Measuring the Impact of Community-University Research Partnership Structures: a case study of the Office of Community-Based Research at the University of Victoria

by

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B.A., York University, 1989
B.Ed., York University 1989
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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

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This research study focused on measuring the impact of structures that support community-university research partnerships. The broad research question asked: How can we determine the impact of community-university research partnership support structures such as the Office of Community Based Research at the University of Victoria, within the university and within local, regional, national and international communities? Methods of inquiry included: participatory research, institutional ethnography and case study. These are among an increasing number of research approaches consistent with what is called engaged scholarship. Congruent with the methods of inquiry, methods of investigation included: in-context immersion, participant-observer-listener, use of available documents and information, use of an impact assessment framework prototype designed pre-data collection, key informant interviews, field notes, research journaling and the writing process. Data contributing to this study were drawn from key informant interviews. Interview participants were situated within local, regional, national and international communities. Methods of analysis included: a two-pronged approach to organising data, deductive and inductive approaches, the lens of praxis, and the prototype
as an analytical framework. Assessment as praxis is proposed as broad analytic framework. Theory was constructed through data analysis. This study’s data and analysis point to impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry and eight elements that inform impact on and through community life and impact on and through the university. The proposed Impact Assessment and Measurement Framework (IAMF) includes eight elements: coupling intention with impact, spheres of impact, categories of impact, conditions of impact, points of impact, impact-focused documentation, multiple perspectives of impact, and impact assessment and measurement statements.

Contributions of this study include: recognition of staff who support community-university research partnerships through their varied work spaces, research councils as a type of support structure, impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry, explicating impact through elements of impact assessment, and a literature consolidation of impact assessment in the context of support structures. Future research may include revision and refinement of the IAMF across different types of community-university research partnership support structures.
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Dedication

Deo gratias – Jehovah Jireh
Chapter 1: Introduction

Placing Myself

This study is my praxis. It is a cycle of reflection and action (Freire, 1996) rooted in my quest to conceptualise and theorise impact and impact assessment while offering practical application through the consolidation of collective knowledge, wisdom and experience. As an educator, researcher, writer and day-to-day advocate, I have sensed where I have made an impact, I have seen and experienced impact, and I feel a sense of fulfillment when I know I have contributed to making an impact in the lives of people. A significant amount of my time is spent assessing and evaluating since I am required to measure the work of others and my own work is measured against others. Regardless of the tools, methods and reporting procedures, I always return to impact as being of utmost importance to me. Sometimes, the process of assessment and measurement sheds light on impact, giving more meaning to what is often a requirement but not a meaningful process. So, I have always tried to integrate meaningful impact-related facets into required assessment, measurement and reporting requirements.

Throughout this study, I have had the privilege of conversing with many people who express similar sensibilities around impact, impact assessment and measurement. However, we also share the same struggle when it comes to evidencing impact, especially impact that has contributed to the lives of larger groups of people. Even though we sense impact has occurred and in some cases we can see the overall impact, there is a common question we ask: “I know there is impact, I can feel it ... but how do I identify it?”

Throughout this study, identifying impact has become an all important first step to
investigate with assessing and measuring impact discussed as integrated layers. The literature uses the term impact often, but it is not always defined or made distinctive, while the terms assessment and measurement are used interchangeably. This tells me that we are all grappling in similar ways with the same concepts and terms. However, by using and applying these concepts and terms within our respective fields, sectors and research interests we are refining and distilling these concepts and their meaning as we continue the journey of understanding.

**Entry Point of this Study**

The entry point of this study began in 2008 through conversation and mutual interest in the study of impact, between myself and the Director of the Office of Community-Based Research (OCBR) at the University of Victoria. Our mutual interest converged during a course and summer institute on community-based research attended by participants from higher education and members of local, regional and provincial communities. I was a student in the course and a participant in the summer institute. It was the first course I had ever experienced with participants from such varied sectors of society across the globe. In our final assignment, I proposed an investigation of the immediate impact and longer-term impact of such an experience on course participants. Through conversations, that proposal grew into a proposed investigation of the impact of the OCBR.

The OCBR existed from 2007 to 2013 within the University of Victoria with a mandate to facilitate collaborative community-university research and partnerships that would enhance the quality of life and the economic, environmental and social well-being
of communities (OCBR Service plan, 2009). Discussions between myself and the Director of the OCBR extended over time to the OCBR full-time and contract staff, and the steering committee about a possible impact study. I was invited to spend time attending workshops, short and long term planning meetings, community-university initiatives, seminars, steering committee meetings, institutes, conferences and courses directly and indirectly related to the work of the OCBR. Concurrently, I explored the literature of community engagement, community-university research partnerships and the literature of assessing these partnerships. It became apparent that the field of assessing partnership structures is an emergent one and developing the tools to assess the impact of community-university research partnership structures is a timely challenge across institutional and community based structures. Those who participated in the daily work, guidance and governance of the OCBR agreed on the value of this study and recognised this study’s value in the OCBR 2010-2013 Service Plan, stating that a combination of evaluation tools is needed to address the impact of the work being conducted in and through the Office.

This study’s entry point facilitated opportunities to begin to foster positive relations and a level of trust. According to Ball (2008), “strong relationships of trust, nurtured from the inception of a project, are the backbone for ongoing negotiation of ethical practice in partnership research” (p. 11). Maintaining good relations, trust and respect are critical values in community-university research partnerships and in the engaged research approaches of this study. Such collaboration and agreement has contributed to positive interactions and an understanding that participatory approaches
were to be explored to fit with the collaborative culture of the OCBR. Using the terms participatory action research and participatory research, interchangeably, Hall (2005) states that “participatory research, is a proposal for action that focuses on transformed understandings of the creation of knowledge among human beings” (p. 21). Co-creating knowledge and the ethical use of knowledge reflect the core research principles of community-based research and participatory research. These principles are central to the work of institutional support structures for community-university research partnerships such as the OCBR.

**Research Study, Development and Questions**

Through my in-context immersion with the OCBR and ongoing research in the field, the following questions began to formulate: What kind of impacts are community-university research partnerships making toward creating vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities? How does the OCBR add value to what community-based researchers have already been doing? What difference does the OCBR make to the institution and to the community stakeholders? I distilled these questions into one broad research question posed for this study: How can we determine the impact of community-university research partnership structures such as the OCBR within the university and within local, regional, national and international communities? (Lall, 2010).

**Narrowing my Research Focus**

My doctoral proposal included a sketched impact assessment framework based on aspects of the literature, which I used as a part of my in-person interviews. This study
proposed to correspond ‘Categories of Impact’ with ‘Levels of Impact’. At the time the study was proposed and at the time of dissertation writing, such a pairing of ‘Categories of Impact’ and ‘Levels of Impact’ had not been located in the literature or during the data collection or writing phases. This gap in the literature was an expressed need in the field. Concurrently, understanding what was meant by ‘impact’ and how impact could be identified in the context of this study and the work of community-university research partnership support structures (CURP support structures) became an increasing focal point for the study.

As this study developed so did the field and the OCBR. Each influenced the other. I continued my active involvement with the OCBR locally, regionally with the newly initiated Vancouver Island Community Research Alliance (VICRA) and globally with GACER, the emerging Global Alliance on Community Engaged Research. Concurrently, there was high interest in my study and in impact assessment and measurement in local, regional and international spaces. Publications emerged along the lines of impact and community university engagement, including my publications on the development of this study and my related work with GACER. In my first publication based on my review of the literature, I added ‘Addressing and Assessing Impact’ (Table 1, Chapter Two) to the ‘Audit, Benchmark and Evaluate’ chart developed by Hart, Northmore and Gerdhardt (2008). This was important because while there were many approaches to assessing and measuring the work of community-university research partnerships and some of these approaches were being used in an emergent way by various CURP support structures, impact assessment was not explicated in the literature.
Since the study focused on impact assessment, I needed to begin to develop a description of what I meant as drawn from a combination of the literature.

In addition, the term ‘assessment’ is used in the literature but rarely defined. When I use the term, ‘assessment’, I am referring to its meaning in its simplest form, “the act of making a judgment about something; an idea or opinion about something” (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/assessment). The term seems to encompass both the element of not making judgement by offering an informed idea or opinion as well as making a judgement, which is more connected to an understanding of measurement. Using the term ‘assessment’, offers an opportunity to apply it to varying contexts. Such a definition and application fits with the focus and trajectory of this study’s investigation.

Reflecting the patterns that were emerging around explicating impact and impact assessment, I added a layer of analysis to my study that would begin to articulate and formulate the meaning of impact and impact assessment in the field of community-university research partnerships and the structures that facilitate and support them. This process gave rise to articulating the following questions, which were being asked and examined throughout this study in fragmented ways until consolidated through analysis:

- What is impact/What does impact mean in the context of OCBR type structures?
- What does impact include?
- To whom does assessing impact matter?
- Why does assessing impact matter?
- To what end does assessing impact matter?
What can be assessed? What can be measured?

What’s the relationship between the two? Are they parallel? Do they intersect?

Where do they converge? Where do they diverge?

These questions were important to examine as they represent what is important, in terms of impact assessment, to those who participate in community based research activities. As well, these questions reflected conversations evident in the literature by scholars and practitioners. Through the duration of this study, the relevant body of literature and data expressed the value and need of an impact assessment framework.

A combination of the initial review of the literature, ongoing review of the emerging literature, expressive interview participants, and initial research findings and analysis continued to shape and consolidate the direction of the study toward the design and development of an impact assessment framework. A framework that could address ways to identify and assess the impact of the OCBR and other similar systematic structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnerships. Over the course of this study, support structures within university systems grew then shifted drastically due to national and international economic restraint causing conflicting priorities. Navigating through this study mirrored the shifting realities within which it is situated. This study is located at the intersection of the dynamic social, academic, institutional and political landscapes, which are so intricately interconnected.

**Anticipated Contribution of the Research**

The findings of this research study will be of interest to those who are involved in and with community-university research partnerships, their systematic support structures
and support spaces. This includes a broad spectrum of people and groups within universities, communities, funding agencies, and various sectors. Contributions of this study include: recognition of staff who work in varied spaces that support community-university research partnerships, research councils as a type of support structure, impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry, explicating impact through elements of impact assessment, and literature consolidation of impact assessment in the context of CURP support structures. These are discussed fully in the final chapter.
Chapter 2: A Review of the Literature

This chapter will offer a summary review of the literature reflecting the emerging and evolving work of assessment within community-university research partnership support structures. This literature review reflects my local, regional, national and international experiences and investigation as a researcher and scholar in the field, as well as my contributions to the body of literature.

This review of the literature includes many of the peer-reviewed print and online publications. It also draws on documents and information such as reports generated through community organisations and universities that are not peer-reviewed and cannot be found in peer-review publications. These represent websites, presentations and other sources that offer information and represent knowledgeable sources. Focusing my investigation on impact assessment related to CURP support structures within universities proved challenging as it is an under-developed area likely because many of these structures are relatively new. I searched uncountable websites to try to access impact assessment reports and tools related to this study, but these were rarely to be found.

Subsequently, I communicated via email with CURP support structure directors, staff and researchers to inquire as to their work in the area of impact assessment. In order to gain insight into the work of impact assessment, I met face-to-face with many of these people at conferences and through my work as the Research Officer for the Global Alliance on Engaged Research. I was also involved in related online community-university partnership research communities focused on impact, assessment and measurement, which provided me with current on-the-ground discussions and challenges borne out of
everyday experiences in the field. I came to the conclusion that identifying and assessing impact within the context of CURP support structures is a highly emergent and evolving field and I was in the company of many highly experienced community-based and university-based scholars and practitioners who were grappling with the quandary, ‘What is impact?’ and “How do we assess it?’. What follows is an updated version of my review of the literature.

The structure of this literature review is based on trying to understand how CURP support structures are working toward demonstrating impact in order to illuminate understanding as to how to determine the impact of the CURP support structure, the OCBR at the University of Victoria. Previous iterations of the literature review contributed to shaping the direction of this study toward the need to first design and develop an impact assessment framework that could be used to identify and assess the impact of the OCBR and similar CURP support structures. I came to the realisation after many iterations, that since this study is focused designing and developing an impact assessment framework for use by CURP support structures, the original focus requiring investigation of tools and measures that can be used to determine the impact of the OCBR, continued to be highly relevant. I still needed to focus on how CURP support structures are addressing the same question that I am investigating. I therefore organised the information that I gathered to structure my final version of the literature review in the following way. I begin by situating the review of the literature in the broad field of community engagement and by describing community engagement using a co-constructed lens. Then I address the question being collectively asked in the field, ‘What
does impact and impact assessment mean? I continue by situating community-university research partnerships in higher education, discuss the recent classification of their unique type of co-constructed knowledge and include literature on organisational knowledge creation. Then, I outline a recent classification of various types of community-university research partnership structures, where I include examples of each type from across the globe. In addition, I describe research councils as a fifth type of CURP support structure. Building from that foundation, I consolidate the literature in a unique way profiling cases of CURP support structures to describe their approaches to impact. The design and structure of my review of the literature, mirrors my process of investigation and contribution to the collective journey toward understanding impact and impact assessment within the context of CURP support structures.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the broader context of impact assessment, while the second part of this chapter focuses on examining how community-university research partnership support structures represented in the literature, capture and assess their impact within the university, within local and regional communities and across national and international communities. However, before describing the literature and themes explored in this chapter, it is important to first define the specific sub-field within the broader category of community-university engagement.

Community-University Engagement (CUE)

The literature and themes explored in this chapter are situated within the broader category of community-university engagement (CUE). CUE definitions have been articulated by many sources. I have chosen to draw from the following source, since
aspects of most definitions are represented in the following working definition of CUE based on the following four principles, developed by Pearce, Pearson and Cameron (2007): Reciprocity, Externalities, Access and Partnership (REAP). Reciprocity is the “flow of knowledge, information and benefits in both directions between the University and its partners in activities” (p. 24). Externalities are “benefits outside of those accruing to the partners ... contribute to building social trust and social networks in the [local] District ... enhanced sustainability, wellbeing and cohesion locally and nationally to the building of a learning and knowledge based society” (p. 24). Access involves “partners [having] access to University facilities and resources as opposed to receiving a one-off provision of goods/services” (p. 24) and “partnerships deepen and develop through the extended reciprocity and improved access” (p. 24). Pearce, Pearson and Cameron (2007) used these four principles to create the preliminary REAP self-assessment and measurement tool, which is drawn upon throughout this study. These principles and their integration as an assessment and measurement tool situate community-university research partnerships within the broader contexts of community-university engagement and assessment.

In tackling the challenges of assessing community engagement, Hart et al. (2009) developed a framework to summarise indications of university community engagement. They identified seven critical dimensions of public engagement describing and providing examples of auditing, benchmarking, evaluative and reflective practices for each, as well as possible output and outcome indicators. The seven dimensions of public engagement are identified as: public access to facilities, public access to knowledge, student
engagement, faculty engagement, widening participation, encouraging economic and regeneration and enterprise in social engagement and institutional relationship and partnership building. These dimensions combined with indications, assessment and measurement approaches and examples have been used widely as a reference across universities.

**What does impact and impact assessment mean?**

Approaches, strategies, tools and methods being used to capture impact in the context of community-university research partnerships and their support structures, stand in stark contrast to the standard practice of quantitative-driven bibliometrics indices to evaluate research conducted within higher education institutions. The same indices are also used to evaluate research conducted by companies, organisations, government, policymakers, research directors, and researchers (Pendlebury, 2008). Bibliometrics measure the visibility, influence and ‘impact’ of authors, articles, journals and publishers using an ‘impact factor’ and ‘h-index’ by counting publications and tracking citations, which “may be used as a measure of output” (Pendlebury, 2008, p. 2). Impact factors have become a type of scientific currency and “in some countries, these indices are now being used formally as objective indicators of suitability for promotion or increased financial compensation” (Loscalzo, 2011, p. 947). The notion of objectivity is likely related to comprehensive countable and numerical representation of impact factors through web-based generated methods, which have accelerated the ways in which counting, tracking and measurement is conducted (Roemer & Borchardt, 2012). This places some at an advantage and others at a disadvantage. Loscalzo (2011) makes the
point that larger scientific communities publish more and therefore cite more versus smaller scientific communities which would have less publications and therefore less citations.

Community-university research partnerships and their support structures stand outside mainstream scientific communities and therefore understand impact and impact assessment in contrast to the standard practice of measuring researchers’ impact through impact factors. According to Holland and Ramaley (2008), “a capacity for engagement and community partnership requires change (routine change, strategic change and transformative change) to traditional organizational structures, policies, budget and values” (p. 42). A capacity of engagement and community partnership also requires changes to the way research and research activities within the university are assessed. Not without its challenges, those within the university and community involved in the work of initiating, supporting and engaging in research partnerships are finding ways to demonstrate the impact of their work.

A common quote by Albert Einstein states that, “Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted.” This statement begs the question, “Who determines what is countable and what counts?” Questions such as this one are common in the literature of assessing community-university research partnerships of all types and challenge partners who work in the community and within higher education. An emergent field, the challenge of assessing and demonstrating impact of organisational structures functioning within a university to intentionally engage university and community partners in research for mutual benefit, is being tackled within
the university and within the community. The literature offers ways of working through some of the assessment challenges.

Community-university research partnerships intend to be collaborative and action-oriented (Rubin, 2000); these objectives create challenges when assessing success on the basis of outcomes and impact (Watson, 2007). Many partnership projects are vulnerable to shifts in resource and funding allocation resulting from changes in external priorities and policies. The potential for such directional changes increase interest by both university and community partners to create strategies for developing sustainable partnerships. Measuring and documenting impact can contribute greatly to this goal (Suarez-Balcazar, Harper and Lewis, 2005). Measures which are relatively easy to implement are attractive since they meet the reality to be accountable within short timelines. Langworthy asks a key question in the context of this reality, “Do these measures indicate what really matters and is the process enabling universities to improve and progress?” (Langworthy, 2007). According to Langworthy’s (2007) review of international approaches such as those developed by Charles and Benneworth (2001), Gelmon et al. (2001), and the Kellogg Commission (1999), assessments of community and/or regional engagement conducted by universities, take the following forms: either a guided self-evaluation assessment with expert peer review and iterative agreement, a metric assessment based on an agreed schedule of measures, or a combination of both. These three types of assessments tend to be longitudinal thereby focusing on the process of engagement rather than the outcomes of engagement.
Outcomes of engagement can be described as achievements such as improved relationships, greater trust and increased confidence in higher education (Pearce, Pearson, & Cameron, 2007). As such, measurement becomes particularly problematic, it is an “ongoing challenge to find innovative solutions to the complexities of evaluating and demonstrating the impact of this kind of work [community-university research partnerships]” (Hart & Wolff, 2007, p. 196).

**Assessing Impact: Various Approaches**

Impact assessment is by no means a new phenomenon, it is often done intuitively in our daily lives. The difference between what we do to assess impact in our daily lives and formal impact assessment is the process of developing a structure, a systematic or complex process, involving indicators, outcomes and timelines, which can be used to map unchartered territory using a pathway of change (Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Hart & Northmore, 2008; Roche, 1999). Developing a pathway of change is one aspect of applying a theory of change approach that identifies changes (outcomes) planned by a program, a particular initiative or an intervention. It is important to define the “level at which change is desired and include stakeholders in the collaboration who are able to effect change at that level” (Todd, Ebata & Hughes, 1998, p. 238).

Marullo et al. (2003) categorise levels of analysis connected with change, in their framework “designed to help CBR practitioners better understand various types of assessment strategies used to measure social change” (p. 61). Three levels of analysis are identified as micro, meso and macro. The micro level of analysis refers to “outcomes of individuals influenced by the social change activity” (p. 62); the meso level of analysis
“focuses on changes that occur in programs and/or communities resulting from social change initiative ... determining if the change initiative is actually altering the organization in ways expected to enhance social change” (p. 62); and the macro level “signifies those broader structures that impact individuals’ lives such as social policies, local, state and federal laws and community systems ... considering larger populations of people from an entire community, or from several communities” (p. 62). I find these levels a helpful categorisation as they can be considered as levels of impact associated with change.

One common approach to assessment and evaluation in the literature is to identify inputs, outputs and outcomes, which may eventually lead to impact (Hart, Northmore, & Gerdhardt, 2009). This approach draws from logic models, which depict logical relationships between inputs, outputs, outcomes, resources and activities. It is helpful to describe ‘inputs, outputs and outcomes’ and their relationship to impact since these represent the most common terms used in assessment and measurement approaches.

Inputs into a project can be described as “all the resources put into the project to enable the delivery of output (Hart, Northmore, & Gerdhardt, 2009, p. 16). Outputs are “all the products and services delivered ... training courses, support sessions and publications” (p. 16). Hart et al. drew the following definition of outcomes from, Cupitt and Ellis (2007) as “the changes, benefits, learning or other effects ... as a result of your work” (p. 6). Commonly associated in the literature and in practice, inputs into a project enable the delivery of project outputs, which then bring about outcomes that may lead to impact (Hart et al., 2009, p. 17). Impact “is the effect of a project at a higher or broader
level in the longer term, after a range of outcomes has been achieved” (p. 16). These concepts and their relationships appear to be somewhat distinct when they each appear in their individual columns in a table. However, they are indistinct as they tend to overlap contributing to assessment challenges.

The process of capturing impact often involves intentionally connecting inputs, outputs, outcomes and generating indications of impact. Another working definition of impact assessment that complements the definition described by Hart et al. (2009), is offered by Chris Roche (1999) in his book, *Impact Assessment for Development Agencies* as: “the systematic analysis of the lasting or significant changes – positive or negative, intended or not – in people’s lives brought about by a given action or series of actions” (p. 21). Roche (1999) connects outcomes with impact, focusing on the actual change that occurs, “impact is then assessed by analysing the degree to which an intervention’s outcomes led to change in the lives of those who it is intended to benefit” (p. 22). These operational definitions of impact and the indistinct nature of the concepts used to assess and measure impact are relatively common within the context of community engagement and partnerships. In the next section I will contextualise community-university partnerships as they function in higher education.

**Community-University Research Partnerships in Higher Education**

Higher education institutions and communities are learning to work with each other in partnership toward mutual benefit. Community-university research partnerships are one of several ways in which universities and communities collaborate for mutual benefit (Carnegie Foundation, 2008; Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada, 2008).
Although not commonplace, there are pockets of researchers and practitioners within communities, universities and other sectors engaging in university-community research partnerships. These research partnerships tackle complex and challenging social, economic and environmental issues such as housing access, homelessness, food and water security, and health and education. Such research partnerships have the potential to contribute to social action and social change at a time when many communities across the globe are in economic, environment and social crises.

Aiming to address challenges within communities and society (Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada, 2008) researchers position themselves with community members and community organisations toward social change and transformation using engaged research methods (Strand 2003; Hall 2009). Historically, CBR, participatory research and participatory action research have been research methods conducted by rural communities particularly in the majority world, civil society organisations, Indigenous communities, and by feminist and racial minority scholars and practitioners. Strand et al. (2003) explains:

Community-based research involves research done by community groups with or without the involvement of a university. In relation with the university, CBR is a collaborative enterprise between academics and community members. CBR seeks to democratise knowledge creation by validating multiple sources of knowledge and promoting the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination. The goal of CBR is social action (broadly defined) for the purpose of achieving (directly or indirectly) social change and social justice (p. 5).
This definition values community-based research as having the potential to influence social and policy changes within the community and university.

Using the terms participatory action research and participatory research, interchangeably, Hall states that “participatory research, is a proposal for action that focuses on transformed understandings of the creation of knowledge among human beings” (2005, p. 21). Co-creation of knowledge and the ethical use of knowledge reflect the core research principles of community-based research and participatory research (Campbell & Gregor, 2002; Hall 2009; Stoecker, 1991, & Strand et al., 2003). These principles are central to the work of community-university research partnerships. Research methods such as community-based research and participatory research are predominantly used within community-university research partnerships.

Traditionally considered as unconventional, these research methods value and validate diverse forms of knowledge and wisdom from individuals, groups, and organisations within communities that have been traditionally marginalised in the research process. Therefore, the aim of a community-university research partnership is to create an equitable partnership between those whose knowledge has exerted power within our societies such as higher education institutions and policy-makers (government) and those whose knowledge and wisdom is powerful but have greater challenges being heard and therefore have not been able to engage fully in the process of social change and transformation within their own communities and societies.
**Producing unique types of knowledge.** The literature reflects a common understanding that community-university research partnerships have the potential to create a shift from knowledge transfer to knowledge exchange thereby co-constructing a different kind of knowledge. Combined with intentional systematic support from higher education institutions and civil society organisations, this unique knowledge when used to address complex and inter-related social issues has the potential to create positive impact on the social, economic and environmental conditions of people and their communities. According to Hart, Maddison and Wolff (2007), “despite our very different traditions of knowledge production in the Community University Partnership Programme (CUPP), academics and community practitioners have managed to merge expertise to produce forms of knowledge together” (p. 6). By utilising engaged research approaches and fostering collaborative ways of working together, university-based community-university research partnership structures aim to create a shift in the way knowledge is produced and disseminated by moving from knowledge transfer to the co-generation, mobilisation and exchange of knowledge. The type of knowledge co-generated within community-university research partnerships has been classified as a unique mode of knowledge (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007). The use of such knowledge has the potential to contribute to impact within communities. Hall (2009) proposes that “a modest shift in the institutional gaze ... along with some imaginative partnership structures, could have a significant impact on current community issues, such as homelessness, food security and Aboriginal health and education” (p. 39). Furthermore, “in communities where institutions of higher education exist, the collective resources of
these universities and colleges (students, academic staff, facilities, research funding, knowledge skills, and capacities to facilitate learning) represent our largest accessible, available, and underutilised resource for community change and sustainability” (Hall, 2009, p. 13).

