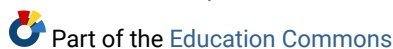Theses

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The Perception of Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools Towards Christian Service-Learning

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THE PERCEPTIONS OF YEAR 11 STUDENTS IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS TOWARDS CHRISTIAN SERVICE-LEARNING

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Declaration of Ownership

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published by another person, except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institution.

The research followed the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2018). The University of Notre Dame Australia Human Research Ethics Committee approved this research, Reference Number 2022-086F. Catholic Education Western Australia also approved the research, Reference Number RP2022/28.
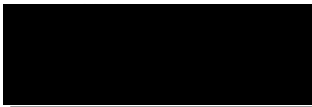
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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to firstly, explore the perceptions of Year 11 students in four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia towards Christian Service-Learning (CSL), and secondly to assist improvement in the delivery of CSL programs through an understanding of the students' perceptions. The study explored Year 11 student perceptions regarding their understandings of CSL, as well what they perceived to be the benefits, challenges, and impacts of participating in a CSL program. A key informant (KI) from each school provided contextual understanding about the CSL program within their school and how the program is delivered within the school. This research is the first study of student perceptions towards CSL in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia.

The study's literature review identified five areas of literature that formed the conceptual framework of the thesis. These five areas were experiential learning, Service-Learning (SL), benefits and positive impacts of Service-Learning, challenges associated with Service-Learning, and Christian Service-Learning. The epistemology underpinning this predominantly qualitative research was constructivism and the theoretical perspective was interpretivism, specifically symbolic interactionism. The methodological approach for this research was an instrumental case study entailing four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. The methods of data collection used in this research were a structured online questionnaire open to all Year 11 students from each school, focus group interviews with a group of Year 11 students from each school, document search, semi-structured interviews with a KI in each school, and a researcher reflection journal. The strategy for the analysis of the qualitative data in this research followed the process outlined by Miles et al. (2020). The quantitative responses from the structured online questionnaire were reported on by descriptive statistics and graphs.

The results of the study indicated that the Year 11 students had four key understandings of CSL. These understandings were related to the Christian aspect of CSL, the purpose of CSL, the differentiation between CSL and volunteering, and the compulsory nature of CSL. The study found that the Year 11 students perceived numerous benefits of CSL. These benefits were related to positive attributes such as the value of CSL, connection with others, the importance of reflection activities, personal enjoyment, and development of a positive attitude towards CSL. The students perceived benefits of CSL including personal development, development of values, leadership development, learning life lessons and skills, preparation for future careers, and civic responsibility. The study identified that the Year 11

students perceived several challenges to their participation in CSL. These challenges included negative perceptions towards the requirement of written reflection activities within the CSL program, the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities, the minimum number of hours for the successful completion of the CSL program, and the use of incentives and awards in a CSL program. The students' perceptions about challenges included the time required to complete CSL, individual circumstances, academic requirements of other courses, an understanding of the purpose of CSL, and liaising and connecting with service placement providers. The Year 11 students proposed seven suggestions for overcoming their perceived challenges associated with CSL to improve CSL programs. These suggestions included the importance of support from school staff; the need for support with transportation, alternative forms of reflection activities, undertaking of CSL during school time, incorporating CSL into the Religious Education (R.E) curriculum, the potential for connection between CSL and other learning areas, and flexibility with completion dates.

The study indicated that the Year 11 students perceived numerous positive impacts as a result of their participation in the CSL program. These positive impacts were personal growth, making a positive contribution, development of perspective, stepping out of one's comfort zone, an increased awareness of social justice issues, and positive standing within the community. The student responses also revealed three factors which they believed influenced the impact of CSL. These impacts were the attitude of the individual, friendship and family influence, and preparation for CSL participation.

The semi-structured interview with the KIs provided contextual understanding about the delivery of the CSL program within their school. The KIs also shared their perceptions of CSL for the Year 11 students. These perceptions were related to positive and negative Year 11 student attitudes towards CSL. The KIs also shared their perceptions of impacting factors within the CSL program. These impacting factors of CSL were: making a difference through contributing to society; the inclusion of incentives and awards; parental involvement; and the importance of reflection activities within the CSL program. The KIs all noted that their CSL programs are impactful on the students.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Nick and Nuccia De Luca, who taught me the ethos and value of working hard; my wife, Madeleine, who has unconditionally supported me throughout this journey; and my son, Nicolas, to whom I hope to model and teach the ethos and value of working hard. Mum and Dad, my first educators, I am immensely proud to call you my parents. Thank you for teaching me my faith, my love for family, the value of working hard, the value of justice, and the value of serving and living like Jesus did. I am thankful for all the opportunities you have given to me and continue to do so. The journey of this research study has drawn inspiration from all of the qualities, opportunities, and lessons taught to me by my parents. This journey was possible because of the amazing and unwavering support received from my wife, Madeleine, and son, Nicolas. I am deeply thankful for their unconditional support, love, understanding, patience, encouragement, cheering, and belief throughout the duration of this research study, and always. I hope to be a role model of all the qualities taught to me by my parents, to my son.

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I am very thankful to Catholic Education Western Australia, particularly the previous Executive Director of Catholic Education, Western Australia, Dr Debra Sayce who allowed me to conduct this research study within the four Catholic secondary schools under her direction within the Archdiocese of Perth. I am also thankful to Catholic Education Western Australia for the Doctoral scholarship I received, to finish the writing of this thesis. Thank you to Frances Haji-Ali and Jennifer Morley for their understanding, encouragement, care, and for approving me the time to finish the writing of this thesis. I also received an Australian Government Research Training Program scholarship to complete this research, for which I am appreciative.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Principals, Deputy Principals, Key Informants, and Year 11 students from the four Catholic secondary schools involved in this study. Their willingness, enthusiasm, and belief in this research topic made this research possible. Thank you also to my brothers, Christian and Daniele, their families, my extended family, friends, peers, and colleagues who have encouraged me throughout this journey, and for their interest in this research. I also thank my Nonni, who are in heaven, for their significant impact on my life in so many ways.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Service-Learning and Christian Service-Learning

Service-Learning (SL) is a teaching method (Miller, 2012) whereby students address community needs through acts of service that are linked to the curriculum being studied (Brail, 2016; Pendergast et al., 2017; Roso, 2013). The concept of SL derives from work completed in 1967 by Sigmon and Ramsey of the Southern Regional Education Board from the United States of America. Sigmon and Ramsey sponsored an internship program for college students to work on community projects (Giles & Eyler, 1994; Kenny & Gallagher, 2002). Participation in SL requires that it is mutually beneficial for students completing the action of service, as well as for those receiving the service (Kaye, 2010a; Moak, 2020). SL can occur in multiple teaching areas such as Mathematics, English, or Physical Education. SL therefore supports improvement in student learning across a variety of disciplines and can improve educational outcomes for students (Kaye, 2010a; Miller, 2012; Wurr & Hamilton, 2012).

Some forms of SL are situated within a tradition of faith. In Australia since the "mid-2000's, various faith-based educational institutions have sought to contextualize service-learning within their specific religious tradition" (Chambers & Lavery, 2018, p. 6). Christian Service-Learning (CSL) is a case in point. CSL is a pedagogical method underpinned by gospel values where students in primary, secondary, and tertiary settings can meet community needs through acts of service (Engebretson, 2014; Lavery, 2007a; Lavery & Hackett, 2008). In the Catholic school, CSL is "designed to enable students to grow from a Christian perspective as people of service" (Catholic Education Western Australia [CEWA], 2021a, p. 1). The life of Jesus depicted in the gospel underpins the service and learning (CEWA, 2021a; Engebretson, 2014). Jesus, as evident throughout His life, associated with the vulnerable, the poor, and the oppressed (Lavery & Hackett, 2008). The belief in the benevolence of Jesus Christ makes following His example through serving others a foundational task for all Christians (Feenstra, 2011; Lavery & Hackett, 2008; Schuttloffel, 2005).

1.2 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is twofold. The first purpose is to explore the perceptions of Year 11 students in four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia towards CSL. Underpinning this purpose is the intention to understand the benefits, challenges, and impacts

that CSL presents students, how students feel about CSL, why they feel this way, and what their experiences were that led to the construction of these perceptions.

The second purpose of the research is to assist improvement in the delivery of CSL programs through an understanding of student voice. The CEWA (2021a) Christian Service Learning Guidelines and Framework for CEWA Schools includes the notion of student voice, calling for students to be actively involved in their learning, and identifying the need for students to have their perceptions heard and enacted. It is anticipated that the student perceptions towards CSL, gleaned from this research, will provide insights into what students expect from CSL programs and these insights could be formative for the future development and delivery of CSL programs.

1.3 Researcher Statement

I was motivated to engage in this research for two reasons. Firstly, I have a long-standing passion for CSL and its contribution to improving communities. Secondly, as a teacher, I also believe in the important role that student voice plays in forming a high-quality and engaging curriculum. The overarching research question synthesises these two passions. I have a passion for CSL. I believe that CSL is dynamic and provides students with many benefits that can only have a positive impact on their lives. CSL has always had an important role in my life and serving others fills me with a sense of fulfillment, satisfaction, and joy. From a young age the notion of helping others for no reward and doing good for others was instilled in me by my parents. As a student in a Catholic secondary school in Western Australia I was able to participate in a CSL program, which provided me with a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment.

A practice which I have maintained from my early years as a classroom teacher, and which I still maintain now in my role as a Deputy Principal, is to give students an opportunity to share their thoughts, opinions, and ideas about lesson activities, classroom and school processes, and pedagogical practices. In my experience, the practice of allowing students to share feedback and have their voices heard has led to increased student engagement, better attendance, an improvement in student educational achievements, and an overall positive experience for the student in the classroom and at school. A strong motivation behind this research has been to give students a voice to have their perceptions heard about the benefits, challenges, and impacts of participating in a CSL program.

1.4 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this research is to explore the perceptions of Year 11 students towards CSL through the implementation of an instrumental case study. The overarching question is: What are the perceptions of Year 11 students towards Christian Service-Learning in four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia? There are five specific questions to be researched:

1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?

2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?

5. What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

1.5 Significance of the Research

This research is significant in two ways. Firstly, it attempts to address a gap in the literature regarding Western Australian Catholic secondary school students' perceptions towards CSL. Research by Lavery (2007b) focussed on student participation in CSL within the Western Australian context and its impact on the leadership abilities of students. The inclusion of student perceptions was not the purpose of the study undertaken by Lavery (2007b). However, the inclusion of student perceptions was identified as a crucial missing element which would provide a deeper and more well-rounded understanding of CSL. The present research will contribute the valuable, yet often missing component, of student voice to the existing literature and therefore add to knowledge in the field.

The second significance is linked to the first. It is anticipated that the results of this research will help inform decision-making, program creation and delivery by those practitioners involved in secondary CSL in CEWA through consideration of student perceptions. Cooke and Kemeny (2014) highlighted the scarcity of student perceptions towards SL, noting that "further analysis of student perceptions about service learning is needed" (p. 110).

1.6 Research Design

      The epistemological approach selected for this research is constructivism. This research has its foundation in constructivism as it allowed the researcher to explore the perceptions of Year 11 students towards CSL from the students' viewpoint. The theoretical perspective which underpins this research is interpretivism, specifically symbolic interactionism. Interpretivism aims to "explain human and social reality" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). In this research the Year 11 students shared their perceptions about how they think, feel, and why they act in a certain way about CSL, thus their understanding of reality. An instrumental case study methodology was employed for this research. In an instrumental case study, the focus is on a specific issue rather than the case (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The specific issue under investigation in this research is student perceptions of CSL and the instrumental case study of the four Catholic secondary schools provides the means to explore the issue.

      Five data collection methods were employed: document search; semi-structured interviews with a key informant (KI) in each school; structured online questionnaire with Year 11 students, including both qualitative and quantitative questions; focus group interviews with Year 11 students; and a researcher reflection journal. The document search included School CSL rationale/program, Annual school reports, School strategic plans, Evangelisation plans, and Annual School Improvement plans. The document search was used to formulate the questions for the semi-structured KI interviews, the structured online questionnaire, and the focus group interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with a KI from each school. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to gain contextual understanding about the CSL program within each school and how the program is delivered in the school.

      All students in the Year 11 cohort at each school were invited to participate in the anonymous structured online questionnaire. The questionnaire included qualitative open-ended questions, several multiple-choice questions, and five-point Likert scale questions where students had the opportunity to share their perceptions towards CSL. Within the structured online questionnaire students were able to nominate to participate in a focus group interview. The focus group interview questions derived from the literature review, document search, KI interviews, and the structured online questionnaire. The focus group interviews enabled the Year 11 students to provide further insights and build on the understanding of CSL gleaned from the structured online questionnaire. The semi-structured interviews and

focus group interviews were audio-recorded with participant permission and were transcribed for analysis.

The qualitative data were analysed using the process outlined by Miles et al. (2020) involving "three concurrent flows of activity" (p. 8): data condensation, data display, and the drawing and verifying of conclusions. Specifically, the data from the semi-structured interviews, the qualitative responses from the questionnaire, and the focus group interviews were coded and thematised. Member checking, which involved following up with the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), was employed to gain feedback on the accuracy of the transcriptions from the KIs. The quantitative questions from the questionnaire focussed on obtaining demographic and contextual data and responses were represented through the generation of descriptive statistics and graphs. The final phase of the data analysis was to draw conclusions and verify the data. The data collected from the document search, the KI interviews, and the Year 11 students was constantly contrasted and compared for emerging meanings and conclusions drawn. An in-depth outline of the processes for analysing the data is provided in Chapter Four.

1.7 Limitations of the Research

There are four potential limitations identified within this research. The first relates to the generalisability of the research. This research was limited to four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia from a total of 54. The four schools, however, were purposively selected to provide variation. The schools are currently facilitating a CSL program in Western Australia, representing co-educational and single-gender cohorts from Pre-Kindergarten-12 and 7-12 schools, with differing Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) scores. The study may have credibility within CEWA, but generalising the results to other educational sectors within Australia or internationally may be more difficult.

The second potential limitation is concerned with the range of participants in the research. The research included only Year 11 students and KIs from each school. The perceptions of other students, other staff, or parents were not included. The Year 11 students were purposefully selected to participate in this study because most Year 11 students will have had up to five years of CSL experience, from Year 7-11. Furthermore, Year 12 students were not selected to participate given their commitments with their final year of study, including study and examination commitments. The inclusion of other stakeholders could be a focus for future research.

The third potential limitation relates to volunteer bias, also known as self-selection bias (Tripepi et al., 2010). Volunteer bias occurs when participants who are involved in a study differ from those who are not involved (Oswald et al., 2012). The selection of an appropriate research design and methods of data collection, as employed in this research, can reduce its impact (Tripepi et al., 2010). The reporting of descriptive statistics, used within this research, has also been recommended so that the "generalisability of findings can be evaluated and accurate conclusions drawn" (Oswald et al., 2012, p. 173)

The fourth potential limitation relates to researcher bias. The researcher is a staff member employed by CEWA and has within his role responsibility, the co-ordination and implementation of CSL programs within his own school. Further, the researcher has a passion and keen interest for CSL. This potential limitation was addressed in three ways. The researcher maintained a reflective journal throughout the data collection and analysis stage of the study. The reflective journal enabled the researcher to maintain awareness of his own perception, ensuring it did not influence the data collection or analysis and interpretation. Member checking of the semi-structured interview transcripts by the KIs was employed to ensure the recorded accounts were accurate, as well as affording the KIs the opportunity to clarify and add any further points. Triangulation of the data sources and of the data collection methods allowed for results to be corroborated which also reduced the potential of researcher bias.

1.8 Key Definitions

1.8.1 Authority-Developed Community Service (ADCS)

Authority-Developed Community Service (ADCS) is an endorsed unit developed by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) and launched in 2015. It is a 55-hour program where students complete at least 50 hours of community service activities plus five hours of reflection and induction activities. The unit is endorsed until 2024 (SCSA, 2022).

1.8.2 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is a ranking system between 0.0 and 99.5, used for university admission in Australia. The ranking indicates a student's standing in comparison to their cohort (Department of Education Western Australia, [DoEWA], n.d.a). ATAR courses are offered to Year 11 and 12 students in Western Australian schools. The courses are designed for students who have the intention of going to university, or undertaking tertiary studies, upon successful completion of Year 12 (SCSA, 2019).

1.8.3 Catholic Schools

A Catholic school is a school in which students are provided opportunities to "reflect deeply upon the meaning of their lives, particularly in the light of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ" (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia [CECWA], 2009, p. 7). Catholic schools are an important way the Catholic Church "proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (CECWA, 2009, p. 7). A key responsibility of a Catholic school is to "form Christian men and women committed to the love, compassion and justice of the Gospel of Jesus Christ" (CECWA, 2009, p. 7). There are 163 Catholic schools in Western Australia across the four dioceses (G. De Vos, personal communication, August 29, 2023) with the purpose of "providing a Catholic education for all families who seek it" (CEWA, 2022).

1.8.4 Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA)

Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) was founded in 1843 (CEWA, 2022). CEWA became a limited company in 2019, known as CEWA Limited, and was established by the Catholic Bishops in the state of Western Australia (CEWA Limited, 2019).

1.8.5 Christian Service-Learning (CSL)

Christian Service-Learning (CSL) is a teaching method underpinned by gospel values such as love, charity, justice, compassion, kindness, and service, exemplified by the life of Jesus. In CSL, students put faith into action by addressing community needs through acts of service (Engebretson, 2014; Devlin & Warner, 2017; Kaak & LaPorte, 2022; Lavery & Hackett, 2008).

1.8.6 Endorsed Program

An endorsed program or endorsed unit is a learning program developed for senior secondary students in Western Australia, that is students enrolled in Years 10,11 or 12. Some endorsed programs are developed by SCSA whilst others are developed by an individual school or private organisation and then endorsed by SCSA. Endorsed programs comprise lessons and activities that are delivered either in class time as part of the curriculum or as extra-curricular activities (SCSA, 2014a)

1.8.7 Department of Education Western Australia (DoEWA)

The Department of Education Western Australia (DoEWA) has the role of influencing the education of every student in Western Australia directly via the public school system and indirectly in the form of regulation and funding of Catholic schools (DoEWA, n.d.b). DoEWA was created in 2017, amalgamating the previous Department of Education and other Department of Education Services. SCSA staff form part of the Department of Education though SCSA is a statutory entity (DoEWA, 2018).

1.8.8 General Courses

General Courses are courses of study that are offered to Year 11 and 12 students in Western Australian schools, aimed at those students who are attempting to enter the workforce or extended vocational training once they complete their senior schooling. Some General courses are completed to gain alternative entry into universities (SCSA, 2019).

1.8.9 Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)

The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). ICSEA provides information relating to the socio-educational backgrounds of students. It is not reflective of school staff, facilities, or educational programs within a school. An ICSEA rating is calculated using parental occupation and educational information and school details such as geographical location and percentages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled. An average or benchmark ICSEA value is 1000. A higher ICSEA value indicates a higher level of educational advantage of students enrolled in the school. A lower ICSEA indicates a lower educational advantage of students enrolled in a school (ACARA, 2015).

1.8.10 Key Informant (KI)

A key informant (KI), also known as a key knowledgeable (Patton, 2015), is an individual who can "shed light on the inquiry issues" (Patton, 2015, p. 268) because of their knowledge of the subject matter in question. KIs can be considered critical to case study research because they are able to provide insight into a particular topic (Yin, 2018).

1.8.11 School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA)

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) is an entity which has the responsibility of overseeing the Kindergarten-Year 12 curriculum in Western Australia

(DoEWA, 2022). SCSA sets the curriculum, standards of achievement, certification, and reporting within Western Australian schools (SCSA, 2014b).

1.8.12 Vocational and Educational Training (VET)

Vocational and Educational Training (VET) is course-based learning with a focus on providing students with practical, work-ready skills for direct entry into the employment sector (SCSA, 2014c). The VET pathway differs to an ATAR pathway which has its focus on theory and entry into university courses (The Good Universities Guide, 2022).

1.8.13 Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)

The Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) is the certificate awarded to students who successfully complete two years of senior secondary schooling. It is nationally recognised in the Australian Qualification Framework and recognised by universities, TAFE, and industry (DoEWA, n.d.c).

1.8.14 Year 11 Student

A Year 11 student is an enrolled pupil at a secondary school who is usually aged between 15 and 17 years in his or her penultimate year of secondary school.

1.9 Thesis Structure

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Table 1.1 provides an outline of the thesis structure.

Table 1.1

Outline of the Thesis Structure

Chapter	Title
Chapter One	Introduction
Chapter Two	Context of the Research
Chapter Three	Literature Review
Chapter Four	Research Plan
Chapter Five	Presentation of Research Results
Chapter Six	Discussion of Research Results
Chapter Seven	Review and Conclusions

Chapter One introduced the research. The chapter included a personal statement from the researcher explaining the motivation for completing this study. The underpinning purpose of the research was outlined. The five research questions were introduced along with the significance of the research. A summary of the research design including data collection methods and strategy for analysis were presented and the limitations within the study were considered.

Chapter Two outlines the contextual foundation of the research. There are four contextual dimensions which underpin the research: CSL in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia; the SCSA Endorsed Program; CEWA; and the background of the four participant Catholic schools.

Chapter Three contains a review of the literature. Five key areas are explored in the literature review. These areas are: experiential learning; SL; benefits and positive impacts of SL; challenges associated with SL; and CSL.

Chapter Four sets out the research plan that is used to address the research questions. The epistemology underpinning this predominantly qualitative research is constructivism, using the theoretical perspective of interpretivism, specifically that of symbolic interactionism. Instrumental case study is the methodology employed in this research. A justification and defence of this methodology is included. The data collection methods used in the research are outlined and a description of the research participants is provided. The trustworthiness of the research and methodological rigour employed and applied within the research are described. The data analysis process is defined. The chapter concludes with ethical considerations and overall summary of the research design.

Chapter Five presents the results from the data collection. The results are organised using the five research requestions as headings. The qualitative data collected from the document search, the semi-structured KI interviews, the structured online questionnaire, and focus group interviews with Year 11 students were contrasted and through the process of analysis, themes were generated. The quantitative data collected from the structured online questionnaire were also compared with the themes that emerged from the qualitative data. The results from the first research question outline four key student understandings of CSL. The results from the second research question display the students' perceived benefits of CSL. The results from the third research question present the students' perceived challenges associated with CSL. The results from the fourth research question highlight the students' perceptions on the impacts of CSL. The results from the fifth research question indicate KI

perceptions of CSL for students in Year 11 as well as KI perceptions of impacting factors in the CSL program.

Chapter Six presents a discussion of the results outlined in Chapter Five. The data is analysed and interpreted with reference to the literature presented in Chapter Three, based on each research question. Similarities and differences between the results of this research and the literature reviewed in Chapter Three are explored. The data collected from the semi-structured interviews with the key-informants are contrasted and compared to the data collected from the Year 11 participants in both the structured online questionnaire and focus group interviews.

Chapter Seven reviews and concludes the thesis. It contains a summary of the results obtained in the research through answering the five research questions. Potential contributions of the study, suggestions for future research and implications for proponents of CSL are presented. As a result of this study a framework is presented to explain the recommendations for CSL emerging from this research. The framework is considered a starting point for the development of a CSL program. A personal impact statement and addendum close the chapter.

Chapter Two: Context of the Research

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is twofold. Firstly, the purpose is to explore the perceptions of Year 11 students towards Christian Service-Learning (CSL) in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. Secondly, the purpose is to assist improvement in the delivery of CSL programs through an understanding of student voice. Underpinning this purpose is a desire to give students an opportunity to be heard as a means to improve the delivery of CSL programs.

This chapter outlines the context underpinning the research. Context enables an understanding of participants' backgrounds (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative research investigates what happens in the lives of people within their specific context (Patton, 2015). Four contextual dimensions underpin this research: CSL in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia; the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) endorsed program; Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA); and the four participant Catholic schools.

2.2 Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

CSL programs have been present since 1997 in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia (Lavery, 2007b). The CEWA (2021a) Christian Service-Learning Guidelines and Framework for CEWA Schools defines CSL as "an educational activity that contributes to the development of students as followers of Jesus" (p. 1). CEWA (2021a) calls for CSL "to be embedded into the curriculum of each school both primary and secondary and be flexible enough to be conducted in or out of school time, both on and off school premises" (p. 4). CSL is an important part of the whole school curriculum within Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia (CEWA, 2021a). Various Catholic schools highlight the following outcomes from CSL participation: the fostering of gospel values; preparing students to be Christ-like citizens; espousing the gospel values once they leave their school; and the development of students from a faith perspective to be people of service (Bunbury Catholic College, 2022; Lumen Christi College, n.d.; Ursula Frayne College, 2019). Schools with a religious patron often connect the life and works of the patron with the CSL program (Servite College, 2020, St Brigid's College, 2023). For example, at Aquinas College, their CSL program is linked to the founder of the Christian Brothers, Blessed Edmund Rice (Aquinas

College, 2022). At St Mary MacKillop College, their CSL program is linked to their patron St Mary of the Cross MacKillop (St Mary MacKillop College, 2023).

2.3 SCSA Endorsed Program

From 2009 to 2014, all students in their senior secondary school years in Western Australia were required to complete over 20 hours of service, including reflection activities in order to graduate. However, this requirement has subsequently been removed. In 2014, SCSA developed the endorsed program known as Authority-Developed Community Service (ADCS) which was launched in 2015, replacing all endorsed community service and Service-Learning (SL) programs developed by schools for students in Years 10-12 (SCSA, 2014d). Each completed endorsed unit counts as one of the 14 units which comprise a successfully completed Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) that students receive at the completion of Year 12. All completed endorsed programs are also documented within the Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement which is received at the completion of Year 12 (SCSA, 2014a).

2.3.1 Authority-Developed Community Service

The SCSA Authority-Developed Community Service (ADCS) endorsed program can be adapted to a school's particular context and therefore CSL in Catholic schools can be part of the ADCS endorsed program (SCSA, 2022). Participation in the ADCS endorsed program is open to students through Years 10, 11, and 12 with each participating school overseeing their own program. The aim of the ADCS is to provide students with positive outcomes by participating in, and then reflecting on the service activities completed. The endorsed program has a requirement for the completion of 50 hours of community service through Years 10, 11, and 12, recorded by the student and validated by a co-ordinator or authority within the school. Further to the 50 hours of service, a minimum of five hours' worth of induction and reflection are necessary for successful completion of an ADCS unit. Students are required to demonstrate their learning by submitting a portfolio to their school. The purpose of the portfolio is for students to provide evidence of their capabilities in three areas. The portfolio must include evidence of knowledge and understanding, such as a completed workbook or reflective journal. The portfolio must demonstrate evidence of abilities, skills and/or techniques, for example, annotated photographs of students completing service, student developed and created planning documents or publicity materials. Evidence of participation and engagement must also be demonstrated, for example through a completed

community service logbook, record of service, or letter of appreciation from an external agency (SCSA, 2015). The successful completion of 55 hours (service, induction, and reflection) counts as one completed unit with a maximum of four units available to each student (SCSA, 2022). SCSA is a government funded organisation and therefore does not refer to the religious-based CSL, but rather to SL, stating that it recognises "the value of service learning" (SCSA, 2014e).

2.4 Catholic Education Western Australia

Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) was established by the Catholic Bishops in the state of Western Australia. CEWA became a limited company in 2019 (CEWA, 2019) with a stated purpose to "provide Catholic Education for all families who seek it for their children" (CEWA, 2019, p. 1). The vision of CEWA is to be a "Christ-centred and child-focused community of engaged learning environments, inspiring all to actively live the Gospel" (CEWA, 2021c). This vision is enacted through the Quality Catholic Education (QCE) framework which is "based on the Bishops' Mandate and incorporates the Strategic Directions of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA)" (CEWA, 2023). Catholic schools, supported by CEWA, provide the structure for children to develop into young men and women with Christian foundations.

