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The Australian Journal of Adult Learning is an official publication of Adult Learning Australia (ALA). It is concerned with the theory, research and practice of adult and community education, and to promote critical thinking and research in this field. While the prime focus is on Australia, the practice of adult education and learning is an international field and Australia is connected to all parts of the globe, and therefore papers relating to other countries and contexts are welcome. Papers in the refereed section have been blind reviewed by at least two members from a pool of specialist referees from Australia and overseas.

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Book review

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From the Editor's desk

Tony Brown

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the publication of Eduard Lindeman's landmark *The Meaning of Adult Education*.

Lindeman is much less well known than his more famous American counterparts who preceded him, John Dewey, and followed him, Malcolm Knowles. Yet his under-recognised contribution is important and still relevant today. Lindeman was born to Danish and German immigrants and worked various jobs as a stable cleaner, nurseryman, grave-digger and delivery man before joining an 'access' course at an Agricultural College which he entered with below average reading and writing abilities. Eventually he joined Columbia University in 1924 and

wrote his best known book in 1926. In 1927 his was the first English-language use of the term 'andragogy', pre-dating Knowles by some decades.

Written in a time of great American prosperity, technological advance, and cultural experimentation, *The Meaning* followed close on the heels of the massive destruction of life of the First World War. What should a prosperous society look like? How should it be organised? How should progress deliver upon its promise to the population as a whole?

He expanded upon Dewey's notion that school-based education should strengthen democratic participation, to include adults who too often had to struggle to participate in social and economic decision-making that affected them. He argued that there was an inter-dependence of an informed public and a democracy.

In *The Meaning* he articulated a set of core beliefs that underscored the essential practice of adult education. Firstly, that Education is life, 'not merely preparation for an unknown future living … the whole of life is learning'. Secondly that adult education should be non-vocational, 'its purpose is to put meaning into the whole of life'. Thirdly, that educators should start with situations not subjects so that the curriculum is built around the student's needs and interests. And finally, educators should use the learner's experience, as it is the highest value resource in adult education.

He described adult education as a 'cooperative venture in non-authoritarian, informal learning the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience, and a quest to uncover the roots of the preconceptions that form our conduct'.

Is remembering Lindeman just a historical curiosity? What might we say is the 'meaning of adult education' today? That of course is a difficult question to answer. But looking back we can see how vital were the concerns and writing of the early adult educators. How pressing they felt the need was to outline the connection between adult education and a healthy democracy and civil society. Confronted as we are by the rapidly widening gap in inequality, the winding back of social provision, the mass dislocation of people around the world, the threats to the environment – water, food, climate, deforestation, and the

encouragement of leaders to be fearful, we might well think about the narrowing instrumentalism of much that passes for adult education. Lindeman urged his readers to 'reject the orthodox and regulated methods' of the time for he believed that adults 'want to count for something; they want their experiences to be vivid and meaningful; they want their talents to be utilised; they want to know beauty and joy; and they want all of these realisations of their total personalities to be shared in communities of fellowship'. His words deserve to be remembered for they ring out with their hope and aspirations.

The papers in this issue of AJAL can be divided in two, reflecting informal and formal aspects of adult learning in the early 21st century. The first three papers examine learning from popular films, in Art Galleries, and through a self-directed adult learn-to-swim program. The second three papers continue a focus on the range of enabling programs for new students in Australian universities and a study of a service-learning program in a South African university. Continuing a tradition of using film for teaching that goes back to Raymond Williams and the British WEA, **George Lafferty** explores the potential of feature films to encourage broader learning about work and employment among university students. The use of film enabled opportunities to open up discussions and widen perspectives among students drawn from diverse backgrounds. The paper describes how this approach was used.

Kouros Samanian, Hoda Nedaeifar and **Ma'soumeh Karimi** from Tehran's University of Arts introduce readers to an account of the learning generated through the use of artwork titles in Iranian art galleries. They outline how titles are means of interpreting works for gallery visitors and hence play an important mediating role in the viewer's learning experience.

In a famous account of individual adult learning Stephen Brookfield once recounted his personal experience, and trepidation, of learning to swim. **So-An Lao, Brett Furlonger, Dennis Moore** and **Margherita Busacca** in their paper re-enter this pool by examining how the use of video modelling and video feedback can assist in an individual self-managed learn to swim program. The paper follows one 36 year old who used the video technology over a one year period to monitor its effectiveness as a way of developing confidence and technique.

The spread of various enabling and pathway programs to assist new entrants in under-graduate university study has been a stimulus for much research in Australian higher education in recent years. How do these programs work? Are they successful? Do they meet the needs of those young adults encouraged to enter university as part of governments' efforts to broaden the intake into the higher education sector? **Susan Johns, Nicole Crawford, Cherie Hawkins, Lynn Jarvis, Mike Harris** and **David McCormack** from the University of Tasmania take up this topic by examining the individual and community outcomes of a rural based enabling program. Their preliminary study is somewhat different in that they examine the benefits for a pool of mature-aged students with strong ties to their local community, and suggest that the enabling programs are able to unlock the potential in rural communities.

Addressing the potential of enabling programs is also the subject of **Cheryl Bookallil** and **John Rolfe's** paper. They compare completions, articulations and academic performance between students completing the programs by internal mode and those who opted for distance study.

Service-learning undertaken as part of community-university partnerships has been a growing area of South African higher education. **Anneliese Goslin, Engela van der Klashorst, Darlene Kluka** and **Johannes van Wyk** report on a study of 410 students in a recreation service course on their first service-learning experience. Students used reflective journals to record their pre-experience thoughts and then their experiences over the four-week program. Their paper considers the question of whether these pre-service and formative reflections can develop collaborative, in-depth learning.

The final contribution to this issue is a book review by **Tom Stehlik** of an edited collection of contributions responding to the question of 'what does a VET teacher need to know in order to develop themselves as an expert practitioner in the field'. The collection, edited by Ros Brennan Kemmis and Liz Atkins, is an important addition to Australia's VET literature. It is also important because it is such a worthy last contribution by our colleague Ros Brennan Kemmis who sadly passed away in 2015. Ros had been at Charles Sturt for over 20 years, been

Head of the School of Education, a leading VET researcher, involved in the development of a post-graduate diploma in the Wiradjuri language, culture and heritage, and recognised as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM). She was a highly valued, generous and admired colleague and will be missed by all those in adult education and learning who knew her.

Tony Brown

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Opening the learning process: the potential role of feature film in teaching employment relations

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This paper explores the potential of feature film to encourage more inclusive, participatory and open learning in the area of employment relations. Evaluations of student responses in a single postgraduate course over a five-year period revealed how feature film could encourage participatory learning processes in which students re-examined their initial perspectives on a series of employment relations topics and debates. Over time, the course became increasingly characterised by a pluralism in which all participants became more open to a range of different views, including those of students from diverse political, cultural and religious backgrounds. Of particular note was how the fictional situations depicted in feature films could expand the opportunities for participation and more complex, multidimensional approaches to learning. Following on from a discussion of how more open learning processes require a reconfigured conceptual framework, the paper concludes with some open-ended questions on the use of film in learning processes.

Keywords: *Feature film, employment relations, openness, learning process.*

Introduction

The use of film in teaching and learning has attracted considerable attention for many years, across a wide and growing range of topics and subject areas – for example, medical sociology (Pescosolido, 1990), race relations (Loewen, 1991), ethnographic methods (Leblanc, 1998), sociology and social policy (Kennedy, Senses and Ayan 2011), politics (Chang and Cryer, 2009) and health education (Persson and Persson, 2008). This paper investigates the ways in which film, specifically feature film, might assist in achieving more open, inclusive and participatory learning processes in employment relations, which includes the sociology of work, industrial relations and human resource management. In doing so, it necessarily leads on to the potential roles of film, (to which TV and online audio-visual material could reasonably be added) in developing more complex intellectual and emotional responses that are irreducible to 'knowledge'.

The paper assesses the contributions of film to student learning in a single postgraduate course on strategic employment relations, taught over a ten-week period annually, between 2009 and 2013. The course had been re-designed to open up and evaluate different perspectives on employment relations issues, particularly through participation in seminar discussions, debates and case study analysis. The composition of each student cohort (between fifteen and thirty students) over the period was diverse, with a range of disciplinary backgrounds (encompassing arts, social sciences, business and law), nationalities (twenty countries represented overall), ages (a median of 32-36), with slightly more female than male students in each cohort (a ratio of approximately 55:45). The highest qualification for the great majority of students was a Bachelor's degree. Almost all the international students (around 40 per cent of each cohort) had no or very little work experience, while most of the local (Sydney) students had considerable work experience, with a sizeable sprinkling of middle managers.

Popular culture, including feature film, can play an important role in

how adult learners view themselves in relation to the world, providing informal learning experiences against which they can reposition themselves, reassessing their own views (Armstrong, 2008; Hall, 2001; Guy, 2007; Jarvis, 1999; Malcolm, Hodkinson and Colley, 2003; Tisdell and Thompson, 2007). Similarly, within the formal learning process, the situations depicted in feature films can enable students to draw on and complement their own experiences, as the dilemmas and challenges faced by the fictional characters resonate with events in their own lives. Significantly, identification and empathy with exploited, excluded or marginal groups can encourage a deeper appreciation of social, political and economic problems, conflicts and divisions (Batson, Chang, Orr and Rowland, 2002; Giroux, 2002; Schwandt, 2000; Stuckey and Kring, 2007; Tisdell and Thompson, 2007). Students' construction of their own narratives, therefore, can increase the possibilities for the emergence of a critical pedagogy that apprehends and examines prevailing power structures and relations.

The construction of such a critical pedagogy was a pivotal concern in this particular course, which sought to address the intersections between employment relations and broader societal issues of power relations, inequality and discrimination. Within this context, feature film offered the potential to open up multiple perspectives, through which students could identify and empathise with characters and situations which they may never have encountered previously. Thus feature film could encourage alternative narratives as a basis for engagement and critique, rather than the transmission of a single, didactic view (see Brown, 2011: 236). While an occasionally risky venture in terms of student responses, a form of transformational learning could be achieved, whereby students could gain new insights and ways of looking at their own work experiences (Brooks, 2004), which could in turn be brought back to inform and enrich class discussions.

The introduction of feature film to the study of employment relations could thus create possibilities for a critical workplace pedagogy through which adult learners could construct alternative meanings and interpretations to those promulgated by employers, which are predominantly oriented around closed neoliberal and managerial discourses of intensified individual competition and increasing corporate profitability (Wright, 2013; Yang, 2004; Subramaniam,

Perrucci and Whitlock, 2014). A particular strength of feature film in this respect was its capacity to explore frequently neglected emotional aspects of workplace situations, while illuminating the situations of previously silent or excluded groups (see Brigden and Milner, 2013; Paré and Le Maistre, 2006). The shifting intersections of informal learning, formal learning and popular culture could offer opportunities to analyse and debate fundamentally moral issues – for instance, job losses or sexual harassment. Identification and empathy with fictional characters and the moral dilemmas they encountered, therefore, could lead to further questioning of the moral stances of all participants, not just students, as the previously uncontroversial became complex, confronting and contested.

The introduction of feature film into the formal teaching context, therefore, could add specifically 'human' dimensions (Wright, 2013: 14), bringing into question the ostensibly uncomplicated rationality of 'efficient' business decisions – a recurring event in the course discussed in this paper. The development of a critical workplace pedagogy in this respect represented a step further than the occasional introduction of a film to illustrate a particular issue, since it required a consistent change of approach to the learning process, through which multiple, often competing and even unanticipated perspectives were opened up. These phenomena all became unmistakable in the integration of feature films in this course.

Film, closed learning and possible openings

The origins of this paper lie in a remarkably *un*successful use of film in a teaching and learning context. An unexpected level of disinterest had greeted the showing of a sequence from the documentary, *The Corporation* (Akbar and Abbott, 2004), to a class of postgraduate coursework students in 2007. This was despite my prior confidence that the film's content and style were well-suited to the teaching context in which it was shown: a seminar/workshop session on how transnational corporations have transformed employment conditions globally. Subsequent discussions with students indicated that they felt intimidated by the 'talking heads' format of the film: they felt they were being talked at, rather than being engaged in a critical dialogue. In effect, they thought that the film was like a traditional lecture – with all

that medium's advantages and limitations (Bligh, 2000; Dolnicar, 2005) – therefore adding little new in terms of the learning experience, as they had already attended a lecture on the topic. Students also indicated that they believed the content of the film was one-sided and that it left them little scope for alternative opinions – a major shortcoming, since the film was included as the focal point for debate on the topic. Students believed there was clearly a 'correct' view, the position endorsed in the movie and which they consequently, and not unreasonably, assumed was shared by the lecturer. Subsequent course evaluations confirmed that this perception was held across the student cohort. Students, then, withdrew into passivity rather than drawing upon the film to generate discussion: disengagement and closure were the outcomes. What factors were at play, leading to these generally negative student responses and learning outcomes, and how might they be addressed, to achieve greater, more meaningful participation and openness?

Some progress towards answering these questions was achieved in a quite different setting: a workshop at a US labour educators' conference. The workshop was oriented around the topic of workers and immigration – particularly the much-debated question of working class conservatism (see, for example, Nordlinger, 1967; Svallfors, 2006). From this general topic, the discussion then concentrated on an intensely controversial issue: why do many US workers, both union and non-union, remain resolutely opposed to 'illegal' Mexican immigrants – their legal status providing a further point of contestation – despite the apparently overwhelming evidence that these immigrants constitute no meaningful threat to the jobs of US workers?

One strategy discussed during the workshop was the use of a range of feature films, depicting the plight of many Mexican workers. Through viewing these films, US workers might identify more closely with the personal situations of the Mexican immigrants and come to question their own prior opinions on the 'border crisis'. This strategy, of the 'mile in their shoes' variety, meant addressing the issue at an emotional as well as intellectual level: 'the facts' may not be equally convincing to everyone, even without entering into debates on the reliability of 'facts'. The 'emotional' and the 'intellectual', therefore, came to be viewed as inseparable – and often indistinguishable.

Subsequent reflection on these two contrasting experiences led to the question of how film might be used most effectively in the employment relations learning process. The first film used in seeking to address this question was the Charlie Chaplin classic, *Modern Times* (Chaplin, 2003), which provides a caustic depiction of the Fordist assembly-line and Taylorist management techniques. The film, silent except for its celebrated closing scene in which the Tramp sings, was introduced, therefore, to encourage greater engagement by students, particularly by international students from non-English backgrounds. The first section of the film, approximately 15 minutes, entirely silent save for musical accompaniment, was shown. Focusing on the rigours of mass production, factory discipline and surveillance, this section's relevance to higher education teaching has been discussed by several authors (for example, Tolich, 1993). Students viewed the film in conjunction with seminar discussions and debates on unemployment and mass production techniques. Since the film was originally released in 1936, during the Great Depression, and the Global Financial Crisis had descended when the course was being taught, the discussion was given considerable contemporary relevance, enabling students to identify how certain themes remained consistent to the present.

Within this particular teaching and learning context, *Modern Times* created a common ground and even a common, non-verbal language, whereby the English-language difficulties of some international students were erased temporarily. Introduced primarily to add visual substance to the discussion of the topics, the film added a dimension of humour that encouraged student involvement and reduced any possible anxieties (Kaufman, 2002). Although many students were initially perplexed by the medium of the silent movie, most found *Modern Times* highly engaging, to the extent that they continued to discuss the issues for a considerable time after the end of the scheduled class. A significant number of students also specifically mentioned the film as a highlight when completing their course evaluations.

Feature film, multiple learning dimensions and openness

The use of film in the course was refined over successive offerings between 2009 and 2013, a total of twelve feature films being shown at different times, with varying degrees of effectiveness. After considerable

experimentation, the four films discussed in the following section were used in addition to *Modern Times*, which continued to serve to a considerable extent as an ice-breaker in the course, opening up greater space for discussion and debate. Extracts from each film were shown where they could clearly contribute extra dimensions to the course's lectures, workshops, debates and case study analysis. Therefore, they were not introduced as a routine element of the course, being viewed only where they could add depth and new perspectives to class discussions and assessment. The evaluation of the effectiveness of each film extract also included scrutiny of the most appropriate timing for film showings – for example, before or after debates, or even both, in order to introduce issues before a debate and/or to amplify issues raised during debates.

An extract from *The Closet* (Le Placard) (Veber, 2001) was introduced during a class on equity policies and legislation. The film was shown in its dubbed rather than subtitled version, to make it more readily accessible for students from non-English-speaking backgrounds. Accountant François Pignon (Daniel Auteil) is in crisis: his personal relationships having disintegrated, he has just discovered he is earmarked for redundancy. Work, his only salvation, is about to be snatched from him. Suicidal and preparing to leap from his apartment balcony, he is interrupted by a neighbour, Jean-Pierre Belone (Michel Aumont), who eventually persuades him towards an alternative plan. This involves giving his management and co-workers the impression that he is gay – an impression to be achieved through anonymously sending mocked-up photos of Pignon embracing a male companion to the company, which manufactures condoms. According to Belone, management will be unable to fire him if they are to maintain their carefully cultivated appearance of employment equity. Pignon protests: 'I thought it over. Your strategy won't work. I can't fake being gay. I'm no actor, I'll get exposed!' To which Belone replies: 'You're right. If you camp it up, you'll be a flop. … You'll pull it off if you do nothing at all. Just stay the shy, discreet person they've known for years. What'll change is how they perceive you.'

From this core premise, a series of previously improbable events inevitably ensues. The only constant, as his world is transformed around him, is Pignon's own unchanged behaviour. Alarmed at the probable

consequences of firing him, the company's management becomes suddenly desperate to keep him. Pignon not only retains his job but goes on to achieve an unforeseen popularity and glamour, even attaining minor celebrity status at the local Gay Pride festival. The film thus enabled students to identify the multiple dimensions of employment equity legislation and policies – as the company was forced to act against its own informal culture of discrimination, standing in stark contrast to its formal commitment to equity. It helped to demonstrate, in conjunction with other elements of the course, how a deeply embedded, persistently sexist and homophobic organisational culture could be rapidly and very publicly disowned and dismantled, when the company's profits and core market were threatened. Students were also able to address, through a case study and a debate, the complexity of organisational decision-making, policies and procedures on equity in employment.

Following the gentle humour of *The Closet*, students were then confronted by a film depiction of a highly aggressive, often unscrupulous all-male workplace where equity was not a consideration. *Glengarry GlenRoss* (Foley, 1992), based on the play by David Mamet, focused on the desperate, even illegal efforts of a group of Chicago real estate agents to save their jobs. The movie's most celebrated scene was written specifically for the film version: Blake (Alec Baldwin), a highly successful, brutally aggressive salesman, has been drafted in from the Mitch and Murray central office to address the branch's salesmen in order to boost flagging sales. He proceeds to berate three of them – Shelley Levene (Jack Lemmon), George Aaronow (Alan Arkin) and Dave Moss (Ed Harris) – informing them that only two would still be with the company in a week, following a sales contest: 'Third prize is you're fired'. The fourth salesman, Ricky Roman (Al Pacino), is safe for the present, as he is a star performer. This is the scene used in the course, with reference to the topics of bullying and workplace voice and silence. Intimidation is present in almost every word uttered by Blake – for example, 'If you don't like it, leave' – thus presenting students with a graphic illustration of a workplace in which only one voice, that of management, is permitted. There are no sympathetic characters, as the agents proceed to lie, cheat and steal their way to sales, amidst their own feelings of resentment, despair and outrage. The scene was a revelation for many students, particularly those with little or no work experience,

providing a worst-case scenario against which students could evaluate other workplace situations, enabling them to explore issues related to workplace voice, silence and bullying. Film in this instance was particularly valuable in illustrating the operation of silence and inaction through the imposition of managerial power (see Lukes, 2005).

More light-hearted but no less confronting was the extract shown in the following week, from *9 to 5* (Higgins, 2007). Very much of its place and time (USA, 1980), the film was introduced during class discussion on gender discrimination and harassment. A particular strength was its illustration of the multiple forms of discrimination and harassment. Thus the blatantly discriminatory manager, Franklin Hart Jr. (Dabney Coleman), overlooks Violet Newstead (Lily Tomlin) for promotion, appointing a less experienced man: 'Clients would rather deal with men when it comes to figures', he states bluntly. Hart repeatedly sexually harasses his secretary, Doralee Rhodes (Dolly Parton): 'You mean so much more to me than a dumb secretary'; and hurls verbal abuse at Judy Bernly (Jane Fonda) as the Xerox machine goes rapidly haywire: 'Any moron could operate this thing.' The tables, though, are eventually turned – in the movie, at least. These brief scenes helped to capture the immediate consequences and enduring damage of discrimination and harassment, adding impact to textual and lecture presentations. Students were able to assess how much or how little had changed with respect to the contexts of their own workplace and national cultures, policies and legislation and to relate the film events to a case study and debate on gender discrimination and harassment.

