

Service Learning and Community Engagement:

A Cross Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

One of the presumptions of a well-functioning, viable democracy is that citizens participate in the life of their communities and nation. The role of higher education in forming actively engaged citizens has long been the focus of scholarly research but recently an active debate has emerged concerning the role of service as a third core function of institutions of higher learning and the introduction of service learning as a vehicle to realize this potential. Although research on service learning is increasing, a significant gap exists in the literature about what this pedagogical approach seeks to achieve (in nature and in outcomes) and how it is construed in non-western contexts. Using a comparative analysis across three widely different contexts, this paper explores the extent to which these differences are merely differences in degree or whether the differences are substantive enough to demand qualitatively different models for strengthening the relationship between higher education and civil society.

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Higher education, regardless of national or social context and geographic location, is undergoing change as societies endeavor to align the local context to national priorities and global pressures. The challenge for higher education, as intimated by Du Pre (2003), is to understand its history, articulate and accept its role with regard to diverse constituencies in society, and create an appropriate future within its social context.

As university-society relationships have evolved, so have methods and strategies for strengthening these relationships. One of these methods is the pedagogical strategy called service learning (SL) that links students with communities with specific educational and civic goals in mind for both. Encompassing a set of intentional educational objectives to be addressed seriously in American higher education (Astin & Sax, 1998; Battistoni, 2002; Zlotkowski, 1999), SL is increasingly recognized as a valuable strategy for strengthening both civil society and higher education in the USA and in Africa—although, *how* SL is conceived and practiced in such widely different contexts, is still evolving and is the principal focus of this paper. Concepts such as service, SL, civic engagement, community engagement, and university-community partnerships remain contested terms across nations and we hypothesize that significant differences exist in the meaning and application of these initiatives across these contexts.

Although research on SL is increasing (Billig & Eyler, 2003; Erasmus, 2005), a significant gap exists in the literature about what SL seeks to achieve (in nature and in outcomes) and how SL is construed in non-western contexts. This paper explores the extent to which these differences are merely differences in degree or whether the differences are substantive enough to demand qualitatively different models for strengthening the relationship between higher education and civil society.

We provide a brief exploration of US and African (primarily Sub-Saharan) higher education in order to frame our discussion of SL and community engagement across cultures. We then move to a comparative analysis of the community-university relationship in three

different contexts: the USA, the Republic of South Africa (RSA), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Looking at two countries on the same continent that vary significantly (e.g. RSA is a relatively stable African country; DRC is considered a quintessential failed state and highly unstable) provides a more nuanced exploration and analysis of community-university interactions and juxtaposes these against a US perspective. A growing body of research in both the US and RSA on the use of SL as a means to link universities with local communities stands in stark contrast to the lack of research on SL in the DRC. The latter represents an outlier case where SL has yet to be introduced; it is, nevertheless, included in this discussion because it expands the range of variables and illustrates the relative complexity that researchers and practitioners need to consider when studying or designing SL programs across cultures.

Specifically, this paper explores the following questions:

- Do recognizable patterns exist in the understanding and application of SL and community-university relationships that provide a better understanding of how engagement between higher education and society needs to be adapted across cultures?
- What are the key variables (e.g. historical, economic, political, social factors) that need to be taken into account when considering SL in widely different contexts?
- Are certain elements (e.g. reciprocity, mutuality, reflection, political and economic empowerment of communities) common across nations?
- How can SL contribute to the development of the third sector and participation of youth in their communities after graduation?

The paper concludes with a discussion of similarities and differences across the three cases and proposes a preliminary framework to guide both theory and practice; a framework that will allow comparative cross-cultural research while providing meaningful structure for practitioners interested in designing educational programs beneficial to students, faculty, members of communities and communities as a whole.

Trends and Perspectives in US and African Higher Education

Although developing civically engaged citizens is not a new role for higher education in the USA or Africa, the historical, political, economic, and social differences in contexts cannot be underestimated as the role of higher education in society is examined. In order to frame this case study discussion, we briefly examine American and African higher education as it has evolved and is today. Due to the risk of speaking so generally about so vast a diversity of

institutional types, missions, and approaches in both US and African higher education, “US and African higher education” are used primarily for heuristic purposes in order to illustrate broad differences in contexts. Furthermore, most of the discussion of African higher education refers to two Sub-Saharan African countries.

Higher Education in the USA

In the USA, higher education has always played a role in developing good citizens, and historically many different types of community-university relationships have emerged (Peters, Jordan, Adamek, & Alter, 2005; Thelin, 2004) ranging from cooperative extension, outreach and continuing education programs to top-down administrative initiatives, faculty professional service and research, student volunteer initiatives, and SL courses (Thomas, 1998). Similarly, different pedagogical techniques have emerged around these community-university interactions. Levine (2003) notes, for example, that numerous pedagogical approaches for civic learning abound such as classroom instruction on civics, moderated discussions of current events, student governance and community activities, simulations, and role playing. The emergence and expansion of the field of SL is a relatively new innovation in this discourse that has heightened attention to the nuances of the civic domain, social responsibility, and the rules of engagement between institutions of higher education and society (Astin & Sax, 1998; Bringle, Games, & Malloy, 1999).

Regardless of the type of interaction or pedagogical technique, the debate over the appropriate role of American universities in society has been greatly enriched by Commissioner of Education and President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Ernest Boyer, who challenged American higher education to move beyond piecemeal approaches to civic education. “What is needed [in American higher education],” he writes, “is not just more programs, but a larger purpose, a larger sense of mission, a larger clarity of direction” (Boyer, 1994, p. A48).

Boyer promoted a new model for higher education that revitalized the notion of community engagement as a central mission for 21st-century colleges and universities in the USA. His far-reaching vision for American higher education has led to a renewed critical examination of how community involvement can change the nature of faculty work, enhance student learning, better fulfill campus mission, and improve the quality of life in communities (e.g. Bringle et al., 1999; Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; O’Meara & Rice, 2005;

Percy, Zimpher, & Burkardt, 2006). As a result, all types of USA institutions of higher education continue to rethink and redefine their public purposes.

This redefinition and evolution cannot be separated from the USA's unique history and distinct democratic institutions. Civic service, as an institutional program, for example, has not always enjoyed strong public support although service remains an enduring part of the American psyche (Perry & Thomson, 2004). In its ideal form, civic service is most frequently viewed as a means of educating citizens about the civic virtue so necessary for democratic citizenship. From this perspective, community service fits with the preference of America's founders to rely on private voluntary action "rightly understood" as the best way to build a nation (Perry & Thomson 2004).¹

Although political developments in the United States (and subsequently the development of American institutions of higher education) is characterized by a tension between reliance on the private nature of moral individualism and the public nature of an active citizenry, the distinctly historical preference for limited representative government, private interest, and individualism may help to explain the more decentralized and individualized nature of service learning as practiced in institutions of higher learning in America. Except in the case of land-grant universities, the US government does not mandate American universities to engage in community or national development; that is largely left up to mission statements, university trustees, administrators, and faculty.