The type or mode of knowledge mobilised and co-constructed by community-university partners and structures that support them is distinctly different from the type of knowledge the university and community mobilise and construct as separate entities. Hart, Maddison and Wolff (2007) propose that this type of knowledge and how such knowledge is created, mobilised and legitimised through community-university research partnership structures, such as the University of Brighton’s Community-University Partnership Programme (CUPP), is distinctly different from four existing modes of knowledge as classified by Gibbons et al. (1994) and Scott et al. (2004). A brief explanation of the knowledge typologies helps to illustrate this. Mode 1 (Gibbons et al., 1994) is identified as being exclusive to the knowledge generated in universities. It is disciplinary, expert-led, hierarchical, peer-reviewed, and offers legitimacy and prestige. Mode 2 knowledge (Gibbons et al., 1994) "has not traditionally been valued by academics and by institutions of higher education" (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007, p. 5). It is applied, problem-centered, transdisciplinary, heterogeneous and network-embedded knowledge. Mode 3 (Scott et al. 2004) is dispositional and transdisciplinary knowledge having its context in structured university work, specifically at the postgraduate level. Mode 4 knowledge (Scott et al., 2004) has more of a conceptual nature with the purpose of being political and change orientated.
Having identified aspects of the type of knowledge created through CUPP in each of the four modes, Hart, Maddison and Wolff (2007) created a fifth mode by combining and adding to the classifications of Gibbons et al. and Scott et al. Mode 5 knowledge is peer-reviewed, applied, heterogeneous, problem-centred, transdisciplinary, change-orientated and co-produced by the university and community (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007).

**Organizational Knowledge.** In addition to the unique type of knowledge created through systematic structures that support community-university research partnerships, their knowledge creation as organisations are to be considered. Nonaka (1994) offers an understanding of organisational knowledge creation “in terms of a process that ‘organizationally’ amplifies the knowledge created by individuals, and crystallises it as a part of the knowledge network of organization” (Nonaka, 1994, p. 17). The concept and practice of ‘the knowledge network of organization’ is one that directly connects with the work of community-university research partnership support structures.

**Classifying Community-University Research Partnership Support Structures**

Efforts to effect social change and positive impact within universities and communities have given rise to different types of community-university research partnership support structures. These structures operate at the macro-level (national and international), meso level (regional) and locally at the micro level (Hall et al., 2013). Support for community-university research partnerships have been categorised into four
types (Hall, 2009). Types are organised below with the inclusion of examples from across the globe (Hall et al., 2013).

**No systematic support structure within a university.** Type one involves individual faculty engaging in transactional and community-based research partnerships with community, created without a systematic institutional support structure for engaging in community-university research partnerships (Hall, 2009). For example, there are higher education institutions within which there are no organisational structures such as a centre, office or institute to systematically support faculty, community members, groups and organisations that work together in community-university research partnerships. The lack of such a systematic support structure does not preclude the fact that individual faculty and departments engage in research partnerships with communities. These partnerships may be scattered across the institution; however, those involved may become isolated in their efforts. In such cases informal supportive groups may organise leading to the creation of a formal structure.

**Support structures functioning within a community.** Type two are centres or institutes with particular foci that support community-based research partnerships with communities having similar interests (Hall, 2009). Some examples are: Reseau de Recherche Participative en Afrique au Sud Du Sahar/ African Participatory Research Network (REPAS) based in Senegal, Centro Boliviano de Estudios Multidisciplinarios/ Bolivian Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies (CEBEM), Bonn Science Shop in Germany, Centre for Community Based Research (CCBR) in Ontario, Canada and
Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) based in Delhi, India. These are generally independent, non-profit organisations that act upon the power of knowledge using participatory approaches to mobilise and collaborate with community members, marginalised groups, community organisations, government ministries, social and health services, and educational institutions; with the purpose to impact positive social change.

**Support structures functioning within a university.** Type three identifies systematic organisational structures functioning within a university to intentionally engage university and community partners in research for mutual benefit (Hall, 2009). The following are a few examples among a growing number of systematic organisational structures that operate within higher education institutions: The Office of Community-Based Research (OCBR) at the University of Victoria, Canada (2007-2013); the Community-University Partnership Programme (CUPP) at the University of Brighton; Science Shop InterMEDIU at the Technical University of Iasi, Romania; and a jointly managed institute hosted by Bukidnon State University with Tanggol Kalikasan, a non-governmental organization, in the Philippines. The case being examined in this study is the Office of Community-Based Research (OCBR), a systematic organisational structure, which operated within the University of Victoria from 2007-2013. The OCBR worked with a mandate to facilitate collaborative community-university research and partnerships that would enhance the quality of life and the economic, environmental and social well-being of communities (OCBR Service plan, 2009). Goals and activities of type three structures include: facilitating the process of widening participation, addressing social and economic inequity, funding, policy and ethical concerns, innovation and design in
teaching, research and curriculum, facilitating working relationships between the community and university and serving as access points for “all citizens and all social groups ... to access the intellectual capital, the resources ... and the learning networks which are at the heart of what makes a university” (Laing & Maddison, 2007, p. 13). In addition to engaging in multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approaches within the university, this type of support structure seeks to actively encourage and mobilise government departments, research councils, government supported agencies, civil society organisations and philanthropic foundations to invest in and support partnership models.

**Network support structures.** Type four involves multiple higher education institutions and community partnerships engaging in ongoing research and strengthening engaged teaching and research at regional, national or international levels (Hall, 2009). Examples include: the Global Alliance on Community Engaged Research (GACER), the Living Knowledge Network, and the research consortium of the Alliance de Recherche Universités-Communautés en Économie Sociale/Community-University Research Alliance in Social Economy (ARUC-ÉS) and the Réseau Québécois de Recherche Partenariale en Économie Sociale/Quebec Network of Research Partnerships in Social Economy (RQRP-ÉS). Community-university research partnership support structures take different forms. According to Lall (2014), “collectively, community-university research networks have the potential to act and call to action those in local, regional,
national spaces; challenging boundaries, naming barriers and blurring the edges of policy towards creating social, institutional and environmental changes” (p. 5).

**Research councils as a support structure.** Research councils are an integral support structure for community university research partnership networked projects involving multiple types of support structures. They serve as a macro support structure. While the review of the literature reveals scholars who have created four categories of support structures, the role of the macro institutional support structure is to be considered. Later in this chapter, I will return to this consideration in suggesting research councils as another type of CURP support structure.

One way that research councils support community-university research partnerships (CURP) is through funding networked projects, initiatives proposed by other types of support structures. An example of a networked community-university research partnership project was the global participatory research project (Hall et al., 2014) funded by the Social Science and Humanity Research Council and the International Development Research Centre. Focusing on strengthening community-university research partnerships for sustainable development, this research project (2010-2013) involved multiple types of community-university research partnerships and support structures engaging in research and strengthening engaged teaching and research. Partners in research were: the Society for Participatory Research in Asia; the Living Knowledge Network; the Sub-Saharan Africa Participatory Research Network; Community-University Partnership Programme (University of Brighton), University of Victoria, University of Quebec in Montreal and Carleton University.
The South East Coastal Communities Business Case (SECC) is an example of a macro-scale networked project involving universities and communities in partnership. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) funded the SECC Project three million pounds over three years. The South East Coast of England is a region with some of the highest income levels in the country coexisting with some of the most severe deprivation in the country across multiple sectors such as income, employment, health, disability, education and training, crime, and barriers to housing and services. Fragmentation across initiatives, disjointed ways of working between government departments and the duplication of services reflect a few of the concerns. Government, communities, community organisations and universities generally agreed that there was a failure to understand the issues and meet the needs of these communities (South East Coastal Communities Project Business Case, 2007).

The SECC Business Case is a document outlining a strategic well-resourced approach to community knowledge exchange created by nine south east coastal higher education institutions to work in partnership with each other, with local organisations and with their communities for the benefit of the communities (www.coastalcommunities.org.uk/SECC-business-case.doc). This case details project initiatives to address the current fragmented approach to inter-related and complex health and social issues, funding collaboration, and regional and sub-region foci, which include different strands of the community knowledge exchange agenda such as social enterprise, regeneration, and specific communities of practice.
Another way that research councils facilitate and support community-university research partnerships (CURP) and support structures is through funding CURP focused programs. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) initiated funding for community-university research partnerships in the year 2000 acknowledging that such partnership projects and initiatives require different types of protocol, duration and research approaches as compared to conventional research granted projects. The Community University Research Alliance (CURA) programme and the Alliance De Recherche Universités-Communautés En Économie Sociale (ARUC-ÉS)/The Community-University Research Alliance On The Social Economy (CURA In The Social Economy) were launched in 2000 by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) with the aim of including community-based organisations as funding recipients. The ARUC-ÉS “is Quebec’s first centre for interuniversity research partnerships. Its activities focus on different sectors of the social economy: community housing, social services, recreation and social tourism, finance and local and regional development” (Bussières et al., 2008, p. 4). The CURA funding opportunity was offered for approximately ten years and attracted an overwhelming number of applications far exceeding the number that could actually be funded. By 2008, approximately 100 CURAs were funded with more than 900 non-academic organisations. These organisations, having engaged with SSHRC, widened the scope and boundaries of traditional research and scholarship to include recognition and value of the unique process and knowledge that community-university partnerships have to offer in tackling

Research councils can be considered a macro-type community-university research partnership support structure. They operate on a wide scale with the capacity to initiate programs that focus on funding community-university research partnerships (CURP) as well as funding CURP networks and support structures. Acting as unique knowledge and participatory research hubs with communities to tackle complex issues, community-university research partnership support structures have a networked approach to knowledge construction and research across multiple sectors and levels. Support for community-university research partnerships have been classified as four types in the literature (Hall, 2009). A fifth type has been added through this study. The focus of this study is to investigate how the impact of community-university research partnership support structures can be determined. The following section profiles how different types of CURP support structures approach impact assessment.

**Community-University Research Partnership Support Structures: Cases that Profile Approaches to Impact Assessment**

Community-university research partnership support structures facilitate, support and strengthen community-university research partnerships within higher education institutions and civil society. Over the past decade, these structures have intensified their examination of approaches to assess and demonstrate the value and impact of their work. The past decade has been characterised by global economic instability resulting in funding restraints, cutbacks and shifts in priorities. Communities, universities and all
sectors have been affected. Finding ways to demonstrate value and assess impact have become increasingly vital for community-university research partnership (CURP) support structures to survive, maintain and attempt to sustain their work with and within communities and universities.

The literature highlights approaches to impact assessment but these approaches are not consolidated. I have consolidated approaches to impact assessment largely through the exploration of cases. A review of six cases, one from a community-university research partnership and five from different types of community university research partnership support structures will therefore help to inform their methods of assessment within the context of impact. At the end of each case, I compare highlights of each case with other cases profiled.

**Approaches to impact assessment by a community-university research partnership.** The first case is that of the Community University Partnership Program at the University of Brighton. This organisation uses what they call a Communities of Practice model (CoP); by this they mean “groups of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise” (Wenger & Snyder, 2000, p. 139). The Community University Partnership Programme (CUPP) at the University of Brighton applies the ‘communities of practice conceptual framework’ to community-university research partnerships to improve community, university and practitioners’ capacity to:
share their expertise, accumulate a body of common knowledge, discuss practices and approaches and innovate and create new knowledge.

A brief description of a project and how it was assessed illustrate these principles in operation. *Bouncing Back* is the title of a community-university research partnership project through CUPP, which sought to address the complexities of disadvantaged children and families through Resilience Therapy (RT). Resilience Therapy “strategically focuses on scaffolding resilience for these children through the imaginative and creative therapeutic work of resilient promoters such as mental health practitioners, social workers, teachers and parents” (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007, p. 171). In the context of the *Bouncing Back* project, the communities of practice approach is built on “knowledge exchange and understanding of the research underpinning resilience to continually facilitate refinement of Resilience Therapy in theory and in practice and builds on what is found to be effective” (Hall et al., 2013, p. 173). The communities of practice approach contributed to the effectiveness of this partnership by developing unique perspectives and knowledge in the areas of interest of parents, practitioners and academics. Through established personal relationships and ways of interacting with each other, partners became committed to and connected in the value they found in working together.

The Resilience Therapy community of practice chose to pilot the recently developed REAP metrix. REAP is a self-assessment and measurement tool designed to capture Reciprocity (reciprocal benefit and value for partners), Externalities (outputs and outcomes), Access (within community and university) and Partnership (Pearce, Pearson,
& Cameron, 2007). Designed to be used at the beginning of a project, while intentions are being clarified, and at the end of the project by providing a measure of achievement against a baseline; the REAP metrix was developed as a “cost effective tool for ongoing monitoring and evaluation, as well as qualitative measurement to generate analytical units for understanding the potential contribution of community engagement” (Pearce, Pearson, & Cameron, 2007, p. 35). In the case of the Resilience Therapy community of practice (CoP), to capture reciprocity, partners described then reflected upon their respective contributions (input) and the anticipated generated value of those contributions for partners. To capture externalities partners identified how countable achievements (outputs) would both potentially and actually benefit families and/or organisations involved in the project as well as outcomes that outlined the potential and actual achievements and impacts of the CoP for families and organisations in several areas. Interviews were conducted with communities of practice members at the beginning and end of the project to determine their understanding of Resilience Therapy, the ways in which they have or have not been able to implement it in their practice and/or families, how RT has or has not impacted on their own well-being, and their own evaluation of the RT approach. In addition, during CoP meetings, evaluators observe with the aim of capturing the transition from theory to practice. Lessons learned in using the REAP tool in the Resilience Therapy CoP included collecting basic statistics at the beginning of the partnership, being transparent with evaluation methods and tools, seeking advice from other colleagues, and staying focused on aiming to measure impact and change not only activity (Hall et al., 2013). Outcomes were demonstrated by stronger links with the
university that extend beyond specific project timelines. The exploration of new ways of thinking about supporting children and families has impacted practice and created an expanded knowledge base drawn from diverse expertise, which contributed to the project’s capacity to support parents. Growth was reported as being fluid due to the absence of bureaucratic and administrative hurdles coupled with the enthusiasm fostered by the partnership.

Drawing from lessons learned while engaging in community university research partnerships, Aumann and Hart (Hall et al., 2013) recognise that “given how labour intensive and methodologically challenging such a demonstration is, it is vital alongside any intervention, presentation or formally organised gathering, to collect data, such as, numbers attending, evaluation questionnaires, social networking commentaries and debates” (p. 173). Other lessons learned also included remaining responsive to feedback and understanding that it “is increasingly evident that funding follows the ability to show impact and results, which puts added value on building such project work around methodologies that facilitate the collection, analysis and dissemination of impact and benefit” (p. 173).

This case demonstrates several key principles driving the assessment. These include: reciprocity; knowledge mobilisation, exchange, and co-construction within a community of practice. A combination of methods were used to demonstrate impact including piloting the REAP Metrix. Impacts identified included the expansion of an existing knowledge base, well-being, stronger relationships, links with the community and university, and impact on practices within community and university. Within this
community-university research partnership, demonstrating impact was focused within the community of practice, as well as within the broader community and university.

**Approaches to impact assessment by a community-university research partnership support structure within a university.** This second case will describe the way in which the Community-University Partnership Programme (CUPP) approached assessment of their support structure. I will begin with a brief description of CUPP and then describe their assessment approach. CUPP began in 2003 at the University of Brighton with the aim of setting-up, supporting and fostering community-university research partnerships that benefit both the university and community. Not without its challenges, CUPP has been and continues to be an example of a successful sustained community-university research partnership structure within a university. From 2005 to 2007 CUPP commissioned an external evaluation to overview the experiences of those involved in their projects and activities. This relatively small-scale process involved over 50 participants in total and was conducted by an external evaluator (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007). The three-stage evaluation conducted with university, practitioner and community partners comprised of a baseline audit, identification of learning and good practice and an impact survey. Evaluation describes value through a series of individual assessments over time. Complex data are collected, research methodology is rigorously defined and it is often possible to generalise findings. An audit measures what is being done through a series of reviews. It is a collection of routine data collection, documenting what practitioners are actually doing but it is not possible to generalise from the findings (Hart, Northmore, & Gerhardt, 2008). CUPP’s evaluation process included face-to-face
and telephone interviews, focus groups, and self-reporting questionnaires. Roker surveyed seven community partners and seven university partners on impact related to CUPP. This initial impact survey is one tool that informs the process of impact assessment.

Drawing from the literature and data collection from participants at all stages in the evaluation process, Roker (as cited in Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007) identified and summarised the following seven success factors associated with community-university research partnerships: a shared vision of university-community collaborations in general, and individual projects and activities in particular; mutual benefits and mutual benefits of learning; good personal relationships and openness to new ideas and ways of doing things; individual and organizational flexibility; senior staff leadership and commitment; commitment and enthusiasm from universities and communities; and organisational infrastructure and support. These success factors were then used to structure evaluation results by asking the questions: “To what extent is CUPP able to demonstrate the seven success factors?” and “Are there other factors that help us understand what works in CUPP activities?” (as cited in Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007, p. 185). Results of their series of evaluations at an early stage in their organisational practice provided indications of impact, and success and barriers to engage in better practice for the communities and university which they serve and service. Their assessment process led to asking and investigating deeper questions leading to better practice and relevant theory development. Becoming intentional about the kind of changes, influences and impact CUPP creates within the university and community, can
be demonstrated by the combination of meaningful measurement activities applied within their formative and subsequent years as a community-university research partnership support structure.

A key principle driving CUPP’s assessment model was investigating deeper questions, which led to better practice and relevant theory development. Practice and theory development were also highlighted in the previous case in the context of the kind of impact being demonstrated. Reciprocity and developing good personal relationships were among the success factors used to structure the evaluation process of the support structure; and were also highlighted in the community-university research partnership case. In addition, a combined approach to assessment was used in this case as well as the previous case, although some of the approaches varied.

**Approaches to impact assessment by a community-university research partnership support structure based within communities and universities.** A third case helps to illustrate how a different model of partnership approaches impact assessment. This case is the Science Shop, singular and networked community-university research partnerships structures operating within communities and universities. Science Shops are “small entities that carry out scientific research in a wide range of disciplines – usually free of charge and – on behalf of citizens and local civil society” ([www.livingknowledge.org/livingknowledge/science-shops](http://www.livingknowledge.org/livingknowledge/science-shops)). Drawing from a broad definition of science and using principles of community-based research (CBR), Science Shops are “organisations created as mediators between citizen groups (trade unions, pressure groups, non-profit organisations, social groups, environmentalists, consumers,
residents association etc.) and research institutions (www.livingknowledge.org/livingknowledge/science-shops/more-information-about-science-shops). Acknowledging that impact assessment is always difficult (Mulder, 2011), the Living Knowledge Network has outlined different areas of impact relevant to their work (Mulder, 2011). Science Shop impacts higher education, scientific research and civil society. Impact in society includes: media/public attention, legal success, policy influencing success, new product and service organisation, and empowerment. Science Shop impact on university include: problem-based learning, social awareness of students, employability of students, and improved image. The Living Knowledge Network, which is the international Science Shop network, focuses on strategic issues and is active within political settings. Their aim includes working toward recognition of “civil society as a producer of knowledge, and have civil society organisations accepted as partners in research and innovation directed towards public interest, but also have civil society’s own activities recognised as research and innovation (Living Knowledge International Journal of Community Based Research, 2014).

This case highlights the challenge of impact assessment as related to wider sectors such as media, policy and student employment. This wider sector impact focus reflecting the work of a network of small entity community and/or university Science Shops differs from the previous two cases where impact was focused on the partnership, within the community and university reflecting the work of a partnership and CURP support structure. Similar to the previous cases’ understanding is the recognition of communities
as knowledge producers and communities as viable research partners to benefit public interest.

**Multi-institutional approach to assessment, evaluation and impact.**

The Australian University Community Engagement Association’s (AUCEA) Benchmarking Pilot Project is the fourth case profiled in this chapter. It has been selected because it is a type of CURP support structure that offers another example of a hybrid approach to assessment that involved self-evaluation, assessment by the community, and metric assessment based on agreed quantitative measures. This project, piloted by nine AUCEA member universities, aimed to develop a framework within the broader scope of community engagement assessment. With the growing interest in building university-community partnerships there was a perceived need to develop planning and evaluation frameworks for community and regional engagement in Australia (Garlick & Langworthy, 2004; Garlick & Pryor, 2004). The AUCEA Benchmarking Project originated in 2005 and 2006 at the AUCEA conference where interest was expressed by 28 universities to develop and test a core benchmarking framework and indicators that would be modified and implemented locally by each university in partnership with their communities. Three data collection instruments (an institutional questionnaire, a partner survey and a good practice template) were designed to collect data related to key measures identified in the Benchmarking Framework. The framework designed to facilitate the improvement of university engagement with their communities was “concerned with the quality of partnership relationships between university and community; the responsiveness of...
administrative processes; questions of university accessibility; and the way that research, teaching and learning support staff student and community involvement” (Langworthy, 2009, p. 107). Gaps that existed between current practice and better or best practices were captured and assessed. Outcomes demonstrated by each university and confidential to that particular university were intended for their use to improve the quality of their engagement and partnership with community. In moving forward Langworthy (2009) set the following consideration for impact upon university community engagement by making the critical and valuable point that, “there may be considerable benefit in wider sharing of specific outcomes as the process has made it clear that a much wider dialogue and applied community engagement strategies are needed to really impact upon university community engagement” (Langworthy, 2009, p. 112). The AUCEA’s ambitiously collaborative Benchmarking Pilot Project, applied across multiple institutions, demonstrates the short and long-term value of intentionally working toward creating meaningful impact and developing hybrid approaches that can inform impact assessment and measures.

Different from the previous cases, this case uses benchmarking as an assessment tool. However, their hybrid approach is similar to CUPP’s three-stage evaluation demonstrating such an approach is used at different scales and in varied assessment contexts. So far, the following commonalities exist among cases profiled where assessment approaches have been tested and piloted: a focus on the quality of partnership relationships, the support of university senior administration, improving practice,
expanding knowledge bases through knowledge exchange, and benefit to communities and universities with a particular emphasis on ensuring community benefit.

**Approaches to impact assessment by a macro-scale networked project.** The fifth case study which helps to illustrate approaches to impact assessment is the South East Coastal Communities (SECC) Project. It is an example of a macro-scale networked project Funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE/HEFC). The SECC project was funded three million pounds over three years involving over 30 community projects across nine universities aiming “to demonstrate the potential value of university-community knowledge exchange (UCKE) and transfer (Pratt et al., 2011, p. i).

The Higher Education Funding Council’s Business and Community Strategic Committee, which reported directly to the HEFC’s Board, supported the South East Coastal Communities project as one that would inform how funding “can leverage partnership, expertise and resources from local and regional stakeholders” (SECC Business Case, 2007, p. 1). Outputs and outcomes were intended for use by the Higher Education Funding Council to demonstrate the knowledge in and funding for community knowledge exchange in the context of a community engagement investment model. This project focused on generating evidence to benefit community knowledge exchange, to determine how those benefits may be funded and measured, to begin to concretise effective models or metrics for assessing the impact of community-based initiatives and to develop a collaborative model of funding that would serve to both initiate and sustain university-community knowledge exchange across the south east coastal region of England.
Performance was summarised against nine main success criteria identified in the original business case for SECC. Significant budget reductions due to the economic recession in 2008/9 and government changes in 2010 completely changed the original outcome of SECC acting as a demonstrator program that could lead to a new HEFC funding stream for university-community knowledge exchange (UCKE). This reality shifted the responsibility to higher education institutions to draw funding for UCKE activities from their teaching and research funding streams. Given this context shift, which occurred in the second year of the project, “the most appropriate success criteria for the SECC programme might have been different” (Pratt et al., 2011, p. iv). Assessment based on success criteria “drew on and will contribute to a growing literature on frameworks for conceptualising UCKE and the potential benefits of knowledge exchange and transfer for both universities and community partners” (p. vi). While the REAP framework created by CUPP was borrowed by the Sussex group as an initial starting point, they determined that the “slightly obscure terminology was perhaps less helpful in engaging partners in the evaluation process” (p. vi). However, there were “some useful developments at a sub-regional and project level, looking at more consistent approaches to measuring leverage (in Sussex) and evaluating social and economic impacts (in Hampshire)” (p. vi).

Embedding sustainable infrastructure was considered important for the sustainability of UCKE through provision for communities to engage in a continuous flow of opportunities for knowledge exchange and support for academics to engage in UCKE activities (p. iv). In addition, learning included the need to build UCKE activities
into formal academic reviews taking into account the reality that “HEIs and their community partners need to recognise that effective UCKE is built on personal relationships that need time and space to develop” (p. v).

Resourcing projects and activities was also highlighted as other learning from the SECC programme since conventional structuring of projects and budgets are not always suitable for UCKE. Different stages and development of partners and partnerships require different funding needs. For example, “a central fund to which partners can apply for small amounts (for room hire, refreshments, travel etc.) may be more appropriate for new partnerships …established partnerships may be more likely to seek more substantial project style funding for scaling up and/or evaluating their activities” (p. v).

This fifth case profiled, provides an example of the effect of significant budget reductions due to economic recession, which completely changed the original outcome of SECC acting as a demonstrator program for the potential shift in the way funding for community-university research partnerships are organised across universities. This case also brought to the fore the importance of embedding sustainable infrastructure for university-community knowledge exchange through opportunities and support for academics engaged in this work. The need for stability and sustainability for resourcing community-university projects and activities was also was also addressed. The SECC Business case provides some insight into the challenges of impact assessment at a macro networked level. Science Shops also indicated impact assessment across a network was a challenge. The REAP metrix and success criteria, applied in the SECC case, within the community-university partnership case profiled and CURP support structure, were useful
approaches to highlight principles in action such as mutuality, reciprocity, benefits as well as knowledge exchange for both universities and communities.

**Approaches to impact assessment through public research councils.** Situated in the broader reality of increased accountability, finding ways to assess, measure and describe the impact of publicly funded academic research has proliferated. This final case profiled is actually a composite of approaches to assessing impact through the work of two public research councils. The use of the term ‘impact assessment’ is not as common in the literature reviewed as I expected. These particular profiles are of particular interest because they use the term ‘impact assessment’ to describe their assessment activities. One of the research councils’ studies generalised an existing tool commonly used within health research to address impacts of Social Science research, while the second research council addressed impact assessment as part of their national research assessment framework and offer a definition of impact. I discuss them both in the following section.

**Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).** Seeking to provide quality research on issues of importance to business, the public sector and government; the ESRC is the UK’s largest research funder and training agency addressing economic and social concerns. Responding to “the increasing culture of accountability affecting government spending” (Klautzer, 2011 p. 201) the ESRC funded studies to examine the most effective ways to evaluate the impact of social science research on society” (Klautzer, 2011). One of those studies was the Future of Work Programme.
Through the Future of Work (FoW) Programme, multidisciplinary UK researchers were gathered to investigate the future prospects for paid and unpaid work. Funding totalled £4 million, supporting 27 projects (Wooding et al., 2007, p. 1). Through revision of benefit categories in the Payback Model (see overview provided below), impact categories were identified and used through the study. Results and findings of the study evidenced the FoW programme as having significant wider impacts on policy and practice as well as contributing to a generalised framework for Social Science research.