Context was also crucial to the final film extract discussed in the course, from *Up in the Air* (Reitman, 2009). During the GFC and its aftermath, mass corporate downsizing in the USA prompted soaring demand for the services of professional downsizing firms. The film's central character, Ryan Bingham (George Clooney) is employed to deliver the news to employees that their own managers are unwilling to deliver: 'pussies … who don't have the balls to sack their own employees', as he describes them. In its opening few minutes, *Up in the Air* conveys the human dimensions of job loss with remarkable power, as Bingham conducts a (literally) rapid-fire series of terminations. He seeks to defuse the process through following a tested formula, focusing on a future he knows is bleak but which he portrays as full of promise: 'Anyone who

ever built an empire or changed the world sat where you are right now, and it's because they sat there that they were able to do it.' Bingham is the ideal downsizer, having dispensed with all unnecessary baggage, such as possessions and relationships, as he is most at home when 'up in the air', accumulating mileage points. He knows none of the people he fires – and he never will. All the emotion emanates from the employee's side. As one exclaims: 'This is what I get in return for 30 years of service for my company? And they send some yoyo like you in here, to try to tell me that I'm out of a job? They should be telling you *you're* out of a job.' Students are thus confronted in the opening few scenes with the emotionally devastating human consequences of what may appear initially to be bloodless financial decisions. These scenes, then, informed class discussion and debate on redundancy and dismissals. The emotional aspects of the employment relationship, those aspects rarely addressed in texts, became undeniable.

Therefore, these film extracts within a specific learning context could provide a collective experience in which students developed emotional closeness and empathy with different characters, in contrast to the distance and detachment demanded of many of them in their everyday working lives – for example, as middle managers. The unspoken signs of the workplace – from a raised eyebrow to physical intimidation and abuse – were illustrated dramatically: a non-verbal language often reinforced by words, impossible for students to ignore. Multiple issues could even be raised in a single film extract: for example, in a few minutes of *9 to 5* the topics of gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, organisational misconduct and unfair dismissals were made explicit. The extracts also helped to illustrate the need for historical contextualisation, a consistent theme in the course, particularly national and international political-economic developments – for example, the Great Depression in the case of *Modern Times* or the Global Financial Crisis in the case of *Up in the Air*. Thus students were enabled to explore the interrelationships between workplaces, organisational strategies and these broader contexts over time – for example, the effects of fluctuations in employment growth and unemployment on workforce planning.

Assessing the effectiveness of feature film

Several qualitative and quantitative sources were drawn upon over the successive offerings of the course, to assess the effectiveness of the film extracts – that is, the extent to which they added new dimensions to the learning experience. First, two main informal methods of evaluation were adopted: direct observation by the lecturer on how and to what extent the extracts enhanced both class discussions and student learning, as demonstrated through their class participation and assessment items; plus a brief (5-10 minutes) direct discussion between lecturer and students conducted at the end of each class, in order to capture immediate responses on the effectiveness of each film extract in relation to other teaching components of the course. Second, these informal methods were complemented by two formal, anonymous questionnaire surveys of the course (one online, one paper-based), which included open-ended questions on its most and least effective aspects and suggestions for improvements. In order to reduce the possibility of survey fatigue among students, these formal evaluations were relatively brief, lasting no more than fifteen minutes. The survey questions provided numerical indicators on a five-point Likert scale of student views on the overall effectiveness of the course, while the open-ended questions enabled them to provide comments on the specific effectiveness of the film extracts. These specific responses were almost entirely positive, while students were happy to provide comments on the value of particular films, with a particular focus on their relevance to the topics under discussion.

From this combination of formal and informal evaluation sources, it became evident that the situations portrayed in these film examples, in conjunction with discussions on debate issues and case studies, led to students developing more complex, reflective and negotiated responses that questioned the logic and suitability of actions based on a single perspective – usually that of 'the organisation' or its management. These responses included the integration of different cultural perspectives in reaching decisions, embracing a pluralism that recognised others' views as legitimate. The use of film in these contexts, then, helped to encourage both diversity in not only participants' ways of knowing but also in their ways of feeling and identifying with people and situations emotionally, these processes being constantly interrelated.

The film extracts provided scenarios which assisted both students and the lecturer to apply theories of strategic planning and implementation to a range of scenarios, both fictional and factual, in case studies and debates, and to explore relationships often more complex than could be accommodated by the available models usually deployed in employment relations. All participants could enrich their understandings of issues through apprehending alternative perspectives that were opened up by the contextually integrated use of film.

Initially, though, not all students were entirely happy with the role allocated to the film extracts: especially for several students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, it added to their sense of uncertainty, while other students expressed scepticism concerning the introduction of films seen as less than serious. Yet, once the connections with other elements of the course, particularly assessment items, were clarified, students expressed more enthusiasm for the role occupied by feature film. Indeed, the extracts were frequently mentioned as a highlight, while numerous students, mostly from non-English-speaking backgrounds, volunteered that, following the collective experiences opened up by the extracts, they felt more integrated with their peers. In the words of one student, 'I used to think I would be laughed at – but now I know that other people are thinking the same things.'

Several students from non-English-speaking backgrounds also ventured that they felt more prepared to assert their opinions, including disagreement – which had previously posed cultural difficulties for them. As one said, 'It's OK to think differently – and say it.' Therefore, the integration of film in this course stimulated at least a partial democratisation and diversification of the learning process, as numerous students moved from silence to voice, bringing a wider range of personal experiences, backgrounds and perspectives to the overall learning process and expanding the issues for debate and discussion. In this regard, accessibility, especially for students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, proved to be a particularly vital criterion for selecting extracts, in order to reduce uncertainty and increase the possibility of a more open, participatory, collective learning experience. For example, the silent movie, *Modern Times*, could virtually eliminate English language barriers. In contrast, an English language extract with a high level of colloquial expressions, especially where delivered sarcastically

or with innuendo, as in *Glengarry GlenRoss*, could present difficulties. The French film, *The Closet*, when shown in its dubbed English version, reported by several international students to be more readily accessible than the subtitled version, in fact proved more immediately accessible for students from non-English-speaking backgrounds. In the case of *Glengarry GlenRoss*, the lecturer provided an explanation of the intent and impact of the sarcasm and innuendo, which were usually associated with bullying and intimidation. Thus predicting and increasing accessibility emerged as an occasionally complex exercise.

Inclusion of feature film extracts in this course contributed to a collective experience through which students could achieve identification and empathy not only with fictional characters but also with fellow students from very different backgrounds and with groups discussed in the accompanying debates and case studies. Film conveyed situations and identifiably 'human' dimensions with a pressing sense of immediacy arguably impossible to convey in print. Hence the learning possibilities identified in the initial example that inspired the introduction of film in this course, 'illegal' Mexican immigrants to the USA, were enhanced, replicated and reconfigured in several new contexts. As Jarvis (2012: 754) notes, though, the efforts of educators to achieve greater identification and empathy among students can have very uneven outcomes on different students, depending on background and context. For example, in this course the showing of *9 to 5* in conjunction with a debate and case study on contemporary employment discrimination engendered cross-national disagreements among students on gender-related practices and policies. Students' experiences underscored how differences may often not be reconciled and unexpected schisms may emerge.

Therefore, the potential for integration should not be exaggerated – as illustrated by a single event during one showing of *The Closet*. On seeing the photo of two men (Pignon and fabricated partner) embracing, three Saudi Arabian women students stood up and silently walked out. They returned the following week without saying a word and without expressing any concern about the torrent of expletives in the next film shown, *Glengarry GlenRoss*, which had been preceded by a standard 'explicit language' warning. Words, though, were scarcely necessary to illustrate how cultural borders can be crossed, even inadvertently.

It is at least arguable, though, that such borders *should* be crossed if employment and equity issues are to be addressed seriously. This instance indicated how the openness afforded by a feature film, therefore, may lead to unanticipated consequences: the particular showing of *The Closet* closed off discussion for the Saudi Arabian students, leading to the vexed question of whether or not the lecturer should effectively self-censure or should make those potential issues explicit at the outset. In this case, a brief warning was provided for subsequent showings.

Therefore, the extent to which students are able and/or willing to engage can fluctuate within the context of a particular class and according to the extent of openness or closure a class and their own backgrounds may provide. The effectiveness of film can vary widely with context and cohort, whereby one extract can be valuable in one setting and for certain students and less valuable in others. Consequently, evaluating their effectiveness requires assessing the responses of various student groups. Overall, the use of film in these contexts nonetheless revealed a complex, participatory learning process in which everyone experienced, to varying degrees, a reorientation of their respective understandings of a topic and of their own relationships to it – that is, film contributed to a degree of personal change and development within the teaching and learning process. As observed by Maggioni and Parkinson (2008), openness to multiple possible truths can enable students to apprehend and evaluate a range of alternatives – each of which may have greater or lesser relevance according to situation and context. In the most successful instances here, differences were made explicit and debate was integral to the content and conduct of the course from the outset. Pluralism, as the acknowledgement of and engagement with alternative perspectives, became an integral characteristic of the course – facilitated by debate questions that opened up a range of competing views.

The integrated use of film in the teaching and learning process, therefore, can enable us to identify with specific situations and the people within those situations, in order to develop more emotionally informed understandings that complement other teaching and learning resources and methods. The integration of feature films within the broader learning context poses a further crucial question: how to maintain a learning (rather than exclusively entertainment)

environment, while recognising the inherent paradox that the learning value of a feature film is that it is often engaging and entertaining: its capacity to entertain opens up possibilities for engagement. A particular strength of the films discussed here was their entertainment value, particularly humour, which ensured engagement. However, in order to maintain purposeful engagement, only scenes that were directly relevant to the week's topic were shown. A major consideration was how much of a film, within copyright constraints, should be shown: in this case, twenty minutes constituted the maximum, to ensure that engagement with the week's topic was retained. The films were not shown in their entirety as separate events but integrated as brief extracts into the teaching and learning process, in order to link them directly to previous and subsequent discussions.

Dorothy Parker once famously, but perhaps apocryphally, said of a performance by the young Katherine Hepburn that she had run 'the gamut of emotions from A to B'. In contrast, the use of film in student learning can assist us to draw on the A to Z of emotions that occur in the world of work, adding a significant dimension of openness to discussions. Although the situations depicted may be uncertain and even dangerous, film offers a safe, inclusive environment in which to address them and in which the problems of passivity and silence, especially in this case from students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, can be addressed. Fictional examples, such as those provided by feature films, afford us considerable licence in this regard: so long as characters are not readily identifable as real people, we can say virtually anything we like about them – an observation that of course extends to both written and other audiovisual representations. Yet often they provide potential sources of insight and analysis that would be impossible for any empirical research – for example, the kinds of bullying and harassment depicted in several scenes from these films would normally be revealed only in legal proceedings. Through discussing them in fictional form, though, students could explore potential strategies for the prevention of bullying with a considerable degree of freedom. The fictional situations depicted in feature films, believable to greater or lesser degrees, provided a basis from which to draw new, more reflective arguments and conclusions that breach the confines of textbook explanations.

Conclusion: opening the learning process through feature film

Research on higher education over recent decades has stressed the development of 'deep' rather than 'surface' learning, in conjunction with strategies which stimulate 'active' rather than 'passive' student involvement (Biggs, 1999; Ramsden, 1992). These constructs have been deployed widely in the higher education literature (see Webb, 2004) and they provide a pragmatic framework for the interpretation of student learning. There is substantial evidence (for example, Trigwell, Prosser, and Waterhouse, 2004) that, where teaching staff adopt student-oriented approaches which change students' conceptions, deeper learning outcomes are more likely than in more teacher-oriented, transmission-type approaches. This paper has been concerned with the potential of film, and specifically feature films, to enhance student learning in the study of employment relations, to produce more active, complex and deeper learning experiences, while acknowledging that students have to acquire fundamental knowledge (for example, of employment law).

Effective learning invariably comprises a combination of active/passive, individual/collective, surface/deep dimensions and related teaching techniques (Mayer, 1986). Not all learning can be exciting, active and 'deep'; certain basic ('threshold') concepts and knowledge are required to reach towards any deeper understanding (Land, Cousin, Meyer, and Davies, 2006) – for example, in this case, a thorough grasp of relevant employment legislation such as workplace health and safety. The main challenge lies in adopting approaches suited to the specific content, teaching environment, student cohort, and intended learning outcomes. The use of film should be similarly contextualised. The impacts of film can be multi-dimensional, complex and frequently unpredictable: the unintended consequences from the use of film may include unexpected learning outcomes.

Student are not 'passive observers': their responses can amplify the power of a film (Champoux, 1999; see also Tipton and Tiemann, 1993). However, if debate and discussion are closed off, they may withdraw into passivity. In this respect, 'mainstream' films, rather than the lecturer's favourite arthouse movie, offer considerable advantages in already being open to a wide audience. *The Corporation*, regardless

of its other qualities as a film, closed off debate, providing virtually a single perspective and reducing the possibilities for students to develop more complex understandings – and, while it could well have encouraged 'deeper' learning, student disengagement largely prevented this. However, the other films used in the course were successful because they encouraged different types of learning to those provided by the other teaching and learning methods used in the course, opening up new issues that neither the lecturer nor students may have contemplated or even recognised before. Students could become to some extent participant observers, within a collectively shared experience, generating emotional closeness and empathy rather than distance and detachment – the latter position being demanded of many of them in their daily working lives. Consequently, their ability to understand the situations of individuals and groups within a range of difficult situations was enhanced.

The conceptual framework for interpreting the teaching and learning process in employment relations should be able to apprehend the complex and multidimensional issues that provide their focus. This necessitates venturing, in addition to 'surface' and 'deep' understandings, towards the apprehension of multiple perspectives that encapsulate both intellectual and emotional aspects. The constructive use of film, integrated within the learning context and providing another dimension of experience, indicates a more complex understanding of the learning process, which reveals how conflict and contradiction can stimulate discussion and debate, leading on to a reformulated, often consensus-based understanding of the issues. This participatory and experiential learning process is one in which all participants undergo a reorientation of their understandings of a topic and of their own relationship to it – contributing to a degree of personal change and development. Thus participants can identify resonances with their own workplace experiences and informal learning, which are in turn brought back to the formal learning context. The inclusion of multiple perspectives also places a considerable onus on the lecturer: to take risks with respect to learning outcomes and to acknowledge a pluralism which, depending on the characteristics of the student cohort, can encompass a range of diverse political, cultural and religious views and backgrounds. This has quite radical implications – for example, it may lead to the overt questioning of the generally 'Western' values, practices,

assumptions and expectations contained in most employment relations, management and business literature.

To raise some open-ended questions on the use of film, questions which should be asked throughout a course and in formal evaluations: What, if anything, is the film extract adding that is new? How much should be shown? How suitable is the particular genre (for example, feature film or documentary) for the specific teaching context and learning purpose? How appropriate is the movie for the student cohort (nationality, gender, age, work experience, disciplinary background)? How well does it relate to the organisation of the class – for example, students engaged in group debates? The learning outcomes from the use of film are closely related to the answers to these questions.

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A survey on the influence of titles on the visitor's interpretation and learning in art galleries: an Iranian context

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As previous studies suggest, titles of works of art have generally proven to be influential elements in reading and interpretation of the artworks. In the exhibition context, titles can be considered as a physical component of the museum or art gallery's space. According to the relatively new approaches, learning, being a subcategory of interpretation, occurs as a result of the dialogue between the personal background of the visitor and the context of museums. The present study takes shape on the ground of general studies on titles to account for titling role in the interpretation, hence the learning process of visitors. It also attempts to show whether the artistic background of visitors would influence the role they assign to titles in the process of interpretation. The results of this study can inform art galleries of how visitors regard titles and how titling can be a potential learning element. It may also suggest designing titling manuals to inform the

artists of how titles can act as a medium between the artwork and audience. By following a survey method, 243 questionnaires were obtained from visitors of five painting exhibitions in the art galleries of Tehran. The data was analysed using SSPS software. The results suggested that interaction of visitors with titles can be categorised by two indicators of importance and functionality, both of which received high value by visitors to art galleries in Tehran. The most significant function of title for visitors was communicative function. Also, there was a significant, inverted relationship between the amount of artistic background and considering function and importance for titles.

Keywords: *titles of artworks, art gallery, exhibitions, visitors' learning, Tehran, Iran*

Introduction and research framework

A visitor who enters a museum or art gallery requires different levels of interpretation to make sense of the exhibited items and the space of that museum or gallery in general. The notion of interpretation has been more commonly used to "discuss matters of design and display, with the emphasis being on the work of museum personnel, who decide on the interpretive approaches". (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999: 1&2)

Nevertheless, visitors can also use "interpretive strategies" and the exhibition techniques to form and enrich their interpretation. This latter sense of interpretation is linked to the process of visitors' "learning." In other words, learning can be considered as a subcategory of visitor interpretation. Such an idea stems from the more recent notion of *Constructivist learning* developed and endorsed by a number of renowned museum learning scholars, including Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, George A. Hein, John Falk and Lynn Dierking. In the constructivist approach, learning is the process of *constructing* knowledge in the mind of the individual, which results from experiencing and interacting with the environment. (See for example, Hein, 1998; Hooper-Greenhill, 2004)

Accordingly, learning "[...] can occur in many different kinds of locations, is understood as multi-dimensional, involves the use of what

we already know, or half-know, in new combinations or relationships or in new situations" (Hooper-Greenhill, 2004:156-157). Based on the constructive model, learning is a contextual process. It occurs when there is an interaction or a "dialogue" between the following contexts: whatever the visitor brings with himself/herself to the environment of museum or gallery, including his/her "[…] prior knowledge, experience, interests, and motivations," all of which comprise a personal context, the socio-cultural context of the visitor and museum (Falk and Dierking & Adams, 2006: 325), and finally, whatever the visitor encounters in the museum or gallery space, i.e. the "physical context" which includes "[…] architectural and design factors, including lighting, crowding, presentation, context, and the quantity and quality of the information presented…" (Ibid:327). According to Geroge E. Hein (1998) and Falk & Dierking (2000), the strategies set to introduce an artwork to the audience are the components of this physical context; hence they foster the process of learning. Labels in the museums or titles of artworks in art galleries are among these components.

The present study aims at investigating the general role of titles in the process of interpretation, hence learning, of Iranian gallery-goers. It also seeks to examine the relationship between the prior art knowledge and artistic background of visitors, and the assigned role of titles in the process of interpretation and learning.

With an exclusive focus on titles (not labels or other kinds of texts) the authors pursued the following questions:

1. How can titles influence the interpretation process of visitors in an art gallery setting?

2. Is there any significant relationship between visitors' artistic background (including artistic education, having an art-related job, having artistic experience, etc.) and the importance of titles in the interpretation process?

3. Is there any relationship between other visitation features (such as time spent and frequency of visit) and the role of titles for visitors?

To answer the research questions, a brief literature review of title

studies is presented to account for the significance of title as a factor in the interpretation of artworks. Next, with regards to visitors' personal context, a number of studies are referred to in which the segregation of visitors is considered an important factor to measure the quality and quantity of learning. By reviewing the relevant literature, a research model is developed to design the research instrument, in the form of a survey questionnaire. Finally, the findings and results are reported with reference to the prior studies to draw the conclusion. The implications of this study will concern art galleries and museums by directing their attention to the amount of importance and credit various visitors assigned to titles and how titles can be a potential learning factor.

Literature of title studies

Titles of artworks are verbal entities employed to name and refer to visual objects such as paintings. They appear to be different from proper names as they, at the very least, have a relation to their objects, while proper names do not necessarily have this relation (Fisher, 1984; Levinson, 1985; Adams, 1987; Peterson, 2006). Titles, presented along with many artworks and placed on the label, can intrude the mental set of viewers and compel them to adapt a completely new mentality toward it. They are in a way the first and the most accessible tool in the encounter with artwork that can help the audience form their interpretation. According to Jerrold Levinson's categorisation of titles in his seminal work named "Titles" (1985), they can acquire various functions in the interpretive mentality of the viewer, from being just a designator to being a strong interpretive tool. Regardless of which kind of titles the artworks have, they affect the aesthetic experience of visitors. The reason is, as Levinson (1985) argues, "the place of title has an aesthetic potential, no matter how they are filled…"

Ernest Gombrich's essay, "Image and Word in 20th Century Art," (1985) can be considered as the starting point for later research. As scrutinising the extraordinary role of titles in modern and post-modern art, he put forward this question; "Would it not be interesting to show it (Turnball's sculpture entitled *Head*) to one set of volunteers with the title and to another labeled *Untitled?"* (Gombrich, 1985:224). At roughly the same time, aestheticians such as Fisher (1984) and Levinson (1985) generalised the idea to all kinds of art, including literature. Such

theorisations about titles became the source of inspiration for a number of subsequent empirical studies.

Although there are many studies which indirectly bear some implications for the role of text and language in comprehending art (see, for example: Koroscik, Osman, & DeSouza, 1988), this review will go through the most direct ones in which title is the main subject of inquiry. A group of experiments, conducted by psychologists, measured titles' effects on viewers' perception, judgment and interpretation. In one of such studies, Franklin, Becklen and Doyle (1993), aimed to explain whether "titles affect the interpretive reading of a painting." To this end, they replaced the titles of two famous paintings (Claude Monet's *Garden at Saint-Adresse* and Arshile Gorky's *Agony*), with fabricated ones. The results revealed that "…the change of titles affected individuals' interpretive readings, as determined by their descriptions of the paintings…" (Franklin, Becklen, & Doyle, 1993:103). Accordingly, the title proved to be more than an identification tag.