There is a strong zeitgeist in American higher education to explore the public purposes of higher education and improve on traditional models of engagement. Although some USA accrediting bodies (e.g. Higher Education Commission) have added community engagement components to their criteria, the engagement agenda is largely discretionary and open to self-definition by institutions within the context of their individual mission statements.

Higher Education in Africa

In Africa, unlike the USA, the university-community relationship has been indelibly influenced by a colonial legacy (as well as by the international community of bilateral and multilateral institutions) that continues to define the nature of higher education in Africa to this day. Not unlike the USA, the role of higher education in African society is evolving and contested but, in contrast to the USA University debate, the debate in Africa may be more

¹ . For an excellent discussion of the conceptual and theoretical perspectives on civic virtue, see David K. Hart, "The Virtuous citizen, the Honorable Bureaucrat, and 'Public' Administration," *Public Administration Review* 47 (March 1984: 111-20).

closely interwoven with the development of an “African Identity” that, according to Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe, “is still in the making” (Le Grange, 2005, p. 1208). Although generalizing about an “African Identity” and the “African University” is problematic (given the exceptional diversity across the continent’s fifty-four countries), Teferra and Altbach (2003) argue that African universities face enough commonalities to allow reference to “African Higher Education” (p. 3).

Most notable among these is the widespread impact of colonial education policy on all African institutions of higher learning. That common policy significantly curbed access, made the language of the colonizer the language of instruction, limited what could be taught, and greatly restricted the autonomy of institutions of higher education, leading Teferra and Altbach (2003, p.4) to conclude that despite the fact that

Africa can claim an ancient academic tradition, the fact is that traditional centers of higher learning in Africa have all but disappeared or were destroyed by colonialism [so that today] the continent is dominated by academic institutions shaped by colonialism and organized according to the European model; [it is] an artifact of colonial policies (p. 4).

Nevertheless, after independence in the 1960s, most existing African universities were nationalized or new ones created to embody and champion the nationalist agendas of newly independent African states. In an address to the General Assembly of the World University Service in 1966, Nyerere asserted that the university, “must put the emphasis of its work on subjects of immediate moment to the nation in which it exists, and it must be committed to the people of that nation and their humanistic goals” (Nyerere, 1968, p. 183). For Nyerere, pedagogical techniques to strengthen the relationship between the university and society (such as work camps, encouraging voluntary student activities, national service) were less relevant than the creation of a general attitude of service where “the whole atmosphere of the university is one of giving service, and expecting service, from all its members and students; [in] other words, the prevailing attitude [must be one] of social responsibility [and not] the idea of giving aid to the poor” (p. 186).

This is not unlike RSA’s call for a new role for higher education in the wake of the brutality of the apartheid regime and minority rule. “In South Africa today,” a report from the Department of Education asserts, “the challenge is to redress past inequalities and to transform the higher education system to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs, and to

respond to new realities and opportunities” (Department of Education, 1997, p. 7). This distinctly public approach and state mobilization of institutions of higher learning for national agendas stands in stark contrast to the private and decentralized approach taken by diverse USA higher education institutions.

Although these two distinctly different perspectives on the role of higher education in society represent one of the most important differences in the two contexts, it is not the only one. Other historical legacies in Africa and what Lulat (2003) calls “the tyranny of the present” (p.28), create a very different context in which SL may be conceived and applied in the African university than in the USA university. High unit costs of higher education (Lulat, p. 29)²; continuing political and economic instability, lack of investment in tertiary education,³ brain drain, and overall lack of infrastructure continue to pose unprecedented challenges to African higher education when compared to the overall context in the United States. In conclusion, however, scholars in this field agree that higher education in Africa need not be held hostage to the past and investment in tertiary education in Sub-Saharan Africa can yield significant private and public benefits (Bloom, Canning, & Chan, 2006; Lulat, 2003). With these contexts in mind, we now turn to a discussion of SL and community engagement in three widely different settings.

Community Engagement and Higher Education in Three Different Contexts:

A Comparative Analysis

One of the presumptions of a well-functioning, viable democracy is that citizens are well-informed about community issues, they participate in various ways to address those community issues, and the quality of life is improved as a result of their involvement (Wandersman & Florin, 1999). This is partly what drives scholarly debates about the third core function of universities in both American and African universities and its potential to influence young adults to involve themselves in civic matters and develop the capacity to act efficaciously. Central to these debates

² . “The total yearly expenditure for higher education in Africa as a whole,” write Teferra and Altbach (2003), “does not even come close to the endowments of some of the richest universities in the United States. The budgets of individual universities in many industrialized countries exceed the entire national budgets for higher education in many African nations” (p. 5).

³ . In their World Bank sponsored report on higher education and economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa, Bloom, Canning, and Chan (2006) point out that the belief among the international community that investment in primary and secondary schooling is more important than tertiary education for poverty reduction has led to relative neglect of higher education over all. “For example,” they write, “from 1985 to 1989, 17 per cent of the World Bank’s worldwide education-sector spending was on higher education. But from 1995 to 1999, the proportion allotted to higher education declined to just 7 per cent” with significant deleterious effects on higher education in Africa” (p. iii).

is the concept of “service” and the introduction of SL as a vehicle to realize this potential. The following section examines the evolution of these debates in three countries that differ significantly politically⁴, economically, historically, and socially⁵. Four overarching themes frame this comparative analysis:

- Community engagement as the third core function of both African and USA universities,
- The social and political context of concepts,
- SL and community engagement: theoretical and historical foundations, and
- SL and community engagement in practice.

Service: The Third Core Function of Universities

Universities increasingly include service as a third core university function together with teaching and research. Of the three, the service function may be the most contentious because it involves an epistemological debate about the role of knowledge in society. Central to this is the mode 1/mode 2 knowledge creation debate (Gibbons, 2006) that juxtaposes knowledge for knowledge’s sake (mode 1) with useable knowledge for the benefit of society (mode 2). In contemporary society there are increasingly louder voices that demand that universities generate socially useful knowledge that integrates with other forms of knowledge in the knowledge economy. It signifies a shift from the “truth” as main criterion to “what use is it” (Gibbons, 2006; Le Grange, 2005).

