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Service-learning in MBA degree programmes in South Africa

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Chapter 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Earlier work undertaken as part of this study has been published (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005; Carmichael and Stacey 2006) and most has not been repeated in this document. Instead, the model developed, illustrated in Figure 2.1 (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005), will be taken as the starting point for the purpose of deeper inquiry into the potential value of introducing the particular learning methodology known as Service-Learning into MBA programmes in South Africa.

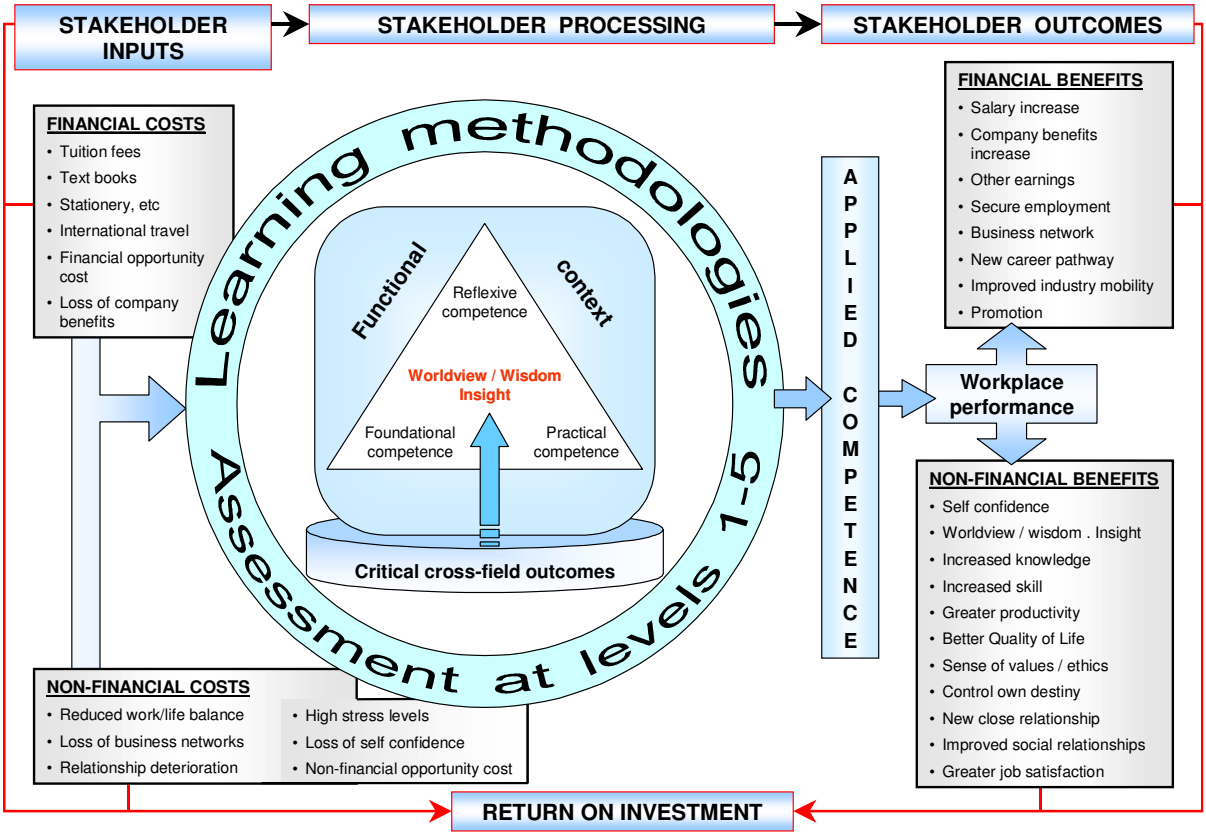


Figure 2.1: A holistic framework for the perceived return on investment of an MBA (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005)

Although it is possible that some of the principles inherent in the model and the brief recap that follows may apply to other educational settings, the specific context here is that of MBA education, and should be interpreted as such.

The model was developed based on the view that education is a transformational process. Students enter the system, which then transforms them in terms of their knowledge, skills and worldview through the mechanisms of teaching, learning and assessment. They emerge from the system with a new qualification, ready to reap the personal and workplace benefits accruing from their (assumed) improved performance. Student objectives in immersing themselves into the MBA transformation system are linked, with varying levels of importance, to financial and non-financial benefits, illustrated in Figure 2.1. An important point emerging from the model is that the benefits are only likely to be realised *if* performance is improved, not merely on attainment of the qualification.

As was made explicit in Carmichael and Sutherland (2005), the role and activities that take place in the circle in Figure 2.1, representing the learning and assessment methodologies, are the major areas under the control of faculty members in maximising the effectiveness of the educational experience for MBA students. Applied competence refers to the application of foundational (knowledge) and practical (skills) competence in a variety of contexts (RSA 2000a; SAQA 2000, 2001a, 2001b, 2003; Isaacs 2001; RSA 2002a) but seldom falls under the control of faculty, since it, by its nature, takes place within the workplace, usually after students have completed their degrees.

Service-Learning is added to the processing phase as a teaching and learning methodology that contributes to higher education transformation. It takes place in the functional academic context specified by the course, within a selected community organisation.

Service-Learning is a logical learning method for MBA programmes in that it would create opportunities for real workplace learning to occur (Kolb *et al* 1971), whilst students are still within the educational system. With such experience, they would be more immediately effective in the organisations employing them, to their own as well as organisational benefit. Service-Learning has the potential to create such opportunities (Dumas *et al* 2000; Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000; Rama *et al* 2000; Weber *at al* 2004; Godfrey *et al* 2005; Coffey and Wang 2006).

The well documented (Kirkpatrick 1979, 1996; Phillips 1996, 1997; Phillips *et al* 2001) assessment model as presented in Carmichael and Sutherland (2005) seen here in Figure 2.2 serves to remind us of the respective assessment responsibilities of the

teacher / trainer and the line manager of the learner. This model could be used to add value to MBA education by integrating learning and assessment at the five levels described, rather than viewing them as separate processes.

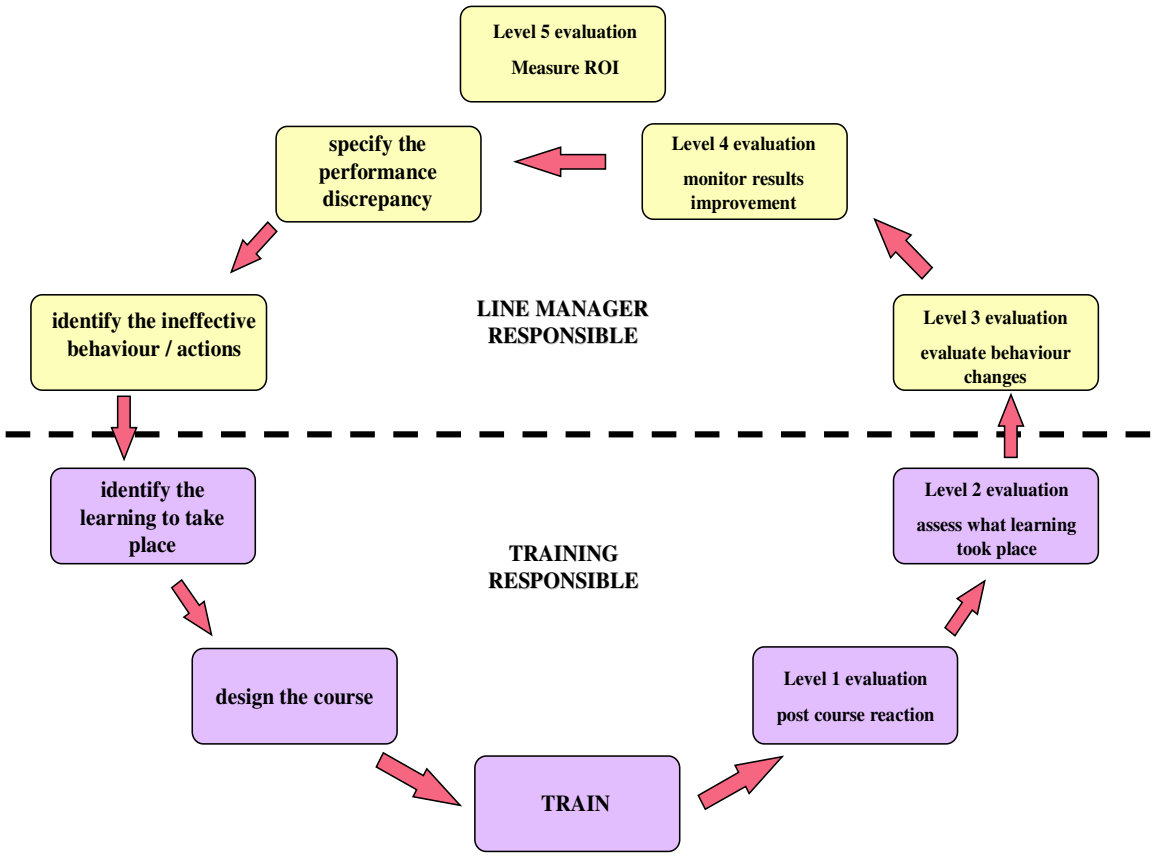


Figure 2.2 Kirkpatrick's (1979, 1996) evaluation levels 1-4 with Phillips' (1996, 1997) fifth level inserted as presented in Carmichael and Sutherland (2005)

Based on the model in Figure 2.1 (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005), once an effective Service-Learning model has been developed for MBAs, student "processing" would result in better applied (managerial) competence, leading to both social and economic upliftment within local communities. Assuming that better management performance does lead to the financial and non-financial rewards described, students will perceive a greater return on their educational investment. Assuming, too, that enhanced management performance leads to better organisational performance, employers of

MBA graduate managers will enjoy greater growth. Enhanced economic activity would be the logical end result of the intervention.

This research takes into account the contexts of the business sector, higher education, and the social sector as illustrated in the outer circle of Figure 2.3. The linking processes seen in the middle ring (dealt with only briefly) are, respectively, management, transformation and sustainability, and the entities being researched with a view to potentially increased performance are business managers as MBA students, MBA programmes and community organisations.

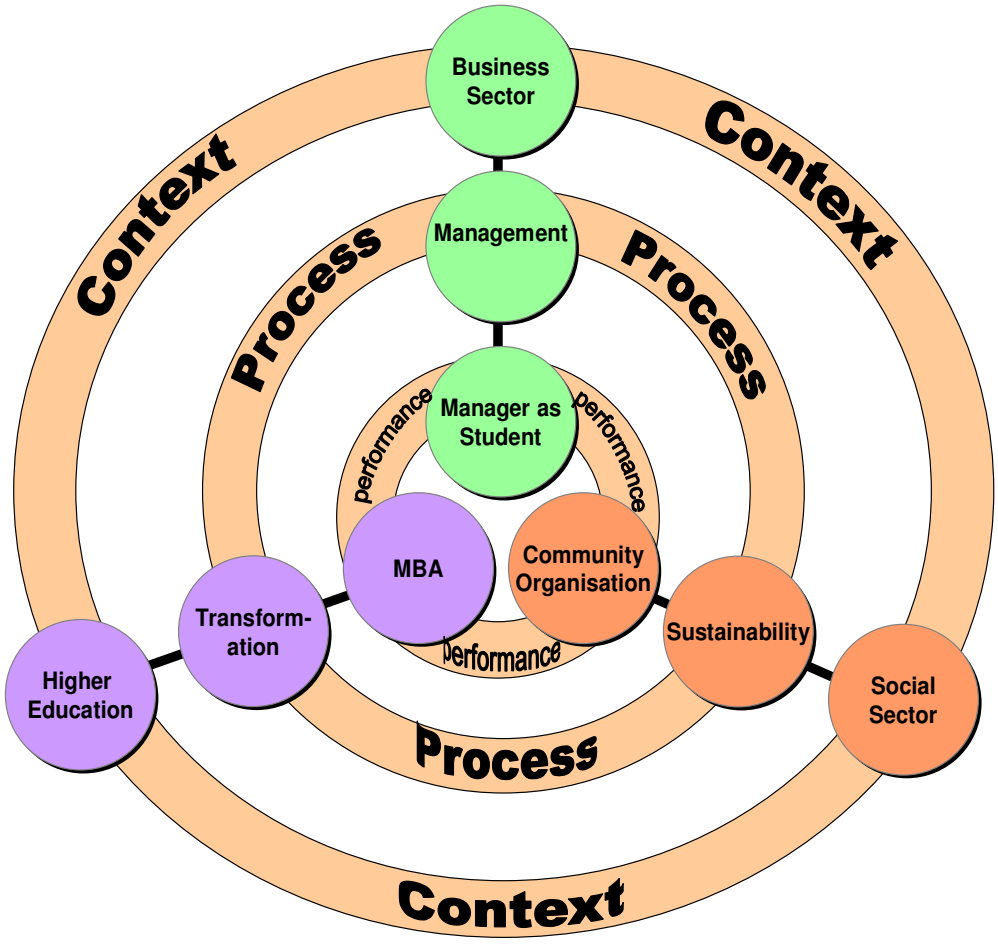


Figure 2.3 The links between the contexts, processes and entities in this study

The literature review is structured by the above contexts as illustrated in the mind-map in Figure 2.4 overleaf. The first level headings are thus context related. In this way the contents and flow can be viewed holistically as well as in detail.