To see how titles can influence the aesthetic processes, Cupchik, Shereck, & Spiegel (1994) observed the judgments of participants before and after providing them with textual information, including artist's statement, the mentioned style, titles and other information on the label. Generally speaking, the results showed that participants rated artwork to be of greater value and power after receiving textual information. Another interesting observation by Keith Millis (2001) revealed that "titles increase aesthetic experiences when they suggest an alternative explanation to what can be readily inferred from the explicit artwork". (Millis, 2001). He also suggested that "viewers are likely to use the title of a work to help them determine the artist's intention and, in contrast, random titles led to low understanding because the viewers could not determine the artist's intention." (Ibid: 328 Leder, Carbon, & Rispas, 2006) used a more detailed approach to account for the difference between the kind of titles (descriptive and elaborative) for different styles of painting (abstract and repesentational). To this end, they also included the variable of time of looking at paintings. The results were in line with the previous studies: titles "[…] support the assignment of content or meaning …" (Leder, Carbon, & Rispas 2006:192). They added to the literature by suggesting that the assignment of meaning and understanding is more obvious in abstract art with elaborative titles in

medium and long amounts of time but the descriptive title worked better in shorter amounts of time and not when the encounter is longer.

In the above studies the role of titles has been considered and experimented independently. None of these studies seem to indicate the relationship between the artistic background of visitors and their prior art knowledge, and the role of titles in fostering museum or gallery interpretation. While the present study is generally informed by the described trajectory of research, it focuses on titles as a component of museums or art galleries' context and its position for different visitors. In this regard, the volume of research about the interpretation or relationship of different visitors with the museum is of interest to the authors. As an example, Falk divided five museum-specific identities and demonstrated that identity-related motivation can influence visitors' interpretive processes and learning in museums (Falk J. H., 2006). In another study, Falk and Adelman proposed to group visitors according to their entering understanding, attitudes, prior knowledge and experience in order to understand the nature of learning (Falk & Adelman, 2003:163). Again, this study was based on the idea that visitors come from a variety of backgrounds, with different levels and types of knowledge, experience, interest. This diversity influences what and how individuals learn from their experience and perceive/process the messages of exhibitions.

In a study by Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert (2009), she inquired about how people perceive/relate to a museum and how these perceptions "might influence their visiting decision". The results of interviews with visitors identified eight museum perceptual filters (MPF); in other words, eight kinds of visitors based on their perception about museums. These filters include: (1) professional, (2) art-loving, (3) self-exploration, (4) cultural tourism, (5) social visitation, (6) romantic, (7) rejection and (8) indifference filters. The implication of Stylianou-Lambert's study is that the difference in individual and socio-cultural factors of visitors, prior art knowledge being one, can influence the way they make sense of the museum and regard their visit. This understanding will be used in designing our research model.

Predictions

Based on the volume of literature, the authors predict the following to answer the research questions:

Prediction No. 1: *Titles have an important role in the process of interpretation and learning for visitors of gallery exhibitions in Tehran. It is likely that they can influence visitors' learning, since they are part of the physical context of the art gallery*. This prediction is based on the volume of literature about the role of titles in interpretation. It is also based on the constructivist model of learning in which learning occurs as an interaction of personal, socio-cultural and the physical context of visitor and museum.

Prediction No. 2: The role of titles is likely to fluctuate for various visitors. Existing titles might be more helpful for the visitors with less prior knowledge. According to Lambert, segmentation of visitors and grouping them based on socio-cultural and individual factors is important in examining how they relate to museums, perceive them and learn from them (Stylianou-Lambert, 2009). Also, this prediction is based on the role of prior knowledge in the process of constructivist learning: visitors interpret and learn based on their prior knowledge. Titles could compensate for the gap of prior knowledge in visitors.

Research model

Through reviewing the presented volume of research, the authors extracted two concepts of *importance* and *functionality* to account for the role of titles in visitors' process of interpretation and learning. By Importance, the authors have the ontological aspects of titles in mind. According to Levinson's primary thesis in "Titles", "The *title slot* for a work of art is never devoid of *aesthetic potential*; *how* it is filled, or that it is *not* filled, is always esthetically relevant. A work differently titled will invariably be aesthetically different." (Levinson, 1985:29) Accordingly, the presence/absence of titles can influence the aesthetic experience. The indicator of importance is to show how much visitors care about the presence of titles as an entity and whether the absence of titles makes difficulties for reading and reception of the artworks. If visitors believe in the importance of title, it can be counted as a factor in learning since it attracts the visitor's attention to the work and initiates

the learning process. This general indicator was thought to have two aspects: the ontological and social necessity. Apart from these positive indicators, an inverted aspect was included to ascertain the accuracy of visitors' opinions: the expressive redundancy of titles, i.e. the unnecessary existence of titles by artwork in order for it to be expressive. Accordingly, the importance indicator was categorised as:

1. Ontological necessity (Positive); considering a role for title as being the artwork's Identity, being an essential part of artwork, and being complementary to artwork.

2. Social necessity (Positive); considering title to be effective in artwork's sale, considering title to be a necessity in social reception and identification of artwork for critics and the public.

3. Expressive redundancy (Negative); the preference for "untitled" works, and considering titles as redundant in expression of meaning.

The indicator of functionality is concerned with the particular roles of title that helps visitors approach the work, establish a connection with it, and understand it more easily. In other words, it accounts for the ways in which titles affect different levels of interpretation process. This indicator was inspired by the functions and forces, which Levinson counts for titles. Based on his categorisation, titles can function from being merely a tool for ease of identification to a factor which adds new meanings to the artwork (Levinson, 1985). Titles can affect the process of interpretation at different levels and in various ways. Four indictors of functionality are extracted as follows:

- Communicative function: it covers the roles of title in establishing a primary connection with the artwork and artist's intention, and communicating the primary messages of the artwork. A set of questions was designed to measure how titles play a role in primary interactions of visitors with titles.

- Meaning-making function: it means that a title can lead to/from the meaning, change the primary understanding, and interfere in the meaning of artwork. This indicator examines higher level of interaction of titles and visitor interpretation.

- Interpretive-additive function: title can enrich the artistic experience by adding ambiguity and engaging the audience. It expresses a higher level of communication than the previous function. Here titles will offer new insights about the artwork and add challenging meanings. (This indicator corresponds with the third function of title in Levinson's study)

- Exhibitive function: title can function simply as an advertising or presentation tool.

To show how these functions might interact with the interpretation process, it is possible to place them in the stages of *hermeneutic cycle*. This is particularly useful since, according to Hooper-Greenhill, the process of constructivist learning is similar to the stages of hermeneutic cycle. In the first stage of this cycle, the visitor "encounters the artwork and perceives an overall impression." The indicator of importance in this stage will determine whether titles can be conceived as a part of artwork by the visitor and hence help foster this phase. In the second and third stage "the visitor tries to make a connection with some aspect of artwork that she/he already knows and feels comfort about". He also "attempts to find a familiar or perceivable thing through similarity". Communicative function of title can be found in these phases, since titles can help foster the primary connection with the artwork. When this primary connection is established, the process continues in three more stages in which the viewer views all parts and details and attributes meaning based on his prior knowledge and returns to work as a whole again (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999). The meaning-making and interpretive-additive function of titles can be covered in these final stages.

In both hermeneutic cycle and constructivist learning, construction of meaning depends on the prior knowledge, beliefs and values: "how far it (attributing meaning) goes depends on how much is known, and how well we are able to interrogate and use what is known" (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999:46). Hence our next step would be to categorise visitors based on the concept of prior knowledge and artistic background.

Inspired by Stylianou-Lambert's MPFs mentioned in part 1, the visitors were divided into categories of *Artistic* and *Non-artistic*. In that article, filter number one, the professional, were those whose interviews revealed that they were directly involved in art through education,

occupation and expertise. This group had enough background and certain motives when they visit a place like museums and their art knowledge helps them to decode artworks. Based on this result, this filter was used to form Artistic division in our study. The *Artistic group* members have (either) studied an art major (artistic discipline), have an art-related job, are involved in doing art informally (artistic occupation), and/or have had some experience in art (artistic background).

Filter numbers two (art-loving), three (self-exploration) and five (social visitation) in Stylianou-Lambert's article were merged into the group of *Non-artistic* visitors. These visitors lack formal/informal art training, they are not artists and they do not hold an occupation in art spheres. Their motivation for their visit is considered to be personal interest, entertainment and/or a form of socialisation. The categorisation of artistic and non-artistic is merely a terminology to show whether the existence of any prior art knowledge or background might affect the importance and functions of titles in the process of learning in the space of art galleries. Also, the time spent on the particular visitation and frequency of visiting art galleries are subjected to scrutiny to provide an answer for the third question.

Methodology

According to Hill's methodology, the survey method consists of seven phases including: aims, method of data collecting and determining the sample, designing research questions, data gathering, data analysis and reporting the findings. Accordingly, in the initial phase the researchers design a model based on the existing knowledge and literature review. This can help them to test the hypotheses (Hill, 1998). The same procedure was followed in the previous sections. The remaining parts of the survey method are henceforth elaborated.

The indicators mentioned above are used for designing the research tool which is a survey questionnaire. It consists of three parts: demographic section, artistic profile, visitation features such as time spent, and table of scoring visitor's understanding and ideas about titles (seventeen's author-designed sentences). The first version of the questionnaire was subject to subsequent revision and reconsideration after a pilot study. In the next stage, the sample size was determined using the formula of sample size estimation of random sampling.2

The mode of data gathering is simple random sampling without replacement. The random method of this research tries to avoid being exclusionary by including just a special group of visitors (Dawson & Jensen, 2011). At the final stage, the obtained data is analysed by statistical tests in SPSS software.

Setting and Sampling

Art galleries appear to be suitable places to provide immediate feedback on how random visitors with different backgrounds shape their experience of titles. While this study is inspired by previous research conducted in psychology labs, galleries and museums, its specific focus is on painting exhibitions of art galleries in Tehran. It is worth mentioning that there are around 50 active private galleries in Tehran. They are usually dispersed in different parts of the city and have similar standards to global practices. Each gallery holds around 10-15 exhibitions per year. In terms of formal features such as physical space, they usually have modern structures and organise their exhibitions according to common practices. Five art galleries3 in Tehran were used as the setting of this study (Appendix 2). The only criterion for choosing the exhibitions was that each exhibited artwork should have a title designated by the artist himself/herself. It was decided to exclude "random" titles by curators, gallery officials or other persons since, as mentioned, the random titles might result in "low understanding" (Millis, 2001:328). Hence they might manipulate the results.

Our initial observation and understanding of Tehran's Art galleries was that, gallery-goers are mainly adults who visit galleries alone or in friend-groups. After required coordination with the gallery manager, 30-40 questionnaires were allocated for exhibition days (10-19 days). The gallery officials were told that they will get the feedback and be informed of the results for using them in their exhibition logistics. Phone-interviews with gallery managers revealed that none of the chosen galleries had titling obligation; the artists were free to present their artworks with/without any labels or titles. In most cases, the artists were asked to title the whole exhibition for advertising and network purposes.

According to the above-mentioned information, the definitions for statistical terms of this research are as follows:

Target Population: adult visitors of art galleries in Tehran.

Survey population: visitors of Seyhoon, Afrand, Aran, Homa and Elahe art galleries.

Sampling unit: visitor of art gallery.

Sampling scheme: simple random sampling without replacement. To maintain the highest amount of variation of participants and avoid sampling bias, the evaluator approached every four entering visitors. If they declined to participate in the research, the very next visitor was asked for participation (Toit & Dye, 2008:77). Another way that kept the variation high was that the questionnaires were distributed gradually in six shows to include different artworks, styles and visiting status. Although this high amount of heterogeneity and randomness may seem to cause a problem regarding the relatively small sample size, the advantage is the ability to recognise patterns and different groups of visitors (Patton, 2002). The overall design of this survey is Retrospective Panel Design, in which a group of people are being examined during a time unit, i.e. from time A to time B.

Sampling population: The adult visitors of Seyhoon, Afrand, Aran, Homa and Elahe art galleries in spring 2014.

Results and Discussion

Based on the sample size estimation formula, 265 questionnaires were distributed among the same number of participants. Twenty-two questionnaires were returned incomplete. On the whole 243 questionnaires were used as data source. Three statistical tests including Mann-Whitney U, Kendall's tau-b and ANOVA were applied. All statistical tests in the research were computed with 5% error and 95% confidence. The results are presented in two parts: descriptive and analytical. The descriptive results, which are presented in tables 1-5 include demographical information (Table 1), artistic background and profile (Table 2), the score of indictors of importance (Table 3) and the overall score of functionality (Table 4). More detailed descriptive results are included in Tables 5-6, which display the value of various indicators of functions (Table 5) and the values of all indicators for artistic visitors (Table 6). The descriptive results aim to answer question no.1 and assess

prediction no.1. Then, questions no.2 and 3 will be considered with regard to analytical results to account for prediction no.2.

Considering the female dominance (56.4%) and the educational level (on the whole 89.6% hold B.A. and upper university degrees), educated females appeared more active in visiting art galleries in Tehran. The dominant age-group was 20-30 years old (Table 1) and the high percentage of artistic education (67.5%) and artistic job (67%) (Table 2) were reported. Also, the evaluators reported the rare presence of families (less than 10 times) in the galleries; most of the visitors were young people in the form of friend groups or alone. These demographic findings prove our primary understanding of Tehran galleries' range of visitors. On the whole, our findings show the low amount of diversity among visitors of art galleries in Tehran. Due to local peculiarities and a less-researched context, the results cannot be easily compared with previous studies in different contexts. However, interestingly, they are not in line with the assumptions in articles of Mason & McCarthy (2006) and Xanthoudaki (1998), according to which young visitors4 of art galleries5 are a small group compared to other age groups.

Table 1: *Demographic Data of Participants*

Gender	***Female***			***Male***		
	56.4%			*43.6%t*		
Age Group	***Under 20***	***20 - 30***	***30 - 40***	***40 - 50***	***50 - 60***	***Upper 60***
	5.9%	*51.7%*	*31.5%*	*6.7%*	*3.8%*	*0.4%*
University Degree	***High School Diploma***		***Associate Degree***	***BA***	***MA***	***PhD***
	4.6%		*5.8%*	*56.7%*	*27.5%*	*5.4%*
Marital Status	***Single***		***Married***		***Other***	
	69.3%		*30.7%*		*0%*	

Table 2: *Data on Artistic Background of Participants*

Artistic Discipline	***Yes***	***No***
	67.5%	*32.5%*
Artistic Job	***Yes***	***No***
	67%	*33%*
Artistic Background	***Yes***	***No***
	73.7%	*26.3%*
Artistic Occupation	***Yes***	***No***
	83%	*17%*
Art Field*	***Music***	***Traditional Arts and Hadicrafts***
	17%	*10%*
	Visual and Fine Arts	***Literature Arts***
	58%	*11%*
	Architecture	***Dramatic Arts*** **
	1.5%	*13.5%*
	Applied Arts[1]	
	20.5%	

*This division is inspired by septet categorising of arts attributed to Aristotle.
**Some visitors do more than one artistic field; therefore the total percentage is more than 100%.

Table 3: *Importance Indicators*

Importance	***Number of Participants***	***Mean***	***Percentage***
Social Necessity	*235*	*2.858*	*57%*
Ontological Necessity	*235*	*3.0137*	*60%*
Expressive Redundancy	*235*	*3.0617*	*61%*

Table 4: *The Value of Titles' Functionality*

Participants' number	***Mean***	***Percentage***
243	*3.2080*	*64%*

Although visitors mostly believed that titles were a necessary element for an artwork (58.7%), they assumed a self-expressive role for the artworks. As is apparent in Table 3, titles were relatively important for visitors in ascribing social and ontological identity to the artwork. They also believed the work needs to speak for itself (61%) (Table 3). Nevertheless, contrary to the idea of title's redundancy, visitors get a great deal of help from titles, since on the whole they assign a score of 64% to titles functions. Accordingly, visitors believed that titles can have particular roles that help them approach the work, establish a connection with it, and understand it more easily (Table 4). One way to account for this incongruent result is to assume that when titles exist their function is considerable; they help visitors in interacting with artworks (Levinson, 1985; Fisher, 1984; Symes, 1992; Bann, 1985). Regarding functions (Table 4 & 5), communicative function (71%) was the highest-rated in the whole survey population and also artistic and non-artistic divisions (Table 6). Therefore, the considerable function of titles was that they worked as a communicative tool to establish the first stage of interpretation in the hermeneutic cycle. Titles are very likely to help the visitors make a connection with some aspects of the work. They can also help to make the connection with the aspects of the work visitors already know. Their role is highly noticeable in the primary stages of interpretation and learning. This finding also proves the claims, for example in Bann's article, about communication made between artist's message or intention and visitor (Bann, 1985). In Jean-Luc Jucker's words, the accompaniment of titles with paintings facilitates the understanding of artist's intention (Jucker, 2012). Other functions of titles were all rated above 50%. From these results, prediction no. 1 was supported: Two indicators of functionality and importance show the significant role of title in the process of interpretation, hence learning.

Table 5: *Function Indicators*

Function	***Number of Participants***	***Mean***	***Percentage***
Meaning-making	*243*	*3.3639*	*67.3%*
Communicative	*242*	*3.5496*	*71%*
Interpretive	*243*	*3.1776*	*63.5%*
Exhibitive	*235*	*2.7447*	*55%*

Table 6: *Indicators' Values for Artistic Group*

Indicators	*Number of Participants*	*Percentage*
Value of Functionality	209	66.2%
Meaning-making	209	67.3%
Communication	208	70.5%
Interpretive	209	64.8%
Exhibitive	202	53.4%
Value of Importance	209	58.5%
Social Necessity	209	57.2%
Ontological Necessity	209	59.7%
Expressive Redundancy	209	61.6%

Regarding the second research question, in the division of artistic and non-artistic visitors, Kendall's tau-b correlation test shows a significant and inverse relationship between the amount of artistic background and attributing function and importance for the titles; that is, the less the visitors have been involved in art based on the criteria defined in the research model, the more they assign meaning-making (sig: 0.000) and communicative function (sig: 0.008) to titles. These visitors also believed that the existence of a title is generally important (sig: 0.002), especially in terms of social (sig: 0.030) and ontological necessity (sig: 0.001). Mann-Whitney U test shows a significant and inverse relationship between artistic background of participants and assigning interpretive function (sig: 0.008) and exhibition function (sig: 0.008) for the titles; it means that those visitors who have no artistic background consider the role of titles to be more important for interpretive and exhibition purposes.

The significant relationship between lower amount of artistic background and prior art knowledge and assigning meaning-making and communicative and interpretive-additive function, also ontological necessity, shows that for our non-artistic group the role of titles is more significant in their interpretation and learning. In all these stages of

interpretation (mostly the communicative stage based on the descriptive results), titles may compensate for lack of prior artistic knowledge; hence, they can foster learning at this level. These relationships answer the second question: the less prior knowledge and artistic experience the visitors have, the more they rely on the help of titles in meaning-making and getting the message of artist and artwork. The probable indication is that prior art knowledge and experience causes the visitors to be less dependent on titles and to try to make their own experience independent of titles with the support of their artistic knowledge. This evokes the professional filter of Lambert: The professionals know what they are looking for; they know how to read a work and are probably less dependent on interpretive tools such as title. Ontological necessity is also high for them as a factor of knowing the title to be a part of artwork.

To answer the third inquiry, a number of tests were performed. According to Kendall's tau-b correlation test, the more time the visitors spend visiting an art gallery (duration of visit), the more concerned they are with the ontological necessity (sig: 0.00) of title; so they consider a high positive importance (sig: 0.001) for titles. Also, Kendall's tau-b correlation test shows a significant relationship between the frequency of visiting art galleries and considering function and importance for the titles; it means that those visitors who visit art galleries more frequently than others believe that a title has a function (sig: 0.001) such as meaning-making (sig: 0.007) and communicative function (sig: 0.000) more than other visitors. They also stated that the existence of a title is generally important (sig: 0.000), especially in terms of social (sig: 0.000) and ontological necessity (sig: 0.000).

The information obtained by the results of the third inquiry is not theoretically backed in this study. However, they have the potential to develop in different ways. For example, the significant relationship between longer duration of visit and assigning ontological necessity indicates that those who have longer visits and stayed longer in the art gallery, considered titles to be more important ontologically; that is, they stated that titles are essential parts of artworks more than the visitors whose visits are shorter. Time spent has been under extensive studies and is sometimes considered to have a linkage to learning (Donald, 1991). For example, Hein believes that, "The Constructivist Museum will do all it can to lengthen visitor time in the exhibition." (Hein, 1998: 172).

The positive importance of title and more time spent in the gallery might have some implications for those studies that measure learning and interpretation in relation to exhibition techniques. How the presence of title or textual information might interact with inclination of visitor to stay in the museum can be a subject for further research.