The impact categories developed through the FoW Programme for social science research are: knowledge, impacts on future research, impacts on policy, impacts on practice, and wider social and economic impacts.

The FoW programme’s impact categories are based on Buxton and Hanney’s (1996) benefit categories as part of their Payback framework model. Developed by Martin Buxton and Stephen Hanney at the Health Economics Research Group (HERG) at Brunel University, the Payback Framework model was designed to examine the payback of health services research (Buxton & Hanney, 1994, 1996). This model included two parts: a logic model representing the research process for impact evaluation and payback categories to classify research payback as benefits (Buxton & Hanney, 1994, 1996). In Banzai et al.’s (2011) systematic review of literature focusing on conceptual frameworks and empirical approaches to assess the impact of health research from 1990-2009, the Payback Framework model emerged as the most frequently used. This was one of the reasons that contributed to the use and revision of the Payback Model in the FoW Programme.
The FoW Programme’s generalisation of benefit categories in Buxton and Hanney’s (1996) Payback Model to impact categories stand out as being unique across the cases profiled in this section of the chapter. Five impact categories were consolidated, used in analysis and to report impact related findings. Although, the impact categories as a consolidation are unique; knowledge, future research, policy, practice and wider social and economic impacts are all common concepts addressed repeatedly across all cases profiled. Although applied in an area and context that differs from this study, yet under the broad field of Social Science, these categories can potentially be applied to community-university research partnerships and their support structures.

**UK Higher Education Funding Councils.** There are four UK higher education funding bodies that allocate about £2 billion per year of research funding to UK universities: Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Higher Education Funding Council for England, Scottish Funding Council and the Department for Employment and Learning. Periodically, these funding bodies assess research. The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) was conducted in 2008. Results of the most recent assessment, the Research Excellence Framework, were published in December 2014 ([http://results.ref.ac.uk/](http://results.ref.ac.uk/)) and will be used to allocate research funding from 2015-2016. The Research Excellence Framework (REF), piloted and implemented across the UK, introduced a definition of impact as “any effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia (HEFCE, 2014, p. 8). It can be argued that this is an attempt to begin to address academia’s impact outside of itself and in doing so opened spaces for valuable
discussion and debate. One of the distinctive features of the REF as compared with its predecessor, the RAE, is the inclusion of impact assessment. Based on impact pilot exercises in 2011, decisions were made to assess impact based on expert review of case studies submitted by higher education institutions. Case studies were to include any social, economic or cultural impact or benefit beyond academia occurring during the assessment period from January 1, 2008 to July 31, 2013 (HEFCE, 2011). Impacts were to be clearly demonstrated using a narrative with appropriate indicators and evidence. Impact case studies were assessed in terms of the ‘reach and significance’ of the impacts.

Controversy around the RAE and subsequent REF, which according to Martin (2011) is the old RAE with impact assessment, centres on the whole process being “increasingly sophisticated, intrusive, labour-intensive and costly; to the point of being too costly, bureaucratic and burdensome to fulfill their intended purpose and benefits” (Martin, 2011, p. 249). Expressing his concerns around the increasing costs and diminishing benefits of the RAE and REF process, Martin (2011) describes assessing the impact of research as ‘mass production’ demonstrated by the REF process versus a ‘craft activity’. Martin describes impact assessment as a craft activity when based on a small number of case studies using sophisticated methodology requiring labour intensive efforts, and extensive professional expertise as with the Research Payback Framework (Martin, 2011, p. 248). Ultimately, Martin (2011) asks and answers the question, “What is impact? No one is very sure but impact is clearly important” (p. 249). Martin’s question and responses are reflected in the literature as a whole, where impact and impact assessment is valued but still somewhat of a conundrum.
To conclude this section, I offer a few observations. Impact assessment appears to be an emergent type of assessment within CURP support structures. Approaches are driven by developing categories such as success factors, REAP categories (reciprocity, externalities, access and partnership) and five impact categories revised through the Future of Work Programme. Approaches such as the following are used in combination to create hybrid approaches to addressing impact: auditing, benchmarking, evaluation, survey, and self-evaluation among others. Principles such as reciprocity, developing good relationships, valuing knowledge exchange and co-constructing knowledge are common across cases. The use of the REAP tool has been piloted across several cases profiled in this section of the chapter contributing to its usefulness and refinement in the field at different scales within different types of CURP support structures. Research councils are also are engaged in the work of supporting community-university research partnerships while reworking and refining impact related tools and approaches by using them in similar and different contexts.

Challenges articulated relate to the difficulty of identifying impact on a broad scale. The community-university research partnership case profiled discussed impacts that were demonstrated through the community of practice; the cases operating as networks on a larger wider scale expressed that demonstrating impact was a challenge. Challenges relating to financial resources were also articulated. Such challenges affect the stability and sustainability of community-university research partnerships, their support structures and the infrastructure with universities and research councils to support the time, resources and work it takes to develop community-university research
partnerships and engage in knowledge exchange. Such challenges also seem to create an increased need for accountability, which increases the need for tools and assessments to evidence the value and impact of the work of community-university research partnerships and their various types of support structures.

**My Response to Approaches to Impact Assessment in the Literature**

One of my conclusions, through reviewing the literature, was that I realised that impact assessment was not discussed in as much detail as other types of approaches. Even though approaches were being applied to demonstrate impact, impact assessment was not explicated. In response to the gap in the literature, I combined Roche’s (1999) understanding of impact and impact assessment with Hart et al.’s (2009) understanding of audit, benchmarking and evaluative practices to describe impact assessment. I have included this in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing</th>
<th>Audit</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Evaluate</th>
<th>Addressing and Assessing Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cyclical series of reviews</td>
<td>Ongoing process</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>Short term impact and long term impact assessed throughout and after the intervention using a combination of measurement activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Level</td>
<td>Collect routine data</td>
<td>Exchange of information</td>
<td>Examines processes</td>
<td>Identify change. Mapping a pathway of change. Short and long-term outcomes and consequences. Challenge: Lines between outcomes, effects and impact are not distinct; these concepts overlap.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although impact is being investigated, examined and demonstrated at different levels and at different scales, there is overlap across CURP support structures in their choice to use various impact assessment approaches and tools. The literature finds that impact can be demonstrated using various types of assessment approaches; impact is being investigated, examined and demonstrated at different levels and at different scales according to the type of support structure; and impact is difficult to assess and identify.

Who assesses impact and who should assess impact?

There are many considerations and challenges when working to assess impact. I conclude with the following consideration, which I will discuss further in subsequent chapters. Impact assessment needs to consider intended and unintended benefits as well as any negative impact. In addition, the significance of impact being assessed depends on whose views and voices are represented, those who benefit and for what purpose. Certain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specificity</th>
<th>Review of what practitioners actually do</th>
<th>Review of best practice in the sector</th>
<th>Process and value oriented</th>
<th>Consider external influences and events. Challenge to determine connection between influences and outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Community University Partnership Program (CUPP, U.K.)</td>
<td>Australia Universities Community Engagement Associates AUCEA (piloting)</td>
<td>AUCEA CUPP SECC</td>
<td>South East Costal Communities Project (SECC) Impact Survey 2008 (CUPP) CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Four types of measurement activities, adapted by N. Lall (published in Inman and Schuetze, 2011, p. 95).
communities’ voices that are often under-represented can unintentionally be sidelined while various agendas of other stakeholders are being met. Hart, Northmore and Gerdhardt (2009) conclude that, “although there are many resources available to assist universities and their partners, there is no single approach to audit, benchmarking and evaluating that can be taken off the shelf and applied to any given university and its partners” (p. 4). The literature evidences that the same is true for impact assessment. This creates many challenges when engaging in the work of impact, but as the literature highlights, there is value in assessing impact but there are also many challenges that are being tackled by CURP support structures from partnerships to macro-scale structures such as research councils.

**Concluding Thoughts**

There is agreement in the literature that it is valuable to address the impact of structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnerships. There is no singular tool, approach or particular combination of tools being used to investigate impact of/through these types of support structures; neither is a single tool or approach a desired goal. Support structures are experimenting with various approaches and assessment tools to demonstrate the value and impact of their work within universities and communities. Examining impact include considerations such as the scale at which different CURP structures operate. For example, a CURP project within a university support structure may be able to demonstrate and understand impact differently depending on the amount of embedded infrastructure support they have across their university (SECC Business Case, 2007). Research councils operate at different scales so
there will be different considerations around their investigation of impact within their particular context. However, across the CURP support structure spectrum, there seems to be overlap and intersections of approaches to demonstrating and assessing impact. Many of the methods, tools and strategies can be considered as being in an emergent stage being revised and refined as they are used in different contexts and scales.

Determining the type of assessment approaches and tools to use for particular purposes within specific contexts is important. Since many tools and approaches are emergent, there is an element of experimentation and testing connected to the revision and refinement process. Use of different approaches, tools and types of assessment offer different feedback (e.g. REAP brought out mutuality and reciprocity in one context but didn’t work as an evaluation tool). In addition, different approaches, tools and types of impact assessment require different levels of expertise in their application, and serious consideration of cost versus benefit and timelines. Common to all assessment and measurement activities is the element of change being identified, which connects to impact as identifying change and various types of change.

Common to all undertaking the process of assessment, measuring and demonstrating impact is to understand and identify intention and purpose within the context. Intentions as they relate to impact are not clearly outlined in the literature using the term ‘intention’. The language of intention is dispersed in the literature through success factors, indicators and outcomes. It certainly aids understanding when intention is clearly referred to, as in the SECC Business Case final report, which clearly stated that the intention of SECC as a demonstrator for HEFC’s new proposed CUE funding stream
was not realised due to economic collapse at the beginning stages of the SECC collaboration. The resulting impact is that universities continued to fund CUE through their teaching and research streams. Intentions are not always realised but there is impact associated with intentions, whether or not they may be realised. Stating both intentions and impact offers clarity to everyone involved in the process. It also helps to see that impact and impact assessment can be a process in flux due to vulnerabilities of CURP support structures to competing institutional priorities in the context of economic and political shifts.

Efforts to capture and assess impact provide opportunities for discussion, rethinking and revision of assessment processes while contributing to a multi-faceted understanding of what it means to identify and assess impact. Since there are no existing tools to identify and assess the impact of CURP support structures based in the university, this study will draw from existing frameworks and tools to design and develop an impact assessment framework. The data gathered and analysed in this study will contribute further to the discussion and understanding of what it means to identify and assess impact and the process of designing and developing an impact assessment framework for community-university research partnerships support structures.
Chapter 3: Methodology in Five Parts

Background

As a lifelong learner and an educator I have always been a proactive agent of change bearing in mind the connection between my intentions and their associated effect, changes and impact. Prior to the past decade, I mainly situated myself with multilingual, multiracial and multicultural urban populations in public schools. Each person and groups of people represent different ways of knowing (epistemological), thinking (intellectual), being (ontological) and interacting (sociological).

I have been an agent of change through curriculum innovation, policy influence, and by drastically deviating from the knowledge transmission process and the role of teacher as being somewhat ‘distant’ from the life of students, families and immediate communities beyond the school walls. My approaches contributed to a deeper level of interacting with mutual respect, value for people as ‘whole’ persons and the exchange of knowledge, rather than its’ exclusive transmission or translation. I have been able to see the impact of my actions as they occurred in the immediate and over time; learning through the process to be mindful, listen more, and advocate ‘with’ not ‘for’. According to Shotter (1974), I have been aiming to move toward living in a state of exchange with others both like and unlike myself, forming communities so we can do more together than we could ever do alone.
My pedagogy and practice: intention and impact

Through interaction and involvement with various advocacy groups in Victoria and through courses, conferences and institutes at the University of Victoria, the context of my work shifted from public school-community relationships to community-university engagement. Despite this change in context, I maintained the focus of my interest on impact, intention, knowledge exchange and working toward shifting the status quo.

I have learned much through the course I have taught for the past eight years at the University of Victoria. I teach this course using an anti-oppressive lens focusing on deconstructing and examining oppression and privilege from the personal to the social and systemic. In particular, I find it necessary every year to spend more time than I anticipated, deconstructing the widely held misunderstanding, that in everyday life, good intentions excuse negative impact.

As a part of my own pedagogy and practice I have come to embrace the concept of conscientisation. Paulo Freire (1996) used this term in the Portuguese language to describe “learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (p. 17). I have come to understand that it is the non-linear path toward conscientisation that I have been travelling through my own background, as I and my ancestors have been drastically impacted through colonial intent and oppression. I have come to realise that when communities engage or are engaged everyone involved is stepping outside of their own ways of knowing and their frames of reference. Therefore, we must be diligent in our intention to create social change, identifying those to whom we often presumptuously feel we are giving voice and
making visible. Before embarking on this research study, some of the questions I asked myself in the context of research conducted with communities were and still are:

- What are the follow-up processes of research projects as they relate to impact on communities?
- Who speaks for ‘communities’?
- Whose decision is it, within a specific community, to determine what can be made public and what should remain private?

I have not included intention in my questions because I am becoming convinced that good intentions are not the focus, they have been used too readily to excuse negative and recurring impact. For me, the struggle is to be mindful, respectful, and engage in a constant cycle of reflection and action. This is my praxis. As an educator and researcher, the critical questions I have asked myself over the years have filtered down to one key question: What kind of impact is being made by whom and to/upon whom? This research study maintains continuity with my curiosity to seek answers to this question in collaboration with the curiosity and interest of others. Questions such as these and the many questions that have driven this study, are based on the unfolding of my understanding of the centrality of community and the need to put their voices at the centre of this study, rather than the perspective of the OBCR being the only focus.

**A Qualitative Research Approach**

I have chosen a qualitative research approach because this study is grounded in the lived experiences of people (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) within various communities, sectors of society and within the university. Qualitative research tends to be
conducted in natural settings where the researcher views “social worlds as holistic and complex” (p. 2). The social worlds represented in this study are various communities, sectors, the University of Victoria and the Office of Community-Based Research (the systematic community-university support structure within the University of Victoria). These social worlds intersect in the work of community-university research partnerships and intersect within in this study. They bring their own complexities to bear as individual worlds within their intersection spaces, within their contexts and within the context of this study. In this way, qualitative research focuses on context.

Multiple methods are used within qualitative research. These methods respect the humanity of study participants and researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The researcher engages in “systematic reflection on the conduct of the research” (p. 2) and systematic reflection and action rooted in respect for participants, which grounds the researcher’s decision-making process at every step thereby informing the research, participants and researcher. Reflection and reflexivity are a complementary pair as the qualitative researcher uses her reflexive lens to bear in mind her own “biographies and social identities and how these shape the study” (p. 2). In addition to reflection and reflexivity, the qualitative researcher is engaged in “complex reasoning that moves dialectically between deduction and induction” (p. 2). A focus on context, use of multiple methods, systematic reflection, reflexivity and complex reasoning, contribute to qualitative research as being “emergent and evolving and is fundamentally interpretive” (p. 2).
There are many ways of categorising qualitative research methods. Marshall and Rossman (2011) build on the work of Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) to categorise the following three major genres:

- **society and culture** as seen in ethnography, action research, case studies and often grounded theory; **individual lived experience**, as exemplified by phenomenological approaches, some feminist inquiry, life histories, and **testimonio**; and **language and communication** – whether spoken or expressed in text – as in sociolinguistic approaches, including narrative analysis and discourse and conversation analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 19).

Of these three major genres, this study is congruent with the first two: society and culture as seen in ethnography, action research, case study and grounded theory; and individual lived experience as exemplified by phenomenological approaches, which generally involves “in-depth interview with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon of interest” (p. 19). Specifically, the phenomenon of assessing and measuring impact within the context of the OCBR is being studied using a participatory research approach. The OCBR is the case study.

Impact assessment and measurement outside of the context of community-university research partnership, their support structures and the field of community engagement is usually heavily dependent on quantitative methods such as using formulae to calculate social and economic impact in terms of cost equivalents. However, within the context of community engagement, community-university research partnerships (CURPs) and their support structures, impact assessment and measurement is a
qualitative-dependent endeavour with some quantitative contributions. This is evidenced through a review of the literature, where impact assessment and measurement methods, tools and approaches are emergent but clearly being explicated mainly through qualitative research methods and an ongoing reflection-action cycle. In other words, as methods, approaches and tools emerge, they are used in-context and revised accordingly. Learning is conveyed and discussed through publications, blogs, conferences, and then used by others in the field who alter and revise.

Qualitative research methods are congruent with principles and methods used within community-university research partnerships. Therefore, there is congruency between the research methods used by CURPs and their support structures and the research methods used to investigate the phenomenon of assessing and measuring impact within the context of the OCBR. These research methods are typically drawn from participatory research, participatory action research and community-based research.
Part 2: Methods of Inquiry

This study’s methods of inquiry are located within the major genre of qualitative research methods focused on society and culture as seen in ethnography, action research, case study and grounded theory (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Participatory research, institutional ethnography and case study are this study’s methods of inquiry. These are among an increasing number of participatory research approaches that are consistent with what is called engaged scholarship.

Engaged Scholarship

Engaged scholarship challenges traditional and conventional scholarship. Power imbalances between the researcher and so-called, ‘subjects’ are inherent in the research process; and knowledge has traditionally been perceived as a commodity to be harvested and used at the discretion of the research team, institution and funder. Such approaches to research have their roots in colonialism. Asad (1973) in his critical examination of social anthropology and antecedents to ethnography states:

The colonial power structure made the object of anthropological study accessible and safe – because of it - sustained physical proximity between the observing European and the living non-European became a practical possibility. It made possible the kind of human intimacy upon which anthropological fieldwork is based, but ensured that intimacy should be one-sided and provisional (p. 19).
Research rooted in the mentality of the colonial power structure is conducted by harvesting knowledge and experiences from others while acknowledging sole ownership and credit to researchers.

Those challenging the mentality of the colonial power structure from within universities and across diverse communities were formerly traditional ‘research subjects’ who were acted upon in the research process. These groups historically and currently work to structure, facilitate, collaborate and provide scaffolding for engaged scholarship whereby knowledge is exchanged and mobilised through, with and between themselves, communities, organisations, institutions, and governing structures. In an ongoing process of what I call, ‘claiming, re-claiming and innovating research and scholarship’, women, people across the diaspora of the Majority World (in lieu of ‘Third World’ or ‘Developing Countries’), people who challenge heteronormativity and their allies, represent the lived realities of themselves and their communities through the work and development of engaged research scholarship such as community-based research, participatory action research, institutional ethnography and case studies. Research defined as engaged scholarship tend to draw from service-learning pedagogy, community-based participatory research, and public scholarship as a set of powerful strategies for collaboratively generating knowledge and practices to alleviate social problems affecting communities (Bringle, Games, & Malloy, 1999).

**Community-Engaged Scholarship**

Engaged scholarship rooted in the community can also be referred to as community-engaged scholarship. Researchers position themselves with community
members and within the community, to create knowledge, and work toward transformation and social justice (Hall, 2009; Strand 2003). Their position is rooted in collaborative research, valuing different ways of knowing and different types of expertise. Community-engaged scholarship is the “teaching, discovery, integration, application and engagement that involves the faculty member in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community and has the following characteristics: clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation, reflective critique, rigor and peer-review” (Gelmon, Seifer, Kauper-Brown & Mikkelson, 2005, p. 1). Although, the term community-university research partnerships separate university from community, it is critical to acknowledge and understand that, “academics do not cease to become members of the community by going to work in a university” (Hall, 1992, p. 25).

**Knowledge stances**

This study’s inquiry methods are mechanisms for the multi-disciplinary co-creation and mobilisation of knowledge to collaboratively tackle inter-related social issues that affect the social, economic and environmental conditions of people and their communities. Such collaborative partnership research “has emerged as an approach that is particularly well-suited to learning new ways of conducting research that avoid the expert-subject dichotomies and de-contextualization often associated with ‘lone-star’ research conceived and conducted solely by academics” (Ball, 2008, p. 7). Democratising knowledge creation and validating multiple sources of knowledge are among the purposes of using a participatory research approach (Hall, 2009). These are
also among the purposes of institutional ethnography, which is “theorised and its research design developed in such a manner as to produce an analysis in the interest of those about whom knowledge is being constructed” (Campbell & Gregor, 2002, p. 48). Stoecker (1991) emphasises that “… we don’t just barge in and begin making changes as we see fit … the emphasis here is on collaboration and the most useful case studies may be those which start with a community problem and work collaboratively with the community on that problem” (p. 108).

Methods of inquiry such as those applied to this study, and those within the three major genres of qualitative research are among the research methods used in community-university research partnerships and their support structures. As discussed in the review of the literature, knowledge that is produced, mobilised and legitimised through community-university research partnerships, differs from or is a combination of the four modes of knowledge. Hart, Maddison and Wolff (2007) acknowledged and reviewed aspects of the debate around classification of different forms of knowledge. Having identified aspects of the type of knowledge created through the Community University Partnership Programme, the systematic support structure at the University of Brighton, they found that it was uniquely different from the existing four modes of knowledge (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007). By combining and adding to the classifications they created a fifth mode. Mode five knowledge is peer-reviewed, applied, heterogeneous, problem-centred, transdisciplinary, change-orientated and co-produced by the university and community (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007). The knowledge co-generated through this study fits in the category of mode five.
**Participatory Research**

This study also draws on participatory research principles such as reciprocity, shared knowledge creation and shared democratic outcomes informing social change (McGregor, Clover, Sanford, & Krawetz, 2008). Using the terms participatory action research and participatory research, interchangeably, Hall (2005) states that “participatory research, is a proposal for action that focuses on transformed understandings of the creation of knowledge among human beings” (p. 21). Co-creating knowledge and the ethical use of knowledge reflect the core research principles of community-based research and participatory research. These principles are central to the work of community-university research partnerships and their institutional support structures such as the Office of Community-Based Research (OCBR) at the University of Victoria, the case being studied. Drawing from one of the most common definitions of community-based research (Strand et al., 2003) the OCBR framed community-based research in its university context as:

- a way of integrating research and teaching, an opportunity for experimental learning in real-world settings, as a contribution to recruitment through the creation of a dynamic and engaged atmosphere, a means of making our region a better place to live and as a contribution to national and global understanding of ways in which the creation and co-creation of knowledge are used for social innovation (OCBR Service plan, 2009, p. 4).

Community-based research, from a university perspective, provides opportunities for community scholars, practitioners and university researchers to use their collective
academic, scientific, experiential and on-the-ground knowledge in a process of co-
creation, exchange and mobilisation, to address community and societal needs. In this
way, the theory and practice of community-based research is merged with the theory and
practice of knowledge mobilisation, knowledge creation and knowledge democratisation
thereby engaging in research as a co-constructive and co-creative process.

**Institutional Ethnography**

*Institutional Ethnography acts as a kind of radiography of everyday life, making visible
its skeletal underpinnings ... the skeleton is comprised of people’s actions that are
coordinated somehow, including textually (Campbell & Gregor, 2002, p. 97).*

Institutional ethnography is referred to as a methodology by many but is best
described as “a method of inquiry because its findings are not already prejudged by a
conceptual framework that regulates how data will be interpreted; rather exploration and
discovery are central to its project” (Smith, 2005, p. 50). In this method of inquiry, “the
ethnographer explores and describes the same world as that in which the inquiry is done”
(p. 49). Learning through the actualities as they are experienced and checking concepts
against what the ethnographer has learned and is learning (p. 50) is critical. Building
knowledge, methods of discovering and explicating the coordination of institutional
processes and relations are part of the overall aim of institutional ethnography, which can
be generalised beyond a particular study as an aspect of how institutions operate (p. 50).

Institutional ethnography is theorised and its research design developed in such a
manner as to produce an analysis in the interest of those about whom knowledge is being
constructed (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). Since institutional ethnography is interested in
those about whom knowledge is being constructed, the entry point of the study builds accounts of their situation, what they are experiencing, their social and institutional relations and relations that rule them; it is their experiences that define and guide the researcher’s steps (Smith, 2005). An inquiry starts with what actually happens as those who live knowledge creation, experience it and talk about it (Campbell & Gregor, 2002 & Smith, 2005). The entry point of this study can be characterised in a similar way as discussed in Part 4 of this chapter.

Institutional Ethnography “is committed to discovering beyond any one individual’s experience including the researcher’s own and putting into words supplemented in some instances by diagrams or maps what she or he discovers about how people’s activities are coordinated” (Smith, 2006, p. 1). This is an important research principle to apply in constructing a research approach to design and develop a framework to assess the impact of university-based community-university research partnership support structures. It is critical to discover how people’s activities are coordinated in and through these structures so that the impact can be recognised.

There are other research principles outlined in the literature of Institutional Ethnography, yet there are many ways of practicing these principles and there are no methods that “tell you exactly how to produce a piece of research that others can recognise as institutional ethnography” (Smith, 2006, p. 1). For example, there are numerous studies which have been published, some of which are written and discussed in publications by Campbell and Gregor (2002) and Smith (2006). These studies use different methods of research and in some cases have “produced a whole new genre of
methodological writing” (Smith 2006). Interviews, participant observation, focus groups, attempts at using participatory action research and community-based research, and various creative and useful dissemination strategies such as a board game, are all documented in various institutional ethnography studies. They are as diverse as the people who are involved in this work. The limitations that must be considered by the institutional ethnographer are part of the strength and novelty of this research strategy. The most significant limitation is that the researcher is unable to draft a detailed and thorough design of the study (Smith, 2005) since the direction of the inquiry unfolds through collaboration with people and investigation of texts. There are similar limitations with community-based research and participatory action research methods where every step engages community members and partners. These are limitations staff, faculty and students must consider when dealing with the university’s and community’s ethical and procedural requirements.

This study drew principles from participatory research approaches. Requirements drove some of the study’s design, while the focus, direction and analytical processes have unfolded through the engagement of study participants, shifting economic and political realities, the refinement of my understanding as the study unfolded, and my continued focus on listening to the data throughout the analysis. More will be said about these details later in this chapter.

**Institutional Ethnography and Uncovering Impact.** Connecting the concept and everyday reality of institutional transformation is relevant to the study of the impact of the work of institutional support structures for community-based research. In one
particular case, Marie Campbell (as cited in Smith, 2006), “shows how institutional ethnography can draw on people’s experiential – and diverging – knowledge of their work (in the generous sense of the term) ... she captures those dimensions of people’s experiences that locate the institutional in the everyday of their work ... those she talked to were participating in processes of institutional transformation ... they had a piece of it in their hands, so to speak” (p. 97). Similarly in this study, participants were asked to discuss their identification and assessment of smaller points of impact that either will continue to accumulate to contribute to larger impact or has already done so. In this way, they were participating in the process of institutional transformation without realising it.