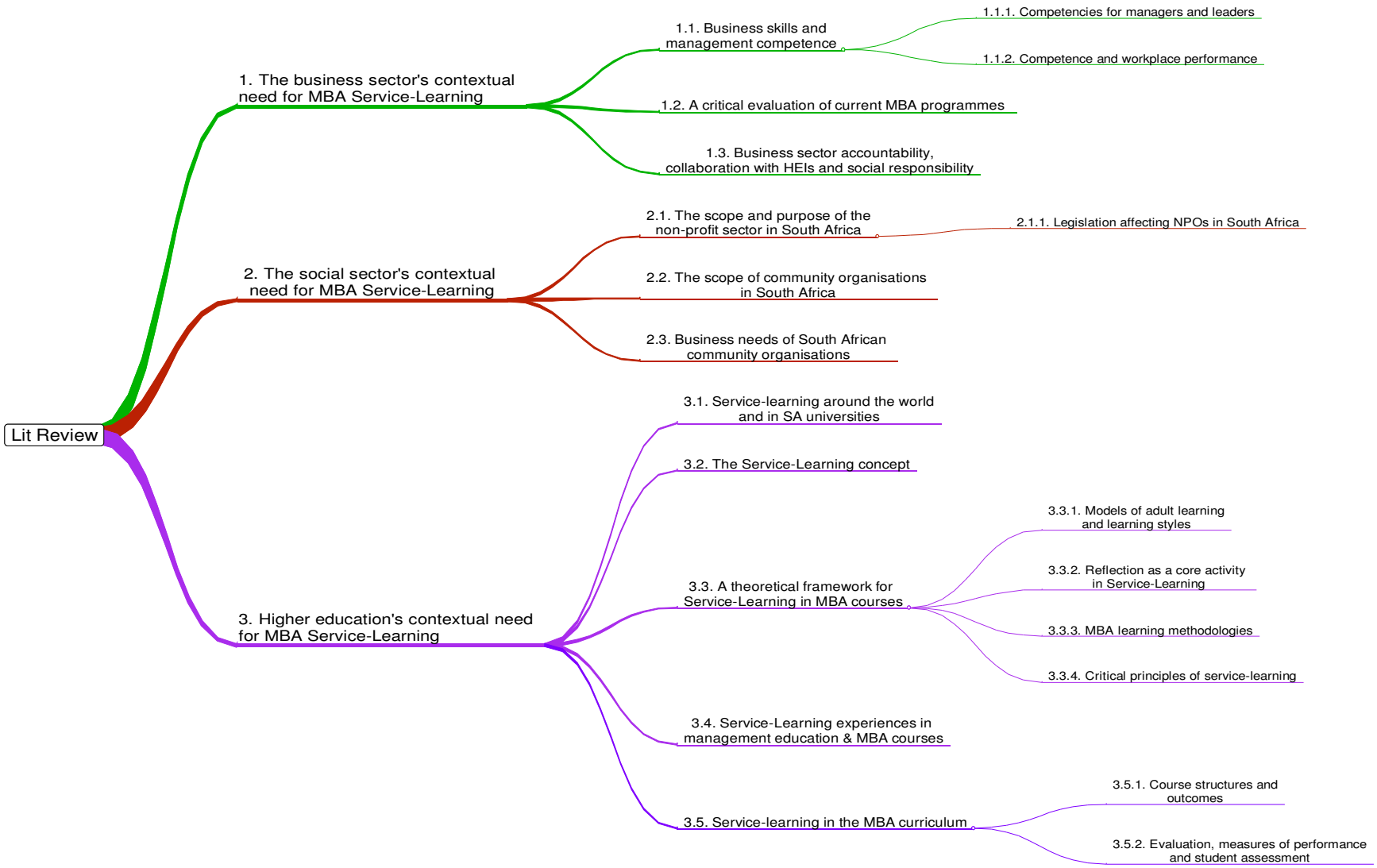


Figure 2.4 A mind-map of the literature review headings and sub-headings

2.1 The business sector's contextual need for MBA Service-Learning

It is clear that businesses need skilled individuals in order to operate, and that the skills required change as technology changes, as organisations move through their lifecycles and as various other factors influence and shift trends in the marketplace. The need to remain competitive drives many skills development initiatives, particularly those of managers and leaders (Neave 1990; Pralahad and Hamel 1990; Argyris 1991; Sandwith 1993; Spencer and Spencer 1993; Bassi 1997; Beinhocker 2000; Nordstrom and Ridderstrale 2002; van der Sluis 2002; Gosling and Mintzberg 2003; Huy and Mintzberg 2003; Parker 2004; Mintzberg 1990, 2004a, 2006).

The context is often one of rapid change in the external environment (Pityana 1999; Nordstrom and Ridderstrale 2002; Gosling and Mintzberg 2003; Huy and Mintzberg 2003; Parker 2004), requiring economies of scale (Sandwith 1993) quality improvement (Neave 1990; Sandwith 1993; Nordstrom and Ridderstrale, 2002) in response to customer demands (Pralahad and Hamel 1990; Nordstrom and Ridderstrale 2002) and innovating to keep ahead of competitors (Pralahad and Hamel 1990; Sandwith 1993).

Even though developing countries are exposed to similar pressures of internationalisation and the global economy, these largely western ideas of management and leadership may or may not apply to them (Mintzberg 2006). Mintzberg (2006) considers the value of indigenous development taking place from the inside and growing outward towards global practices, rather than *vice-versa*, since such practices are more contextually relevant and locally applicable. One does wonder how this concept has affected the implementation of skills development initiatives in South Africa, which are acknowledged to be critical to the country (Pityana 1999), yet have been beset by difficulties (SAQA 2005) and obstacles.

Since South Africa moved out of the era of apartheid in 1994 and began to reintegrate into the global economy, the country's social and economic systems have been undergoing structured and systematic change to overcome inequities of the past (DTI 2006a). However, the pace of change has been slow (Pityana 1999; Heintz 2000; Thomas 2005), with population growth matching economic growth so closely that unemployment percentages have remained almost constant at around 26-27% since 2005 (SAInfo 2006a; DTI 2006b). To make real progress it is critical that factors

contributing to human capital growth (Luiz 2006) and productivity (Thomas 2005) such as education systems develop to and match international standards.

Historically, South Africa's education system has a great deal to make up for. Under apartheid, there were at least 19 different education systems (van der Linde 2002), the different races were kept apart, and the system focused heavily on content, rote learning and teacher input, rather than learner outcomes (RSA 1995, 2000a, 2000b). The so called "Bantu education system" produced a population of adults of colour able only to perform manual labour, and opportunities for these South Africans to be employed in technical or managerial positions were almost non-existent. Even after apartheid ended, tokenism was rife for many years (National Training Board (NTB) 1994,1995).

It was acknowledged in the NTB (1995) report that much of the initial skills development that would need to take place over many future years would be remedial, since mathematical, science and communication education were particularly absent in the Bantu education system. Clearly this type of education was, and still is, a far cry from addressing the labour market's demand for the development managers and leaders.

In 1991, as part of a drive to speed up skills development and improve South Africans' ability to become economically active, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) initiated the development of a solid foundational basic education system from which to develop skills required in the labour market. As political reformation took place, new policies were written and legislation passed (van der Linde 2002), which eventually resulted in the publication of the SAQA Act (RSA 1995) and the Skills Development Act (RSA 1998b).

Early discussion documents and conference proceedings relating to the development of the NQF, SAQA and the various supporting Acts (NTB 1994; HSRC 1995, 1996; RSA 1996) relate in depth how the principles, practices and criteria evolved.

Implementation of the SDA has been slow, with overly complicated structures and processes, lack of co-ordination between the Departments of Labour and Education and political jockeying being blamed (SAQA 2005). However, the findings of the Cycle 2 Impact Report (SAQA 2005) show that of the 17 indicators used to measure the NQF / SDA implementation impact, three have had a "high positive" impact since implementation. These are a) the nature of learning programmes, b) organisational,

economic and societal benefits, and c) contribution to other national strategies such as the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) (RSA 2000b) and the Human Resources Development Strategy (HRDS) (RSA 2002c).

Since the implementation of the NQF is already showing economic and societal benefits as described above, it follows that continued implementation could extend these benefits further. Businesses are inextricably linked into the process through the SDA and the skills levies that they pay (RSA 1998b), and are already enjoying the benefits of the increased economic activity. Further innovation in the nature of learning programmes, (for example the introduction of Service-Learning), one of the high impact factors reported (SAQA 2005), is likely to accelerate skills development (Dumas *et al* 2000; Rama *et al* 2000; Weber *at al* 2004; Godfrey *et al* 2005; Coffey and Wang 2006). One of the main reasons for this anticipated benefit is that Service-Learning offers a unique opportunity to practice workplace skills in a real work environment, where their output *matters* (Mager and Pipe 1997; Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000).

International trends show that businesses are constantly seeking and utilising new forms of technology to gain competitive advantage, causing a decline in the need for labour with a low level of skills and expertise (Pityana 1999; van Buren and Erskine 2002). What is increasingly required is a highly skilled, flexible and mobile workforce able to manage in a rapidly changing environment (Nordstrom and Ridderstrale 2002), increasing the demand for MBA graduates (van Niekerk and Penman 2002).

2.1.1 Business skills and management competence

It is not the intention of this study to undertake an exhaustive analysis of the work of managers in order to validate the types of competencies that they require; Henry Mintzberg and colleagues have carried out that task admirably over a period of over 35 years (Mintzberg 1973, cited in Mintzberg and Westley 2000; Mintzberg 1990, 1994, 2004a, 2006; Gosling and Mintzberg 2003).

Suffice it to say that "the classical view says that the manager organises, co-ordinates, plans and controls" (Mintzberg 1990:163) is neither sufficient, nor necessarily true. It appears that managers' jobs are far more complex and unpredictable than that simple formula implies. It is also true that managers' jobs are no longer adequately described

by the mantra of shareholder value above all else; there are other stakeholders to consider and a larger picture to view if we are to sustain ourselves into the future.

Organisations can only act responsibly and ethically if its managers and leaders act responsibly and ethically with all stakeholders with protection of the environment and natural resources in mind (Moorhead and Griffin 1995). Handy (2002) questions whether capitalism could be its own undoing, arguing that, although market forces operate for profit, they rely on truth and trust, which are both fragile and under pressure. He illustrates his point by suggesting that "executives no longer run their companies for the benefit of consumers, or even of the shareholders and employees, but for their personal ambition and financial gain" (Handy 2002:50). Mintzberg *et al* (2002) agree that the socioeconomic fabric is being disrupted by the view that prosperity is related only to financial wealth, and that the role of responsible management is to balance the needs of the many different stakeholders in an economy in order for it to be sustainable.

The essence of good corporate governance is captured in the King II Report on Corporate Governance (King 2002) in describing that the key for good corporate citizenship revolves around all stakeholders, not only shareholders, and requires that individuals in organisations focus not only on performance, but also on conformance. The requirement for "triple bottom line" reporting (King 2002: 12) serves as a mechanism for demonstrating broad-based responsible citizenship.

> Prosperity is not just economic and cannot be measured by averages alone. It has to be societal too, and that depends on distribution. Real prosperity combines economic development with social generosity.
>
> (Mintzberg *et al* 2002:73)

Thus managers and leaders clearly need to think beyond the narrow confines of their own immediate needs and desires to a longer term view of sustainability, otherwise they are simply strangling the golden egg-laying goose.

2.1.1.1 Competencies for leaders and managers

The following description of competencies, the ways in which the term has been developed, interpreted and used over the past 20 years or so and the meaning intended

in this study have been cited in both Carmichael and Sutherland (2005) and Carmichael and Stacey (2006). It is retained here to contextualise the research that has taken place subsequent to these two publications.

The noun "competency" has been the subject of much debate in the world of learning. One of the pioneering definitions comes from Spencer and Spencer (1993:9), who define the term as: "A competency is an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and / or superior performance in a job or situation".

Some of the assumptions inherent in the Spencer and Spencer (1993) definition have been the cause of the debate around the term in more recent times. For example, they specify that a competency is part of a person's personality, rather than something that a person can do (Isaacs 2000; SAQA 2001b, 2003), although all agree that performance should be in accordance with agreed performance criteria. Spencer and Spencer (1993: 9) also maintain that "a competency causes or predicts behaviour and performance". This is contradicted by Mager and Pipe (1997), who clearly differentiate competence as "can do" from performance or "will do" on the basis that simply because an individual is able to perform a task, it does not follow that they will.

This latter view is supported in the Situational Leadership model (Hersey *et al* 1996), in their categories of followers, viz. a) unwilling and unable, b) willing and unable, c) unwilling and able and, lastly, d) willing and able. Here, the first two categories of individuals are task-specific "unable", not having the competence to perform the task at hand, so clearly need to learn it. In the second two categories, the individual does have the competence to perform the task, so does not need further education or training; however the "unwilling and able" individual does need to be motivated to apply his competence. This concept is elaborated on by both Mager and Pipe (1997) and by Hersey *et al* (1996) in pointing out that poor performance is not always linked to lack of competence.

The definition proposed by Meyer and Semark (1998) is somewhat different to that of Spencer and Spencer (1993). They indicate that competence is the demonstration of integrated knowledge, skills, personal attributes and values. From this it may be extrapolated that a "competency" is a description of the knowledge, skills, personal attributes and values required to meet a specific learning outcome. This definition is

embedded in qualifications frameworks from around the world (RSA 1995b; New Zealand 2000; United Kingdom 2000a, 2000c; Scotland 2003; Australia 2003), and will be the one implied in references to competencies in this research.

The competency units to be found in the various qualifications frameworks cited above may be related to Bloom's domains of educational objectives (Bloom 1956a, 1956b). All the country-specific qualification framework models include: the skills required to achieve a defined outcome (Bloom's psychomotor domain), certain knowledge underpinning the skill (Bloom's cognitive domain), and a statement of context. However, only the New Zealand (2000) and South African (RSA 1995; SAQA 2000a, 2000b; Isaacs 2000) models include references to attitudes, attributes or values (Bloom's affective domain) (Bloom 1956b). The affective components are difficult to measure, but can be translated into behavioural outcomes, and are key components of the competence of leaders and managers. Thus they need to be developed.