Another significant relationship between being a frequent visitor and assigning meaning-making and communicative function (functionality in general) and also social and ontological necessity might also have some further implications. This relationship supports the previous relationship and indicates that the more time dedicated to visit, not only leads to assigning more importance but also high functionality to titles. This, to some extent, confirms some findings about frequent visitors according to which frequent visitors have more serious attitudes like, as Hood states (1983) "having the opportunity to learn, the challenge of a new experience, and coming away with a sense of doing something worthwhile" (Edwards, Loomis, Fusco, & McDermott, 1990: 21 Also, this is in line with the findings of Edwards et. al. according to which high involvement visitors were more likely to value interpretation aids. As they state, "Perhaps as involvement with art and the museum grows, visitors will be more likely to commit the time and effort it takes to use supplementary interpretive aids." (31) Although they don't mention titles in particular, titles are among the strongest of interpretive aids.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Iranian visitors considered titles to be an important component of art gallery space that affects interpretation and learning process. The fact that non-artistic visitors were more dependent on the importance and functionality of title shows that they receive more help from titles in the process of interpretation. It is very likely that they base their interpretation upon them and compensate for their lack of prior art knowledge with artworks' titles. Nevertheless, more studies are needed, probably with qualitative approach, to account for the reasons of such findings. Also, it is worth mentioning that there has not been a similar study about titles in Iran. It is possible that the results are affected by cultural and contextual differences. Hence, their correlation with similar studies in different cultures should be considered with delicacy and care. However, the spatial and overall conditions of art galleries in Tehran are

in accordance with global standards. This research used the quantitative survey method step by step; therefore the results are applicable to similar contexts and communities.

The main results of this study, along with the subsidiary findings on proportion of visitors, can be used in promotion of art galleries in Tehran. Despite the attempts to keep heterogeneity high, the audiences of art galleries were a specific group. Although galleries in Tehran might not have historical credit and high popularity of museums, it seems they need to go beyond their specificity to a certain group and make more effort to broaden their audiences (Mason & McCarthy, 2006, Xanthoudaki, 1998). Admittedly, the popularity among educated young should be maintained, at the same time galleries should design programs and develop logistics to be more inclusive. Designing titling manuals and guidelines can be one of the ways to implement plans that can be effective in attracting a diverse audience. In doing so, one suggestion is to inform the artists of how titles can act as a medium between the artwork and audience, hence prevent over-interpretation and/or misinterpretation. In doing so, artists have the option of paying more attention to titling task prior to the exhibition.

This research examined the overall role of titles in learning and their relation to the visitor prior art knowledge and artistic background. The next steps would be to conduct qualitative studies and interviews to find patterns of interpretation and learning in the museum and art galleries with reference to titles. Also, the division of Artistic and Non-Artistic can include other factors or exclude more general factors and concentrate on, for instance, just the formal or informal education. The results of this study would be of help in conducting such potential inquiries.

Endnotes:

1. This study concerns three groups of non-visitors, too. However, as they are not relevant to the present study they won't be mentioned.
2. Sample size estimation formula:

$$n = \frac{pqz^2{}_{\alpha/2}}{d^2}$$

3. Elahe Gallery was referred to twice.

4. However, the exact reference of the word 'young' should be clarified in such studies. In our study young means 20-30 y. In Xanthoudaki's, it is 14-25.
5. In both of the mentioned studies, there is no demarcation of art galleries and museum.

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Appendix: Exhibitions

Exhibition Title	Days on View	Artist(s)	Location	Artistic Media
'Dream of Spring'	7-14 Mar 2014	Group Exhibition	Afrand Art Gallery	Painting
'Sealed Letters to Myself'	4-23 Apr 2014	Reza Afsari	Seyhoun Art Gallery	Painting
Untitled	25 Apr-9 May 2014	Shahriyar Hatami	Aaran Gallery	Painting
'Teratogenese'	9-20 May 2014	Zahra Hossaini	Homa Art Gallery	Painting
'Ophelia'	16-26 May 2014	Maryam Takallo	Elahe Art Gallery	Painting
'Beyond the Fact'	13-23 June 2014	Sima Najafi	Elahe Art Gallery	Painting

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Learning to swim using video modelling and video feedback within a self-management program

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Although many adults who cannot swim are primarily interested in learning by direct coaching there are options that have a focus on self-directed learning. As an alternative a self-management program combined with video modelling, video feedback and high quality and affordable video technology was used to assess its effectiveness to assisting an adult to develop and practice swimming skills. The participant was a 36 year-old non-swimmer who had previously attempted unsuccessfully to learn to swim on previous occasions. A single subject design with baseline, intervention and 12-month post-intervention phase were conducted. Dependent variables included a continuous 25-metre swimming distance goal using the freestyle stroke. After a 13-week intervention phase the continuous swimming distance had increased to 25 metres. For this adult participant, self-managed learning proved to be an effective way to learn to swim and greatly improved her confidence around deep water.

Keywords: *self-management, video, modelling, feedback, swimming, adult*

Introduction

On average 290 people die of drowning in Australia each year, of which adults make up 85% of all the drownings (Royal Life Saving, 2011). However, this figure obscures the numerous unreported near-drowning cases where people were rescued (Australian Medical Association, 2010; Royal Life Saving, 2011). As the majority of the Australian population lives along the coastline, or have easy access to public pools, being able to swim has become an integral part of the Australian lifestyle. Adults who cannot swim not only run a very real risk of drowning but may also feel marginalised if they cannot participate fully in water activities. Learning to swim is a process that not only involves the shaping of a complex motor skill but also a significant amount of practice in order to become proficient (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993). Typically, an adult who cannot swim undertakes swimming lessons, however, the advent of the Internet, high quality portable video technology combined with programs that aid self-directed learning may provide viable alternatives to direct coaching. The potential for a person to learn how to swim when they cannot access a coach for reasons of cost or availability is of significance. While video feedback is currently used with elite athletes to improve performance little is know of its applicability to non-elite individuals wising to improve swimming skills. Accordingly, it was the aim of this study to examine whether a self-management program that included video modelling and video feedback components would facilitate swimming expertise.

A self-management program offers the novice swimmer a structure for self-directed learning (Watson & Tharp, 2014). The appeal of self-management is that it is inexpensive personally relevant, easily monitored, more likely to promote generalisation, maintenance and independence (Watson & Tharp, 2014). Self-management also has a lengthy history associated with behaviour change in the domains of sport (Polaha, Allen, & Studley, 2004; Wolko, Hrycaiko & Martin, 1993) and exercise (Flora, 2012; Kau & Fischer, 1974; Miller et al, 2008), although the application of self-management strategies to swimming has received little attention.

Video modelling has been a logical extension of the research demonstrating the clinical utility of live modelling procedures (Nelson, Gibson, & Cutting, 1973; Nikopoulos & Keenan, 2006; Rosenthal, 1977). There is also evidence to support the conclusion that symbolic modelling is as effective as live modelling (Bandura & Barab, 1973; Meharg & Woltersdorf, 1990). Typically, competent examples of the target behaviour are filmed and then watched by an individual who uses the video recording as a competent example to emulate. As a treatment procedure video modelling and video feedback have been used effectively in a variety of settings including anxiety reduction (Gagliano, 1988), nursing education, (Chang & Hirsch, 1994), self-care (Clark & Lester, 2000), language development (James, Wadnerker-Kamble, & Lam-Cassettari, 2013; Wadnerker, Pirinen, Haines-Bazrafshan, Rodgers, & James, 2010), clinical supervision (James, Collins, & Samoylova, 2013), the management of childhood conduct disorders (Brestan & Eyberg, 1998), and teaching children with autism to write (Moore, Anderson, Treccase, Furlonger, & Didden, 2103). Video modelling and video feedback has also been observed to be effective in the development of a range of physical activities and sporting skills (Boyer, Miltenberger, Batsche, & Fogel, 2009; Hager, et al, 2004). However, video modelling combined with video feedback is less well researched.

Recently, technology required for video modelling and video feedback has become easily accessible due largely to the proliferation of sophisticated mobile phones. The major advantage of 'Smartphones' is that they allow video modelling to be used without the need for specialised and expensive equipment (Hinck & Bergmann, 2013) and consequently are able to provide almost immediate feedback. The advantage of advanced iPhone technology is its high quality freeze frame that allows the capture of clear body images providing better opportunities for a swimmer to discriminate various elements of arm and leg positions as correct or incorrect. Previously, poor quality freeze frame technology limited the advantages of video feedback (Boyer, Miltenberger, Batsche, & Fogel, 2009). Video feedback, as distinct from video modelling, involves showing an individual a video of his or her own performance (Boyer, Milternberger, Batsche & Fogel, 2009). Video feedback further allows an individual to then analyse the digital recording using the predetermined set of behaviours that were selected

to define performance with the intention that he or she will use it as a benchmark to reflect on the difference between his/her performance and that of the model in order to change their behaviour to more closely match that of the model (James, Collins, & Samoylova, 2013).

The majority of behavioural interventions in sports and exercise have been aimed at improving an existing skill, increasing or decreasing behaviours already in the individual's behavioural repertoire (Hume & Crossman, 1992; Wolko, Hrycaiko, & Martin, 1993). Only a handful of studies have examined the acquisition of new sport skills such as teaching golf swings to beginners (Johnston-O'Connor & Kirschenbaum, 1986) and service techniques to novice tennis players (Buzas & Ayllon, 1981), while fewer still have focused on self-management and swimming. Those that did tended to concentrate on self-management techniques to further improve the swimming skills of children (Koop & Martin, 1983) and adults (Polaha, Allen, & Studley, 2004) who were already competent swimmers.

Therefore, the present study examined the effects of a self-management program in teaching an adult non-swimmer to swim. In what follows, self-management is defined and four pertinent topics related to self-management are reviewed: goal setting, self-monitoring, feedback and self-evaluation. While there is no widely accepted definition of self-management, for the purposes of the present study self-management is defined as the ability of an individual to monitor his/her own behaviour and then to effect the necessary cognitive, behavioural and emotional responses required for self regulation (Barlow, Wright, Sheasby, Turner, & Hainsworth, 2002; Watson & Tharp, 2014). In other words, self-management is the ability of an individual to systematically alter his or her own behaviour. In what follows goal setting, self-monitoring, feedback and self-evaluation are reviewed as they form key components of self-management.

Previous research has demonstrated that goals should be specific rather than vague (Boyce, 1990), challenging but achievable, and should include proximal as well as distal objectives (Locke & Latham, 2002). Latham and Locke (2007) suggested that an achievable goal is one that no more than 10% of individuals could reach without the use of goal setting or other interventions. Goal setting research has suggested

that in sport and exercise moderate goals are superior to difficult ones (Kyllo & Landers, 1995). The principles of goal setting derived from organisational management appear to generalise well to sport and exercise, improving sporting and exercise performance by .34 of a standard deviation against 'no goals' or 'do your best' control groups (Boyce, Wayda, Johnston, Bunker, & Eliot, 2001; Kyllo & Landers, 1995). This finding has been verified from studies of the value of self-set goals in the sports of rugby, boxing and football (Mellalieu, Hanton, & O'Brien, 2006; O'Brien, Mellalieu, & Hanton, 2009; Ward & Carnes, 2002). Significantly, higher levels of commitment are observed in those individuals who are themselves involved in the process of goal setting. Kyllo and Landers (1995), for example, reported large effect sizes for individuals who set their own goals (.62) or were allowed to participate in the goal setting process (.49) compared to groups who were assigned goals (.30).

Self-monitoring has often been used in the context of improving sporting performance by using time on task measures during practice drills. Monitoring further involves documenting the frequency, duration or intensity of a behaviour, often using a diary, logbook or cumulative graph. Such techniques have proved to be advantageous to figure skaters (Hume, Martin, Gonzalez, Cracklen, & Genthon, 1985) gymnasts (Wolko, Hrycaiko, & Martin, 1993; Boyer, Miltenberger, Batsche, & Fogel, 2009) and swimmers (Polaha, Allen, & Studley, 2004). McKenzie and Rushall (1974) conducted one of the first research studies using self-monitoring in a sports context. The problematic behaviour was poor attendance and rate of practice by a youth swim team. The use of waterproof display boards positioned at one end of a pool, on which swimmers could indicate their attendance at practice and mark off work units as they completed them, significantly improved attendance and, in turn, swimming rates. However, the possible confounding effect of the coach's verbal feedback was not controlled for in the study. In 1991 Critchfield and Vargas replicated McKenzie and Rushall's study, this time controlling for the influence of the coach, and found that swimming rates increased, with swimmers maintaining higher swimming rates in the 'self-monitored condition' compared with the 'instructions-only condition'.

More recently, Polaha, Allen, and Studley (2004) also investigated

whether self-monitoring could enhance skill development. The study examined whether self-monitoring could reduce the swimming stroke, a measure of increased stroke efficiency. Results indicated that swimmers were able to reduce their stroke counts during periods of self-monitoring. However, stroke counts returned to baseline when self-monitoring ended suggesting that to maintain target behaviours self-monitoring needed to be maintained (Watson & Tharp, 2014). Interestingly, it would appear that accuracy of self-monitoring is not necessary to achieve improvements in the behaviour being monitored, possibly change is a function of the act of observation itself (Marshall, Lloyd, & Hallahan, 1993).

Feedback has traditionally been viewed as a necessary part of learning and performance (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993; Kazdin, 1993; Spiegler & Guevremont, 2010) though there is debate over how much feedback is required (Lee, Keh, & Magill, 1993) and whether feedback should be positive, negative or corrective (Brophy & Good, 1986), it is agreed that some is better than none (Lee, Keh, & Magill, 1993; Patrick, 1992). Behavioural coaching using feedback, instructions and reinforcement has been effectively used to improve practice behaviours of young female competition figure skaters (Hume, Martin, Gonzalez, Cracklen, & Genthon, 1985), technique of youth tennis players (Buzas & Allyon, 1981) and stroke performance of youth swimmers (Koop & Martin, 1983). Studies appear to support feedback from technology being superior to regular coaching methods. For example, video modelling has been used with gymnasts and swimmers where a video of an expert performing the technique is shown followed by viewing a video of the athletes themselves performing the same technique (Boyer, Miltenberger, Tactche, & Fogel, 2009; Hazen, Johnston, Martin, & Srikameswaran, 1990). This method of feedback was found to be successful in improving the skills of swimmers and gymnasts more quickly than regular practice and coaching alone.

Inherent in the process of self-management is the comparison made between current performance and set goals. This involves an evaluation about whether behaviour change is occurring in the desired direction (Miltenberger, 2012). Termed self-evaluation, this use of feedback allows the individual to correct or maintain his or her behaviour and is seen to be essential in skill development (Ericsson, Krampe, &

Tesch-Romer, 1993; Miltenberger, 2012). The evaluation data collected through observations allows decisions to be made about the individual's self-management plan, often by examining a graph (Watson & Tharp, 2014).

The present study was designed to examine the effects of a self-management program that incorporated goal setting, self-monitoring, feedback and self-evaluation, together with video modelling and video feedback on the swimming skills of a 36 year-old non-swimming female. It was anticipated that swimming ability would improve to the point that the participant was swimming 25 metres unaided and without stopping and that these improvements would be maintained for at least 12 months.

Method

Participant

The participant was a 36 year-old female in good physical health. A physician's approval form was obtained prior to beginning the study, and a detailed medical history was taken showing that her past medical history was unremarkable. The participant had previously undertaken swimming lessons but swimming competency was not achieved. She was unable to exhale under the water or to put her face in the water for any length of time. She was also unable to float. She feared deep water and as a result her behaviour prior to the commencement of the study had been to avoid settings where the bottom of the pool or the beach could not be touched easily with both feet. However the participant was motivated to learn to swim in order to be able to enjoy swimming with her young son and provide assistance should he encounter difficulties in deep water. Consequently, she had committed to facing and managing her anxieties in order to undertake the swimming program. Prior to and during the study the participant attended gym sessions for 60 minutes three days a week during which time she completed 10 minutes on the treadmill, 10 minutes rowing, and 30 minutes of resistance and weight training followed by a 10 minute stretching and cool down period.

Materials and setting

Standard female swimming bathers, a standard size polyethylene

kickboard (35cm x 26cm), iPhone with a video-recording feature, chalk and a measuring tape were used at various stages of intervention. Three YouTube video clips that included a person modelling arm rotation and freestyle swimming were used for video modelling purposes (iSport, 2012; Triathlon, 2009). Practice sessions were conducted at a 25 metre indoor swimming pool ranging in depth from 1.50 to 2.00 metres.

Design

A changing criterion design with changes in the direction of reduced support and increased behavioural demand was used within the structure of a single-case experimental design. A single-case design was used as this design has the ability to demonstrate experimental control with a single participant. Single-case designs provide rigorous experimental control, more so than case histories because, while case histories are based on correlations among events, single-case designs systematically introduce and withdraw independent variables to study effects on behaviour (Kennedy, 2005). Single-case designs are well suited to initial pilot testing because important functional relationships between an intervention and the problem can be identified using far fewer subjects. Indeed, several replicated single-case experiments can potentially establish a promising avenue for treatment then providing justification for larger and more expensive randomised control studies (Barlow, Nock, & Hersen, 2009). In addition, there is some evidence that single-subject designs are well suited to assessing the effects of an intervention designed to improve athletic skills (Martin, Thompson, & Regehr, 2004). Repeated measurements were obtained in order to establish stable baseline measures prior to intervention. The effectiveness of the treatment/intervention phase was determined by whether the participant's behaviour changed to meet the performance criteria of swimming 25 metres using three successive approximations of the freestyle stroke (i.e., flotation assistance with kicking only, flotation assistance with kicking and arm strokes and finally kicking with arm strokes and without flotation assistance). Repeated measurements of the dependent variable were collected during all phases. Following the completion of three successful trials within one session the criterion was changed.

Video modelling and video feedback

Several types of video modelling were considered for use in the present study. The types were; basic video modelling, video self-modelling, point-of-view video modelling, and video prompting. Basic modelling involves a participant watching a pre-recorded video of a person modelling the targeted skill. Video self-modelling records the participant's own behaviour displaying the targeted skill that is then viewed at a later time and requires subsequent editing to produce an optimal performance of a behaviour the participant cannot currently perform. Point-of-view video modelling shows a video recorded from the perspective of the participant while video prompting is used when teaching a step-by-step skill. It is recorded by breaking the targeted skill into steps and pausing after steps to give a participant an opportunity to perform each step before viewing the next. Basic video modelling was selected for use in the present study as adult models demonstrating correct swimming strokes were freely available on YouTube and did not require any technical photographic knowledge required for self-production of swimming videos. Video feedback was also used as it can maximise skill learning by focusing on a specific feature such as arm rotation. Video feedback also allows immediate feedback and reinforcement.

Procedure

Recording of dependent variable measures was undertaken at practice sessions twice a week in the late afternoon. At poolside, before the swimming trials began, the participant viewed the YouTube video model of a competent freestyle swimmer. Swimming sessions of approximately 20 minutes each (3 trials) were undertaken twice a week on non-consecutive days. One session per week was for practice only during which time only the participant was involved. During both 'practice only' and 'recording sessions' the participant attempted to swim from one end of the pool for as far as she could without stopping. The participant was deemed to have completed a lap when her hands touched the end of the pool. As the lane dividers indicated every metre by a change of colour, the participant could measure the distance covered by counting the colour changes.

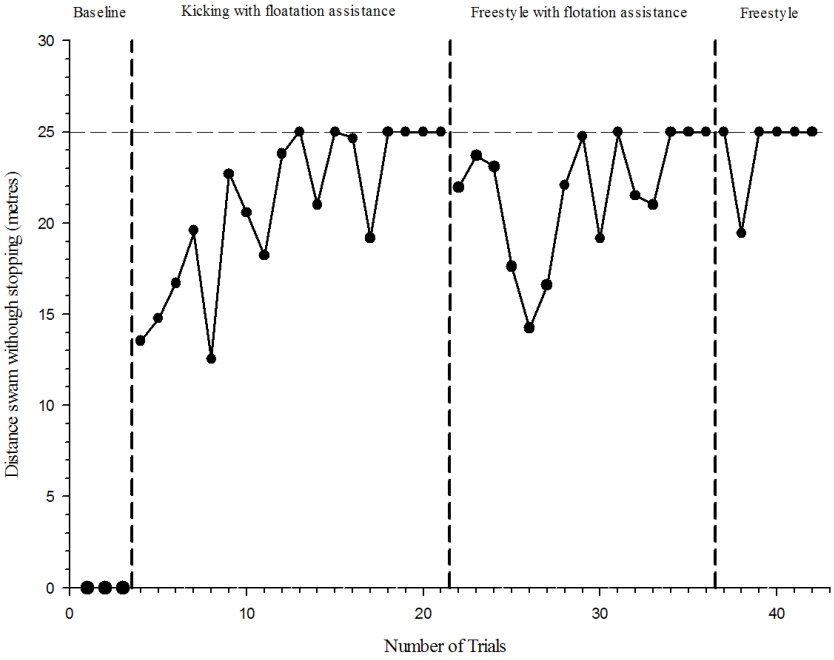
In the recording session a confederate recorded swimming distance by

walking approximately one metre behind the swimmer using the iPhone video recording feature. During the recording session if the participant paused before reaching the end the confederate placed a chalk mark near the edge of the pool to record the distance completed before stopping. Measuring from the chalk mark to the nearest pool divider allowed an accurate assessment of the distance. The swimming trials that were recorded on the iPhone were played back to the participant for the purposes of video feedback at the conclusion of each trial. The video recordings allowed the participant to evaluate her swimming style, compare it with the model on the YouTube video and to correct her stroke. The confederate was only involved in recording the participant's swimming and distance and played no role in the experimental design, coaching, planning or feedback. This decision was made to avoid confounds resulting from coaching or feedback other than that provided by the YouTube video and iPhone recordings. After 12 months the participant was contacted to establish whether she had maintained her ability to swim 25 metres and if swimming had become a regular activity.