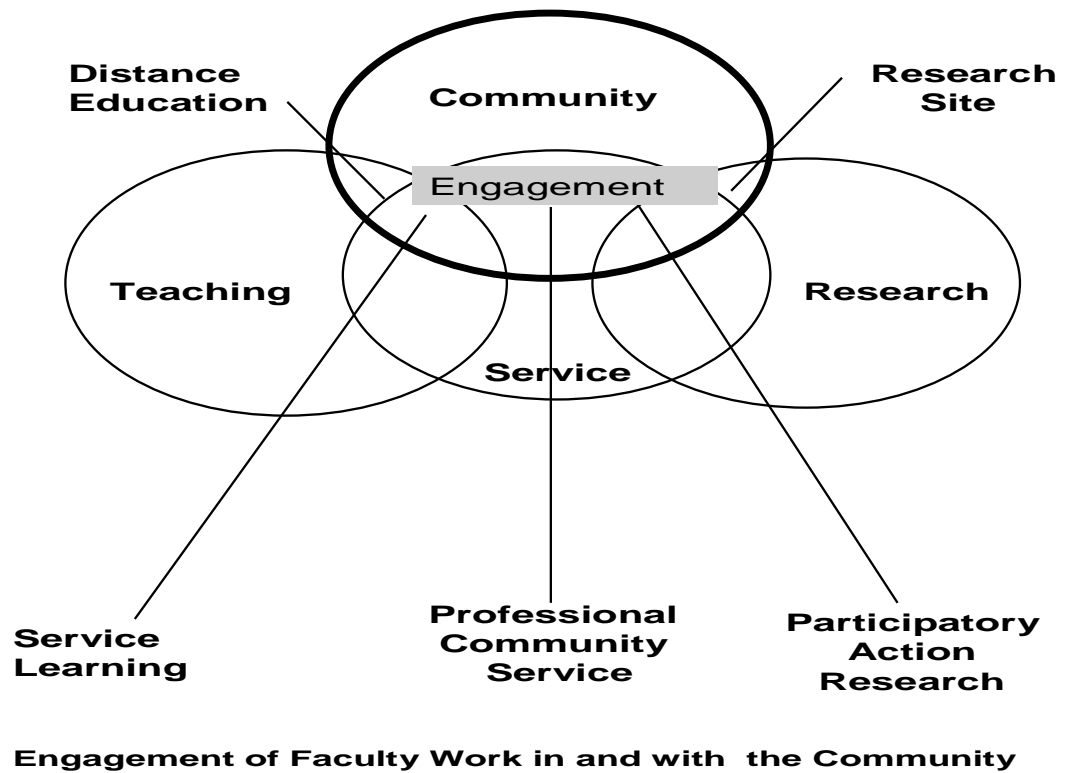
In the United States, SL (a pedagogy that deliberately integrates the service function of the university into its teaching function) has stimulated a renewed commitment to civic engagement (Langseth & Plater, 2004), which is a departure from traditional university approaches to outreach that are hierarchical and elitist. Furthermore, it departs from the traditional tripartite division of teaching, research, and service. Civic engagement is not merely a

⁴ By this we mean the degree of democratic consolidation.

⁵ The USA (a relatively “developed” country) the RSA (a “developing” country), and the DRC (a classically “underdeveloped” country) .

substitute for professional service but is a particular way of doing teaching, research, and service *in and with* the community as illustrated in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1



There are two primary ways in which campuses involve students in community service in America: (a) co-curricular service, and (b) academically-based SL; typically the former is the purview of student affairs and the latter, academic affairs. Although co-curricular service allows for student-initiated activities that provide excellent opportunities for student leadership, foster student-community interaction, and fit into students' schedules, they have no specified formal learning objectives that can be assessed nor do they take full advantage of faculty and other educational resources on campus; furthermore, these activities may not be consistent with the

mission of the institution (Bringle, 1996). Service learning, on the other hand, represents a distinctly different approach that formally challenges students to apply the knowledge they learn in the classroom to real world experiences in local communities. This credit-bearing educational experience has the potential to impact local communities positively through the development of civic skills in young adults, though that impact may not be immediately apparent (Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999). In practice, the immediate outcome of SL in the American context focuses primarily on the development of individual student's civic development; community outcomes remain important but are often long-term.

In RSA, on the other hand, the development of the third core function of the university has taken a different evolutionary path. Since the 1960s, the term community service was used to indicate the social responsibility of universities to invest in community programs. Most community service programs were voluntary initiatives of students at the periphery while the university continued its core focus on teaching and research (for example, USKOR at Stellenbosch University and SHAWCO at University of Cape Town).

The linkage between service and academic work only surfaced when the ANC government instituted a higher education transformation plan with the primary goal to change the racially divided institutions of higher education to non-racial merged entities. This plan was part of a comprehensive nation-(re)building effort as espoused in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (ANC, 1994) meant to redress the inequalities of the apartheid legacy. In seeking to transform the inherited educational landscape, a White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education (Dept of Education, 1997) identified community engagement as an integral and core part of higher education in RSA. The newly appointed government body established to oversee this transformation, the Committee for Higher Education (CHE), challenged higher education institutions to demonstrate social responsibility and their commitment to the common good by making available expertise and infrastructure for community service programs.

Multiple sources (Bender, 2007; Erasmus, 2005; Lazarus, 2001; Perold, 1998) capture the history of South African higher education's transformation brought about by the 1997 White Paper and the intervention of Community Higher Education Service Partnerships (CHESP). The latter, a non-governmental organization funded externally by the Ford Foundation, was instituted to promote community engagement and SL in higher education in RSA during the last decade.

CHESP responded specifically to the parts of the White Paper that referred to pilot studies⁶ intended to mobilize students⁷ (Par 1.27) and universities⁸ (Par 1.28).

Research sponsored by CHESP on the role of community service in higher education reflected the status of community service in RSA (Perold, 1998). Recommendations in the Perold report renewed the call to all stakeholders to support institution-driven curricular-based community service instead of the prevailing volunteerism at the periphery of institutions. The inclusion of community engagement and SL in the follow-up legislation was to a great extent the result of CHESP's advocacy and collaboration with government resulting in the inclusion of SL as one of the HEQC's auditing criteria in 2004 demonstrating the value of SL for high quality academic programs (HEQC Audit Criteria, 2004a; 2004b; 2004c).

It must be noted, however, that although community engagement and SL were recognized to be part of some universities' missions, neither the HEQC nor the Department of Education (DoE) provided any material means to achieve the goals of these initiatives until recently. A notable distinction of SL in RSA, then, is the pivotal role of the university in the broader transformation agenda of the state. Although that role was not supported with government funding, the policy mandate from the government is clear: universities should become more responsive to the socio-economic realities of the country (Castle & Osman, 2003; Fourie, 2003).

In the DRC, neither the civic engagement interpretation of what constitute a university's core function of service, nor the top down approach of the South African government applies. The historical legacy of Belgian colonization of the Congolese people and their resources continues to have implications for all aspects of higher education in the DRC. During colonization, it was the express policy of the Belgians not to allow Congolese access to university level education except for the few chosen for the priesthood (Lulat, 2003). It is not at all surprising then, that in 1960, when Congo gained its independence from Belgium, Congolese

⁶ "The Ministry is highly receptive to the growing interest in community service programmes for students, to harness the social commitment and energy of young people to the needs of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, and as a potential component of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS). The Ministry will consult the CHE and the National Youth Commission on this matter. In principle, the Ministry will encourage suitable feasibility studies and pilot programmes which explore the potential of community service

- to answer the call of young people for constructive social engagement
- to enhance the Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service in higher education, and
- to relieve some of the financial burden of study at this level."

⁷ "To promote and develop social responsibility and awareness amongst students of the role of higher education in social and economic development through community service programmes."

⁸ "To demonstrate social responsibility of institutions and their commitment to the common good by making available expertise and infrastructure for community service programmes."

had little if any training in administration or governance. The subsequent chaos that followed in the wake of Patrice Lumumba's murder (the first democratically elected prime minister of the newly formed Congo) in 1961 has continued unabated in various disguises until today. The 30 year legacy of the military dictatorship and kleptocracy of Mobutu Sese Seko, for example, only set the stage for the current tragedy that characterizes Congo today.⁹ This does not bode well for higher education and its potential for creating civically minded students that will actively engage in democratic politics.