The research was completed within the context of Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. There are presently 163 Catholic schools in the four dioceses within the state, Broome, Bunbury, Geraldton, and Perth (Figure 2.1). Of these 163 schools there are currently 54 Catholic secondary schools and 27 of these are composite schools (primary and secondary), with all offering some form of CSL program (G. De Vos, personal communication, August 29, 2023). There are over 80,000 students in Catholic schools in Western Australia and more than 10,000 teaching and non-teaching staff (G. De Vos, personal communication, August 29, 2023).

Figure 2.1

The Four Catholic Dioceses of Western Australia (CEWA, 2021b)
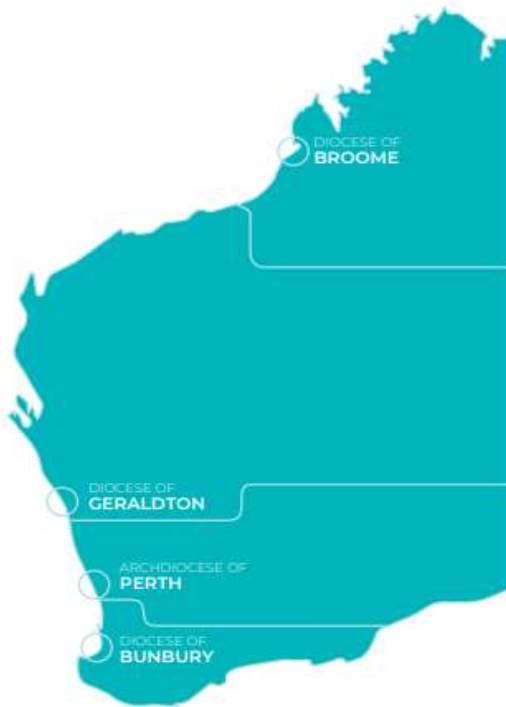
2.5 The Four Participant Catholic Schools

The participants for this research were from four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. Purposive sampling was used to provide a variety of contexts, including co-educational schools, a girl's school, a boy's school, and differing socio-economic conditions (Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage [ICSEA] value and percentile). Two of the four schools used the ADCS endorsed program for CSL and two schools did not. Table 2.1 provides an overview of the contextual background of the four schools, labelled as School A, B, C, D.

Table 2.1

*Overview of the Four Participant Schools (*Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting

Authority, 2022)

School	Type	Single Gender/Co-Educational	2022 ICSEA value	2022 ICSEA percentile	2022 Student Population
A	Pre Kindergarten (PK)-12	Co-Ed	1038	64	1142
B	Kindergarten (K)-12	Single Gender	1113	88	1311
C	PK-12	Co-Ed	1120	89	1734
D	K-12	Single Gender	1050	69	759

The information below outlines each school's CSL program and was obtained from the semi-structured interview with the key informant (KI) from each school.

2.5.1 School A

In School A the CSL co-ordinator oversees the CSL program, which is delivered to all Year 7-12 students. The name of the program is linked to the school's vision and there is a focus on linking with the school patrons. The term CSL is not used. As the KI explained: "Our patron story is very strong, so the students do know that whatever they're doing is working in some way towards putting that patron story into practice". The KI outlined that the program is scaffolded for Year 7-12 students with a focus on introduction for Year 7-9 students and then increased rigour in Year 10-12, linking into Religious Education (R.E) studies in social justice. Year 10-12 students complete CSL as part of the ADCS endorsed program. Students are provided with opportunities to complete service including soup kitchens, breakfast clubs, before and after school onsite activities, local social justice immersion, and helping with charity organisations. Students are also required to organise their own SL placements. By the conclusion of Year 11 students need to have completed a minimum of 34 hours of service and there is a requirement that students are up to date in their CSL, including reflection activities to be eligible to attend the Year 12 Ball. Students are given a list of questions to guide their reflection response, which is submitted as an essay with a minimum length of 800 words.

2.5.2 School B

In School B the CSL program is delivered for all students from Year 4-12. The program is named CSL. The Director of CSL oversees the program with nominated teachers delivering the Year 4-6 program and a middle-school assistant director, responsible for the Year 7-9 program. Students are offered opportunities that are age specific and scaffolded. The KI noted that parent involvement is crucial: "The parents have a lot to do with their [child's] involvement…They're more excited about their [child] being part of the service than they're [child is], and that's half the battle". The KI indicated that some activities take place during school time and others are completed out of school time on and off campus. Examples of areas these activities address include disability groups, homelessness, primary schools, conservation, and social justice. Students from Years 10-12 complete a minimum number of sessions rather than a set number of hours or tasks, with some students achieving this minimum number as early as Year 10. The CSL program is not linked with the ADCS endorsed program, rather school-affiliated programs, and completion of the program is required for a student to graduate from the College. Upon completion of the programs, students are required to prepare a reflection essay with an 800-word limit, which is required for successful completion of CSL. Reflection activities are also incorporated into the Year 11 Retreat.

2.5.3 School C

In School C the CSL program is offered from Year 7-12 with the Deputy Principal for Ministry overseeing the program. The name of the program is linked to the school's heritage story and tradition. The term CSL is not commonly used. The program is also linked with the school's mission, with a focus on the quality completion of activities and reflections rather than a set number of hours. The CSL program in this school is not linked with the ADCS endorsed program. The KI emphasised that students are encouraged "to take ownership of the service they're going to do" with the hope that the program builds "a spirit where they want to serve as opposed to forcing…students to get involved in activities they might not necessarily be interested in". The KI indicated that Year 11 students complete activities on and off campus including local and international immersions, fundraising events, school-based service, and service at local primary schools. Students are provided opportunities for reflection through the school-based Retreat Days. The R.E teachers are the primary staff members who oversee the day to day running of the program for all year groups.

2.5.4 School D

In School D the CSL program is overseen by the Head of Faith and Mission. The name of the program is linked to the school's patron and heritage story. The term CSL is not commonly used. The KI explained that the program is offered to all students in the college. From PK-Year 4 the program is focussed on the college values with practical on-campus experiences of service being offered. The program is formalised in Years 5 and 6 where students complete service activities at home as well. Students in Years 7-9 are expected to complete between five and 10 hours of service. Students in Year 10 are expected to complete 30 hours and Year 11 students are expected to complete 20 hours. Students in Year 10 and 11 complete CSL as part of the ADCS endorsed program. Year 10 and 11 students are also required to complete a 1500-word reflective journal by the completion of the Year 11 school year. To be eligible to attend the Year 12 Ball, students must have successfully completed the reflective journal and the cumulative 50 hours of service in Year 10 and 11. The KI explained that students are informed that "anything you join as a club out of normal school hours counts as service, because the club wouldn't run without you". School-based clubs include choir, dance, environmental groups, and drama productions. Examples of other activities in School D include community events and service activities at aged care facilities.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the four contextual dimensions that underpin this research to provide the reader with a greater understanding to the setting of the research. These contextual dimensions are CSL in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia; the SCSA ADCS endorsed program; Catholic Education in Western Australia; and a brief outline of the context of each of the four Catholic schools in this study. The next chapter, Literature Review, will present literature across five key areas relevant to the research. These areas are experiential learning; SL; benefits and positive impacts of SL; challenges associated with SL; and CSL.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore the perceptions of Year 11 students towards Christian Service-Learning (CSL). Research on students' perceptions about their Service-Learning (SL) experiences appears to be limited (Colvin, 2020; Cooke & Kemeny, 2014), although the inclusion of student perceptions or student voice has been identified as a crucial ingredient to the achievement of the many benefits of SL (Billig et al., 2005; Colvin, 2020; Kaye, 2010a). Colvin (2020) emphasised the importance of this inclusion of student perceptions, highlighting that these perceptions "can impact the experience that [students] have in doing service-learning" (p. 9). The areas of literature that informed the research included experiential learning; SL; benefits and positive impacts of SL; challenges associated with SL; and CSL. Table 3.1 outlines the structure of Chapter Three.

Table 3.1

Outline of Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.1	Introduction
3.2	Conceptual Framework
3.3	Experiential Learning
3.4	Service-Learning
3.5	Benefits and Positive Impacts of Service-Learning
3.6	Challenges Associated with Service-Learning
3.7	Christian Service-Learning
3.8	Conclusion

3.2 Conceptual Framework

The five areas of research outlined in Table 3.1 bring into focus the conceptual framework underpinning the research. These five areas directly influenced the subject of this research, student perceptions towards CSL. Literature presented on experiential learning provides the foundation for an understanding of SL by detailing various forms of experiential learning, given that SL is itself a form of experiential learning. Literature on SL outlines forms and types of SL, a brief history of SL, and an exploration of the many components that SL comprises. The third area of the conceptual framework is the benefits and positive impacts

of SL. This area details various benefits and positive impacts derived from participation in SL, including: personal growth; increased citizenship and civic mindedness; enhanced academic achievement and understanding of classroom content; preparedness for future professions; development of leadership skills; increased awareness of social justice and environmental issues; stepping out of one's comfort zone; and the benefits of SL to others.

The fourth area of the conceptual framework describes challenges associated with SL. These challenges include: resistance to SL; time required for SL; personal circumstances; and communication. Strategies for overcoming some of these challenges are also described. The fifth area in the conceptual framework is CSL. The literature in this area includes: Christian Service; reflection in CSL; Catholic Social Teaching as a foundation for CSL in the Catholic context; CSL in the Catholic school; and the benefits of CSL. The conceptual framework underpinning the literature is presented in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1

Conceptual Framework

Experiential Learning
-Forms
-Differences

Christian Service-Learning
-Christian Service
-Reflection
-Catholic Social Teaching context
-In the Catholic school
-Benefits

Perceptions of Year 11 students towards Christian Service-Learning

Service-Learning
-Forms and types
-Brief History
-Components

Challenges
-Resistance
-Time
-Personal Circumstances
-Communication

Benefits and Positive Impacts
-Personal growth
-Increased citizenship
-Enhanced academic achievement
-Future professions
-Leadership skils
-Social justice awareness
-Stepping out of comfort zone
-Friends and Family
-Benefits to others

3.3 Experiential Learning

Experiential learning can be defined as learning through action or practice (Maher & Hanley, 2013). Experiences are considered a necessary requirement for learning to occur (Taras & Gonzalez-Perez, 2015). Experiential learning involves experiences that are supported by reflection and critical thinking (Association for Experiential Education, 2023). The individual undertaking the experiential learning is constantly engaged in "posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning" (Association for Experiential Education, 2023, para. 4) throughout the entirety of the experience. Benefits of experiential

learning include: more active involvement in comparison to other classroom activities; learning related to the specific experience being undertaken; development of the individual to become a professional and self-guided learner; and application of the knowledge gained from the experiences to other contexts (Steele, 2023). Challenges to the success of experiential learning include: the time required to complete the activities; time required to support the participants to prepare; and financial restraints (Steele, 2023). Experiential learning can also contribute to the formation of the whole person (Maher & Hanley, 2013). The literature on experiential learning is considered under two main categories, forms of experiential learning and differences between SL and other forms of experiential learning. These categories will now be explored.

3.3.1 Forms of Experiential Learning

There are various forms of experiential learning including volunteering, community service, SL, internships, and Workplace Integrated Learning (WIL) (Furco, 1996, Knapp et al., 2020; Patrick et al., 2019). Volunteering allows individuals or groups of people to provide a service to others without financial reward (Knapp et al., 2020). Community service is where individuals help the community by choice or through specific school or university program requirements (Kaye, 2010a). An alignment with an academic curriculum or the inclusion of reflection activities may not always be present in community service (Kaye, 2010a). SL is considered a form of experiential learning whereby individuals, generally students, learn through experiences, reflection activities, and through an overall connection to academic learning (Brail, 2016; Norhafezah et al., 2020). Internships provide people with a practical working experience in a possible future industry of employment whereby they can develop skills required to complete a job (Knapp et al., 2020).

WIL involves programs whereby university students are connected to a workplace in their chosen area of study (Education Services Australia Ltd, 2021). Activities within WIL can include workplace placements, online activities with real clients, industry or community-based projects, and activities in contexts involving industry and community partners (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2022). WIL is prominent in Australian higher education (Patrick et al., 2019). SL, volunteering, and community service are forms of experiential learning more frequently used in a secondary school setting in Western Australia (SCSA, 2015). The continuum in Figure 3.2 displays volunteering, community service, SL, and internships according to the beneficiary and focus within each form (Furco, 1996).

Figure 3.2

Forms of Experiential Learning (Furco, 1996)
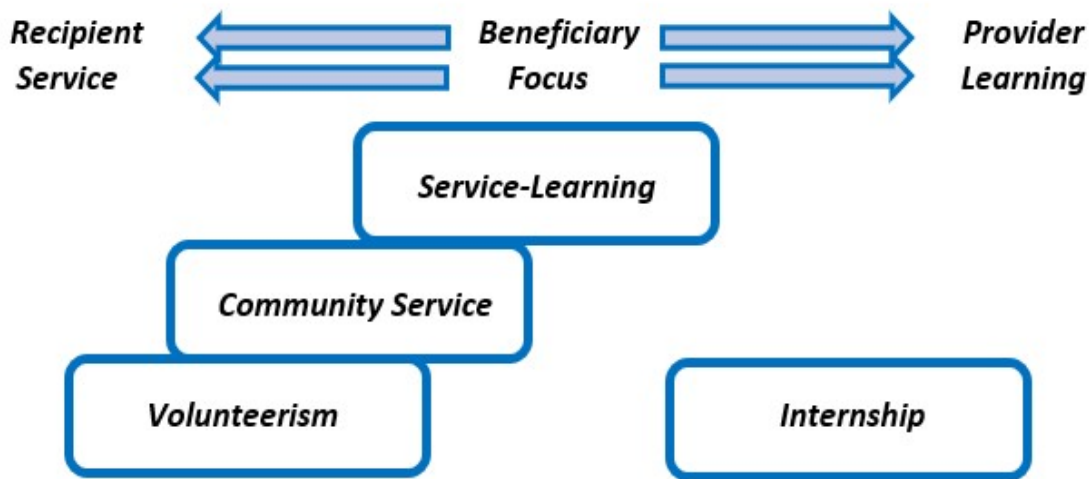
In volunteer work, as shown in Figure 3.2, students are engaged in activities where the intended beneficiary is the recipient of the service and the focus is on the service being provided (Furco, 1996). Volunteering is based on the needs of the community and can be organised by institutions or organisations, taking place within or outside the institution or organisation (Knapp et al., 2020). Volunteering is usually not connected to academic coursework or learning goals (Phelps, 2012).

In community service, students are engaged in activities that directly or indirectly assist an individual, organisation, or community (Chambers & Lavery, 2018). The focus is on the service provided and on the benefits for the recipients (Furco, 1996). Whilst there are some benefits attained by the students undertaking the activities, the students are not the primary beneficiary (Furco, 1996). Community service programs are more structured than volunteer work though the emphasis is on the actual experience and not on learning from the action (Furco, 1996; Liu, 2015; Phelps, 2012). Further, community service does not involve the service being linked to academic learning outcomes (Billig, 2011; Phelps, 2012).

Whilst SL is sometimes mistaken for other forms of experiential learning, SL is not volunteering, community service, or internships (Chambers & Lavery, 2022; Chung & McBride, 2015; Furco & Norvell, 2019). SL has distinct components and purpose, in comparison to volunteering and community service (Lim & Bloomquist, 2015). As shown in Figure 3.2, the intention of SL is to equally benefit the service provider and the recipient whilst maintaining an equal focus on the service being provided and the learning being

undertaken (Furco, 1996). SL has as a central tenet the education of students (Kaye, 2010a) and student learning (Chambers & Lavery, 2022) and is embedded and intentionally linked to the academic curriculum (Filges et al., 2021; Wodon, 2022). The importance of reflection in SL is emphasised (Filges et al., 2021; Knapp et al., 2020) with the service activities benefitting both the community and the service providers (Yamauchi et al., 2006).

3.3.2 Differences Between Service-Learning, Volunteering, and Community Service

There are several differences between SL and volunteering and community service. Kimonen and Nevalainen (2020) suggested that SL, community service and work-based learning can all be used interchangeably with the more contemporary "community-based learning", each with its own meaning. Haski-Leventhal et al. (2010) highlighted three key differences. Firstly, volunteering involves free will whereas SL is commonly mandated or compulsory (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). Secondly, volunteering is often initiated by the volunteer themselves, instead SL is initiated by a school or institution (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). Thirdly, whilst those undertaking both volunteering and SL activities are usually not paid, in SL the activities may contribute towards academic credit (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). Knapp et al. (2020) noted similar differences between SL and volunteering. In addition, Knapp et al. (2020) included that in volunteering, learning is not an intentional goal, and that volunteering does not have to be course-based. Moreover, reflection is not included within volunteering (Knapp et al., 2020). Liu (2015) asserted that a difference between SL and community service lies in the learning obtained from the completion of the service action. Through community service activities, the community may benefit, and the students may or may not learn something from the experience (Liu, 2015). However, in SL, students learn from the actions being undertaken and this learning may be linked to the school curriculum (Liu, 2015). Collaboration between those completing the service and the recipient of the service, seeks to move participants from viewing their service actions as charitable towards the recipients, thus removing a potential deficit mentality (Peterson, 2009; Stewart, 2009; Walsh & Spells, 2020).

3.3.3 Summary

The review of literature pertaining to experiential learning focussed on experiential learning as a concept. Experiential learning was defined, various forms of experiential learning were presented, and comparisons between SL and volunteering and community service were addressed. The literature revealed that experiential learning is learning through

action or practice and identified various forms of experiential learning. These forms include SL, volunteering, community service, internships, and WIL. Through volunteering, individuals or groups of people provide a service to other people for no financial reward. In community service, individuals help the community by choice or through program requirements. However, links with academic curriculum and the inclusion of reflection activities may not always be present. In internships, people have a practical working experience in a possible future industry of employment. In WIL, university students can experience their field of study in a workplace environment. The literature outlined the differences between SL, volunteering, and community service and emphasised that SL is not the same as volunteering or community service. What follows is a review of the literature on SL underpinning the research into the implementation of CSL within Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia.

3.4 Service-Learning

There is no one universally agreed upon definition of SL (Jacoby, 2014; Liu, 2015; Wodon, 2022). The lack of a universal definition relates to the diversity of how SL is implemented in different contexts with differing objectives (Billig, 2018; Furco & Norvell, 2019; Resch et al., 2020). SL is also known by different names (Billig, 2018; Chong, 2014). Jacoby (2014) suggested that rather than focussing on terminology, each institution should select the focus that best suits their context. The literature on SL is reviewed under three categories: forms and types of SL; a brief history of SL; and components of SL.

3.4.1 Forms and Types of Service-Learning

The literature identified numerous forms and types of SL. These forms included: international SL (Taylor et al., 2018); critical SL (Soslau & Gartland, 2021); project-based SL (Brescia et al., 2009); arts-based SL (Power & Bennett, 2015); and faith-based SL (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Fourré, 2006a; Jacoby, 2014;). International SL includes service trips, internationally located immersion-based academic courses, overseas study programs with service experiences, and service within international communities (Taylor et al., 2018). Critical SL involves students reflecting upon their own values and attitudes, their own power and privilege, and then exploring social issues that they have been exposed to or have experienced (Soslau & Gartland, 2021). Project-based SL allows students to participate in real-world projects in challenging situations where they must use functional, interpersonal, and critical thinking skills to solve the projects, allowing them to make sense of what they

have learnt in the classroom (Brescia et al., 2009). Arts-based SL promotes community arts practices whereby students achieve arts specific educational outcomes (Power & Bennett, 2015).

Faith-based SL enables followers of a religion to express their faith through serving others (Fourré, 2006a). Thus, SL in religiously affiliated institutions has both an academic and spiritual focus (Jacoby, 2014). The service component of SL is a practical way that the faith of the institution can be lived out (Chambers & Lavery, 2018). The focus of SL in these religiously affiliated institutions is on the spiritual growth of the students as well as the incorporation of morality and faith related issues within the academic curriculum which may otherwise not be included (Jacoby, 2014; Schaffer, 2010). CSL is an example of faith-based SL or SL in a religiously affiliated institution (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Fourré, 2006a; Jacoby, 2014).

There are four types of SL actions. These actions are direct service, indirect service, research service, and advocacy service (Kaye, 2013; Kaye & Connolly, 2018). Direct service involves service activities with face to face, direct interaction with the recipients. Indirect service is service completed for the community or environment but not for an individual. Research service involves the locating of information and then reporting this information. Advocacy service involves generating awareness of social justice issues or public issues of interest (Kaye, 2010a, Kaye, 2013). Billig et al. (2005) found that indirect service was related to higher academic levels of engagement at school whereas direct service was related to community attachment.

SL focusses on both the service and the learning being undertaken, with both components being equally important (Billig, 2000; Kaye, 2010a). For an activity to be classified as SL it must therefore have components of both elements (Price, 2021). The hyphen in Service-Learning illustrates the link between the two elements (Jacoby, 2014; Price, 2021; Sigmon, 1979). Several common characteristics can be extrapolated from the definitions of SL found in the literature. These characteristics include: SL is a pedagogical method linked to academic outcomes (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Helms et al., 2015; Jacoby, 2014); SL involves experience-based learning (Brail, 2016; Maher & Hanley, 2013; Norhafezah et al., 2020); SL involves reflection activities (Lin, 2021; Lynch, 2018); students meet the needs of the community (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Furco & Norvell, 2019; Kaye, 2010a); and reciprocity is evident when the students who complete the service and the recipients of the service benefit equally (Kaye & Connolly, 2018; Petri, 2015). Similarly, Caspersz et al. (2012) conducted a content analysis on a variety of SL-based texts from which

they determined various core elements of SL. These core elements were the learning experience, connection with community, reflection, and responsibility (Caspersz et al., 2012).

One purpose of SL is for students to develop their civic responsibility and engagement with society and therefore strive to make positive change within society (Furco & Norvell, 2019). A second purpose of SL is to combine academic and real-life learning whereby students can combine what is learnt in the classroom with the experiences they are undertaking in the real world to bring ideas to life (Furco & Norvell, 2019; Kaye, 2013; Sivalingam & Yunus, 2017). Critical thinking and meaningful reflection enable students to make connections between classroom and real-world experiences (Kaye & Connolly, 2018; Wang & Calvano, 2018). Students can develop connections with community partners and learn how to impact society (Helms et al., 2015; Kaye & Connolly, 2018). Additionally, SL assists students to develop their concern for others and learn the value of altruism (Liu, 2015; Miller, 2012).

3.4.2 A Brief History of Service-Learning

The history of the term SL has its foundation in three concepts: "the common good, civil society and learning by doing" (Shumer, 2018, p. 1). The term was first used in the United States of America (USA) by the Southern Regional Educational Board in the late 1960s (Ver Beek, 2002). SL is a derivative of the work completed in 1967 by Robert Sigmon and William Ramsey who sponsored an internship program for college students at Oak Ridge (Giles, 1987; Shumer, 2018). The students involved in the internship program undertook work on community projects and in return received recognition through the form of academic credit and/or financial remuneration (Kenny & Gallagher, 2002).

Over the next four decades SL continued to develop in the USA. The 1970s can be described as "a period of incubation and nurturing" (Shumer, 2018, p. 7) for SL. In the 1970s both career education and vocational education principles impacted upon the development of SL by introducing people to the concept of SL. This introduction led to the development of a network which would continue to support SL throughout the remainder of the century (Shumer, 2018). In the 1970s many American Kindergarten-12 schools as well as higher education institutions introduced SL programs (Shumer, 2018). Shumer (2018) described the 1980s as the decade where SL took root with approximately one-third of American high schools having community service programs. In the 1980s, SL proponents in both K-12 schools and higher education settings began to work closely together and the overall interest at both levels increased (Shumer, 2018). In 1989 at the Wingspread Conference in Wisconsin,

the *Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning* were drafted by experienced SL proponents (Berman & Paular, 2006). These principles have been used by SL staff to develop programs in schools and communities (Berman & Paular, 2006)

The 1990s can be defined as the "growth decade" (Shumer, 2018, p. 17) with SL in the USA becoming considered as "a legitimate subject with a national and international following" (Shumer, 2018, p. 20) along with a number of experienced practitioners. In 1993, SL was formally endorsed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Berman & Paular, 2006), a global educational organisation that is focussed on ensuring educators are empowered to meet the needs of students (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2023). A year later, in 1994, The Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning, the first refereed SL journal, was established to develop and sustain the integrity of SL (Berman & Paular, 2006). The journal is still in circulation. In the early 21st century a national K-12 organisation known as the National Service-Learning Partnership was formed, involving the 50 states of the USA. This organisation had the focus of continuing to promote and develop SL and included teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, community organisations, and policymakers (Shumer, 2018). 2001 saw the occurrence of the first international conference on SL research, held in California (Berman & Paular, 2006). The beginning of the 21st century also saw SL develop and evolve into a global phenomenon with SL being undertaken in such countries as Argentina, Australia, Canada, India, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Northern Ireland, Singapore, South Africa, and Spain (Langworthy, 2007; Shumer, 2018).

In Australia, SL is considered "a twenty-first century phenomenon where initially universities and then secondary and primary schools" (Lavery & Coffey, 2016, p. 1) have utilised SL to engage students with their communities. Whilst there appears to be a dearth of literature on the introduction of SL into Australian high schools, Patrick et al. (2019) outlined two reasons for the introduction of SL into Australian universities, where SL is most prominent in education degrees. The first reason was related to specific course requirements for a placement experience aligned with the SL curriculum. The second reason was that SL experiences provided participants with the opportunities to gain various benefits such as academic knowledge, personal development, awareness of social justice issues, and civic engagement.

3.4.3 Components of Service-Learning

Various authors have identified key components of SL. For example, Kaye (2010a) outlined five "essential and interdependent" (p. 15) components of SL: investigation; preparation; action; reflection; and demonstration. Each component is connected and experienced concurrently with each of the five considered crucial to the effectiveness of SL for students (Kaye, 2013). Similarly, Billig (2011) proposed six key components of SL, replacing preparation with planning, and including celebration after demonstration. Various scholars have identified four additional components within SL: reciprocity (Moak, 2020; Price, 2021); high quality and meaningful service (Billig et al., 2005; Chung & McBride, 2015; Jacoby, 2014); links to academic curriculum (Brail, 2016; Pawlowski, 2018; Pendergast et al., 2017); and the mandatory nature of the SL program (Flanagan et al., 2015; Kackar-Cam & Schmidt, 2014; Pawlowski, 2018). All these components will now be described in detail.

3.4.3.1 Investigation. All SL commences with investigation (Kaye, 2010a), which involves an examination of the students' areas of interest and skills (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Kaye, 2010a). Investigation also comprises an analysis of social issues which allow the participants to identify an appropriate and genuine community need to be addressed (Billig, 2018; Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Nickels, 2018). There is no best way to undertake investigation (Billig, 2011). However, there are a variety of strategies that can be employed by students to complete the investigation including: interviewing experts; surveys of populations; accessing media resources; conducting internet research; student observation; and lived experiences (Billig, 2011; Kaye, 2013). Following the investigation component, students undertake preparation and planning for their SL activity.

3.4.3.2 Preparation. Students need to receive comprehensive preparation prior to completing service activities (Jacoby, 2014). Jacoby (2014) suggested that preparation should focus on student concerns, hopes, and expectations. Furthermore, preparation includes details concerning logistics, information about the service recipients and the location of the actual service (Jacoby, 2014). Within the preparation phase, students need to be given specific information about what constitutes appropriate behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal communication and dress code (Pawlowski, 2018). Pawlowski (2018) suggested that during preparation, students learn about the potential impact of SL and the differences between SL and community service. Students can also explore and learn more about a particular topic

which in turn can introduce them to a wide range of careers (Kaye, 2010a). Within the preparation phase, students can formulate a plan to complete the action (Kaye, 2010a).