In a collaborative study also conducted by Campbell et al., called *Project Inter-Seed* (Campbell, Copeland, & Tate, 1999), Campbell and the research team noted that the purpose of explaining ruling organisational policies was to identify how those practices impacted lives (Campbell & Gregor, 2002). Identifying the purpose of the research as the impact on people’s lives reflected a shift away from interpreting an observation from a ruling perspective, which the literature demonstrates as being one of the main purposes of institutional ethnography. Highlighting impact is not meant to minimise the core of institutional ethnography as explicating ruling relations, which was significant to all aspects of the project. For example, ruling relations were significant since Campbell, a university faculty member and principal investigator for the funded research, had to work with forms of accountability, hiring staff, and dealing with other types of work to establish the project. However the understanding of the purpose of the research as how
practices impacted people’s lives, caused the whole team to realise that they had to learn how to take the standpoint of people with disabilities (Campbell & Gregor, 2002).

This is an important research principle to draw from in order to construct a research approach that would be effective in studying the impact of the work of institutional support structures for community-based research, since it suggests the researcher could take the standpoint of people who have been involved over time and in different capacities with the Office of Community-Based Research. In this case, I can use my own experience as one who has been involved over time and in different capacities with the OCBR as a participant and an observer. Institutional Ethnography therefore offers many useful and applicable areas from which to draw when explicating impact and impact assessment in the context of university-based CURP support structures.

**Case Study Inquiry**

The OCBR is being framed as case in this study to explicate the design and development of an impact assessment framework for CURP support structures. Case studies “help define abstract concepts, provide concrete illustrations of those concepts and ... present information in a more familiar and interesting mode than extensive research can” (Stoecker, 1991, p. 108). A case study inquiry provides us with one way to intentionally concretise concepts such as impact, impact assessment and knowledge creation within the context of the OCBR, a university-based systematic structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnerships. A case study approach is particularly relevant since impact can be considered an abstract concept until it is
consciously and intentionally concretised through a process to demonstrate, identify and assess impact.

Stoecker (1991) argues that the “most useful case studies may be those which start with a community problem and work collaboratively with the community on that problem (p. 108). As previously discussed, this study will not employ a pure community-based research method or a complete participatory action research method, since that would involve the question originating from the community and community members would be partners in generating the research question and the research design (Hall, 2005). Although the methodology of this study itself does not start with a problem in the community outside of the university, the idea for the study was initiated through collaboration and discussion within the context of a Community-Based Research course and institute at the University of Victoria in 2008. The study developed and grew through local, regional and international interest, interaction, discussion, seminars and workshops involving university and community research partners and participants, the OCBR staff and the OCBR Steering Committee members who represent community members, university staff and faculty, business and non-profit organisations. These groups have been involved in shaping the formative stages of this research study and representatives from these groups have been interview participants in the study. Participants have used their collective academic, scientific, experiential and on-the-ground knowledge in a process of co-creation, exchange and mobilisation, to address the design of an impact assessment for the OCBR and similar structures.
Methods of inquiry used in this study are congruent with principles and methods used within community-university research partnerships (CURPs). Contributing to the credibility of this study, there is congruency between the research methods used by CURPs and their support structures and the research methods used to identify, assess and measure impact. Research methods in this study inform the following methods of investigation and data collection.
Part 3: Methods of Investigation and Data Collection

Methods of investigation in this study have been informed by the methods of inquiry. Methods of investigation as described below include in-context immersion, participant-observer-listener, use of available documents and information, key informant interviews, use of an impact assessment framework prototype, field notes, research journaling and the writing process. These methods of investigation informed my thinking through experience and were rooted in the practice of building relationships. All of my participation in various contexts as described further in this section at local, regional, national and international levels; participation in workshops, my role as a participant-observer-listener, field notes, and use of available documents and information, informed my positioning in the study and my thought processes. The specific details of these events were not data for my study. The eighteen key informant interviews, as discussed in the section below, comprise the data collected for this study.

In-Context Immersion and Participation

Local. I participated in the local setting of this study. I was involved with the work of the OCBR on a voluntary basis from 2008 – 2013. Through the work of the OCBR, local and global teams working within the broader field of community engagement and community-university research partnerships often visited the University of Victoria and presented workshops within the university and within communities. I attended and participated in many of these workshops, which were learning spaces that
informed my thinking. I was invited to participate in a working group at the university level, which further informed my thinking and understanding of the broader context and support for community engagement, CURPs and their support systems across the university.

**Regional.** I was involved with the work of the OCBR during the initial and formative stages of the creation of the Vancouver Island Community Research Alliance extending my understanding of issues across the region.

**National and Global.** I was involved in the initial, formative and development stages of GACER, the Global Alliance on Community Engaged Research from 2008-2014. Prior to my start of this study, I volunteered at CUExpo2008 at the University of Victoria, and was a participant in the declaration that marked the beginning of GACER. In my capacity as GACER’s Research Officer, I co-ordinated, organised and reported on the first Global Dialogue (2010) held at the London Institute of Education. I also visited the team at the Community-University Partnership Programme at Brighton University in Brighton, England. As the Project Co-ordinator for a large global research project on poverty alleviation through the work of GACER, I also had the opportunity to meet with various funding agency representatives from Canada and across the globe.

These local, regional, national and international experiences informed my thinking and furthered my understanding of the context of this study and associated complexities.
Participant-Observer-Listener

My observations of the settings into which I was invited were contextualised according to my level of involvement in the particular setting, event or activity. For example, when I was conducting a presentation and facilitating discussion, my observations were based on participation of the group and their feedback. I acted on these observations as I presented and facilitated. Other times, such as when facilitating a small group I was focused on the group at hand. Since settings varied thematically, in content, in context, in purpose and intensity, listening was one of my most central and critical methods of investigation throughout the study from inception to listening to the voices of interview participants, which informed this study’s data, through to analysis and dissertation writing.

Available Documents and Information

Available documents and information through the work of the OCBR included agenda and reports prepared for the Steering Committee, information and documents posted on the website, research documents prepared and presented to various levels of administration within the University of Victoria to advocate for the creation of the OCBR prior to 2007, and documents available related to the work and projects of the OCBR’s three focus areas: Food Security, Housing and Homeless and Aboriginal Communities. I used all available OCBR related documents and information as discussed in Part 5 of this chapter to help direct the course of this study. These were not used as data for this study.
Key Informant Interviews

Data for this study was based on key informant interviews. I conducted 18 key informant interviews with representatives from the various contexts connected to the OCBR. Later in this chapter, I describe my recruitment strategies in more detail. I conducted presentations of the study and asked for volunteers to participate in an interview, in addition to approaching certain people who fit particular criteria discussed in the research design part of this chapter. I conducted presentations, which included sample interview questions as well as the areas included in the sketched impact assessment framework, also known as the prototype. Since I was immersed in these contexts, all interview participants already knew me and all knew about the study to varying degrees. Please see Appendix A for interview questions.

Sketching the impact assessment framework (prototype)

Through a combination of the literature, my methods of investigation, and with input from my supervisory committee, there was a collective and collaborative conclusion that it would be helpful to design and develop an impact assessment framework that could then be used throughout this study. I sketched an impact assessment framework prototype using the literature and then shared it through presentations and discussions in the OCBR. This prototype can be found at the end of this section (Part 3). The purpose of sharing the prototype was to check-in with those doing the work of the CURP support structure to listen to whether or not the prototype was suitable for deeper discussion and feedback during key informant interviews. There were
no changes recommended to the prototype, so I proceeded with it as it appears in Table 2. As the study developed, I also used this prototype as a framework for the analysis of my research data; given the significance of this approach, I discuss it in a subsequent chapter. Later in this chapter, I also describe how my analysis was guided using this framework.

Field Notes

At all times throughout the study I made notes. These notes varied from being very general to taking on an impact-focus and impact assessment and measurement focus. My notes alerted me to the development of my own understandings around impact and assessment and to my interpretation of the understanding of others. At times, my notes alerted me to the need to listen and observe differently. While at other times, I entered a setting with specific criteria I wanted to note. However, I learned that I needed to reflect on my field notes, highlight areas and next steps within a timely fashion due to the quantity of the work of the OCBR in many different directions, the emergent nature of their work and similarly the work in most of the contexts in which I was immersed.

Research Journal

At all times throughout the study I have kept a research journal where I note everything related to my research. These notes are a combination of being systematic, creatively chaotic, with questions and possible responses, which at times are more questions. My research journals are generally focused on the particular stage in the research process combining literature with in-context immersion observations, reflections, ideas, wonderings and next steps. Being highly visual when organising
information, my approach is often in the form of drawing charts, creating relationships through diagrams, and relating evolving patterns to existing patterns I see in nature. It is within my research journals that I repeatedly work through what seems to be the most basic questions, such as the purpose of this research, to whom does it really matter and why, what is impact, what does it look like, why assess and what does impact assessment look like in different areas of life, nature and in this particular study. As subsequent sections of this chapter will discuss, I used this information extensively in my analysis.

**Writing as a Method of Investigation**

According to Richardson (2000), “writing is a “method of inquiry” (p. 923), “because of the interrelatedness of the sections and because writing is developmental and recursive” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 59). The writing process for me has been an integrated part of all other methods of investigation in this study and has proven to be a method of investigation itself through pre-writing stages often in the form of mapping and diagrams and through countless writing stages noting observations, reflection, narratives, journaling, reworking, reviewing, and revising.

These methods of investigation combined have focused on the OCBR as a case drawing from case study inquiry. They reflect a participatory approach to the study since the development of the study was co-constructed through people engaged in the work of community-university research partnerships and support structures in various contexts and settings drawing from community, university, funders and multiple sectors. They also are informed by an institutional ethnography approach in which people’s knowledge are valued, sought after and recognised (Smith, 2006), specifically knowledge and
experience with the OCBR, knowledge and experience about how institutional processes and relations are coordinated, and knowledge and experience about the design and development of an impact assessment framework for CURP support structures.

In addition to being informed by the combination of methods of inquiries, all of the methods of investigation inform this study as my praxis (Freire, 1996) as I engage in the constant cycle of investigation that involves placing myself, reflection, analysis, strategy, action, re-placing myself and reflection of the cycle toward different action representing change. It’s a cycle of learning, unlearning and investigation. These methods of investigation are intricately connected as they intersect each other; each one contributing to the construction of the other, while together co-constructing this research study into a whole.

Data used for analysis were gathered through semi-structured key informant interviews, which ranged from one to two hours each. In total, 18 interviews were conducted. As research data were gathered, I began “to identify to whom it makes a difference” (Campbell & Gregor, 2002, p. 48); this question informed the analysis of the data being produced in the interest of those about whom knowledge is being constructed. I was focused on knowledge generated through data for the design and development an impact assessment framework by those who are actually creating impact and possibly being impacted by the OCBR.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Impact</th>
<th>Outputs: Countable achievements e.g. Number of seminars, people at seminars etc. (Pearce et al., 2007).</th>
<th>Outcomes: Unquantifiable or experiential achievements (Pearce et al., 2007).</th>
<th>Impact: Analysis of the degree to which outcomes lead to change; intentionally and unintentionally (Roche, 1999).</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Macro Level</strong></td>
<td>e.g. Number of joint funding proposals; joint credit for publications</td>
<td>e.g. Greater collaboration between structural levels</td>
<td>Impact on larger populations, people from an entire community or from several communities (Marullo, 2003)</td>
<td>Administrators and Formal and Informal Leaders OCBR’s full-time and grant-funded staff OCBR’s Steering Committee Researchers and Community Partners Funders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mezzo Level</strong></td>
<td>e.g. Number of MOUs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Impact on groups of individuals</td>
<td>Students, faculty, community involvement in workshops, courses, seminars, institutes etc. OCBR’s full-time and grant-funded staff OCBR’s Steering Committee Researchers and Community Partners Funders Undergraduate and graduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Micro Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Impact on individual</td>
<td>Students, faculty, community involvement in workshops, courses, seminars, institutes etc. OCBR’s full-time and grant-funded staff OCBR’s Steering Committee Researchers and Community Partners Undergraduate and graduate students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Sketched Impact Assessment (Prototype)
Part 4: Research Design

Research Site

The primary research site of this study is the University of Victoria. The University of Victoria is situated on the territory of the Coast and Straits Salish people on the site of an old Lekwungen village. Established on July 1, 1963 as a public university, the University of Victoria is located within the Greater Victoria area in the cities of Saanich and Oak Bay on Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada. A mid-size university, enrollment was 20,813 in 2013 (uvic.ca). The current and active strategic plan is entitled, A Vision for the Future – Building on Excellence (University of Victoria, 2012). This plan states the University’s “commitment to civic engagement and to serving communities locally around the world” (p. 36) with the goal to “establish UVic as a recognised cornerstone of the community, committed to the sustainable social, cultural and economic development of our region and our nation” (p. 36). Achieving this goal “entails furthering relationships with organizations and groups in the public, private and non-profit sectors locally, provincially, nationally and internationally” (p.36). The research mission of the university is to benefit society through the advancement and application of knowledge, creative and artistic expression, and the creation of a research-inspired learning environment (uvic.ca).

Located within the University of Victoria as the systematic support structure for community-university research partnerships, The Office of Community-Based Research
(OCBR) was active from 2007-2013. Building on the work of the OCBR and “on the history and context of commitment by UVic to community-engagement embedded in the Strategic Plan” (uvic.ca/research/centres/cue/), the Institute for Studies and Innovation in Community University Engagement (ISICUE) was launched at UVic in June 2013.

**Narrative of timeline**

**Entry Point and Stand Point.** I will begin this section with my entry point into this research study. I mapped my entry point into this impact study guided by Dorothy Smith’s process in A Woman’s Standpoint: Single Parenthood and Educational Institutions (Smith, 2006, p. 3).

I registered and participated in the University of Victoria’s Community-Based Research (CBR) Institute and course in 2008. Students and participants across the Institute and particularly in the course were asking and wondering: How are we going to practice CBR principles in our institutions and organisations (schools, universities, advocacy groups)? Challenges and barriers were articulated as not having enough time, not being able to access enough funding, and CBR not respected as valid research. I theorised the problem as a general lack of support and the lack of recognition of CBR as a valid and effective research method. Through the course participants, I heard the language of professional restrictions based on roles within hierarchical ruling relations such as teacher, activist, youth workers, non-profit organisation and government. I also heard the language of policy presenting real obstacles for implementation of CBR. As CBR projects for an assignment were being developed through the course, participants
wrestled with being able to sustain interest outside of the Institute, and how they could connect with like-minded people. Recognising patterns in what I was observing and hearing, I chose to dedicate my project design to the impact of the CBR experience through the course and Institute. I asked the questions: “How did participants intend to integrate CBR into their work?” and “What was and/or would be the impact of the Summer Institute on participants?”

During an in-class dialogue, one of the co-instructors and the Director of the OCBR posed questions from his perspective: “What is the impact of the Office of Community-Based Research?”, “How can it be assessed?” and “How do we look at the actual/real impact of the OCBR?” We met to discuss the possibilities of an actual study on the impact of the OCBR, which extended to discussions with the OCBR staff. As I came to learn more, my understanding of the OCBR was as a catalyst, facilitator, and advocate for CBR in the academic institution and the community (meaning neither university nor industry). CBR as a method used in the university, seemed to disrupt the traditional objectified research paradigm by partnering community and university in collaborative research. CBR as a method within academia valued the respective knowledge and expertise of community and university, while acknowledging that the power of the university’s knowledge has been and still is privileged above ‘community’ knowledge. The academy validates particular methods of research and particular types of knowledge. I wondered, “How is CBR integrated as a valid research method through the OCBR despite its constraints in the university?” and “How is the work of the OCBR in an academic institutional setting related to time, funding, education, engagement,
community development, academics and engaged scholarship?" The disjuncture that the OCBR presented was that of being a university structure, which facilitated a generally contested research method in an academic institution. The study proposed through involvement with the OCBR was to design research around determining the impact of the work of institutional support structures for CBR and community-university research partnerships. It would be useful to discover and describe the socially organised features of the setting including how ruling practices are involved. I was already working with a theorised view of CBR which positioned me to hear and observe in particular ways (Campbell & Gregor, 2002, p. 50).

A common approach of the researcher in institutional ethnography is to “to take the ‘standpoint of the people’ whose experience provides the starting point of the investigation” (Smith, 2006, p. 20). From her standpoint, the researcher is engaged in a complex of relations, which is unknown to her (Smith, 2006). In 2009, I mapped my standpoint. The problem I experienced in conceptualising my standpoint was: “Where does the OCBR fit?” Its function is fluid, it has a formal space at the university but its activities are fluid. It reaches locally, regionally, provincially, nationally and internationally. I decided that it could not be placed in a box but rather be represented with curving lines and arrows going both ways (see Figure 1 below) to show that OCBR is a ‘boundary spanner’ (Wenger, 1998).
Mapping my standpoint provided me with a way to begin thinking like an institutional ethnographer. It demonstrated to me visually, the impact the OCBR had on me in a short period of time. It is a common notion that researchers generally assess and measure impact over the long-term; there is a move in the literature and in practice challenging that notion. I theorised that if impact occurs over the short-term and long-term; it can therefore be assessed and measured as such.

**Beyond the Entry Point.** As discussed in detail above, the entry point of this study began through a conversation and mutual interest in the study of impact, between
myself and the Director of the Office of Community-Based Research (OCBR) at the University of Victoria. This conversation occurred in July 2008 during a course and institute on community-based research attended by participants from higher education and members of local, regional and provincial communities. In September 2008, discussions with the Director of the OCBR continued and during the Fall, extended with the OCBR full-time and contract staff; and the OCBR steering committee about a possible impact study.

I was invited to spend time attending workshops, short and long term planning meetings, community-university initiatives, seminars, steering committee meetings, institutes, conferences and courses directly and indirectly related to the work of the OCBR. I engaged as a participant-observer, read through available documents and information, and took field notes. Concurrently, I explored the literature of community engagement, community-university research partnerships and the literature of assessing these partnerships. I made connections between the literature and observed practices, and I noted my own stream of thoughts, questions and wonderings in my research journals. It became apparent that the field of assessing partnership structures is an emergent one and developing the tools to assess the impact of community-university research partnership structures was a timely challenge across institutional and community based structures. There was strong interest and support from the people who participate in the daily work and guidance of the OCBR; all agreed on the value of this study and a collective commitment was collaboratively formalised by recognising, in the OCBR 2010-2013 Service Plan, that a combination of evaluation tools, as proposed by my study, was
needed to address the impact of the work being conducted in and through the Office. The culmination of this study would be an impact assessment framework focused on identifying and assessing the impact of the OCBR and community-university research partnership support structures.

There was also strong interest in the study beyond the research site of the OCBR and the University of Victoria. My understanding of impact and impact assessment in the field has been informed and developed through my writing for publications, presentations, facilitation and discussion at conferences within local, provincial, national and international contexts. In addition, my role as Research Co-ordinator and Research Officer for the Global Alliance on Community Engaged Research also focused on impact assessment in the field across international community and university spaces.

There have been formal procedures that have been required for this study. After writing my candidacy exams, I wrote my doctoral proposal and successfully completed my oral defence of my proposal. I received Ethics Approval for conducting 18 key informant interviews (see Appendix C). I conducted these interviews over the course of seven months. I listened to and typed my interview transcripts verbatim. Subsequently, I began to work with the transcripts and entered the analysis phase while keeping current with the literature. I worked on analysis and writing phases in consultation with my doctoral supervisors and committee members.

**Study Participants**

The key informant participants in this study were included either on a voluntary basis or through invitation. Each participant signed a consent form (Appendix B).
Consistent with my ethics application, invitations to participants were extended verbally within formal presentations and discussions, as well as individually. Selection was purposive in order to represent a cross-section of voices from the following groups: students, staff, faculty, administrators, formal leaders of civil society organisations, informal leaders within the university and civil society organisations, funders, community-based researchers and community partners. The eighteen key informant participants in this study were an even mix of male and female. Eight participants were associated primarily with the University of Victoria on a long-term basis, while ten participants were associated primarily with civil society organisations on a long-term basis.

Participants worked and lived within local, regional, national and international communities. Participants were involved in formal or informal organisational leadership roles within the University of Victoria and/or within civil society organisations and/or within local/regional governance. They engaged locally, regionally, Canada-wide and internationally with varying foci. Participants were a sample of the people already engaging with the OCBR and could therefore speak to the work, relations and inform elements of an impact assessment framework related to the OCBR.

Ethics and Trustworthiness

Maintaining good relations, trust and respect are critical in community-university research partnerships, in the work of the OCBR and in the engaged research approaches of this study. According to Ball (2008), “strong relationships of trust, nurtured from the inception of a project, are the backbone for ongoing negotiation of ethical practice in
partnership research” (p. 11). Marshall and Rossman (2011), also connect ethics with
trust in the broader spectrum of qualitative research, emphasising that ethical concerns
and trustworthiness are intricately connected. Such connections contribute to a key
practice of trustworthiness, which creates a strong, detailed evidence trail (Lincoln &
Guba, 1985).

Developing good relationships was a major part of my entry point into this
research study. The entry point of this study began through a mutual interest between
myself and the Director of the OCBR, to study impact. Discussions with the OCBR full-
time and contract staff; and the Steering Committee about a possible OCBR impact study
began before the study was formalised. There was interest from those who participate in
the daily work and direction of the OCBR, and all agreed on the value of this study. Such
agreement has contributed to positive interactions and an understanding that the
participatory approaches of this study converge with the approaches used in the work of
the OCBR. I spent time attending OCBR workshops, short and long term planning
meetings, initiatives, seminars, Steering Committee meetings, institutes, conferences and
courses directly and indirectly related to the work of the OCBR. Consistent and
prolonged involvement in several areas related to the work of the OCBR enabled me to
foster positive relations and trust.

Deeper and broader relationships of trust and respect contributed to my prolonged
engagement in the field. Building, developing and maintaining good, honest and
respectful relationships in all settings inform ethics as being “more than a set of
principles or abstract rules that sit as an overarching entity guiding our research … Ethics
exist in our actions and our ways of doing and practicing our research; we perceive ethics to be always in progress, never to be taken for granted, flexible and responsive to change” (Davies & Dodd, 2002, p. 281). For me, cultural and intercultural sensitivities and knowledge were integral to my interaction with people. There are aspects of institutional culture that are embedded within procedures and practices across the university and also vary from unit to unit, which are taken-for-granted and relatively invisible to those who work primarily within the university. These practices and procedures seem foreign and confusing to those who function outside higher education institutions and to those who function outside particular units within the university. Since I was re-entering higher education after a long time, I was quite sensitive to some of the cultural and intercultural tensions and challenges being experienced between people and groups who were university-based and community-based. This involved the kind of language being used, processes, protocols, and the myriad of areas to negotiate when transitioning from community-life to university-life. My transition in many ways contributed to my insight and my connection to people who worked outside and inside the university as I heard different positions being expressed. Due to my personal, professional and volunteer background, education and experience, I had a lot in common with people who worked in community organisations and within settings addressing issues concerning people groups who are considered marginalised and/or particularly vulnerable or oppressed within our society. My unique position and experience contributed to developing trust through varied interactions.
At no time during my research study did I perceive ethics as separate from my daily practice, isolated to my approved ethics form and process (Davies & Dodd, 2002). I completed my ethics review forms and procedures in and ethics approval was granted on June 29, 2010. Each year, I renewed my ethics certificate to provide me with the opportunity to make any changes that may arise. I continued to renew the certificate to the end of the study.

**Confidentiality and Limitation.** Study participants either volunteered by speaking with me individually or were invited personally, by me, to participate as key informants (interview participants). As indicated on the invitation letter and in person, even though interview participants would be anonymous, there would still be a possibility that participants could be identified due to the sample size and the fact that many people who interact with and within the OCBR may be connected to each other by their work in related or other partnerships. I also communicated to interview participants that I would put measures in place when writing that would limit identification of individuals such as grouping responses together without any identifiers. Some interview participants were open to having their names used, while others appreciated confidentiality and measures to maintain anonymity. Those for whom the limitation on confidentiality would present discomfort, were not interviewed. The limitation on confidentiality was clearly disclosed verbally and in writing through the formal invitation to participate in this study and the
consent form was signed by each participant. Despite all efforts, the limitation on confidentiality exists and this was understood by all interview participants.

**Validity in this qualitative research study.** There is consensus in the literature that qualitative genres vary and the same holds true about the validity of qualitative research. Validity criteria in qualitative research also vary. In this section, drawing from the way Shenton (2004) has organised his article, I will discuss the validity of this study in terms of credibility, transferability and dependability.

**Credibility.** According to Lincoln and Guba (1995), one of the most important factors in ensuring credibility is to establish trustworthiness. Developing trustworthiness has been central to this study. Respectful and trustworthy relationships were established through prolonged engagement in field and local, regional, national and international engagement in the field. In fact, familiarity and relationships were developed before the key informant interviews were conducted. This established rapport contributed to open and honest dialogue during in-context immersion and during interviews.

Triangulation, according to Denzin (1986), is the “use of multiple methods ... to partially overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigation or one method” (p. 236). Major methods of investigation and data collection strategies such as observation and key informant interviews, contributed to the possibility for greater credibility. Engaging a diverse and broad range of participants is also considered another form of triangulation. According to Shenton (2004), “individual viewpoints and experiences can
be verified against others and, ultimately, a rich picture ... may be constructed based on the contributions of a range of people” (p. 66).

Throughout the research process I have engaged in ongoing reflexivity with the aim of constantly keeping participants as the dominant voices in the study. I have consistently articulated this process as my praxis to the extent that praxis has acted as an approach to my inquiry and to assessment within the context of this study.

**Transferability and dependability.** Although the direction of this study is the design and development of an impact assessment framework, for consideration and contribution to the field, it is difficult for me to ascertain how it will transfer into contexts outside of this study. However, through thick description and contextual information I have aimed to facilitate understanding of the study, findings and conclusions. Lincoln and Guba (1985) draw close ties between credibility and dependability through methods that overlap with each other such as key informant interviews and participant-observation. In this study, there is overlap in the methods of inquiry as being participatory methods informing the methods of investigation, which are also closely connected. Dependability can also be ascertained through this chapter having outlined details to provide an understanding of the research practices and procedures followed.

Validity is not dependent on the use of certain techniques (Cho & Trent, 2006), according to Marshall and Rossman (2011), “the question of validity in itself is convergent with the way the researcher self-reflects, both explicitly and implicitly, upon the multiple dimensions in which the inquiry is conducted” (p. 42). This chapter and dissertation is an articulation, a thick description, of the multiple dimensions of this study
as well as representing my process as the researcher, which attempts to convey to the reader the credibility and dependability of the study.