With the definition of competencies clarified for the purposes of this research, it now becomes necessary to investigate what specific competencies are required by leaders and managers. Functional competencies such as marketing, finance or human resources are explicit to particular positions within organisations; they are well documented and will not be considered as part of this study. It is the underlying generic, life skill competencies that are investigated here. These are the competencies considered to be necessary to all individuals if they are to participate effectively in society as useful citizens (Isaacs 2000).

The work of Spencer and Spencer (1993) is useful in that they have created clusters of generic, differentiating competencies – those that lead to superior job performance - along with behavioural indicators that can be used as measures. Superior performance (achieved by approximately one person in ten) is defined statistically as being one standard deviation above average performance (Spencer and Spencer 1993).

Meyer (1996) identified clusters of generic competencies, which he called meta-competencies. These fall broadly into the areas of communication, gathering and interpretation of data from a variety of sources, problem solving, systems thinking, ability to apply the use of technology in the workplace, working in groups, teams or communities, using mathematical concepts and managing oneself and one's own learning and development.

Similar thinking can be seen in the construction and implementation of the Key Skills Qualification in the UK (United Kingdom 2000b; City & Guilds 2002). These skills are "a range of essential skills that underpin success in education, employment, lifelong learning and personal development" (United Kingdom 2000b: 2). Further support for the named categories of meta-competencies may be found in research carried out by the American Management Association (AMA) (2001) amongst 525 managers, and they are embedded within the South African NQF (RSA 2000a; SAQA 2003).

In the South African education system the cluster of generic competencies referred to as critical cross-field outcomes (CCFOs) are legislated to be incorporated into all national qualifications (Isaacs 2000). The inclusion of the critical outcomes must be explained within the text of the qualification, and each CCFO linked to the specific outcome or assessment criterion through which it will manifest.

As has been published (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005; Carmichael and Stacey 2006) the competencies evaluated in this research are limited to the legislated (RSA 1995) CCFOs, despite the fact that evidence relating to their evolution and validation is lacking in the literature. However, the similarity of the CCFO framework to others found in international literature does suggest their validity.

A comparison of the CCFOs with other, similar frameworks may be seen in Table 2.1, which was published in Carmichael and Stacey (2006).

The CCFOs are divided into two groups: the first group of seven are the assessable CCFOs, at least some of which are expected to be embedded into all education and training courses if they are to be accredited by the Department of Education. It is also required that they are assessed along with the functional outcomes of such courses, although little evidence exists that this does occur. It is on these seven CCFOs that most of the work in this study has been conducted; they are listed in the first column of Table 2.1 overleaf.

The other group of five CCFOs are aims for educational institutions to achieve in the course of conducting their educational activities, and they are listed on page 29, in the brief description after Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 An illustrative matrix of SAQA's CCFOs and similar frameworks of generic competencies for managers (sources as per column headings)

Isaacs (2000); SAQA (2001b) CCFOs	Meyer (1996) Meta-competencies	UK (2000b) Key Skills	AMA (2001) Comp category	Spencer and Spencer (1993)	Mintzberg (2004a: 260) Management competencies
Solve problems: Identifying and solving problems in which responses display that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made	Solve complex, multi-dimensional problems	Problem Solving		Conceptual thinking Analytical thinking Impact and influence	Informational, personal and additional competencies, eg designing, mobilising, administering, processing information, and facilitating
Use of Information: Collecting, analysing, organising and critically evaluating information	Locate and interpret relevant information from written, electronic and human sources		Conceptual Skills	Information seeking Analytical thinking	Informational competencies, including data processing, modelling, evaluating
Systems thinking: Demonstrating an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation	Use analysis, synthesis and systemic thinking; innovate, apply skills & knowledge to manage change effectively;			Conceptual thinking Analytical thinking Organisational awareness	Personal, Interpersonal, informational and additional competencies
Communicate effectively: Communicating effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written persuasion	Communicate effectively with diverse groups of people and individuals on complex issues;	Communication, Numeracy (called Application of Number),	Communication skills	Directiveness Impact and influence	Interpersonal and informational competencies Information gathering and processing, presenting, writing, speaking, organising, listening, verbal and non-verbal skills, etc

Isaacs (2000); SAQA (2001b) CCFOs	Meyer (1996) Meta-competencies	UK (2000b) Key Skills	AMA (2001) Comp category	Spencer and Spencer (1993)	Mintzberg (2004a: 260) Management competencies
Use technology: Using science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others	Apply scientific and mathematical concepts and use relevant technology effectively;	Information Technology	Conceptual skills	Analytical thinking	Additional competencies, eg scheduling, systematising, project managing
Work with others: Working effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation, community	Operate effectively in multi-disciplinary teams;	Working with Others	Interpersonal skills Team leadership	Interpersonal understanding, Customer service, Networking, Relationships Teamwork , Impact and influence, Developing others	Interpersonal competencies including leading individuals, teams, business units, organisations; Collaboration, networking, negotiation, promoting, organising, listening, resolving conflict, etc
Self-management: Organizing and managing oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively	Use time effectively and to manage a variety of tasks; Manage one's own, often multiple career and balance occupational, family, community and other demands effectively.	Improving Own Learning and Performance.	Effectiveness skills Order, quality and accuracy	Achievement orientation Initiative, Self-control Self-confidence, Flexibility Organisational commitment Job related expertise	Managing oneself, both internally (reflection, strategic thinking) and externally (time, stress, career, information)

The seven CCFOs listed in Table 2.1 are those specified as assessable in individuals, and are henceforth referred to as the assessable CCFOs. There is another group of five CCFOs which are educational aims (Isaacs 2000; SAQA 2001b). They are:

i. Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively;

ii. Participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities;

iii. Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts;

iv. Exploring education and career opportunities;

v. Developing entrepreneurial opportunities

Although they are not required to be assessed in learners, it would seem that assessable outcomes could emerge from institutionalising the five CCFOs listed. For example, effective implementation of a cultural sensitivity programme should result in the emergence of culturally sensitive individuals, and that this is an outcome that could be assessed in individuals.

In addition, it is incumbent on institutions of higher education to instil a sense of responsibility into the graduates that they release into the world of business. Should this be done globally, managers would better be able to deal with events such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks (Guiliani 2002). Locally Szeftel (2000:287) describes Africa's "catastrophic corruption" in the context of the global environment of business, and states quite clearly that corruption is a major threat to economic and social development and to democracy. His view is supported by Luiz (2006) in his description of patronage based governance. Clearly it is incumbent on all leaders to demonstrate and facilitate responsible citizenship at all levels within their sphere of influence.

> We can learn to value and protect our environment, and become its guardians, or we can continue to use up irreplaceable natural resources, destroy other life forms, kill one another, pollute the planet and destroy its ability to sustain life.
>
> (Hunter *et al* 1998: 1-2)

The description of the role and interdependence of the assessable CCFOs in business settings has been published in Carmichael and Stacey (2006), as part of this study. The content following is a slightly expanded, but essentially similar version of that

contained within the aforementioned publication. It is retained in this report so that the relevance of the CCFOs may not be lost to readers without access to the publications already in print.

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

Problem solving proficiency (Porter and McKibbin 1988; Bagayoko *et al* 2000; Kirkwood 2000), leading to the making of sound managerial decisions, can result in great financial success, or conversely, to "poor product and service mix, disastrous pricing decisions, misplaced expenditure and turf battles that destroy people and an organisation's ability to compete" (Kelly 1996:4). Higher order thinking (Kirkwood 2000) allows the individual to consider multiple interpretations, accommodate uncertainty, find order in chaos and often yields multiple possible solutions. Such thinking requires developed creativity through both convergent (teams excel here) and divergent (more an individual ability) cognitive approaches (Thompson 2003). Rowley and Slack (1998) highlight the lack of student critical thinking and reasoning ability as a barrier to learning.

Clear, critical thinking is the art of being able to logically assess claims (of truth) according to specified general principles in order to separate truth from non-truth (Dauer 1989; Ruchlis and Oddo 1990). This enables one to make better decisions based on the information available. Critical thinking abilities enable managers to act fairly and democratically, to take initiative and to be aware of and attempt to counter distortion and bias (Brookfield 1987).

ii. Working effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organisation, and community.

By definition, teams, groups, organisations and communities consist of groups of people, who, by pooling their individual talents and resources, may create environments of synergy so that all are exponentially better off than simply the sum of their collective talents and resources would allow (Moorhead and Griffin 1995; Charlton 2000; Robbins 2001). Teams (Hunter *et al* 1998: 79) "work together to achieve a purpose . . . are co-

operative structures . . . a form of group intelligence". The concept of corporate emotional intelligence (Carmichael *et al* 2005) encapsulates the idea that executives who integrate their emotional intelligence (Goleman 1995, 2000) capabilities can achieve strategic decision-making synergies enabling sustainable competitive advantages for their organisations.

Teams, in the form of functional, divisional, project, work-group, or cross-functional groups are commonly found in organisations for the purpose of solving more complex problems or performing more complex tasks than an individual could alone (Hunter *et al* 1998). Robbins (2001) does point out, however, that teams are not suitable for all types of work, and that they should be used only when appropriate.

Handy (1994) describes businesses as communities of people, and, as workplace environments change at an ever-increasing increasing pace (Nordstrom and Ridderstrale 2002), different ways of belonging to one's different communities need to emerge (Hunter *et al* 1998). Organisation and community leaders need to able to contribute meaningfully to the goals of those communities. Management is essentially about getting results through others, and the success of a manager depends largely on their ability to do this effectively (Robbins 2001).

Since the recognition of people as one of the key factors for organisational success (Schoeman 1997), working effectively in groups is key to management success. This encompasses all areas of group dynamics, including group development, decision making and productivity, as well as inter-group dynamics (Moorhead and Griffin1995). This last factor is important, for example, in creating strategic horizontal alignment within organisations by removing functional, divisional or geographic barriers (Fitz-enz 2000).

iii. Organizing and managing oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively.

The concepts implicit in this outcome operate at many levels (United Kingdom 2000b; SAQA 2001a). Fundamentally, it implies the application of skills such as time management, goal setting (Canfield *et al* 2000; Mintzberg 2004a), and project management, establishing personal workflow processes, personal operating principles

and even dealing with e-mail and telephone calls (Robbins 2001; Moorhead and Griffin 1995). At a deeper level it encompasses the concept of personal mastery (Senge 1990; Senge *et al* 1994), requires an enquiring mind to constantly seek better and more efficient ways of meeting one's objectives and leveraging off available resources (Canfield *et al* 2000), and also sharing those learnings with others.

Organising and managing oneself implies self-application of the fundamental management principles of planning, organising, leading and controlling, including the delivery of agreed outputs according to specified criteria (Robbins 2001). Self-management is about integrity (Canfield *et al* 2000), self-leadership, personal accountability and trustworthiness (King 2002), all of which link to the critical outcome of responsible citizenship. Computer technology is an integral part of all management functions (Boyatzis *et al* 1995), not least the control function, and business leaders "need to ensure that the necessary skills are in place for them to discharge their responsibility for internal controls" (King 2002: 11).

Knowledge management and information technology have also become key drivers of business strategy (King 2002), and are core competencies in the knowledge economy (Nordstrom and Ridderstrale 2002). A great deal of communication, including the delivery of learning, takes place via the medium of e-mail and the Internet, especially in geographically dispersed and global organisations.

iv. Collecting, analysing, organising and critically evaluating information.

Kelly (1996) describes the importance of building confidence in management decisions by basing decisions on reliable data. He describes the emotional manoeuvring and manipulations evident in many strategic meetings, resulting from attachment to uninformed opinion, gut feeling or anecdotal example. These effects are significantly reduced by the introduction of valid, reliable data, which may be obtained from scholarly publications (Robson 2003). Those with high levels of information literacy (Karelse 1998) and the ability to read critically (Davies 1996), will be in a position to differentiate and apply the more reliable sources to inform their thinking.

Collecting, analysing, organising and critically evaluating information is fundamental to making well-founded business decisions and solving problems (Kirkwood 2000);

managers need business expertise for dealing with real-world issues. Managing information in this way presupposes an ability to read critically and evaluatively (Davies 1996). The major source of reliable information is peer-reviewed published journal articles (Robson 2003), followed by other academic texts, whereas un-reviewed journal articles, magazine articles, newspaper reports and popular writings are not reliable information sources, and may be frankly misleading. Developing the ability to differentiate reliable from unreliable data would stand organisational decision makers in good stead.

Davies (1996) describes critical reading as an objective, unprejudiced evaluation of a text, taking into account an appropriate definition of the problem, sample validity, the identification of biases or confounding variables, the extent of subjective interpretation of results, the outcome measures and the generalisability of the findings. Such critical reading ability would not only enable executives to judge the quality of the information they receive, but also to critically evaluate the reports of others (Boyatzis *et al* 1995). This would stand them in good stead as decision makers, as well as validating the Master's level of the MBA qualification (SAQA 2001a), which requires such abilities. The ability to read in this way is extensively developed through the research process, which is a major part of accredited MBA degrees.

v. Communicating effectively using visual, mathematical and / or language skills in the modes of oral and / or written persuasion.

Business communication in many parts of the world, including much of South Africa, is carried out in English (Bruton-Simmonds 1992), and it follows that, in our globally emerging economy, it is necessary for current and aspirant business executives to be fluent in this language. The medium of instruction at the major business schools in South Africa is English. Locally, business communication is complicated by the fact that there are 11 official languages and English is not the first language of the vast majority of the population.

Communication is not only about careful choice of words and an appropriate vocabulary (Bruton-Simmonds 1992), but also the important non-verbal components

such as tone, nuance, emphasis and body language (Pease 1993). Misuse of these may lead to the wrong message being heard (Morris 1982).