3.4.3.3 Planning. Some scholars use the term 'planning' instead of 'preparation' (Billig, 2011; Billig et al., 2005). Specifically, planning helps students determine the process and set goals to meet the community need (Billig, 2018; Nickels, 2018). The students will decide how the service will be undertaken (Billig, 2011). The planning phase includes further research as well as potential solutions for how the community need will be addressed (Billig, 2011). Billig (2011) suggested that participants use a planning template to co-ordinate the action. The planning template includes information about the need being addressed and an opportunity to reflect on how the need was met, after completion (Billig, 2011). Following completion of preparation and planning, the students put their plan into action by undertaking acts of service (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Kaye, 2010a). Celio et al. (2011) suggest that students, guided by adults, should have a voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating SL activities.

3.4.3.4 Action. The preparation or planning are implemented through action (Kaye, 2010a; Kaye & Connolly, 2018;). Action takes place through one or more types of service: direct service; indirect service; advocacy service; or research service (Kaye, 2010a; Kaye & Connolly, 2018;). Kaye and Connolly (2018) highlighted that the undertaking of an action is accompanied by an element of the unknown. Action must be planned with mutual agreement of all parties involved, which fosters an appreciation and understanding of the circumstances of others (Kaye, 2010a). The completion of actions enables students to "identify themselves as community members and stakeholders and, over time, learn how to work within social institutions" (Kaye, 2010a, p. 16). By completing service with their peers, students are engaged in an atmosphere of parity whereby, in theory, there is less involvement of adults and students can work together (Richards et al., 2013). Once the action has been completed, students participate in reflection activities.

3.4.3.5 Reflection. Reflection is the connector between the various components of SL that informs how the process develops (Kaye, 2013). Reflection is considered a crucial component of an effective SL program (Billig, 2018; Kaye, 2010a; Moak, 2020). Rieger (2014) likened the absence of reflection in SL to "eating a meal without gaining any nutritional benefit from it" (p. 26). It is necessary for reflection to occur before, during, and

after the SL action (Kaye, 2010a; Rieger, 2014). Price (2021) emphasised that "the power of SL" (p. 30) can be found through ongoing reflection. Further, this ongoing reflection must be formative, not simply at the end of a program or semester (Harrison et al., 2020). The formative nature of reflection can enable students to develop their perspective throughout SL engagement (Harrison et al., 2020).

Reflection allows students to better understand the service they have undertaken and assist with retaining learning (Moak, 2020; Nickels, 2018). Through reflection, students can learn more about themselves and their role as a citizen within society (Billig, 2002; Kaye, 2010a; Moak, 2020). Students can also identify the relevance of academic content in relation to real-world issues (Jacoby, 2014). Simply describing an action undertaken during service does not comprise reflection, rather, students need to examine how the SL experience has impacted their thinking (Rieger, 2014). Reflection should also be used to generate student thoughts about processes, policies and practices within society, and why society functions the way it does (Billig, 2018). Through reflection, students can challenge their own thinking, prejudices, and thoughts (Moak, 2020). Billig (2018) highlighted that meaningful reflection can be transformational for students.

There are various strategies for undertaking reflection including written and oral formats (Jacoby, 2014; Pawlowski, 2018; Rieger, 2014). Written formats of reflection are the most commonly used form in academic courses (Jacoby, 2014). Written formats provide students with "the opportunity to improve written communication skills" (Jacoby, 2014, pp. 29-30). Some examples of written reflection include essays, diaries, scrapbooks, field notes, statistical reports and flow charts, journals, blogs, and newsletters (Pawlowski, 2018; Rieger, 2014). Oral forms of reflection include small group presentations, oral presentations, monologues, and open sharing (Jacoby, 2014; Pawlowski, 2018; Rieger, 2014). Another common form of reflection involves artistic and creative-based projects (Kaye & Connolly, 2018; Pawlowski, 2018; Rieger, 2014). Artistic and creative examples of reflection include paintings, music, poetry, photo books, dance, photography, crafts, and sculpture (Pawlowski, 2018; Rieger, 2014). Rieger (2014) cautions that digital forms of reflection should not be overlooked, noting the importance of IT literacy within society. Reflection activities can be completed individually or in collaboration with others (Felten & Clayton, 2011).

However, reflection is sometimes neglected or overlooked by students and staff alike (Price, 2021; Rieger, 2014). Further, reflection is not well-liked by youths (Price, 2021) who sometimes perceive it as a burden or a box ticking activity, especially when there are limited options for the type of reflection activity (Kaye & Connolly, 2018). This negative perception

is enhanced when the reflection activities are formally assessed (Kaye & Connolly, 2018). Pawlowski (2018) noted that the assessment of reflection is challenging, given the content within the reflections. Kaye and Connolly (2018) therefore suggested that formal assessment, in the form of grading reflection activities within SL, be removed. The removal of grades would also reduce the perception that reflection is required, instead promoting that reflection is inspired as part of the SL process (Kaye & Connolly, 2018). Pawlowski (2018) proposed that credit is given for the learning, not the service or the completion of a set number of hours, aligning SL with other curriculum areas where students demonstrate the understanding of concepts and information through formal assessment.

3.4.3.6 Demonstration. Demonstration involves reflection on the SL action and a presentation on what has been learnt during this action (Kaye, 2010a; Nickels, 2018). Demonstration can be exhibited in various ways (Billig, 2018). These ways include presentations, class lessons, or letters to the editor (Chambers & Lavery, 2018). The presentations enable students to clearly share what they have learnt and to own the learning they have undertaken (Kaye, 2010a). Demonstration captures the fullness of the SL experience, with students drawing on their own skills, which often includes the use of technology (Kaye, 2013). Through demonstration students can recognise their contribution to society and display the outcomes of the SL action to key school personnel, decision-makers, or members of the community (Billig, 2011; Kaye, 2013; Nickels, 2018).

3.4.3.7 Celebration. Celebration involves students receiving recognition for what they have achieved (Billig, 2011). The celebration is the end point of the SL project where students can showcase their achievements (Lavery, 2007b). Billig (2011) however cautioned the use of extrinsic rewards within celebration. She argued that the inclusion of extrinsic rewards may indicate to the students that the SL was undertaken for the receipt of these awards rather than for the purpose of learning.

Werner and McVaugh (2000) proposed two forms of rewards that do not compromise intrinsic motives for the completion of SL. These rewards were categorised as unexpected rewards and feedback rewards (Werner & McVaugh, 2000). The argument around the inclusion of these rewards within SL is that they "serve primarily as a signal that the recipient is doing a valued task well" (Werner & McVaugh, 2000, p. 124). Menezes et al. (2020) suggested that "valorisation means recognising service effort in the form of rewards, prices (sic), certificates or in the diploma supplement" (p. 120). They argued that this recognition

officially documents the students' level of engagement in SL and could be beneficial on their resume and job applications. Menezes et al. (2020) acknowledged, however, that awarding prizes and awards could be difficult because comparing different service activities and levels of engagement may be challenging.

3.4.3.8 Reciprocity. A key tenet of SL is reciprocity or reciprocal benefit (Felten & Clayton, 2011; Petri, 2015). Reciprocity in SL means that both the service provider and the service recipient benefit from the service activity (Moak, 2020; Price, 2021). Fourré (2006a) discussed the notion of SL as a partnership, with the person providing the service working together with the person receiving the service. Fourré (2006) warned however that students should "not fall into an attitude of feeling better than those [they] serve" (p. 32). Moreover, Lavery and Richards (2006) highlighted that those being served must have their needs and dignity respected throughout the entire encounter. Reciprocity assists in the development of a strong bond between the academic context of the institution and the community (Felten & Clayton, 2011). Resch et al. (2020) emphasised that ongoing feedback and reflection from all involved in SL including students, teachers, and participating community members is required to sustain the reciprocity. Reciprocity has been highlighted as a pivotal characteristic of high quality SL (Petri, 2015).

3.4.3.9 High Quality and Meaningful Service. For SL to be effective, the service must be meaningful (Kaye, 2010a; Lavery, 2009) and high quality (Billig et al., 2005; Chung & McBride, 2015; Jacoby, 2014). Meaningful service is the first of eight K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice developed by the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) (2008) for the delivery of SL in the United States. The other seven standards are link to curriculum, reflection, diversity, youth voice, partnerships, progress monitoring, and duration and intensity (NYLC, 2008). This prioritising of meaningful service underlines the need for service activities and experiences to be well-organised but also relevant to achieve student educational benefits.

In their study of 28 college students in the USA, Jones et al. (2008) identified meaningful service as a key indicator for successful student engagement within SL programs. Jones et al. (2008) explored the students' perceptions of their high school SL experiences. The results of the study indicated that the positive outcomes of SL involvement occur when the service is perceived as meaningful (Jones et al., 2008). If students identify that what they are doing is meaningful then engagement and success will follow (Kaye, 2010a). Student

input on what is meaningful is important and necessary for a program to be effective and cannot be ignored (Billig et al., 2005; Kaye, 2010a).

Billig (2002) defined high quality within SL as the integration of SL with curriculum outcomes, reflection activities, and engagement in meeting genuine community needs. Further, Billig (2002) identified that high quality SL comprised the completion of more than 40 hours of service within a year. By participating in high quality SL students can see firsthand, and then act on, the issues faced by members of the community (Jacoby, 2014). The benefits and impacts of SL are usually only experienced by students and schools who feature high quality SL programs (Billig, 2002). Through meaningful and quality service activities, students can connect service with learning, positively impacting the community and resulting in the achievement of academic outcomes (Lavery, 2007b).

3.4.3.10 Linked to Academic Curriculum. It is essential that SL is linked to the academic curriculum (Brail, 2016; Celio et al., 2011; Kaye, 2013). SL programs need to have clear program goals and intentions for the students, linking the program to the goals (Celio et al., 2011). In SL, both the service and the learning are connected and are equally important with one informing the other (Billig, 2000; Kaye, 2010a; Liu, 2015). Linking service with the curriculum is one of the standards in the K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice (NYLC, 2008). When SL relates to the curriculum there is a greater possibility for positive outcomes to occur (Miller, 2012; Pawlowski, 2018; Pendergast et al., 2017). However, if the SL is disconnected from the curriculum, then it can do more harm than good, reinforcing negative stereotypes and undermining the values and attitudes present within the community (Price, 2021). SL strengthens the curriculum by incorporating life-skills with academic knowledge and increasing proficiency and self-efficacy (Kaye, 2010b). SL can occur across multiple learning areas (Kaye, 2010a; Wurr & Hamilton, 2012) which therefore enables improvement in student learning across a variety of disciplines (Kaye, 2010a) and overall better educational outcomes (Miller, 2012).

3.4.3.11 The Mandatory Nature of Service-Learning Programs. There has been significant debate about the mandatory nature of SL programs (Flanagan et al., 2015; Kackar-Cam & Schmidt, 2014). For example, Swan (2014) called for SL to be mandatory in all schools. Making a SL program mandatory can have a positive impact on students. Karasik (2005) noted that mandating SL can allow students to experience and reap the benefits of SL. In a study conducted by Stewart (2009) in an urban Catholic high school in California (USA)

involving 18 12th graders, the mandatory nature of the SL program led to increased social awareness amongst students and allowed them to observe real life situations (Stewart, 2009). Haski-Leventhal et al. (2010), in their study involving almost 11,000 university students across 14 different countries, including Australia, identified that when SL programs are mandatory, there is still a positive correlation with voluntary action. This positive correlation was found to be true in several countries and led to the recommendation that educational institutions and government organisations include SL programs in both high schools and universities. Pawlowski (2018) asserted that "just as students are expected to spend time reading course textbooks, writing papers, or preparing presentations, they should also be expected to spend time fulfilling a service-learning assignment by spending time with community partners" (p. 87). Furthermore, Pawlowski (2018) accentuated the importance of linking SL to academic course outcomes, which consequently reinforces the pedagogy and increases academic rigour. Another positive aspect of mandatory SL is that it would mitigate student refusal to participate (Karasik, 2005).

However, various authors have raised concerns over a mandatory approach to SL (Cloyd, 2017; Jacoby, 2014; Jones et al., 2008). The compulsory nature or mandated requirement of SL for graduation may lead to a feeling of resentment from the participants (Jacoby, 2014). Jacoby (2014) questioned "whether service-learning that is required for graduation has the same educational value as service-learning that students select through course or a cocurricular experience" (p. 229). Warburton and Smith (2003) conducted a study of student perceptions, as well as adults' perceptions, towards compulsory service programs involving focus groups of Year 11 students from three Queensland high schools. This study revealed a feeling of resentment towards the mandatory nature of the program by the respondents, which was primarily due to their lack of choice. This lack of choice was described as a "fundamental flaw" (p. 784) and was related to both the mandatory nature of the program as well as choosing the types of activities to participate in. Engebretson (2009) also highlighted that the lack of choice may impact students' future involvement in service activities. The results of the study conducted by Warburton and Smith (2003) also identified that mandatory SL programs failed to generate positivity within community attitudes and social behaviour and that mandated SL may not contribute to a sense of civic responsibility among young people.

Similarly, a study conducted by Jones et al. (2008) highlighted how the students resented the compulsory nature of the high school SL program. Jones et al. (2008) found that the students recognised the importance of their contribution to society and did not resent the

actual service activities. However, the students detailed negative perceptions about the compulsory nature of SL, indicating that SL was a burden, stressful, despised, and resented (Jones et al., 2008).

Cloyd (2017) contended that the inclusion of the requirement for SL to be completed for graduation could lead to students deciding to drop out from school, particularly if they are having difficulties with achieving the set number of hours. Kackar-Cam and Schmidt (2014) conducted a study of 125 9th-12th grade USA high school aged students who participated in a year-long SL activity. The SL concluded with an eight-day trip where students provided home repairs for disadvantaged families. Results of this study revealed that the impact of mandatory or voluntary SL was not found to be a significant predictor for the likelihood that students would participate in SL in the future (Kackar-Cam & Schmidt, 2014).

There are benefits and challenges of mandating and not mandating SL and the decision is not an easy one (Aramburuzabala et al., 2019). Flanagan et al. (2015) recommended that schools should focus on the quality of service rather than mandating SL or including SL as a requirement for graduation. Lavery and Richards (2006) recommended that each school needed to determine the mandatory and voluntary aspects within their SL program. In addition, Lavery and Richards (2006) suggested that schools should specify to students the aspects of the SL that are mandatory or voluntary.

3.4.4 Summary

The review of literature on SL explored the forms and types of SL, a brief history of SL, the value of SL, and the components of SL. There are numerous definitions of SL within the literature. Rather than attempt to add to the list of definitions, the common characteristics found within the definitions of SL were summarised. There are many forms of SL identified within the research. CSL, under examination within this research, is one such form of SL, and falls under the umbrella of faith-based SL. There are four types of SL actions. These service actions are classified as direct, indirect, research, and advocacy service. In SL both the service and the learning have an equal weighting, with one supporting the other.

The literature indicated that SL originated in the USA with its first use in the late 1960s. Over the next four decades SL continued to evolve within the USA. By the beginning of the 21st century, SL had developed into an international phenomenon, arriving onto the Australian educational landscape. The various components of SL are inter-connected, with one informing the other and are crucial elements to successful SL outcomes. The review of literature in this section influenced the formation of the specific research question:

• What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia

understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?

What follows is a review of literature on the benefits and positive impacts of SL related to the implementation of SL programs and in turn CSL.

3.5 Benefits and Positive Impacts of Service-Learning

Identified within the literature are a range of benefits and positive impacts of SL for students (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Miller, 2012; Moak, 2020; Rieger, 2014). The involvement in a SL program within primary, secondary, and tertiary settings can have a positive impact from an early age, with long-lasting benefits (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Chung & McBride, 2015; Warren, 2012). The benefits of SL include: personal growth; increased citizenship and civic mindedness; enhanced academic achievement and understanding of classroom content; preparedness for professions; and development of leadership skills (Billig, 2017; Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Jacoby, 2014; Maher & Hanley, 2013; Segrist, 2013). The positive impacts of SL also include: increased awareness of social justice and environmental issues; and stepping out of one's comfort zone (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Nabors et al., 2018; Ocal & Altınok, 2016; Schneller et al., 2022; Stevens et al., 2014; Williams, 2016). Both friendship and family can positively impact the way students engage with SL and the overall benefits and impacts they derive from participation in SL (Chambers & Lavery, 2022; Liu, 2015). The benefits of SL can also extend to others, including staff, institutions, and the wider community (Jacoby, 2014; Moak, 2020; Rieger, 2014). Various scholars have recognised the value of SL for students (Furco & Norvell, 2019; Furco & Root, 2010; Rieger, 2014). Specifically, the value of SL for students is related to the benefits and impacts that it offers the students (Fourré, 2006b; Kuhn, 2017; Caspersz & Olaru, 2017; Roso, 2013). The benefits and impacts will now be described.

3.5.1 Personal Growth

SL allows students the opportunity for personal growth (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Nabors et al., 2018; Price, 2021). This personal growth can take the form of learning about self, development of perspective, character development, and development of values. Through participation in SL, particularly the reflection process, students can understand themselves better (Wang & Calvano, 2018; Winans-Solis, 2014). For example, in a study conducted by Nabors et al. (2018), 47 high school-aged students from four high schools in the USA participated in a program where they coached children about healthy eating. The

results of the study revealed that one of the key benefits of students' participation was "learning new things about oneself…learning to be more patient…and liking coaching and working with the children" (p. 101). The results of the study conducted by Kackar-Cam and Schmidt (2014), involving 51 9th-12th grade high school students, demonstrated student benefits in the development of self-determination and learning about identity.

Participation in SL provides students with the opportunity to develop their perspectives. Price (2021) noted that through SL activities, students can "discover deeper levels of meaning" (p. 37) and therefore develop their perspective and modify their worldview. Winans-Solis (2014) suggested that through SL students can have their version of reality disrupted and challenged, enabling them to re-construct a more powerful view of self and community. At Sunnyside Environmental School, in Portland Oregon (USA), students in 6th-8th grade undertook SL activities within their community (Williams, 2016). The results revealed that through engagement in SL, students benefitted personally by opening their minds and having their preconceived stereotypes challenged. Participation in SL allowed students to reflect on their own privileged identity in comparison to those whom they were serving (Williams, 2016).

Participation in SL has been found to positively influence the character development of high school aged students (Ocal & Altınok, 2016). This character development can take the form of increased confidence, self-esteem, and feeling of worth (Celio et al., 2011; Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). Positive feedback also has an important role to play in increasing students' feelings of worth and self-esteem (Engebretson, 2009; Lavery & Richards, 2006). Nabors et al. (2018) highlighted examples of where students felt a positive sense of worth. These examples related to enjoying the SL experience, the feeling of helping others, and helping in the community. Positive feedback received by students from those whom they served can be affirming and increase their sense of self-esteem, usefulness, and belonging (Engebretson, 2009, Lavery & Richards, 2006).

Through SL students can develop a more precise understanding of the world around them, increasing their awareness of issues, and leading to a development of their beliefs and values (Fourré, 2006a; Rieger, 2014). Students in several studies articulated that they were able to positively develop and change their perspectives and preconceptions on engagement with children, learning about environmental issues, and the predicament of the homeless and refugees (Colvin, 2020; Price, 2018; Schneller et al., 2022). Service also allows for personal growth in the form of challenging the values of wider society (Maher & Hanley, 2013). Within the secondary school context, SL can "act as a conduit for values change" (Price,

2018, p. 3). Students can deepen and develop their values during reflection activities. Through the process of self-reflection, students can assess their own values and attitudes (Fourré, 2006a; 2006b). Price (2021) acknowledged that each student participating in SL has their own set of values and perspectives, however the goal of SL is to engage with these values by making them explicit for students.

3.5.2 Increased Citizenship and Civic Mindedness

SL can positively impact citizenship and civic mindedness (Ocal & Altınok, 2016). SL extends learning into the community and in so doing supports citizenship and a concern and care for others (Pendergast et al., 2017; Stewart, 2009; Winans-Solis, 2014). Moreover, an individual may grow in their understanding of the world and their responsibility as a global citizen (Ocal & Altınok, 2016; Pendergast et al., 2017; Schaffer, 2010). Billig (2017) suggested that service and SL are important methods for fostering civic mindedness in high school aged students. In earlier work on SL and civic mindedness, Billig et al. (2005) highlighted that "the research shows that unless certain practices within SL are in place, the impact may not be maximized" (p. 4). These practices include high quality SL experiences which are required to produce outcomes related specifically to civic mindedness (Billig et al., 2005). Civic responsibility is also included within the intended benefits and impacts of CSL.

3.5.3 Enhanced Academic Achievement and Understanding of Classroom Content

SL can also positively impact academic achievement and understanding of classroom content (Billig, 2017; Chung & McBride, 2015; Jacoby, 2014). SL provides an opportunity for students to transfer academic concepts into real-world environments, therefore enhancing their learning and understanding (Miller, 2012). Participation in SL activities can support students' understanding of curriculum content, the application of theory into practice, an increase in retention of course content, and cognitive development (Jacoby, 2014; Moak, 2020; Warren, 2012). For example, Brail (2016) conducted a four-year study of 338 undergraduate students enrolled in a second year course on urban studies at the University of Toronto. As part of the course, some students chose to complete SL or city learning whereby students selected a neighbourhood and researched a specific problem within that neighbourhood. Brail asked a critical question: "do students who choose to participate in service-learning demonstrate greater academic achievement as a result of participation in service-learning, or is it the case that brighter, higher achieving students select service-learning in the first instance?" (p. 154). The study revealed that students enrolled in SL

achieved a full grade higher in comparison to students who were not enrolled in SL (Brail, 2016).

Billig et al. (2005) undertook a study involving over 1000 high school students from across the USA, half of whom were Latino and/or Hispanic. The researchers found that students with a stronger engagement in SL were already engaged with the academic curriculum of the school and valued schooling more than those who were not engaged in SL. However, Brail (2016) believed that academic achievement is irrelevant if the academic learning does not accompany the students' development of connections and reflective skills.

3.5.4 Preparedness for Future Professions

SL has the capacity to uncover potential career paths, increasing preparedness for future professions (Miller, 2012; Wurr & Hamilton, 2012). Through undertaking SL, students are exposed to a variety of experiences where they can learn about many different career options (Kaye, 2010a; Kuhn et al., 2017; Moak, 2020). Moreover, Miller (2012) suggested that SL enables students to discover career paths that had previously not been considered which leads to "more varied or ambitious job aspirations and enhanced motivation for academic achievement" (p. 17). SL involves practical experiences for students that provide the opportunity to develop skills and network with community partners which can be beneficial for students' career development (Wang & Calvano, 2018). SL engagement enables the development of job-related skills such as time-management, working with different people, and getting along with others (Jones et al., 2008). Jacoby (2014) posited that students who participate in SL are more likely to select careers in the service industry and demonstrate confidence in their career selection.

3.5.5 Development of Leadership Skills

Participation in SL provides students with the opportunity to develop their leadership skills (Moak, 2020; Ocal & Altınok, 2016; Pendergast et al., 2017). Lavery (2007b) commented that SL is an "often under-utilised means of preparing students for leadership" (p. 1). SL activities enable students to enact various leadership traits such as thinking critically, foreseeing potential outcomes, flexibility with planning, outlining their intentions in written and oral formats, and assessing the impact of their efforts (Kaye, 2010a). Further, SL enables students to develop leadership skills for social change (Moak, 2020). In a Western Australian study involving staff members from eleven Catholic secondary schools, the respondents were "unanimous in their belief that participation in service-learning can enhance the development

of leadership abilities in students" (Lavery, 2007b, p. 13). Given the social justice focus of SL, it is an ideal means to develop community-oriented, selfless leaders "who are… aware of the needs of the environment, civically minded in politics, and sympathetic to those living on the margins" (Lavery, 2009, p. 5).

3.5.6 Increased Awareness of Social Justice and Environmental Issues

Engagement in SL can lead to an increased awareness of social justice and environmental issues (Ocal & Altınok, 2016; Schneller et al., 2022; Williams, 2016). Through participation in SL, students can engage with the world in which they live, experiencing first-hand the needs of the community and the issues faced by those on the margins (Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2003). Schneller et al. (2022) conducted a case study investigating the outcomes of environmental SL in Albany, New York. Fourteen high school students were involved in this study, and it was found that the students embraced positive environmental behaviours as well as an increased awareness of environmental issues within the community (Schneller et al., 2022). Similarly, Ocal and Altinok (2016) examined the effect of SL on the social sensitivity of 160 12-14-year-olds in Türkiye. They found that SL contributed to the student's ability to identify problems in society and then to take responsibility to solve these problems. Furthermore, it was identified that students who participated in SL were more sensitive to problems in society (Ocal & Altinok, 2016).

Students can become aware of issues in their community through participation in SL (Williams, 2016). Students can also realise that "their efforts to make a difference have a visible impact on the people they serve and make a tangible contribution to the places where they live" (Williams, 2016, p. 172). SL enables students to connect with the marginalised in society (Chambers & Lavery, 2018). Students can meet inspirational individuals who have had many challenges in their lives yet still manage to smile (Fourré, 2006a). From these connections students can foster positive lifelong values such as justice and communal responsibility (Chambers & Lavery, 2018). SL can therefore foster the development of individuals who are externally focussed and committed to improving the community and the lives of others (Stevens et al., 2014).

3.5.7 Stepping Out of One's Comfort Zone

A key characteristic of SL is participation in challenging activities in which students would not normally choose to engage. Such participation is sometimes referred to as stepping out of one's comfort zone and engaging in new, diverse, and sometimes uncomfortable

experiences (Chambers & Lavery, 2018). In SL activities, students can meet new people, often who are from a different culture to their own (Fourré, 2006a). Moak (2020) argued that opportunities for multi-cultural education enable students to step out of their emotional comfort zone and Fourré (2006a) referred to meeting new people as the "fun of service" (p. 75).

For students to step out of their comfort zone and grow, first they need to reflect on their own interests, passions, talents, and experience (Fourré, 2006a; 2006b). Once this reflection has taken place, the next step is for the individual to be willing to grow by completing actions of service (Fourré, 2006a; 2006b). When students participate in direct service activities, they are pushed out of their comfort zone by interacting and engaging with those whom they are serving (Stewart, 2009). Nabors et al. (2018) found stepping out of the comfort zone as a common theme in their study of 47 high school aged students who participated in a program where they coached children about healthy eating. The results of the study conducted by Nabors et al. (2018) indicated that when the students were challenged by the requirement of leading a group of younger students, they were more likely to gain self-confidence and overcome their shyness.

3.5.8 The Positive Impact of Friends and Family on Student Participation in Service-Learning

Several authors identified the positive impact of friends and family for students completing SL. For example, Liu (2015) highlighted the positive impact of students completing SL with their friends. This friendship could "strengthen [students'] willingness to do their service learning" (Liu, 2015, p. 81). Moreover, Lavery and Richards (2006) recommended that SL activities should provide opportunities for students to develop friendships. Chambers and Lavery (2022) identified friendship as a comforting element for students undertaking SL. In their study of 13 pre-service teachers preparing to complete an international SL immersion trip, participants noted friendship as a contributing factor to their relaxed feeling (Chambers & Lavery, 2022). Whilst the influence of friends impacts the willingness to complete SL, the influence of family members is related to positive role-modelling whereby students observe their family members completing acts of service within the home environment (Liu, 2015). Liu (2015) suggested that student responses towards SL are impacted by their past experiences. Some of these experiences create responses that can change over time (Liu, 2015). When students make decisions about their SL involvement, they reflect upon the impacts of others, as well as their past experiences (Liu, 2015).