**Evolution of the Research Questions**

The fundamental questions in this study centre on how people interpret impact and impact assessment within the context of the OCBR, a community-university research partnership support structure within a university. The broad research question asked in my doctoral proposal was: How can we determine the impact of community-university research partnership structures such as the OCBR within the university and within local, regional, national and international communities? (Lall, 2010). This research question was formulated through a review of the literature and in-context immersion with the OCBR and related settings. Questions that led to the formulation of the broad research question were: What kind of impact are community-university research partnerships making toward creating vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities? How does the OCBR add value to what community-based researchers have already been doing? What difference does the OCBR make to the institution and to the community stakeholders? These specific questions stem from the mandate of the OCBR to facilitate collaborative community-university research and partnerships that enhance the quality of life and the economic, environmental and social well-being of communities (OCBR Service Plan, 2009).

In order to investigate the broad research question, the following question needed to be asked: What combination of tools can be used to determine the impact of the OCBR? This key question reflected the use of recently developed tools and frameworks
in combination, as an approach to assessment and measurement activities in the field as discussed in contemporary publications. The growing body of literature provided some insights into this question but there was no related framework focused on determining the impact of a CURP support structure like the OCBR. In addition, the phrase that I used in the research questions, ‘determine the impact’, needed to be deconstructed into two parts, identifying impact and assessing and/or measuring impact. In fact, the terms impact, impact assessment and measuring impact were used often in the literature and in various types of written material across the field (secondary data, reports, websites), but these terms were not usually explained or defined and at times seemed to be used interchangeably.

The deeper I investigated, the more I experienced the challenge of trying to grasp an understanding of impact, impact assessment, measuring impact and their relationships. Through their experience in developing the REAP assessment tool, Pearce, Pearson and Cameron (2007), also articulated one of my challenges, “At this stage, some means of highlighting the importance of the difficult-to-measure elements needs to be developed. However, it is important to avoid the opposite problem of confusing the measurement of impact with impact itself” (p. 35). I consciously and unconsciously toggled back and forth, between what it means to assess the impact of the OCBR and the impact of the OCBR itself. One of the questions I have had to constantly ask myself throughout this study is: Does ‘x’ inform identifying impact and/or demonstrating impact and/or assessing impact? Though intricately connected, it is necessary to understand each separately. In the same way as the lines between outcomes, effects and impact are not
distinct (Hart et al., 2009), these impact concepts also overlap. This led me to another set of questions focused on explicating impact, which arose during my analysis phase that needed to be addressed.

The terms assessment and measurement were also used interchangeably in the literature as well as in other written material related to the field of study. I tried to find distinctions between the use of the terms assessment and measurement, since they were both being used frequently with some increase in the use of the term ‘measurement’ or ‘measuring tool’. I could see no difference, however, between these qualitative measurement tools in calling them tools of assessment. There were no explanations of the use of these terms in their contexts. Since both terms have similar general definitions, I decided to use the term, ‘assessment’ when writing most of my dissertation since the aim of the study proposed in the doctoral proposal through the literature and in-context immersion and consolidated through the key informant interviews remained the design and development of an impact assessment framework. However, through the research, analysis and writing processes, I came to clarify some difference between the two concepts and included both in the elements of the impact assessment and measurement framework.

Returning to the discussion on the need to explicate impact and impact assessment, the need to conceptually consolidate impact and impact assessment came to the fore during the analysis phase of this study. Interview participants were very impact and impact-documentation focused, concurrently the literature and field was becoming more impact focused. Therefore, the fragmentation of these concepts in the context of
this study needed to be consolidated. One method of analysis was to ask the following questions that were already being asked and examined through this study, but were not consolidated:

- What is impact/What does impact mean in the context of OCBR type structures?
- What does impact include? E.g. assessment, measurement …. (Impact is …)
- To whom does assessing impact matter?
- Why does assessing impact matter?
- To what end does assessing impact matter?
- What can be assessed? What can be measured?
- What’s the relationship between the two? Parallel? Intersect?
- Where do they converge? Where do they diverge?

Some of these questions were of utmost importance to interview participants, while others were helpful to articulate as I became more and more immersed in the process of analysis and writing. Congruent with the methods of inquiry, the study became more consolidated through the evolution of research questions stemming from the broad research question. The OCBR was foundational as the case and the context to inform the design and development of an impact assessment framework. In working toward designing and developing an impact assessment framework, determining impact included identifying impact, demonstrating impact, assessing impact and measuring impact. Conceptually, these became increasingly blurry at times and clearer at other times. Staying on course meant revisiting the research questions, the literature and the data while maintaining the one direction of designing the impact assessment framework as
determined by interview participants and those engaged in practice, as having utmost importance and value.
Part 5: Method of Analysis

Grounded Theory

The methods of analysis of this study are informed by grounded theory (Charmaz 2006; Strauss & Corbin 1997). Theory generated through this study is grounded in the data and constructed through the analysis of data. Campbell and Gregor (2002) describe the ongoing process of analysis as including an understanding of what else the data make visible and whose priorities and interests are being reflected in the data. This ongoing process occurs, “little by little, from picking at the pieces of data and writing them up, the full argument is made” (p. 100). It is in this way, the process of analysis has occurred throughout this study. Each method of investigation required analysis to adjust strategies, to focus and re-focus depending on emerging ideas being checked. Decisions throughout the study were made using various analytical strategies to check propositions, name, classify, link and wade through the myriad and density of these processes (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

In my doctoral proposal (2010), I discussed the beginning stages of my approach to analysis, which included placing the standpoint of people who “occupy the everyday world as the study problematises it” (Campbell & Gregor, 2002, p. 101) at the centre of the analysis. My initial analysis of the literature and in-context immersion led to identifying the lack of a suitable impact assessment framework for community-university research partnership support structures.
In this section, I will explain the processes that informed my analytical decisions through this study. This includes how I organised the data, my immersion process in the data, coding the data, deductive and inductive approaches used, praxis as a lens of analysis, the process of developing the impact assessment framework prototype and elements of the refined impact assessment and measurement framework. I consider this framework as a theoretical and conceptual framework grounded in the data of this study.

Organising the Data

It was not until I began to organise the pieces of data into sets, that I realised the magnitude and volume of ‘the data’. I organised and reorganised my field notes and research journal entries according to stages of the study. They were mainly hand-written with some committed to soft copy files. At times, I found that when I typed my hand-written notes connections were easier to make, however the best method to organise data in order to determine both patterns and gaps were to consolidate data on large sheets of chart paper with colour-coded markers.

Having amassed countless documents in files related to OCBR, UVic, local, regional, national and international connections closely and loosely related to the study, these needed to be organised and reorganised according to various stages of the study. Physical file folders and transparent bins kept hard copies accessible and moveable, while soft copy files were organised on the computer.

I conducted face-to-face key informant interviews with individual consent to use a digital audio recording device. I received individual consent from every interview participant. I also kept a copy of the questions with me and gave a copy to the interview
participant. My note-taking varied, depending on the duration of the interview and whether it kept a systematic flow or ebbed and flowed as a discussion format. Most of my notes acted as triggers for further clarification from the interview participant to make sure that I understood what was being communicated. Notes also reflected some of the main concepts that interview participants and I were trying to work through in our discussion.

**Transcripts**

I transcribed all interviews verbatim. I wrote what I heard, listening countless times to include tone, feeling, expression and anything relevant from my interview notes. I also included, ‘Nirmala’s Note’, which meant something I wanted to add that I remembered from the interview experience. In some cases, during interviews, I was asked to turn off the audio recording device and readily complied. I was then told when I could resume recording. The reason I was asked to turn off the device, was because the information being shared was not yet widely disseminated and needed to remain confidential for a relatively short period of time. However, I have not included any confidential disclosures even though information was only confidential for brief period of time. I only transcribed what was on the audio recording device. I transcribed interviews at different times, making an attempt to transcribe shortly after the interview was conducted. Interviews were conducted in many different places, varying from interview participants’ offices and homes. I also booked a library room and a room at the Halpern Graduate Centre when needed. A minimal number of interviews were conducted at the OCBR at the request of interview participants.
Once I completed listening to and typing all transcripts, I listened to the audio recording files to check for any gaps or inaccuracies. These were noted then revised on transcript files that are called, ‘master files’. Hard copies of these files were printed and also labelled ‘master files’. I worked with a set of transcripts, which I called my ‘working copies’. I read and re-read the transcripts to get a sense of them as a whole. I listened through reading without noting. After having a sense of comfort with the set of transcripts as a whole I began to make notes in my research journal. Then I began noting on the transcripts themselves, shifting back and forth from the individual to the whole. Each round of notes on the individual working copies were noted in a different colour pen. This was my initial form of coding.

**Deductive and Inductive approaches**

My initial form of coding was very open-ended. I noted particular phrases, language, tensions, concepts, challenges, barriers, ideals, aha moments, what made people excited or distressed, I coded everything I could possibly code. That being an inexhaustible exercise, I began to read through my own writing of the study, my proposal, research questions, field notes, research journal notes and started to formulate the direction that I had set for the study through my proposal. I reviewed the literature and tried to see the direction being set through the data. In addition, I read and scanned my notes related to all of the OCBR related documents (as outlined in Part 3 of this chapter) that I had been using and reading to this point in the study.

In retrospect, that was too large an undertaking and seemed to create more confusion than clarity because I was focusing on too many paths. I re-read the transcripts
multiple times over a duration of time with a focus on listening to participant voices as a whole. I was reminded as I read the transcripts that the expressed value of this study to the people within my in-context immersion setting was an impact assessment framework in order to determine the impact of the OCBR. As the researcher, I was trying to integrate the knowledge and wisdom of those who I interviewed and those who are represented in the literature, to design an impact assessment framework for structures that support community-university research partnerships, with the OCBR as the case.

When I returned to the transcripts, I saw, heard and felt, that all interview participants not only discussed their experiences with the OCBR, they also spoke about and drew from their vast experiences with many structures/units within the university and within communities, financial institutions, NGOs, non-profits, working with government at the municipal and provincial levels, working with funding agencies and councils locally, provincially and nationally. It was the collective experience, wisdom and knowledge that I value as a researcher that would contribute in a unique way to designing an impact assessment for structures that support community-university research partnerships. The OCBR was an intentional community-university research partnership support structure within the University of Victoria. For all interview participants, the OCBR was the structure that connected them as interview participants in this study but they were also connected to a whole network of structures that contributed to facilitating the work of community-university research partnerships.

**Creating Data Clusters.** The process of trying to understand what the data were saying was taking too many directions. However, once I began to create data clusters
around the key concepts, this deductive approach helped me to draw out six data clusters. I have included the graphic representation of these six data clusters at the end of this section. I wrote details relevant to these data clusters according what interview participants said, taking each cluster and cutting and pasting using the transcripts. In trying to develop these clusters and subsequently frame them as themes, I continually summarised and consolidated on large sheets of chart paper, using markers of different colours to group concepts and lines to create connections and links. I also created an uncountable number of charts and matrices and networks to uncover relationships and patterns. I tried to frame the six clusters as themes. Once I began that process, I was able to integrate the six themes into three and started to work with the three main themes. This search for themes led to a deeper inductive approach of theme development and interpretation, which I will discuss following the data cluster figures.

**Data Cluster Graphics.** The following figures are seven data cluster graphics. The clusters each contain a key core question or investigative statement representing a deconstruction of questions asked in this study and a consolidation of discussions relating to key informant interview questions. The seven core questions/statements are:

- Value of designing an impact assessment framework for structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnership structures
- Relationships: community life impact and institutional impact
- What does partnering mean in the context of the research process?
- Knowledge
• Key considerations when designing an impact assessment framework for structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnerships

• How do you figure out the impact of the OCBR?

• Challenges

Figure 2: Data Cluster 1
Figure 3: Data Cluster 2
What does partnering mean in the context of research process?

Cluster 3

What is community-university partnership knowledge? hybrid, applied, fertile place for transformation,

What is knowledge? storytelling, education, relationships

Knowledge

Cluster 4

What’s the purpose of gaining knowledge from communities and universities? So we can live together in good relationship with each other, the land and environment

How do you gain, use and present knowledge gained from communities and universities (separately and together)? In an honourable and respectful way.
Use and present in different ways to different audiences

Figure 4: Data Cluster 3

Figure 5: Data Cluster 4
Figure 6: Data Cluster 5
Cluster 6

Ask/Answer questions that reflect on OCBR practices & the role of the OCBR

Ask/Answer questions about OCBR building partner capacity

Identify the complexities around relationship building
- Meet/greet
- Engagement
- Access to connect
- Establishing Relationships

Ask/Answer questions about the impact of building capacity for CBR and partnerships

Ask/Answer questions about policy impact

Integrate impact assessment framework as planning tool

Challenges:
- We know there's change and impact but how do we show it?
- Different tools to show different things - what do we use?
- Logic models don't make the leap to impact

How do you figure out the impact of the OCBR?
Figure 8: Data Cluster 7

These data clusters are my interpretation of a consolidation of interview participants’ thoughts, ideas and perspectives. Since this is my interpretation, I tried to be very careful in referring to the transcripts to make sure that I was representing interview participants as accurately as possible.
Getting to dominant themes

I began to work on developing each cluster. The more I toggled between the clusters and transcripts the more I saw that three dominant strands were repeatedly surfacing: the value and design of an impact assessment framework for systematic structures that support community-university research partnerships within universities such as the OCBR, the expressed urgent need for a framework to address impact, and the richness of contributions toward designing the impact assessment framework. Interview participants seemed to also have a lot of the answers to questions they were posing, especially in addressing challenges. For example, even though there was perplexity around how to demonstrate impact in the ‘Challenge’ cluster, there were many suggestions in the ‘How do you figure out the impact of the OCBR?’ cluster and many key considerations as to how to design an impact assessment framework. Relationship building featured heavily throughout all the clusters and the need to shift away from the tools that interview participants were currently using was emphasised. I drew out quotes and conversation excerpts to represent participant voices. I narrowed the dominant ideas down to:

- Value of the impact assessment framework
- Use a variety of strategies, tools and measures to address impact in an integrated way

These dominant ideas also included strong convictions around what was working for interview participants in their respective fields and what was not working. These two dominant ideas could also contain common threads throughout the interviews. I was
continually overwhelmed by the richness of their contributions through their wisdom, experience, intellect, and deep thoughts around the things that I thought deeply about that were directly and indirectly related to this study.

I framed the first dominant idea as a dominant data theme but I found the second dominant idea extremely difficult to frame as a dominant theme since it was more of a statement. Eventually, after much angst, I framed the second dominant theme more accurately as: impact assessment as a challenging process within complex contexts such as CURP support structures. This theme encompassed the challenges raised by interview participants related to the use of a variety of strategies and tools to address impact, as well as other challenges expressed that were common threads throughout the interviews. In addition, this theme also related to participants’ strong convictions.

**Using the lens of praxis in analysis**

During the process of this study, I kept a graphic of the praxis cycle using various lenses (microscope, magnifying glass, binoculars and telescope), which read, “Praxis is a way of being and acting in the world” (inspired by Freire, 1996). The reason I chose to stay connected to the cycle of praxis is because it is the best way for me to think and learn with clarity. I realised that due to my own propensity to analyse everything, I was challenged by the need to draw back from the process of analysis to find deeper ways of listening to interview participants during the analysis stage of the study. I listened with ease when I worked with the transcripts and focused only on interview participants. However, once other layers such as literature and my thinking as a result of other methods of investigation were added, my analytical flow would become too dominant.
The lens of praxis reminded me continually pull away from the details and to listen and look at the whole as well as shift from a broader view to a more detailed view. This process also served me well when I became stuck due to saturation. The use of the graphic representing various lenses continually connected me to my personalised version of the cycle of praxis as being a process of placing and re-placing myself (a form of reflexivity), reflecting and analysing, making decisions, acting on them and then reflecting as I moved through the cycle (Arnold et al., 1991; Freire, 1970).

Each process in the cycle is not sequential, it is quite messy. The graphic drew my attention to locating my present process, my previous processes and helped me to determine a way forward. Working through the process of analysis through data findings, generating data clusters and themes using the cycle of praxis helped me to begin to unravel and understand how to frame the various areas of my study that were so intricately connected and so difficult to tease apart.

One the most challenging aspects for me to continually separate and integrate was to maintain the direction of designing an impact assessment framework while trying to apply learning drawn from how impact was being demonstrated across CURP support structures. This was combined with trying to represent and interpret how interview participants were discussing both the impact assessment framework and their work with CURP support structures.

I eventually came to realise that I was travelling two paths leading in one direction through an iterative and recursive process. My review of the literature served as a conceptual framework to begin to understand CURP support structures and how they
were demonstrating impact through the use of various tools and measures. The data proved to be a conceptual framework to explore, investigate and examine impact and impact assessment toward the development of elements of impact assessment, which suggested a theoretical framework consisting of these elements. In this way, my study is contributing to theory that is grounded in data through a process of social construction. In the next section I will discuss the process of developing an impact assessment framework.

Using the impact assessment framework prototype as an analytical framework

Developing an impact assessment framework prototype has been discussed as a method of investigation in this study. In this section, I will discuss my journey to deciding upon the prototype as a framework for my analysis. As I conducted key informant interviews, listened to the audio recordings and read transcripts, I realised that participants’ contributions based on designing and developing an impact assessment framework were not limited to their responses in the prototype section of the interview. Therefore, I needed to listen in a deeper way to what interview participants were offering across the entire interview and interview set, related to impact and impact assessment. Once I started to listen more deeply, I got an overall sense that there was commonality across interviews informing impact as an ongoing stream, not as a one-off event that could be plugged into a chart and then identified as an impact. I also heard that there were certain desirable conditions that participants thought would contribute to impact. Since these contributions were scattered across individual interviews and the interviews as a whole, I spent a lot of time and charting trying to make sense and meaning of what I
thought I was hearing. Since the literature suggested categories as a framework, I decided it would be valuable to connect participants’ contributions with categories.

I finally rested on a two-pronged approach to organising the data. The first prong focused on drawing out themes from the data that converged and differed from the literature. This process placed interview participants’ broad contributions at the centre of findings and analysis. The second prong situated the interview participants’ contributions about impact and the impact assessment framework prototype framework at the centre of findings and analysis.

Working toward the direction of designing and developing an impact assessment framework that would reflect the experiences, wisdom and knowledge of interview participants meant that I had to gather all of their contributions related to impact and the impact assessment framework. These contributions were scattered across the transcripts where they were often embedded in discussions that stemmed from interview question responses and discussion that were not necessarily related to the impact assessment framework prototype line of questioning. Using the prototype as a framework for analysis worked well because interview participants had a lot to contribute and it was challenging to capture and organise it all coherently. It was at this point that I integrated categories from the literature in order to analyse the data. The categories from the literature served as a way to consolidate the data. I drew five categories from the literature and analysed the data according to these categories.
Proposing an Impact assessment framework

The next step in my analysis involved addressing and consolidating my interpretation of what I heard interview participants saying about impact. These interpretations started at the point of listening to the audio recordings and reading transcripts, which continued as the study progressed. I continued to return to the transcripts and considered the study as a whole through methods of inquiry, investigation and working with the study while keeping in tune with impact and the impact assessment landscape across the field. I wove these interpretations into my analysis related to the categories as they were further developed through data analysis. I offer the following examples. I reframed the literature category called ‘impacts on future research’ to ‘impacts on current and future research’ based on interview participants’ experiences. In turn, this reframing process informed my theorisation of impact as both a present and future reality. By investigating the category, ‘impacts on policy’ I consolidated discussions in both the literature and by interview participants as being long-term and difficult to track. This informed my theorisation of points of impact based interview participants’ observations of multiple indications of impact, which when viewed collectively indicated that impact occurred within certain faculties related to the change of tenure and promotion criteria to validate methodologies used by community-based researchers. The sense that I had about impact being perceived as a stream and conditions of impact when first listening to the interviews as a whole were also consolidated along with the connection of intention and impact. Embracing both terms, ‘assessment and measurement’ through the process of this study, I have been able to grasp a better
understanding of these concepts; to the point of renaming the impact assessment framework, an Impact Assessment and Measurement Framework (IAMF). Explicating impact is one of the most interesting findings of this study because it is the gap in the literature and in practice that I have been wondering about throughout this study and throughout my career as an educator.

These layers of analysis are consolidated in the elements of impact assessment, which can be framed as theory grounded in data through the process of social construction (Charmaz, 2006). I conclude this ‘Method of Analysis’ section by proposing the process of assessment as praxis. I formulated this thought while writing an article for the journal, *Rhizoma Freieano* (Lall, 2011) and it has served as an approach in this study.

**Proposing Impact Assessment as Praxis**

Using praxis as a lens of inquiry has been a common approach for me in my craft as a learner and teacher. During this study I proposed assessing impact as praxis. As beings of praxis, we engage in a process of transformation (Freire, 1996a, p. 106). At the core this is “human activity – action and reflection, it is praxis; it is transformation of the world” (Freire, 1996a, p. 106). I propose impact assessment as praxis since the process of assessing impact through this study embeds the action of critical reflection and critical dialogue into all aspects and stages of assessment, from entry point through the research process and through the iterative cycle of ongoing implementation, research, action and reflection. Impact assessment as praxis complements the methods of inquiry, methods of investigation, design and facilitation of this study.
Marullo et al. (2003) offer a community-based research model that supports assessment as a critical feedback loop, which can be described as one aspect of praxis. Their critical feedback loop begins with and continuously shapes the social change initiative and the assessment work for the betterment of those who are marginalised. They describe the assessment as being:

analogous to a reflective process through which social change actors and advocates articulate their change goals and formulate the criteria with which they will evaluate the successes and failures of change efforts. This in turn guides the actors in rethinking their change efforts, influencing whether and how their further efforts should be modified (p. 58).

Considerations offered by those engaging in assessment cycles derived from the community-based research model include: the seemingly unlimited variables that are at work in the process requiring community and university partners to establish focal points and priorities; the difference in status and power between partners and the way their respective world view and ways of knowing are validated or invalidated; and a shared understanding that marginalised groups have unique and valid understandings of power relations within institutions and how they maintain injustice and inequity through their status quo and work to promote social change through social justice and equity (Marullo et al., 2003). These considerations are congruent with engaging in an assessment process that involves the action-reflection cycle toward transformation. This is assessment as praxis.
The lens of praxis has informed all aspects of this study. When applied to the process of the design and development of an impact assessment and the process of implementing the impact assessment framework, it has the potential to identify and assess transformation, and it has the potential to shift the way impact is perceived, determined and assessed. Impact is about change and transformation, so it seems fitting that the impact assessment and measurement framework could be viewed as a tool with the potential to be a catalyst for transformation.

Concluding Thoughts

I have discussed the methodology of this study in five parts. I have discussed the roots of the study through connecting my roles as educator and researcher in my quest to explicate impact. I have come to deeply appreciate the complexities and necessity of engaging participatory methods of inquiry, even though I have only just scratched the surface. Having the opportunities to ground myself in the local, regional, national and global contexts of building community-university relationships and research partnerships are invaluable in conducting this study. It is through these relationships that the study developed and its direction decided at several crossroads. Each part of this chapter reflects complexities and challenges of the process of gaining an understanding of impact and impact assessment, in the context of community-university research partnership structures, as co-constructed through the literature, study participants and myself, the researcher.
This chapter represents different parts along the journey from the entry point of this study, to the proposal of an impact assessment and measurement framework and the articulation of theorising elements of impact assessment grounded in the data.
Chapter 4: Emerging Themes and Considerations of Impact Assessment

In this chapter, I will focus on emerging themes and considerations in the data. I will discuss how the perspectives of the research participants both converge and differ from several key themes in the literature. First I will contextualise and explain the use of the terms, ‘impact assessment’ and ‘impact assessment framework’ in this chapter. Then I will offer a few related points drawn out of the literature review before moving into a thorough discussion of the emerging themes and considerations in the data.

References to ‘impact assessment’ and ‘impact assessment framework’

References to the impact assessment framework in this chapter are based on participants’ reflection of an impact framework prototype, which I developed following my initial review of the literature and shared with participants during interviews. Although chapter five is dedicated to interview participants’ discussions about and contributions toward designing and developing the impact assessment framework based on the prototype, reference to the impact assessment framework occurred throughout all interviews. I have been specific in my writing process to include the instances when interview participants are referring specifically to the impact assessment framework and when interview participants are referring to the process of impact assessment.

Brief Insights from the Literature

As discussed in chapter two, a combination of tools and approaches are applied to determining and assessing the impact of different types of community-university research partnerships (CURP) support structures. These approaches are emerging, evolving and
challenging. No single approach can be fully applied outside of its intended context (Garlick & Langworthy, 2008; Gelmon, Seifer, Kauper-Brown & Mikkelsen, 2005; Hart, Northmore, & Gerhardt, 2008, Holland & Ramaley, 2008, Pearce, Pearson, & Cameron, 2007). Time and effort are being invested by people within the CURP field to engage collaboratively in the research and practice of determining and assessing impact.

Emerging Themes and Considerations

I have identified two dominant themes where perspectives of research participants and the literature converge. The first dominant theme addresses the value of assessing impact of structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnerships (CURP). The second dominant theme addresses impact assessment as a challenging process within such complex contexts as CURP support structures. After discussing these two themes, I then describe how the participants identified issues that are not highlighted in the literature. Participants offer strong convictions about impact assessment as an iterative process and an integrative process. Participants are also convinced that the question of “Whose view do you use to assess impact?” must be considered as well as relationship building complexities. I summarise these ideas in the sections that follow.

First Dominant Theme: Value of Assessing Impact

The first dominant theme reflecting convergence of the data and the literature is that it is valuable to address the impact of structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnerships at the community-university research
partnership project level, the university support structure level, the multi-institutional level and research council level. Research participants addressed the value of assessing impact in the following ways: ensure relationships meet mutual needs; access and use resources wisely; equip people who work in community and university to inform policy; examine and improve practice; and rethink goals. I will discuss each of these separately with respective links between the data and the literature.

Ensure relationships meet mutual needs, particularly the community.

