciated.

Roshini Nayagar

## APPENDIX B

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### MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Mrs R Nayagar

Room 213

Faculty of Humanities

Vaal Triangle Technikon: East Rand Satellite Campus

**DATE:** 09/04/2003

**SUBJECT:** INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH PROJECT

---

I am currently busy with my MA in Adult and community Education at the Rand Afrikaans University. The focus of my investigation is the learning experiences of learners of the notion of social responsibility and community services within the curriculum. I would really appreciate your participation in my research.

Your participation would require an interview, which would be conducted at a time convenient for you. The Interview will entail a discussion about your learning experiences within the curriculum. All information offered will be treated confidentially and the identity of the participants will be protected.

I would appreciate it if you would sign the consent form should you want to participate.

I thank you in anticipation for your co-operation and support.

Roshini Nayagar

**APPENDIX C**

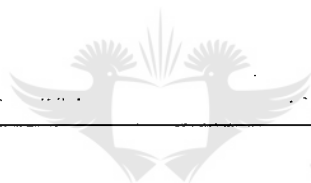
**PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT**

**CONSENT FORM**

I \_\_\_\_\_  
hereby agree to participate in your research project on the learners' experiences of the notion of social responsibility within the curriculum.

I give my consent that the information I give can be submitted to the Rand Afrikaans university and that my identity will remain anonymous.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



UNIVERSITY  
OF  
JOHANNESBURG

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D

OI	:	participant
Rosh	:	interviewer

Rosh Thank you for giving me this time OI. I really appreciate your willingness to share your experiences with me. I assure you that your participation in this discussion will be kept confidential and your name will be kept out of the report. I'll start with my first question. Looking back at your experiences at the technikon, what areas of your life have been mostly influenced?

OI *Since I came to study at this school I didn't have money, my parents didn't have money. I applied to TEFSA and they gave me money. That's why I am here today. The other thing is, you can apply and register here with letters from TEFSA. They let you register at this school as long as they understand you are getting the money. Then you can pay any amount to them. The other thing is they are charging less price than the other places.*

Rosh Can you tell me something in terms of your learning experience?

OI *It is very very tough. Sometimes you don't get good lecturers like physics. I am doing physics for the fourth time. This year, I am lucky I got a better lecturer. Some of the things you got to study on your own, even if you go to the lecturer you still got to study the things on your own. These are some of the disadvantages of this school. We don't get enough good lecturers. I think I got only one lecturer who really helps, the Maths lecturer. I can say that she is good.*

Rosh Are there other disadvantages you would like to mention?

OI *Yes. There are. We don't get enough learner activities. I don't know if it is because it is a satellite. We don't have enough things that they at the main campus get. May be also because it is a satellite.*

Rosh What things are you referring to?

OI *Like eh... Computers, The computer lab is not open every time, then the classes we don't have each and every subject every semester. Like Digits I can't do it this semester because they are not offering it this semester. They don't have enough staff and facilities to offer it. But at the main campus they get each and every subject every semester. They don't have to wait.*

Rosh Why do you think this is so?

OI *They say there is no staff and no facilities.*

Rosh What do think about that?

OI *The facilities, they are not enough. They don't have enough facilities like the computers for us to do practicals. You can find out that there are many learners who don't have a computer in classes. It is very hard to finish your work. And even though there is a computer laboratory there is only one printer. Some of the learners don't have computers at home. And in this whole school there is only one printer. We have to do our work here at school, print out our assignments and complete our projects. And we have to do something else if that one printer is not working. And if the lecturer is*

*not there we have to suffer without the printer. They should do something to give us more access to the printer and the computer.*

Rosh In terms of other facilities, besides the computers etc. What about other facilities. Let's look at outside the class, are you happy?

OI *This place is not good for the learner life. We just come here because we have to study. They said they were giving us carport for shade since 2000. It is now 2002 and it is still not here. Even outside the building, maybe we are not studying or going to class, we just got to stand out. There is no place to sit, to study. We just go there and wait in the sun. See that bin down there we just sit around it. There is no cafeteria to go. You have to buy your own food before you come here.*

Rosh Do you think it is a problem that learners do not have a cafeteria?

OI *Yes. We have to like study and sit separate from others. We can't talk to others because there is no place to go. There must be some place to talk our friends.*

Rosh Who are your friends at the campus?

OI *Just the ones we know from class. They are not our friends really. we just have class together. My friends are the ones I come to school with. We travel together.*

Rosh Do you get to associate with learners out of your course group.

OI *No. The only person is the person you are studying with. Because we are in the same class. But if you want to meet a person from outside we can't*



*get to other people. We all just come here and go to class and go home.  
The only thing that is perfect in this school is finance.*

Rosh How many of your friends are of other cultural groups from yourself?

OI Not any one really. Just in my class there are others.

Rosh Why is that?

OI I don't know. We just don't meet others here. It's not easy.