Despite this historical legacy and the state of education in DRC today, it is interesting to note that historically, Congolese university students have a legacy of student activism that began in 1964, when students at the former Lovanium University Center “asked for more participation in the organization and operation of the university in the form of a co-management model and demanded the Africanization of the conception, orientation, and methodology of both teaching and research” (Lelo, 2003, p. 269). In the 1970s and 1990s, students enrolled in the now nationalized university system also organized and demanded improvements in the living and working conditions on campus (including demands for increased financial assistance) that led to the closing of all national universities for a time in 1971 and the forced enlistment of student activists into the Congolese army (Lelo, 2003).

Relevant for our discussion of SL, however, is the fact that the kind of “civic engagement” evident in the 1964, 1971, and 1990 student movements was narrowly confined to education reform and the immediate living and working conditions on university campuses, not a more widespread call for political reform and social justice at the national level. Nevertheless, that they did, in fact, confront an existing status quo suggests Congolese students have a legacy of activism that could be channeled towards community development, civic engagement, and SL if the political and social conditions were stable.

The Social and Political Context of Concepts

That words matter is hardly a contested idea yet scholars, practitioners, and policymakers alike continue to act as though they hold similar meanings in widely different settings. For

⁹ . It is difficult to assess the state of higher education in the DRC today given the paucity of data available. UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2006) data on tertiary education demonstrate that in 1999 (more recent data unavailable), the gross enrollment rate for tertiary education was 1%. According to the most recent UN Human Development Reports (HDR 2007-08),⁹ the DRC falls 9th from the bottom of 177 countries in the world. The recent effects of a series of civil wars between 1997 – 2003 have resulted in over 5 million deaths—the greatest loss of life since WWII (International Rescue Committee, 2007) and devastated DRC's health care and economic systems with an equally devastating effect on education in general and higher education specifically.

example, that the term “civic engagement” should be used in America to connote a means by which teaching, research, and service can be integrated to create civically-minded citizens is not surprising linked as it is to the overall consensual (albeit theoretical) understanding of the relationship between government and its citizenry. Civic engagement in an African context, however, where the relationship between citizens and governments remains largely undefined, may or may not be conceived in the same way.

In both the American and African contexts, the term “civic” is political but in different ways. In RSA and the DRC, the term “civic” has a political connotation that does not resonate with individual capacity building and democratic empowerment processes aimed at improving quality of life. In the USA, on the other hand, the focus on individual empowerment is directly rooted in the expected rights and responsibilities of citizens who hold their governments accountable through the democratic principle “government by the people.” In RSA and the DRC, the term citizen remains highly contested given the yet developing (in the case of RSA) and non-existent (in the case of DRC) democratic state.

For this reason, it is not surprising that in RSA, the term civic engagement is not used in the higher education context. Instead, the term of choice is “community engagement” when referring to the university’s third core function, a term that acts as an umbrella term to cover a wide variety of types of engagement (including SL) across each of RSA’s 23 institutions of higher learning (Bender, 2007; Lazarus, Erasmus, Nduna, Hendricks, & Slamati, 2008). In some South African languages, however, there is no term with the same meaning as engagement. Stellenbosch University has adopted the term “interaction” as it presupposes a two-way communication or influence and equality between the interacting parties. Today, the terminology continues to evolve moving away from “community engagement to “a scholarship of engagement’ (HEQC/JET, 2006). “Community engagement” in RSA, then, has many names and manifestations and little or no research has been done on the scholarship of engagement in RSA (Bender, 2007).

In the DRC, because of the paucity of information on the subject, it is difficult to determine the extent to which students engage in community service at their universities today. A superficial review of the French literature suggests that no translation exists for the terms “community service,” “community engagement,” or “civic engagement” although the term “*civisme*” is used to refer to civic-mindedness. In relation to the university, the most common

terms used refer to internships such as “l'internat” (referring to vocational training) or “le stage” (referring to work placement) implying a narrow conceptualization of community service as a civic responsibility (Thomson, Field Notes, 2006).

In the USA, a distinction is made between the broader term, “community involvement” (defined solely by type of activity pursued such as teaching, research, and / or service in the community) and civic engagement, which is more narrowly defined as teaching, research, and service that is both in *and with* the community (Bringle, Hatcher, & Clayton, 2006). Community involvement has no geographic boundaries and includes university work in all sectors of society (e.g. nonprofits, government, business). In contrast, civic engagement is “civic” in the sense that it expects relationships and methods of participation among parties to be fair, participatory, and democratic, and to honor different ways of knowing and different knowledge bases.

Two other terms in this discourse that do not easily travel across contexts are the terms “service” and subsequently “service learning.” In the USA context, the term “service” remains an enduring part of the American psyche rooted in the civic virtue necessary for democratic citizenship and civic participation expressed through moral individualism (Perry & Thomson, 2004). Hence, in general, Americans do not balk at the term though for some, the term connotes charity in contrast to social justice. In RSA, on the other hand, “service” is a hotly contested term and cannot be isolated from RSA’s racialized history characterized as it is by master-servant relationships and the paternalistic charitable activities that were typical manifestations of this unequal relationship dynamic. “Service” in this context is a loaded term that brings with it a deeply ingrained recollection of subordination, oppression, and injustice. For this reason, several South African universities have chosen to use the more inclusive concepts of community interaction or community engagement (rather than SL). Given the transformational and developmental intentions that are invested in the university-community relationship in post-apartheid RSA, the term “engagement” may better reflect the values of democracy, mutuality, and reciprocity intended by this third core university function.

In the DRC, the same concerns about “service” that emerged in RSA have also surfaced in Congo. When talking with Congolese in general and in particular, board members (especially those born and raised in the DRC) of a non-governmental organization initiating a pilot SL program at a university in the DRC, the negative connotation of service within the colonial context emerged naturally. “Service” is often equated with colonialism and reminiscent of

paternalistic and hierarchical relationships between Congolese and their white colonizers. Lessons learned from the RSA experience suggest that this organization in the DRC might consider using a less politically charged word than “service” as they begin to design their SL program at the Protestant University of Congo.

Service Learning and Community Engagement: Theoretical and Historical Foundations

Although the theoretical foundations of SL are found largely in American scholarship and practice, the SL field is increasingly marked with non-American scholars and practitioners bringing different perspectives and research questions that can only enhance the vitality and richness of the field. Not all community-based instruction and/or activity is SL. As it is practiced in the United States, SL is defined as a

course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) 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 & Hatcher, 1995, p. 112).

This definition helps differentiate SL from other types of educational experiences that take place in the community (e.g. internship, practicum, field-based instruction, cooperative education) and also differentiates SL from volunteering (Furco, 1996). In the USA and RSA, unlike many practica and internships (which focus on pre-professional skill development), SL is linked to a course and has the intentional goal of developing civic skills and dispositions in students. Unlike volunteering, SL represents academic work in which the community service activities are used as a “text” that is interpreted, analyzed, and related to the content of a course in a way that permits a formal evaluation of the academic learning. Thus, in SL, academic credit is not given for engaging in community service; rather, academic credit is based on the academic learning that occurs as a result of the community service.