3.5.9 Benefits of Service-Learning to Others

The benefits of SL can extend to staff, institutions, and the wider community (Jacoby, 2014; Moak, 2020; Rieger, 2014). The benefits for the staff of an institution include an enhancement of teaching and learning practices (Jacoby, 2014; Segrist, 2013) and regeneration of enthusiasm (Rieger, 2014). Further, SL can be beneficial by exposing staff to new methods of teaching which can lead to an increase in learning for the students (Jacoby, 2014). SL can also provide institutions with a range of benefits (Jacoby, 2014; Rieger, 2014; Segrist, 2013). These benefits include the development of an inclusive and collaborative school climate and culture (Rieger, 2014) and establishment of community partnerships (Segrist, 2013). Jacoby (2014) identified further benefits for institutions, such as increased student engagement in learning, increased student satisfaction with institutional experience, and improvement in preparedness for work.

For the various benefits of SL to be achieved there needs to be interaction between students and communities (Karasik, 2005). SL can support collaboration and the development of community (Celio et al., 2011; Kaye, 2010a). There appears, however, to be limited research into the benefits of SL on the community (Jacoby, 2014; Stevens et al., 2014). Within this limited research, community benefits of SL include: the addition of initiative and drive by SL students to complete activities and tasks (Jacoby, 2014; Moak, 2020); the practical provision of work (Jacoby, 2014; Moak, 2020); opportunities for teaching and learning; and access to institutional-based resources and materials (Jacoby, 2014).

3.5.10 Summary

The review of literature on the benefits and positive impacts of SL revealed that participation in SL can positively influence students from an early age. The literature identified that students who participate in SL can experience the following benefits: personal growth; increased citizenship and civic mindedness; enhanced academic achievement and understanding of classroom content; preparedness for professions; and development of leadership skills. The positive impacts of SL for students include increased awareness of social justice and environmental issues and stepping out of one's comfort zone. Furthermore, friends, family members, and past experiences have been found to positively impact the way students participate in SL. The literature also highlighted that the benefits of SL extend past the students to the staff, institutions, and the wider community. The review of literature in this section influenced the formulation of three specific research questions:

- What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
- In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?
- What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

The review of literature now considers literature pertaining to the challenges associated with SL. These same challenges would also tend to be evident in CSL.

3.6 Challenges Associated with Service-Learning

There appears to be a paucity of literature outlining the challenges of SL (Chung & McBride, 2015; Karasik, 2005; Norhafezah et al., 2020). Moreover, the challenges that students face are mostly related to SL in a university context (Hahn et al., 2020; Karasik, 2004; Morin, 2009). This literature on SL indicates four main challenges associated with SL. These challenges are: resistance to SL; time required for SL; personal circumstances; and communication (Chung & McBride, 2015; Hahn et al., 2020; Jacoby, 2014; Karasik, 2004; Morin, 2009). Whilst challenges for students come with negative connotations in SL, they also present opportunities for learning by exposing students to real life challenges that may be experienced in their professional life (Yusop & Correia, 2013). This review includes some strategies for students to overcome these challenges, as identified in the literature. The challenges faced by students and staff alike will now be discussed.

3.6.1 Resistance to Service-Learning

Whilst SL provides students with many benefits and positive impacts, not all students are motivated or want to be engaged in SL (Chung & McBride, 2015). The resistance to SL derives from a variety of factors including: the compulsory or mandatory nature of the SL program; students being asked to participate in a new activity; or general disengagement from schooling (Chung & McBride, 2015; Fourré, 2006b; Jacoby, 2014). SL is sometimes considered as an extra-curricular activity and students do not identify the connection with the academic curriculum (Pawlowski, 2018). The literature also reflected student discontent and a definite opposition towards the compulsory nature of the SL program. For example, Jones et al. (2008) found that when SL was mandated for the successful completion of an academic year, students developed feelings of resentment and frustration. Students' enthusiasm towards SL also diminished (Jones et al., 2008). Further, Jones et al. (2008) noted that the resistance

to SL was not solely because of the mandated requirement but also due to the lack of perceived relevance of the SL activities being undertaken. As a result of resistance to SL, students may attend their SL activity unprepared, disrupt the activity for others, demonstrate negative behaviours when at the activity, or even refuse to attend the activity (Karasik, 2005). This resistance, manifested through negative behaviours can spoil the SL experience for everyone involved and damage relationships between the student, institution, and service placement organisation (Karasik, 2004).

Understanding from where the resistance to SL derives is a crucial step for staff members who oversee SL (Karasik, 2004; 2005). A potential way to reduce resistance to SL is to ensure that meaningful and wide-ranging activities are included within a SL program, however the activities must still be mutually beneficial to the students and those whom they are serving (Lavery & Richards, 2006; Schneller et al., 2022). Another potential way to reduce resistance to SL is by making explicit links between the learning outcomes in SL and the academic curriculum being studied by the students (Jacoby, 2014).

3.6.2 Time Required for Service-Learning

The time required for SL is often a greater challenge faced by students than a resistance to SL (Karasik, 2004). Karasik (2005) suggested that there are two time-related issues that students face. These issues include: not having the time to participate in SL and difficulties meeting the required number of hours for SL completion (Karasik, 2005). Students have other commitments such as school, family, sport, and work which sometimes make it impossible for them to complete their SL requirements (Karasik, 2004; Morin, 2009). The time required for SL is also a challenge identified by staff members who deliver SL programs (Karasik, 2004; Morin, 2009; Norhafezah et al., 2020). There is a perception amongst some staff members that SL intrudes on classroom learning and reduces the time spent on core subjects (Losser et al., 2018; Norhafezah et al., 2020; Speck, 2001). Further, the incorporation of SL into coursework is seen by some teaching staff as a detractor to academic work (Norhafezah et al., 2020).

Morin (2009) commented that time-management or scheduling issues are a challenge that students can overcome through the prioritisation of tasks. Both Karasik (2005) and Pawlowski (2018) suggested careful consideration of the number of hours required for SL completion. Students need to complete enough hours of SL to have meaningful learning opportunities, but the number of hours required needs to be reviewed (Karasik, 2005; Pawlowski, 2018). Karasik (2005) proposed that a reduction in hours combined with

recognition of classroom learning could be a potential strategy to reduce challenges associated with the time requirement of SL. Kackar-Cam and Schmidt (2014) also highlighted that the amount of time spent completing service is not directly linked to the outcomes achieved, with student achievement in academic, behavioural and civic outcomes not linked to the number of service hours completed.

3.6.3 Personal Circumstances

Several personal circumstances can make it challenging for students to complete their SL hours. These personal circumstances relate to transport, as well as school, family, sport, and work commitments (Bennett et al., 2016; Karasik, 2004). Bennett et al. (2016) conducted a study in two American high schools involving 13 students. These students were enrolled in community-based learning. One of the most significant challenges identified by the students in the study was transportation to and from their service activity (Bennett et al., 2016). Bennett et al. (2016) proposed that partnership programs set-up by school districts could assist students in overcoming the transportation challenge. These partnerships could be with local transport authorities whereby students could receive "temporary or reduced or free transportation access" (p. 610) during their placement.

As a means of addressing concerns with students' personal circumstances, staff responsible for overseeing a SL program need to be aware of their students' personal circumstances. This awareness will assist staff to mitigate possible issues where students could be exposed collectively to societal issues that are being faced by individual students within the program. Chung and McBride (2015) suggested that this exposure could lead to further isolation for those students experiencing the issues where the SL program could do "more harm than good" (p. 198) by unintentionally highlighting a student's personal situation.

3.6.4 Communication

Communicational challenges within SL programs have been identified as "the most problematic" (Morin, 2009, p. 49) form of challenges that students face. Challenges with communication can be between students and institutional staff, as well as students and people at their placement site (Hahn et al., 2020; Morin, 2009). Hahn et al. (2020) conducted a study of 19 students at a mid-western public university in the USA who were completing an introductory gerontology course containing a SL component. The results of the study revealed that students felt that they did not receive adequate communication from staff within

their institution about the SL course or the requirements of the program (Hahn et al., 2020). This lack of communication led to students having negative feelings about their SL experience. Students requested more guidance, better preparation, and greater availability from the institutional staff (Hahn et al., 2020). Students need the active support of all staff within their school opposed to staff members solely involved in the SL program (Hackett & Lavery, 2011). Willing teachers can support students on how to learn and engage with their community through SL (Kaye, 2013). A simple one on one check-in can support students to ensure they are engaged but also learning from their SL experiences (Karasik, 2004). Moreover, school staff need to ensure that students are adequately prepared for their SL experiences (Pawlowski, 2018, Playford et al., 2019).

Hahn et al. (2020) also identified that improved communication from people at the placement site was required, including specific information such as a contact person, location details, and logistical information. Additionally, Hahn et al. (2020) raised a concern that the staff at placement locations were unprepared for student visits. Part of this preparation includes clear communication with the placement location or the service recipients as to what constitutes SL (Hahn et al., 2020). Moreover, placement providers need to be carefully selected to ensure that the students participate in meaningful activities whilst also achieving the intended outcomes of SL (Pawlowski, 2018).

3.6.5 Summary

There appeared to be limited literature on the challenges associated with SL and the extant literature was mostly related to the challenges faced by students participating in SL within the university context. There were four challenges associated with SL identified within the literature. These challenges are resistance to SL, time required for SL, personal circumstances, and communication. The literature identified potential strategies to overcome these challenges. The review of literature in this section influenced the formation of two specific research questions:

- What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
- What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

What follows is a review of literature on CSL, with a particular focus on Christian Service, the Catholic Social Teachings, and CSL in the Catholic context.

3.7 Christian Service-Learning

CSL is a form of SL. CSL is therefore based on the same theoretical and practical principles that underpin SL in general, however it is additionally inspired by the gospel value of love for others (Engebretson, 2014). The Christian aspect implies that it is the gospel which underscores the service and the learning (Catholic Education Western Australia [CEWA], 2021a; Lavery & Hackett, 2008). In CSL, the purpose is not only civic responsibility but to act in solidarity with others, espousing Christ-like values such as love, charity, justice, service, kindness, and compassion (Kaak & LaPorte, 2022; Lavery & Hackett, 2008). In CSL, this civic responsibility is extended to encompass discipleship, which in the Christian faith means to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ (Lavery & Hackett, 2008). CSL can be "be conducted in or out of school time, both on or off school premises" (CEWA, 2021a). The literature on CSL is considered under five main categories: Christian service; reflection in CSL; Catholic Social Teaching as a foundation for CSL in the Catholic context' CSL in the Catholic school; and the benefits of CSL. These aspects of CSL will now be outlined.

3.7.1 Christian Service

Service is considered an important part of life for all Christians (Lavery & Hackett, 2008; Ver Beek, 2002) A service experience provides an opportunity for an individual to develop their relationship with God (Fourré, 2006a). Within the Christian context (Kaak & LaPorte, 2022), the value of SL is linked to the Christian commitment of showing love to one's neighbour, which can be lived out through service (Engebretson, 2014; Kaak & LaPorte, 2022). Pope Francis (2015) commented that Christians must promote, fight, and live for the dignity of all people. Christians are required to set aside their own interests and desires to serve the most vulnerable, those who Jesus called us to love and care for (Pope Francis, 2015).

Faith cannot be considered a task of words, rather it is actions which bring faith to life (DiGiacomo, 2007). In Christian institutions, service is considered faith in action (Schaffer, 2010). Service allows Christians to undertake actions which enable them to learn about themselves and others, enhancing their identity as followers of Christ, and live out the call of Jesus to serve one another (Lavery & Hackett, 2008).

SL in a Christian school context can be understood as giving a concrete expression to the underlying perspectives of the religious tradition of that school such as responding to the Christian call to help those less fortunate and an individual answer to God's love (Lutheran

Education Australia, 2022; Christ Church Grammar School, 2022). Schaffer (2010) underscored that the mission of Christian educational institutions encompasses the task of engaging students across the dimensions of academia, spirituality, social and emotional growth. CSL is a vehicle for this growth, allowing students to engage with "Christ's command to serve" (Schaffer, 2010, p. 143).

3.7.2 Reflection in Christian Service-Learning

As in SL, reflection is a crucial element in a CSL program (CEWA, 2021a). Reflection provides students with an opportunity to think about the service activity being undertaken through a Christian lens (Rieger, 2014). Students are encouraged to reflect on Genesis 1:27 within the CSL reflection activities, exhibiting the notion that everyone is created in the image and likeness of God (Rieger, 2014). Reflection also enables students to learn about the presence of God within the world (Fourré, 2006b). Thus, reflective activities need to be intentionally linked to the gospel and to Catholic Social Teachings and must occur before, during, and after the service activity (Engebretson, 2009). Through reflection, students can develop their faith perspective and response to world issues (Schaffer, 2010).

A guided reflection, linked to the gospel values, provides students with the opportunity to connect with others, following Jesus' call to serve others (CEWA, 2021a). Further, a guided reflection allows students to think about the meaning of what they are doing and to question the injustices in the world around them (Engebretson, 2014). Di Giacomo (2007) argued that if students in a Catholic school are not participating in guided reflection they are engaging in "secular humanism without any faith dimension" (p. 15).

3.7.3 Catholic Social Teaching as a Foundation for Christian Service-Learning in the Catholic Context

Catholic Social Teaching is based on scripture, Church documents, statements and declarations by Popes and Bishops (Fourré, 2006a). Catholic Social Teaching can be considered as "a lens, or a way of looking at the world [which]… shapes how [Catholics] behave" (Fourré, 2006a, p. 48). Since Catholic Social Teaching outlines how followers of Jesus can follow and live out the gospel values, CSL provides opportunities for students to enact Catholic Social Teaching in practical ways (CEWA, 2021a). Engebretson (2014) argued that whilst most Catholic high schools have CSL programs linked with the Catholic identity of the school, the link is strongest when the CSL program is based on Catholic Social Teaching and scripture. Similarly, Price (2021) noted that when SL is connected to "the

broader Jesus story" (p. 9) the Catholic identity of the school is strengthened. Engebretson (2014) also emphasised that students need to differentiate CSL with charitable works, where in CSL students are living out "Christ's vision of the Kingdom of God, spelled out for our times in Catholic social teaching" (p. 89). Wodon (2022) suggested that because SL does not require that students are adherents of the Catholic faith, this may also strengthen the Catholic identity of the institution whilst at the same time respecting the differing religious views within the student cohort.

3.7.4 Christian Service-Learning in the Catholic School

A Catholic school is a community of faith which has a primary role to evangelise its students through education (CEWA, 2021a). Simply delivering a Religious Education (R.E) curriculum is not satisfactory for the Catholic school to fulfil this role (DiGiacomo, 2007). Catholic schools just like the Catholic Church, are called to develop holiness through the serving of others. CSL is one such way that this holiness can grow (Engebretson, 2014). CSL should be a crucial aspect in the curriculum of all Catholic schools where service enhances the Catholicity of that school (DiGiacomo, 2007; Lavery & Hackett, 2008; Price, 2021).

CSL in Catholic schools is designed to support students to grow from a Christian perspective as "people of service" (CEWA, 2021a, p. 1), with an emphasis on service and justice (Engebretson, 2014; Walsh & Spells, 2020). Within the Catholic school context, CSL is about putting one's faith and the gospel into action (Devlin & Warner, 2017; Price, 2021). Active participation in CSL allows students to appreciate how their individual skillset can be used for the service of others (Devlin & Warner, 2017). CSL engagement can also support students to grow in faith whilst serving others (Feenstra, 2011). CEWA (2021a) outlined that participation in CSL can enable students to understand the value of service from the Catholic faith perspective.

In a Catholic school, CSL should be considered a key element of the curriculum and an educational method which can enhance the impetus for students to follow Jesus (CEWA, 2021a). Catechesis is considered to be the passing on of Jesus' teachings (CECWA, 2009) and evangelisation is defined as living by and sharing about the life of Jesus (Dwyer, 2018). Therefore, CSL can be seen as a significant catechesis activity which supports the evangelisation of students (CEWA, 2021a) whereby students act "through actions and words that reflect a Christ-like presence and a Christ-like love to others" (CECWA, 2009, p. 12).

Walsh and Spells (2020) posited that CSL in Catholic schools is different to SL in other schools because the service is "explicitly tied to our identity as members of the Catholic

faith" (p. 5). This difference was a common theme in two Australian studies (Engebretson, 2014; Lavery, 2007b) which both found that CSL and the Catholic identity of the Catholic school are linked. In the study conducted by Lavery (2007b), involving staff members responsible for SL from eleven Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia, all respondents noted how the Catholic identity of the school and the SL program were connected. Staff members underscored the importance of SL in a Catholic school which enabled Christ-like values to be lived out and for Catholic teachings to be enacted. Another Australian study, conducted by Engebretson (2014) featured 17 Catholic secondary schools in Victoria. In this study, key SL staff within each school were interviewed, revealing perceptions towards the benefits and impact of SL in their context (Engebretson, 2014). All staff members interviewed by Engebretson (2014) noted that through the SL program (named Christian Service in these Catholic schools) it was easier for students to express their Catholic identity (Engebretson, 2014). The staff member comments emphasised the development of Catholic identity as well as students living out their own faith through acts of service.

3.7.5 Benefits of Christian Service-Learning

The benefits attained by students in SL and CSL have much in common (Lavery & Hackett, 2008). For example, leadership development (Lavery & Hackett, 2008) and awareness of social justice issues (Stewart, 2009). The literature on CSL highlights various benefits for students such as an understanding that the Christian life is one of service and justice (CEWA, 2021a). Engagement in CSL can also lead to a deeper understanding of the Catholic Social Teachings and how these teachings can be lived out, including promoting the dignity of each human being and the common good for the environment and wider community (CEWA, 2021a). Another benefit of CSL participation is that students can hear the voice of God in their lives (Feenstra, 2011). Faith development is also a benefit of participation in CSL (Roso, 2013). In an Australian study of 1359 Christian youth, 63 percent noted that service activities impacted the development of their religious faith (Rieger, 2014). Kuhn et al. (2017) called for further research into the benefits and impacts of the inclusion of CSL into academic coursework, given the paucity of research in this area.

3.7.6 Summary

The review of literature on CSL identified five key aspects: Christian service; reflection in CSL; Catholic Social Teaching as a foundation for CSL in the Catholic context; CSL in the Catholic school; and the benefits of CSL. Whilst CSL shares the same theoretical

and practical principles as other forms of SL, CSL is inspired by gospel values. SL in religious or faith-based institutions is seen as a practical way for the students of that institution to live out their faith. However, the focus for CSL is on students living out Christ-like values as well as increasing civic responsibility. Just like in other forms of SL, reflection is an important part of CSL. Within CSL, reflection takes place through a Christian lens. The Catholic Social Teachings provide guidance for Catholics on how to live out the gospel values. Through CSL students can live out the Catholic Social Teachings in practical ways. In Catholic schools, CSL can support students to grow into Christian men and women with an ethic of service. CSL in Catholic schools is directly linked to the identity as adherents of the Catholic faith. The benefits attained from participation in SL and CSL are similar. The benefits of CSL are linked to the gospel and Catholic Social Teachings, where students can live out the gospel values and develop their faith through actions of service to others. The review of literature in this section influenced the formation of two specific research questions:

- What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?
- What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

3.8 Conclusion

Presented within this chapter are five areas of literature underpinning the study. The first area examined the concept of experiential learning. The second area explored SL, the forms and types of SL, a brief history of SL, and an outline of the numerous components that constitute SL. The third area presented the various benefits and positive impacts of SL for students and the benefits of SL for others such as staff, institutions, and the wider community. The fourth area outlined the challenges associated with SL, including suggested strategies for overcoming these challenges. The last area detailed CSL, a form of SL, highlighting key concepts such as Christian service, reflection within CSL, the role of Catholic Social Teaching as a foundation for CSL, CSL in the Catholic school, and the benefits of CSL. Together, these areas of literature informed the present research. Presented within the next chapter is the research plan.

Chapter Four: Research Plan

4.1 Introduction

The review of the literature in Chapter Three addressed five key areas related to the present research, these being: experiential learning; Service-Learning (SL); benefits and impacts of SL; challenges associated with SL; and Christian Service-Learning (CSL). Five specific research questions were developed from the review of the literature which informed the focus of the study:

1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?
2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?
5. What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

This chapter defines the research plan to explore these research questions. The plan includes the theoretical perspective, the methodology, and the methods of data collection. The chapter presents the research participants, trustworthiness, methodological rigour, the data analysis process, ethical considerations, and design summary. An overview of the research plan is provided in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Overview of Chapter Four: Research Plan

4.1	Introduction	
4.2	Theoretical Framework	
4.3	Epistemology	4.3.1 Qualitative Research
		4.3.2 Constructivism
4.4	Theoretical Perspective	4.4.1 Interpretivism
		4.4.2 Symbolic Interactionism
4.5	Methodology	4.5.1 Case Study
		4.5.2 Instrumental Case study
		4.5.3 Concerns and Defense of Case Study Methodology
		4.5.3.1 Subjectivity
		4.5.3.2 Generalisability
		4.5.3.3 Volume of Information
4.6	Methods of Data Collection	4.6.1 Document Search
		4.6.2 Semi-structured Interviews
		4.6.3 Structured Online Questionnaire
		4.6.4 Focus Group Interviews
		4.6.5 Researcher Reflection Journal
4.7	Research Participants	4.7.1 Sampling
4.8	Trustworthiness	4.8.1 Credibility
		4.8.2 Transferability
		4.8.3 Dependability
		4.8.4 Confirmability
4.9	Methodological Rigour	
4.10	Data Analysis	4.10.1 Data Condensation
		4.10.2 Data Display
		4.10.3 Drawing Conclusions and Data Verification
4.11	Ethical Considerations	
4.12	Design Summary	
4.13	Conclusion	

4.2 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework represents the underlying beliefs of the researcher undertaking the study (Miles et al, 2020). The theoretical framework outlines the theoretical assumptions that underpin the research and subsequently impact the findings (Crotty, 1998). There are four elements of a theoretical framework: epistemology; theoretical perspective; methodology; and methods. Each of the four elements are connected and impact each other as well as the overall strength of the research and the achievement of its outcomes (Crotty, 1998). Epistemology is the theory of knowledge that is rooted within the theoretical perspective and therefore in the methodology (Crotty, 1998). Theoretical perspective is the "philosophical stance" (Crotty, 1998, p. 3) which informs and is reflected within the methodology. The methodology is the research design which influences the selection of methods and the achievement of the intended outcomes. Methods are the procedures used to collect the data from the participants (Miles et al., 2020). The theoretical framework of this research is presented in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1

Theoretical Framework of the Research
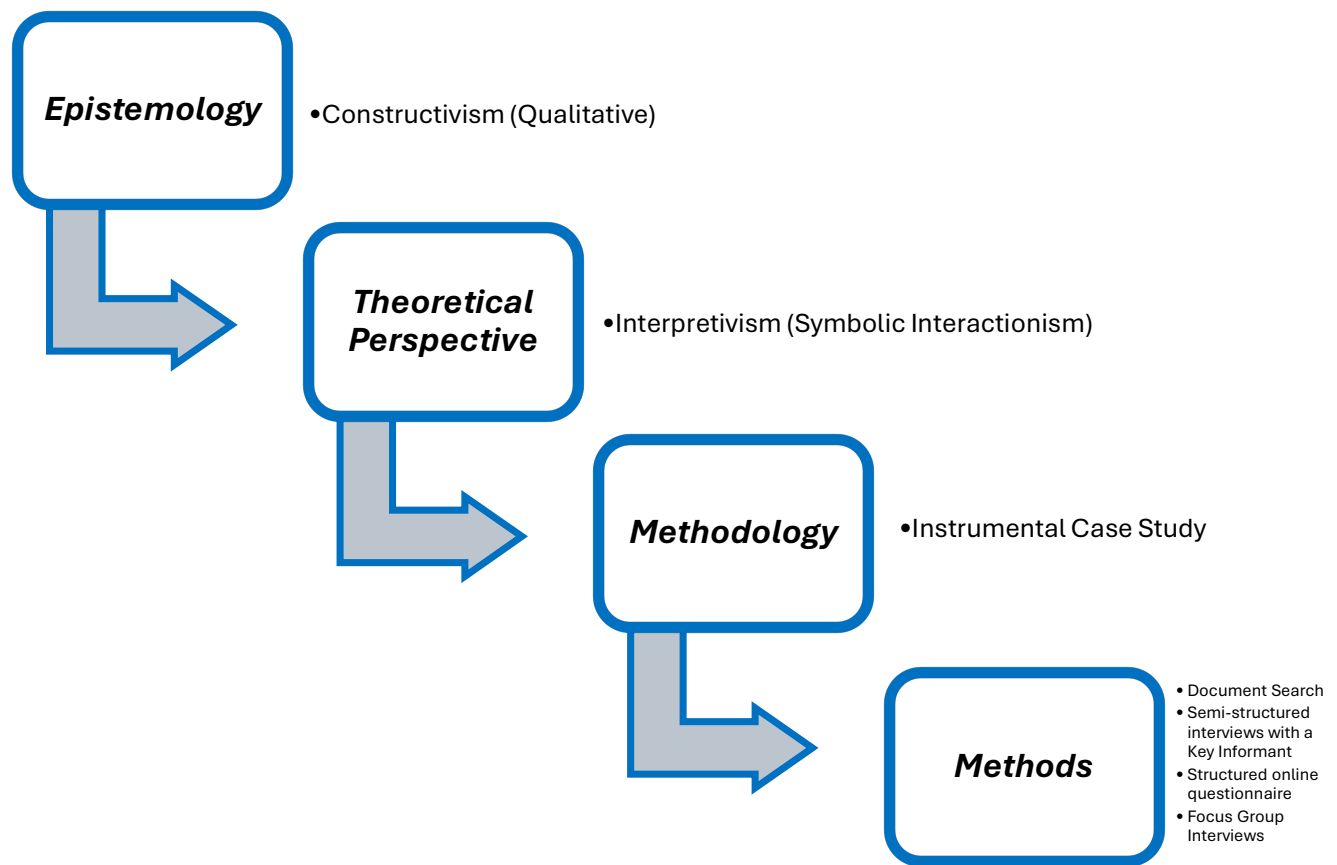
4.3 Epistemology

Epistemology can be defined as a "way of knowing the world" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 8). Crotty (1998) noted that epistemology is a means to grasp and demonstrate "how we know what we know" (p. 3). The researcher must try to get "as close to the participants being studied …. through the subjective experiences of people" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 21). It is then through the data collated from participant input that the researcher can identify what is known by the participants and hence understand their thinking (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The epistemological perspective selected for this qualitative research is constructivism. In the constructivist epistemology "meaning is not discovered but constructed" (Crotty, 1998, p. 42). Patton (2015) explained that constructivists "study the multiple realities constructed by different groups of people and the implications of those constructions for their lives" (p. 121). The aim for the researcher is to comprehend and make

sense of these realities in which "individuals [have developed] subjective meanings of their experiences - meanings directed toward certain objects or things" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 8). The researcher understands that their background shapes their response and interpretation and acknowledges that this interpretation is influenced by personal and cultural circumstances (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This research explored Year 11 students' perceptions towards CSL. The study gave students the opportunity to voice their honest perceptions, thoughts, opinions, and ideas about CSL based on their lived experiences, thus a constructivist epistemology was appropriate for the research.

4.3.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research uses non-numerical data in the form of words to explore a problem or issue (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The results derived from qualitative research can be used "to enhance quality, improve programs, generate deeper insights into the root causes of significant problems, and help prevent problems" (Patton, 2015, p. 205). Creswell and Poth (2018) noted that qualitative studies "not only add to the literature but they can also give voice to underrepresented groups" (p. 130). Qualitative research uses such methods as open-ended questions in both questionnaires and interviews as well as observation of a setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative researchers explore the stories of individuals within their own context to understand their perceptions (Miles et al., 2020; Patton, 2015). Through qualitative research, quotations are collected from people and are then verified and reflected upon to deduce meaning (Patton, 2015). In this study, qualitative research has allowed for the in-depth exploration of the perceptions of Year 11 students towards CSL.