This critical outcome includes communication mechanisms such as speeches, presentations, facilitation, training, coaching and mentoring, as well as communication channels, for example publications, advertising, videos, tape recordings, and slide presentations, which may be either written or verbal (Pease 1993; Pease and Dunn, 1995; Mintzberg 2004a). Each of these has its own attendant rules, best practices and mechanisms.

The functions and processes of communication are also included in this critical outcome, as are barriers to communication and how to overcome them. Informal and formal communication channels are important in organisations, and often relate to politics and power dynamics within companies, factors usually of great concern to managers (Robbins 2001). Gender and cultural differences may easily complicate communication, especially in today's highly diverse and politically correct society.

Written communications in organisations include instructions, policies, reports, Acts, training materials, assessments, media releases, strategy documents, proposals, and so on. They may be disseminated formally or informally, including by e-mail, which has developed its own protocol. Information and knowledge management systems store and dispense communications in specific formats and at appropriate times or on demand, as specified by a particular organisation (Moorhead and Griffin 1995).

Clearly, communication in all its forms is crucial for corporate success, and managers need to identify the "who, what, why, how, when and where" of the communications under their control in order for them to be effective.

vi. Using science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others.

This critical outcome does encompass all forms of science and technology. However, in the business context, the discussion here focuses on the use of computer technology. It goes beyond the ability to simply produce documentation to standards that would have been unheard of a few years ago, using word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software (Boyatzis *et al* 1995). Such resources are standard on most executive desktops,

and managers need to be able to apply technology to management functions, including information management and problem solving.

Since information literacy (Karelse 1998) is a vehicle for self-directed learning and knowledge creation, enabling individuals to participate in the global information society, it is a particularly important critical outcome. Information analysis in a business context generally also requires an appropriate level of numerical competence (Boyatzis *et al* 1995; Isaacs 2000). This is to enable the application of computer-based resources such as databases and spreadsheet programmes to analyse, communicate and store large volumes of information (Boyatzis *et al* 1995). It is self-evident that, to be successful, business executives no longer have the option of numerical or computer literacy.

Business schools have huge resources of knowledge available in their libraries. Students would benefit academically if they were able to more effectively utilise these resources, a skill that business schools could support by integrating "learning to learn" concepts into the programmes that they offer (Boyatzis *et al* 1995). Not only would this help students cope with an ever increasing volume of material, but would also facilitate better learning outcomes and instil an attitude of life-long learning as encouraged by SAQA (2000). Students who demonstrate a high level of applied competence on their return to the workplace are likely to experience an enhanced ROI for their educational investment (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005).

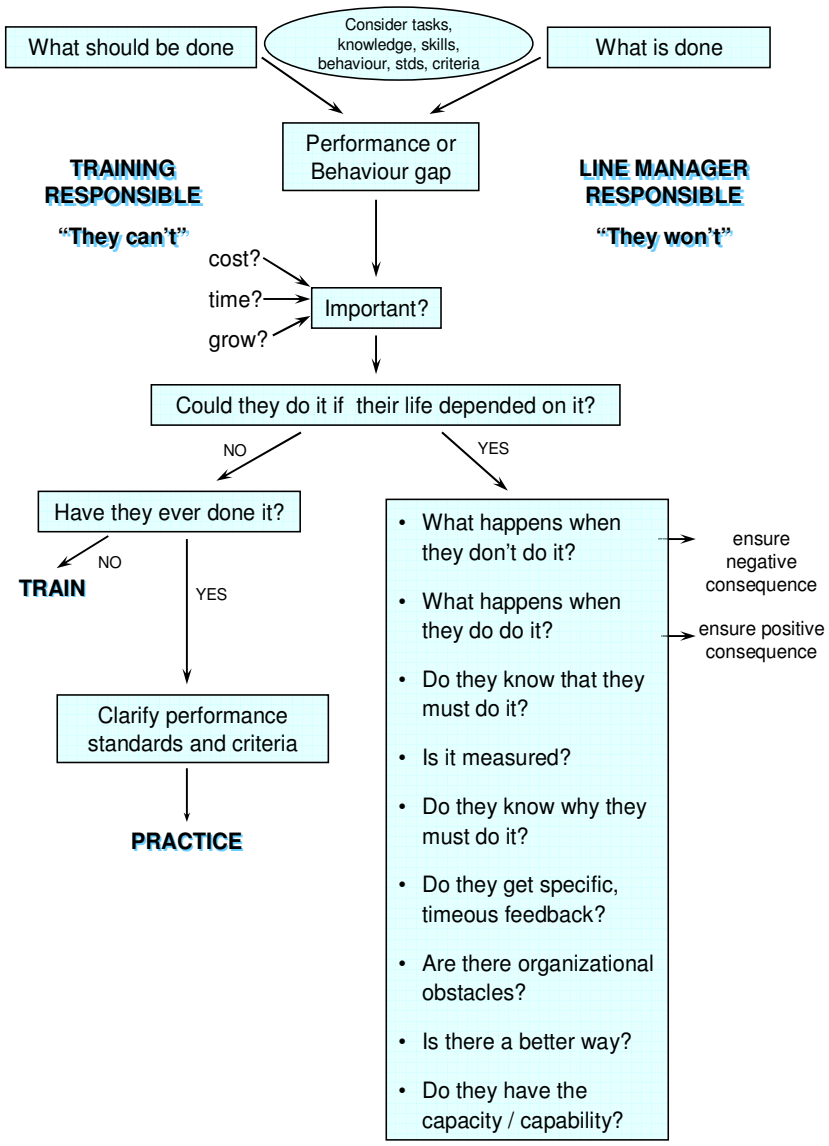
vii. Demonstrating an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

The systems thinking conceptual framework as defined by Senge (1990) has become a key strategic tool in business since it was published 13 years ago. The concept has been applied, elaborated in many business contexts and widely published (Senge 1990; McCaughan and Palmer 1994; Senge *et al* 1994). This type of thinking is key to executive data gathering and decision making because it makes it more likely that all relevant information will be gathered and taken into account (Senge 1990).

As with a research undertaking (Leedy and Ormrod 2001), clarification of the problem before one begins to work on it is crucial to its successful resolution; systems thinking supports this logical approach (McCaughan and Palmer 1994).

2.1.1.2 Competence and workplace performance

Organisational performance is the key to sustainability; performance should be measured as actual outcomes versus targeted outcomes. Mager and Pipe (1997) provide a model (Figure 2.5) that clearly differentiates between competence and performance. Competence is the ability to perform a specific task (Mager and Pipe 1997) or achieve a specific outcome (RSA 1995), whereas performance relates to the achievement of business results in the workplace.



Adapted from Mager, R.F.& Pipe, P. (1007): *Analyzing Performance Problems,* third edition, The Centre for Effective Performance, Inc.

Figure 2.5 Mager and Pipe's (1997) model differentiating competence and performance

The Mager and Pipe model (1997) makes two points clear; that not all performance discrepancies are due to lack of competence, and that competence does not necessarily lead to performance. It could be said that performance is the *application* of competence in the absence of organisational (such as lack of resources) (Mager and Pipe 1997; Gosling and Mintzberg 2004) or personal (Hersey *et al* 1996) barriers (such as lack of motivation), which leads to the achievement of organisational objectives.

In the context of this research, it is anticipated that MBA students who experience Service-Learning will be more competent managers and leaders, which in turn, will enable their employer organisations to perform at a higher level. It is also anticipated that recipient community organisations will perform at sustainably higher levels as a result of the strategic change-agent role (Jones *et al* 2001) played by the students as they support the organisations with business tools and capacity building.

2.1.2 A critical evaluation of current MBA programmes

The evolution of management education, including MBA degrees, can be traced back many years, but only a brief synopsis is discussed here. Management education is inextricably linked with the process of management, and developments in both areas are intertwined and iterative. Peter Drucker (1964:9) one of the earlier modern business writers, pointed out that, despite the fact that "economic performance is the specific function and contribution of business enterprise", there was lacking any systematic or organised dissertation on how business managers should obtain the desired results of business enterprises. This lack of organised knowledge about the practice of management is surely one of the drivers of management education.

As early as 1970 Townsend (1970:175) emphasised that the only way to learn how to manage is "on the job", a principle heavily and prolifically supported by Mintzberg (1990, 1994, 2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d; Gosling and Mintzberg 2004) in more recent times. In a similar vein, Townsend (1970:66) also warned against hiring Harvard Business School graduates on the basis that they were "trained for only three posts – executive vice-president, president and board chairman". Gordon and Howell (1959), cited in Porter and McKibbin (1988) report that, in 1955-56, Harvard and New York Universities together produced around 25% of the 4500 Business Masters graduates in

the United States, so perhaps they can be forgiven for their lofty objectives. That renowned institution has come a long way since that quote was made, although their MBA programme is still full-time, teaching non-practicing managers.

Porter and McKibbin (1988) produced some of the early comprehensive writings on management education through a large study incorporating the views of the business sector, the higher education institutions and the students (potential or future managers). Much debate at that time was around the balance between breadth and depth in MBA degrees, the extent to which they should be professional *versus* academic (Porter and McKibbin 1988:53), and the extent to which MBA students should be allowed to specialise.

Despite the 20 years that have passed since then, many of the arguments today are on similar topics, particularly around the issue of the *practical* management abilities so strongly enforced today (Gosling and Mintzberg 2004; Mintzberg 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d). This point supports the accepted models of adult learning (Kolb *et al* 1971; Kirkpatrick 1979 1996; Honey and Mumford 1992; Knowles and Holton 2000) which include the necessity for a practical element in their models; knowledge alone is not enough – it must be reflected upon in the context of theory, practiced and put to use so that it may be improved through further reflection and action.

Drucker (1964: 139) emphasised that the only *distinctive* resource that any business has is knowledge (social, economic and managerial), and how it applies its knowledge to exploiting opportunities so that it's immediate and future existence can be assured. Since knowledge is a "perishable commodity" with an increasingly short half-life, it needs to be constantly upgraded and renewed, lest the Peter Principle (Peter 1972) come into effect and organisations become populated with individuals in positions for which they either never had or have lost their competence.

Criticisms that have arisen regarding the competence of MBA graduates stem in part from the types of instruction that they have been exposed to and the ways in which the programmes are structured – curricula being considered unduly narrow (Porter and McKibbin 1988; Boyatzis *et al* 1995). These are: insufficient ability to vision and take acceptable risks; problem solving rather than problem finding; poor ability to adapt to change; poor leadership skills; poor communication and interpersonal skills; do not work well in groups; too focused on functional aspects, eg finance, operations,

marketing, at the expense of taking a holistic view; poor entrepreneurial skills, being trained for large corporations only; insufficient ability to evaluate and make decisions on ethical issues; not practical enough; have unreasonable expectations of promotion; do not know how to use information resources and have poor computer skills.

The most agreed on areas earmarked for greater emphasis were, in order of priority: business communications, entrepreneurship, international business and management information systems (Porter and McKibbin 1988).

Students' self reported strengths from attending MBA programmes included having realistic expectations, increased maturity, knowledge of how businesses actually operate, an ability to see the big picture, understanding the socio-political environment of business, a high level of motivation – as well as the functional skills that they had acquired, of which financial and analytical skills were seen by most as the most valuable (Porter and McKibbin 1988). Many of these strengths have also been reported by Carmichael and Sutherland (2005). Employers of MBAs in the Porter and McKibbin (1988) study were generally satisfied that they were purchasing the intellectual abilities that they required, with the exception that graduates tended to have poor people skills and were perceived to have a low level of organisational loyalty.

The strongest theme of criticism recently is that of practice, management practice where management skills are learned through the cycles proposed by the adult learning experts (Kolb *et al* 1971; Kirkpatrick 1979, 1996; Honey and Mumford 1992; Knowles and Holton 2000), and the key critic is Mintzberg (1990, 1994, 2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d; Gosling and Mintzberg 2004). His contention is that classroom-based management education results in distorted ideas of management that have little contextual reality. Fortunately, the development of Service-Learning as a pedagogy in MBA programmes could provide a workplace context in which real management learning can take place (Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000).

The growing focus on workplace education as a mechanism for knowledge-based skill-building, such as is being implemented in South Africa through the SDA (HSRC 1995, 1996; RSA 1998b; 2000b; 2002a) fosters the development of applied and reflexive competence in learners (RSA 1996, 2002a; Pratt *et al* 1999; Isaacs 2000) so that they are knowledgeable, skilful and able to apply themselves in a variety of work contexts,

giving them more portable qualifications and greater power over their own careers, as intended in the local legislation.

> Learning should . . . increase people's capacity to discover, define, pursue and achieve common objectives, and in the process, to develop more confident relationships with one another and the outside world.
>
> (Randall 1993: 15)

2.1.3 Business sector accountability, collaboration with higher education and social responsibility

Organisations are in constant contact with their environments, which affect them through changes, trends, technology and social and other influences, to which they must respond or adapt, as well as take care of (Drucker 1966; Porter and McKibbin 1988). The five educational aim CCFOs may play an important role in linking the business sector to both higher education and the social sector. These CCFOs, listed earlier, are:

To contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the society at large, by making it the underlying intention of any programme of learning to make an individual aware of the importance of:

a) *Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively*
b) *Participating as responsible citizens in the life of local, national and global communities*
c) *Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts*
d) *Exploring education and career opportunities*
e) *Developing entrepreneurial opportunities*

As the world of business changes, particularly with regard to technology, science and diversity (Pityana 1999), educators and businesses have to upgrade, adapt and renew their educational offerings in order to maintain a competitive edge (Boyatzis *et al* 1995). This is an ongoing process, and individuals and organisations need to be constantly learning to keep up (SAQA 2000).