Furthermore, in both contexts, not just any community service activity is appropriate for SL; the service activities are intentionally selected to align with the educational objectives of the course as well as with community partners to ensure that the community service is meaningful not only to students but also to third sector organizations, their clients, and community residents. Thus, high quality SL classes demonstrate mutual benefits and reciprocity between the campus and the community with each giving and receiving, and each teaching and learning.

In RSA, the situation is complicated by the fact that although the theoretical foundations of SL have been extensively influenced by the development of the field in the USA, the impetus for the introduction of this new form of pedagogy has been mandated by the ANC government as a mechanism by which South African universities could become a knowledge-based instrument of social equity. This places South African faculty and community engagement administrators in the difficult position of responding to a top-down driven mandate with a model that is essentially USA in origin. In response to the South African government's mandate, international consultants were contracted to train South African faculty and community engagement administrators to implement SL in South African universities (Lazarus, 2007). Definitions of SL and community engagement used in RSA have been adopted from USA colleagues and applied to the South African context. Very few if any new definitions of SL have been developed over the last decade (Bender, 2007).

South African scholarship in the field is increasingly assertive about the need to reconsider the adaptation of the US-based model to the South African context. As Bender (2007) eloquently articulates:

Collaboration with USA scholars and champions have enhanced the South African academic staff members' scholarship of engagement, critical reflective thinking and the urge to develop grounded theory and a conceptual framework for the South African context of higher education. Yet if these models are uncritically assimilated into the South African context, [scholars] are ignoring the highly influential aspects of language, culture and content (p. 130).

It remains an empirical question the extent to which South African scholars and administrators will successfully adapt US-based models of SL to a South African cultural context or whether the model will remain largely American in practice. Whereas SL has a long history and gestation in the USA, in RSA it is hardly a decade old.

In the DRC, anecdotal evidence suggests that SL is a foreign concept in Congolese higher education. What is true for most African universities (all of which adopted the education systems of the colonizer) is also true in Congo (whose system remains Belgian for all intents and purposes). "With few exceptions (such as running teaching hospitals and allowing public access to university library facilities)," writes Lulat (2003), "most universities [in Africa] have essentially been ivory towers" (p. 28). This may partly explain the fact that student activism in

the DRC has historically been limited to the narrow confines of university life rather than larger political, economic, and social issues.

Currently, in contrast to RSA, the DRC government's role in higher education is extremely limited given the continued instability of the country. As long as institutions of higher learning remain relatively quiet and do not challenge the status quo, universities will be left largely ignored by the DRC government. Given the continued political and economic instability in the DRC (Afoaku, 2005; Njongola-Ntalaja, 2004; Trefon, 2004), one might reasonably speculate that were the implementation of SL programs at universities to follow the transformational agenda of the ANC government in RSA, it is highly likely that the university, and its faculty and students could experience serious and negative consequences. Like RSA, the SL context in the DRC has serious political consequences not found in the United States. The growing body of literature on SL in the USA and in RSA will have significant impact on the theoretical foundations for SL in the DRC and elsewhere in Africa. Of more immediate relevance to DRC practitioners, however, are the lessons learned in the practice of SL in the USA and in RSA.

Service Learning and Community Engagement in Practice: Implications for the Third Sector

There are two dominant themes that SL makes salient for new models of civic engagement in the US: (a) education of students in civic skills for democratic processes, and (b) community outcomes in addition to academic outcomes. Within the USA context, Westheimer and Kahne (2003) identified three distinct domains of civic education: (a) the personally responsible citizen, (b) the participatory citizen, and (c) the justice-oriented citizen. Battistoni (2002) conducted an analysis of the different dimensions of citizenship with reference to the content domains and paradigms of the disciplines and professions. His analysis identifies seven distinct approaches to civic education: (a) civic professionalism, (b) social responsibility, (c) social justice, (d) connected knowing and the ethic of caring, (e) public leadership, (f) public intellectual, and (g) engaged or public scholarship.

Service learning can facilitate the achievement of learning objectives in each of these domains, although how and with what success remains to be explored through further research.¹⁰

¹⁰. See Bringle and Steinberg (in press) for an excellent discussion of what constitutes a civic-minded graduate. They identify seven core elements that signify a civic minded graduate that include: (1) academic knowledge and

To the degree that skills and knowledge for democratic processes and civic involvement are important to educators, SL (properly designed and implemented) provides a means for students to practice and develop skills, relate their activities to appropriate academic content, and develop motives to sustain their community involvement after graduation.

Current research on students in American universities demonstrates that, prior to entering college the vast majority of students have volunteered in local communities (Astin & Sax, 1998), and the dominant motives for civic engagement are (a) altruistic and humanitarian concern for others, and (b) understanding the degree to which volunteering provides opportunities for new learning experiences and for using knowledge, skills, and abilities (Bringle, Hatcher, & MacIntosh, 2006). American college students are not particularly motivated to engage in traditional politics and volunteering serves as a source of civic engagement that is largely apolitical. Thus, in most ways, American college students view their voluntary civic engagement as rather benign politically. Generally, results across research support the conclusion that American college students have the highest interest in charity activities and the lowest interest in social change activities (Bringle et al., 2006; Moely & Miron, 2005; Morton, 1995).

The second dominant theme that SL makes salient for new models of civic engagement in the USA is: community outcomes in addition to academic outcomes. Service learning educators must avoid the risk of focusing predominantly on student outcomes, to the exclusion of community outcomes. However, well-designed SL courses that engage students in activities that have significant community outcomes promote a cluster of cognitions, motivations, and attitudes that may increase the likelihood of positive community outcomes by graduates in the future.

For example, self-efficacy, as a goal of civic education, captures the tendency of the individual to be inclined to take action, to expect that the action will produce the desired result, and to learn from one's own actions and those of others. Efficacy, and the related elements of perceived control and competency, are viewed as key components of personal empowerment and have been found to discriminate between high participation groups versus groups with low or no participation (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Thus, structuring well-designed opportunities for SL is one way of encouraging the future post-graduate participation of students in civic activities (Astin et al., 1999). Furthermore, Balcazar, Seekins, Fawcett, and Hopkins (1990) have found

technical skills, (2) knowledge of volunteer opportunities and nonprofit organizations, (3) knowledge of contemporary and social issues, (4) listening and communication skills, (5) diversity skills, (6) self-efficacy, and (7) behavioral intentions as a predictor of civically engaged behavior.

that community interventions can increase perceptions of control among residents. Thus, the best designed civic engagement activities promote self-efficacy and empowerment in students, faculty, *and* community participants.

Service learning places students in community environments in which they interact with persons who are different from themselves in terms of racial, economic, religious, or other background characteristics. Research studies in the USA have documented that SL has an impact on student perceptions, values, and behaviors related to diversity. For example, SL has been found to: increase student sensitivity to diversity (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Keerigan, 1996); increase student knowledge of, and ability to get along with, people of different races and cultures (Astin & Sax, 1998); increase student tolerance and decrease stereotyping (Eyler & Giles, 1999); and increase students' ability to work with diverse groups (Osborne, Hammerich, & Hensley, 1998). Being involved in SL courses during college predicted students' ability to put themselves in someone else's shoes, regardless of their background (Eyler, Giles, & Braxton, 1997). Two studies (Astin & Sax, 1998; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000) found that SL experiences were related to student commitment to promoting racial understanding. Finally, Astin et al. (1999) conducted a longitudinal survey study and found that the frequency of volunteering during the last year of college was positively correlated with reported promotion of racial understanding nine years after graduation.