Results

Figure 1 depicts individual data for swimming progress across 4 phases. Baseline remained at zero for the three trials clearly demonstrating that the participant was a non-swimmer. In the following 'kicking with flotation assistance' phase the distance increased from 13 to 25 metres, meeting the criterion after 18 trials. In the following phase, 'freestyle with flotation assistance', the participant met the criterion after 15 trials with the final goal of swimming 25 metres freestyle met in six trials.

Figure 1. *Swimming distance over time across four experimental conditions*



An interview with the participant after a year confirmed that the participant maintained her ability to swim 25 metres without stopping for at least 12 months.

Discussion

This study was designed to assess if self-directed learning could be a viable alternative to direct coaching in the context of learning how to swim. Although the results are consistent with previous research suggesting that self-management techniques may be an effective means of acquiring new behaviour we are not arguing that a self-managed swimming program is superior to direct coaching, rather it is presented as a viable learning alternative available for the non-elite swimmer. In situations where individuals cannot easily access or afford tuition, self-management using both video modelling and video feedback may be a way by which non-swimmers can achieve their learning-

to-swim goals. The self-management package, through a process of successive approximations, facilitated progress from non-swimming to swimming 25 metres. This outcome was especially important given the participant's previous lack of success in learning to swim. There is no consensus regarding the time it takes for a non-swimmer to progress to being a confident swimmer as it is linked to factors such as the quality and number of structured lessons, how often they practice, and their individual ability and self-efficacy. The participant in the present study became a swimmer in a little over 8 and-a-half hours distributed across a 13 week intervention period. Interestingly, her previous self-reported fear of deep water did not adversely affect her self-managed swimming program. Had anxiety played a greater role then her progress may have suffered. Future researchers would be well advised to establish levels of anxiety prior to beginning a swimming program as there is anecdotal evidence that individuals learn to swim quite quickly once water anxieties have been conquered. As importantly, there is a need to replicate this study to examine if swimming mastery can be facilitated by self-management with other non-swimmers.

While the participant in the present study was motivated to begin a self-managed swimming program her motivation and attitude towards swimming was not measured and addressing this issue might strengthen future studies. Following studies also need to take into account the heightened sense of personal responsibility to engage with the task when an individual undertakes a task on their own rather than in a group. Participation in a group can result in a diffusion of responsibility and, in turn, a reduced sense of responsibility for success (Ciccarelli & White, 2009), suggesting that practicing alone may have provided some form of an advantage over group lessons. Competition within a group might also increase both motivation and performance. Furthermore, the limitations of single-case research design include restricted generalisability of the present study's conclusions. While not a limitation per se, the necessity of some form of supervision during practice sessions needs to be emphasised as the risk of a non-swimmer becoming distressed while in the early stages of learning to swim remains a possibility. Limitations aside, the self-managed training program described in the present study proved to be both feasible and effective in changing the behaviour of a non-swimmer as the participant learned how to swim and as importantly maintained this ability over a 12-month period.

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Unlocking the potential within: A preliminary study of individual and community outcomes from a university enabling program in rural Australia

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Many rural communities have a pool of mature-aged local people seeking a career change or better lifestyle, which inevitably involves reskilling or upskilling. These people have strong local ties and are committed to their community. University enabling programs provide a bridge to higher education. This longitudinal study explores the impact on rural mature-aged people of participation in a university enabling program, in terms of further study and employment outcomes. The benefits of enabling programs extend beyond individuals, to family and friends, and beyond. These broader benefits include an enhanced local skills base in key industry areas,

and an increased awareness of the value of higher education within the community. Enabling programs are a powerful but under-valued tool in helping to unlock and harness the potential within rural communities, both in the medium and longer term.

Keywords: *educational aspirations, enabling program, outcomes of education, rural education, social inclusion*

Introduction

For rural communities, competition in the new globalised economy requires access to a highly skilled, creative and innovative workforce. Rural universities have a key role in rural development in terms of building the capacity of individuals, communities and industries, acting as a catalyst for place-based innovation (Allison & Eversole, 2008), and shaping community educational aspirations (Robinson, 2012). Many communities have a pool of mature-aged people who, for a variety of reasons, are unable or unwilling to leave their community for further study, but who are seeking opportunities for personal development, a better lifestyle or a career change. They are seeking 'second chance' learning opportunities that may not have been available when they were younger. Research indicates that educational aspirations and their realisation are linked to previous schooling experiences, and to parental factors such as their educational level, socioeconomic status and cultural capital (Abbott-Chapman, 2011; Cullity, 2006; Winterton & Irwin, 2012). Gendered cultural expectations in rural communities, which favour employment over further study, such as apprenticeships for males, and post-school employment and marriage for females, have been found to influence the aspirations and post-school choices of rural students (Alloway & Dalley-Trim, 2009; Cullity, 2006). Families without a tradition of further education may not have access to the necessary networks and connections that are important in building navigational capacity for higher education access and participation (Bok, 2010; Hawkins, 2014).

Alongside the economic imperative to increase university enrolments is a widening participation agenda designed to increase social inclusion within the higher education sector. The majority of rural

and metropolitan Australian universities offer enabling programs as a component of the widening participation agenda. University enabling programs are a key, but largely under-researched, strategy to facilitate the transition to further study for under-represented or non-traditional learners, including those from rural and remote areas. Such programs have operated in Australia for several decades (James, 2002). They provide a foundation for students who may not have a family tradition of higher education, to gain the skills, knowledge, confidence and connections necessary to succeed in undergraduate studies (McIntyre, Todd, Huijser, & Tehan, 2012). A relatively large proportion of enabling students are mature-aged (Cullity, 2006).

The study reported in this paper examines the impacts of a university enabling program in one rural community.

Literature Review

The published research base on the outcomes or benefits of enabling programs is relatively small. Much of the focus to date has been on retention and academic achievement within enabling programs, and the implications of this for transition to undergraduate study. Research indicates that the attrition rates of those enabling students who continue to undergraduate study are no higher than those of general entry students (Cantwell, Archer, & Bourke, 2001), and that their academic performance in undergraduate study is similar to or better than general entry undergraduate students (Clarke, Bull, Neil, Turner, & Birney, 2000; Klinger & Tranter, 2009). Other research found that while the academic performance of enabling students was marginally below that of general entry students, the effect of this was mediated by age, in that older enabling students performed better than their younger counterparts (Cantwell et al., 2001). The effect of student age is supported by later research that identified younger enabling students (18-24 years) as being more at risk of poor performance and withdrawal from their enabling program, and more at risk of failure in their first semester of undergraduate study (Whannell, 2013; Whannell & Whannell, 2014). Performance and retention of older enabling students is linked to the perseverance and confidence more typically associated with this age group (Archer, Cantwell, & Bourke, 1999).

There is a limited body of literature on the further study rates,

destinations and outcomes of enabling students, and of their pathway beyond university. Figures from the University of South Australia (Cocks & Stokes, 2013) and the University of Newcastle (Trounson 2012 cited in Andrewartha & Harvey, 2014) report 50-55% and 70% respectively of their enabling students continuing with undergraduate study. Whannell and Whannell (2014:118) report a 13% failure rate for the 92 regional university enabling students who had commenced undergraduate study, which they describe as a 'remarkable achievement' considering their academic background. A study by Andrewartha and Harvey (2014) reported that 30% of the cohort in the La Trobe University regional enabling program was guaranteed entry into selected undergraduate courses on the basis of their enabling program results.

Cooper, Ellis and Sawyer (2000) noted that just over half the students in their discipline-specific enabling program, which was designed to prepare students for entry into Nursing and Social Work courses, were offered degree places over a five year period. They reported that an unspecified number had gone on to complete a social work degree and commence work as a social worker, and made the point that study outcomes may not be realised in the short term, noting that four of the 20 students completing a social work degree in 1999 had a break of some eight years between their enabling and undergraduate courses. A recent study of 340 former Open Foundation Program students from 1995-2011 by Bunn (2013) reported that 45.6% had an improved economic status as a result of doing the program, and were engaged in a wide range of careers, largely in teaching, health, caring, management and public service professions. Preliminary findings from Albright and Fagan's (2014) study of a similar but smaller cohort also report improved employment opportunities, with a large percentage (71%) of former enabling students now working in a professional capacity.

In terms of continuation with postgraduate study, Cooper, Ellis and Sawyer (2000) reported that one former student in their enabling program delivered in a regional campus of the University of South Australia was about to complete their PhD, while Bunn (2013) also reported that a number (not specified) of former Open Foundation Program students from the University of Newcastle were engaged in postgraduate study at Honours, Masters and PhD level.

A small body of literature considers the benefits of enabling programs beyond further study and employment, exploring the transformative effect on individuals in terms of increased self-confidence and self-esteem, changes in attitudes and beliefs, greater tolerance of diversity, enhanced self-reflective capabilities and a valuing of knowledge (Crawford, 2014; Debenham & May, 2005; Ellis, Cooper, & Sawyer, 2001). Crawford (2014) interviewed nine former enabling students in their first semester of undergraduate study, and identified some of the more profound effects of enabling programs that enhance social inclusion. This included attitudinal change resulting in increased levels of intercultural understanding, which impacts on campus culture as well as on families and communities, and the development of academic leadership potential amongst former students, who organise study groups and mentor their undergraduate peers. Tolerance of diversity and the positive impacts of former enabling students in undergraduate classes have been touched on elsewhere in the literature (Cooper, Ellis, & Sawyer, 2000; Ellis et al., 2001). The potential leadership role of enabling students in terms of reproducing and generating knowledge was identified by Debenham and May (2005), whilst other literature reports the impacts on the children and families of enabling students in terms of better educational outcomes and study habits (Cooper et al., 2000) and continuation with further study (Albright & Fagan, 2014). Albright and Fagan's preliminary findings represent the most comprehensive coverage of Australian enabling program outcomes to date, identifying the ripple effect on individuals, families and communities.

The Study Site and the University Preparation Program (UPP)

The study is centred in North Western and Western Tasmania in a region known as Cradle Coast. The two main population centres are Devonport (population 24,615) and Burnie (population 19,329). More than one third of the population within the region has an educational level of Year 10 or equivalent (Institute for Regional Development, 2009). Labour force participation in the region is low, and the 8.3% unemployment rate is higher than the national average of 6.3% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014). In terms of higher education the region is served by the University of Tasmania's Cradle Coast Campus in Burnie. At 8.7%, University participation rates for the Cradle Coast

are significantly lower than state (14.3%) and national (18.8%) averages (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

Key industries in the region are manufacturing, retail, health care, agriculture, tourism and education and training (Institute for Regional Development, 2009; Tasmanian Government, 2012). While the local workforce has informal, on-the-job skills, the level of formal and professional-level skills is low (Institute for Regional Development, 2009). In the northern part of Tasmania, including Cradle Coast, 70% of managers have vocational education and training (VET) qualifications but no university qualifications (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011).

The University Preparation Program (UPP) was introduced by the University of Tasmania in 1996, with the aim of providing access to higher education for mature-aged people on the Cradle Coast, in order to address low levels of educational attainment within the region. The launch of UPP coincided with the opening of the Cradle Coast Campus in Burnie. UPP has since been extended to the Launceston and Hobart campuses. This study focuses only on UPP delivered at Cradle Coast. UPP runs for two semesters, however enabling students with good academic results can transition to undergraduate study without completing both semesters. The program delivers on-campus and distance units that focus on academic skills, such as written and oral communication, critical thinking and numeracy. Students become familiar with the university academic culture, and adept at navigating the physical and online environments. The course prepares students to make a smooth transition to undergraduate studies. Like most enabling programs the course is open access and fosters a supportive environment and the development of strong relationships between staff and students, and amongst students (Dawson, Charman, & Kilpatrick, 2013; Klinger & Wache, 2009). The University also offers an enabling program for Aboriginal students, called Murina. The findings reported in this study do not include Murina students.

Methodology

The purpose of the study was to explore the medium to longer-term outcomes of participation in UPP for Cradle Coast students, in terms of study, employment and geographic mobility. Adopting an explanatory sequential mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2014), the study used

both quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to explore the phenomenon. Qualitative data were used to illustrate and further explain the quantitative data. The mixed methods approach assisted in triangulation of data (Creswell, 2014).

Past cohorts of successful UPP students from 1996 to 2007 were targeted. Successful students were defined as those who had successfully completed at least one UPP unit. A range of strategies were used to contact former students, including mail, email, radio and print media, social media and university websites. Former UPP students were surveyed in order to understand what they had done since they completed UPP, in terms of further study and employment, community involvement, geographic mobility and future intentions. A total of 614 surveys were distributed, of which 126 were unable to be delivered. Fifty six surveys were completed, representing an 11.5% response rate. Survey data were entered into IBM SPSS version 21 for analysis. Frequencies were run to describe the data. Pearson's Chi-square tests were used to investigate associations between categorical variables, and Fisher's exact tests were used where all expected cell counts were less than 5.

Following completion of the survey, 25 respondents self-selected to participate in a semi-structured interview. Interview data were also collected from two key stakeholders: the former UPP coordinator and the former Cradle Coast Campus manager. Semi-structured interviews provide a depth of data that are difficult to gather by other means (Fontana & Frey, 2003) and allow for the collection of thick, rich data in order to better understand the phenomenon (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Using inductive analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2000), and consistent with a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014), interviews were coded, then a number of themes generated which informed further analysis and reporting of results. Quotations from participants are used extensively in the paper, and pseudonyms are used when reporting findings. Full details of methodology, results and recommendations were published in a report to the funding body (Johns et al., 2014).

The study has several limitations. It is based on a small, self-selecting sample of former UPP participants who had successfully completed at least one UPP unit, and favoured participants who had remained in the

Cradle Coast region. It is difficult to determine causal links between participation in UPP and longer-term outcomes such as employment, given that a range of other factors are likely to have contributed to these outcomes and the study was not designed to control for these factors. Any claims of causality come from the interviewees themselves, who provided comment on the extent to which participation in UPP influenced their later lives.

Results

Participant profile and motivation

Participants were broadly representative of the 1996-2007 UPP cohort in terms of gender (71% female), age (mainly in the 30-49 age group), and mix of previous educational levels, with one third having an education level of Year 10 or below. Approximately half were low socioeconomic status (SES). Thirty three (59%) survey respondents were first in their family to attend university. Most of those surveyed (82%) were still living in the Cradle Coast region. There were small numbers of respondents from each of the study years.

A number of interviewees identified that reasons for not previously undertaking university-level study were linked to expectations and aspirations within families and communities, which valued employment over further study. This is consistent with other research into rural aspirations and educational participation (Abbott-Chapman, 2011; Cullity, 2006). Other reasons cited by interviewees were negative school experiences, peer pressure and the cost of further study.

The majority enrolled in UPP to prepare for university study (57%), with 23% citing personal development. The main motivation for enrolling was to gain qualifications to enhance career options:

> *Mine [reason for doing UPP] was that I got to the stage where, heading back to work, 'do I really want to be in retail for the rest of my life? Is this it? Let's explore a different path …' (Gaylene)*

> *I was looking at another career. … I was quite fearful that I wouldn't be able to look after myself for the rest of my life as a hairdresser so … I would have been on the poverty line on a pension … just going from one low skilled job to the next and … I couldn't bear that. (Ashley)*

> *... my [health] problems caught up with me and I just couldn't maintain farming and [job at the paper mill] and I knew I had to make a change and it had to be something off my feet. (Daniel)*

Themes of resilience, and a strong sense of purpose and commitment to further learning, ran through the interviews. This is reflective of mature-aged student characteristics identified elsewhere (Archer et al., 1999). Interviewees described how UPP represented a personal challenge and, for some of the females in particular, a challenge to accepted gender roles and family values around further education. It also represented a chance to realise long-held aspirations:

> *they [parents] didn't like it too much because ... it was a full time commitment ... so basically they got to talk to me and see me when I had spare time. ... at the point when I first said I was going to uni [my father said] 'oh just get another job and wait until you're married'; he just didn't understand ... he'd come from a different time. ... it did cause a bit of a ruckus actually. (Wendy)*

Most interviewees had positive perceptions of their UPP experience because of the accessibility of the program through the Cradle Coast campus, and the supportive relationships developed amongst students and between students and staff.

New opportunities

Participation in UPP built individual capacity in three broad areas: foundations for change, confidence, and new opportunities. Interviewees talked about UPP as a catalyst for change, describing how they gained the skills and confidence to access new opportunities such as further study and employment. This paper focuses on new opportunities. Foundations for change and confidence are covered elsewhere (Johns et al., 2014)

Most survey respondents (88%) continued with further study post-UPP, mainly undergraduate study at UTAS (see Table 1 for field of study) and most (77%) completed their course.

Table 1: *Field of study post-UPP*

Field of study	*Number*	*Percentage (%)*
Natural and Physical Sciences	3	6
Information Technology	3	6
Engineering and Related Technologies	1	2
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	2	4
Health	3	6
Education	15	31
Management and Commerce	8	16
Society and Culture	12	25
Not stated	2	4
Total	49	100

Students who completed five or more UPP units (i.e. more than half) were significantly more likely to continue with further study than students who completed four or fewer units (100% vs 78%, p=0.016). Seventy two percent of those who continued with higher education undertook Bachelor degrees, while 28% chose to then continue with postgraduate study at Honours, Masters and PhD level. Two had subsequently gained their PhD. Interview data indicated that at least six others had plans to continue with further study at some stage in the future.

Some interviewees recognised how their own experience of UPP had helped to shape attitudes regarding higher education amongst family and friends:

> *University is a part of normal life; it's not something that just other people do … not only has it broadened my horizons and my prospects but for my whole family. (Andrea)*
>
> *[My children's friends would] see you working away on*

> *assignments and go oh yeah, and then they see you graduate and they go OK, that leads to that path.' (Barbara).*
>
> *... my family saw the changes in me and saw I was making these small steps and then these great leaps forward in terms of learning and research skills ... Some of them then went onto Uni within the next couple of years and have now completed their own degrees, so I guess it had an effect on them as well. (Kevin)*

The former Cradle Coast Campus manager reflected that the introduction of UPP made the community more

> *higher education conscious ... a person goes to UPP and they do one unit and then they drop out, and their friend discovers that they did it or their daughter knows they did it, the person who was there for a semester is having a significant impact on the people in their circle.*

Participation in UPP assisted just over half the survey respondents (54%) to get a job or a better job. Some interviewees talked about UPP leading to undergraduate study, which subsequently led to employment opportunities locally and interstate:

> *I was trapped because I didn't have any choices ... and the day I got my degree ... I opened the newspaper and there were three [social worker] jobs I could apply for and I applied for them all and I got two of them. (Ashley)*
>
> *Now, as a person with a university degree, I was able to just go straight in [to the armed forces] as an officer. (Chris)*

Others described how participation in UPP led directly to employment:

> *... the reason that I've got the [public service] job I've got now is because of UPP ... It was a combination of two things. The fact that I had done the course and the fact that one of the ladies I met there ... helped me do my resume and address the selection criteria ... I couldn't have done that by myself ... So out of that I got the interview and then I got the job. (Kahla)*

Table 2 shows occupational classifications post-UPP. There was a marked increase in the proportion of people employed in professional

roles (61% of those in employment post-UPP were professionals, compared with 12% pre-UPP). This is similar to the 71% of former enabling students now in professional work reported by Albright and Fagan (2014). Professional roles included teachers, administrators in government and private enterprise, and university researchers. Many of the interviewees who had secured different employment post-UPP compared with pre-UPP, indicated their new employment offered better job security, satisfaction and remuneration.

Table 2: *Occupational classification post-UPP*

Occupational classification	***Number***	***Percentage (%)***
Manager	3	8
Professional	22	61
Technician and Trade Worker	1	3
Community and Personal Service Worker	5	14
Clerical/Administrative Worker	2	5
Sales Worker	0	0
Machinery Operator and Driver	1	3
Labourer	1	3
Not stated	1	3
Total	36	100

Most participants in the study chose further study that would lead to local employment in education, allied health, agriculture, or to employment in management roles. All interviewees who were awarded an Education degree reported they had gained local employment in that field. As the former UPP coordinator noted:

> *the majority of the mature-aged people saw it [UPP] as a means of remaining here in an environment where employment is hard to find in many cases and made more secure by the level of professionalism. So teachers or nurses or agricultural scientists with formal qualifications are more likely to find employment in their industry than people without.*

Post-UPP, a greater proportion of females were participating in the paid workforce compared with males (72% vs 44%) and the difference was statistically significant ($X2 (1) = 4.1$, $p = 0.043$). Prior to UPP, the proportion of females and males in the paid workforce were similar. Survey findings also show that a greater proportion of females compared with males reported increased self-confidence and self-esteem from participation in UPP and again the difference is statistically significant (92% vs 69%, $p = 0.038$). Melissa, now a teacher, was seeking financial independence following a failed relationship. She reflected that UPP had made a 'huge difference … I certainly wouldn't be where I am now and I wouldn't have the career I have without UPP'. Gina recognised that she lacked employability skills after many years at home caring for her children. She completed UPP and continued with, but did not complete, undergraduate study. She is now a successful project manager, with a career that has seen her manage projects worth over $20 million.