Interview participants within this study emphasised that impact assessment would be valuable to “ensure that the relationships that are created meet the needs of the non-profit sector and the needs of the university” (Participant 2). In particular, the potential of the impact assessment framework being developed through this study, as discussed in chapter three, could be used to provide evidence for mutual benefit to community organisations and researchers. One example of evidence that could be included in an impact assessment framework is that:

collaborations have led to stronger programming, which could increase dollars for the organisations that ultimately benefit the people accessing the programs and assist researchers in applying the work that they do with community to their list of academic achievements and get them better linked with the community (Participant 2).
Interview participants also expressed that using an impact assessment framework could potentially identify and assess impact on the community. This was expressed through experiences where the:

- community is studied many times and sometimes they know what the outcome is and, sometimes they don't know; community groups, NGOs, business whoever you're working with, this [impact assessment framework] can help them to really move forward and help to sort out and prioritise connections you never knew in communities....it can be very profound.

(Participant 18)

Meeting the mutual needs of both community and university within community-university research partnerships are discussed broadly in the literature as the concept of reciprocity (Hart, Maddison, & Wolff, 2007; Pearce, Pearson, & Cameron, 2007).

**Account for using resources wisely.** A common thread expressed throughout participant interviews is that it is necessary to account for using resources wisely by demonstrating “what programs are important because this is the impact that they are making ... and also to report that we're not wasting your money” (Participant 7). It is important to note that these concerns likely emanate from a combination of the shifting economic realities of cutbacks affecting community organisations, shrinking funding sources, and how that was affecting CURP support spaces within the university and community. Research participants articulated that with less resources from which to
draw, it would be useful and necessary for an impact assessment framework to provide a way to demonstrate accountability and their wise use of resources.

Connected to the interview participants’ understanding of accountability, the need to justify the work of the OCBR was linked with demonstrating impact:

We really need justification to continue the work at so many different levels. We need to justify to the university that it [OCBR] has value. We need to justify for any investment in the work, so through funding and probably at the end of the day we need to each justify to ourselves that this work is important because I think people want to put their time and energy into something that has impact (Participant 9).

Accounting for and justifying the wise use of resources were also connected to the value of an impact assessment framework by a funder representative who expressed, “[we] have put money in but where does it go from there?” (Participant 14).

Interview participants connected the value of assessing impact using an impact assessment framework with accounting for and justifying their use of resources. In doing so they could justify to themselves and others that their work was important as well as use the impact assessment as supporting evidence to secure funding. Similarly, in the literature, at the CURP project-level within the systematic university structure at Brighton University (CUPP), it became increasingly evident that “funding follows the ability to show impact and results, which puts added value on building such project work around methodologies that facilitate the collection, analysis and dissemination of impact and benefit” (Hall et al., 2013, p. 173).
Examine and improve practice. Some interview participants expressed that assessing impact using a structure such as an impact assessment framework would provide a more consolidated and validated way of reflecting on and improving the practice of people engaged in CURP support work. Participant 1 expressed, “my hope is that your findings will help the university and help those of us doing this kind of work to know how improve, to do these things better; we need to have processes in place where we can reflect on our practices, and concretely identify what some of the impacts are”. The importance of using an impact assessment framework to examine and reflect on practice was expressed through the following questions and concerns, “right now with all the cuts economically where are they going to first look at, because we [OCBR] haven't established a baseline; What has happened over the four years? What have we learned and what have we done to address that?” (Participant 4). Another interview participant (Participant 17) connected one aspect of ‘what happened in the OCBR over the past four years’ to what could be learned through the work of relationship building. This participant suggested that “at the micro level, before starting the program, the question would be asked: How are we going to build relationships in and through this program?” (Participant 17). In order to determine the answer to this question, this participant suggested that the OCBR make it a point to access existing relationships with people and groups at the university and within the community. Participant 17 continued, the meso level would involve working with the OCBR’s Steering Committee to generate indicators and to discuss community organisation
links for program participants then following up with participants as to how relationships are being built in and through the program. In this way, building relationships could be intentionally integrated into all organisational practices and connected with the impact assessment framework.

This participant provided an example of how to integrate relationship building into organisational practices at the micro and mezzo levels and suggested that this be included in the impact assessment framework.

The literature converges with the data since the literature also focuses on assessing examining and improving practice of the CURP support structure as in the example of CUPP’s evaluations; using assessments that contribute to understanding what works and to engage in better practice for both communities and university being served and serviced through the work of the AUCEA; capturing and assessing gaps between current practice and better/best practices (CUPP and AUCEA); and becoming more intentional about a common understanding of the kind of influence and changes created across the university and community originating through the structure within the university (CUPP and AUCEA).

**Equip to inform policy.** The overall sense in the data is that it is important but difficult to identify impact on policy since the impact may be long-term, and likely not able to be tracked by the community-university research partnership structure. The value of community-university research partnership structures as spaces that equip community groups and organisations with skills and tools to inform policy is not extensively
considered in the existing literature. Given its importance to participants in this study it is articulated in the following way:

At the end of this process is the work that the Office [OCBR] is doing through all its various projects, giving me better tools, or do I feel more capable of going and talking to policy-makers about changes that may be needed? Certainly for homelessness advocates being able to go through a research piece and being able to say at the end of it, this is what the research says and this is where your policy would be valuable ... that would be like a gift that would be fabulous that would be so valuable” (Participant 7).

This needs to be investigated and documented more fully in future studies as it will serve to inform the work and the day to day practices of organisations engaged in tracing impact for CURP support structures.

**Dedicate formal time and space to capture meaning through reflection.** As I indicated earlier in this chapter, I asked participants to reflect on an impact framework prototype, which I developed following my initial review of the literature. As a result of this discussion, the theme of reflection and goal setting was an important belief that the participants expressed. This was a common thread among the participants, who felt that the ‘doing’ of community engagement work tended to dominate their daily activity, and that there was a need to stop, reflect and bring meaning as they consider their work and its significance. Many participants expressed this understanding in various ways by
offering questions such as the following, which may be integrated into the impact assessment framework:

- How do we know if we’re on the right track?
- How do we know what the next steps will be after workshops and connecting people together?
- How do we know what we are doing makes a difference?
- Who is benefitting and how?
- How do we justify to the university and the funders how we are using their resources?”

Interview participants strongly suggested that the impact assessment framework could be used during a dedicated time and space to capture meaning and to contribute to improving goals.

**Second Dominant Theme: Impact assessment is a challenging process within complex contexts such as CURP support structures**

The second dominant theme reflecting convergence of research participants’ perspectives and the literature is that within such complex contexts as community-university research partnership support structures, assessing impact is a challenging process. Research participants discussed impact assessment as a challenging process in the complex context of CURP support structures in the following two areas. First, assessing impact is connected with investigating change and CURP support structures are involved with varied social issues deeply entrenched within established layers and
systems with our society (e.g. homelessness, food security). Second, assessing impact requires a combined approach because the work of CURP support structures is highly context-driven. For example, university-based CURP support structures relate across the local university and across local and regional communities. I summarise interview participants’ discussion about this theme in the sections that follow.

**Assessing impact is connected with investigating change.** Common across the data was the notion and possible correlation between change and impact. This commonality was linked with the understanding of interview participants, that people connected with the OCBR were working with mindsets and methods toward social change. The following phrase combined from what participants said, provide a glimpse into the connection between these two commonalities: We know there is growth, movement and change and we know impact is occurring; that’s what we are working for. Key related questions related were: ‘How do we know change is happening?’, ‘What kind of change is occurring?’, ‘How do we track impact?’, and ‘What kind of impact is occurring?’. These and numerous similar questions were asked in context of OCBR activities and projects, which all focus on socially entrenched issues and the goal of effecting change. For example, there was a sense expressed by many of the interview participants that the Vancouver Island Community Research Alliance (VICRA) and its associated Food project had an impact and was successful but all interview participants who knew of the project expressed the challenge of assessing impact, “there is no way of knowing if we’re creating change and impact” (Participant 10). Questions asked by interview participants along the lines of: “Have we made a difference in/to the various
communities?” (Participant 6) were suggested for me to “be sure you include this as part of your impact assessment framework, it will be important” (Participant 6).

Interview participants were uncertain as to how to capture change and impact. Interview participants expressed an understanding that impact is connected with investigating change and that is especially important since they are dealing with socially entrenched issues where impact is difficult to assess.

Assessing impact requires a combined approach because the work of CURP support structures is highly context-driven. Research participants and the literature share a common understanding that there is no single approach to assessing impact in complex contexts such as community-university research partnerships and their support structures. The data indicate that a combined approach is needed. I have drawn out the following approaches mentioned by interview participants. Interview participants suggested the importance of having a starting point, “some kind of baseline” (Participant 4) in order to know what kind of changes were occurring. The need to track impact was expressed repeatedly as part of an impact assessment process. For example, in the context of the Food Project, there was a sense that impact was occurring and there was a desire to track the impact:

the impact is felt with community people meeting academics and academics meeting community people … getting engaged and moving in the same direction. All of that will have impact over the future because of the connecting together and possibly working together over the future. There will be some impacts’ for sure. I’d like to be able to track that stuff (Participant 10).
My interpretation of what I heard during discussions related to the Food project is that it is important to have ongoing approaches to tracking impact as you see, hear, and feel it occurring. Another approach suggested by interview participants was to take time to critically examine organisational practices asking questions such as “how the purpose and direction of the OCBR align with the choice of projects being sponsored, advocated and represented” (Composite of participant comments). The final approach that I drew from the data is based on suggestions that there is one important question to ask, ‘What succeeded?’ This indicates to me an approach such as using success criteria.

These are some of the approaches suggested by interview participants that could contribute to assessing impact when combined according to the context of the CURP support structure. Having discussed data convergence with the literature through the two dominant themes, I will now discuss how the data differ from the literature.

Despite the fact that the literature spoke at length about outputs, outcomes, indicators and other kinds of logic model concepts and terms to assess and measure, participants did not discuss this in their interviews. This was puzzling to me in my early analysis, because it is so much a part of how the literature written by university scholars discuss approaches to assessment in the field. However, as my analysis continued, I surmised that this points to an important dichotomy between scholars of community engagement and community practitioners. Community practitioners within this study did do not emphasise outputs, outcomes, indicators, and other kinds of logic model concepts and terms; rather, they care about how to consider and engage regularly with activities that show impact. Interview participants offered the following strong convictions: logic
model language is limited, assessing impact is described as an iterative process and it is necessary to integrate ways of documenting impact into the daily work of CURP support structures. I will discuss these strong convictions individually in the following sections.

**Strong Conviction One: Logic model language is limited, assessing impact is described as an iterative process**

When discussing how to capture impact, most interview participants clearly articulated challenges due to the limitations of logic models in identifying and assessing impact. One example was that a number of highly funded and highly anticipated impact assessment projects were never completed because the logic model just could not make the leap to impact (Participant 3). Another interview participant with ongoing experience in developing assessment approaches within a community-based research partnership organisation, described the process as “building a very iterative cycle, not a logic model; it’s a process in action; our work focuses on the processes, processes are more connected to outcomes than actual activities– we use it as program evaluation: formative or developmental; it’s an ongoing shifting thing that continues to grow as we move” (Participant 17). Another interview participant was convinced that, because the people involved in the process of developing assessment criteria for a provincial impact assessment for service providers in a particular sector, were those directly involved in the work, challenges of models that were not effective in the past were minimal (Participant 7). This iterative process included discussions and meetings over time, focused on identifying ways to measure the range of success of service providers’ provision of services. It was the process of being engaged in the meeting discussions and being
engaged in discussing and developing the various ways of measuring that was most helpful to this interview participant, not necessarily the end product. Other participants spoke of impact as a process but these participants connected engagement with identifying and assessing impact assessment as a process in action compared to common and familiar logic models. In other words, the latter two participants’ involvement in being engaged in impact assessment development as ongoing process involved situating themselves, reflecting, analysing, strategising and acting, with the understanding that the cycle is complex and dynamic.

**Strong Conviction Two: Integrate ways of documenting impact into the daily work of CURP support structures**

Connected to the first strong conviction of impact assessment being described as an iterative process, participants were very interested in ensuring that there were multiple forms and ways of documenting impact as an integrated part of their daily work of supporting community-university research partnerships. This was not highlighted in the literature. I am describing these multiple forms and ways of documenting impact as ‘integrated impact-focused documentation’. The voices of participants highlighted a need for integrated impact-focused documentation, which includes: regular impact-focused feedback and telling and recording impact stories.
Regular impact-focused feedback. Participants gave many examples that help to show this emphasis on the need for regularised and formally integrated moments of assessing impact throughout a project. They offered the following examples:

- All the way along trying to write a few things about the impacts; part on your own, part in group, blog, online survey, same format for all (projects, funders, reporting); keep it organised and not hard to manage. Choose reflective topics such as: the impact of meetings (Participant 13)
- Integrate impact statements at meetings (Participant 3)
- Build use of impact assessment framework into projects, funding, reporting (Participant 13)
- Build impact focus into calendars. Build it into contracts, overall evaluation at the project level and organisational level (Participant 9)
- Carve time to spend on reflection questions and use the responses for better practice (Participant 9)
  - What is it I saw happening here?
  - Why does that seem important to me?
  - How do I link it back to what we’re trying to achieve overall?
  - What are some of the key stories ... so we can communicate how successful and justify the work?
  - How can you/we communicate what we’ve learned about the impact that you are having so it can reinforce your work and you can continue your work?
• How do you look at what’s not happening well? – no space to talk about that

• How do we change those things?

  • Use the universal tool. First, how well was this done? Second, how important is it? For example, how important was this project to the community? How well was it done? Includes academic papers. Measure from an effectiveness point of view, a self-determined point of view and an importance point of view (Participant 5)

  • Look at the triple bottom line: impacts on the environment; impacts on society; and profitability of an initiative. Take on the challenge to interpret data for users for media for busy politicians (Participant 18)

To summarise, interview participants suggested building an impact-focus into formal spaces such as meetings, calendars, contracts, and organisational ways of working at the project level. The use of informal online spaces were also suggested such as blogs and surveys. Reflection questions were suggested as well as different types of impacts and interpreting those impacts for ease of use. Participants placed a heavy emphasis on this need for continuous forms of assessment integrated into the collaborative work of the individual projects and the CURP support structure.

**Document impact using stories.** I was surprised by the number of stories participants shared that related to their conviction of the occurrence of impact combined with their perplexity as to how to capture and assess impact. For example, a story was told about hearing an interview on the radio about a particular project where the OCBR was an important catalyst to connecting the researcher and the community and
developing those relationships. The person listening to the interview said that a connection was not made between the person being interviewed and the impact of the OCBR. However, the person listening to the interview made the connection and wondered why the impact was not connected to the OCBR. Both the interviewer and the listener were connected in some way with the OCBR but not a part of the core. Rhetorical questions asked during this interview were, “How can the impact be communicated in these types of stories?” and “Why wasn’t the OCBR’s relationship building role recognised?”. These important questions were not further developed during our interview.

Another example of a story told was that a unique course was developed through the process of the Food Project: “the Food Course came out of community groups’ priority on Food Security – through developing a detailed research agenda – first the CBR agenda with communities was created, partners were funded through the Capacity Project” (Participant 12). All interview participants related to the Food Project were confident that impact occurred among students, impact occurred within the university, through the Project and the course, which “opened up the door for UVic to look internally and externally at food (Participant 12). Participants used story-telling during interviews when discussing impact. One participant who was involved in creating an ‘Impacts Book’ explained that one of the reasons they wrote stories to relate impact was “because it is very hard to compare things that are so disparate. It’s about the stories instead of a metrix. Richness can come through that is accessible to all people (Participant 18). Other interview participants expressed that, “stories are very powerful and illuminative”
(Participant 1) and “stories are important to document and tell so we can communicate how successful and justify the work” (Participant 9). This participant continued by suggesting, “Ask the question regularly: How can you communicate what you’ve learned about the impact you are having so it can reinforce your work and you can continue your work?” (Participant 9). Communicating impact through stories as suggested by interview participants is a powerful and accessible way to describe and share information as well as influence others.

Integrating impact-focused documentation through regular impact-focused feedback and communicating impact through stories suggest an ongoing and integrative approach to assessing impact. The way in which interview participants spoke of the value of designing and implementing an impact assessment framework and concepts related to approaches to assessing impact, seems to indicate their understanding of impact as an ongoing phenomena. If this is the case, then it is important to consider that the process of documenting, identifying and assessing impact should be regular and ongoing. This finding is not found in the literature and will continue to be developed further in subsequent chapters. In addition to dominant themes and convictions, the interview data offer three dominant considerations not highlighted in the literature: build relationships before partnerships, defining community is problematic and the need for cohesion of governance practices. I will discuss each of these dominant considerations in the next section.
Dominant Consideration One: Build community-university research focused relationships before community-university research partnerships

Interview participants identified building community-university research focused relationships as central to the work of the OCBR. There was a common understanding that respectful partnerships develop based on a foundation of existing relationships that have been nurtured. Participants asked questions along the lines of, “once relationships were built … then what?” There were no concrete answers to those types of questions. However, when interview participants discussed building relationships they indicated that there is a step beyond initial relationship building (Participants 4 and 14). Participants concluded with the understanding that the work of building mutually respectful research-focused relationships involves the following challenges: differences between ways of working within the university and ways of working with communities; timing; administrative systems; perceptions, and different visions, goals and expectations. For example, “relationships keep evolving; dynamics keeps changing; not just maintain but understand who they are, what they are – mutuality – people on both sides are suspect and it takes a lot of time” (Participant 11 and 12). My interpretation of interview participants’ understanding of the importance of building research-focused relationships before research partnerships, as connected to impact assessment is that the impacts of relationship building could be identified and assessed in addition to partnerships. In this way, building relationships was seen as part of the stream toward building partnerships.

Community-university focused relationships are developed through staff’s skillful navigation creating CURP support spaces. Building relationships with
community in the context of the work of CURP support structures is discussed in the literature as an important role and function. The data are consistent with the literature but also highlight the value of building supportive relationships and networks within the university. Data gathered suggest that the work of developing community-university research focused relationships is conducted through staff’s skillful navigation, creating CURP support spaces within the university that are not formally recognised in the literature. Staff, within the context of the University of Victoria are considered distinct from faculty. Staff are described in two categories: “academic and administrative staff” as well as “office and technical staff”

(Internet address).

Interview participants who work within community organisations and those who work directly in community-university research partnerships expressed challenges navigating the system to access information that was necessary to their work. Concurrently, interview participants also identified staff as being able to navigate internal networks thereby facilitating access to secure information and to create necessary connections. Staff engage in critical on-the-ground, day-to-day work of building and facilitating relationship networks within the university and between university and community while navigating the terrain of multiple community-university research relationships and partnerships. Staff negotiate procedures, protocols and secure whatever is necessary from communities, universities, other stakeholders such as funders, government departments and community organisations. In doing so, staff create CURP support spaces recognised by many of those who are engaged in the work of community-
university research partnerships but generally unrecognised outside of those circles. It would be valuable for an impact assessment framework to include examination of the impact of staff as skillful navigators who develop CURP support spaces and networks within and outside of the university.

**Dominant Consideration Two: Defining ‘community’ is problematic**

Several faculty and staff who work with CBR methodology and principles articulated that the way universities and communities define a community, is problematic. An example was expressed by an interview participant in the following way:

I think that the lack of understanding or I guess it's the beginning of the understanding of who is First Nations, who is Metis, who is Inuit, who are we, who are we dealing with and which laws are we up against. For example the guidelines for conducting research in First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities...basically the community is defined as on reserve for the First Nations community and 60% of the First Nations population does not reside on reserve. So who speaks for them? (Participant 11).

This interview participant articulated a problematised understanding of how community/communities are defined in community-university research partnership work. Although interview participants did not always articulate this understanding in the same way, the same or similar understanding was shared by all interview participants in asking, “Who is the community? How do we define community?” These questions were
frequently and rhetorically asked during interview discussions. A summary of these perspectives is provided next.

**Who is ‘community’?** All interview participants discussed relationships using the reference point of the university because their commonality was that they were either connected to the university through the OCBR or connected to the OCBR through the university. When people identified themselves they used their title (staff, faculty, student, CEO) and/or described their responsibilities and who they worked with relationally. Participants did not describe themselves as university or community, neither did they name their relationships as ‘inside’ (institution) or ‘outside’ (community). Regardless of how participants described themselves and their work it was always in context of many different relationships. During interviews, when participants used the term ‘community’ they referenced a specific group or groups. Some self-identified as being part of particular groups, networks or sectors i.e. groups addressing homelessness, food security network and the financial sector. Relationships were often discussed as a critical network. For example, the development of the food security network of connections and relationships that existed prior to the OCBR and the growth of the network though the OCBR was expressed as being one of the reasons the Food Project could be organised.

Several interview participants noted the missing community of university alumni when referring to community. They noted that there are more alumni than there are students in the university at any given moment in time. Interview participants identified university alumni and the process of mobilising this group in community-university
research partnerships as a missing piece, which needed to be included in the impact assessment framework.

Identifying community spheres. The following community spheres were identified by interview participants in the context of their work and suggested as useful to include in the impact assessment framework: indigenous communities, local communities, national communities, and international communities (Participants 1-18). Relationships influencing community-university research engagement and partnership drawn from the data can be summarised as follows:

- Relationships within the university
  - Staff
  - Students
  - Faculty
  - Senior Administration
- Relationships originating within the university but dispersed (not concentrated within the university)
  - Mobilising university alumni
- Relationships originating within ‘communities’ going in and out of the university
  - Students coming from outside the university having various community networks, develop networks inside the university are connected with both the university and working within/with communities outside the university
People from community organisations who work on a long-term contract basis within the university develop relationships and networks within the university and community.

- Communities engaging in relationship with university
  - Organisations serving communities: local, regional, national
  - NGOs, Non-profit services providers, formal, informal, social issues/challenges (homeless, poverty-alleviation, food security) and specific to certain populations (i.e. immigrant support, indigenous communities)
  - Indigenous communities: Challenge of the understanding “Who is First Nations, who is Metis, who is Inuit, who are we, who are we dealing with and which laws are we up against.” (Participant 11).
  - Funders
    - Government (municipal, provincial, federal), NGOs (national, international), philanthropic and private sector
  - Public, meaning people or groups of people connected formally or informally by particular social, environmental or other issues
  - Business and financial sectors
  - Community interests and development (research, funding, connected with government and universities)
  - Policy-makers

The question, ‘Who is community?’ inevitably arises in all spaces where community-university research partnerships are discussed and represented. These community spheres
drawn from the data represent a classification of experiential and comprehensive understanding of communities.

**Dominant Consideration Three: Governance Practices**

The data point to three governance practice considerations: the university’s long-term vision for community-university research partnership work, funding allocation for the CURP support structure and communities, and the inclusion of strengthening governance practices connected to community-university research partnerships into the impact assessment framework.

**Long-term vision.** Vision and governance were connected by several interview participants representing community, students, staff, faculty and senior administrators. There were specific questions around the vision, long-term goals and desired impact of the OCBR such as: “What impact does the OCBR want to have and what is the long-term vision?” Long-term vision was connected to emphasis on the need for “a vision from the top” (Participants 5, 12, 13, 17) in the form of the university’s strategic objectives developed in partnership with community (Participants 5, 12, 13, 17).

**Funding.** How funding is governed and decisions around the use and dispersion of funds between and among university and community were expressed as great concerns by many interview participants working within community and university. Commonly expressed, was the difference between practices of the OCBR and decision-making related to core funding practices of the university for building community and university partners’ research capacity. One perspective was that the university was “trying to
understand to what degree, where there are limited resources at the university, should the focus within the OCBR be around service provision for the community both internally and externally" (Participant 6). Interview participants representing communities expressed the need to be able to use funds to develop research and analysis capacity within the community. These two views reflect different perspectives and needs around funding allocation between the university and communities.

**Including governance into the impact assessment framework.** It was strongly recommended in participant interviews that governance be integrated into the impact assessment framework since, “strengthening governance has been such a key to doing community-based partnership work, and if that’s ignored, nothing works. Also, if you haven’t already, then that is something you need to integrate [into the impact assessment framework]” (Participant 17). One contribution to this discussion raised by several interview participants is that the OCBR cannot develop or use the impact assessment framework by itself. In order to be useful, such a framework would need to be integrated and used by those in relationship and partnership through the OCBR in community and university.

**Concluding Statement**

I have drawn broad conclusions from an analysis of the data. First, the literature and the data agree that it is valuable to address the impact of structures that facilitate and support community-university research partnerships. Second, impact assessment is discussed as a challenging process within such complex contexts as CURP support
structures. Interview participants expressed two strong convictions: (1) that logic model concepts and terms are limited and impact assessment is an iterative process; and (2) that documenting impact is to be an integrated process in the daily work of CURP support structures. Finally, interview participants offered three dominant considerations that focused on building relationships before partnerships, defining community and governance practices. I have examined the data broadly in this chapter and drawn out themes, strong convictions and considerations. In the next chapter, I will focus specifically on interview participants’ comments on the impact assessment framework prototype. I will discuss how interview participants’ perspectives converge with and diverge from the literature.
Chapter 5: Using a Prototypic Impact Assessment Framework for Analysis

Through the combination of a literature review, immersion in the field of study and the data collection process, I found neither impact categories nor a pre-existing impact assessment framework associated with structures within universities that systematically support community-university research partnerships. Because of this, I sketched an impact assessment framework (Lall, 2010) to share with research participants as a means of generating feedback and discussion on the design and development of an impact assessment framework for a university-based community-university research partnership support structure (please see earlier discussion in chapter three, methodology).

In this chapter, I will refer to the sketched impact assessment framework (Lall, 2010) as the prototype. The first part of this chapter is structured according to each of the five columns in the prototype. After describing each column included in the prototype, participants’ comments during discussions of the prototype will also be briefly summarised. The implications of these comments for the prototype will be an important part of the discussion throughout. Because of the importance of the issue of impact itself, the final part of this chapter analyses literature and data related specifically to explicating impact and impact assessment.
Micro, meso and macro impact levels (first column)

In developing the first column of the prototype (Table 2), I included Marullo et al.’s (2003) CBR impact assessment levels of analysis (micro, meso and macro) and their respective change-focused descriptors. These three levels focus on: individuals influenced by particular activities (micro level), changes that occur in programs and/or communities (meso level) and changes that occur in social policies, systems within the university and community – broader structures (macro level) (Marullo et al., 2003, p. 58). I rephrased these three levels of analysis as levels of impact because they focus on change. In discussing this column, interview participants indicated a sense of familiarity with the terms (micro, meso and macro) and agreed that identifying impact levels is a useful part of the prototype.

In my analysis of the data collected, it became evident that all interview participants spoke of impact in terms of two broad spheres: community and university. When I introduced the terms micro, meso and macro levels in the prototype, there was acceptance among interview participants with no discussion about the terms. Yet despite this level of acceptance, I was curious to investigate my interview data to determine whether or not participants used these terms during interviews. After examining my transcriptions and notes, I noticed only one instance where the terms 'micro and meso levels' were used by an interview participant (Participant 17) to suggest that the OCBR integrate a clear organisational vision and responsibility around building relationships.