The concept of lifelong learning as expounded by SAQA (2000) has been found to be important in assisting post-graduate students to transfer the skills that they learn as part of undertaking a research programme (Cryer 1998). Cryer (1998) demonstrates that these "skills" include: project management skills, resource allocation, creative thinking, accommodating change, collecting, analysing, organising and interpreting contradictory information, challenging assumptions, presenting findings in written reports and verbally, participating in groups, dealing with criticism, self-motivation, resilience, tenacity, networking and advanced computer skills. She points out that it is also important that students recognise that they have developed these skills as a by-product of their research, and articulate them to improve their marketability.

Business schools have huge resources of knowledge available to them in the form of publications, and will benefit from integrating "learning to learn" concepts into the programmes they offer (Boyatzis *et al* 1995). Not only will this help students cope with an ever increasing volume of material, but will also facilitate better learning outcomes and instil an attitude of life-long learning as encouraged by SAQA (2000). Students who demonstrate a high level of applied competence on their return to the workplace are likely to experience an enhanced ROI for their educational investment, which will positively impact on the reputation of the institution.

South Africa's history is one of ethnic fragmentation (Horwitz and Bowmaker-Falconer 1996), but in the newly democratic society, diversity is part of the social and economic reality, representing the county's identity and human assets. The workplace renaissance (Pityana 1999), with the driving forces of the EEA (RSA 1998a) and the SDA (RSA 1998b) behind it, is creating places of employment that are becoming increasingly diversified. In order to benefit from the true nature of diversity (Thomas and Ely 1996), all South Africans must learn to become culturally sensitive and learn to leverage the benefits inherent in difference. Spencer and Spencer (1993: 9) identified "cross-cultural interpersonal sensitivity" as one of the differentiators of superior job performance. The implication embedded in this outcome is that educational processes should incorporate opportunities for students to experience and internalise aesthetic and cultural sensitivity.

Consistent with the requirements to build a culture of life-long learning (SAQA 2000), individuals are encouraged to continuously seek opportunities for learning and career enhancement through awareness of alternative career pathways in their organisations.

Development of the entrepreneurial mind is critical in developing economies as, in order for economic development to take place, individuals willing to take business initiatives are essential (King 2002). The small business sector in South Africa is an important part of the economy and offers numerous opportunities for employment (Pityana 1999).

2.2 The social sector's contextual need for MBA Service-Learning

The work conducted in this research applies to a broader concept of "community" than normally comes to mind when the word is used. Soukhanov (1992) defines a community as either a group of people living in one locality, or as society generally. These are the usual recipients (implied or stated) of most Service-Learning interventions (RSA 1997b; McMillan 2000; McMillan and Saddington 2000; Stanton 2000; Wits University 2003; Bringle and Erasmus 2005). The meaning here, however, also encompasses that of a group of people with a common interest, common purpose or common identity, and is intended to include relevant organisational communities, ie those who would benefit from a business-viability related intervention within the context of the South African transformation imperatives.

Sustainability is key to continued existence and growth; there would be little point in providing a community organisation with a short-term intervention and no mechanism with which to develop the influence of that intervention. The old saying "Give a man a fish and you feed him for day; teach him how to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime" perfectly describes the essence of sustainability as intended in this research.

> Because of its connection with the world of work and citizenship, Service-Learning has much to contribute to sustainable communities.
>
> (Albert 2002: 2)

2.2.1 The scope and purpose of the non-profit sector in South Africa

The non-profit sector in South Africa falls within the scope of civil society, a force to be taken seriously in the socio-political context of South Africa (DSD 2005), and because

of the high levels of unemployment and continuing poverty in South Africa (DTI 2006a, 2006b), non-profit organisations play an important social role in the country.

The non-profit sector is also a significant player in local economies, in South Africa (Swilling and Russel 2002) as well as internationally (Harrow 2001; Brown and Kalegaonkar 2002; Costa and Chmura 2003; Masaoka and Peters 2005), accounting for a total operating expenditure (in South Africa) of R9.3 billion in 1998 (Swilling and Russell 2002). That research also established that the non-profit sector employed 7.6% of the total (formal and informal) non-agricultural workforce in the country in 1998, and, in 1999, 1.5 million volunteers participated in NPO projects and activities.

The government policy regarding these roles are two-fold; "social watch" and "service delivery" (Swilling and Russell 2002:5), encompassing the types of non-profit organisations (NPOs) in these contexts. In terms of the NPO Act (RSA 1997b:2), non-profit organisations are "a trust, company or other association of persons established for a public purpose, and the income and property of which are not distributable to its members or office bearers, except as reasonable compensation for services rendered" .

Non-profit organisations classify themselves in a number of different ways, and it is not always clear from the literature what the differences are; for example the term "non-profit organisation" (or NPO) is often used interchangeably with "non-governmental organisation" or NGO, as in DSD (2005) and Swilling and Russell (2002). However, the generally used categories of NPOs include:

- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).
- Faith Based Organisations (FBOs).
- Community Based Organisations (CBOs). Many of these are small self-supporting community organisations.
- Trusts
- Section 21 Companies
- Volunteer organisations

(Swilling and Russell 2002; DSD 2005)

The factors common to NPOs in general are that they have the following core characteristics (Swilling and Russell 2002):

- They are organised in that they are at least partially institutionalised, having structures, activities and goals, and intend to exist for a permanent or semi-permanent period,
- They are private in that they are not governmental, but can receive funding from government and can bid for government contracts,
- They control and govern themselves,
- They do not distribute any profits to shareholders, directors or other stakeholders. All profits are re-invested in the NPO for the purpose of meeting the objectives and mission that they were set up to achieve, and
- They engage a voluntary workforce component or membership to carry out operational tasks and / or make voluntary contributions.

Generally the primary purpose of NPOs is to interface with government and / or business to support public and societal causes and promote survival at the least and wellbeing where more successful. CBOs and NGOs fill important gaps in government efforts, especially in poor communities.

The scope of community organisations under consideration for the purposes of this research is not limited to the non-profit sector, and is more fully elaborated on in section 2.2.2. There are many, especially small community based organisations, not registered with the Department of Social Services (DSD), but who perform a critical role in society, often at a survivalist level (Rippon 2002). On the other hand, there are many well established, wealthy non-profit organisations who would not be targeted for assistance in a Service-Learning context for the purposes of this study, nor recommended for further interventions.

NPOs fund their operations from a number of possible sources, including donations, (a portion of which is tax deductible to the donor), grants, gifts, endowments, membership fees, fund-raising activities, or the sale of goods or services, such as may be found in charity shops, counselling services, research, education and training or medical / convalescent support and care.

With such a variety of functions to perform, community organisations, including NPOs would logically require both strategic and operational skills. As organisations, they have normal work processes to conduct, along with the types of functional activities common to other organisational types, eg facility management, marketing and sales, financial management, administration, human resources management and so on. In order to conduct their businesses effectively, it is inevitable that training and / or skills development would be required from to time. They may even implement some of the traditional models used in business, such as the Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan and Norton 1996; Kaplan 2005) or the McKinsey 7-S framework (Kaplan 2005).

2.2.1.1 Legislation affecting NPOs in South Africa

The Non Profit Organisations Act (RSA 1997), was passed to support the efforts of NPOs to contribute to the needs of their stakeholders, by establishing a regulatory framework encouraging high standards of governance and accountability (RSA 1997b). This legislation was amended in 2000 (RSA 2000c), making certain changes in NPOs operations necessary.

All NPOs are required to register with the DSD (RSA 1997b), and to submit regular reports to government – a financial report accounting for income and expenditure, as well as other standard reports, and a narrative report describing the organisation's activities and achievements. They must also endeavour to become more self sustaining, particularly in terms of managing their operating overheads. To meet these requirements, it is possible that NPOs may need to improve their business skills, particularly in the area of financial reporting.

2.2.2 The scope of community organisations in South Africa

Both internationally and locally, the definitions of who should or should not be part of civil society / the non-profit or voluntary sector / community organisations varies (Brown and Kalegaonkar 2002; Swilling and Russell 2002; Masaoka and Peters 2005).

> "by aggregating a mishmash of organizations' assets and employees, we end up with an impressive sounding but distorted story about the sector as

> a whole: gigantic numbers that put lawmakers on the alert, but that are in fact a wild mixture of apples, oranges, squid and mutton"
>
> (Masaoka and Peters 2005:5)

There are types of organisations performing community support functions, but who do not have non-profit objectives (whether they make a profit or not), such as those involved in cultural activities, education, advocacy, political pressure, recreation, small scale agricultural development, social services such as food distribution, HIV / AIDS orphanages and support, shelters – especially for abused women and children, environmentalists, animal protection, housing, burial societies, co-operatives, stokvels (a group of people contribute regularly to a fund, and members take turns in utilising the fund for their own purposes), unions and philanthropists (Swilling and Russell 2002). The DSD (undated) search facility, in addition to the above organisational types, lists business and professional associations as well as legal and international associations.

The aforementioned lists encompass groupings only, and each group comprises the wide range of organisation types and different work areas investigated in the Swilling and Russell (2002:27-32) study, reinforcing the notion that the term community organisation should be larger than the non-profit sector. The South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO), the development information portal for NGOs in South Africa (undated: 1), supports this view in describing that the term NPO . . . "is widely enough defined to capture everything from the racially exclusive cultural and welfarist organisations that have always been central to the social structure of white society, right through the entire spectrum of religious organisations to the huge and dense networks of community-based NPOs that hold African societies together."

In the South African (perhaps common to African nations and other developing countries) context, it may well be beneficial to be broad-minded and flexible in defining who Service-Learning beneficiaries should be, and it is possible that many academics delivering Service-Learning programmes of all types have their own ideas as to who deserves to benefit.

Possible inclusions could be small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) including Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) organisations who are struggling to start up viable businesses and create employment opportunities. In the context of the big picture

of a developing South Africa, it is possible that a great deal of good could be done in the country if these organisations were to be included in the scope of "community organisations" for the purpose of implementing Service-Learning in MBA programmes.

2.2.3 Business needs of South African community organisations

The NPO stakeholder base and the requirements of the NPO Act (RSA 1997b) and amended Act (RSA 2000c) both influence the types of business needs that may be required by NPOs and other community organisations. NPO stakeholders include Boards of Directors, donors from the government and the private sector, volunteers, employees, managers, beneficiary communities, customers (where goods or services are being supplied to generate income), suppliers, as well as the government and the DSD to whom they must report.

Apart from general management, administrative, fundraising, human resources, marketing and financial skills found in most organisations, these organisations may need to meet requirements specific to particular stakeholders. For example the Board would expect to see reports on accountability and governance (King 2002), donors would want to know how their donations were being utilised, so report writing skills may need to be developed, along with general communications skills including writing fundraising proposals and making presentations to potential donors.

NPO effectiveness is measured financially, despite the fact that they are not profit generating. They are still required to account for the use of the funding that they have acquired through whatever means, and need to be seen to be operating effectively and efficiently, ensuring that they serve their purpose to society (RSA 2000c; King 2002). They are also measured by the achievement of their objectives and the successful completion of projects, using agreed upon measures and indicators, much as for-profit organisations would. It is likely to be more difficult to measure the success of NPOs as many of their objectives could be termed "soft" as in beneficiary satisfaction indices rather than "hard" as in numerical or financial data. However, this does not mean that they are any less important or that they should not be measured; but it may be expensive to measure some of these factors through surveys or other labour-intensive mechanisms. It is clear that skills are required to meet the ever-increasing demands for accountability

in all organisational types around the world. Whilst for-profit organisations have training and developmental budgets, this may not always be true in civil society and community organisations.

It has been suggested (Brown and Kalegaonkar 2002:237) that management support organisations be established to assist NGOs acquire "needed managerial and organizational skills" as well as supply material, intellectual and informational resources, develop capacity, build alliances, and offer strategic support. This role could be provided by management students by offering needed support activities to community organisations of various types (Zlotkowski 1996; Stanton 2000a; Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000; Salimbene *et al* 2005; Coffey and Wang 2006).

2.3 Higher Education's contextual need for MBA Service-Learning

As outlined in the introduction, Higher Education has a critical role to play in moulding the leaders of a future South Africa, but, to achieve this, must undergo significant transformation itself. The business and financial skills needed by the non profit / informal / third sector are also required in parts of the public sector, including universities so that they may, as cited earlier, take up "the formidable challenge of integrating themselves into the competitive arena of international production and finance" and "reconstruct domestic social and economic relations to eradicate and redress the inequitable patterns of ownership, wealth and social and economic practices that were shaped by segregation and apartheid" (RSA 1997a: 4). South African higher education has set objectives to overcome "the chronic mismatch between the output of higher education and the needs of a modernising economy" (RSA 1997a:5). As a reminder from page 5, The Education White Paper (RSA 1997a: 5) is quoted:

> Higher education plays a central role in the social, cultural and economic development of modern societies. In South Africa, the challenge is to redress past inequalities and to transform higher education to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to respond to new realities and opportunities. It must lay the foundation for the development of a learning society which can stimulate, direct and mobilise the creative and intellectual energies of people to meet the challenge of reconstruction and development.

Universities need to establish mechanisms by which to connect with and develop communities within broader civil society. Wits University has taken up this challenge with such rapidity that its strategic priorities have shifted over the period that this research has been conducted. Certainly, part of the required response is that universities align their teaching, learning and research policies and practices with the legislative requirements of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (RSA 1995), and part is that they encourage community engagement practices at all levels within the university, some of which may be Service-Learning practices (Wits University 2003).

The latest Wits University strategic document, Wits 2010 (Wits 2006) has taken the transformation initiative further with the concept of "Advancement" which includes a drive to build strategic relationships and alliances, not only locally but broadly and internationally, and to develop a strong third stream income to support the development of scarce skills, including management and entrepreneurial skills, within the country.