Viewed from the perspective of outcomes (student and community), SL becomes the impetus for American higher education to examine both the methods and goals of a broad range of activities in higher education (e.g. Boyer 1994, 1996; Bringle et al., 1999; Colby et al., 2003; Langseth & Plater, 2004; O'Meara & Rice, 2005). Given the relative stability of the political, economic, and social environment in which American higher education has evolved, these activities (including SL) have also had the benefit of time, experimentation, and research to inform their development. In RSA and the DRC, however, the environment in which higher education and SL are evolving has been far from stable and marked with a paucity of resources and opportunities for experimentation and research.

One of the defining attributes of SL in the USA context is that, along with academic learning, it also aspires to students' civic growth (Ash, Clayton, & Atkinson, 2005). In the RSA context, additional objectives include: students' exposure to the structural conditions in communities; engagement with causative contextual considerations for the manifestation of

prevailing social conditions; cross-cultural interaction (this is a significant consideration given that RSA's neighborhoods remain largely racially segregated); and the opportunity to engage in community development initiatives and social change. This can only be accomplished through third sector organizations and direct collaboration with residents of communities in which the engagement activities will take place. Thus, the CHESP model for SL replaced the USA dyadic approach to campus-community partnerships with a triad: campus-residents-service providers.

The extent to which universities have integrated community engagement into their core functions, will unequivocally affect the third sector organizations with which they engage, for it is this very sector that has formed an integral part of the development of community engagement and SL in both the USA and in RSA. In contrast to the USA, however, no consensus exists in RSA regarding its very young democracy and what is expected of citizenry within that democracy. In general, the term civil society refers to: "those non-for-profit organizations and groups or formations of people operating between the family and the government, which are independent, voluntary and established to protect or enhance the interests and values of their members" (Camay & Gordon, 2002). In RSA, the term encompasses a wide range of organizational types including those that focus on meeting basic needs as communities, families, and individuals fight for survival in the face of poverty and discrimination as well as those characterized by progressive values and norms (e.g. political, economic, gender equality).

This diversity poses significant challenges for creating university – community partnerships. Marais and Botes (2006), for example, contend that the nature of community service partnerships with third sector organizations could easily lead to an overemphasis on the role of the university at the expense of community. Marais, Naidoo, Donson and Nortje (2007) also draw attention to ways in which the power differential in SL partnerships may mitigate against relationships of equality and mutuality with community partners. Service learning initiatives with community partners must be informed by a shared vision, clarification of roles and expectations, and allow for collaborative decision making, reciprocity, and the attainment of mutual goals and benefits for all constituencies.

Despite the power differential in SL projects, Marais et al. (2007) argue that both university and community needs and agendas have to be accommodated in negotiated partnerships. Naidoo and Van Wyk (2003) describe a community SL project that sought to operationalize community psychology values (e.g. ecological perspective, empowerment,

prevention, sense of community, social justice; see Duncan, Bowman, Naidoo, Pillay, & Roos, 2007; Nelson and Prilleltensky, 2005) while actively pursuing locally articulated community development objectives in a small peri-urban community.

In response to a request for psychological services at the local primary health clinic, a process of engagement was set up that initially included a series of contact visits and consultation meetings and later a community forum with the clinic staff, and other relevant community role-players and organizations (e.g. the primary and high school principals, local clergy, local governance representatives, community elders and the local municipality). These consultations permitted the university team of lecturer and eight master's students to gauge local community opinion and perceptions on issues requiring attention and to gain a broader understanding of the local context of this community (e.g. its history, socio-economic conditions, psycho-social needs, risk and protective factors, and aspirations among others).

The consultation served as a platform to establish formal links and personal working relationships between the project team and community role-players. From its onset, the process also identified potential partners and resources, created space for community input and participation through expression of other needs, and identified broader community development aspirations at the local level beyond the initial SL objectives (Naidoo & Van Wyk, 2003). Creating participative processes where the voices and involvement of local residents are included is crucial to the success and sustainability of community-based endeavors (Prilleltensky, 2001).

Creating partnerships with local community residents and third sector organizations for the benefit of the community fits well with the South African government's mandate to incorporate higher education into the national agenda for community development and social transformation of society. Different from the USA model, SL practitioners in RSA adopted the CHESP triad model of partnership between the university, third sector organizations, and residents of the community (HEQC, 2006). At Stellenbosch University, for example, the rationale to adopt this model was to avoid duplicating existing services in communities which would further fragment the existing third sector and its organizations.

Students involved in SL at Stellenbosch are required to do a situation analysis of the organization where they will work as well as the communities in which the organization resides, enabling them to work within the parameters of the organization's mission while taking into account the macro development processes that influence the micro situation. In RSA, most

universities have an historical background linking it to race, language, culture, and political preferences. Higher education discourse refers to universities as “previously disadvantaged” or “historically white.” These ascriptions pose one of the most difficult challenges for universities seeking to interact with communities. For example, faulty reflection during several capacity building seminars in 2005/2006 suggested that communities of one race showed resistance to interaction with students from another race while predominantly white students tended to hesitate to work in predominantly black community localities. Even between non-white racial variations, issues of classism surfaced in face-to-face interactions. Non-white middle class students would be met with distrust, while the students themselves would act within their own perceptions of such communities. Third sector organizations can play a pivotal role in neutralizing power differentials that might exist between community members and the university because both stakeholders normally enjoy the trust of these organizations (HEQC 2006). On the positive side, research on perceptions of community organizations shows that students provide meaningful resources to organizations in reaching their goals (Mitchell & Humphries 2007; Nduna 2007). The functions they perform are administrative, skills training, fundraising, and improving existing systems.

In the DRC, lessons learned from a nascent attempt to design a SL program at one of DRC’s premier private universities suggests that in a country with no reliable basic public services (including roads, potable water, electricity not to mention health care and education systems), Maslow’s hierarchy of needs may determine the extent to which SL is a luxury of higher education or a necessity. Furthermore, the logistics of a SL program—where relationships need to be built between students, the university, and third sector organizations *but the infrastructure does not exist to support those relationships*—have proven to be a nearly insurmountable challenge.