Discussion and conclusions

By taking a longitudinal perspective we have been able to demonstrate how participation in UPP facilitated social inclusion for mature-aged learners, leading to increased financial security and/or independence. Females, in particular, appeared to enjoy economic and social benefits post-UPP. While a greater proportion of females were in paid employment post-UPP compared with males, it should be noted that this also reflects broader employment trends in the region following the Global Financial Crisis, in terms of declining male employment and increasing female employment (Tasmanian Government, 2012). For many male and female participants, qualifications gained led to local employment in key industry areas, thus increasing and expanding the skills base of the local workforce. The shift to higher-status employment, and the associated rewards in terms of remuneration and job security, have also been identified in other recent research (Albright & Fagan, 2014; Bunn, 2013), and indicate increased capacity of these individuals to contribute to the region economically and socially. Increased skill levels in priority areas such as agriculture, and increased management capacity, are necessary to drive and sustain growth within the region (Tasmanian Government, 2012).

The fact that most survey respondents continued with and completed

further study at the University of Tasmania suggests that not only was UPP a bridge or transition to tertiary study for this group of mature-aged students, but also a source of well-prepared undergraduate students for the university. It confirms other research regarding successful academic performance of enabling students who continue with undergraduate study (Clarke et al., 2000; Klinger & Tranter, 2009), particularly mature-aged students (Cantwell et al., 2001). Completed or planned postgraduate study is a clear indication that UPP has engendered lifelong learning amongst some participants, and is consistent with findings from other studies regarding the postgraduate pathways of former enabling students (Bunn, 2013; Cooper et al., 2000). However, progression to and completion of undergraduate study was only one avenue to success for this group of participants. As Kahla and Gina demonstrate, participation in UPP led to a successful employment outcome without the completion of undergraduate study, suggesting that the confidence, skills and relationships developed through UPP were applicable across multiple contexts.

The influence of UPP as a place-based capacity-building initiative (Allison & Eversole, 2008) should not be overlooked. It is unlikely that the same outcomes would have been realised if UPP had been available only by distance from another campus. UPP was an accessible local option that prepared mature-aged students for further study and employment opportunities that they may not otherwise have accessed. The study provides early evidence that the presence of UPP offered through the Cradle Coast Campus, as well as the visible success of former students and their influence as role models and potential change agents, contributed to broader attitudinal change regarding higher education. This builds on findings from earlier studies regarding the impact on children and other family members of enabling students (Cooper et al., 2000; Debenham & May, 2005), and provides further evidence of the broader community outcomes touched on by Albright and Fagan (2014). In the current study, interview participants identified the way they influenced the aspirations of their family and others in the community, while the former Cradle Coast Campus manager described the ripple effect of UPP completion on broader community attitudes towards higher education. The ripple effect of enabling programs was also identified by Albright and Fagan (2014). The influence that former enabling students have on others builds on recent research (Crawford,

2014) that identified leadership in terms of the mentoring undertaken by former enabling students in undergraduate courses. The contribution of UPP and its participants to attitudinal change is important, given the region's low university participation rates (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011), and given that historically this community had been characterised by a culture in which employment was valued over further learning (Abbott-Chapman, 2011; Alloway & Dalley-Trim, 2009; Cullity, 2006). The findings suggest that former UPP participants, as trusted and credible community members, have the potential to shape educational aspiration within the region (Bok, 2010; Hawkins, 2014). Further research into the leadership potential of former enabling students is needed to confirm the nature and extent of this influence.

The study has identified new directions for research into the medium to longer-term outcomes of enabling programs. It highlights the need for longitudinal research that looks beyond the first semester of undergraduate study and that considers individual and whole-of-community outcomes, including transition out of university and beyond. The complexity of rural communities means that while survey data are useful in giving a picture of rural demographics and patterns of behaviour, qualitative research is also needed to tease out the varying aspirations, motivations and life courses of the individuals who live in rural communities. Further research is needed to better understand the nature and scope of the medium to longer-term outcomes from enabling programs and the extent to which these outcomes are mediated by student characteristics and rural context. Such research would benefit from an examination of successful and less successful student outcomes and the reasons for this.

This study favoured students who enjoyed successful outcomes. While it is not intended to imply that all enabling students experience similar outcomes, it is clear that participation in an enabling program can and does have a transformative effect. The changes in the lives of individuals, and the way this impacts on the community, are compelling and powerful narratives about the social and economic value of enabling programs in rural communities. Issues in relation to the development of capacity in rural communities are complex and require multiple solutions. Enabling programs are part of the solution, and represent a powerful but under-valued tool in helping to unlock the potential within.

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University-based enabling program outcomes: comparing distance education and internal study

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Enrolment in university enabling programs has expanded dramatically in the last decade as universities strive to increase enrolments, particularly of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Offering enabling study by distance education has been part of this expansion with the benefit of providing access to a wider enrolment base. The purpose of this study was to compare enabling program completions and articulations to undergraduate study as well as student academic performance between those students who undertook enabling by internal mode and those who opted for distance education. Archival data from the host university student records system was extracted covering the time period from 2001 to 2011. Statistical analysis found significant differences existed in both course completion and articulation for students enrolled in online learning versus face-to-face teaching. Analysis also revealed academic achievement in the enabling programs, as measured by Grade point Average (GPA), to be higher among internal students compared to distance students.

Keywords: *University enabling programs; distance education; attrition; completion; articulation; grade point average*

Introduction

Enabling programs at Australian universities are known by many different titles such as 'Bridging Courses', 'Foundation Studies', 'Tertiary Preparation' as well as the definitive title of 'Enabling Programs' (HE Support Act 2012: 302). Regardless of name these programs share the common objective of providing second-chance learners with a pathway for entry to undergraduate study. Such programs have the potential to reverse the inequality lamented by Jones (2009:1) where he asserted "…patterns of inequality entrench themselves in society, reinforcing themselves across generations and skewing people's life chances".

As at February 2013 there were 35 Australian universities offering enabling education (Hodges, et al., 2013). These programs serve an important role in delivering equity in access to higher education for people from disadvantaged groups (Willans & Seary, 2011; Miyamoto, 2005; Ross & Gray, 2005) by providing the requisites for entry to university study for people whose education has been disrupted.

Higher levels of education and labour market credentials can generate positive spill over effects for the economy. This is a reason governments choose to subsidise education, including the cost of university enabling programs, considering them to be 'Merit Goods' that might otherwise be under consumed (Musgrave, 1959). Australian Universities have received specific funding for enabling programs under the Commonwealth 'Enabling Loading' since 2005. A benefit to the university supplying the enabling is a potential increase in undergraduate enrolments.

The Australian government's definition of an enabling program is to enable "…the person to undertake a course leading to a higher education award…" (HE Support Act 2012: 302). Therefore, enabling programs can be considered as an intermediate good assisting in the achievement of targets recommended by the Bradley Review of Higher Education (Bradley, et. al., 2008). Intermediate goods are inputs into the production of final goods or services (Krugman & Wells, 2013). In this sense success of an enabling program could be considered as completion of enabling and articulation into university level study.

Enrolments in enabling programs expanded by 180% between 1989 and 1999 (Ramsay, 2008), with more universities offering enabling and enrolment by distance education further expanding the student numbers. However, there has been little evaluation of their effectiveness. In their final report on the higher education base funding review, Lomax-Smith, Watson and Webster stated that "Enabling courses are not part of the Australian Qualifications Framework and seem not to have been subject to a targeted review of effectiveness despite having existed since 1990" (2011:122).

Ramsay (2004, 2008) suggested the need for national coordination and monitoring of enabling program outcomes. The requirement for a national "systematic evaluation" on the efficacy of alternative university entry programs was recognised more than two decades ago (Cobbin & Barlow, 1993:ix). Despite these calls, quantitative evaluation of the outcomes from these programs has been constrained and sporadic.

Most research on enabling education in Australia has been qualitative in nature and undertaken by those engaged in teaching such programs. Important student outcomes such as increased self-confidence and self-esteem have been identified by these studies (see for example Cantwell & Grayson, 2002; Debbenham & May, 2005; Cullity, 2006; Spreadbury, 2007; Stone, 2008; Willans & Seary, 2011). However, these studies do not necessarily demonstrate improvements in individuals' human capital (Becker, 1964) with respect to certified qualifications for the workforce.

Ideological tension persists within enabling educator's circles concerning enabling programs' purpose that further obscures any scrutiny of outcomes. Since their inception in Australia three decades ago, as a socially just way to address issues of equity and equality in higher education and broaden access (May, 2004), bureaucratic and institutional agendas have also exerted influence over the roles of enabling programs as an equity strategy, a university recruitment strategy and a source of additional revenue (Clarke, Bull, & Clarke, 2004).

Clarke et al. (2000) suggested that what constitutes success in terms of enabling programs is a source of conjecture. Debate continues today within enabling educators' circles about what defines success

suggesting that articulation to undergraduate level study not be considered as the definition of enabling programs' success. Hodges et al. (2013:23) contribute to this debate by proposing that "…completion of an enabling course may be indicative of commitment and a work ethic from an employer point of view". This may hold true in some instances. Conversely an employer might also question the ability of such an applicant to commit to achieving goals if the student completes a university enabling program but does not articulate to degree level study. Hodges et al. do appear to recognise that enabling programs are not an end in themselves and suggest that enabling programs are "… merely pathways towards further learning" (2013:33).

Specific Commonwealth 'Enabling Loading' funding to universities for the provision of enabling programs commenced in 2005. This funding was linked to the number of enrolments in enabling programs and may have precipitated increased enrolments. University-based enabling programs are offered free of charge to participants and the high attrition rates may be influenced by this lack of financial commitment further obfuscating the interpretations of success. If students do not incur any explicit costs for enabling study an important impetus to persist to completion may be absent from their study decisions giving students "little reason to buy in" (Hodges et al. 2013:22). In addition, such programs, that were initially implemented to assist mature aged students to access university education, are now enrolling ever larger proportions of recent school leavers. Hodges, et al (2013:16) noted that "…secondary students appear to be becoming somewhat strategic and selecting enabling programs as a legitimate pathway for higher education".

The level of Government funding to universities for the purpose of offering enabling programs is dependent upon student enrolments. Giving attention to the end product of providing free enabling programs is important to measure the effectiveness of such funding and ensure evidence-based practice. This quantitative study investigates and compares the outcomes of students who chose to study by internal mode to outcomes from students enrolled by distance education.

The research questions that drove this study were (1) Does providing enabling programs in distance education mode increase access to these

programs? , (2) Does providing enabling study by distance education affect program outcomes in terms of students' academic performance, completions of enabling program and articulations to undergraduate study?, and (3) Can mode of study chosen for enabling programs predict outcomes in terms of academic performance, completions and articulations?

These research questions have been addressed with analysis of enabling enrolments at CQUniversity (previously Central Queensland University). Notwithstanding the wealth of heart-warming anecdotal stories collected of lives positively influenced by undertaking university enabling study (Doyle, 2006), no research exists to quantify the extent that enrolment and completion of an enabling program led to entry into undergraduate study. This study is the first rigorous quantitative evaluation undertaken of the outcomes of these enabling programs at CQUniversity.

The case study context and enrolment patterns from 2001 to 2011 are first presented before an analysis of completions demonstrates that students who study enabling by distance have lower rates of program completion than internal students. An investigation of articulations is then undertaken revealing a higher attrition rate between enabling and undergraduate study for distance students compared to internal students. Finally, academic performance is contrasted between internal and distance education students showing a significant difference in mean GPA scores.

The conclusion drawn from this statistical analysis is that providing enabling study by distance education does improve access to these programs but does not improve outcomes in terms of students' academic performance, program completions or articulations to undergraduate study. In addition, studying an enabling program by distance education was the strongest predictive factor for negative student outcomes in terms of academic performance, completions of enabling program and articulation into undergraduate study.

Case study context

CQUniversity is one of many Australian tertiary institutions that offer university enabling programs by distance study. Other universities that

offer enabling by distance education include University of Newcastle, University of Southern Queensland and University of New England (Hodges, et. al., 2013). Enabling education at CQUniversity commenced in 1986 and expanded over the ensuing decades to become an important entry point for many aspiring university students.

Skills for Tertiary Education Preparatory Studies (STEPS), which commenced in 1986 was initially taught by internal study mode only but expanded its offering to distance students in 2007. Women into Science and Technology (WIST) was implemented in 1990 and was taught flexibly by distance education. From 2007 onwards WIST and STEPS both experienced increased enrolments; particularly for distance study. In 2009 Lifting the Boundaries to University (LIFT), commenced further expanding enabling program enrolments.

Applicants for both STEPS and LIFT had to complete intake testing to gain entry. There was no intake test for WIST. The application, enrolment and course assessment of STEPS and LIFT students complied with set dates from the CQUniversity academic calendar for terms 1 and 2 with LIFT also offered during term 3. STEPS had a set curriculum and students were expected to complete all courses listed under the program. LIFT made only one course compulsory but students had to complete at least two courses.

WIST applicants could enrol at any time during the year and commence study almost immediately on their preferred courses. There was no set minimum number of courses and students could study at their own pace. While STEPS offerings included distance study it was the only one of these three enabling programs that provided internal study options. WIST and LIFT were taught exclusively by distance. The WIST program provided the greatest contrast having been designed to fit flexibly around women's busy lifestyles of employment and/or family responsibilities allowing enrolment at any time of the year and self-paced study. Table 1 sets out the differences and similarities in each of these enabling program offerings.

Table 1: *STEPS, WIST, LIFT Enabling programs at CQUniversity 2001-2011*

	STEPS	**WIST**	**LIFT**
Commenced	1986	1990	2008
Target group	Males & females	Females (Males from 2009-2011)	Males & females
Intake test	Yes	No	Yes
Application/ Enrolment	Term 1 & 2	Enrol anytime	Term 1, 2, &3
Assessment timing	Submission dates set	Self-paced	Submission dates set
Curriculum (courses)	Set number of courses for each offering	Flexible number of courses according to interest/need	Flexible number of courses according to need – one was compulsory
Study mode	Internal and DE	DE only	DE only

As with enabling programs offered by other Australian universities, no systematic quantitative research had been undertaken on these programs. However, differences in success rates were becoming apparent from student records and King (2011) was commissioned to conduct a review of enabling Programs at CQUniversity. Recognising that the STEPS, WIST and LIFT programs had more similarities than differences, the university followed King's (2011) recommendation and combined these three programs as a single offering, incorporating any differences in structure or curriculum, from 2012 under the historical title of STEPS. However, the flexibility of enrolment and self-paced study that had been afforded under the WIST program no longer applies and all enabling enrolments and assessment is conducted according to the university's academic calendar.

Although these programs are now integrated into a single offering, the archival data used to compare distance and internal study success rates also provides opportunity to disaggregate the enrolment, completion

and articulation rates by the different programs. The available data commences from 2001 as it was from this time that enabling students were provided with a student number allowing for centralisation of electronic enrolment records and finishes at 2011 after which no further enrolments in WIST or LIFT were taken.

Enrolments

A total of 9,820 discrete first enrolments in the enabling programs STEPS, WIST and LIFT were accepted from 2001 to 2011. Of this number 9,493 were first enrolments and 327 were inverse enrolments. Students who enrolled inversely had initially commenced an undergraduate degree and subsequently reverted to an enabling program.

Enrolment numbers were fairly stable at around 600 students in each of the years from 2001 to 2006. In the ensuing years enrolments experienced a sharp increase which may have been precipitated by the provision of specific Commonwealth funding from 2005 onwards (refer Table 2).

Table 2: *Enabling program enrolments 2001-2011*

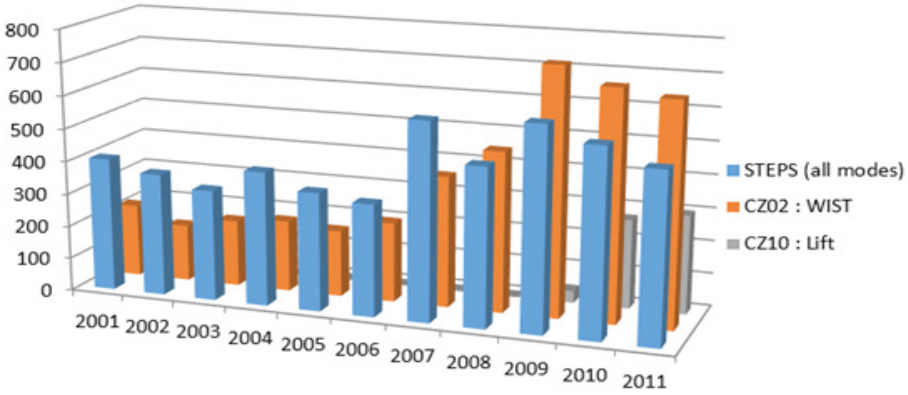
Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Internal study	377	348	336	406	358	339	299	283	343	349	317	3,755
Distance Education	249	195	202	216	201	241	693	679	1,050	1,178	1,161	6,065
Total	626	543	538	622	559	580	992	962	1,393	1,527	1,478	9,820

The numbers of students undertaking Enabling by distance increased from 249 (39.8%) in 2001 to 1,161 (78.5%) in 2011. Distance study mode accounted for the majority of enrolments over the eleven year time frame with more than 61% choosing this option.

Although the majority of enabling students were enrolled by distance education, the proportions choosing distance study varied amongst the age categories. Distance study was chosen by half (50.8%) of students aged less than 21 years old. By comparison two thirds (66.8%) of students aged 22 to 31 elected to study an enabling program by distance.

The WIST program that was taught entirely by distance education contributed most strongly to the increasing enrolments from 2005 onwards. Specific commonwealth funding for enabling programs had commenced in 2005 and this, together with the ease of entry into the WIST program, may have precipitated such a large increase. From 2007 STEPS was broadened to include distance study further adding to the increase. With the introduction of LIFT, taught by distance education only, in 2009 enrolments in enabling were further expanded (refer Figure 1).

Figure 1: *Increasing enrolments in STEPS, WIST, LIFT 2001-2011*



Source: Bookallil and Rolfe 2013

Completions

Enabling program completions increased from 39.2% in 2001 to peak at 52.9% in 2005. From 2006, as enrolments experienced a sustained increase, the completion rate fell reaching a low of 30% in 2008. Although completions improved in the ensuing years the figure was still only a 39.1% completion rate in 2011.

STEPS was the only one of the three enabling programs that offered face-to-face teaching by internal study. STEPS offerings taught in a mode that included face-to-face classroom interaction had higher completion rates than other modes. CZ01 STEPS Accelerated and

CZ04 STEPS Extended were both taught by internal day classes and proved the most successful with a completion rate of 72.5% and 59.8% respectively. Entry into CZ01 STEPS Accelerated was determined by the applicant's score on the intake test (refer Table 1). CZ05 STEPS Flex which included night classes had a 55% completion rate. Where STEPS was taught by distance the completion rates were lower than when taught face-to-face mode with CZ06 STEPS (Ext) at 40.2% and CZ09 STEPS (Exte) at 42.9% (refer Table 3).

Table 3: *Program Label and Completion of enabling*

Program	Mode of study	Did not complete EP	Completed EP	% Completed	Total
CZ01 : STEPS Acc	Internal (day classes)	509	1344	72.5%	1853
CZ04 : STEPS Ext	Internal (day classes)	625	930	59.8%	1555
CZ05 : STEPS Flex	External (night classes)	127	155	55.0%	282
CZ06 : STEPS (Ext)	Distance study	153	103	40.2%	256
CZ09 : STEPS Exte	Distance study	545	409	42.9%	954
CZ02 : WIST	Distance study	3484	530	13.2%	4014
CZ10 : Lift	Distance study	305	274	47.3%	579

Distance education had attracted a much greater proportion of enrolments than internal study. However, internal enrolments had a far higher program completion rate of 65.7% compared to only 22.7% for distance study, as demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 4: *Mode of study and Completion of enabling program*

Study mode	Total first enrolments	Did not complete EP	Completed EP	% Completed
Internal	3700	1268	2432	65.7%
Distance education	5793	4480	1313	22.7%

χ^2 (1, N = 9493) = 1751.181, p = .000

A Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) revealed a significant association between mode of study and completion status χ^2 (1, N = 9,493) = 1,751.181, p = 0.000. According to Cohen's (1988) criteria with *phi* = -0.43 this indicates a medium to large negative effect on completion by enrolling in enabling by distance education.

Articulations

Not all students completing an enabling program went on to further study, or further study at the host institution. In the eleven-year time frame of this study the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) advise that 241 applicants accepted an offer to other Queensland universities where STEPS, WIST or LIFT results from CQUniversity formed the basis of their Tertiary Entrance Ranking (TER). These students were added to the numbers articulating to CQUniversity undergraduate programs to more accurately determine articulation figures.

Only the 9,493 records of first enrolments in enabling were used to calculate articulations. Inverse enrolments were not included as these students were already in undergraduate prior to undertaking enabling study and so their records indicated articulation regardless of whether they continued with undergraduate after reverting to enabling. To include such inverse enrolments may have overstated the articulation statistics.