The transformation initiatives started by the CHE and implemented through the HEQC, have been ongoing, and have run in parallel with one another, driving the improvement of standards through quality assurance mechanisms in key areas of higher education (Figure 1.1). The Directorates for Programme Accreditation (CHE 2004a, 2004b, 2004e), Institutional Audits (CHE 2004c, 2004d) and Capacity Development (CHE 2004f, 2005) have been the drivers of transformation in the key areas of Teaching and Learning, Research and Community engagement.

Service-Learning has been implemented around the world over several years:

> . . . . higher education has begun to embrace a "scholarship of engagement" (Boyer 1990), be it manifested as experiential education, Service-Learning, undergraduate research, community-based research, the scholarship of teaching and learning movement, or stronger relationships with local communities. A scholarship of engagement is seen to link theory and practice, cognitive and affective learning, and colleges with communities. Such a paradigm of teaching and learning seemingly breaches the bifurcation of lofty academics with the lived reality of everyday life to promote critical inquiry and reflective practice across complex and contested local and international issues (Butin 2006:273).

The practice appears to address a wide range of social and educational issues, many of which have been seen to be affecting South Africa. Implementation of the pedagogy may accelerate transformation of higher education in South Africa (Erasmus 2005), and, in so doing, have wide ranging social and economic benefits.

It should be noted at this point, that, although most of what has been written about Service-Learning describes positive experiences, there are limits to its broad-based value and especially to its institutionalisation (Butin 2006).

However, these are issues for further investigation in the South African context; the purpose of this research was to establish the merit of, and build a foundation for implementing Service-Learning into MBA courses, to answer the simple question "Can it work?" Assuming an affirmative answer, further research can be undertaken to establish mechanisms to tackle deeper and wider ranging issues.

2.3.1. Service-Learning around the world and in South African Universities

Service-Learning has been implemented in various forms. Berry and Chisholm (1999) describe service-learning initiatives in 33 countries around the world. Other research highlights the application of Service-Learning in 30 institutions from nine Asian countries (International Christian University 2002), in the Americas, Asia and Western and Eastern Europe (Chisholm 2003), in Mexico (Espinoza 2001), the United States (Reardon and Lohr 1997; White and Ramaley 1997; Stanton 2000a, 2000b) and in Botswana, Costa Rica, Ghana, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria and the United States (Perold and Omar 1997; Perold 1998).

It may be observed from the dates of the literature that Service-Learning is a relatively recent innovation. In the USA, community engagement began in the 1970's, based on the ideas of Dewey (1963, cited in Bender *et al* 2006), which is one of the earliest references obtained relating to the practice.

In South Africa, Service-Learning has been identified as a key initiative in the transformation of higher education (UCT undated; RSA 1997a; HEQC 2001; RSA 2002b; Wits 2003). Wits University incorporated the principle of Service-Learning into its strategic plan, "Shaping our Future" (Wits, 1999), which acknowledges the role of higher education in economic and societal transformation. In order to demonstrate

commitment to these philosophies, Wits (1999, 2003), has identified amongst others, the following strategies:

- To sustain direct links between teaching and research
- To bring research and the community closer together
- To pursue and develop collaborative academic initiatives and programmes with other tertiary institutions . . . joint activities with partners from industry and commerce, local and provincial government, NGOs and organs of civil society
- Promoting and introducing opportunities for student involvement in a range of community-based activities, including those that earn academic credit.

Wits University, along with seven other local universities, joined forces in the Community Higher Education Service Partnership Programme (CHESP), which runs under the Joint Education Trust (JET) in South Africa. The funding provided by the Ford Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation has supported research into projects for integrating community service into teaching and research in higher education. Exploratory research conducted in terms of the grant (Perold and Omar, 1997; Perold, 1998 cited in Lazarus *et al*, 2000) established that:

- Most higher education institutions had included the notion of Service-Learning into their mission statements. However,
- Few had policies aimed at effecting this community service component.
- Most higher education institutions implemented and supported a range of community service projects, although these were not necessarily linked to learning objectives.
- The community service projects were initiated by innovative students and academics within the institution, not as a deliberate institutional strategy.
- Few of the projects embraced the three aspects of teaching, research, and service.
- Where projects included all three aspects of teaching, research and service, and where a partnership had been established between participating constituencies, the benefits to community, academics, students and service providers were significant.

Lazarus (2004) shows the South African Service-Learning courses from 2001-2004. These, sorted by total courses conducted over the period may be seen in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 JET / CHESP supported Service-Learning courses run in South Africa from 2001-2004 (Lazarus 2004)

Higher Education Institution	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
University of the Free State	12	18	4	8	42
University of the Witwatersrand	5	15	6	2	28
University of Natal Pietermaritzburg	12	14	0	0	26
University of the Western Cape	2	6	9	7	24
University of the Transkei	4	7	6	5	22
University of Natal Durban	5	7	2	1	15
Central University of Technology	0	0	0	7	7
Pentech	0	0	0	7	7
University of Cape Town	0	0	0	6	6
Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg)	0	0	0	5	5

Lazarus (2004) reports that only two of the courses were business related; one being for the management of SMMEs and the other was in the field of economics. Both were undergraduate courses. Of the 6930 students participating in the courses listed in Table 2.2, 423 were at Masters level (6.1%).

The CHESP institutions have developed strategies for implementing community service into academic teaching and research (Lazarus *et al* 2000; Lazarus 2004) in support of local legislation (RSA 1997a). The figures in Table 2.2 show declining numbers of Service-Learning courses, but do not include the drive over the past three years. Local and international conferences, workshops and capacity development initiatives have been held, collaborative links established and practices implemented. Links to these and many other resources may be found on the CHESP website www.chesp.org.za.

Comprehensive documentation (Bender *et al* 2006, HEQC, 2006) encompassing a Resource for Higher Education and a Good Practice Guide has recently been made available free of charge from the HEQC as a result of this research. In addition, a special edition of *Acta Academica* (Bringle and Erasmus 2005) has focused on additional South African research into Service-Learning across disciplines and levels of

higher education. These three documents in particular provide a solid basis for any higher education institution in South Africa to create, implement and research Service-Learning in the local context.

2.3.2 The Service-Learning concept

Service-Learning has been defined as:

> ….. a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organised service activity that meets identified community needs, and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.
>
> (Bringle and Hatcher 1995)

Two early models were identified in the literature; both are illustrated in Figure 2.6. The first is that referred to by the University of Cape Town (UCT undated). This model reflects the overlapping relationship between the bodies involved; the university, the community and the service provider. This model was also referred to by Wits University (2003). The second model, developed during the JET research (Perold 1998) illustrates the links and overlaps between the academic environment, the community and the civic or service aspect, rather than the service provider (Figure 2.6). Both have value; the first in articulating the players, the second in articulating the objectives.

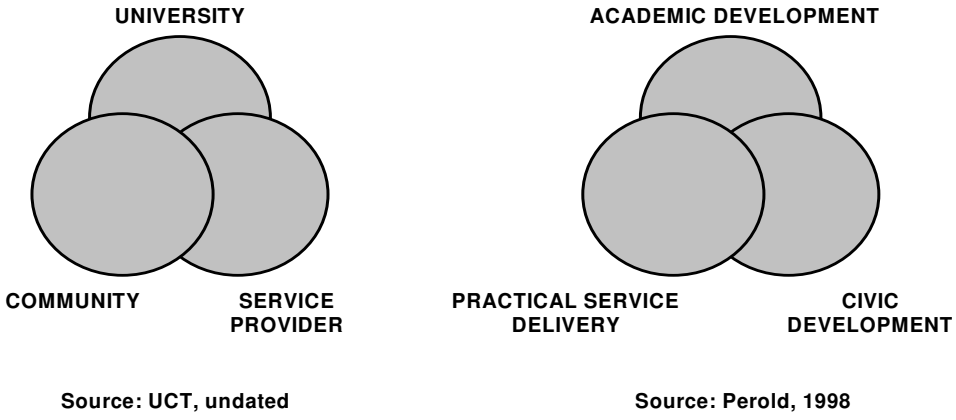


Figure 2.6: Two Service-Learning models (sources as identified in graphic)

However, Bringle (2005) developed and has presented a more comprehensive model, inclusive of both teaching and research aspects of academia, to demonstrate a variety of mechanisms through which Higher Education institutions may become involved in community engagement. His model is illustrated in Figure 2.7.

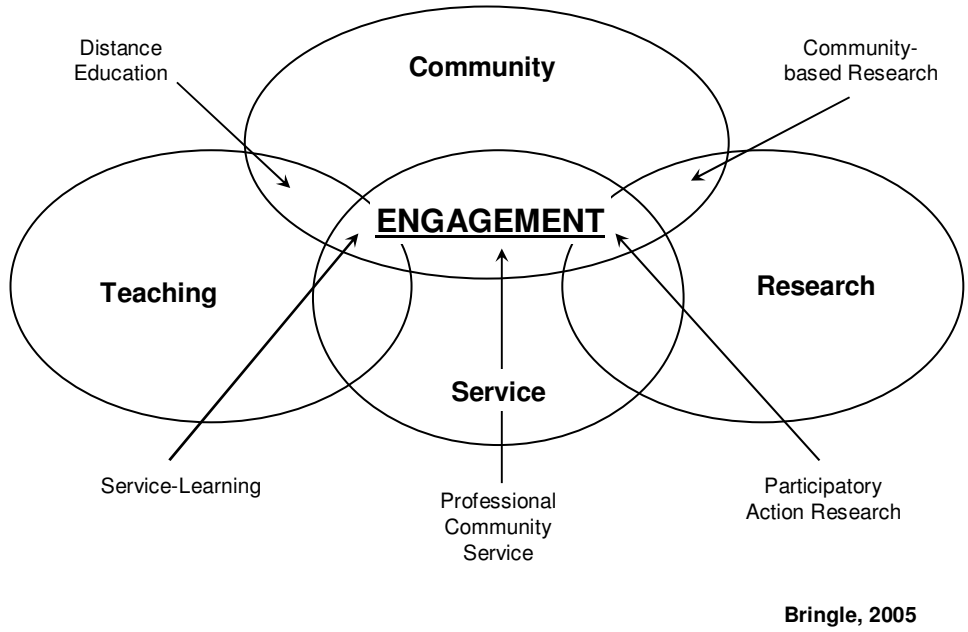


Figure 2.7 Bringle's model (2005) of Higher Education Community engagement

SAQA's incorporation of foundational, practical and reflexive competence components into learning outcomes is to maximise the applicability of the learning in the business environment. Here, this environment is created through Service-Learning. The knowledge component, the practical application of that knowledge plus the student's own experience and worldview are used to construct meaning in a range of contexts, giving them an adaptable and flexible approach to the rapidly changing business world, in which they are more likely to achieve success (RSA 1995).

The Service-Learning methodology focuses on student experiences and application of their theory (McMillan, 2000), in the real world of work (Albert 2002). This application, together with strategically guided reflection (Bringle and Hatcher 1999; Griffith 1999; McMillan 2000; Bender *et al* 2006) leads students to the discovery of greater meaning from their experiences (Boyer 1996; Bringle and Hatcher 1999; Bender *et al* 2006, HEQC 2006). The nature of Service-Learning thus dovetails well with the

concepts of experiential learning (Butin 2006) already described, and it can therefore be suggested as an effective adult learning methodology.

In the context of the research proposed here, a slightly different approach is suggested (Figure 2.3) in order to accommodate stakeholder contexts and processes as well as principles of performance as the end result of Service-Learning. In this study, the entity referred to in other work as the service provider is defined here as a community organisation. The three interacting entities under investigation are the MBA degree, the community organisation and students as managers.

Whilst the early models in Figure 2.6 are useful, they do not go far enough towards rebuilding the economy and civil society. The UCT (undated) model identifies the players, but does not describe the nature of the end result, appearing to focus more on process than outcome. In such a model, it would be feasible to undertake service-learning projects that involve doing things *for* the community, such as building a road. Whilst this is admirable, and would no doubt enhance the competence of the students, it does not support community development or capacity building.

The Perold (1998) model goes further in that it promises development through experiential and practical learning activities. However, to be meaningful, "development" should be planned as the result of a gap analysis, and then measured against agreed criteria. "Success" or "failure" would imply meeting or not meeting the criteria – in other words, performance. Sustainable performance is built on applied capability (RSA 2000) combined with appropriate motivation (Hersey *et al* 1996; Mager and Pipe 1997). Service-Learning initiatives need to address sustainable performance if they are to make a difference to the economy and to civil society.

In addition, experiential learning is a fact of life in business schools, and is a primary aspect of adult learning (Kolb 1984; Kolb *et al* 1971; Knowles and Holton 2000), so is assumed in this model. Business school students at WBS undertake practical assignments as 50% of their course mark. These are usually carried out within the business sector employing them; the difference here is that their assignment will constitute 100% of their mark, will be "real" in the sense that they will be delivering an actual output for an actual customer (the community organisation), and they will conduct their assignments in community organisations rather than commercial organisations.

Service-learning complements case-based learning through the common framework of the undisputed Kolb (1984) model of learning (Stacey *et al* 2001) in Figure 2.9. The published literature (Dumas *et al* 2000; Harkavy *et al* 2000; Jones-Evans *et al* 2000; Erasmus 2005) strongly supports an action learning approach to student Service-Learning interventions and an action research approach to conducting investigations into Service-Learning in tertiary educational institutions.

2.3.3 A theoretical framework for Service-Learning in MBA courses

Service-Learning adds concrete experience to adult learning interventions that they should have in order to optimise learning, but seldom do, as seen in the description of learning methodologies employed in MBA programmes in section 2.3.3.4.