Despite the fact that the DRC represents a quintessential failed state,¹¹ there are pockets of civil society that thrive in the midst of the chaos created by the overall lack of any governmental infrastructure. According to Trefon (2004), because Congolese have experienced intense social stress for decades, one would expect that social institutions would have collapsed. Instead, he argues, at least in Kinshasa (DRC’s capital city of roughly 10 million), social

¹¹. For an excellent discussion on what constitutes a failed state, see Robert Rotberg’s 2003 book *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, especially chapter 2 on the Dem Rep of Congo.

institutions “appear to be diversifying and even strengthening...through the development of civil society institutions’ [the effect of which has been] the “reinvention of order” from the bottom up (pp. 2, 5). These new forms of social order were created out of necessity; in the absence of any public services, widespread hunger, and insecurity, millions of Congolese have formed associations, local grassroots helping networks, or participated in what Giovannoni, Trefon, Kasongo, and Mwema (2004) call the “NGO phenomenon” (p. 100). In Kinshasa alone, some estimates suggest as many as 1300 NGOs have been created since 1990 and many Kinshasa residents (especially intellectuals) are beginning to place greater faith in third sector organizations than government to provide what the state has been unable to provide: peace, improved quality of life, democracy, and poverty alleviation (p.101).

That the third sector seems to be thriving in Congo (at least in Kinshasa) suggests multiple opportunities for Congolese university students to engage in local communities through SL in ways that can contribute to the strengthening of civil society. The empirical question not yet addressed, however, is the extent to which the vast numbers of NGOs in Kinshasa since the 1990s (stimulated by the need to survive and the presence of external funding sources) have the overall capacity to host students implementing service learning projects. That these students could be the very ones most capable of strengthening the third sector in DRC (given their knowledge and skills developed at university) makes the implementation of SL programs particularly compelling. Building long-term relationships with local organizations and communities may be the only way to increase the likelihood of mutually beneficial outcomes for students and communities in a country like DRC where no reliable public infrastructure exists.

Yet, how to build partnerships between partners of unequal influence is neither straightforward nor assured, especially when one organization provides the financial resources in an exceptionally resource-poor environment (as is the case with community NGOs and outside funders) and the other partner is a university with well-established cultures and deeply embedded policies. As the South African experience with community interaction has demonstrated, without the deliberate creation of infrastructure, skilled university staff, and processes where the voices and involvement of local residents are included, the success and sustainability of community-based endeavors is unlikely to occur (Prilleltensky, 2001).

Some Preliminary Thoughts on Service Learning and Community Engagement

The comparative analysis across three very different countries with wide variation on historical, political, economic, and social factors suggests that overall, the application of SL beyond the USA will not easily occur nor without adaptations. As a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which both students and third sector organizations will, in theory benefit (through joint activities that meet identified community needs), SL cannot be easily applied in the same way in all contexts. Some adaptations are matters of degree, however, others are substantive (e.g. pursuing ameliorative activities rather than advocacy activities so as not to place in danger young university students doing community service in highly unpredictable environments). Furthermore, forming long-term partnerships with third sector organizations may prove more important in both the DRC and RSA than in the USA where SL programs tend to focus on short-term project oriented community service activities.

The political and historical environment in which SL is practiced matters. For example, what is the relationship between higher education and society when, in fact, that society has no functioning government (as in the DRC) and when citizens have no consensual understanding of what constitutes “civic” in “civic engagement” (as in both RSA and the DRC). That democracy has never been practiced in the DRC is reason to question the relevance of SL for a country whose citizens are primarily concerned with the immediate demands of day-to-day survival. Ironically, in a well-established democracy like that in the USA, American college students tend to view civic engagement largely in terms of charitable actions through third sector organizations rather than political mobilization. Thus, in most ways, American college students view their voluntary civic engagement as mostly free from contention with regard to political issues and rarely dangerous. In contrast to the USA, universities are sometimes viewed as sites of political activism in RSA and the DRC. Involving students in civic matters can be viewed as fulfilling a political agenda (e.g. transformation in RSA) and “taking sides” in a politically contentious situation (e.g. in the DRC). Furthermore, economic conditions in both RSA and the DRC are dire and it is not at all clear that extreme conditions such as these can yield the kind of “civic” engagement expected of citizens in developed countries like the United States. This is further complicated, of course, by the fundamental differences in understanding of principal concepts like service, civic engagement, and community service.

In many cases, for example, community service is equated with charity work, reinforcing the perception that poor communities are helpless (Bringle & Hatcher, 2006; Lazarus, 2005).

Practitioners of SL in all three countries regularly raise concerns about the use of “service” in describing community-based learning pedagogies focused on developing civic skills in students. As consistent as these concerns are, however, the basis of concern differs in countries with a colonial heritage of brutality and master-servant relations. Still, the relevant and immediate concern centers on the risk of students viewing their community activities as something that is done “to” and “for” others and not “with” others. Engaging students so that they respect indigenous ways of knowing, practice democratic and egalitarian approaches to interactions, develop intercultural competencies, and approach the activities in ways that develop efficacy for all participants are challenges that educators must address in designing effective courses for their students regardless of culture, context, or pedagogical approach.

What the institutions of higher learning in these three countries do have in common is a commitment to the tri-partite functions of teaching, research, and service. At least in RSA and the USA, a commitment exists to developing socially responsible young people, but the way this is done differs as we have seen. Most universities in developing and underdeveloped countries face additional developmental challenges (not found in the US), challenges such as dire fiscal limitations and inability to meaningfully address developmental issues that are perpetuated by weak government structures. Furthermore, like the rest of Africa, RSA and DRC universities face the challenge of reconsidering their roots within the African culture.

These concerns make it all the more important to consider a framework that might inform the design and implementation of SL programs in different context. How these programs are designed has serious implications for the third sector in each country particularly because third sector organizations are significantly affected by SL programs. It is important to note that SL programs are also affected by the extent to which third sector organizations have the capacity to meaningfully absorb incoming students.

Morton (1995) describes three community service paradigms relevant to this discussion of designing community interventions. These include: charity (providing direct service to another person), project (implementing or participating in service programs through third sector organizations), and social change (transformational models of systemic change). Each type of service is a separate paradigm and, he contends, it may not be reasonable for educators to have a developmental goal of challenging college students to move from acts of charity to planned projects towards social change. He posits that college students active in community service tend