The figures in Table 4 include the QTAC data on offers to study at other universities revealing that, from 2006 onwards there was a steady decline in articulations to university study resulting from enrolments in enabling. Just as the year 2005 was most successful in terms of

completion of enabling, so too was 2005 the most successful year in terms of study progression with 55.3% articulating from enabling to undergraduate level study.

However, the data in Table 5 also reveals that, as enrolments rose after 2005, the percentages of students articulating from enabling programs to undergraduate study declined to a low of 30.6% in 2011.

Table 5: *Articulations to undergraduate study at any Queensland university*

Year	Enabling enrolments at CQU	Articulated to CQU	Percent	QTAC offer accepted	Total articulated to undergraduate	Percent
2001	620	292	47.1%	6	298	48.1%
2002	542	233	43.0%	12	245	45.2%
2003	536	239	44.6%	20	259	48.3%
2004	606	307	50.7%	6	313	51.6%
2005	546	284	52.0%	18	302	55.3%
2006	561	228	40.6%	13	241	43.0%
2007	953	311	32.6%	25	336	35.3%
2008	931	294	31.6%	24	318	34.2%
2009	1,336	416	31.1%	31	447	33.5%
2010	1,469	460	31.3%	54	514	35.0%
2011	1,393	394	28.3%	32	426	30.6%
Totals	9,493	3,458	36.4%	241	3,699	39.0%

Despite the low articulation rates, CQUniversity may be more successful in articulating students from enabling than other universities. While there is little data with which to compare these figures to confirm this, Lomax-Smith, Watson and Webster stated that "…in 2010, there were 4,061 students who had progressed to a Bachelor degree level course out of the 12,411 students [nationally] who undertook a pathway enabling

course in 2009" (2011:123). These 4,061 articulations represent 32.72% of the 2010 Australian enabling programs cohort. CQUniversity's articulation rate from enabling to Undergraduate of 35.0% in 2010 compares favourably since it is 2.28 percentage points above this figure.

The articulation rate for internal enabling study was 51.6% compared to 26.7% for distance enrolments. These figures give an attrition rate between enabling and undergraduate study of 48.4% for internal enabling students and 73.3% for those students who attempted enabling by distance as demonstrated in Table 6. Chi-square testing for independence indicates a significant association between mode of study for enabling program and articulation to undergraduate χ^2 (1, N = 9,493) = 605.574, p = 0.000. The effect of undertaking Enabling study by distance is negative with *phi* = -0.253 well above Cohen's (1998) criteria for a small effect and close to 0.3 criteria for a medium effect.

Table 6: *Articulation to undergraduate by mode of study for enabling*

Mode of study	Did not articulate	Articulated	Percentage articulated	Total
Internal study	1789	1911	51.6%	3700
Distance education	4246	1547	26.7%	5793

χ^2 (1, N = 9493) = 605.574, p = .000

Given that enabling study by face-to-face teaching had higher completion rates than internal study, it is not surprising that enabling study by internal mode was much more likely to result in articulation into university than was enabling study by distance mode.

More important to the analysis was to identify if students who had demonstrated academic capability, as measured by their Grade Point Average (GPA) achieved in the enabling program, progressed on to undergraduate study. To test this a dummy variable was created to categorise enrolments with a passing GPA of four or above to allow for analysis of choices made by those considered to be "enabled" for undergraduate study.

Table 7 provides the cross tabulations showing the numbers and percentages of successfully enabled students who progressed to undergraduate study at CQUniversity. It was not possible to determine the enabling program study mode of the 241 students who accepted QTAC offers to other Queensland universities. However, these 241 students are only 2.6% of the overall enrolment in enabling at CQUniversity during the time frame of this study.

Table 7: *Enabling study GPA and Articulated Cross tabulation*

Enabling GPA	Did not articulate	Articulated	Percentage articulated	Total
GPA < 4 = Fail	4,594	926	16.8%	5,520
GPA >= 4 =Pass	1,441	2,532	63.7%	3,973

χ^2 (1, N = 9493) = 2197.448, p = 0.000

As would be expected a Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity correction) reveals a large and significant association between achieving a passing GPA in enabling and articulation to undergraduate study. χ^2 (1, N = 9,493) = 2197.448, p = 0.000. The *Phi* of 0.481 is just under Cohen's (1988) threshold of 0.5 that would indicate a large effect.

This analysis not only reveals a 36.3% attrition rate between enabling programs and degree level study for students who had achieved a pass level GPA, it also reveals that 926 students who did not achieve a passing GPA were subsequently accepted into undergraduate study. Further research on this revelation might be instructive.

Further investigation was undertaken on the 3,973 students who had achieved a pass level GPA to compare the rates of articulation into undergraduate study for those students who studied by internal mode compared to those who studied an enabling program by distance education. Table 8 demonstrates that 67.5% of internal enabling students who had achieved an enabling GPA of pass or higher had articulated to undergraduate study indicating that the attrition rate between enabling programs and degree level study from internal study was 32.5%. The articulation rate between distance education enabling

programs and degree level study for students who had achieved a pass level GPA was 56.3% which is 11.2% lower than for internal students giving a higher attrition rate of 43.7%

Chi-square testing revealed an association between mode of study for students who achieved a passing GPA in their enabling program and articulating to undergraduate study. However, while mode of study was significant, Phi = -0.11, suggesting the effect of mode of study for enabling on articulation to undergraduate study is small for students who had successfully completed their enabling program.

Table 8: *Articulations by mode of study for students with a passing GPA from a university enabling program*

Mode of study	Did not articulate	Articulated	Percentage Articulated	Total
Internal study	857	1780	67.5%	2637
Distance education	584	752	56.3%	1336
Total	1441	2532	53.7%	3973

$\chi^2(1, n=3973) = 47.754, p = .000$

Predicting articulation to undergraduate study

The high attrition rate between enabling and undergraduate enrolment for successfully "enabled" students appeared enigmatic when the purpose of enabling programs is to prepare for tertiary study. An issue of interest, therefore, was whether articulation could be predicted from the variables in the data.

Logistic regression was used to assess which variables might predict whether the 3,745 students who had successfully completed their enabling program between 2001 and 2011 would articulate to undergraduate study. The STEPS enabling program had several variations as detailed in Table 3. Not all of these variations were offered in each year. To simplify this analysis all offerings of STEPS were combined to provide a single discrete variable to compare against the

outcomes of the programs WIST and LIFT.

Ten independent variables were entered into the model: three categories of enabling programs, three categories of SES (as measured by Australian post codes), Mode of study, gender, students' age at enrolment in Enabling (log transformation was used to more closely resemble a normal distribution), and having achieved a passing GPA in their enabling program. Table 9 provides the data on the variables in the model showing that socioeconomic status, gender, age or having a passing GPA in enabling were not significant contributing factors for predicting articulation when controlling for all other factors in the model. Note that the STEPS mode of study has been omitted from the analysis by SPSS, as the probability of being enrolled in a STEPS program is perfectly collinear with the probability of being enrolled in a LIFT or WIST program.

Table 9: *Predicting articulation for successful enabling students*

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.
LowSocio(1)	.346	.499	.480	1	.488
MedSocio(1)	.111	.500	.049	1	.825
HighSocio(1)	-.226	.564	.161	1	.689
CZ10LIFT(1)	.467	.157	8.847	1	.003
CZ02WIST(1)	.352	.129	7.402	1	.007
DE(1)	-.665	.100	44.005	1	.000
Male(1)	-.083	.081	1.051	1	.305
LneAge	-.219	.105	4.337	1	.037
PassEPGPA(1)	.079	.229	.120	1	.729
Constant	1.210	.661	3.351	1	.067

χ^2 (9, N = 3745) = 76.417, p <.001

Having studied enabling by distance mode (DE variable) made a uniquely statistically significant contribution to the model (p<.001).

The effect was negative and revealed an odds ratio of 0.514 indicating that for every additional student who successfully completed enabling by distance mode they were only half as likely to articulate than students who studied by internal mode. Having studied the WIST or LIFT programs were also statistically significant ($p<.05$). However, the effect of these variables would interact with the DE variable since these programs were taught exclusively by distance. Age at enrolment in enabling also contributed significantly to the model ($p<.05$). The effect of age was negative and again there is an interaction with distance study as students between the ages of 21 years and 45 years were the group most likely to undertake enabling study in the distance mode.

The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, χ^2 (9, N = 3,745) = 76.417, $p < 0.001$, indicating the model was able to distinguish between students who articulated and those who did not articulate to an undergraduate program. However, the model with these predictors only improved the classification of articulations by 5%, correctly classifying 65.2% compared to 64.7% without the variables included. The model with these variables explained only between 2% (Cox and Snell R square) and 2.8% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in articulation rates for those students who had successfully completed their enabling program.

Grade results

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the GPA scores for students who studied an enabling program by internal mode and those who studied by distance education. The results, tabulated in Table 9, reveal a significant difference in GPA scores for internal (M = 4.35, SD = 2.446) and distance education (M = 1.50, SD = 2.393): t (9,491) = 56.091, p<.001, two-tailed).

The magnitude, eta squared, of the differences in the mean GPA scores between internal and distance students was 0.25 which is well above the measure of 0.14 that Cohen distinguishes as his guideline for a large effect (Cohen, 1988:284-7).

Table 10: *Association between study mode and GPA scores*

		N	Mean GPA	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
EP GPA	**Internal study**	3700	4.35	2.446	.040
	Distance education	5793	1.50	2.393	.031

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.021	.886	56.091	9491	.000	2.849	.051	2.750	2.949
Equal variances not assumed			55.819	7752.641	.000	2.849	.051	2.749	2.950

Eta squared = $t^2 / t^2 + (N1 + N2 - 2) = 3146.2/3146.2 + (3700 + 5793 - 2) = 0.25$

The differences in the mean GPA scores between internal study and distance mode for enabling programs is important to note. The mean GPA score for enabling students who studied by internal mode is 4.35, which is just above the GPA pass rate of 4. Not only was the mean GPA score of 1.5 for enabling students who studied by distance mode considerably less than that achieved by internal students it was well under the GPA pass rate of 4 indicating that distance students were less likely to experience success in the enabling program.

Conclusions and recommendations

University enabling programs are an important equity initiative to provide a second chance to those whose education has been disrupted. These programs are offered free of charge and delivered by both internal study and distance education in an effort to increase equity of access.

There are now 34 Australian universities receiving funding to offer enabling education.

Specific Commonwealth funding for enabling programs commenced in 2005 may have precipitated a sharp increase in students accessing enabling study. However, the increased enrolments did not translate into increased program completions or articulations to undergraduate study. Despite repeated suggestions of the need for a systematic evaluation of ever expanding university enabling programs most research has been qualitative in methodology.

This study attempts to fill a gap in the literature on enabling programs by providing quantitative analysis of student outcomes from one university over an eleven year time frame. In particular the analysis focusses on the differences between outcomes for internal study and distance education because it is distance education that has contributed most heavily to the escalation in student enrolments since 2006.

The analysis presented has demonstrated that providing greater opportunity of access to enabling programs by distance education increases enrolments but does not increase completions nor articulations to undergraduate study. Distance study also appears to have a negative effect on student achievement as measured by grade point average when compared to internal study.

The fact that entry to CZ01 STEPS Accelerated was restricted according to applicants' performance on an entry test suggests that individuals' initial academic capability may be a factor in the success rate of this program. However, data to evaluate this question was not available. Consideration of such pertinent factors as the enabling students' academic capability on entry and the effect of teaching staff would be required before a conclusive assertion can be made regarding causation. Such research would also need to include academic success in particular subject areas, as well as overall program completions, to eliminate curriculum factors.

Further research into the learning styles of enabling program students with respect to intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation might shed some light on why enabling study by distance education has lower success rates. Such research might form the basis of evidence based strategies to

increase retention in enabling and articulation to undergraduate study.

The revelation that 926 (16.8 %) students who did not achieve a passing GPA from their enabling programs were subsequently accepted into undergraduate study suggests that some enrolments in enabling programs may be unnecessary. Further research on this point might prove instructive for enabling program recruitment practices.

Enabling programs are offered free of any financial commitment by participants. The low program completion rate and high attrition rate between enabling and undergraduate study, particularly for distance study, might be addressed by more targeted enrolment or a stronger incentive/reward structure, such as charging a minimal fee.

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Formative reflections of university recreation science students in South Africa as catalyst for an adapted service-learning program

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Community-university partnerships through service-learning have progressively developed as part of institutions of higher education's mission statements. This paper explores the qualitative reflections of 410 undergraduate students enrolled in an academic recreation science course on a first time service-learning experience in South Africa. The study asks the question: 'how can pre-service and formative reflections used in a social constructive approach impact on collaborative, in-depth learning?' Students were tasked to keep reflective journals to express concerns as pre-service-learning and formative reflections over a four week, twenty hour service-learning experience. The service-learning program aligned with the social constructivism principles of collaborative learning, which occurred under the guidance and

supervision of a lecturer, was embedded in a realistic problem, required collaborative problem solving and collaboration with the community partner and involved self-direction and self-management of students. Both pre-service and formative reflection themes changed over the three year study period. Results suggested that the initial service-learning experience did not contribute to a positive attitude towards community engagement and did not contribute to skill development. Results of the study confirmed the value of reflection as a tool in service-learning and commensurate with the overall aim and purpose of service-learning in institutions of higher education.

Keywords: *higher education, recreation science, reflection, service-learning, social constructivism, South Africa.*

Introduction

Universities as institutions of higher education have a tripartite mission of teaching, learning and service. At different times in the history of higher education one or more of these three parts have dominated (Millican & Bourner, 2011). According to their teaching and learning mandates universities create and disseminate knowledge and related activities enhance the outcomes and effectiveness of higher education (Hussain, 2012). The contribution of the university to society of which they are a part of is increasingly emphasised through significant community engagement initiatives such as academic service-learning. Researchers (O'Brien, 2009, Millican & Bourner, 2011) have postulated that university-society engagement and partnerships offer considerable potential for enhancing student social responsibility in order to develop the student's sense of social awareness. Scholars (Hussain, 2012, Millican and Bourner, 2011, Peters, 2011) advocate for higher education that is not only subject-centred (academic teaching) but also society-centred (academic service-learning). Such a dimension in higher education curricula would add value in the sense of increasing students' awareness of context-specific societal challenges, provide opportunity to apply classroom learning, develop interpersonal and leadership skills, enhance understanding and appreciation of diversity, gain opportunity for greater self-knowledge and expand students' capacity for reflective learning.

Over the past decades researchers have presented scholarly evidence on the benefits of service-learning in a range of academic disciplines and contexts (Giles and Eyler, 1998, Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Roos, Temane, Davis, Prinsloo, Kritzinger, Naude & Wessels, 2005; Keselyak, Simmer-Beck, Bray & Gadbury-Amyot, 2007; Steinke & Fitch, 2007; McClam, Diambra, Burton, Fuss & Fudge, 2008; Coetzee, Bloemhoff & Naude, 2011; Jacobson, Oravecz, Falk & Osteen, 2011; Peters, 2011). Some of this research could be the result of the World Conference on Higher Education convened by UNESCO in 1998 to re-examine educational policies appropriate for the current millennium. From this conference declaration fifteen principles emerged to guide higher education including the use of knowledge to benefit society, the importance of student reflection and a concern for strengthening the identities and values of students (Millican & Bourner, 2011).

At the end of South Africa's turbulent history of apartheid in 1994, the emerging democracy also placed strong emphasis on the transformation of higher education (Maistry & Thakrar, 2012). The White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education introduced community engagement in its diverse forms on the transformation agenda (Department of Education, 1997). Community engagement was proposed as a process to institutionalise universities' commitment to social responsibility by engaging with national priorities and the challenges it proposed in their immediate socio-economic contexts. Against this background the Council on Higher Education (CHE) Community Engagement Conference (2006) refer to students as both agents and beneficiaries of community engagement. Classroom activities must educate and prepare students for engagement with the social challenges of their academic discipline (Maistry & Thakrar, 2012).

The ongoing scholarly debate involving conceptualising and formalising the relationship between the university and society through community engagement in a developing country like South Africa is acknowledged (Council on Higher Education, 2010, Kruss, 2012). According to the Council of Higher Education's Framework for Institutional Audits (Council on Higher Education, 2004) community engagement encompasses all initiatives and processes through which universities apply teaching and learning to address relevant issues in their social environment. Initiatives and processes range from informal,

unstructured volunteerism to formal and structured credit bearing academic service-learning programs to create a shared vision among the community and partners in society. Shared vision results in long-term collaborative programs of action that benefit all partners equitably that in turn contributes to the sustainability of holistic service-learning initiatives (Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo & Bringle, 2011, Maistry & Thakrar, 2012).

For purposes of this investigation the researchers accepted service-learning as a pedagogical approach and drew on the definitions of the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (2005) that define service-learning as a teaching strategy that integrates significant and thoughtfully organised community service in a specific academic discipline with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility and strengthen partners equitably. According to this definition service-learning as a pedagogical approach reflects student learning and development through active participation, integration into an academic curriculum with structured time for reflection, subsequent opportunity to apply feedback in real-life situations and extension student learning beyond the formal classroom space and time (McClam et al., 2008).

Sport and recreation constitutes significant and real life elements of the ongoing South African transformation agenda (Department Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2011b) and we contend that it provides context and rationale for service-learning in the academic discipline of Recreation Science at a South African university. As a national government department, Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA), endorses national government priorities and recognises that the success in the implementation of the plan depends, amongst other, on the ability to build partnerships with institutions of higher learning as well as sport and recreation governance structures (Department Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012). Partnerships with institutions of higher education are encouraged to harness the power of students while at the same time empowering them to contribute to the overarching goals of building an active and a winning nation through sport and recreation (Department Sport and Recreation, 2011a). Designing service-learning engagements around sport and recreation activities could increase students' social awareness and provide common ground to link academic content and social context.

Context and aim

Given the increased emphasis on service-learning as a pedagogical approach in higher education it became necessary for the Department of Sport and Leisure to determine and analyse pre-service and students' formative reflections on the value, and their experience of credit bearing service-learning as an integral part of their academic curriculum. Pre-service and formative assessment of students' perceptions of this pedagogical approach provided an opportunity for feedback to improve the structure and quality of service-learning practice and demonstrate the impact service-learning can have on student learning (Steinke & Fitch, 2007). The academic context for the present study was the second year recreation science curriculum as part of a three-year undergraduate degree in Human Movement Sciences at a South African research university. Human Movement Sciences prepares majors as sport and recreation specialists able to work in various sport and recreation settings with a wide range of clients. Specific goals of this recreation science curriculum focused on the benefits of physical activity as recreation throughout the human lifespan, appreciation of social diversity, identifying appropriate motor development and physical activities and the development of teaching and facilitating skills of students to institutionalise lifelong sport and recreation activities in communities. In order for service-learning to be meaningful students at the Department of Sport and Leisure are immersed into a community setting that presents them with experiences related to their academic curriculum (Peters, 2011). Aims of the service-learning activities were intentionally linked to those of the particular undergraduate recreation science curriculum and were structured and organised into three categories of basic movement skill development (pre-primary school learners), life skill development through physical activity (primary school learners) and leadership skill development through physical activity (secondary school learners). The service-learning program activities were credit-bearing and contributed to the final assessment mark in this particular academic course and were organised and delivered annually over 25 weeks with two weekly contact sessions in the community. The service-learning component took place in a real-life context of a lower socio-economic urban area in South Africa where residents of mixed race origin resided in high density apartments. For 95% of the students this service-learning component was their first

contact with a lower socio-economic, coloured community.

At the start of the study the need to adapt and transform the community engagement was expressed and the decision was made to introduce and utilise student's pre- and formative reflections as input in the development of the program. Even though community engagement has been proven to be beneficial in enhancing a students' learning experience, it did not seem to impact student learning in this program. Students questioned the need to participate in the program and lacked the motivation to get involved. The community engagement program was also strongly based on instructive learning, which did not contribute to the proposed outcome of collaborative learning. The need to change the community engagement program in order to make it relevant for student learning was the driving factor behind this study.

The study was planned over a three year period, with a reflection diary introduced in the first year. Students were tasked to personally reflect on their experience and, in conjunction with personal reflections, were asked to reflect, as a group, on the following questions: What went well, and why? What didn't go so well, and why? What could we have done differently, and how? In order to simplify the relationship between the university, the community and the students, one lecturer was identified to lead the program.

Conceptual framework

Due to the need to enable collaborative learning, the conceptual framework for the study drew on the theory of social constructivism and the principles of reflective practice in service-learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), the founder of social constructivism as a departure from the cognitive constructivism views of Piaget, all of the cognitive functions, for example learning, originates in collaborative, human social interactions and must therefore be explained as products of social interactions. New knowledge is not simply assimilated through cognitive memory or rote learning but also by being integrated into a community where the learner creates subjective meaning of their experiences through collaborative human interaction in communities. A collaborative learning environment is fundamental in social constructivism. Yuzhu, Yunxiang, Lili and Yingjie (2010) identified the four basic elements of this collaborative learning environment as

the teacher, learner, task and context. From a social constructivism approach all four elements are crucial to the learning process and each element interacts, supports and develops the learning process. Vygotsky (1978) refers to this collaborative and assisted learning environment as "scaffolding" where the learner progresses to the next level of cognitive understanding with the assistance of the other elements in the collaborative learning process.