However, I noticed that the concept and term ‘level’ was introduced by interview participants prior to my introduction to the phrase ‘levels of impact’ in the prototype. An
examination of the data revealed that the term ‘level’ was used by interview participants only when referring to the university and the community-university research partnership structure within the university. For example, levels within the university were identified as being hierarchical, which included senior level administrators, faculty level, and the level of the OCBR, institutes and centres. Most interview participants emphasised that the impact assessment framework must be supported at the highest levels within the university. However, communities were not described using the term ‘levels’. Interview participants identified communities specifically and broadly in the context of their work and suggested their inclusion in the impact assessment framework. When interview participants used the term ‘community’ they referenced a specific group or a wide range of groups. These groups have been identified and categorised in chapter four of this dissertation.

**Spheres of Impact**

Despite participants’ acceptance of the phrase ‘micro, meso and macro impact levels’ to describe the nature and scope of impact, their use of the term ‘levels’ was tied to a hierarchical understanding. Therefore, a flatter, or less hierarchical term is needed. I have chosen to use the term ‘spheres of impact’ to create an intentional shift away from a hierarchical understanding associated solely with the university and a deliberate shift to include communities. This is a consideration within the design and development of the impact assessment framework.

My understanding drawn from the data includes community, university and sectors (such as the not-for-profit sector), which engage in facilitating, initiating and
supporting the core work of community-university research partnerships. When consolidating how CURP support structures assess and measure their work and impact in chapter two, I only included CURP support structures. I excluded the community-university research partnership since it is not a support structure. However, as I continued my analysis, this exclusion became a glaring omission since partnerships are the core context of support structures. Therefore, it was vital to include in the literature review how a community-university research partnership assesses and measures its work and impact. This learning process contributed to my consolidation of four spheres of impact: core, micro, meso (university), meso (community) and macro. Although these spheres are represented as separate entities I have used faded lines to represent the way they function as pockets of networks as well as interconnected and integrated networks.

In addition to the spheres of impact, some interview participants clearly articulated, while some inferred, that there are two broad impact focus areas: community life impact and university impact. The figure below (Figure 9) is my representation of the four spheres of impact and the two broad focus areas that they inform.
The arrow representing community life impact and university impact cuts across all spheres. Community life is impacted through the four impact spheres and community life also impacts the four spheres. Similarly, university is impacted through the four impact spheres and university also impacts the four spheres. I will integrate spheres of impact into the impact assessment framework, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

**Outputs and outcomes (second and third columns)**

I canvassed the literature to find common ways of approaching assessment. Most assessments included the use of outputs and outcomes. I chose Pearce, Pearson and Cameron's (2007) articulation of outputs and outcomes in their REAP self-assessment and measurement tool because this articulation represented a common use of the terms in the literature discussing community-university research partnerships. In addition, the
REAP tool is designed to examine the way outputs lead to outcomes. To identify outputs, the following question is asked, “What will the countable achievements of this project be?” (p. 58). Pearce et al.’s (2007) examples include number of seminars, number of people attending seminars/meetings/conferences, number of people trained, number of videos produced, and number of training packs produced. To identify outcomes, Pearce et al. (2007) ask, “What will the unquantifiable achievements of the project be?” (p. 58). Their examples include improved relationships, greater trust, and more confidence in higher education.

During interview discussions of the outputs and outcomes columns, several community-based participants mentioned working with outputs and outcomes in their professional capacity. Overall, most interview participants suggested that outcomes could be used as possible indicators of impact, which resonates with the literature. Some interview participants, who experienced trying to connect outputs and outcomes with impact, shared their conclusions that the planning and assessment tools they have seen and used did not go any further than identifying outcomes. Furthermore, these participants’ articulated that their experiences with outputs and outcomes did not make the leap to impact.

Participants had a mixed understanding of the connection between outcomes and impact; although the literature describes outputs, outcomes and impact, the literature also suggests that these concepts are indistinct (Hart et al., 2009). When asked specifically about impact, interview participants articulated that they sensed impact was occurring but were unable to track or identify it. The literature seems to suggest that working with
outputs, outcomes and developing indicators in order to determine whether or not outcomes have been met, may be used to evidence impact. However, these relationships are not clearly connected in order to evidence or assess impact. Since the literature also suggests that these concepts are indistinct and the participants seemed to have varied understanding of these concepts, the ongoing challenge in both the literature and field lies in how to make the leap to impact.

**Participants at micro, meso and macro impact levels (fifth column)**

The fifth column entitled, ‘Participants’ corresponds with the first column (three levels of impact). I associated individuals, groups and larger populations with participant groups at each level of impact (micro, meso and macro) in the following ways: impact on individuals (micro level), impact on groups of individuals (meso level) and impact on larger populations such as community, communities and university (macro level). The micro level represents individuals influenced by a particular activity (Marullo et al., 2003). I identified, individuals at the micro level as: undergraduate and graduate students; faculty; community involved in workshops, courses, seminars, institutes; OCBR’s full-time and grant-funded staff; OCBR’s steering committee; and researchers and community partners. The meso level focuses on “changes that occur in programs and/or communities” (Marullo et al., 2003) and intends to address impact on groups of individuals. I focused on the same groups as I outlined at the micro level and I added funders as a group at the meso level because they are not usually individuals, they represent a group. The macro level represents impact on larger populations such as people from an entire community or several communities (Marullo et al., 2003); and
people who have the capacity to influence social policies, institutional policies and systems within the university, community and broader structures (Marullo et al., 2003). I identified participants within this group as administrators, formal leaders, informal leaders and funders.

When discussing this column and the prototype in its entirety, interview participants focused on relationships between and among participant groups identified in the fifth column. Interview participants, especially staff and community-based, stressed the need to focus on building research-focused community-university relationships before committing to community-university research partnerships.

Impact (fourth column)

Seeing there was no related impact framework for CURP support structures evident from my review of the literature, I left the impact column completely open with the exception of a brief definition drawn from Roche (1999) describing impact as an analysis of the degree to which outcomes lead to change, intentionally and unintentionally. Given the scope and generous feedback participants provided for this column, I have organised the data into categories drawn from the literature. I will begin this section with a brief discussion on developing assessment categories, a common assessment approach in the literature. Then, I will discuss an analysis of the data according to five impact categories. I will close this chapter with my concluding thoughts.
Developing assessment categories. Tools and frameworks in the literature addressing assessment of community-university research partnerships and/or the work of CURP support structures, have generally organised impact into particular conceptual categories (Pearce, Pearson & Cameron, year; Marullo et al., 2003; Hart et al., 2009; Buxton & Hanney, 1996). By conceptual categories I mean that concepts have been organised into broad categories and used to structure assessment frameworks. For example, the broad concepts of knowledge, future research, policy, practice, social (societal) and economic have been used to identify categories of impact. This is what I refer to as conceptual categorisation.

As discussed in my review of the literature, the Payback model (Buxton & Hanney, 1996) has been considered the most widely used model to identify health impacts (Banzai et al., 2011). Buxton & Hanney (1996), categorise the following health benefits: advancing knowledge, building capacity, informing decision-making, health and health system impacts and broad economic impacts. These health benefit categories (Buxton & Hanney, 1996) were generalised in the Future of Work project (Wooding et al., 2007) with a rephrasing from ‘benefits’ to ‘impacts’ to address impacts in the broad field of social science. Categories of impact as generalised by Wooding et al. (2007) are: knowledge, impacts on future research, impacts on policy, impacts on practice, and wider social and economic impacts. I will use these five categories as a structure for analysing the data since Wooding et al.’s (2007) generalised categories are the only ones identified specifically as impact categories.
**Impacts on practice.** Wooding et al.'s (2007) generalisation of ‘impacts on practice’, in the context of the Future of Work Project, provides a broad lens to begin to focus data analysis on ‘impacts on practice’. The category 'impacts on practice' is described by Wooding et al. (2007) as “effects on individual behaviour, which may or may not be in line with the policies of the organisation, or group to which the individual belongs” (p. 42). This study reconstructs the meaning of impacts on practice given the frequency of references to practice in the data. I propose that one strand of impacts on practice in the context of CURP support structures can be focused on policies of the organisation or group; in other words, organisational practices. Drawing from dominant themes in the data as summarised in chapter four, a second proposed strand of ‘impacts on practice’ is identified as relational practices, while a third proposed strand is governance practices.

**Organisational practices.** Drawing from one of the dominant literature and data themes, there are five areas describing the value of assessing impact of CURP support structures that can also be used to describe organisational practices:

- Ensure relationships meet mutual needs
- Use resources wisely to make an impact (programs, money, data, time and energy)
- Examine and improve practice
- Reflect, rethink and improve goals
- Equip individuals/groups to inform policy
Drawing from these five areas, the organisational strand of impact on practices would include the following:

- Practices that ensure relationships meet mutual needs—reciprocal practices
- Practices that use resources wisely
- Practices that examine and improve existing practices
- Practices that reflect, rethink and improve goals
- Practices that inform policy

These organisational practices may be connected within and across the spheres discussed earlier in this chapter and represented in Figure 9.

**Relational practices: build relationships before partnerships.** Interview participants agreed that the central work of support structures is to invest in research-focused relationship building first then identify and articulate intersections that have the potential for research partnership. Funding implications were connected to the idea of relationships through concerns around the pervasive practice of researchers being told that the first step is to procure partnership funding, then finding community research partners to fit the funding criteria and formula. According to interview participants, this approach is not considered partnership and it is not the way to share resources. Instead participants suggested that “partnering is about building authentic relationships over the long-term, we can’t just have good intentions, we have to have a plan, if we have no plan we’re in trouble; fund relationship building first ... then fund partnerships” (Participants: 4, 7, 9 & 11).
Another aspect of relational practices found in the data, highlights mobilising and building internal supportive relationships and networks across the university. Mobilising and building internal supportive relationships and networks across the university is also an important practice connected to relational and partnership development practices between community and university.

Drawing from a consolidation of the data analysis the following three types of relational practices will be included the impact assessment framework:

- Mobilising and building new relationships and partnerships
  - Advocate funding for research-focused relationship building and research partnerships
- Enhancing existing relationships and partnerships
- Sustaining relationships and partnerships

These relational practices may be connected within and across the spheres discussed earlier in this chapter and represented in Figure 9.

**Governance Practice.** Integration of governance practices at the operational level of the OCBR was a dominant theme expressed by participants as discussed in chapter four. A summary of governance practices drawn from the data include:

- Building, establishing and communicating decision-making processes at all levels of the governance structure
- Developing shared understanding and agreement on how decisions are made and understanding who are the decision-makers at different levels
- Connecting governance and vision within all spheres
• Governance of dispersion of funds between and among university and community
• Decision-making related to core funding practices of the university for building community and university research relationships and partnerships

In the context of spheres of impact, governance practices may be connected within and across the spheres discussed earlier in this chapter and represented in Figure 9.

Organisational practices, relational practices, and governance practices are being identified as three strands of impacts on practice of community-university research partnerships as generated through this study. As discussed earlier in this chapter, my interpretation of analysis of the data indicate different spheres of impact. Impacts on organisational practices, relational practices and governance could potentially connect within and across all spheres of impact generated through this study:

• Core: Community-university research partnership
• Micro spheres: Community-university research partnership structure within the university (and/or community) and supportive CURP spaces within the university (and/or community)
• Meso sphere: University as a whole and spaces within the university
• Meso sphere: Communities and community organisations
• Macro sphere: Inter-community and inter-institutional networks across regional, national and international spaces

**Knowledge impacts.** Wooding et al.’s (2007) generalisation of ‘knowledge impacts’ provides a broad lens to begin to analyse the data in the context of community-
university research partnerships and their supportive structures. ‘Knowledge impact’ in the context of the Future of Work programme (Wooding et al., 2007) identified significant impact that the Future of Work (FoW) programme had on knowledge and research such as: numerous publications and conference presentations attributed to the programme; incremental changes in researchers’ field of research to their projects; a clear change of direction in researchers’ field of research to their projects and projects, influence on other researchers (p. ix). In the next section, I will compare the data with each of Wooding et al.’s (2007) knowledge impacts, drawing out relevant knowledge impacts from the data.

Knowledge impacts: transformation through dissemination to different audiences. (Wooding et al., 2007) described knowledge impacts through incremental changes, clear change of direction as related to research fields, and researchers’ influence on other researchers. Interview participants focused on hybrid knowledge, as described by Hart et al.’s (2009) fifth mode of knowledge as having the potential to transform through the act of co-creating knowledge and making knowledge accessible through dissemination.

There was considerable agreement among interview participants that the co-generated knowledge within community-university research partnerships is a hybrid kind of knowledge. One participant said that “from university’s point of view it’s applied knowledge; and the benefit of that kind of knowledge is that we see an improvement in society immediately” (Participant 8). Many interview participants connected the intersection of community-university research partnership as bringing two kinds of
knowledge into unique relationship toward transformation; in other words, a “fertile place for transformation” (Participant 8). Transformation was then connected with social change, resulting in questions and some answers from a combination of participants:

- How do you create social change?
- How do you change universities? Perhaps one person at a time and incrementally.
- What would create a widespread shift? A combination of changes from within the university. Community demanding accountability from university through community pressure. Students mobilising, energising and connecting … that’s the whole process of transformation (Participant 12).

According to interview participants, hybrid knowledge within community-university research partnerships has the potential for transformation through using and presenting knowledge gained to/for many different audiences in different ways: “There is not only one way to present knowledge (i.e. academic journals) ... it’s what you focus on ... what is useful to different audiences; you can present knowledge gained to teachers, policy-makers, community people, people in the field” (Participant 11). It was emphasised that the need for knowledge, from communities and universities, separately and together, must be used and presented to many different audiences “in an honourable and respectful way, so we can live together in a good relationship with each other, with the land and the environment – university-community - each has its own spheres of knowledge that are needed by the other” (Participant 11). This connects with the understanding that, “Good education is when everyone in the community can understand it and when anyone in the community who wants to use it can use it” (Indigenous Elder quoted by Participant 4).
The data identified knowledge as accessible, meaningful and relevant to different audiences as well as transformational through access and dissemination. The data focused on change as transformation, which is in turn connected to impact. Similar connections were made in chapter four’s discussion of the convergence of understanding between the literature and data about the interconnectedness of the concepts of change and impact. This is important because there is consistency in both the data and the literature in making the connection between incremental change, change of direction, influence, and transformation. In other words an understanding of different types of changes as connected with impact, are consistent in both the data and the literature.

**Knowledge impact: making knowledge participatory and wisdom as knowledge.** Interview participants emphasised making knowledge participatory by participating in the community-university research partnership process in respectful ways. The process of making knowledge participatory, according to interview participants, starts with building respectful relationships rooted in valuing on-the-ground knowledge, otherwise identified as knowledge from communities outside the academic university knowledge. One interview participant asked and answered the question: “What is the purpose of gaining knowledge from communities and universities? So that we can live in good relationship with each other, the land and environment” (Participant 11). Although not a mainstream understanding, knowledge and relationship is considered inseparable to many interview participants. Although not discussed widely in the literature, several interview participants also identified wisdom as part of communities’ contribution to making knowledge participatory within community-university research partnerships and their
support structures. In addition, there was acknowledgement that recognising and exercising wisdom is missing in the process of generating knowledge and in making decisions that impact communities and society as whole.

Increasingly evident as the research study continued, interview participants have given deep thought and expression to the knowledge-making process as co-generated, the type of knowledge that is valued, the way knowledge is generated and disseminated and the inclusion of wisdom. Knowledge was represented by one interview participant in the following way, “knowledge is relationships; knowledge is education; knowledge is storytelling” (Participant 4). The context for such an understanding of knowledge is the re-imagination of mainstream university education as being connected with communities and made relevant to communities. Such an understanding, according to the following participant, means that the current philosophy and implementation of education through universities should shift focus away from:

building individuals … and look at the student based on intergeneration, family, community, tribe and nation; where that student comes from and their education is about the balance they get to give back to their community … so their education has to be extremely holistic … learning based on the interconnectedness of all things, if they are Cree, or if they are from Nunavut they can practice their traditions and have some connections to seeing themselves reflected somewhere that promotes physical and sound health (Participant 4).
A community-focus is inherent within such a system of education; identifying impact within communities through the university would draw from existing connectivity. In the same way, the data suggest that existing connectivity between community and university be the starting point to address impact. Having examined the contributions of the data to include knowledge as a participatory process and wisdom as knowledge, I will now address the connectivity between community and university knowledge in the context of CURP support structures.

**CURP support structures as unique knowledge hubs.** CURP support structures are existing connective hubs between university and community. A key question to ask at this point is: How does knowledge relate to CURP support structures? There is consensus in the literature and data that CURP support structures are organisations with organisational practices. Therefore, knowledge creation through the OCBR as a CURP support structure and an organisation can be considered as organisational knowledge creation.

In this section I will discuss my curiosity to examine CURP structures as unique knowledge hubs. My curiosity stems from a combination of my in-context immersion, consideration of interview participants’ understanding of knowledge impact, Hart et al.’s (2009) creation the fifth mode of knowledge, and Nonaka’s (1994) understanding of organisational knowledge creation.

I see connections among the following points that inform CURP support structures as unique knowledge hubs, which I will attempt to make clear. As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, interview participants’ understand knowledge impacts as a
participatory process relevant to different audiences, they understand wisdom as knowledge, and knowledge as transformational. As discussed in the literature, Hart et al. (2009) describe knowledge co-generated through community-university research partnerships as unique. Also discussed in the literature is organisational knowledge creation (Nonaka, 1994). In addition, interview participants discussed organisational practices, which I have included as one strand of impacts on practice in this chapter.

Organisational knowledge creation is explained by Nonaka (1994) as “a process that organizationally amplifies the knowledge created by individuals and crystallises it as a part of the knowledge network of organisations” (p.17). Nonaka (1994) continues:

Although ideas are formed in the minds of individuals, interaction between individuals typically plays a critical role in developing these ideas ... in other words, communities of interaction contribute to the amplification and development of new knowledge. While these communities might span departmental or organizational boundaries, the point to note is that they define a further dimension to organizational knowledge creation, which is associated with the extent of social interaction between individuals that share and develop knowledge. (p. 14)

Drawing from Nonaka’s understanding of organisational knowledge creation, other pieces of literature mentioned earlier, my in-context immersion and interview participants’ understanding, I see CURP support structures as spaces where synergy happens between and among communities, researchers, people representing various
sectors in society and people connected in various ways to the work of the partnerships and the structures. It can be argued, in the same way that a unique type of knowledge is co-generated through community-university research partnerships, CURP support structures represent a unique hub, networking synergetic relationships and research partnerships, which collectively generate knowledge. In this way, CURP support structures act as organisational knowledge creation hubs. While universities are commonly referred to as being focused on knowledge production they are only one space for knowledge production. Where an active CURP support structure exists within the university, hybrid knowledge is being generated through knowledge exchange as the acceptable norm. It is in this way that I see university-based CURP support structures as an organisational knowledge creation hub. Knowledge impacts have the potential to connect across spheres of impact identified in this study.

**Impact on future research.** Returning to the five categories of impact that I introduced at the beginning of this chapter, the next category I discuss is impact on future research. Impact on future research describes the generation of new research questions; development of new methods and/or datasets; capacity building and career development (Buxton & Hanney, 1996; Wooding et al., 2007). A number of interview participants mentioned links to impact on current and future research. One of the impacts of the OCBR “during its development stages in the first year” (Participant 4) was “influencing a shift in research methodology ... the impact on how we see conducting research” (Participant 4). Additionally the “conceptual framework around community-based research, participatory research, participatory action research, creates very much a shift in
Western mainstream colonial methodology and understanding” (Participant 4).

Participant 8 made reference to some campus departments adopting changes to tenure and promotion policies recognising CBR as valid scholarship. This movement was attributed to pockets of CURP support within the university, the work of the OCBR and “UVic’s commitment to change as a part of a broader social shift” (Participant 8). These combined efforts were identified as “helping to move the culture of the university toward recognition” (Participant 8) of community engaged research practice.

Support within the university was also highlighted by Participant 11:

Community-based research at universities, in the way that Indigenous communities need to have research conducted and how university can work with these communities, I think is different from what other people’s ideas are about research. Because in order to conduct research in communities you cannot go in already knowing what you’re going to research; it requires relationship building. I think that the OCBR is educating and finding the means within the university for people to be able to do community-based research in the way that it needs to be done and to have their work acknowledged (Participant 11).

Connected to the shifts within the university in recognising and validating CBR, another interview participant expressed:

Indigenous methodology is still on the margins, but we know we can make these changes. We can’t buy into a system or structure that
makes us just follow the status quo, so the impact has to be at all levels: indigenous communities, local communities; nationally and internationally.

In creating relationships we will have to define where we’re going (Participant 4).

Monitoring and tracking the emergence and development of Indigenous methodology from the margin, would fit within a category called ‘impacts on current and future research’, specifically addressing impacts around the emergence and development of new methods or datasets.

Building capacity for CBR and CBR researchers within the university was addressed in a number of participant comments. For example, Participant 1 expressed an understanding that the OCBR brought wider visibility of community-university research partnerships; while raising the profile and understanding of CBR within the university and legitimising CBR by the institutional presence of the OCBR. The latter was articulated as having benefits to faculty (Participants 1, 6, 8 and 9).

Identified as a missed opportunity, several interview participants expressed their certainty that numerous research connections and relationships were initiated during CUExpo2008, hosted by the OCBR, which likely impacted changes in research directions, development of new research questions, and possibly research partnerships. Some of the impacts expressed were wider visibility, recognition, and validation for community-based research as well as increased mobilisation through the creation of the international network Global Alliance on Community Engaged Research (Participant 1). However, interview participants expressed that due to a lack of follow up this kind of
impact remains unknown. Incremental change or a clear change of direction in researchers’ projects in addition to projects influencing other researchers are the kind of changes identified by Wooding et al. (2007) in the knowledge impact category. Assessment of impact on current and future research through conference events like CU Expo may be considered as a part of this category.

Based on participant interviews, impact on current and future research would include the following strands: a shift in research methodology (Participant 4) referring to shifting toward a more participatory research approach, wider visibility of participatory research approaches, shift in research culture (e.g. toward recognition or validation of participatory research approaches), tracking Indigenous methodologies from margin to mainstream and assessing impact of current and future research of conference events such CUExpo. Current and future research impacts have the potential to connect across the spheres of impact identified in this study.

**Impacts on Policy.** Impacts on policy describe “effects of research on policy at many levels, for example: national policy; the policy of professional bodies; the policies of departments of organizations” (Wooding et al., 2007, p. 42). Also included are effects on the ability, and propensity of policy-makers to use research (p. 42). One interview participant in this study directly asked the following policy-related questions: “How has the research/work impacted policy? How is it pertinent to policy? How has the work assisted community and university folks to address policy and policy- makers? How is the research being communicated to policy-makers?” (Participant 7). Although directly
asked by one interview participant, these questions represented a trend across the data through various related comments and questions.

Tracing policy impacts however, is difficult work. I return to a discussion of the Future of Work (FoW) Programme strategy, as they involved a ‘Media Fellow’ who knew the policy arena and worked to formally enhance the impact of their program work on policy-makers. The ‘Media Fellow’ summarised and produced FoW research to a timescale suitable for policy makers and set FoW research in the context of other research and current policy discussions (Wooding et al., 2007).

The FoW programme identified their influence on policy in an incremental way and informed the policy debate (Wooding et al., 2007), although they note that it was difficult to identify actual policies they had influenced. However, they went on to document how the FoW programme also impacted the policies and practices of organisations through many presentations of FoW research to policy audiences. Organisational practices were influenced by the research but only some were easily identifiable.

Policy impact is clearly important to this field and to the participants in this study. Interview participants articulated that the work of the OCBR and the work supported by the OCBR may have policy impacts but there were no methods to track or identify impacts. One participant suggested that there may have been policy-related impacts within departments in the university such as changes to the tenure and promotion criteria to formally validate researchers work as community engaged scholarship through the use of community-based research, participatory research and community-university research
partnerships. Another example came from an interview participant who suggested that there were likely impacts related to organisational practices and procedures around food sourcing and dissemination of food related information. There was interest expressed during interviews to better understand how the Food Project influenced and impacted policies around food sourcing and the dissemination of food information at UVic.

Additionally, it was clearly expressed that the CURP support structure could be active in equipping people from community and university to connect with and speak to policy-makers:

At the end of this process is the work that the Office [OCBR] is doing through all its various projects, giving me better tools, or do I feel more capable of going and talking to policy-makers about changes that may be needed? Certainly for homelessness advocates being able to go to through a research piece and being able to say at the end of it, this is what the research says and this is where your policy would be valuable ... that would be like a gift that would be fabulous that would be so valuable (Participant 7).

However, there was uncertainty as to where the responsibility for policy-equipping and examining policy impact might lie: “Should OCBR be having something in place to measure it [long-term policy impact] or is that the role of UVic, would we [OCBR] stop when it comes to policy, would we push beyond the university? (Participant 12).

Policy impacts may be identified across the spheres of impact identified in this study.
**Wider social and economic impact.** Impact within wider social and economic spheres is a common goal and a common challenge addressed in the literature and by interview participants. Wooding et al. (2007), Buxton and Hanney (1996), Hart, Northmore and Gerdhardt (2009) and Pearce, Pearson and Cameron (2007) address the challenge of trying to identify impact within wider societal spheres. In particular, since I am using Wooding et al.’s (2007) impact categories, they describe wider social and economic impact as effecting a change in society. This includes impacts on public opinion with the use of media coverage as a proxy for impact on public opinion.

There is convergence between the literature and the data in addressing the goal and challenge of trying to identify impact within wider social spheres. The literature discussed, focuses mainly on wider social and economic impact as it relates to the broad scope of university engagement with community engagement. The data focus mainly on the community-university research partnership work within university as being fragmented, in need of consolidation, continuity and coherence in order to best address and identify wider social and economic impacts. In light of no overarching university governance structure around community engagement, there is a sense in the data that fragmentation may be addressed by using a networked approach to support community-university research partnerships. The concept of networking has arisen in many different areas throughout this study. The understanding that networked relationships within the university, communities and other sectors of society support community-university research partnerships, combined with a networked approach to inter-institutional and
inter-community collaborations is one of the most effective approaches reflected in the data and literature as networks for learning, knowledge creation and dissemination.