2.3.3.1 Models of adult learning and learning styles

Adults learn best through experiential learning (Kolb *et al* 1971; Kolb 1984; Linstead 1990; Honey and Mumford 1992; Dawson 1994; Brock and Cameron 1999; Desai *et al* 2001) that is active and collaborative (Margolis and Swan 1999; Frazier and Keller 1992; Kuh 2003) and includes opportunities to reflect and to practice (Kolb 1984; Honey and Mumford 1992).

Adults learn by doing, and an action component is essential for real learning to take place (Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000; Erasmus 2005; Felder and Brent 2005). They also need facilitated conceptual understanding and a logical course structure (Westermann *et al* 2002), which may be enhanced by good relationships with staff (McNary 1994; Rowley and Slack 1998; Haggis 2002). Adults prefer informal relationships and need to feel safe to question (Dawson 1994).

Kolb's (1984) model, in Figure 2.8 is based on the two independent dimensions of a) perceiving, in which "feeling" and "thinking" oppose one another, and b) processing, in which "watching" and "doing" oppose one another.

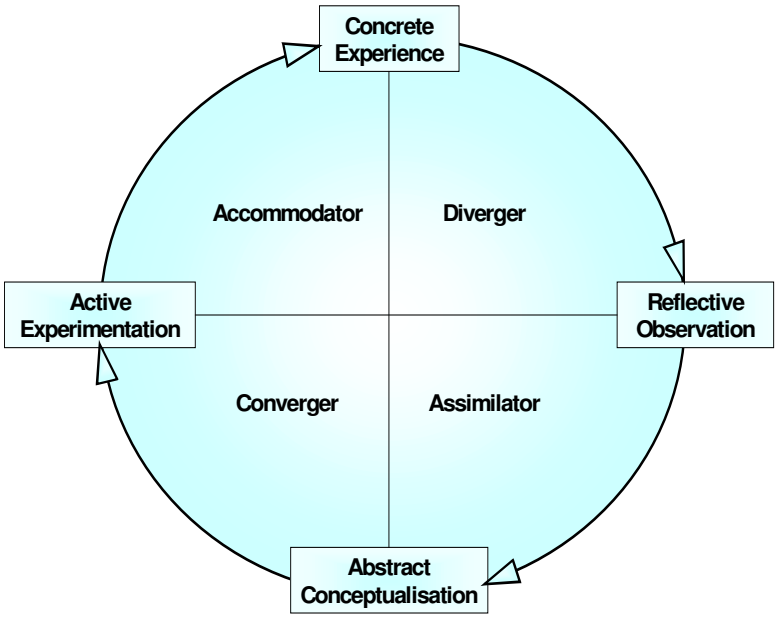


Figure 2.8 Kolb's model of experiential learning and the four learning styles (Kolb *et al* 1971; Kolb 1976, 1984; Loo 2002)

He describes that initiation of a learning episode begins with a concrete experience (feeling) in which an individual perceives a phenomenon. They then reflect on the experience (watching), gathering information and formulating thoughts or theories about the experience, then conceptualise theories about it (thinking), then experiment or try out new ways of doing things (doing).

Once they have experimented then they apply their new knowledge or skill back at the workplace, having another concrete experience, which may trigger another reflection and so on (Kolb *et al* 1971; Kolb 1976, 1984; Loo 2002). The Honey and Mumford (1992) learning styles model is based on almost identical premises, although their terminology is slightly different; their Stage 1 is also experiencing; Stage 2 is reviewing, which can easily be equated to reflection; Stage 3 is concluding from the experience, or articulating lessons learned from it, and Stage 4 is planning the next steps, taking into account the lessons from the initial experience.

The facilitators of MBA degrees have many ways of applying adult learning principles to enhance the learning experiences of their students, and thus facilitate deeper levels of

understanding. This should, in turn, lead to more effective application of the newly acquired skills back in the workplace, enhancing the value of the course of study (Argyris 1991).

Honey and Mumford (1992) emphasise that true learning is continuous and that all stages of the learning cycle should be included in the process. For example, simply having an experience will not lead to learning – it needs to be reflected upon (and there are many models for structuring reflective activities (Bender *et al* 2006, HEQC 2006)) before any learning at all can take place. Some individuals prefer an academic and conceptual approach to learning by only reflecting and concluding. Whilst this may be appropriate in academic institutions that focus primarily on knowledge creation and acquisition, it is insufficient for a professional qualification, which requires a more pragmatic approach.

In the context of Service-Learning, the concrete experience would take place in the community or, in the case of this study, the community organisation as demonstrated in Figure 2.9. The reflection or reviewing process followed by the abstract conceptualisation stages could take place in study groups, in self study or in the classroom, where theories and concepts would be discussed in the context of the concrete experience.

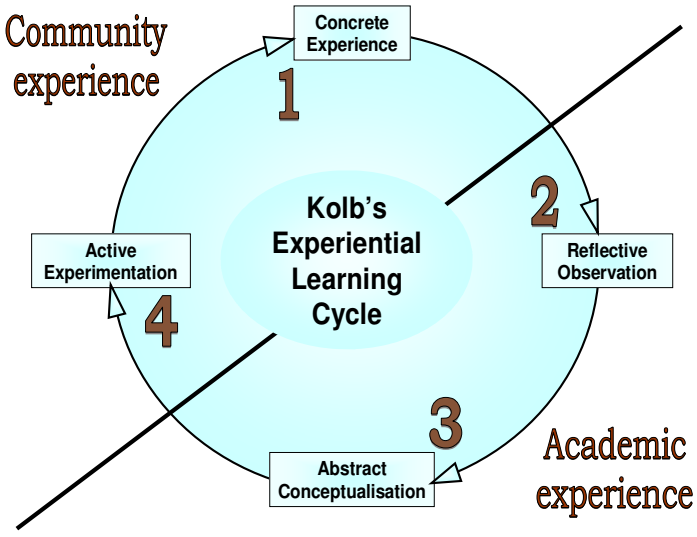


Figure 2.9 Kolb's experiential learning cycle (Kolb *et al* 1971) in the context of Service-Learning

Structured reflection can result in deeper learning than merely thinking about an experience, since a particular focus or point of view can be encouraged (Bringle and Hatcher 1999).

Argyris' (1977) model of single and double-loop learning is also applicable to Service-Learning as a pedagogy. He describes a learning process that includes the elements described by Kolb (1984). His single loop learning consists of the first and fourth elements of Kolb's cycle; identifying a problem (having a concrete experience), and then applying a remedy to it (active experimentation). He goes on to write that *real* learning only takes place if a learner reflects on the experience (reflective observation) first, gathers information with which they formulate a theory (abstract conceptualisation), and only then takes action to solve the problem. These extra steps enable the learner to answer the question "why?" contextualising the problem, which in turn facilitates adult learning (Knowles and Holton 2000). Whilst this approach is somewhat different to that suggested by Kolb, the elements are common. Haggis (2002) investigated published models of adult learning and teaching, comparing them to student accounts of their post-graduate learning experiences. She suggests that the adult learning process is not a simple one, that there is no one best way for all individuals in all circumstances, and that theories of adult learning should not be seen as "universal truths" to be simply applied for academic success.

2.3.3.2 Reflection as a core activity in Service-Learning

Reflection is core to adult learning (Kolb *et al* 1971; Kolb 1984; Knowles and Holton 2000; Honey and Mumford 19992; Bringle and Hatcher 1999). As such, the development of this relatively new methodology must, by virtue of justifying its theoretical foundations, include reflective activities. Writers on the topic of management education (Boyatzis *et al* 1995; Porter and McKibbin 1988; Mintzberg 2004a) have stated that insufficient practical application is included in MBA education, and Mintzberg (2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d; Gosling and Mintzberg 2003, 2004) has made repeated references to the fact that managers need to reflect, and that management education needs to include reflective activities.

Writers on the implementation of Service-Learning (Bringle and Hatcher 1999; Rama *et al* 2000; Stacey et al 2001; Stanton 2000a; Bringle 2005; Bringle and Erasmus 2005; Bender *et al* 2006, HEQC 2006; Stanton 2005; Wittmer 2004; Butin 2006) all include reflection as part of the process, and reflective diaries of some sort are invariably part of the assessment process, whether formative or summative.

Bringle (2005) and Stanton (2005) emphasise that reflection must be an active, cognitive activity, engaging students' minds to intentionally relate their experiences to specific learning objectives, and to do this, they must focus their attention on what they are doing; it is *active*. The reflective activities should be ongoing, take different forms, be connected to the course content and included in the course assessment.

Bringle (2005) also encourages both retrospective and prospective reflection; what happened? What does it mean? What do we do next? This is one of the simpler models of reflection, labelled the "what, so what, now what" model.

The South African Guide (Bender *et al* 2006) has devoted almost an entire chapter (pages 56-77) to reflection and outlined several structured models for reflective activities contributed by Bringle and Hatcher. Embedded in the remainder of that chapter are assessment principles and methodologies, inextricably linked to the notion of reflection.

2.3.3.3 MBA learning methodologies

Learning methodologies in MBA courses have been classified in terms of a number of different models (Linstead 1990; Dyrud 1997). Some of these clearly include at least some of the elements of good practice described in the previous section, but others, determined to be less effective (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005) tend to lack the active, in some cases, the reflective aspects of learning. For example interactive lectures where discussions in class and mutual learning are encouraged (Rothwell 1996; Malone 1997; Evans and Abbott 1998; Margolis and Swan 1999; Phipps *et al* 2001; Haggis 2002) were reported by Carmichael and Sutherland (2005) to be more effective than formal lectures, in which interaction was minimised.

Cases, syndicate work, panel discussions with industry experts, guest speakers and simulations were more favoured than passive activities such as watching videos in class.

Reflective activities were not seen as a popular learning methodology, possibly because of the negative effect of the heavy workload reported (Carmichael and Sutherland 2005) and reflection can be a time consuming and mentally taxing activity.

Kenworthy-U'Ren (2000:58) contextualises the value of including Service-Learning in management education by emphasising not only the value of linking the experiential activity to conceptual learning, but the fact that this methodology specifically, "provides students with a non-traditional, service oriented social context for management learning. It challenges them to confront, sort through and excel in the dynamic, chaotic, non-linear world of a community-based organisation. Real world learning takes place as they assume the role of professional consultants producing goods [and services] that will, in fact, be used."

As described earlier, Mintzberg (1990, 1994, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d) has levelled a great deal of criticism at the educators of managers for the lack of real workplace experience and the lack of reflection in management education and MBA courses.

2.3.3.4 Critical principles of Service-Learning

The core principles or "must haves" of Service-Learning differ slightly from author to author. For example Stacey *et al* (2001) give the following principles of good practice:

- Academic credit is for learning, not service
- Do not compromise academic rigour
- Set learning goals for students
- Establish criteria for selecting community placements
- Provide educationally sound mechanisms to harvest community learning
- Minimise the distinction between students' community learning roles and the classroom learning role
- Re-think the faculty instructional role
- Prepare for the uncertainty and variation in student learning outcomes
- Maximise the community responsibility and orientation of the course

Stanton (2000a, 2000b) and Kenworthy-U'Ren (2000) both emphasise academic rigour, knowledge development and reciprocity (both parties must benefit from and learn from

each other). Later, Stanton (2005) identifies that the Service-Learning experience is part of a credit-bearing educational learning programme in which structured service activities take place to the benefit of the community. Structured, critical reflection on the service activity is essential and should lead to better course content learning, civic learning (including citizenship, public leadership, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, cultural appreciation and social justice learning).

Bringle (2005) focuses on two major concepts, viz. a) reflection – to explore "perplexity", a term coined by Dewey (1963), to clarify areas of confusion and doubt, and activities to structure learning from the service experience; and b) reciprocity, to include criteria for selecting and working with partners and participating in continuous dialogue to structure the service experience.

The South African Good Practice Guide (HEQC 2006b:25), recommends that all Service-Learning courses in South Africa include:

- Relevant and meaningful service to the community (in the case of this research, the community organisation). The service must be meaningful, not only to the community, but also to the students and to the institution – the service intervention must be negotiated and agreed with the community so that the criterion of reciprocity be met. The intervention should be meaningful to the community and improve their quality of life, and students must meet the stated course outcomes.

- Enhanced academic learning – course outcome achievements should be enriched through the practical experience by ensuring that there is a close linkage between the course objectives and the service objectives.

- Purposeful civic learning / social responsibility. This type of learning prepares students for their citizenship role – as described in the CCFOs, and includes knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

- Structured opportunities for reflection. Service-Learning theorists regard reflection as crucial in order to transform, clarify, reinforce and expand student learning through relating their experiences to deeper theoretical learning, a greater awareness of personal values and a sense of social responsibility.

These latter criteria are those most likely to be included in Service-Learning courses developed and implemented within the South African context.

2.3.4 Service-Learning experiences in management education and MBA courses

> Service-Learning represents perhaps the most effective teaching tool available to the contemporary management professor.
>
> . . . It provides students with exposure to the vast network of interdependencies of business and society as well as expansive real-world management experience that gives traction to theory – preparing them to be workers in the economy and citizens in a democracy.
>
> (Papamarcos 2005:325, 326)

Service-Learning has been implemented in management education (Kolenko *et al* 1996) and MBA programmes (Coffey and Wang 2006) in some countries, although not to a great extent, and not in South Africa until this research was conducted. The outcomes of such courses encompass three major areas; a) subject matter learning or intellectual skills; b) generic skills learning and c) personal growth (Kolenko *et al* 1996; Zlotkowski 1996; Rama *et al* 2000; Coffey and Wang 2006).

A valuable resource for those intending to implement Service-Learning into management education programmes (which may or may not include MBA programmes) is the American Association of Higher Education's (AAHE) book in their series on Service-Learning in the Disciplines (Godfrey and Grasso 2000).

Rama *et al* (2000: 661-664) have conducted a systematic review of the outcomes of Service-Learning courses, which they present in tabular format. Some of these outcomes have been included in Table 2.3 where appropriate, but the full paper is well worth acquiring for its sheer comprehensiveness.