Rosh What kind of learner activities do you participate in?

OI Here? There is nothing for the learner here...nothing for us to do.  
We just come go to class and go home.

Rosh Can you describe your typical day when you come here?

OI *I have to take a train, and from the station I have to walk. It is about 30 minutes from the station. Sometimes we arrive here tired, we don't feel like studying, but we just have to come to school. Because we got no choice. Because even the taxis, sometimes they arrive there they are late. Then we are late and miss the class.*

Rosh How is the teaching done in class? Can you describe how the lecturer actually presents the lesson?

OI *The lecturer might come to class and discuss 3 chapters for 20 minutes and go. And then we as learners we sit down and discuss some other things. Like we decided that if you don't understand something you don't have to work own. We work together and discuss. The only thing that helps at the end of the day is the group that we made.*

Rosh Who decided to form a group?

OI *Some of the subjects, I am the one that decided to start that group. Like physics, we are the guys that are doing it for the fourth time now, so I think that group helps. I cannot understand some of the things but if we work as a group it is going to be much better.*

Rosh Does anyone from the technikon encourage you to do group work?

OI *Ya. Like Mrs Van der Hoff, She is the one that likes to tell us.*

Rosh And what about the other lecturers?

OI *The others, No.... (giggle)*

Rosh Can you describe how the class actually progresses from the time the class starts?

OI *There are others who walk in and say we are looking at this page today and open the text book and talk. They are different. There are some of them who will only read, read, read.... We listen. We have to read whatever is written in the book. Some of them don't even write on the board. Sometimes we can't ask what is this or what is that. Some of them don't even like to encourage us. They just say, "If you don't know why did you come here?". "You did apply to do this course but you don't know what is this?" Some of the things we heard but we never learn, they sound the same sometimes so it is hard. Sometimes we try to ask questions but they don't like to answer the questions. Some of them say we will*

*only pass the next semester and we are doing the course now. They can't worry if we don't understand it.*

Rosh How do you find the attitudes of the lecturers out of class? Is it easy to approach them?

OI *I don't have a problem. We as learners are going to answer the questions in that exam paper. I am not afraid to approach the lecturer. Although they sometimes are not very happy.*

Rosh If you had to look back at your whole experience here, I know that you said that the finance is an advantage...but what else have you gained by being here.

OI *For my course, yes I have gained a lot of things. I was doing computers before I came here. But now I know about programming. Like if you had to ask me what is programming, now I know what I am going to say, like before I only knew the introduction, but now I am going to say how you do it. About the computer I have learnt a lot, even how to fix it, I know how to fix a computer.*

Rosh Did any of your classes include discussions about any other issues related to engineering?

OI *No, we don't talk about anything else. Nothing else but the subjects we study and exam papers, tests, and so on.... But some of us learners we do when the class is not on. we talk about working in a group and so on.*

Rosh Were there any activities or functions that involved other issues besides your specific course content?

**OI** *Activities, no, there is nothing else. . But there was this function once for women's day ...only that one... and one of the speakers was telling us about life out there. They were encouraging us to study and do something for ourselves, and how to get on outside.*

**Rosh** How did you find that?

**OI** *It was good. Something different from the normal stuff.*

**Rosh** Can you think of other instances when you might have discussed other issues?

**OI** *Yes the Engineering department one day got a person to talk to us about their company and what they offer, how to apply and so on. He was telling about what they expect from us for in-service training and so on.*

**Rosh** Are those the only instances you can remember?

**OI** *Yes, that 's all.*

**Rosh** Once you qualify what are your priorities?

**OI** *get work and work. And like giving my parents some money, and then I want to buy my own car my own house. But I want to support my parents first. And the people in the community, you know the ones who are suffering, if I can help.*

**Rosh** I am glad you mentioned that – helping your community. Do you get encouraged by the technikon to help your community?

OI *Yes just the one time. You remember I was telling you about that women's day, there was this woman who was encouraging us to get involved in our communities. She said we don't have to have money to help. She said we can do something to help them.*

Rosh Was this person a part of the technikon community?

OI *No, she was a guest speaker, not from here.*

Rosh Was there anybody from the technikon who gave you this message as well or something similar?

OI *Yes there was this one guy, I am not sure from BMF or SRC. Yes he was also encouraging us. He said we have to wake up not forget where we are from, and give something back.*

Rosh How many times did this happen?

OI *Just the one time. It was just before the elections. He was just trying to get us to vote for him.*

Rosh Was there any other instances when you were encouraged to give something back to your community?

OI *No. Not that I can think of. Not in any way.*

Rosh Are you aware of any community development programmes offered by the technikon at this satellite campus?

OI *No not that I have heard of any thing.*

Rosh If there was any, would you participate?

OI *Yes. I would. I think it would be helpful to the people. But I have not heard of anything.*

Rosh Olivia I would like to thank you for your time and contribution to my research. You have really been a great help to me.