4.3.2 Constructivism

Constructivism is commonly seen as an approach to qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the constructivist perspective, meaning is constructed by the individual, not discovered (Crotty, 1998). Individuals develop meaning from their experiences engaging with objects or things in the world and attempt to understand the world that they live in (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Crotty, 1998). Each individual's way of making sense of the world is equally valid and worthy of respect (Crotty, 1998). These meanings are formed through interacting with other people as well as through historical and cultural experiences that form part of people's lives (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The focus of the research within a constructivist epistemology is the reliance on the responses and viewpoints of the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In qualitative

research, the researcher must strive to get close to the participants being studied gathering information through their subjective experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The task for the researcher is to interpret and understand these viewpoints (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The challenge for the researcher is to elicit this information through the construction of appropriate questions. Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggested that if the questions are broad and open-ended this will allow the participants to construct meaning out of situations. The researcher then must listen carefully to what is being said in order to analyse and for interpretation to take place.

In this research, a constructivist qualitative approach allowed the Year 11 students to share their perceptions, opinions, and ideas towards CSL based on their subjective construction of meaning. The researcher supported the students by participating in reciprocal dialogue and a clarification of the questions and responses (Mills & Birks, 2014). The researcher's experience as an educator in Catholic secondary schools enabled him to have insight into the perceptions towards CSL of the Year 11 students as well as an understanding of the perceptions raised by the key informants (KIs).

4.4 Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical perspective is the "philosophical stance lying behind a methodology" (Crotty, 1998, p. 66) and is informed by the epistemology (Crotty, 1998). The theoretical perspective which underpins this research is interpretivism, specifically symbolic interactionism. Interpretivism aims to describe human and social reality whilst analysing "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). Charmaz et al. (2019) explained that symbolic interactionism deduces that it is through interactions that people construct their own understanding of themselves and the world around them. The design of this research was to gather data from Year 11 students to explore their perceptions towards CSL. The Year 11 students were able to voice how they interpret CSL through their opinions, ideas, thoughts, and suggestions. Data was also collected from the KIs who provided a contextual understanding within their school as well as their perceptions of CSL for the students.

4.4.1 Interpretivism

Interpretive research is the most common form of qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdale, 2015). Interpretivist researchers reflect on the subjective aspect of the world with meaning being socially constructed by the participants in the research (Hammond &

Wellington, 2020). The individual and society cannot be considered separately, rather society is understood by the individuals who are in it and the individuals are understood by the society to which they belong (O'Donoghue, 2019). The foundational point of interpretivism is that individuals construct meaning from their interactions and environment and therefore generate their own version and understanding of reality (O'Donoghue, 2019). This research, conducted within an interpretivist framework enabled the Year 11 students to voice their varying and intricate understandings of CSL. These understandings are based on the Year 11 students' lived experience in their own environments and thus are their understandings of reality. The students were able to share these understandings and versions of reality about CSL through the data collection process, in particular the structured online questionnaire and focus group interviews. The KIs were also able to share their understanding and version of reality of CSL through the semi-structured interviews. Interpretivism informs numerous theoretical perspectives, one of which is symbolic interactionism (Hammond & Wellington, 2020) which is the lens through which this research was conducted.

4.4.2 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a major theoretical position within the interpretivist paradigm which has its foundations in the work of Herbert Mead (Crotty, 1998; Hammond & Wellington, 2020; Merriam & Tisdale, 2015; O'Donoghue, 2019). It is from the work of Mead that Herbert Blumer formulated the concept of symbolic interactionism (Charmaz et al, 2019; Crotty, 1998). Blumer (1969) articulated three premises of symbolic interactionism. Firstly, based on the meaning that something has for a human being, this is how they will act towards it. Secondly, this meaning comes from the social interaction that one has with others. Thirdly, these meanings evolve through interpretation of encounters that one has with others. Thus, symbolic interactionism has a focus on how meaning is constructed and acted on by individuals within their lives (Charmaz et al., 2019). This meaning is ever-changing and so symbolic interactionism has an interest in the role played by individuals and those encountered, and how that role impacts the construction of meaning (Hammond & Wellington, 2020).

The focus of the researcher conducting research within the interpretivist paradigm, specifically symbolic interactionism, is to reveal the perspectives behind the lived experiences and actions of the participants and then putting oneself in the participants' shoes to understand and interpret the meaning of these perspectives (Crotty, 1998; O'Donoghue, 2019). Interaction is at the heart of symbolic interactionism. It is the process of interaction

which is crucial because "to understand why individuals think, feel, and act the way they do, we need to understand their worlds from their standpoints" (Charmaz et al., 2019, p. 20). Through interaction, namely dialogue, the researcher is able to explore the perceptions, attitudes, feelings, ideas, and opinions of the respondents, thus understanding their world (Charmaz et al., 2019; Crotty, 1998; Merriam & Tisdale, 2015). Crotty (1998) underlined that it is only by dialoguing with individuals that world viewpoints, feelings, and perceptions can be shared and subsequently interpreted. This interaction then enables meaning to be created and understood. In this approach, the researcher becomes the primary tool of data collection using qualitative methods such as semi-structured and open-ended questioning methods to ascertain information from the respondents in their own surroundings (O'Donoghue, 2019).

This research applied the lens of symbolic interactionism as the theoretical perspective by which to explore the perceptions of Year 11 students towards CSL. In this research the Year 11 participants shared their perceptions, how they think, feel, and why they act in a certain way, about CSL. Through interaction, namely the focus group interviews but also the structured online questionnaire, the students were able to reveal their constructed meanings and attitudes towards CSL. Working within the symbolic interactionist tenets, the research considered the impact that the contextual setting had on the respondents, in particular through the semi-structured interviews with the KIs who were able to provide contextual reference and grounding within their school.

4.5 Methodology

A research methodology is the action plan for carrying out a project. The action plan influences the selection of the research methods ensuring they are linked to the achievement of the overarching intended purpose of the project, addressing the research question (Crotty, 1998; Yin, 2018). Since methodology is focussed on obtaining and producing knowledge about the world of the participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) the researcher can be considered as the methodologist, who determines how the chosen methods will be used for the greatest effect and to provide the greatest understanding (Mills & Birks, 2014). The methodological approach for this research is case study, specifically instrumental case study.

4.5.1 Case Study

Case study research is a methodology in which the researcher aims to gain a detailed understanding of a real-world case by employing multiple methods of data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Yin, 2018). The case could be "a program,

an event, activity, process or one or more individuals" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p 14). The research can involve a single case or multiple cases (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Whilst there is no formula for the number of cases that are included in case study research, four or five cases are considered an appropriate number (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Yin (2018) outlined three forms of case study: descriptive; explanatory; and exploratory. A descriptive case study has the purpose of describing a case in its contextual world setting. An explanatory case study aims to explain the how or why something has come to be how it is. An exploratory case study has the purpose of identifying research questions and procedures to be used in future research. The present study is a form of descriptive case study in so far as CSL is being described within its contextual setting of Catholic secondary schools. The first point in case study research is to conduct a literature review and determine the research questions (Yin, 2018). Within the constructivist approach, the researcher sets out for the case study "to capture the perspectives of different participants and focusing on how their different meanings illuminate your topic of study" (Yin, 2018, p. 16).

Multiple sources of data collection are used within case study research to ensure that an in-depth understanding of the topic is achieved and allow for triangulation to occur (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Yin, 2018). This use of multiple data sources links to the purpose of the case study methodology to gain an in-depth understanding of the topic (Yin, 2018). Common sources of qualitative data collection within case study research are: document analysis; interview questions; focus group responses; open-ended questionnaires; and site visits (Patton, 2015). The lessons learnt by studying one case can be applied to another similar population through reasoning by analogy (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

4.5.2 Instrumental Case Study

Further to the three types of case study that have already been defined, Creswell and Poth (2018) identified three other types of case study: collective or multiple case study; intrinsic case study; and instrumental case study. In a collective or multiple case study there are multiple cases based on a central topic that are examined to determine similarities and differences (Nayar & Stanley, 2014; Pickard, 2017). In an intrinsic case study, the focus is on developing a better understanding of a person, institution, or a single occurrence of a case and the nuances that the singular case delivers (Nayar & Stanley, 2014; Pickard, 2017). In an instrumental case study, the focus is on a specific issue rather than the case (Creswell & Poth,

2018). Nayar and Stanley (2014) suggested that in an instrumental case study the particulars of the case can be analysed with the intention of using the knowledge derived in another situation rather than the particular case from where the knowledge came from.

Instrumental case study is the type of case study methodology selected for this research. Instrumental case study can be descriptive or explanatory. The specific issue in this research is student perceptions of CSL and the instrumental case study of the four Catholic secondary schools is the means to explore the issue. Instrumental case study is considered an important form of evidence-based research for use by program creators (Patton, 2015). The conclusions drawn from this instrumental case study into Year 11 students' perceptions towards CSL have the potential to strengthen the understanding of CSL from a student perspective informing the delivery of CSL programs within, but not limited to, Catholic secondary schools within Western Australia.

4.5.3 Concerns and Defense of Case Study Methodology

Case study as a methodology has strengths and weaknesses (Cohen et al., 2011; Crowe et al., 2011). The primary concerns relating to the use of case study methodology are: subjectivity; generalisability; volume of information; quality of research; and methodological rigour (Cardano, 2020; Cohen et al., 2011; Crowe et al., 2011; Flyvbjerg, 2010). These concerns will now be addressed. The quality of research and methodological rigour will be addressed later in this chapter.

4.5.3.1 Subjectivity. Nisbett and Watt (1984, cited in Cohen et al., 2011) asserted that the data collected in case study methodology is not open to cross-checking and therefore the researcher may become selective or act in a biased or subjective manner. This concern is related to the notion that due to the researcher's own stance and beliefs it is unlikely that the same conclusions could then be drawn by two different researchers exploring the same phenomenon (Cardano, 2020). Subjectivity in case study methodology raises doubts about the value of the research because there is an assumption that the researcher's own bias will lead to a confirmation of preconceived ideas (Flyvbjerg, 2010). These preconceived ideas and perceptions are often wrong and the case study researcher often has to review their hypotheses (Flyvbjerg, 2010). Flyvbjerg (2010) highlighted that subjectivity and bias apply to all methodologies and that it is not unique to case study methodology or qualitative research. Pickard (2017) argued that it is not possible to remove all subjectivity from qualitative research and that if the researcher can maintain awareness of any subjectivity that presents

itself, this can be addressed where needed. The data collected in case study research needs to be self-explanatory rather than have heavy interpretation, evaluation, or judgement applied by the researcher (Cohen et al., 2011). Further, any interpretation should be based on the data and not on the researcher's own opinion or perception which will lead to inter-subjectivity (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Cardano (2020) concluded that there are explicit means to allow for the intersubjectivity of results. Strategies such as audit trials, triangulation, and reflexivity which have been employed in the present research, and are discussed later in this chapter, are means to increase the trustworthiness of the data and to promote intersubjectivity (Billups, 2021; Cohen et al., 2011; Guba, 1981; Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Miles et al., 2020).

4.5.3.2 Generalisability. A frequently raised concern about case study methodology is the inability to generalise from case study research (Crowe et al., 2011; Gomm et al., 2009; Yin, 2018). The concern is that case study methodology lacks generalisability due to the limitation in the number of cases under examination. That is, there is not sufficient statistical evidence to extrapolate to other contexts what is uncovered within the case study under exploration (Cardano, 2020). Yin (2018) counteracted the issue of generalisability by outlining that the goal of case study research is to expand and generalise theory rather than extrapolating probabilities or making statistical generalisations.

Case studies are indeed generalisable to theoretical premises rather than a population (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) therefore suggested that analytical generalisations, focussed on theory, are possible within case study. An analytical generalisation could be based on verifying, challenging, or enhancing theory identified in the literature (Yin, 2018). Another form of analytic generalisation could be a new idea that has arisen from the completion of a case study (Yin, 2018). Creswell and Poth (2018) contended that the researcher is able to develop naturalistic generalisations by analysing the data and the reader is then able to deduce their own generalisation, learn from the case, and apply this learning to a similar context. Thus, generalisability can be demonstrated in case study research when other researchers are able to see their application (Nisbett & Watt, 1984, cited in Cohen et al., 2011). The purposeful sampling applied in the selection of the four participant schools within this research aimed to include a wide range of school types. It is anticipated that this sample of the schools will assist in allowing for the results of the research to be theoretically generalised.

4.5.3.3 Volume of Information. The third concern of case study methodology is that the data collection process can be laborious and time-consuming and this results in a large volume of data being collected (Crowe et al., 2011; Flyvbjerg, 2010). Crowe et al. (2011) suggested that the researcher remain focussed on the research questions during the data collection process but at the same time remain flexible to the possibility of exploring new paths. Regarding the research questions, Miles et al. (2020) reminded the researcher to not "wander too far from them to follow alluring leads or drop them in the face of a more dramatic or momentous event" (p. 293).

Adequate time needs to be set aside for data collection (and analysis and interpretation) and the researcher must resist the urge to collect the most amount of data possible (Crowe et al., 2011). In response to this concern, Miles et al. (2020) advised the researcher to set boundaries for the case study, defining what needs to be studied, ensuring it is linked directly to the research questions all whilst staying within the limits of the time and budget available. The boundaries for the present research were established during the research design phase of this instrumental case study. Five specific research questions framed the research. The study was limited to four Catholic secondary schools to ensure that the amount of data collected was manageable whilst still being sufficient to address the research questions. The data collection methods were piloted, which included refining and rewording of the questions to ensure clarity and intention were addressed. The administration and completion of the semi-structured interviews with the KIs and the focus group interviews onsite at each of the four schools took place at a time convenient to the participants (KIs and Year 11 students).

4.6 Methods of Data Collection

The research methods describe the techniques that are employed to collect and interpret the data (Crotty, 1998). Case study research includes multiple sources of data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Yin, 2018). In line with case study methodology, the methods of data collection used in this research were the following: document search; semi-structured interviews with a KI; structured online questionnaire with the Year 11 students; focus group interviews with the Year 11 students; and a researcher reflection journal. The research design in this study included a pilot of the structured online questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and focus group interview questions. The specific details of the piloting are included within each data collection method as well as the section on methodological rigour.

4.6.1 Document Search

A document search is a commonly used method to support interviews and observations (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and is considered "relevant to every case study topic" (Yin, 2018, p. 113). The aim of the document search was to obtain a detailed understanding of each school's context and approach to CSL. The insight gained from the document search was used to help generate the questions for the semi-structured KI interviews, as well as the structured online questionnaire and focus group interviews with the Year 11 students. In this study examples of the documents that were accessed included:

- School CSL rationale/program
- Annual School Reports
- School Strategic Plans
- Evangelisation Plans
- Annual School Improvement Plans

The Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) (2021a) Christian Service Learning Guidelines and Framework for CEWA Schools document was also accessed. This document is the guide and overarching CSL document for all Catholic schools in Western Australia.

4.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews are considered one of the most important forms of evidence in case study research (Yin, 2018). Interviews provide the researcher with an opportunity to learn about the lived experiences, thoughts, and ideas of their respondents (Patton, 2015). Interviews enable the interviewer the opportunity to better understand the respondents (Crotty, 1998), which is a key aspect of symbolic interactionism. Interviews also generate knowledge with semi-structured interviews considered the most common form of interview (Brinkmann, 2018). The semi-structured interview is a guided conversation enabling the interviewer flexibility to follow-up comments made by the respondent rather than be constricted by a stringent interview protocol (Brinkmann, 2018; Yin, 2018).

In this research, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with a KI from each school. KIs are crucial to the achievement of the outcomes of a case study as they provide insight onto a topic and also useful links (Yin, 2018). Patton (2015) described KIs as a "prized group" (p. 268) who are well-versed on a topic and have a willingness to share this knowledge. The purpose of the semi-structured interview was to gain contextual understanding about the CSL program within each school and how the program is delivered

in the school. The four KIs had differing job titles such as CSL Co-Ordinator, Deputy Principal for Ministry, Head of Faith and Mission, and Director of CSL though all had the responsibility of overseeing the CSL program within their school. The KIs were nominated by the Principal within their school. Prior to the interview, the KIs were provided with a participant information sheet outlining details of the study and a consent form (Appendix A). Once the KI consented to participate in the research, a mutually convenient interview time was determined, and each interview was conducted on site at each school in the KI's office. Each KI was also sent an interview question guide (Appendix B) with a list of intended questions, to assist in their preparation. The questions for the semi-structured interview were derived from the document search and literature review and were piloted with a CSL co-ordinator who is currently on leave. The researcher responded to the feedback and the questions were adjusted. Table 4.2 demonstrates the link between the questions in the interview guide and the research questions.

Table 4.2

Linking of Specific Research Questions to the Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Specific Research Question	Interview Question
1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?	2,3,4,6,7
2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?	9
3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?	13
4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?	18
5. What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?	1,5,7,8,9,10, 11,12,14,15,16 17,19,20

The interviews had a duration of 45 to 60 minutes and were audio-recorded. Audio recording enables the researcher to have a more accurate account of an interview (Yin, 2018). Each interview recording was transcribed with the transcription sent to each KI, allowing for clarification and adjustment of any points deemed necessary. Member checking was used to ensure and maintain the accuracy in qualitative findings by providing participants with a follow-up opportunity to provide insight on the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Following the transcript review, no adjustments to the transcripts were required.

4.6.3 Structured Online Questionnaire

Together with individual interviews (prolonged and shorter), surveys are identified as one of the three types of case study interview formats, with the most common form being the structured questionnaire (Yin, 2018). Questionnaires can be administered by mail, telephone, face to face, paper, or online (Ekinci, 2015; Hague, et al., 2004). An online questionnaire is a questionnaire that is administered via the internet with the purpose to collect data about respondents' behaviours, experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and values towards the subject matter (Dawson, 2019). Structured online questionnaires are self-administered and are easy to complete for respondents (Brace, 2018; Ekinci, 2015). Structured questionnaires are generally used when the number of participants exceeds 30 (Hague, et al., 2004). The absence of a physical interviewer in the process removes a source of bias (Brace, 2018). The use of questionnaires however has disadvantages. Disadvantages linked to online questionnaires include low return rates, rushing when completing the question, and issues presented by respondents' literacy levels (Iwaniec, 2020). Given the number of participants in this research as well as the ease of administration and effectiveness of data collection, the structured online questionnaire was an appropriate method of data collection. The sufficient literacy level of all Year 11 students was also considered when constructing the online questionnaire.

There are two main types of question within the questionnaire: closed-ended and open-ended (Dawson, 2019; Ekinci, 2015; Hague, et al., 2004). This research used a combination of open-ended questions to generate qualitative responses where participants could share their attitudes and opinions as well as closed-ended questions to generate statistical data (Dawson, 2019). The structured online questionnaire contained qualitative and quantitative questions (Appendix C) though it was predominantly qualitative. Qualitative and quantitative data can be gathered and used together (Patton, 2015). Miles et al. (2020) re-enforced the benefit of qualitative and quantitative data being used together noting that the

combination of words and numbers (qualitative and quantitative) are necessary to form an understanding of the world.

The qualitative open-ended questions were based on the five research questions, with open-ended questions also deriving from the literature review, document search, and responses from the semi-structured interviews with the KIs. There were qualitative questions requiring a short written response as well as questions requiring students to select the answers that represented their experience. There were also several quantitative questions which included non-identifiable demographic information such as gender, number of years of involvement in CSL, ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) or General course pathway selection, statements about CSL, and questions relating to student perceptions of CSL. The quantitative questions incorporated multiple-choice and five-point Likert scale questions. Table 4.3 demonstrates the link between the questions in the structured online questionnaire and the research questions.

Table 4.3

Linking of Specific Research Questions to the Structured Online Questionnaire

Specific Research Question	Question Type	Survey Question
Demographic and identifiers	Quantitative	
	Multiple choice	1,2,3,4,5
1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?	Quantitative 5-Point Likert Scale	13,14
2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?	Quantitative 5-Point Likert Scale	6

3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?	Quantitative 5-Point Likert Scale	7
4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?	Quantitative 5-Point Likert Scale Qualitative	8, 9,10,11,12 13,14,15,16

The purpose of the structured online questionnaire was to reach as many Year 11 students within each school and gain a 'feel' for student perceptions towards CSL. The online format of the structured questionnaire was to allow for ease of administration and distribution. The online questionnaire in this research was created through the Qualtrics platform and a link was sent to students to complete it. The responses to the structured online questionnaire were also used to formulate the questions for the focus group interviews.

All students enrolled in Year 11 at the four schools were invited to participate in the anonymous structured online questionnaire. All students and their parents/guardians were provided with a participant information sheet and consent form (Appendix D and E) outlining details of the research as well as what was required from participants. With the assistance of the KI in each school, the consent forms were distributed and collected. All students who consented and received permission from their parents/guardians to participate were then emailed the link to the structured online questionnaire by the KI. To maximise participation the questionnaire took place during class time at a time deemed appropriate by the KI. The questionnaire took between 15 and 20 minutes to complete. A total of 261 Year 11 students participated in the structured online questionnaire.

The researcher piloted the structured online questionnaire with Year 11 students from the researcher's own school, which was not part of the participant group. The pilot of the structured online questionnaire allowed the researcher to determine the appropriate timing for administration as well as the identification of any issues that the students could face when completing the online questionnaire. Through the pilot of the online questionnaire, it was identified that in question three, the option 'VET' should be changed to be 'General'. In question 14, which included a multiple choice (yes/no) option and a text response option, the

students were not able to enter their text responses. This question was refined to be a text response only.

4.6.4 Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews are interviews conducted with a small group of people focussing on a specific subject (Patton, 2015). The size of focus groups ranges from six to 10 respondents (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Patton, 2015; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The questions are open-ended and conversational (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggested that the questions are designed to draw out the thoughts and perceptions of the respondents. Focus group interviews fit well within symbolic interactionism, a tenet of which is that only through dialogue the researcher can recognise the thoughts, beliefs, and values of others and therefore determine and understand their intentions (Crotty, 1998). A further benefit of focus group interviews, which links to the underlying epistemology of constructivism, is that this method can provide participants with the opportunity to listen to others' opinions to better understand their own (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). It is the interactional nature of focus group interviews which allows for respondents to hear other respondents' opinions and thoughts, generating cooperation and further discussion (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The purpose of the focus group interviews was to build on the understanding of student perceptions towards CSL gained from the structured online questionnaire. All Year 11 students in each school were invited to participate in the focus group by nomination within the structured online questionnaire. The number of nominations from each school did not exceed 10 therefore all students who nominated to be part of the focus groups were included within the interviews. As already noted, student and parent/guardian consent was required for participation in the focus group interview. Students were not given a copy of the interview guide. The questions for the focus group interviews (Appendix F) derived from the literature review, document search, semi-structured interviews, and the structured online questionnaire, with a focus on exploring students' perceptions towards CSL. The questions for the focus group interviews were piloted with a group of Year 11 students from the researcher's own school. The feedback from the students was taken into consideration and the questions were re-worded. Table 4.4 demonstrates the link between the questions in the focus group interview guide and the research questions.

Table 4.4

Linking of Specific Research Questions to the Focus Group Interview Question Guide

Specific Research Question	Interview Question
1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?	1,2,3,4,5
2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?	6,7,8
3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?	9,10,11
4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19

The interviews were conducted on site at each school in a classroom, office space, or boardroom and had a duration of 40 to 65 minutes. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed. Each focus group interview commenced with the researcher outlining the purpose of the interview and ensuring that students understood the importance of privacy and confidentiality. The interviewees were encouraged to share their thoughts openly and honestly and were reminded that no judgements would be made about any of the comments they made. The focus group interviews were all different. Some interviewees were energetic and enthusiastic whilst others were shy and reserved. It was evident in each interview that the respondents benefitted from hearing each other's perceptions and in so doing were able to better understand their own and then share these perceptions with the group. When the conversation moved away from the topic the researcher re-directed the discussion otherwise the researcher remained neutral throughout the interviews, listening actively with minimal interruption.

4.6.5 Researcher Reflection Journal

A reflection journal provides the researcher the opportunity to interpret and address personal bias during the data collection and analysis process. The personal background of all researchers is influential for the interpretation of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Reflective journals allow a researcher to be cognisant of personal assumptions, values, and emotions (Miles et al., 2020). A journal was maintained by the researcher throughout the data collection and analysis stage of the research to allow for self-reflection, to ensure cognisance towards potential bias arising, and emotional responses when analysing the data.'

4.7 Research Participants

The participants involved in this study included the four KIs, one from each school who participated in the one on one semi-structured interview; 261 Year 11 students from the four schools who participated in the structured online questionnaire; and 26 Year 11 students from the four schools who participated in the focus group interviews. Table 4.5 provides a summary of the research participants involved in the methods of data collection.

Table 4.5

Summary of Research Participants in Each Method of Data Collection

Method	Participant	Gender
Semi-structured Interviews with Key Informant	Key Informants: CSL Co-Ordinator, Deputy Principal for Ministry, Head of Faith and Mission, and Director of Christian Service-Learning	1 Female 3 Males
Structured Online Questionnaire	261 Year 11 students	72 Females 181 Males 8 Non-binary/third gender
Focus Group Interviews	26 Year 11 students	14 Females 12 Males

Of the 261 Year 11 students who were involved in the structured online questionnaire, 66% (n=171) were enrolled in the ATAR pathway, 18% (n=46) in the General pathway, 16% (n=43) in both, and one student was not enrolled in either ATAR or General.

4.7.1 Sampling

Sampling for this research occurred in two ways. Firstly, in the selection of the four schools and secondly in the selection of the student year level for the study. Purposeful

sampling was the method of sampling used in this research. Purposeful sampling involves the selection of a sample group of participants that "can best inform the researcher about the research problem under examination" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 148). Purposeful sampling is the preferred term for qualitative researchers (Patton, 2015). Schwandt and Gates (2018) commented that purposeful sampling is used by constructivist researchers, who "seek out groups, settings, and individuals where [and for whom] the processes being studied are most likely to occur" (p. 312). Each of the four schools was purposefully selected because they are currently facilitating a CSL program and include a wide range of school types: ICSEA score; co-educational and single gender; and Pre-Kindergarten-12 and 7-12 schools as detailed in Table 2.1 in Chapter Two.

Year 11 students were purposefully selected as the participants for this study. Most students in Year 11 have had up to five years CSL experience from Year 7-11 and are in a good position to share their perceptions about their CSL experiences. Year 12 students were not considered for this study because they are in their final year of secondary schooling and have future pathway discernment, study, and examination commitments.

4.8 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the model framework for the evaluation of qualitative research (Billups, 2021). Lincoln and Guba (1985) summarised the concept of trustworthiness into a question: "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences [including self] that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (p. 290). Korstjens and Moser (2018) simplified trustworthiness further, defining it as "can the findings be trusted?" (p. 121). Within case study research, an inquirer can satisfy the requirements of the question posed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), establishing trustworthiness through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Pickard, 2017). Bryman (2016) posited that each of these four criteria has an equivalent in quantitative research: credibility (internal validity); transferability (external validity); dependability (reliability); and confirmability (objectivity) however these quantitative equivalents are not suitable for qualitative research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This qualitative research met the four criteria of trustworthiness through a number of processes which are summarised in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Processes to Establish Trustworthiness

Criterion	Processes
Credibility (4.8.1)	Background knowledge and experience of researcher
	Triangulation of data sources
	Triangulation of data collection methods
	Member Checks
Transferability (4.8.2)	Definition of research context
	Results linked to Literature Review
	Purposeful sampling
Dependability (4.8.3)	The use of multiple methods of data collection
	Piloting of data collection methods
	Adherence to protocols in interviews and surveys
	Adherence to case study protocol
	Audio recording and transcription of all interviews
Confirmability (4.8.4)	In-depth methodological descriptions
	Triangulation of data sources
	Triangulation of data collection methods
	Confirmation of themes through use of quantitative data from structured online questionnaire
	Reference to researcher's beliefs and assumptions

4.8.1 Credibility

Credibility is the criterion of trustworthiness that relates to the establishment of "confidence in the findings and interpretations of a research study" (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 104). Credibility establishes whether the findings represent "plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants' original views" (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121) The credibility of qualitative research is enhanced through the following techniques: researcher's background; triangulation of sources; methods and theories; prolonged engagement; persistent observation; and member checks (Billups, 2021; Guba, 1981; Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 2013; Patton, 2015). In designing the research, the researcher must determine which strategies are applicable to the research as not all will be appropriate or relevant (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In the present

research, background knowledge and experience of the researcher, triangulation, and member checks have been used to strengthen the credibility of the findings.