Of interest in this research is the fact that the outcomes observed and reported by the authors listed include, and in many cases go beyond, the CCFOs that are the basis of the generic management skills under investigation in this study. A summary of these findings are presented in Table 2.3

Table 2.3 Learning outcomes from Service-Learning Management education and MBA courses (authors as listed)

Learning outcome described	Authors
Leadership	Zlotkowski 1996 Stanton 2000a Rama *et al* 2000 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Coffey and Wang 2006
Teamwork	Rama *et al* 2000 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Coffey and Wang 2006
Community and social awareness and Social responsibility	Kolenko *et al* 1996 Zlotkowski 1996 Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000 Rama *et al* 2000 Wittmer 2004 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Steiner and Watson 2006
Recognition and management of complexity in problems	Rama *et al* 2000 Papamarcos 2005
Decision making	Rama *et al* 2000 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Steiner and Watson 2006
Problem solving	Rama *et al* 2000 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Coffey and Wang 2006
Communication and interpersonal skills	Rama *et al* 2000 Tucker and McCarthy 2001 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Papamarcos 2005 Coffey and Wang 2006

Learning outcome described	Authors
Critical thinking	Rama *et al* 2000 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Papamarcos 2005 Coffey and Wang 2006
Creative thinking	Papamarcos 2005
Strategic thinking	Rama *et al* 2000
Evaluation of information	Rama *et al* 2000 Coffey and Wang 2006
Leveraging technology	Zlotkowski 1996 Rama *et al* 2000
Managing diversity and cultural differences	Zlotkowski 1996 Rama *et al* 2000 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Papamarcos 2005
Life skill development	Zlotkowski 1996 Rama *et al* 2000
Deeper sense of own value system	Zlotkowski 1996 Rama *et al* 2000 Wittmer 2004 Steiner and Watson 2006
Project planning and management	Rama *et al* 2000 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Papamarcos 2005
Academic / subject matter learning / cognitive competencies / increased depth of understanding / integration of theory and practice	Zlotkowski 1996 Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000 Rama *et al* 2000 Wittmer 2004 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Papamarcos 2005 Steiner and Watson 2006 Coffey and Wang 2006

Learning outcome described	Authors
Open to managing uncertainty	Rama *et al* 2000 Papamarcos 2005
Better career planning	Rama *et al* 2000 Papamarcos 2005
Deeper sense of ethical issues	Zlotkowski 1996 Rama *et al* 2000 Wittmer 2004 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Steiner and Watson 2006
Personal responsibility / personal insight	Kolenko *et al* 1996 Rama *et al* 2000 Steiner and Watson 2006
Corporate citizenship	Kenworthy-U'Ren 2003
Conflict management	Salimbene *et al* 2005
Stakeholder management	Salimbene *et al* 2005
Taking action / implementing	Kolenko *et al* 1996 Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000 Godfrey *et al* 2005 Salimbene *et al* 2005 Papamarcos 2005 Coffey and Wang 2006
Lifelong learning	Kolenko *et al* 1996 Zlotkowski 1996 Godfrey *et al* 2005

2.3.5 Service-Learning in the MBA curriculum

The MBA degree is one of the best-known academic brands of qualification worldwide (Tunca 2003; MBAInfo undated; Association of MBAs 2003) and numerous business schools around the world offer it as their primary product. These programmes provide students with the means to acquire skills, knowledge and worldviews appropriate to management in a business environment. Although learning facilitators have not been in

a position to assess application of the acquired competence back at the workplace – ie "applied competence" (RSA 2000a), they can apply learning methodologies that help to internalise learning and build good academic and business practices.

Students have specific expectations of the MBA experience; their desired learning outcomes have been identified (Carmichael 2005); these are illustrated in Figure 2.10. The frequency of each outcome (f) has been displayed at the end of each bar (n=54).

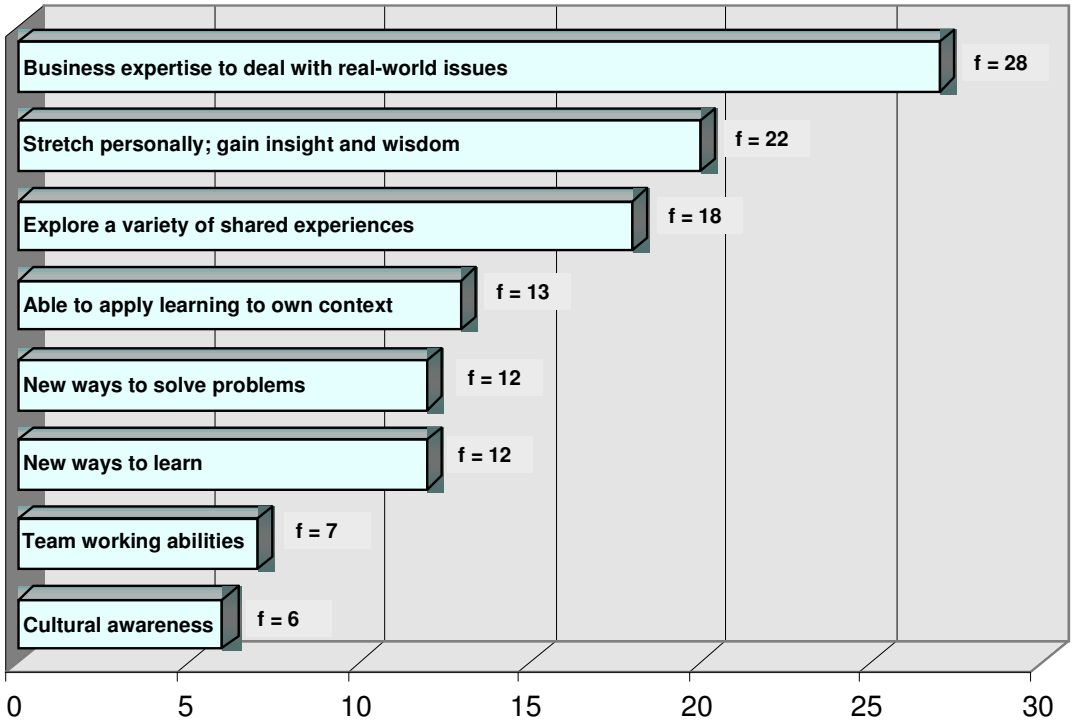


Figure 2.10: Desired student outcomes of MBA learning (Carmichael 2005)

The Service-Learning methodology, because it incorporates direct application within an authentic work situation, has the potential to meet all of the identified student requirements.

The underlying principle proposed here is that of building community organisational performance through student intervention as consultant (Kenworthy-U'Ren 2000; Jones *et al* 2001) to that organisation, within their field of expertise. Currently, at WBS, MBA

students submit individual (25% of the final grade) and syndicate (25% of the final grade) assignments as well as write an exam (50% of the final grade) for each course that they undertake.

The assignments generally involve application of the principles of the discipline that they are studying to a case study or to a real work situation. Since all of the students are either currently employed or have been employed, they normally select an organisation within the business sector that they have access to. This provides them with a work context, but it is seldom that the outputs of their endeavours are utilised by the organisations that they interact with.

2.3.5.1 Course structures and outcomes

The available literature on Service-Learning includes a number of examples of business education and MBA syllabi, which clearly show how the Service-Learning component is integrated with knowledge acquisition (for a range of examples see Appendix 1.

Although published MBA specific outcomes have been discussed in the previous section, outcomes from Service-Learning courses in other disciplines are outlined here, as some of them may become evident in MBA education over time. Bringle (2005) is quite clear that there are three types of outcomes from Service-Learning:

- Academic development
- Life skills, eg racial tolerance and cultural understanding
- Civic responsibility

Certainly the outcomes to be sought through including Service-Learning in MBA curricula in South Africa are consistent with those listed in Table 2.3, even though these are derived from management education courses in general.

2.3.5.2 Evaluation, measures of performance and student assessment

In the context of the Australian Qualifications Framework, Isaacs (2001) describes assessment as being integral to learning, rather than purely as a mechanism to establish the grade of the student. He defines formative assessment as feedback given to the

student for guidance, to direct their next phase of learning, and summative assessment as a contributor to their grade. This contrasts with the South African approach, in which formative assessment is any assessment activity that takes place during the course of learning and tests part of the course material only, while summative assessment is that which takes place at the end of a course, including the content of the entire course (SAQA, 2003). Either type of assessment may contribute to the final grade.

Bringle (2005) expects that Service-Learning assessment should include assessments of student learning in terms of the expected outcomes of the course (content), course satisfaction surveys, pre- and post-tests, overall grades and course attendance. These aspects cover Kirkpatrick's (1979, 1996) and Phillips' (1996, 1997) first two or possibly three levels of evaluation as demonstrated in Figure 2.2.

One of the difficulties, as always in university education, is to assess levels four (behaviour change) and level five (Return on Investment) of learning interventions. A possible way of including these higher levels, or at least level four assessment could be to request that part of the assessment be contributed by the community organisation in which the students have worked.

There is some feeling (Rama *et al* 2000; Steinke and Buresh 2002), though by no means universal (Bringle *et al* 2004), that examinations are not appropriate as an assessment methodology for Service-Learning courses, because exams are not designed to measure innovative thinking and judge experiential learning.

The former authors recommend that longer research papers or structured reflective journals be allowed to substitute for exams. They also point out that, unless assessments are designed to evaluate thinking skills, there may be a poor correlation between student grades and actual learning – a serious academic validity issue.

Should the major part of Service-Learning assessment be linked to such structured reflective journals or research papers, it may be possible to judge higher order thinking skills, such as may be seen in Bloom's taxonomy of educational outcomes (Bloom 1956a), still in use today (Bender *et al* 2006).

The cognitive levels in the taxonomy provide the assessor with a framework to use as a basis for judging the depth of cognitive learning from written assignments or journals. Each level assumes that the previous, simpler levels have been achieved. The levels are:

1. Knowledge (the lowest level of cognitive outcome)
2. Comprehension
3. Application
4. Analysis
5. Synthesis
6. Evaluation (the highest level of cognitive outcome)

Student self-reports of their own learning are used in Service-Learning courses (Steinke and Buresh 2002), but clearly bias would be introduced. This method of assessment should be backed up or triangulated with actual assessment of their assignments or journals, using criteria, tools and / or measurement scales (Bringle *et al* 2004) designed to measure levels of reflection and thinking skills, which may include content analysis (Rama *et al* 2000; Steinke and Buresh 2002; Wittmer 2004) and quantitative measures of complexity.

Bringle *et al* (2004), in their book of measurement scales for Service-Learning, suggest considering structured or unstructured conversations or interviews with students, student portfolios or reflective journals, peer or other stakeholder evaluations (eg from the community or community organisation), as well as the use of formalised, standard tools to measure the specific desired learning outcomes of the course.

2.4 Literature review summary

The purpose of this research undertaking was to establish the merit of pursuing investigations into the implementation of Service-Learning as a pedagogy into MBA programmes in South Africa. The sub-problems do not fall neatly beneath the identified problems, but fall across them; these linkages are demonstrated in Table 1.1 on page 11.

The inter-related contexts of the study are those of a) the business sector, with its requirement for appropriately skilled managers and leaders, b) the social sector within which are situated the community organisations with their own business related needs and c) higher education, particularly with reference to its transformation imperative.

Figure 2.3 on page 18 illustrates the linkages between the different contexts, processes and performance of the entities under investigation.

The mind-map provided in Figure 2.4 on page 20 illustrates the first three title and sub-title levels of the literature review, so that the connections between the whole and the parts can be seen simultaneously.

The literature, including that already published from work conducted in the early stages of this study (Carmichael 2005; Carmichael and Sutherland 2005; Carmichael and Stacey 2006), indicates that SAQA's CCFOs may be regarded as key generic management meta-competencies, which underlie the functional workplace skills of managers.

South Africa's economic growth is being hampered by the lack of managerial talent, and educational methodologies that build appropriate applied and reflexive competencies effectively would be welcomed as a means to supporting the achievement of the objectives of ASGISA and JIPSA.

The literature suggests that Service-Learning may be such a methodology, since management students experience real workplace learning in an authentic context, where the outputs of the work that they conduct (their academic assignments) will be actually used by the community organisation with which they have worked.

Service-Learning is based on a solid foundation of adult learning theories and is one of the few pedagogies to explicitly include reflection as a compulsory activity.

However, Service-Learning has not been implemented widely in MBA degrees around the world, although there appears to be a developing awareness of its potential usefulness in management education generally. The pedagogy had never been implemented in South African MBA degrees until this study was conducted.

Management education in general and MBAs in particular have been criticised both recently and historically for their lack of practicality and narrow focus on functional competencies with too little emphasis being placed on generic skills such as communication, interpersonal skills, and self-management amongst others.

The established requirements of NPOs and other community organisations for management skills are based on increasing legislative pressure for annual reporting.

Such management skills could potentially be provided to, and shared with, these organisations by MBA students acting in student-as-consultant roles.

Such activities, designed to meet the academic requirements of the degree, whilst providing practical experience in an authentic workplace context where the outputs would actually be utilised in a real sense, have the potential to produce graduates better able to demonstrate management competence immediately on returning to their own employers fulltime.

A number of management Service-Learning courses and syllabi have been included in Appendix 1, along with their website addresses, in anticipation of other business schools in South Africa implementing the pedagogy to the benefit of the country's local economies.

The hypotheses and propositions that have arisen from the literature review are presented by context (ie firstly the business context, then the social context and finally the higher education context) in the following chapter. They are tabulated in such a way as to make explicit their links to the sub-problems from which they arose, and each table is headed by the problem statement.

Although "in South Africa" has not been included in every proposition, the reader should assume that it is implied.