**Summary.** Below is a summary of the five impact categories and their related strands (Table 3). The names of each category have been drawn from Wooding et al. (2007) and Buxton and Hanney (1996). As discussed previously, the category, ‘Future Research’ has been modified through this study to ‘Current and Future Research’. Strands and explication of each category have been generated through this study. Each impact category is being represented in this study as an impact stream. Explanation and discussion of the contextualisation of categories as impact streams follow in the next sections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact Categories/Streams of Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice Impact Stream</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Practices that: ensure relationships meet mutual needed (reciprocity); use resources wisely; examine and improve existing practices; reflect, rethink and improve goals; inform policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational Practices that: mobilise and build new relationships and partnerships; advocate funding for research relationship building and research partnerships; enhance existing relationships and partnerships; sustain relationships and partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance Practices that: build, establish and communicate decision-making processes at all levels of the governance structure; develop shared understanding and agreement on how decisions are made; facilitate understanding of decision-makers at different levels; connect governance and vision within all spheres of impact; promote dispersion of funds between and among university and community; include funding practices of the university for building community and university research relationships and partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Knowledge Impact Stream** | Transformation through dissemination to different audiences  
Making knowledge participatory and wisdom as knowledge  
- CURP support structures as unique knowledge hubs |
| **Current and Future Impact Stream** | Shift in research methodology (e.g. shift toward more participatory research approaches)  
Wider visibility of participatory research approaches  
Shift in research culture (e.g. toward recognition or validation of participatory research approaches);  
Tracking Indigenous methodologies from margin to mainstream and assessing impact of current and future research of conference events such CUExpo |
| **Policy Impact Stream** | Incremental Examples: (1) Policy-related impacts within departments in the university such as changes to the tenure and promotion criteria to formally validate researchers work as community engaged scholarship. (2) Food Project may have influenced and impacted policies around food sourcing and the dissemination of food information at UVic.  
- CURP support structure could be active in equipping people from community and university to connect with and speak to policy-makers  
Questions: Where does the responsibility for policy-equipping and examining policy impact rest? How has the research/work impacted policy? How is it pertinent to policy? How has the work assisted community and university folks to address policy and policy-makers? How is the research being communicated to policy-makers? |
| **Wider social and economic impact stream** | Networked approach to support community-university research partnerships: networked relationships within the university, communities and other sectors of society support community-university research partnerships;  
networked approach to inter-institutional and inter-community collaborations; networks for learning, dissemination and knowledge |

Table 3: Impact Categories/Streams of Impact
Impact Assessment as a Cycle of Inquiry

Through this study’s findings and analysis, impact assessment is explicated as a cycle of inquiry. In chapter four, participants’ strong convictions included integrating various types of impact-focused documentation as a part of regular organisational practice, planning and creating time for regular impact-focused feedback, as well as documenting stories to communicate impact. There is a connection across the data between impact-focused documentation, the impact stream and impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry. Impact-focused documentation serves to identify impact regularly in different ways and in different spaces, along various impact streams relating to impact categories (practice impacts stream, knowledge impacts stream, impact on current and future research stream, policy impacts stream and wider social and economic impacts stream). Such an approach suggests assessing impact cycle of inquiry rather than an isolated activity.

Analysis of participants’ strong convictions points to impact assessment as an ongoing process, which involves situating ourselves, reflecting, analysis, strategising and acting, with the understanding that the cycle is complex and dynamic. Analysis of data findings so far in this study points to impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry that include: five impact categories that can be represented as impact streams, points of impact along an impact stream, conditions of impact, past and future impacts, and intention and impact. Impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry contributes to being able to make impact assessment statements and impact measurement statements. I will discuss each of these elements of impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry below.
Points of impact along an impact stream. The five impact categories previously discussed can also be represented as five impact streams: impacts on practice stream, knowledge impact stream, impact on current and future research stream, policy impact stream, and wider social and economic impact stream. As I analysed the data relevant to the impacts on policy category, and revisited some of my earlier understanding drawn from the data, interview participants have consistently expressed that there are signs of impact that can be identified along the way. I am calling these signs, ‘points of impact’. Many points of impact may be informed by what the data suggest as, impact-focused documentation. These points of impact may collectively culminate into more visible impact. The data indicated that points of impact can be identified along a particular impact stream (e.g. policy impact stream). The data also indicated that points of impact, when identified in hindsight, or traced back may reveal a larger singular more visible impact (i.e. a shift in policy). For example, clearly there were points of impact within the university, prior to actual change in tenure and promotion criteria and policy. Interview participants observed and concluded that there was a movement, within certain university faculties, toward a shift in tenure and promotion criteria to include community-based research and participatory action research methods. Whether or not these points of impact were identified, they were part of the shift in tenure and promotion criteria within the meso sphere’s university policy impacts stream and the meso sphere’s university practice impacts stream.

Conditions of impact: created and perceived. The data suggested that conditions for impact exist or conditions for impact may be fostered toward anticipated
impact. I am distinguishing these types of conditions as: created conditions and perceived conditions.

**An example of a created condition for impact.** One of the conditions for impact was the networked approach created within the Food Project. Interview participants indicated being able to strike a balance between university and community representation and collaboration on teams (leadership and feedback teams), round tables and networks. This networked approach involved inter-institutional and inter-community collaboration based on existing relationships and partnerships while creating new relationships, partnerships and a more integrated knowledge exchange, learning and dissemination network. I propose this type of networked approach as a condition for impact since interview participants expressed that the process and results were already having an impact and would likely have future impact. The distinction of present and future impact will be discussed later in this chapter.

**An example of a perceived condition.** Turning to an example of a perceived condition, the data suggested that a condition for identifying wider impact may be to organise, compile, communicate and disseminate existing community-university research relationships, partnerships and related projects across the university, communities, local government, businesses and other sectors represented in the vicinity of the university. This is a perceived condition of impact for which points of impact may be identified. Another example of a perceived impact condition suggested through the data is that an overarching governance model to consolidate fragmented pockets of civic engagement
across the university combined with an impact focus, may contribute to identifying wider impact.

These conditions may not be measureable as impact but they seem to be a part of the process along an impact stream that may be used to trace potential or possible impacts within and across different impact spheres. This resonates with an understanding of impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry as there is a process involved that is impact-focused requiring ongoing reflection, revision, adjustment, assessment and refinement.

**Present and future impact.** The notion of present and future impact has been a thread running through analysis of the data. I examined the data using this lens and realised that identifying present and future impact is common in the data. In listening to audio recordings of interviews and through in-context immersion, identifying present and future impact occurs more often in speech than in writing. It seems more common for the literature to identify impact that occurred in the past. One possible reason may be that when we commit to researching and writing about a concept we need to be more evidence-based than when we are having a discussion. However, if we combine the view of impact as being ongoing and integrated, focusing on a cycle of inquiry to identify and assess impact; we can then begin to create an evidence-base for present and future impact based on dialogue and initial perceptions or hypotheses.

**Intention and Impact.** Woven through an understanding of points of impact, conditions of impact and present and future impact, is the integration of intention and impact. Particularly, if conditions are being created for impact to occur, then it could be
said that we are operating usually with good intention. However, good intentions can lead to immediate and long-term negative impact. As discussed during interviews, it is critical to note that good intentions do not necessarily lead to positive impact, and there is a need to consider whose view of impact we are taking into account.

An understanding of the relationship between intention and impact was discussed passionately during interviews with participants who acknowledged and recognised our (myself and interview participant) similar recent oppressive colonial history and present day impact. Those of us who live with this particular lens and impact of our history and present day systemic impact, connect the realities of intention and impact daily within our own local and regional communities and systems, where we see and experience the deep and perpetuating impact of colonial and oppressive practices. Many of these practices conducted with good intentions, led to and continue to perpetuate deeply oppressive and sustaining impact. Becoming more impact-focused and impact-sensitive is in itself a cycle of inquiry that became evident during interviews with participants who have a critical, experiential and analytical understanding of the tenuous relationship between intention and impact. As the data suggested, shifting the focus from intentions to impact by considering whose impact is being counted, may contribute to ensuring relationships meet mutual needs, accounting for using resources wisely, examining and improving practices, equipping to inform policy, rethinking goals and changing courses of action.

Data findings and analysis addressing ‘Whose view of impact counts?’ and ‘Which impacts matter and to whom?’ are questions to be seriously considered during early stages, especially prior to engaging in community-university research partnership
initiatives. This is often the stage where intentions are set. This stage may be identified as an “impact assessment pre-stage”, where streams of impact, and elements of impact can be considered prior to beginning a project. Using the lens of impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry, addressing intention and addressing potential impacts would be one of the earliest elements addressed in the cycle, which would be revisited, adjusted, revised and refined throughout the cycle of inquiry.

Making impact assessment and measurement statements. Drawing from the consolidation of analysis on impact assessment, these elements combined will likely contribute to being able to make impact assessment statements and impact measurement statements during various stages throughout the inquiry cycle. I discuss this further in the next chapter.

Concluding Thoughts

In this chapter I have used the impact assessment prototype I developed as a framework for analysis. The literature offered several important conceptual lenses that participants agreed should be included in the impact assessment framework, however participants’ voices added new dimensions of impact not found in the literature. Dominant themes included the use of the impact assessment framework as a cyclical process involving reflection, examination, action, communication, consolidation and refinement. The data further suggested that the impact assessment framework should be refined simultaneously while building a shared community-university research partnership vision, goals, intention and impact with and within community-university
research partnership structures involving the university and communities. The significance of the findings discussed is that the development of the impact assessment framework for a systematic CURP support structure within a university contextualises this structure within and across spheres of impact and informs categories as streams of impact in unique ways.

Data and analysis have been discussed in this chapter as contributing to an understanding of impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry through which intentions are coupled with consideration of impact; points of impact may be identified, assessed and measured along an impact stream; conditions of impact, created and perceived, may be adjusted, revised and refined; and present and future impacts may be identified, considered, assessed and measured. Impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry contributes to being able to make impact assessment statements and impact measurement statements through an iterative and impact-focused process. These elements contributing to impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry will be presented in the next chapter as contributing to the proposed impact assessment and measurement framework.
Chapter 6: A Proposed Framework

This chapter will offer a new proposed framework based on interviews and analysis discussed in chapters four and five. First, I will provide a brief summary and comparison between the original prototype developed in the early stages of the study in the context of the changes made as a result of interviews and analysis. Then I will present the elements of the Impact Assessment and Measurement Framework. I will follow that with a discussion and then offer concluding thoughts.

Summary and Comparison of Prototype and Proposed Frameworks

The proposed impact assessment and measurement framework is based on my analysis and key informant interviews of the original impact assessment framework prototype. A prototype was developed drawing from the literature and methodology involved during the early stages of this study. The prototype was used during key informant interviews as a focal point of discussion of each column and the approach as a whole to impact assessment. Data and analysis pointed to an understanding of impact assessment that shifted from the use of the term and concept of impact levels to impact spheres, from the use of logic model terms and concepts such as outputs and outcomes to the construction of an impact assessment with eight elements, as presented below, and its conceptualisation as a cycle of inquiry, as discussed in chapter five. Based on these findings, I propose the following Impact Assessment and Measurement Framework (IAMF).
Impact assessment and measurement framework (IAMF)

In this section, I discuss and represent my synthesis of contributions toward the design and development of an IAMF based on this study’s findings and analysis. So far in this study, the following eight elements have been discussed separately through findings and analysis. Table 4 represents a summary of these eight elements proposed as a combination to explicate, assess and measure impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eight Elements to Explicate, Assess and Measure Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Intention</td>
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<td>2 Spheres of impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Impact Categories/Streams</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Conditions of impact</td>
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<td>5 Points of impact</td>
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<td>6 Impact-focused documentation</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I propose a combination of the eight elements as a cycle of inquiry to explicate, assess, and measure the impact of CURP support structures and support spaces. These eight elements are non-linear, they work together to consolidate an impact assessment and measurement framework. Elements weave together an interconnected conceptual understanding of impact assessment and measurement as a cycle of inquiry. All elements (particularly elements related to intentions, perspectives of impact, and conditions of impact) are best considered during preliminary stages of community-university research relationship and partnerships initiatives in the context of CURP support structures. The IAMF (Figure 10) informs impact on and through community life and impact on and through the university. I have represented the eight elements of the IAMF using overlapping circles to represent and illustrate their interconnectivity and their engagement in a cycle of inquiry. The IAMF represents impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry involving a process of reflection, strategies, analysis, action, reflection, adjustment, revision, and refinement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Impact Perspectives</th>
<th>Include different impact views and voices. Connect with intention of explicating, assessing and measuring impact.</th>
<th>Whose views and voices are represented? Who benefits and toward what purpose?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assess and Measure impact</td>
<td>Assessment and Measurement statements are informed through the process of working with the IAMF.</td>
<td>Assessing evidence of impact gathered through IAMF. Measuring improvement/deterioration, increase/decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Eight Elements to Explicate, Assess and Measure Impact
When working with the IAMF, we can start with any of the elements and move to any other element. The key to the framework is to be impact-focused. There may be overgeneralisation of impact since having an impact-focused mindset and working with the framework may lead to seeing everything as impact. This is a natural response; however, as the literature and the data suggest, distillation accompanies the process of working with a framework. The framework may be integrated into assessment tools already being used toward a deeper understanding and assessment of impact. As the framework is used in practice, it will continue to be refined according to context and to suit different
spheres. This is considered in the next and final chapter as additional and future research and practice.

**CURP support structure and the impact assessment framework**

There was agreement that the process of working with the impact assessment framework would be led by the OCBR or systematic community-university research partnership structure but needs to be generated by university and community stakeholders, funders, community organisations, partners, staff, students, faculty; basically representation from every group involved in community-university research partnership work. In that context, all interview participants affirmed in some form, that this study by asking for and incorporating the input of people from community and university has initiated a co-constructive approach.

**Impact as a dynamic network.** In designing an impact assessment framework I have gained some clarity and understanding of impact, which will continue to be refined and challenged. Overall, the data suggested what I would call a networked approach to identifying, communicating and assessing impact. The data conceptualised impact as a networked and integrated concept rather than a one-off approach. Impact is seen as an ongoing part of the connection between and among people, process and spaces, all engaging in various aspects of community-university research relationships and partnerships. Ideally, the data suggested that CURP support structures and CURP support spaces would be recognised as unique knowledge and support hubs with an impact focus. Impact is related to practices, knowledge, education and learning, research, policy and
social-economic realities within local, regional, national and international spheres. Impact that is identified regularly in meetings; impact that is woven through goals and activities within all spheres is understood as a dynamic process.

**Concluding Statement**

In this chapter I have presented and discussed the elements of the IAMF. These elements contribute to impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry informing impact on and through community life and impact on and through the university. The IAMF has been theorised and conceptualised through a combination of the literature, data and analysis of this study. Additional research and practice is needed to further investigate and ascertain its use and usefulness. In the next and final chapter I will offer contributions of this study and suggest next steps for additional and future research.
Chapter 7: Contributions and Future Research

Contributions of this Study

This study has been a journey to develop deeper understanding of impact and impact assessment. Impact is something we sense and in some cases know is occurring but as the study participants wondered, ‘How do we identify it?’ This study offers one way of conceptualising impact, contributing to the process of impact identification, demonstration, assessment and measurement. It is clear that as varied as impacts are, so are the ways of identification and assessment. In this chapter, I will discuss key contributions of the study followed by a discussion of limitations as connected to future research.

Contribution: Staff as Expert Navigators creating CURP Support Spaces within Universities

The first contribution of this study is that the data highlighted university staff as expert navigators who create CURP support spaces within the university. Staff contribute to developing relationships and create access for community and university research partners, through their expert navigation of the university’s processes, procedures and policies. This particular role of staff and the recognition of CURP support spaces are not highlighted in the literature.
Contribution: Impact Assessment and Measurement as a Cycle of Inquiry

The second contribution highlighted is impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry. Interview participants spoke about impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry rather than using a tool or approach to identify, assess and/or measure a one-off or one-time impact. Impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry includes: integrating various types of impact-focused documentation as a part of regular organisational practice, planning and creating time for regular impact-focused feedback, and documenting stories to communicate impact. Analysis of participants’ strong convictions points to impact assessment as an ongoing process, which involves situating ourselves, reflecting, analysis, strategising and acting, with the understanding that the cycle is complex and dynamic.

My understanding and approach of assessment as praxis also informs impact as a cycle of inquiry. I proposed impact assessment as praxis since the process of assessing impact through this study embeds the action of critical reflection and critical dialogue into all aspects and stages of assessment, from entry point through the research process and through the iterative cycle of ongoing implementation, research, action and reflection. Impact assessment as praxis complements the methods of inquiry, methods of investigation, design and facilitation of this study. These understandings of impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry contribute to the conceptualisation, theorisation and practice of impact assessment and measurement. Impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry as discussed by interview participants is linked with the development of elements of impact, discussed below as another contribution of this study.
Contribution: Explicating Impact through Elements of Impact Assessment and Measurement

In this study, theorising and conceptualising impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry include multiple elements. The third contribution highlighted are elements of impact assessment. These multiple elements present a shift in understanding impact and impact assessment from the common use of concepts and language of logic models, such as outputs and outcomes.

Explicating impact assessment as a cycle of inquiry and through multiple elements is one of the most interesting findings of this study, in my opinion, because it addresses the gap between the literature and practice that I have been wondering about throughout this study and throughout my career as an educator. For example, I am curious as to how these elements might contribute to documenting efforts being made to shift Indigenous methodologies from the margin to mainstream.

Contributions through the Literature Review

The fourth contribution of this study include contributions through the literature review. The review of the literature consolidates the literature on impact assessment in the context of CURP support structures. Such a consolidation is not found in the existing body of literature. In addition, research councils were identified as a fifth type of support structure to add to the existing four types of support structures identified by Hall (2009). In addition to contributions, there are limitations that were realised through this study and as a result, I will offer ideas for additional and future research.
Limitation, Addition and Future Research

Those who participate in the work of community-university research partnerships and the spaces and structures that support them have been central to guiding and directing the formative stages of this study. They have not however, been involved in the analysis and conclusions of this study. I recognise this as a limitation. Additional and future research connected to this limitation may include consultation and focus group feedback needed for revision and refinement of the Impact Assessment and Measurement Framework (IAMF). Subsequent research may include refinement of the IAMF in different contexts through use across cases profiled.

Concluding Thoughts

Finally, my thoughts to researchers and community members as to how to advance the field are as follows. If we are going to speak about impact, investigate impact and attempt to assess and measure impact then we really need to dedicate time and space to understanding impact. This means being impact-focused in innovative and creative ways. As varied as the work is that we do and the approaches we are taking as researchers and practitioners in our fields, there are equally as many different ways to identify and address impact as well as assess and measure.

There appears to be pervasive apprehension to commit to identifying impact that is why the elements of impact assessment generated through this study are important, because it may give us some latitude in approaching impact as a cycle of inquiry. For example, if we suspect there is impact we can document it quickly as a possible ‘point of
impact’. If we think of impact as too complex of a challenge, we run the risk of
simplifying it so much that we lose sight of gaining the richness of the knowledge and
wisdom that can lead us further and deeper. It is equally challenging to get mired in the
complications and complexities, as I have experienced periodically through the course of
this study. Working to understand impact ranges from the simplistic to the highly
complex as evidenced in the literature and in this study.

Somewhere between these two extremes lie impact as a cycle of inquiry.
Engaging in further research, practice and attention in our respective fields related to
multiple issues within various sectors of society, we can find ways to identify,
demonstrate, articulate, assess and measure the impact we already see, hear and know
that is occurring and potentially make evident the impact that is unknown. As we engage
in impact as a cycle of inquiry, we must continually ask ourselves and those with whom
we collaborate and partner, “To whom does it matter and why?” In doing so,
investigating impact does not become an exercise in and of itself, it becomes a
meaningful process through which we gain insight and wisdom into complex social
issues, through which we learn and act respectfully and responsibly, and through which
we are able to live and act more respectfully with each other, our land and our resources.
Impact relates to and connects us with our past, our present and our future; our ancestors,
our present humanity and the conditions we set for future generations.
Bibliography


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Pratt, J., Nairne, B., & Matthews, S. (2011). *South East Coastal Communities Programme evaluation final report*. Prepared for the University of Chichester and partner higher education institutions.


Schatzman, L., & Strauss, A. Field research: Strategies for a natural sociology. Prentice


Appendix A:

Interview Questions

Date:

Between Nirmala Lall and __________________

1) What is your connection and relationship to the OCBR?
   a. Starting point and subsequent
   b. How would you describe the role of the OCBR?

2) How has/does the OCBR facilitate and support your work?
   a. Within the university
   b. Within communities

3) What difference/change/impact has the OCBR made in your work? (speaking from before the OCBR was in existence and after – actual and/or potential impact)

   E.g. The way (and the type of) knowledge is generated, produced, mobilised, and used within the university and community

   a. Within the university? (Specific example – impact story)

   b. Within the Local community, Vancouver Island, B.C, Nationally and internationally? (Specific example – impact story)

4) What do you think has unfolded to create these differences/changes/impact? (Indicators)

5) How do you see OCBR impacting the relationship between the university and the community? E.g. Disruption/transformation of power-knowledge relations?
6) Looking at the impact assessment framework: In your opinion, what is the value of developing and using an impact assessment framework? (Use? Purpose? For whose benefit?)

7) What would you like to see in this framework?

8) Are you aware of other related impact assessment frameworks or models that might inform the development of this impact assessment framework?
Appendix B:

Interview Consent Form

**Project Title**  Measuring the Impact of Institutional Community-University Research Partnership Structures: a case study of the Office of Community-Based Research at the University of Victoria

**Researcher**

Nirmala Lall, Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Education: Leadership Studies

Email: nirmala@uvic.ca

**DOCTORAL SUPERVISORS**

Co-supervisor: Dr. Catherine McGregor; cmgreg@uvic.ca; Leadership Studies (Faculty of Education); 250-721-7823

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Budd Hall; bhall@uvic.ca; Office of Community-Based Research at the University Of Victoria; 250-721-8474

**Purpose and Objective of the Research**

The purpose of this research is to gather evidence from those who have experienced working with the Office of Community-Based Research (OCBR) in different capacities and roles to demonstrate and evidence the impact of structures such as the OCBR that support community-university research partnerships. The overall objective of this project is to develop an impact assessment framework to measure the impact of institutional community-university research
partnership structures through the work and experience of the Office of Community-Based Research at the University of Victoria.

**This Research is Important because**

It will serve to strengthening current and future partnerships and contribute to a better understanding of the co-construction of knowledge as facilitated by institutional structures that support community-university research partnerships that deal with complex issue social issues such as: housing and homelessness, poverty, sustainability and economic development.

**Participation**

You have been selected to participate because you are or you have been connected to the work of the Office of Community-Based Research at the University of Victoria. Participation in this project is entirely voluntary. Whether you choose to participate or not will have no effect on your position [e.g. employment] or how you will be treated.

**Procedures**

You will be asked questions about your experiences as they relate to the impact of the OCBR. Your experiences may include partnerships and projects with which you have been involved. If you agree, you will be audio-taped. If not, the interviewer will take notes and you will review the notes to make sure it accurately represents what you are expressing.

**Duration:** One hour

**Location:** At your convenience. At your workplace.
Benefits
To the participant: Opportunity to shape and input the impact assessment framework for the work of the OCBR and share personal impact stories in the context of their past and/or current work and partnership thereby strengthening current and future partnerships.

To society: Creating tools to measure the impact of community-university research partnership structures such as the OCBR contribute to opportunities for more effective and equitable engagement in partnerships between universities and communities. Such partnerships address complex issue social issues such as: housing and homelessness, poverty, sustainability and economic development.

To state of knowledge: To better understand and strengthen the theory and practice of impact measurement as a process of co-constructing knowledge.

Risks:
There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Withdrawal of Participation
You may withdraw at any time without explanation or consequence. Should you withdraw and request your data to be destroyed, it will be destroyed.

Anonymity and Confidentiality
Your name and your institution or organization will kept confidential and you will have input into the changing of identifying information. If you consent to images being photographed they will only be used for dissemination purposes with your approval and without any connection to
information you have provided. Before the dissemination process commences, time you will be involved in reviewing and approving your inclusion in the study via text and image.

If you mention third parties by name (names and organizations), those names will be also be anonymized. If any third party names are to be used we will check with those parties first. Despite the use of a pseudonym and changes to identifying information; it may be possible to identify individual participants. This is due to the sample size and the fact that many people who interact with and within the OCBR may be connected to each other by their work in related or other partnerships.

Your responses will be stored in a password protected database and hard copies kept in a secure document safe off-site of the University of Victoria campus.

**Research Results will be Used/Disseminated in the Following Ways**

Directly to participants; doctoral dissertation, published articles; presentations at scholarly meetings; internet; media

**Questions or Concerns**

Contact the researcher: Nirmala lall; nirmala@uvic.ca; Office Of Community-Based Research at the University Of Victoria; 250-721-8474

Contact the Human Research Ethics Office, University Of Victoria, (250) 472-4545

ethics@uvic.ca

**Consent**

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.
Understanding of Limitations to Confidentiality

I understand and accept that even though my name and information will be confidential in this study, it is possible that others may be able to identify me due to the sample size of this study and the fact that many people who interact with and within the OCBR may be connected to each other by their work in related or other partnerships.

______________ (Please provide your initials)

Image Consent for Dissemination

I consent to images being taken of me, at my comfort level, for the purposes of dissemination of this study. Once a collection of images have been chosen for various types of dissemination for the purposes of this study, I understand that I will be contacted to view and approve my image(s) as it is represented in this collection for one time consent for all dissemination.

No images were taken or used

Thank you. A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.
Appendix C: Ethics Certificate

Please see page below.
# Certificate of Renewed Approval

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:</th>
<th>Nirmala Lall</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UVic STATUS:</td>
<td>Ph.D. Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>UVic DEPARTMENT:</td>
<td>EPLS</td>
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<td>SUPERVISOR:</td>
<td>Budd Hall; Catherine McGregor</td>
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<td>Project Title:</td>
<td>Measuring the Impact of Institutional Community-University Research Partnership Structures: a case study of the Office of Community-Based Research at the University of Victoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE:</td>
<td>28-Jun-16</td>
</tr>
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**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.

**Modifications**

To make any changes to the approved research procedures in your study, please submit a "Request for Modification" form. You must receive ethics approval before proceeding with your modified protocol.

**Renewals**

Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.

**Project Closures**

When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.

## Certification

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Participants.

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Dr. Rachael Scarth
Acting Associate Vice-President, Research