Patton (2015) emphasised that the background of the researcher and their qualifications and skills impact and re-enforce the credibility of the findings. The credibility in this research was strengthened by the researcher's background in Campus Ministry, specifically CSL, including 15 years as a teacher in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia of which eight of those years have involved the leadership of CSL programs.

Triangulation in qualitative research allows the researcher to explain the phenomenon in question (Billups, 2021). Triangulation entails "comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means from interviews, observations, and documents" (Patton, 2015, p. 662). The use of multiple sources of data allows for triangulation to occur, which can enhance the trustworthiness of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Miles et al., 2020; Yin, 2018). In case study research it is common for triangulation to be achieved through both the triangulation of data collection methods as well as the use of multiple sources (Pickard, 2017). These two forms of triangulation were present in this research. Firstly, triangulation between the data sources: document search; KIs; and the Year 11 students. Secondly, triangulation between the methods of data collection: the structured online questionnaire; the semi-structured one on one interviews; and the focus group interviews.

Pickard (2017) defined member checking as the process whereby participants are given the opportunity to "confirm the credibility of their stories….as interpreted by the researcher…. [commenting] on the contents, adding their own interpretations" (p. 107). Guba (1981) contended that member checking is the "single most important action" (p. 85) that a researcher can undertake as it is central to the criteria of credibility. The four KIs who participated in the semi-structured interviews were provided with the transcript of the audio recorded interview to verify the accuracy of the information and to have the opportunity to provide any additional comments or clarify points that they deemed necessary. All four participants were satisfied with the accuracy of the transcription and thus no changes were required.

4.8.2 Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research refers to the intention of producing findings that can be used by others in comparable contexts (Billups, 2021, Patton, 2015). The role of the researcher is to provide the reader with sufficient information for the reader to determine if

the results and conclusions are transferable to their context (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Therefore, it is the reader making the "transferability judgement" as they are familiar with their own context (Korstjens & Moser, 2018, p. 121). Patton (2015) outlined how constructivist researchers deliberately avoid generalisability instead opting for transferability. The primary method of enhancing transferability is through the outlining of a rich or thick description of the data (Billups, 2021; Bryman, 2016; Guba, 1981; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this research transferability was enhanced through a thick description of the research context, the linking of the results to the literature review, and the use of purposeful sampling.

A thick description is associated with instrumental case study and permits the researcher to evaluate and understand the context, the participants, and the phenomenon under investigation and how this information could present itself in a comparable context with similar participants (Billups, 2021; Mills et al., 2009). Korstjens and Moser (2018) suggested that this rich description could include description of: the context of the research; sample size; demographics; socio-economic information; inclusion and exclusion criteria; interview procedure; and information from the interview guide. This chapter has provided an in-depth description of the research design including the underpinning philosophies and theories, methodology, participants, sampling, and methods employed for data collection. Contextual information is provided in Chapter Two. This combination comprises the thick description. Further, the limitations outlined in Chapter One enable the reader to understand the boundaries of the research.

Purposive sampling is another means to strengthen transferability (Guba, 1981). In qualitative research, sampling tends to be purposive opposed to random (Miles et al., 2020). Purposeful sampling does not intend to be all-encompassing or representative rather to maximise the data to be discovered (Guba, 1981). The sampling process is determined by what is required within the research (Guba, 1981). As outlined earlier in this chapter, purposeful sampling was employed in the selection of the four participant schools as well as the selection of Year 11 students as the participants. Each of the four schools were selected as they are currently facilitating a CSL program and cover a range of school types. Year 11 students were purposefully selected as most Year 11 students would have up to five years of CSL experience, could articulate their thoughts, opinions, and perceptions and further, Year 11 students are not Year 12 students, who are in their final year of schooling with study and examination requirements.

4.8.3 Dependability

Dependability relates to the way in which the research is conducted, with a requirement of demonstration that the methods employed were used accurately and appropriately throughout the study (Pickard, 2017). Further, dependability is focussed on the stability of research findings, in so far as that if the same research design was followed, the same key findings would result. (Billups, 2021; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In order to establish dependability, researchers need to employ an auditing approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 cited in Bryman, 2016). Auditing is a key strategy for ensuring the trustworthiness of initial findings (Billups, 2021). An audit trail involves keeping records of all phases of the research process, including: formulation of the research question; the selection of participants; field and interview notes; transcripts; and data analysis methodology (Bryman, 2016). This auditing trail enables an independent auditor to determine the transparency of the research process (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Both dependability and confirmability employ the strategy of audit trails. Dependability relates to the consistency of process whereas confirmability relates to the maintenance of neutrality (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

In the current research, the researcher enhanced the dependability of the results by maintaining a record of all phases of the research which included procedures undertaken for the collection of and the recording of raw data and the audio recording and transcription of the semi-structured and focus group interviews. The researcher piloted the data collection methods with a similar participant sample, namely KIs, and Year 11 students, who were not involved in the research after which the instruments were refined prior to their administration. These data collection methods were conducted according to relevant procedures and protocols. Finally, the overall methodology of case study, specifically instrumental case study, was adhered to throughout the research process.

4.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability as a criterion for trustworthiness in qualitative study is concerned with objectivity and that the researcher has acted in good faith (Bryman, 2016). Confirmability is vital in qualitative research to deliver confidence in the findings and to demonstrate accuracy and trustworthiness in the participants' perceptions (Billups, 2021). The objectivity within confirmability relates to the researcher ensuring that they do not allow personal values or beliefs to impact the research processes or the findings, rather that the interpretations must be based on the data (Billups, 2021; Guba, 1981; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). As already discussed, audit trails are one such strategy that can be used to enhance confirmability as well

as triangulation and reflexivity (Billups, 2021; Guba, 1981; Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Miles et al., 2020). Audit trails enabled an in-depth methodological description to be provided, addressing the data collection methods undertaken to ascertain the data as well as the piloting process which preceded this. The results obtained from the research were triangulated in two forms: the research methods and the sources of information. The research methods included the use of quantitative data which supported the qualitative findings in the form of descriptive statistics.

Reflexivity is a means to demonstrate confirmability in which the researcher specifically addresses what is known, how it is known, and the impact that their own self-knowledge has on the data collected from the participants (Billups, 2021). Miles et al. (2020) suggested that the researcher acts in a way that is "explicit and as self-aware as possible about personal assumptions, values, biases, and affective states- and how they may have come into play during the study" (p. 305). In the present research, the reflective journal, outlined earlier in this chapter, was one such way that the researcher was able to maintain reflexivity. Further, the researcher clearly outlined and addressed their own position in Chapter One. The limitations of the research were also put forward.

4.9 Methodological Rigour

In this research methodological rigour refers to the research design and the precision of the tools used in the data collection process. Methodological rigour varies from case to case with the researcher's worldview impacting and contributing to the perception of rigour (Reinhardt et al., 2018). Methodological rigour is upheld by a systematic and intentional approach to research design, data collection, interpretation, and communication (Mays & Pope, 1995). To uphold methodological rigour in this research, the three data collection tools, the structured online questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and focus group interview questions were all rigorously pilot tested. The pilot testing strengthened the efficacy of the data collection tools. The data collection tools were piloted with equivalent participants from Catholic schools to those who would be completing the actual tool. That is, Year 11 students piloted the structured online questionnaire and the focus group interview questions and a CSL co-ordinator piloted the semi-structured interview questions.

The researcher piloted the structured online questionnaire with four Year 11 students from the researcher's own school, which was not part of the participant group. The pilot of the structured online questionnaire allowed the researcher to determine the appropriate timing for administration as well as the identification of any issues that students could face when

completing the online questionnaire. Several questions were adjusted based on the feedback received from the students, allowing for easier and smoother completion of the questionnaire. The structured online questionnaire was then re-piloted with a different group of four Year 11 students from the researcher's own school. The questions for the semi-structured interview were piloted with a CSL co-ordinator from another school who is currently on leave. Through the process of piloting the questions, the researcher was able to refine the wording in order to clarify the intent of the questions. New questions were also added. The final refined questions were then re-piloted with a different colleague, a Head of Department from another school and subsequently used for the semi-structured interviews with the KIs. The questions for the focus group interviews were piloted with a group of three Year 11 students from the researcher's own school. The purpose was to ensure clarity and appropriateness of the questions. In a similar manner to the semi-structured interview pilot, the researcher was able to refine the wording and ensure the appropriateness of the questions before re-piloting with a different group of three Year 11 students. The questions were then used for the focus group interviews with the Year 11 participants.

4.10 Data Analysis

Data analysis can be defined as a process whereby the researcher tries to understand the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During this process the data are interpreted and patterns identified to explore the perceptions and thoughts of the participants (Patton, 2015). The strategy for the analysis of the qualitative data in this research followed the iterative process outlined by Miles et al. (2020) involving "three concurrent flows of activity" (p. 8): data condensation; data display; and the drawing and verifying of conclusions, shown in Figure 4.2. The analysis process set out to convert the data into results and conclusions (Patton, 2015). The quantitative responses from the structured online questionnaire were reported on through the use of descriptive statistics and graphs.

Figure 4.2

Components of Qualitative Data Analysis: Interactive Model (Miles et al., 2020, p. 10)
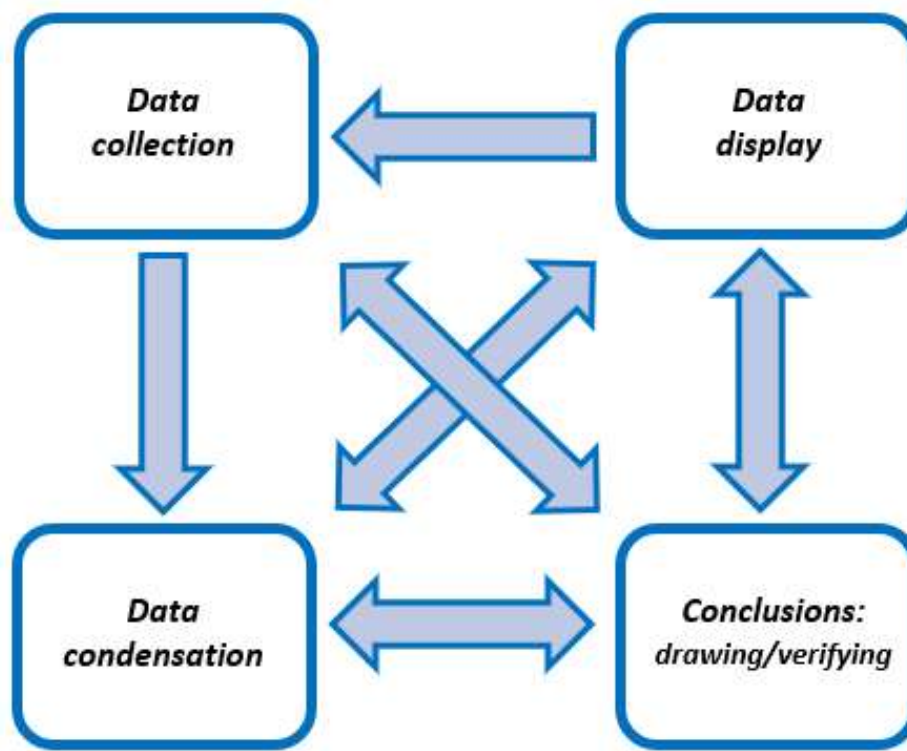
4.10.1 Data Condensation

Data condensation involves "synthesizing material into smaller chunks or clusters" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 274). Miles et al. (2020) preferred the term condensation rather than reduction, implying that the data is being strengthened rather than weakened. Data condensation commences well before the data is collected, with the researcher completing data condensation with decisions relating to the conceptual framework, the research question, number of cases, and data collection tools to employ. Data condensation is a part of analysis serving the purpose of focusing, organising, and fine-tuning the data so that conclusions can be determined and verified (Miles et al., 2020).

The data condensation process, which is ongoing and continuous until the final report is written, includes "writing summaries, coding, generating categories, developing themes, and writing analytic memos" (Miles et al., 2020, p. 8). In this research the data from the semi-structured interviews, the qualitative responses from the online questionnaire, and the focus group interviews were coded and arranged in themes. Codes can be considered as labels that give meaning to data collected during research (Miles et al., 2020). Miles et al. (2020)

suggested a two cycle process for coding with the first cycle involving a summary of the data by assigning a singular term. The second cycle, or pattern coding, then groups those singular terms into refined categories or themes. Themes capture a key point about the data and represent meaning within that data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this research the data analysis involved continuous coding where the initial coding was refined throughout the process. From this process of coding, themes emerged. Member checking (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), outlined earlier in this chapter, was employed for the semi-structured interviews allowing each KI to provide feedback on the accuracy of the data which enhanced the accuracy of the themes.

4.10.2 Data Display

Data display is a part of the data analysis process taking place before, during, and post data collection (Miles et al., 2020). Data displays involve organisation of the collected data into an accessible visual format so that the researcher can move to drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2020). The visual formats can include text, tables, or figures (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The qualitative data collected in this research was coded into themes and displayed in tables under the five specific research questions. An example of a data display table demonstrating the generation of codes, patterns, and ultimately the theme for one part of the results for research question one is shown in Table 4.7. The quantitative data generated from the structured online questionnaire in this research were analysed and displayed in a number of charts. This data was also coded and analysed for the emergence of themes. There were no additional themes that emerged from the quantitative data. The quantitative data re-affirmed and verified the themes that emerged from the qualitative data.

Table 4.7

What do Year 11 students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Understand by the Concept of Christian Service-Learning?

Quote	Code	Pattern	Theme
"Faith-based community service".	Faith-based service	The Christian aspect of Christian Service-Learning	Defining Christian Service-Learning
"Following the teachings of the Church and Jesus".	Christian values and teaching		

"In the Image and likeness of God"	Bible links	
"Helping us live life to the full by helping others" (John 10:10)		
"treat others like you would like to be treated" (Luke 6:31)	Being Christ-like	
"Walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ"		
"Giving back to others"	Give back to others	Purpose of Christian Service-Learning
"Giving back to community"	Give back to the community	
"If we see a problem we need to go out and try fix it"		
"The opportunity to help others"	Help out those in need	
"Help the less fortunate in society"		

4.10.3 Drawing Conclusions and Data Verification

The final phase of the data analysis process is the drawing of conclusions and verifying the data. The drawing of conclusions is one half of the process, the verification of the conclusions is equally, if not, more important (Miles et al., 2020). Miles et al (2020) noted that the meaning that emerges from the data must be analysed for its "plausibility, sturdiness, and confirmability- that is, their validity" (p. 9). Conclusions need to be confirmed, checked, and verified and one such way is through triangulation (Miles et al., 2020). As previously discussed, triangulation was employed through the data sources as well as through the methods of data collection. Further, verifications and conclusions were examined taking into consideration the literature review.

The qualitative data collected from the document search, the semi-structured KI interviews, and the structured online questionnaire and focus group interviews with Year 11 students were contrasted and compared for emerging meanings and then conclusions drawn. Through the comparison and contrasting, the meanings were tested for trustworthiness (Miles et al., 2020), as previously outlined. The generated themes from the quantitative data

collected from the structured online questionnaire were contrasted with the themes that emerged from the qualitative data.

4.11 Ethical Considerations

Researchers must carefully reflect on and plan for ethical matters that may arise during the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The protection of the privacy of participants in the research is seen as significant (Yin, 2018). Ensuring that the participants are treated fairly and that their welfare is attended to must be communicated during the consent process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Compliance with The University of Notre Dame Australia Policy for Research and the Australian Code of Conduct for the Responsible Conduct of Research was crucial in meeting and upholding all ethical considerations in this research. Approval was sought and obtained from both The University of Notre Dame Australia (Appendix G) as well as CEWA (Appendix H). Once these approvals were received, consent was obtained from the Principal within each participant school (Appendix I) and then the KI (Appendix A), parents/guardians (Appendix E), and Year 11 students (Appendix D). No student participated in the research without first having been given consent by their parents or guardians. Table 4.8 outlines the detailed process and procedures to ensure the research satisfied all ethical considerations.

Table 4.8

Process and Procedures to Uphold all Ethical Considerations

Stage	Process	Appendix
1	Formal Approval from The University of Notre Dame Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee	G
2	Formal Approval from the Executive Director, Dr Debra Sayce, of Catholic Education Western Australia	H
3	Consent from each School Principal- Information Sheet, and Consent	I
4.	Consent from Key Informant- Information Sheet and Consent	A
5.	Consent from Parent/Guardians- Information Sheet and Consent	E
6.	Consent from Year 11 Students- Information Sheet and Consent	D
7.	All data stored securely in the Nextcloud server for five years after the study concludes and will then be permanently deleted, as per the UNDA Research Data Management Procedure.	N/A

4.12 Design Summary

The design summary for this research is outlined in Table 4.9. The activities are outlined in chronological order.

Table 4.9

Chronological Summary of the Research Design

Date	Activity
April 2022	Presentation of Research Proposal
July 2022	UNDA HREC Approval
August 2022	CEWA Application to Conduct Research in CEWA Schools and Offices Approval
August 2022	Research Instruments Piloted
August 2022 to September 2022	Consent from participating schools
September 2022 to November 2022	Document search
September 2022 to February 2023	Data Collection within the four schools: Semi-structured Interview with a KI Structured Online Questionnaire Focus Group Interviews
September 2022 to February 2023	Transcription of interview recordings Data Analysis
February 2023 to March 2024	Draft Thesis
April 2024	Submission of thesis

4.13 Conclusion

The research explored the perceptions of Catholic school Year 11 students towards CSL. This chapter outlined the research plan for the study, justifying the selection of an interpretivist and symbolic interactionist perspective within a constructivist epistemology of

qualitative research. The specific selection of instrumental case study as the research methodology was outlined. The inclusion of quantitative research was also explained. The data collection and data analysis methods were explained. The chapter examined the methodological rigour, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations within the research plan. In conclusion, the design summary was included. The following chapter will present the results of the research, structured through the five research questions.

Chapter Five: Presentation of Research Results

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research results from the instrumental case study examining the perceptions of Year 11 students in four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia towards Christian Service-Learning (CSL). The results outlined in this chapter were gleaned from the qualitative data collected from the four school-based focus group interviews with the Year 11 students, the four semi-structured interviews with key informants (KI), and the 261 structured online questionnaire responses. Quantitative data were also derived from the structured online questionnaire. The results are organised according to the five research questions:

1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?
2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?
5. What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

Table 5.1 outlines the structure of Chapter Five.

Table 5.1

Outline of Chapter Five: Presentation of Research Results

5.1	Introduction
5.2	What do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Understand by the Concept of Christian Service-Learning?
5.3	What do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Identify as the Benefits of Participating in a Christian Service-Learning Program?

5.2 What do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Understand by the Concept of Christian Service-Learning?

Data from the Year 11 student focus group interviews highlighted four key understandings of CSL. These understandings were: the Christian aspect of CSL; the purpose of CSL; the differentiation between CSL and volunteering; and the compulsory nature of the CSL program.

5.2.1 The Christian Aspect of Christian Service-Learning

Student responses in the focus group interviews demonstrated an understanding that the life of Jesus Christ underpins CSL programs. One student commented that CSL is about "following the teachings of the Church and Jesus". A student in a different focus group gave the practical example that through CSL students are enacting Christian teachings and are "walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and helping other people… in the way that Jesus Christ helped people. So, I'm walking in the image of God".

Students recognised the faith-based element of CSL. For example, one student commented that CSL is "Faith-based community service". This student continued that through CSL students are "learning from Christian values and teachings". Some students connected biblical references with the faith-based understanding of CSL. One student referred to Genesis 1:27, being created in the image of God, as a foundational aspect of CSL. Another student referred to the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) whereby through service, students are "helping those poor or homeless so they're able to be equals". Another student referred to John 10:10, highlighting that through CSL students are "helping people live life to the full, and even helping us live life to the full by helping others".

5.2.2 The Purpose of Christian Service-Learning

Students identified three purposes of CSL in the focus groups: helping others; giving back to the community; and mutual benefit. Many students held the perception that CSL is about helping others. For example, in one focus group a student commented that the purpose of CSL is "giving back to others, giving back to community". They believed that people are fortunate "to go to schools like this…I think it's a good idea that they're giving back to their community". A student in another focus group noted that through CSL they had learnt "that we shouldn't leave a problem unsolved, and if we see a problem we need to go out and try fix it". A second student in the same focus group suggested that by completing CSL activities students were learning "how to be part of a community, and I think that's just what they're trying to teach us".

Students believed that a purpose of CSL was for the service activities to equally benefit themselves as well as those receiving the service, a concept known as reciprocity. One student referred to the purpose of CSL as a "two-way street" where students learn from their experience whilst helping others. Another student suggested that "when you help someone, obviously it makes you feel good, but then it helps you understand what they're going through". A student in the same focus group added that through CSL, students have "the opportunity to help others in many different ways that can be not only rewarding for them, but also rewarding for you".

5.2.3 The Differentiation Between Christian Service-Learning and Volunteering

Several students recognised differences between CSL and volunteering. The differences included the Christ-like perspective of CSL, reflection activities, and the informal nature of volunteering. During the focus groups students indicated that the Christ-like perspective of CSL was the principle difference compared to volunteering. They highlighted that Christian values and teachings underpin CSL. One student commented that students are acting "as Jesus did" when they undertake CSL. Another student raised the idea that "a lot of Christian service is relating back to your values as being Catholic Christians". Students in one focus group made several direct references to the word "Christian" within the name Christian Service-Learning, suggesting that some students relate CSL to religion and that through CSL students can enact how a religion responds to social issues.

A few students referred to reflection activities within their CSL program as a point of variance with volunteering. For instance, one student spoke about the requirement for

reflection in CSL as a key difference to volunteering. The student noted that through their reflections, students can:

> make that connection back to your own faith, and that's how it's different to volunteering. Because when you volunteer, it's like 'sweet, I helped, I'm done'. But with Christian Service-Learning you have to kind of reflect on… I think the questions for us are like why was your service meaningful? What made it meaningful? So I think that connection back to your faith is what makes service learning different.

In two focus groups students discussed that volunteering was informal in comparison to CSL. For example, one student emphasised that volunteering is an opportunity to do "something you might enjoy…You're just putting your hand up for it". The same student noted that in CSL students have opportunities to learn from the service undertaken, a characteristic not included within their interpretation of volunteering. In another focus group, several students argued that CSL is school-based and is therefore linked to some of their academic subjects. Two students within this same focus group contended that because the CSL program in their school is a compulsory program, it cannot be considered volunteering.

5.2.4 The Compulsory Nature of the Christian Service-Learning Program

A few students spoke positively about the compulsory nature of the CSL program including the requirement of a minimum number of hours and reflection activities. One student in a focus group asserted that "I think the hours are pretty fair… it's not like it's unreasonable or anything like that". A student in the same focus group supported the compulsory nature of CSL noting that students are well supported through "the amount of opportunities we have here and the array of things we can do throughout our schooling".

Similar comments were made in the qualitative response section of the questionnaire. For example, one student wrote that "it is good that it is mandatory to complete a set requirement. This means everyone can at least experience it throughout their school life". Another student wrote positively of the compulsory nature: "I've done over the hours and I still continue to do it. I think it should be mandatory. I think you can learn a lot from it". A third student highlighted that "because we are at a Catholic school, we should do Christian Service-Learning" but called for a reduction in the number of hours needed to graduate.

Whilst a few students were positive about compulsory CSL, many students had a negative perception towards the compulsory nature of CSL. Students commented on the stress caused by the requirement to undertake CSL as a compulsory program within the school. Students in one focus group emphasised that the compulsory nature made their

experience of CSL "a bit stressful" and "a bit of a hassle". Students in another focus group spoke about the busy schedule which Year 11 students have with assignments and exams, with one student noting that there is "a lot to do already, then if we just have something else then we'll just get more stressed about having to do something else other than study and exams". In another focus group, one student asserted that "if you want people to genuinely do it for the interest of themselves, I feel like you need to give them a choice". In the qualitative response section of the questionnaire, one student wrote that when CSL is compulsory, it "defeats the purpose". Another student wrote that the compulsory nature of CSL makes it "incredibly stressful and actually makes me feel more worried and anxious than impacted".

Students in two focus groups as well as some students in the questionnaire proposed that participation in a CSL program should be compulsory in the early years of secondary schooling but not in Year 11. For example, in one focus group a student recognised that it is "better having [CSL] in the younger years than the older years". A student in a different focus group suggested that CSL "should be compulsory in Year Seven so you can teach young children the importance of community". This same sentiment was noted by a student in the questionnaire who wrote that CSL had a greater impact on younger students "in shaping their values".

5.2.5 Summary

In the focus group interviews and questionnaire the Year 11 students provided four key understandings of CSL. These four understandings related to the Christian aspect of CSL, the purpose of CSL, the differentiation between CSL and volunteering, and the compulsory nature of CSL programs. Some students identified that CSL is rooted in the teachings and values lived by Jesus Christ. Students also used scriptural references to exemplify their understanding of the Christian notion within CSL. Students identified three purposes of CSL: helping others; giving back to the community; and reciprocity. Student comments indicated that the purpose of CSL was to benefit others and themselves equally. Students recognised differences between CSL and volunteering. These differences related to the Christ-like perspective of CSL, reflection activities, and formal requirements of CSL. Student responses indicated an understanding that CSL has formal requirements whereas volunteering does not. These formal requirements included the opportunity to learn from the service undertaken, that CSL is school-based and is therefore linked to some of their academic subjects, and that because CSL is a compulsory program, it cannot be considered volunteering. Some students had a positive perception about the compulsory nature of the CSL program. However, many

students provided a negative perception of this compulsory nature. Students outlined that the compulsory requirement of CSL made their experience stressful. Students proposed instead that participation in CSL should not be compulsory in Year 11, rather in the early years of secondary school.

5.3 What do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Identify as the Benefits of Participating in a Christian Service-Learning Program?

This section presents data from the focus group interviews and structured online questionnaire on what Year 11 students identified as the benefits of participating in a CSL program. These benefits are organised into four sub-sections: positive attributes of CSL; personal growth; learning opportunities; and civic responsibility.

5.3.1 Positive Attributes of Christian Service-Learning

Students responded positively to questions about the value and worth of CSL. Five sub-themes emerged from the data. These sub-themes were: the value of CSL; connection with others; the importance of reflection activities within CSL; personal enjoyment; and development of a positive attitude towards CSL.

5.3.1.1 The Value of Christian Service-Learning. Most responses to the qualitative question in the questionnaire yielded a positive response about the value of CSL. Students linked the value of CSL with characteristics such as stepping out of their comfort zone, "building leadership capacity", "personal growth", "awareness of world issues", "self-fulfilment", and job readiness. In the final question of the questionnaire, students were asked to describe their CSL experience in three words. Most students used positive word association to describe their experience. Examples include "valuable", "rewarding", "uplifting", "powerful", "worthwhile", "exhilarating", "eye-opening", "educative", and "enlightening".