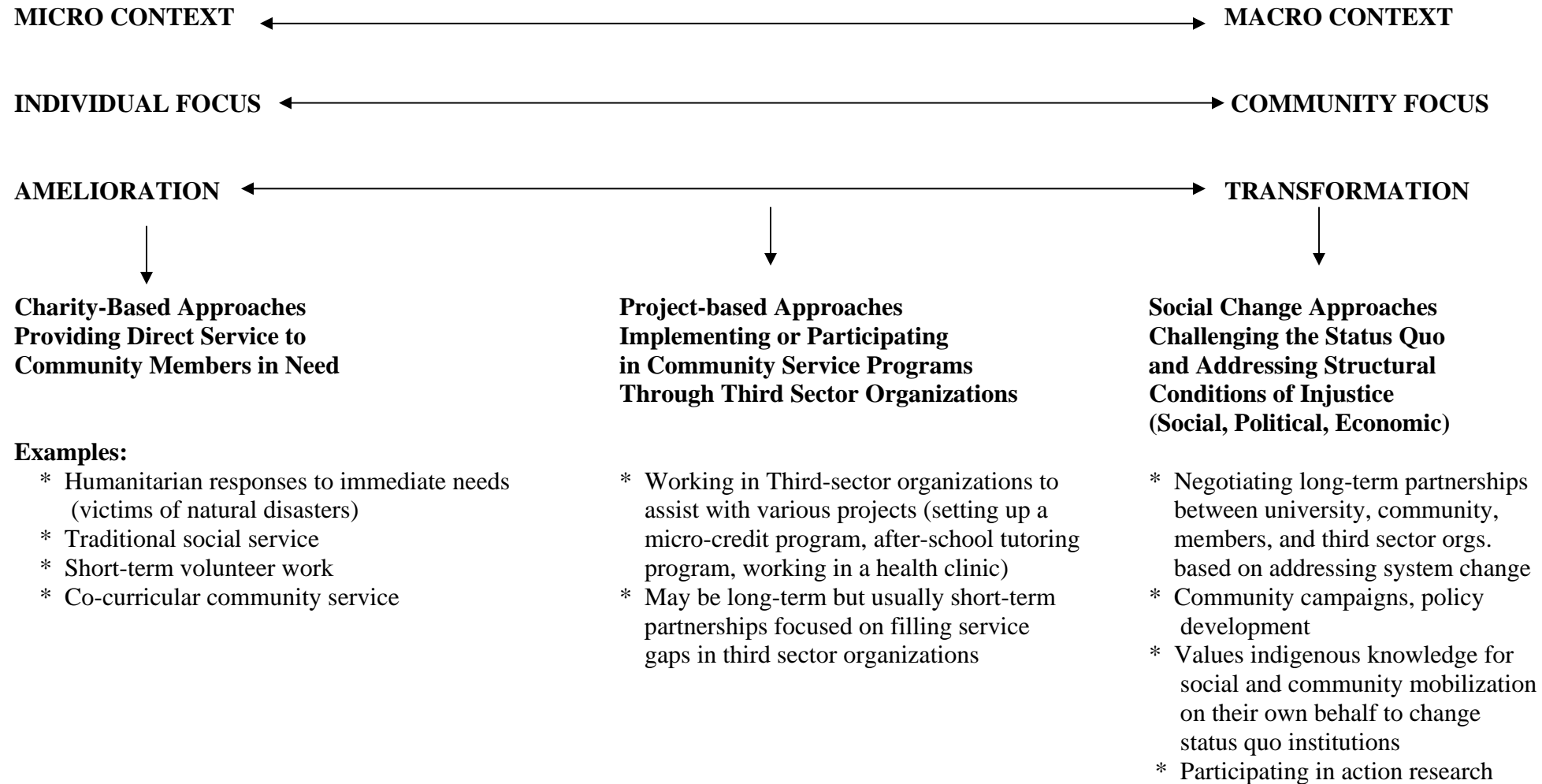
to identify with a particular type of service and educators should rather strive to deepen the integrity of each type of service. Students with high levels of integrity, across the three types of service, possess deeply held, internally coherent values; match means and ends; describe a primary way of interpreting and relating to the world; offer a way of defining problems and solutions; and suggest a vision of what a transformed world might look like (p. 28).

In a recent text on Community Psychology in RSA, Naidoo and his associates (2007) present a continuum depicting a range of psychological interventions from mainstream approaches (e.g. direct social service) to more collective approaches based on transformative actions (such as advocacy, lobbying and social activism). In a similar vein, SL programs can be characterized in terms of being more individualistically or collectively oriented and in having more ameliorative (charitable) or transformative motives or goals. This is illustrated in Figure 2. In general, charitable or ameliorative activities (e.g. providing relief to people affected by flooding in an informal settlement) will involve community service, in contrast to more collectively oriented activities (e.g. supporting the development of a community hall or programs addressing needs through participative processes with local residents and organizations) that are more akin with community development.

Where a SL program might fall on this continuum depends on a number of factors that demand careful consideration. These include but are not limited to: (a) both the national and community specific political, economic, social, and historical contexts (macro and micro), (b) the goals and expected outcomes of a community service learning approach or philosophy (different community service paradigms exist among stakeholders), (c) the extent to which stakeholders involved are able to negotiate agreed upon understandings and approaches, and (d) the capacity of the third sector to support SL programs.

Faculty, students, community engagement administrators, representatives from third-sector organizations, and residents from communities can use this conceptual framework to negotiate the goals and outcomes—and hence the design—of SL programs as they consider both the external and internal factors that vary across political, economic, and social factors. Design should always begin by (a) identification of key stakeholders (e.g. students, community members, third sector organizations), and (b) a joint analysis among the key stakeholders of both the macro and micro (political, economic, social, and cultural) contexts in which SL is to take place. Drawing from this analysis, stakeholders should then identify the developmental goals and

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for Design of SL Programs



(Adapted from Naidoo, Van Wyk, & Carolissen, 2004)

expected outcomes of SL through their own particular lenses and together negotiate the particular design most appropriate. This approach is time-consuming and therefore difficult to achieve. The up-front costs in time, energy, and negotiation may prove too costly for many university faculty, community engagement directors, third sector organization staff, and/or community members yet the long-term benefits may prove worthwhile.

From a university perspective, community engagement by institutions of higher education is staked on the intersection of academic interests (e.g. student learning; faculty scholarship) and community-defined outcomes. This territory needs to be negotiated in the design of community engagement activities (teaching, research, or service) so that an appropriate balance between mutual or competing interests can be achieved. Within all three contexts studied here, this often includes discussions with third sector organization staff who have a stake in mutually beneficial outcomes not only for their own organizations and local communities but also for students and faculty. Respecting the special interests of multiple constituencies is a challenging, yet richly rewarding endeavor, when designing community engagement activities through SL programs.

Conclusion

We approached this paper with an hypothesis that significant differences exist in the meaning and application of SL across cultures. The extent to which those differences are matters of substance or degree continues to drive this analysis. An examination of higher education in America and two African countries framed the analysis by demonstrating significant differences in historical, political, economic, and social conditions that shape the relationship between institutions of higher learning and the societies in which they reside.

This in-depth examination of university–community interactions and SL in the USA, RSA, and DRC suggests certain variables do emerge that influence how SL is viewed and practiced. These include both external structural conditions (especially history, political, and economic conditions) and internal issues (e.g., power differentials, differences in interpretation of terms, motivations for engaging in community service, the extent to which a third sector exists with the capacity to support SL programs). Despite the fact that patterns do emerge demonstrating significant differences in the *nature* of SL, it remains unclear the extent to which the *intent* of SL (as a particular means of preparing young people to be socially responsible and engaged in strengthening the third sector) varies across contexts. This remains an empirical

question. In all three countries, however, apart from the government mandate to redress inequalities and help fight poverty in RSA, the primary role of higher education remains to produce quality graduates for a skilled workforce.

Schudson (2003) notes, there are different types of citizenship skills needed for different democracies. Thus, the answers to these questions about civic objectives are context specific, and will likely be different regardless of context (Annette, 2003). This analysis illustrates that because the outcomes might differ across countries, the design of pedagogies to develop these skills will also need to be tailored to the particular political and social context. Nevertheless, there are some values (e.g., reciprocity, mutual benefit, democratic processes, community voice) that are fundamental to community engagement in general and SL in particular that may transcend geographical, historical, political, and economic boundaries (Bingle, Hatcher, & Holland, 2007).

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