The notions of social interaction and collaborative problem solving and learning are central to social constructivism as well as service-learning. In both concepts the success of students' learning is embedded in engaging with realistic curriculum related problems. Hanson and Sinclair (2008) contend that students learn most effectively when this engagement occurs under the guidance of the lecturer or educator. Bereiter and Scardamalia (2000) in Hanson and Sinclair (2008) argue for a carefully designed collaborative learning environment that needs to be anchored in a realistic problem, collaborative group work, teamwork where each member is accountable to the group, dialogue and negotiation of shared understanding takes place. In such a learning environment students have to exercise self-management in articulating problems, decide on how to understand and solve collaborative problems, educators' roles develop from scaffolding to coaching where they facilitate critical formative reflection on group interaction and the outcomes of the collaborative engagement are generalised beyond a specific problem.

When service-learning is approached through the lens of social constructivism the role of the educator does not diminish but gets elevated to the indispensable function of planner, co-ordinator and guide (Yuzhu et al. 2010). Students are no longer passive receivers of knowledge but actively collaborate in creating own knowledge and understanding through discovering their capabilities and critical thinking skills. Service-learning in a social constructivism context is anchored in real life contexts that present a pedagogical tool and a medium or stage for collaborative interaction. Students bring to this stage their own perceptions and diverse cognitive understanding of a specific content and context resulting in individual learning strategies to construct meaning. This implies that students' perceptions of reality are often challenged and affective factors such as feelings of incompetence,

a sense of being overwhelmed, loss of security or feelings of achievement and bonding influence learning. For this reason guided formative reflections on the individual process of constructing meaning becomes a cornerstone of service-learning based on social constructivism.

Researchers (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999, Keselyak et al., 2007, Jacobson et al., 2011, Gibson, Hauf, Long & Sampson, 2011, Molee, Henry, Sessa & McKinney-Prupis, 2010,) agree that structured reflection is fundamental to effective service-learning. Dewey's (1933) educational philosophy provides a foundation for and a link to the role of reflection in service-learning. Dewey argues that as service-learning extends beyond the space and time of the formal classroom, students inevitably experience contexts that challenge their personal beliefs, thoughts and assumptions. This discrepancy could result in doubt and confusion, conditions that Dewey views as necessary starting points for critical thinking and reflection. As students debate, reflect on, interpret and evaluate the relationship between the experience and the goals of the academic discipline the potential for multi-dimensional learning increases (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999, Gibson et al., 2011).

As reflection provides a bridge between theory and meaningful experience (Dewey, 1933) it needs to be structured along the principles of continuous opportunities to reflect before, during and after the service-learning experience, be connected to academic course goals, challenge students to apply civil discourse, reasoned analysis and reflective judgement and allow contextual reflection (Eyler, Giles, & Schmiede, 1996). Written journals are widely used as a method to record reflections (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999, Keselyak et al. 2007, McClam et al., 2008, Molee et al., 2010) and were also used in the present study. Written reflections meet the requirements as set by Eyler et al. (1996) as they provide students with continuous opportunity to describe and interpret their feelings and learning experiences for the duration of the service-learning experience. The focus of the reflective writings were guided by the goals of the academic course and the social context of the service-learning engagement and required students to engage in social discourse with the community partner.

Methodology

Investigators used qualitative methods to explore students' reflections on service-learning as a credit-bearing element of an undergraduate recreation science course with the secondary aim of considering the implications of their reflections on the organisational structure of the service-learning element and curriculum design. Permission to conduct the study was granted by the faculty ethics committee of the institution of higher education. The credit bearing service-learning element was structured to align with the social constructivism principles advocated by Bereiter and Scardamalia (2000) in Hanson and Sinclair (2008). Students organised themselves into groups and each group was assigned a 20 hour, four week block of service-learning. The service-learning experience occurred under the guidance and supervision of one lecturer and was embedded in a realistic problem (accessible lower socio-economic community), required collaborative problem solving and teamwork (students worked in groups in collaboration with community leaders) and involved self-management and self-direction (students designed session content themselves and assigned duties within the group). Scaffolding of the collaborative learning process took place, as the responsibility for problem solving gradually shifted from the lecturer to the students to construct learning where acquired knowledge could be generalised beyond the context of the lower socio-economic community. Four hundred and ten (N=410) students enrolled in a year-long recreation science course over a three year period, between 2012 and 2014, used written reflective diaries to record their subjective feelings and attitudes prior to their first exposure to service-learning as well as during the service-learning experience. Sixty three percent (63.2%) were female and 36.8% male. Students were also asked to supplement their written reflections with visual photos or videos. The researchers attended and observed all contact service-learning sessions over the period of three years, made notes, provided continuous feedback and awarded a grade that counted towards students' academic performance in the particular course. Prior to the academic service-learning experiences students were briefed on the expected conditions in their service-learning context, were introduced to the community partner, the duration and aim of the service-learning experience were explained and general logistics were clarified. As written self-reflection journals were used as qualitative data collection method, students were

briefed prior to the service-learning experience on the basic principles of reflection. In terms of pre-service-learning reflection they were asked to reflect on their expectations, attitudes and concerns. Students were also required to continuously reflect on challenges, successes, attitudes and lessons learned over the duration of the four week, 20 hour contact sessions (formative reflection) by using the three questions: What went well, and why? What didn't go so well, and why? What could we have done differently, and how? Upon completion of the service-learning experience students submitted their written reflections supplemented by the visual material. Researchers independently analysed the pre- and formative service-learning written reflections and applied inductive content analysis to identify patterns and themes in both sets of data. Researchers then met and reached agreement on provisional themes. Input from students were utilised in the structuring of the program for each following year. This was followed by constant comparison to the provisional themes with visual data collected by the students and their personal notes taken during the contact service-learning sessions. Final agreement was then reached on pre- and post service-learning themes and changes to the program

Results

Results for the study are presented per year as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: *Pre-service and formative student reflections*

	Year 1 2012	Year 2 2013	Year 3 2014
Pre-service learning reflections	Antagonism	Interest	Ownership
	Fear	Uncertainty	Confidence
	Low level of motivation	Higher level of motivation	Higher level of motivation
Formative service learning reflections	Changed attitude and perception	Positive attitude	Positive attitude and future perception
	Relief	Skill development	Skill and personal development
		Translation of theory into practice	Translation of theory into practice

Pre-service-learning reflections

Three major themes emerged inductively from the pre-service-learning reflections of the participants in the first year (2012): 1) antagonism, 2) fear and 3) confidence. Antagonism against the credit bearing academic service-learning component of the academic course surfaced very strongly. Reflections like *"waste of time", "it could be a life-threatening experience – is the university crazy to send us there?", I do not want to get out of my comfort zone, I do not want to mix with groups other than my own", "not excited, I have to sacrifice 4 weeks of working time, I will lose money"* and *"I do not like working with children or non-elite athletes"* expressed students' antagonism. Fear of the unknown was another strong emotional reflection. Students described their fears using words like *"terrified, nervous, apprehensive and stressed*." In particular, students expressed fear for their well-being and safety at the service-learning point as *"I've heard that it is a scary place. Gangs abound – almost like the Cape Flats? My mom is not happy about this!;* concerns on their language ability as the language of the community differed from the home language of some students, their skills profile and fear of assuming leadership roles in an unknown context. At the end of the first year student reflections were used as input into the following year's program. Second years were also given the opportunity to share their experiences with the first years in a two-hour session. During the discussion students reflected on how first years can get involved in order to facilitate the second year program and the suggestion to introduce first year students was implemented in the second year of the study.

Three major themes emerged from the pre-service reflection of the second group of participants, with a slightly more positive predisposition towards participation in the community engagement project. The three themes included: 1) interest, 2) uncertainty and 3) a higher level of motivation. Interest in getting involved in the community engagement module was expressed as *"after the presentations and the briefing by the second years last year, I was quite excited about also helping the little kids out there. I'm a little bit nervous now, but a good nervous, you know?"* Uncertainty about involvement was conveyed in statements such as *"I've never worked with toddlers before. What will happen if they don't want to do the activities that we've planned?"* A higher level of motivation to participate in the community engagement

project was observed with students reflecting that *"the second years told us that anything you can do to put a smile on these kids' faces is fantastic. If you make one child happy for that day you have succeed. I'm going to make sure that I have fun with them."*

The third year concluded the study. An important impact on the pre-service reflections of the participants in this group was that they have already been to the community engagement site and have assisted the previous second years and therefore had prior knowledge on the program. Two major themes emerged from the pre-service reflections of the third group of participants: 1) ownership of learning and 2) confidence. Students reflected that they know the requirements for a successful community program and understand that they are ultimately responsible for how valuable the learning experience might be. This was expressed for example as *"I want to work with people one day. This gives me the opportunity to actively learn how to engage with people I don't know."* The majority of the students were, confident and looking forward to the service-learning experience. They expressed confidence using phrases like *"I will keep an open mind and a ready to learn attitude", I have high hopes to impact the lives of people living in a lower socio-economic community", "I am sure I can teach these people new things", "I do not know what to expect but am looking forward to it"* and *"practical experience is important in the real world."*

Formative service-learning reflections

Students were required to reflect continuously on their perceptions and experiences during the 20 hour service-learning experience and submit it on completion of the experience. Themes that emerged from the formative service-learning reflections obtained in the first year included: 1) changed attitude and perception, 2) relief and 3) knowledge required. A change in attitude and perception was a distinctive theme with students expressing this as *"Once you're in the community, it's ok. Not really dangerous"*, and *"Although I didn't want to do this, I actually learnt a lot. I think the most important thing that I'm taking from this experience is that - even though people may be poor – they're still human beings"*. A strong sense of relief of being done with the project was evident, which was indicative of the crucial need to change the program. Students expressed relief as: *"It was better than I thought, but*

I'm glad we're done!" and *"Our activities worked in the end. Although everything worked out I'm glad we're done!"*. Several students reflected that they did acquire knowledge through participating in this project with one student saying *"My leadership skills have definitely improved. You need to keep going even if nothing works out!"*

In the second year of the study the lecturer provided the students with a basic framework of what is expected, however refrained from taking on an instructional role. Scaffolding of learning content occurred by means of group reflection guided by the lecturer before and after each session. Three major themes emerged from analysing these formative reflections: 1) a positive approach to community engagement, 2) skill development and, 3) translation of theory into practice. A positive approach to community engagement was evident in reflections such as: *"We were disappointed when our turn was over. Maybe we can do the activities we have left one day in the holiday?"*; *"I'll definitely want to stay involved"* and *"every day I learned something from the people in the community"*. With the scaffolding of community development skills coupled with active group reflection skill development resulted as a strong formative reflection theme with students expressing their learning as *"now I realise the importance of time management and detailed planning"*; *"I have to keep activities simple and give instructions that the children understand"*. Reflections such as *"It finally clicked why we have to learn all of this theory"* demonstrated both their construction of understanding as well as the translation of theory into practice.

The third year of the study was a culmination of changes to the community engagement program and involved students as co-constructors of meaning and knowledge by focusing on their strengths. In collaboration with the community engagement lecturer, students redesigned the program, which resulted in a program imitating programs in higher socio-economic communities. The program now provided music, arts and crafts, soccer, motor skill, aerobics, dance, walking and a variety of activities as suggested, planned and presented by the students. Themes that emerged from the third year participants included: 1) positive attitude and future perception, 2) skill and personal development, and 3) translation of theory into practice. Students not only expressed a positive attitude towards community

engagement, but demonstrated future perception of staying involved in community outreach programs: *"I will definitely stay involved. There is a community close to where I live – I'm going to start a soccer club there for the kids"*. With few exceptions students reflected on their own personal development, changes in attitudes and skills during the period of service-learning. Reflections such as: *"it was a humbling eye-opening experience", "a rewarding and challenging experience", "I discovered I like working with children and make a difference in their lives", "Thanks for the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life",* and "*this project changed my life",* illustrated the change in attitudes and is in stark contrast with initially expressed antagonism and fear of the first group of students.

Development in students' personal skills set were depicted in reflections like: *"I feel confident now to work across cultural and language barriers," "I learned how to work in groups and respect diversity", "discovered my strengths and weaknesses"* and *"our group got stronger as time went on – we developed not only as a group but also as individuals."* The reality and challenges of translating theory into practice emerged strongly in the formative reflective journaling of the third group of participants. Students identified their lack of teaching skills as a major barrier preventing them from translating theory into practice. Challenges such as physical activities not being age-appropriate, lack of control and discipline in the service-learning sessions, low levels of motivation and boredom in the groups due to inappropriate activities, inability to cope with the realities of the venue, communication barriers and not reaching outcomes were emphasised. One student expressed her initial frustration as follows: *"It was not as easy as I thought it would be. We have to go back and plan and organise better. We have to prepare better. We over-estimated ourselves and under-estimated the task"* and *"I discovered the huge gap between paper and reality."* Entries in the reflective journals, however, noted a marked improvement in perceived teaching skills after the first contact session and continuous in-depth discussions with the lecturer as group supervisor. Strong evidence of enhanced civic responsibility and awareness was evident from formative reflections. Students appreciated the opportunity for cross-cultural community involvement, to give something of oneself, to get out of their comfort zones and reach out to people and communities different from themselves and

expressed a desire to get involved on a deeper level in communities. Students experienced social reality in a broader context and expressed it as follows: *"Participants were so thankful for the smallest things we did", "I will never complain again about my circumstances", "I did not realise there were communities like this so close to the university"* and *"it influenced my attitude towards other South African communities. I want to actively get involved in volunteer work in future."*

Discussion

This study explored both the pre-service and formative reflections of students' first exposure to service-learning as credit bearing element of an undergraduate academic course. Reflections provided insight into and qualitative evidence of students' experiences and allowed students to freely express their feelings and opinions. The results of this investigation resonate with the essence and rationale of service-learning as a pedagogy with the aim of influencing attitudes through developing critical thinking and problem solving in real-life contexts (Steinke & Fitch, 2007, Thomson et al., 2011, Millican & Bourner, 2011, Kruss, 2012). In general, the results supported findings of studies reporting positive benefits of service-learning in contexts of higher education (Wilson, 2011, Thomson et al., 2011, Coetzee et al., 2011).

The need to change the project in order to achieve the beneficial outcomes of service-learning was strongly indicated in the reflections of first group of participants. The impact of adopting a social constructive approach and a strong emphasis on the use of reflection resulted in a community engagement program supporting collaborative learning; a focus on learning and not only performance; reflective learning and most important, students who foresee themselves as active in communities in the future.

Specific analysis of students' formative reflections indicated a transition from pre-service-learning fear and antagonism to an increased awareness and understanding of social inequities. The researchers are of the opinion that the expressed feelings of fear and antagonism needed to be interpreted and contextualised within the socio-economic and cultural profile of the research participants and the legacy of a post-apartheid segregated South African society. As the majority of the participants were white and represented cultural

and socio-economic groupings different than that of the partnership community, this particular group of students had limited cross-cultural and socio-economic exposure and as such stereotyped the partnership community through their reflections of fear and antagonism. The researchers contend that exposure to and experiences of societal inadequacies and diversity in the partnership community disrupted and questioned notions of norms, self and others and guided students towards appreciation of diversity and attention to micro aspects of the service-learning experience, for example, discipline within groups, selection of appropriate activities and the use of language, as postulated by Butin (2005) in his postmodern views on service-learning in higher education. Through the formative reflections students sensed and experienced the reciprocal nature of service-learning. This shift in attitude became evident through reflections commenting on how their knowledge and skills were influenced by the participants: *"every day I learned something from the people"*. On completion of the experience the majority viewed community service-learning positively. They experienced the positive reciprocal impact the service-learning component had on themselves and the community partner and were able to conceptualise and internalise the benefits of service-learning. In this case, although not recorded in their formative reflections, some students transferred their learning through volunteering for similar experiences. A group of students, for example, retained their involvement with the community partner beyond the institutional academic requirements to assist in fundraising.

Conclusion

It appears that first time participation in service-learning may foster student development in the areas of problem solving, teaching skills, civic awareness, decision-making, and collaborative teamwork if approached from a social constructivist perspective. Although the researchers acknowledge the exploratory nature of the present study, it confirmed the need for service-learning in a particular degree program at a South African institution of higher education. The realities and challenges of the collaborative and reciprocal nature of service-learning, for example, interaction with diverse and cross-cultural target groups and socio-economic contexts must be emphasised. The scaffolding role of a lecturer is a key dimension in achieving the aims of holistic service-

learning. It is therefore recommended that lecturers are also orientated and educated to adequately perform their significant contribution. This paper presented the results of a service-learning experience only from the perspective of the student. The perspectives of the community partner and the lecturers remain unexplored at this stage. Future research will explore the reflections of the community partner and lecturers on the impact of the holistic service-learning experience.

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Book Review

Teaching in the VET sector in Australia

Ros Brennan Kemmis and Liz Atkins (eds.)
David Barlow Publishing, Australia, 2014, 159 pages

Reviewed by Tom Stehlik,
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This practical and useful text was commissioned and produced by the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group (ACDEVEG) with the express aim of providing an overview of the key knowledge required by VET teachers in contemporary Australia. The editors and contributors set out to address the question 'what does a VET teacher need to know in order to start developing themselves as an expert practitioner in the field?' (p. vi), and have achieved this well with a book that is aimed squarely at the VET practitioner while also covering theoretical concepts that underpin VET teaching practice.

Including the editors, contributors represent a range of Australian VET professionals who would be familiar to those working in or associated with the sector, for example: Erica Smith, Michele Simons, Sarojni Choy. Of interest to this reviewer and perhaps indicative of the gendered nature of VET teacher education is the fact that, of the 15 contributors, there is only one male – Steven Hodge of Griffith University. However, regardless of that and the various states and institutions

that are represented, all contributors have taken a big picture view of the national VET system as well as focussing on related practical considerations that have relevance at the local level, often based on the authors' own real life experiences.

The book is well structured and sequenced with nine chapters covering the essential elements of VET policy and practice. Each chapter includes a range of reflective activities that have been designed to consolidate the information covered. Chapter 1 by Erica Smith introduces the context of teaching in VET in Australia with an overview of the structure and policy framework as well as a discussion of the range of providers and participants. Chapter 2 by Steven Hodge and Tracey Ollis introduces key learning theories and practical ways of applying them in teaching practice. Chapter 3 by Sarojni Choy and Annette Green gets down to the 'chalk face' of VET teachers' work - the design, development and delivery of VET programs - and covers training packages, learning objectives and experiences, assessment and evaluation using case studies and examples.

The following chapter by Michele Simons and Anni Yaringa then goes into a more detailed discussion of the principles of assessment in the VET sector, covering RPL for example, and providing practical steps for designing assessment strategies. Ann Kelly, Sarah O'Shea and Kathleen Tanner address diverse learners and inclusive pedagogy in Chapter 5, while Keiko Yasukawa covers language, literacy and numeracy in VET teaching in Chapter 6.

A welcome addition to the literature on VET teaching is Chapter 7 by Jillian Dowling, Ros Brennan Kemmis and Sharon Ahern, who focus on eLearning and the digital landscape including the use of social media and mobile technologies in teaching and learning. While the technologies themselves are constantly evolving, the pedagogical strategies presented to make the best use of them for both facilitator and participant remain relevant and accessible.

Chapter 8 by Erica Smith examines the relationship between VET teachers and industry, as represented by associations, skills councils, workplaces and partnerships. The final chapter by Liz Atkins covers that most important aspect of development not just for VET teachers but for any educator – reflective practice. The chapter provides a fitting

conclusion to a book which as a whole can be used as a resource for reflective practice by the self-directed VET practitioner looking for a practical tool to guide their development.

If the university where I work were still offering undergraduate and postgraduate programs in adult and vocational education for the VET professional, this book would make an excellent set text for the foundation courses, with its focus on the Australian context and its highly practical and relevant content, case studies, reference lists and index. Sadly however, such programs are becoming victims of the rationalisation of university academic policy and a perceived focus on the 'core business' of schools of education – ie educating school teachers. While lifelong learning should be the rhetoric of senior management in higher education, it does not seem to translate into reality when it comes to supporting what are seen as 'marginal' or 'vulnerable' programs. It appears that the VET sector must continually fight to maintain its status as a valid and important contributor to the Australian educational landscape.

In conclusion, the keen VET teacher who is new to the field, as well as the established practitioner looking to continue their professional development, would find this book a valuable addition to their library and perhaps an adjunct to formal coursework - possibly by distance learning at a university which still offers courses for adult educators. It is also a fitting memorial to one of the editors and a well-regarded advocate for the VET sector and for adult education, Ros Brennan Kemmis, who passed away in August 2015 not long after this book was published.

About the Reviewer

Tom Stehlik is co-leader of the Leadership, Teaching and Learning research group within the Centre for Research in Education (CREd) at the University of South Australia. He is also co-editor of the Journal of Educational Enquiry, and on the editorial boards of the Australian Journal of Adult Learning and the international journal Research on Steiner Education. Tom has been at the University of South Australia since 1991, where he has taught and researched in the areas of adult education, organisational development and teacher education.

NOTES FOR INTENDING CONTRIBUTORS

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Further information about possible articles can be addressed to the Editor,

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