Student responses in the focus groups also highlighted the value of CSL. In one focus group, a student commented that CSL is "really important, it's something that everyone should do at least once in their life". Another student in the same focus group commented, "I think it should be encouraged in more schools. It teaches them a lot about themselves and a lot about others, the world they live in, the world they're growing up to be adults in". A third student in the same focus group suggested that regardless of course enrolment "whether you're ATAR [Australian Tertiary Admission Rank course] or General [course], community

service is just as valuable". Several students in various focus groups identified a link between the value of CSL and benefits for themselves and for others. One student asserted:

> I think it is really valuable because everyone gets something out of it. Like the person you're helping or the place you're helping, they obviously get something out of it because you're helping them. And then you get to learn about certain issues and things that is (sic) involved with what you're doing, and you get to feel good about what you're actually doing.

In three focus groups students provided the perception that the value of a CSL activity derives from the activity being undertaken. Several other students commented that the CSL program is valuable "depending on what you do". However, one student suggested that the actual service being undertaken is valuable but "the reflection possibly not as valuable".

5.3.1.2 Connection with Others. Students in three focus groups identified a positive perception towards CSL because of the opportunity to connect with others. These connections were with the people the students were serving, the organisation providing the service, and their peers. One student remarked that they held a positive view of CSL "because I [get to] connect with [the] community more". Another student in the same focus group recalled a connection with a homeless person during a service activity: "I remember just serving food to someone and them having that thankfulness and gratitude for us doing it, and that connection makes you feel satisfied with yourself". Some participants identified a positive connection with the organisation where their service was undertaken. For example, one student suggested that "you're able to connect with those organisations and people who do these things, and sometimes you get to see first-hand how problems impact the modern world".

Participants in two focus groups raised connection with peers as a contributing factor towards a positive perception of CSL. Students noted that friendships were strengthened and new friendships formed when they were able to complete service activities with their peers or friends. For example, in one focus group a student emphasised the connection with friends commenting that to "do it with friends too, because it's always more enjoyable. It's not like a mess-around thing, but it just makes the aspect of it better". The impact of completing activities with friends was also raised by a student in another focus group who highlighted, "sometimes that just makes it better, having those experiences and time with your friends as well as doing these amazing things".

5.3.1.3 The Importance of Reflection Activities Within Christian Service-Learning. A few students spoke positively about the importance of reflection activities within the CSL program. One student in a focus group commented that "during the reflection you kind of realise how rewarding it was doing what you did". A student in another focus group asserted:

> It's also there for the person's benefit… the reflecting on what you've done in your time in this school in the Christian Service-Learning program… [you] realise, 'oh there's so much here that we've done, but there's also so much more that I could have done'.

Several student responses revealed a feeling of resignation towards the requirement of reflection. One student in a focus group asserted that: "I've heard most people complaining, but it honestly isn't that bad". A second student in the same focus group added "What is it, like 600-800 words? It's not that bad". The same student continued "You have to write 800 words over the space of three years in the senior school. It's just, get it done. It's not that hard".

5.3.1.4 Personal Enjoyment. The quantitative student responses in the questionnaire indicated that many students enjoyed CSL. 41% (n=107) of Year 11 students responded that they do like undertaking CSL. Only 18% (n=48) did not like undertaking CSL whilst 40.61% (n=106) were undecided. The Year 11 students also referred to the enjoyment derived from participating in CSL within the qualitative responses of the questionnaire. The students described the enjoyment derived from CSL using words such as "inspiring", "fun", "enjoyable", "fulfilling", "awesome", and "satisfaction".

Students also commented on the enjoyment derived from CSL within the focus groups. The student responses indicated that this sense of enjoyment came from the knowledge that they were helping others as well as completing CSL with their friends. For example, one student reasoned that enjoyment came from "knowing that you're helping people, and you can make it easier for someone else". A student in a different focus group remarked that "I really enjoy it because it makes you… view things differently, and it… impacts yourself as a person, but also the community". Several students in different focus groups commented how some students continued to complete CSL even after achieving the minimum requirement of tasks because of the sense of enjoyment and satisfaction. As an example, one student noted that even though some students have completed so many hours:

> they still continue to do it because they actually enjoyed doing it and being out there helping the community because they realise that even though there's a compulsory

thing to do for the school for our grade and graduating, it just meant something more to them.

As previously mentioned, several students suggested that the sense of enjoyment in CSL was linked to completing service with friends and the camaraderie that was experienced during these activities. As an example, one student recounted an activity where their whole year group was involved: "it was also fun because you were with your friends, and you knew that if you didn't pick up the rubbish, someone in the year group would also do it".

5.3.1.5 Development of a Positive Attitude Towards Christian Service-Learning.
Students in two focus groups discussed how their attitude towards CSL had changed from when they were in Year Seven and had developed into a positive attitude. Students commented that in their early involvement in CSL they felt that "it was a bit of a drag", "a chore", "a hindrance", and "slightly irritated". As one student observed, "I was quite opposed to it in the beginning, I thought, 'this is a waste of time,'… I thought, 'I don't have time to do this'". Several students, however, highlighted that over time their responses had changed and were now positive. For example, one student identified that "I think in the end you feel satisfied with yourself once you've completed it. It's an experience that I think people need to have". A student in another focus group reflected that:

> I think as I've matured and grown up a little bit more, I've seen the benefits of it, not just for myself but for community. So I think because of that gradual maturing process, I've really changed my outlook on it and feel it's quite positive".

A third student commented that their initial response towards CSL in Year Seven was "ten hours a year, that's such a pain". The student then described how this initial response had positively developed over time:

> as I just started doing it, because it just felt like depending on what I did I would get so much out of it, and helping people just made me feel so much better about myself….and I do service all the time now, I'm just always helping people.

A similar comment was made in a qualitative response in the questionnaire, with a student writing that CSL is "important in developing a strong sense of compassion and empathy however it became more relevant to me as I became older and more mature".

5.3.2 Personal Growth

Student responses in the focus groups and questionnaire revealed that personal growth was a key benefit of CSL participation. The students described personal growth benefits relating to personal development, development of values, and leadership development.

5.3.2.1 Personal Development. Student responses in the questionnaire and focus groups included various elements of personal development because of their CSL participation. These elements included confidence, self-esteem, self-improvement, and motivation. Several students wrote that "feeling good" and "self-fulfilment" were personal development benefits of involvement in CSL. Similar comments were raised in the focus groups. As an example, one student commented that CSL can be "a very personal experience" and remarked that "no matter what, you're always going to get some sort of development out of it". Another student in the same focus group added "I think it's a lot of personal growth. Since you do it for such a long time, I guess 50 hours is time spent doing something for someone else, but then you also get to learn something about yourself".

Students in a different focus group discussed the perception and confidence gained from their involvement in CSL. As one student commented, "it's like a reality check on yourself, and you're able to explore yourself, maybe become more confident". Confidence and self-esteem were also raised in another focus group with several students identifying a link between an increase in self-esteem and motivation leading to personal growth and the acquisition of new skills. For example, one student highlighted that through CSL participation they gained an "improvement of self-esteem and motivation…you're doing something without receiving anything back, but it's sort of emotionally you're receiving something back". Another student in the same focus group described how their confidence had increased after completing a school-based peer mentoring CSL activity with younger peers. This student commented that "I've seen those girls grow over the year, and I feel like it makes you feel good about yourself when you can actually see what's happened, and I think I got some confidence out of that".

5.3.2.2 Development of Values. The data from the questionnaire and the focus groups indicated that Year 11 students perceived the development of personal values as a significant benefit of CSL participation. As indicated in Figure 5.1, 70% (n=183) of the respondents identified the development of personal values as a benefit of CSL participation. In the focus group, students described values such as "empathy", "compassion", "understanding", and

"other centredness" because of involvement in CSL. For example, a student commented that good values were developed because:

> you see a lot of different people, people that have different lifestyle paths, stuff that's happened to them or stuff they may have done, and it makes you think a lot and it just builds a lot of values and it helps to develop empathy.

Another student noted that through service students can build values and become better people "because you've learnt new things from helping people, seen how people can have it hard". Students also referred to the development of values within the qualitative responses in the questionnaire. As an example, one student wrote that CSL "helps you develop your values to become a better person". Another student wrote that "the development of [values] will shape [students'] understanding and perception of future dilemmas and situations".

     5.3.2.3 Leadership Development. Leadership development was identified as a benefit of CSL participation in both the questionnaire and focus groups. This leadership development was related to learning leadership skills, development as leaders, and positive role modelling. In the questionnaire, 55% (n=143) of the students indicated that leadership development was a benefit of participation in CSL. Several students also referred to leadership development in the qualitative response section of the questionnaire. For instance, one student responded that CSL "teachers (sic) leadership skills". Another student wrote that CSL "helps us develop as leaders". A third student asserted that CSL "develops your leadership skills". In both the focus groups and questionnaire, students identified a responsibility to act as positive role models of CSL participation to their younger peers. For example, one student identified that they should "pass on our experiences that we went through down to the younger, the junior ranks". The notion of Year 11 students acting as role models for their younger peers was also raised within the questionnaire. One student wrote that as a result of their participation in CSL they were "becoming a role model for the younger kids". Another student indicated that participation in CSL was a "good experience to be a role model for younger [students] and help them".

Figure 5.1

Student Perceptions on the Benefits of Christian Service-Learning Participation
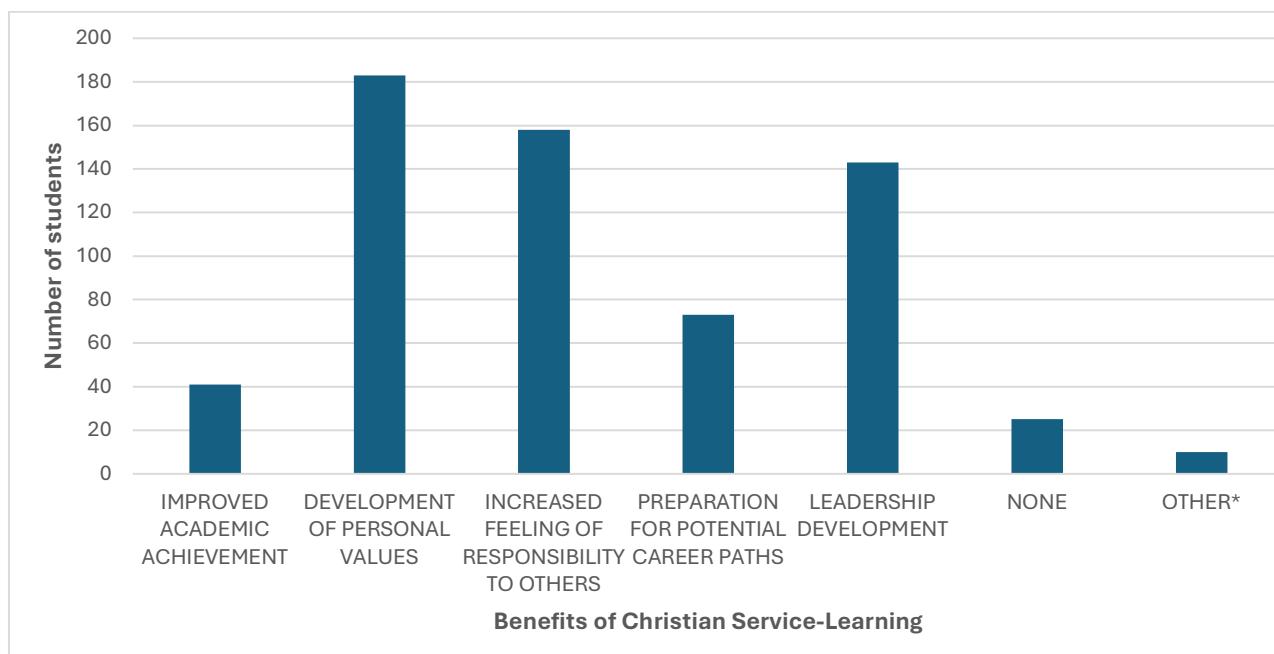
*Examples of other included: Self-fulfilment, Friendships, Feeling good about yourself.

5.3.3 Learning Opportunities

Students identified learning opportunities as a benefit of participation in CSL. There were two learning opportunities raised: life lessons and skills and preparation for future careers.

5.3.3.1 Life Lessons and Skills. Students in the focus groups commented that participating in CSL provided opportunities for learning life lessons and skills for the future. For example, one student remarked that "you learn life skills when you do [CSL] and you…experience stuff". A second student in the focus group added that "the life skills that I get from it are really what makes me love it so much". In another focus group, students specified the life skills they had learnt from participating in CSL. As one student stated, "it's also given us life skills of how to correctly time manage, organise all of our stuff, prioritise". In one of the focus groups a student differentiated classroom learning and CSL, "you're learning lessons and skills that you don't in the classroom".

5.3.3.2 Preparation for Future Careers. Several students in the focus groups connected that learning about future career paths is a benefit of CSL. One student asserted that service activities "can lead into further experiences or opportunities in your life". In a

different focus group, one student commented that without CSL "I don't think we'd be suited for when we graduate, when you go out to the real world. But this kind of gives us somewhat real-life experiences, doing these independently". In the questionnaire, a student wrote that CSL "can help get you into the workforce" whilst 28% (n=73) of Year 11 students identified preparation for potential career paths as a benefit (Figure 5.1). In one focus group, students discussed listing CSL on their resumes. As one student observed: "I know a lot of people say it's good to have on your resume, apparently. Or good to have on your graduating certificate to get jobs". In this same focus group two other students agreed that prospective employers considered service hours, "they look at your community service hours, how many that you've done" with another commenting: "Yeah, apparently they look at that".

5.3.4 Civic Responsibility

Students saw civic responsibility, or the feeling of responsibility for others, as a benefit of CSL participation. 61% (n=158) of respondents in the questionnaire selected increased feeling of responsibility to others as a benefit (Figure 5.1). In one focus group, a student recalled an experience serving meals to those in need and how they have "continued to do it". The same student highlighted that "the first time especially, I was shook (sic) like, how many people there were, and that there were all these people that we just wouldn't even know about". A second student added:

> After doing learning experiences…. you go out and then you are able to see it in real life, and you're like, 'oh my God'…It's like overwhelming, and you want to do something for it. So I guess it brings up that urge of wanting to do something to help them.

A student in another focus group shared that the people receiving the service were "really happy that there are people out there to do this". The same student added that "happiness is just bouncing off each other from doing it, and I think that's the worthwhile contribution because you're both satisfied by what's happening, and you're helping the community, making it a better place".

Students in two focus groups described how graduates from their school continued to participate in CSL after their graduation, maintaining a sense of responsibility for others. One student described that CSL has an "impact on generations that graduate from the school, because they'll end up maybe continuing these kind of Christian volunteering, or just volunteering in general, to help the public and solve problems in the world". Another student detailed how they see ex-students from their school "volunteer at places all the time".

Students in another focus group outlined several examples of graduates from their school who were now working in charity, medicine, or philanthropy.

5.3.5 Summary

The Year 11 students outlined positive attributes of CSL, as well as benefits of CSL participation related to personal growth, learning opportunities, and civic responsibility. Student responses in the focus group interviews and the questionnaire highlighted five positive attributes of CSL: the value of CSL; connection with others; the importance of reflection activities within CSL; personal enjoyment; and development of a positive attitude towards CSL. In both the questionnaire and the focus group interviews, student responses indicated a positive belief about the value of CSL. Student responses identified a positive perception towards CSL because of the opportunity for connection with others, including the organisation where the service was completed, those whom they were serving, and their peers. Several student responses indicated a positive perception towards the importance of reflection activities.

The questionnaire and focus group interview responses indicated that many students enjoyed CSL. 41% of students in the questionnaire indicated that they enjoy CSL, whereas only 18% did not. Student comments in the focus groups revealed that a number of students continue CSL even after meeting the minimum requirements, due to experiencing a sense of enjoyment. Student responses indicated that this sense of enjoyment was linked to the camaraderie with their peers. There were some students who shared that over time they had developed a positive attitude towards CSL. Initially these students did not have a positive perception of CSL but through their involvement in CSL as well as maturing individually, they were able to develop a positive attitude towards CSL.

The Year 11 students identified various personal growth benefits from participation in a CSL program. The students highlighted benefits relating to personal development, development of values, and leadership development. The students provided diverse interpretations and explanations of the learning opportunities obtained through participation in CSL. Some students referred to learning opportunities such as learning new skills and life lessons, whilst others referred to learning for the future. The data also revealed that students felt a sense of civic responsibility as a benefit of their CSL participation.

5.4 What do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Perceive as the Challenges of Participating in a Christian Service-Learning Program?

The data from the focus group interviews and structured online questionnaire highlighted three challenges which the Year 11 students associated with CSL. These challenges included: negative student perceptions of CSL; personal challenges faced by students when participating in a CSL program; and challenges that the Year 11 students associated with the purpose and programming of CSL. These three challenges as well as student suggestions for overcoming these perceived challenges to improve CSL programs are now considered.

5.4.1 Negative Student Perceptions of Christian Service-Learning

Students identified four negative perceptions towards CSL. These negative perceptions were related to the requirement of written reflection activities within the CSL program, the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities, the minimum number of hours for successful completion of the CSL program, and the use of incentives and awards in a CSL program. 39% (n=101) of the participants in the questionnaire nominated the requirements of the CSL program as a challenge (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2

Student Perceptions on the Challenges of Christian Service-Learning Participation
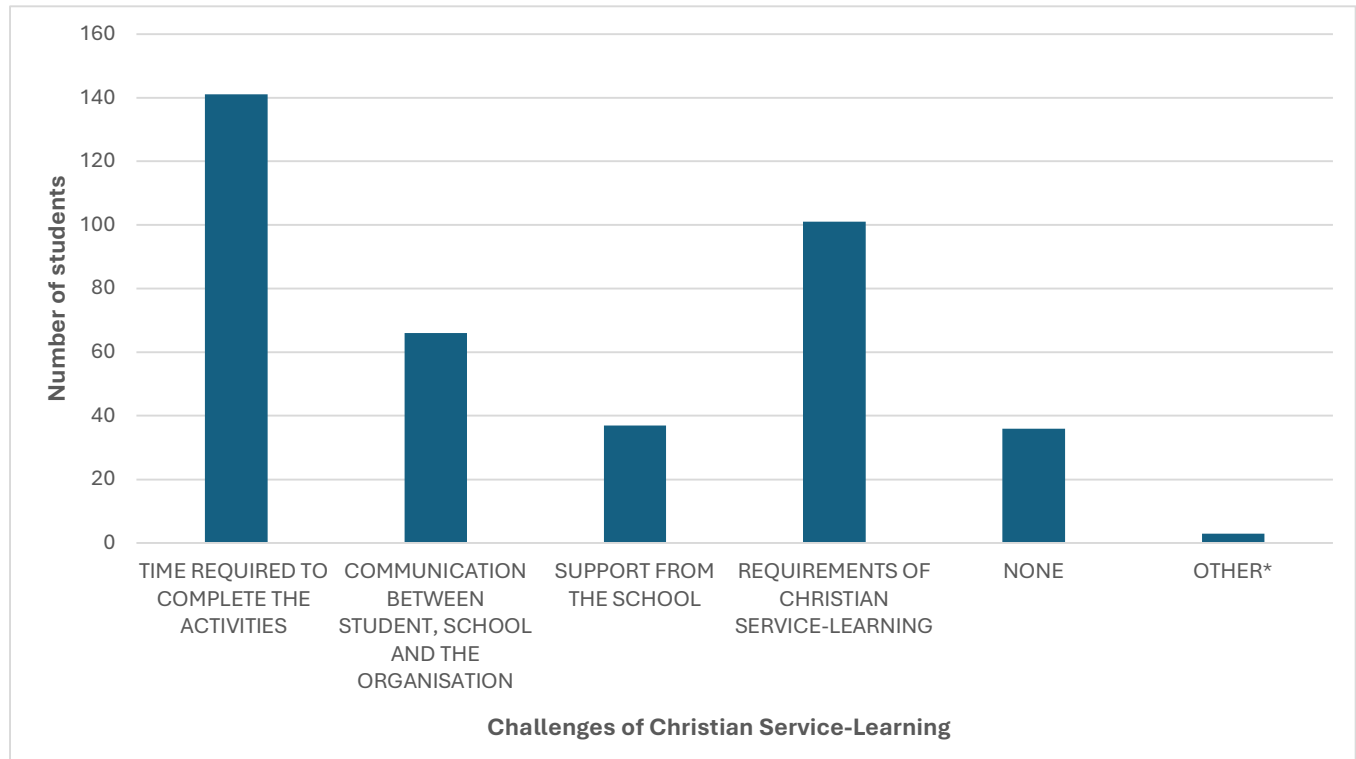
*Examples of other included: Finding what to do, Limited places for each school-organised activity, personal beliefs and values.

5.4.1.1 The Requirement of Written Reflection Activities Within the Christian Service-Learning Program. Whilst a few students spoke positively about the importance of reflection activities within CSL, as outlined earlier, many students presented a negative perception towards the requirement of written reflection within the CSL program. Many students pointedly made the comment that they disliked the reflection activities. There was agreement in all focus groups that students are putting in minimal effort with their written reflections. One student revealed "I lied my whole way through the reflection". Another student in the same focus group disclosed "I didn't mean a thing I said on that reflection". Students in another focus group all agreed that "you can put zero effort into it and they'll still tick it as if you've done it". Another student in the same focus group also commented on the lack of effort they exerted in undertaking the reflection task, sharing that they "did [the reflection task] the night before" it was due.

Students indicated various reasons why they strongly disliked the requirement of reflection activities in CSL. One student divulged that the requirement for reflection had affected their overall experience of CSL. The student emphasised, "I just so strongly dislike

[reflection activities] that it takes away some of the value of the CSL, but the life skills that I get from it are really what makes me love it so much". A second student described that the reflection activities just "turned everyone off". Another student in the same focus group agreed, commenting "It's like yes to the activities and service, but no to the reflection". The quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire also demonstrated that many students do not enjoy completing reflections. Out of the questionnaire responses only 25% (n=57) of students somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoy completing the reflections on the activities of service they complete. 37% (n=86) somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed that they enjoy completing reflections (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3

Student Perceptions on the Completion of Reflection Activities
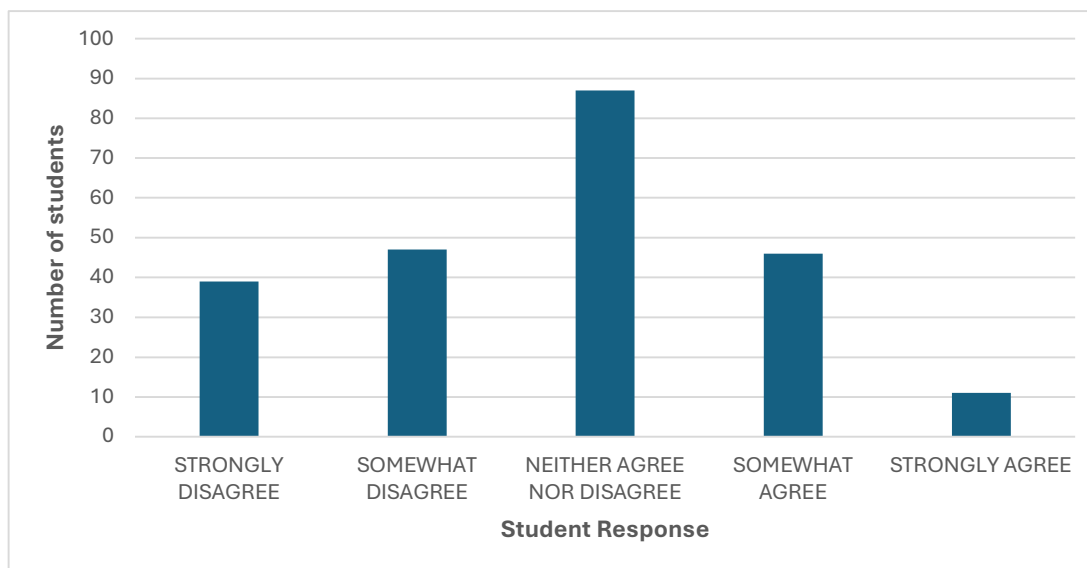
5.4.1.2 The Requirement of Photography to Demonstrate Evidence of Abilities. In one focus group, students provided a negative perception toward the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities in the CSL program. The demonstration of evidence of abilities is mandated by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) as part of the Authority-Developed Endorsed Program: Community Service (SCSA, 2022), which encompasses CSL. As outlined in Chapter Two, the SCSA requirement of evidence of abilities can be demonstrated by students providing, amongst various formats, annotated photographs of them undertaking service activities (SCSA, 2015). In particular, several Year 11 students in the focus group raised concerns related to the appropriateness and viability of

taking photos in certain settings and that photos were not permitted in some locations. For instance, one student spoke about completing CSL as part of a theatrical production, "I was helping out with the play, but obviously there's a rule that you're not allowed technology backstage, so I couldn't exactly take a photo". A second student noted that the possibility of taking photos was dependent on the service placement allowing students "to take photos in the building itself, because I remember in foster care they didn't allow us". Another student spoke about the viability of taking photos during a service activity. This student gave an example of undertaking a service activity cleaning rubbish off roads, "there's not really an appropriate time when you can just like, take a quick pic, like, 'oh yeah, this is my mate Joe,'… you can't just say, 'swept the street'". A fourth student shared, "I've had to erase my friend's faces because I don't have any photos from that day except of with my friends…and then I put it in annotations, like, 'us doing this activity'".

5.4.1.3 Minimum Number of Hours for Successful Completion of the Christian Service-Learning Program. The Year 11 student responses highlighted a negative perception towards the need for a minimum number of hours for the successful completion of the CSL program. Students in one focus group were unanimous in stating that the requirement to complete a minimum number of hours generated a negative perception of CSL. For instance, one student commented that service hours were "the currency [staff] pay us by", highlighting that the transaction (service activity in exchange for service hours) was more important than either the service or the learning. Another student commented that "it feels like you're just kind of counting down to get your hours". A third student remarked that in some CSL activities "you're not going to get that much out of it. It's just solely for the purpose that you get the hours". A student in another focus group recounted their feelings when they learnt of the minimum requirements of the program "when you first get it, you're slightly overwhelmed, you're like, 'oh my God, how am I going to do this?'… I guess that's one of the first challenges, like overwhelming pressure".

In the qualitative response section of the questionnaire, one student wrote that CSL has a "flawed implementation…when a measure becomes a target it ceases to be a good measure and I think that adage applies to the concept of service hours". In both the qualitative responses in the questionnaire and in the focus groups, students used phrases such as "a lot", "daunting", a "challenge", "overwhelming", "a worry", "stressful", and "feel more worried and anxious" in relation to the minimum requirement of 50 hours. In the questionnaire, one student explained that the delivery of CSL "has a flawed execution due to the very recorded

nature of it, due to the concept of service hours, this results in people chasing the hours and not the actual service".

5.4.1.4 The Use of Incentives and Awards in a Christian Service-Learning Program. In the focus groups, students gave the following examples of incentives and awards used within their schools: "can't graduate"; "attending the Year 12 Ball"; "attending the Year 11 Dinner Dance"; "WACE unit"; "approval for a parking bay on campus"; and "school-based colours and honours". Several participants described, with resentment, that if they wanted a car parking bay on campus, they had to meet their service requirements with one student commenting "It just makes them realise, 'oh damn, I kinda (sic) need to get this done". In one focus group, students reasoned that if CSL was not connected with incentives such as attending the Year 12 Ball then students would not participate. As explained by one student: "if they don't connect it to something important like the Ball, then people would be like, 'oh, yeah… I'm not doing it'". In another focus group a student described the inclusion of incentives as a motivational tool and a "checkpoint…helps keep you on track".

Students suggested that the use of incentives such as the Year 12 Ball diminished the value of CSL. For example, one student described the compulsory nature as "disingenuous". The same student continued "I know lots of people who have been like, 'oh I'm only doing this so I can go to the Ball,' or, 'I'm only doing this because I have to'". In another focus group a student stated that it "completely defeats the purpose of having a community service thing when you're not doing it for the incentive of helping the community". A third student stated that because CSL completion was connected to an incentive they were not "doing [CSL] for (sic) the pure goodness of my heart". In a different focus group, a student commented that "if you're only doing it for the prize, then it's pointless".

Responses in the questionnaire also indicated a negative perception towards the use of incentives and awards within a CSL program. For example, one student suggested that students may perceive CSL to be "a box that must be ticked…in exchange for awards or other such rewards". Another student proposed that some students completed CSL to improve their chances of receiving an award: "People also just do it so that [they] could [look] better for awards". The same student continued "There are people who defiantly (sic) enjoy helping and doing [CSL activities] but I feel like having rewards for doing charity ruins the point of it". One student openly admitted that they "only did [CSL] so I could go to the Ball, whilst another wrote that the incentive of attending the school Ball "kind of defeats the purpose".

5.4.2 Personal Challenges Faced by Students When Participating in a CSL Program

Student responses in the focus groups and questionnaire identified various personal challenges that they faced when participating in a CSL program. These personal challenges included: the time required to complete CSL; individual circumstances; and academic requirements of other courses.

5.4.2.1 Time Required to Complete Christian Service-Learning. Challenges related to time were specifically raised in all of the focus groups. One student commented that "I don't think people want to spend their Saturday mornings, Friday afternoons, Friday nights doing that type of stuff". A student in another focus group gave an example of how their own schedule impacts their ability to complete service:

> The school always puts everything on a Wednesday, it's so annoying. And I have other commitments, so I don't have time to do the things that most of the people at school do, and so I think that's one of the biggest barriers.

In another focus group a student reflected that many students have out of school commitments which might make finding the time to complete their service hours difficult when they stated that "they might have after-school commitments and stuff… mum and dad are working or something". One student acknowledged that time management was a challenge. This student noted though that it is "something we have to learn to do as we grow older and we become more mature". The same student recognised that "you just have to make time for [CSL] activities. You just have to do that".

54% (n=141) of Year 11 students in the questionnaire nominated time required to complete the activities as a challenge of CSL (Figure 5.2). The issue of time to complete CSL was also referred to in the qualitative responses in the questionnaire. For example, one student wrote that "there is a lot of pressure on students to not find time but to make time to complete service learning". Another student wrote ""I feel like a lot of hours is a hard thing to achieve especially when you are working, doing ATAR, playing sport".

5.4.2.2 Individual Circumstances. Students in three focus groups raised individual circumstances as a challenge for completing CSL. The main two circumstances were transport and home situation. For example, Year 11 students do not have their driver's license and therefore transport was difficult. As one student explained, "transport is so hard, because we can't drive". A student in another focus group raised home situation as a challenge:

there could be something like a personal situation…I kind of wanted to do that [aged care] stuff, but I never did it because of struggles that I had at home. At the time, my dad's mother was very sick with dementia and so I couldn't go and see people who were in that situation.

In closing, the student suggested that there may be other students who are also faced with a similar challenge but may not be comfortable disclosing this challenge to school staff.

5.4.2.3 Academic Requirements of Other Courses. Students in three focus groups discussed how the academic requirements of their courses of study presented a challenge to completing CSL. One student noted that they were in a "difficult position…just fitting it in especially with some of the schoolwork you have going on". Participants in two focus groups referred to ATAR requirements and the difficulty for ATAR students to engage with CSL. As an example, one student recognised that "missing one lesson of any ATAR subject [can lead to being] very far behind". Another student in a different focus group suggested that "if you're an ATAR kid, [CSL] adds additional stress". A second student in the focus group added that Year 11 students were faced with making a choice between CSL or their assessments: "If you've got a test to study for and you also have to finish the reflective essay… then you're like, 'do I want to go to the Ball, or do I want to do well on my test?'". Academic requirements were also raised as a challenge in the qualitative section of the questionnaire. For example, one student wrote that "Students already have a lot on their plate and with the CSL, it adds pressure which has the possibility to take away from their grades". Another student wrote that "it is not worth my time, I could be doing other things, such as studying for my ATAR".

5.4.3 Challenges Associated with the Purpose and Programming of Christian Service-Learning

Year 11 students outlined two challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL, in the focus group interviews and structured online questionnaire. These challenges were related to an understanding of the purpose of CSL and liaising and connecting with service placement providers.

5.4.3.1 Understanding the Purpose of Christian Service-Learning. Several students flagged that understanding the purpose of CSL was a challenge. In one focus group, a student commented that "I don't really think everyone kind of knows what it is". A student

in another focus group provided a similar perception, commenting that "if we learnt about the reasoning of why we should do it" then engagement levels may increase. A second student in the same focus group suggested that understanding the purpose of CSL could be assisted through prior learning where "the teachers gave us first a situation where we actually did community service". In the questionnaire, one student remarked that the "Christian component could be flashed (sic) out".

5.4.3.2 Liaising and Connecting with Service Placement Providers. Student responses revealed three challenges faced when liaising and connecting with service placement providers. These challenges were communicating with the service organisation to complete appropriate activities, finding a suitable placement location, and overcoming age restrictions. For example, in one focus group interview a student recalled the challenge of liaising with their service-placement location: "I went through their volunteer programs, but their programs were really unorganised (sic). They were really difficult". A similar comment was made by a student in a different focus group, noting that some service placement providers were "quite unorganised (sic) and give you random, off-the-cuff tasks to do".

Several students identified the challenge of finding a suitable placement. This challenge was due to criteria imposed by the service location. As an example, one student stated that the criterion for participation made it very "difficult for me to even get into them because they were just very confusing". The same student used the word "barrier" to describe the impact of these criteria. A few students identified age restrictions in place at some organisations as a challenge. One student commented that "there's certain things you have to be of a certain age to do, so that was hard". 25% (n= 66) of Year 11 students in the questionnaire identified communication between student, school, and the organisation as a challenge associated with CSL participation (Figure 5.2)

5.4.4 Student Suggestions for Overcoming Their Perceived Challenges Associated with Christian Service-Learning to Improve Christian Service-Learning Programs

The Year 11 students were asked during the focus groups to propose ways to improve the CSL program. The Year 11 students proposed seven suggestions for overcoming their perceived challenges associated with CSL to improve CSL programs. These suggestions included: the importance of support from school staff; the need for support with transportation; alternative forms of reflection activities; undertaking of CSL during school time; incorporating CSL into the Religious Education (R.E) curriculum; the potential for

connection between CSL and other learning areas; and flexibility with completion dates. There were a small number of students who commented that they found the current structure of the program to be satisfactory and believed it did not require any change. As an example, one student stated that "personally I would try and keep it the same as what we have right now, because I actually like how the teachers have programmed this thing". A student in another focus group made a similar comment: "No different to how it is. It's pretty good as it is right now. I wouldn't change it". However, most students believed that CSL programs required improvement and provided suggestions for how these improvements could be made, which will now be outlined.

5.4.4.1 The Importance of Support from School Staff. Several students indicated that challenges associated with CSL can be overcome when school staff are supportive of the students. During the focus group interviews students outlined personal experiences of how supportive school staff were and how valuable this support was. Further, students were appreciative of the support from school staff. For instance, students in one focus group explained that they had "tons of support" from the school staff and named several staff members who were positive "role models". As an example, one student observed, in reference to two of the staff members:

> They've done a ridiculous amount of [service activities] … so it's really comforting to know that they're doing what they preach, and I think by them setting a really high and good example of what we can do, can really help support us in feeling like we are able to achieve.

Students in a different focus group outlined how teachers gave them "a list of things we can do" that could count as part of their CSL hours as well as "suggestions" for activities to undertake. Further, they noted, there were "teachers emailing, keeping us updated" with upcoming CSL opportunities. However, not every participant felt they obtained this type of staff support. Some students in this same focus group shared how they received "not much" guidance and felt "not very" supported unless they went and asked for assistance.

5.4.4.2 The Need for Support with Transportation. In one focus group, the Year 11 students discussed that support with transportation could be a way to overcome some challenges associated with CSL. The students explained how their school was flexible with transport needs and organised transport for those who could not access some activities. As an example, one student commented that the school "usually give buses straight up to school,

which is much easier". Another student noted how students were given a list of activities which highlighted if transport was included or alternatively public transport suggestions.

5.4.4.3 Alternative Forms of Reflection Activities. Many students provided suggestions for alternative forms of reflection activities to be used within the CSL program. Many student responses indicated that the current written format for the reflections was not sufficient to express themselves and their thoughts following participation in CSL. For example, in one focus group a student commented that some students may have difficulty with the writing aspect because they are "not able to express themselves while writing". This same student contended that if the reflection activity was in a verbal form, students "could show their emotions and [the assessor could] see exactly how they feel through their body language". Another student commented that "if you gave the option of being able to talk to someone about [their CSL experience] instead of writing, I think it would allow more people to express themselves better". Students in another focus group were all in agreement that their minimum word count was too high and that the questions "were a bit repetitive" which leads to students having to "just repeat yourself".

The Year 11 students suggested the following possibilities as alternatives to the current format of written reflection: one-on-one interview with a staff member; journalling; artwork; and scrapbooking. For example, in reference to one-on-one interviews, a student commented that it "would take up less time and be more genuine". A second student agreed, highlighting that the interview format "would take a lot of stress out of doing it". Students in another focus group believed that journalling, artwork, and scrapbooking would be more enjoyable and genuine. These students believed that the reflections would therefore feel "more genuine", be "more fun, it feels better", and would allow "more freedom with our words".

5.4.4.4 Undertaking of Christian Service-Learning During School Time. In both the focus groups and questionnaire many students indicated that CSL should be undertaken during school time. These students believed that completing CSL activities during school time could assist with overcoming the challenge of finding the time to complete CSL. For example, in one focus group the students proposed that if there were more opportunities during school time "a lot more people would get involved" and it would make CSL "easier" to complete. In another focus group students suggested that a benefit of having CSL activities

during school time would be to expose students to new and diverse experiences doing "things that you maybe wouldn't have known if you were just signing up by yourself".

Students in three different focus groups raised the suggestion that schools include a CSL day within their calendar. For example, one student stated that by having a set day where students completed activities of service, the challenge of finding the time to complete CSL could be overcome because "everyone's got busy schedules, busy lives". There were various comments regarding the format and impact of the CSL day. One student proposed that "everyone did the same thing". Students in another focus group reflected that within their school's calendar they already have faction-based activity days, whereby students undertake a variety of sporting and wellbeing activities together with other students in their patron-based faction. In this focus group, one student recommended "once every couple [faction-based activity days] we could do Christian service".

In two focus groups, students reflected that in previous years at their school there were weeklong life skills activity-based programs and suggestions were made for CSL to adopt a similar format. Students commented that the weeklong format "would be fun"; "it'd be good"; and that "I miss doing that stuff". One student proposed that within the weeklong format "each day of the week is a different activity to do". In the questionnaire, student comments included "if there was a full day activity our whole year group did together, I would be keen" and "if we did it more during school time we could get more [students] to participate in it". In the focus group interviews, students also commented that CSL should "happen during mostly school time" and that "doing [CSL] in school time would be more beneficial".

5.4.4.5 Incorporating Christian Service-Learning into the Religious Education Curriculum. Student comments in three focus groups supported the idea of incorporating CSL into the R.E Curriculum. These students identified examples of existing links between the CSL program and the R.E curriculum. Common examples included social justice organisations, the lives of the Saints, the patrons within each school, and stewardship of creation. Two common responses were that CSL should be part of the R.E curriculum and that CSL could contribute towards a student's R.E grade. One student suggested that CSL could be part of the R.E curriculum as "an assessment so you actually get graded on it". Another student responded that by adding a grade, students could "put more effort in".

Several students identified that CSL was a practical way to implement the learning from R.E. One student suggested that through CSL students can put into "practice what you

learn in religion". A second student agreed, noting that CSL is "more practical learning". Several students commented that undertaking CSL was preferred to sitting in an R.E class. For example, one student emphasised that "a lot more people would prefer to do [CSL] over… just sitting in a class and learning about stuff that they're probably going to forget in a couple of weeks". A second student in the same focus group reflected that they "would rather do volunteering work…than just sit in a classroom". This statement was met with strong agreement from the other members in the focus group.

5.4.4.6 The Potential for Connection Between Christian Service-Learning and Other Learning Areas. Many Year 11 student responses in the questionnaire reveal that they do not perceive a link between CSL and what they are learning in the classroom. Only 30% (n=68) of respondents somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that CSL is linked to what they are learning in class. 31% (n=71) of respondents were neutral whereas 39% of respondents somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed that CSL is linked to what they are learning in class (Figure 5.4). In the focus groups, a number of students provided suggestions for how connections could be made between CSL and classroom learning. For instance, several students linked climate change and environmental activities to the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area. Another student suggested that in Biology, students "could go plant trees". Another student linked the environment and stewardship to CSL, where in the classroom students could "learn about the environment… [then participate in] picking up rubbish". Students also made suggestions that for Mathematics and English, they "could tutor" and "read books to kids". Other examples included Home Economics, specifically students preparing meals and making clothes for those in need.

Figure 5.4

Student Perceptions if Christian Service-Learning is Linked to Their Classroom Learning
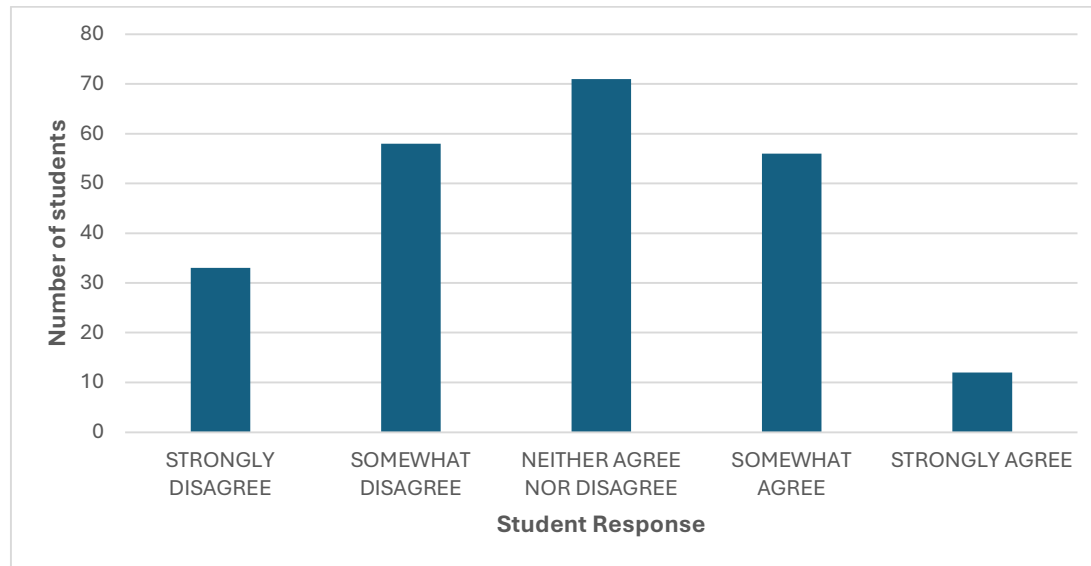
5.4.4.7 Flexibility with Completion Dates. Several students in one focus group discussed how flexibility could be applied to both the completion date for the number of service hours and the submission of the reflection task. As one student suggested "the deadline should be extended for some people". Another student recommended that a timeframe be developed for the submission of the reflection task and the completion of the number of service hours. A third student shared how they had missed a lengthy period of schooling in the previous year and had been unable to complete their service hours. The student explained that "I still have to complete the hours and do the reflection, just a little later, just because I missed so much school". The student noted that it was possible to be granted an extension for valid reasons. All students in this focus group were complimentary of the flexibility of the completion date requirements received from staff, highlighted by one student's response: "If you're just honest and explain your situation, then they're very accommodating".

5.4.5 Summary

The Year 11 students perceived three challenges associated with participation in CSL. These three challenges were negative student perceptions of CSL, personal challenges faced by students when participating in a CSL program, and challenges they associated with the purpose and programming of CSL. Four negative perceptions of CSL were identified from

the focus group interviews and questionnaire: the requirement of written reflection activities within the CSL program; the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities; the requirement of a minimum number of hours for successful completion of the CSL program; and the use of incentives and awards in a CSL program. In the questionnaire, only 25% of the Year 11 students indicated that they enjoyed completing reflections. Further, students in the focus groups expressed a strong dislike of the reflection activities.

Student responses also indicated a negative perception towards the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities, as well as the completion of a minimum number of hours. The student responses also highlighted a negative response to the use of incentives and awards in the CSL program. Students outlined various personal challenges that they faced when participating in a CSL program. The students shared their perceptions on how time, personal situation, and academic requirements of other courses made completion of CSL challenging. The students also provided perceptions on challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL. Several students identified concerns over a lack of understanding of the purpose of the program and liaising and connecting with service placement providers.

Finally, the Year 11 students detailed suggestions on how their perceived challenges could be overcome so that CSL programs could be improved. These suggestions included: the importance of support from school staff; the need for support with transportation; and flexibility for the completion of the number of service hours and reflection tasks. The students proposed various alternative formats to the currently employed written form of reflection. Student responses also revealed the intention of including CSL during school time. R.E was identified as the most appropriate learning area within the school curriculum where CSL could be incorporated, although examples and suggestions of other learning areas were also provided.

5.5 In What Ways do Year 11 Students Believe Participating in a Christian Service-Learning Program has Impacted them?

This section presents data on the Year 11 student beliefs about the impacts of participation in a CSL program. The Year 11 student responses in the focus group interviews and questionnaire revealed two themes: the positive impact of participation in a CSL program on the individual and factors that influence the impact of CSL. These will now be detailed.

5.5.1 The Positive Impact of Participation in a Christian Service-Learning Program on the Individual

The responses in the focus groups and questionnaire highlight that there is a belief amongst the Year 11 students that participation in a CSL program can positively impact an individual in potentially various ways. In the questionnaire 51 % (n=117) of Year 11 student respondents somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that CSL has had an impact on their lives. Only 22% (n=50) strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed (Figure 5.5). In the focus groups one student remarked that CSL is "an impact from the school to the students itself, giving those experiences and allowing us to do it". In another focus group a student commented that the "impact Christian Service-Learning has on us in our whole lifetime is very large". The Year 11 students identified impacts of CSL such as personal growth, making a positive contribution, development of perspective, stepping out of one's comfort zone, an increased awareness of social justice issues, and positive standing within the community.

Figure 5.5

Student Perceptions on the Impact of Christian Service-Learning on Their Life
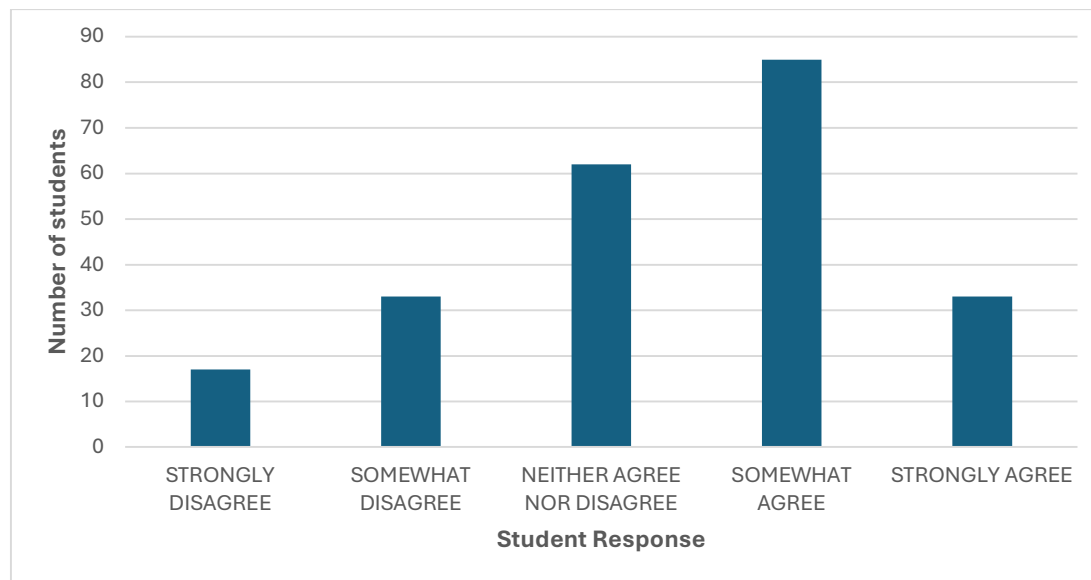
5.5.1.1 Personal Growth. Several students identified that participation in CSL impacted their personal growth. For example, in one focus group a student recounted how their previous school did not have CSL, "I moved to [current school] in Year 10. At my old school we had nothing like this…[CSL] helps you grow as a person". A student in a different focus group shared their story of growth throughout their CSL experience:

it's been constant support and the staff and seniors pushing me to be the best person that I can be… so then I can perform my best for other people as well. So it's really helped me with just personal development.

Students in another focus group discussed their journey of personal growth through their participation in service experiences. As an example, one student recalled an experience of CSL at the Salvation Army which was "really good life experience for me…learn how to do all that independently, to hand in my resume and stuff…The life experience was really good, and I feel like it had more of an impact on me".

5.5.1.2 Making a Positive Contribution. Many Year 11 students detailed that through CSL they developed the feeling of making a positive contribution. In the questionnaire students frequently referred to giving back or helping others and helping in the community when describing their feeling of making a worthwhile contribution through CSL. For instance, one student answered: "I think I am making a contribution when I am directly helping someone". Another student noted that they felt they were making a worthwhile contribution "because I am contributing to society and helping the community". 59% (n=153) of participants in the questionnaire nominated engagement with community as an impact of CSL participation (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6

Student Perceptions on the Impacts of Christian Service-Learning Participation
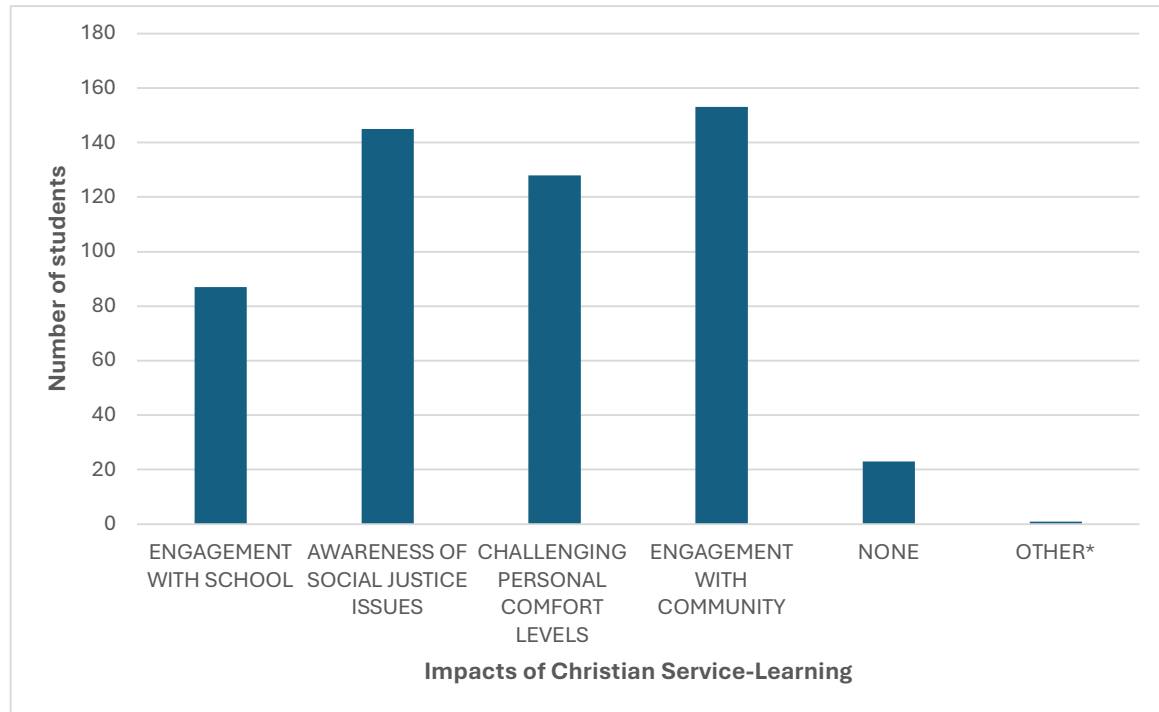
*Other response was: Service is considered a chore

In the focus groups, students also recalled examples where they had a feeling of giving back to others, making a difference in the lives of others, and a feeling of satisfaction knowing their actions had been beneficial to others. For instance, one participant had the realisation that "It's not actually to do with the rewards, it's actually fun helping people if you think about it". Another student in a different focus group had a similar realisation, noting "It made me realise that you can get so much out of giving back to people. Sort of like we're saying a lot of the time: if you give to someone, you will feel the benefit of that back". A second student in the same focus group spoke of the impact they felt by the gratitude shown to them: "giving back is the key thing for me with the impact, and seeing the other person… I don't really know how to word this, but the other person having gratitude for what we're doing".

5.5.1.3 Development of Personal Perspectives. Students across all four focus groups identified that through their involvement in CSL they had been able to develop and broaden their personal perspectives. Students identified that CSL enabled them to "see [the world]

from a different perspective"; "it makes you…view things differently"; and that "it impacts yourself as a person, but also the community". Some students commented that their perspectives had changed throughout their CSL participation. One student expressed that "how I see things [has changed], because I always used to believe that people could just help themselves". Another student reflected on their own growth through their years of involvement in CSL and the impact this participation had on others:

> I didn't think much of service. I pretty much didn't do any at the time, but as I started to do it at school as part of the programs we have to do here, it sort of made me understand that there are people out there struggling. They need people like us.

One student expressed regret in their tone that they had not "done enough" over the years. As they explained, "given all the opportunity, I think I probably have made excuses. Like if there's a maths test in two days, and I have an opportunity to go help out on a program… I'd probably avoid that to do that".

Many students identified that participation in CSL enabled them to develop understanding for what other people may be going through. For example, one student highlighted that CSL participation "really put in perspective my life and how different my life is to other people's as well". A second student in the same focus group commented that participation in CSL "made me realise that I'm not the centre of the world". The same student then recalled a service experience in India which led to the realisation "that the opportunities I am given in my life and the privileges I am given in my life is (sic) not the same as everyone else". In another focus group, a student reflected on a soup patrol activity serving homeless people "…they're just people. They've just fallen on hard times or just something wild has happened, and they've just lost it all. They're just people".

5.5.1.4 Stepping Out of One's Comfort Zone. In both the questionnaire and the focus group interviews many students referred to stepping out of their comfort zone as an impact of CSL. 49% (n=128) of Year 11 students in the questionnaire identified challenging of personal comfort levels as an impact of CSL. Many students connected stepping out of their comfort zone to the value of CSL in the qualitative responses in the questionnaire. Student comments included: "[CSL] helps students step outside of their comfort zone and participate and connect with people/communities they would not usually communicate with"; "[CSL] pushed me outside of my comfort zone"; and "gets people out of their comfort zones".

In one focus group a student commented that participation in service activities "helps people that like being in the comfort zone and doing what's easy to actually try new things". Another student in the same focus group suggested that students had to get out of their comfort zone when finding a placement: "You actually have to go look, get out of your way and look for those type of places that offer it". A student in a different focus group commented on the impact of their CSL involvement noting that "it just helps me get out of my comfort zone".

5.5.1.5 Awareness of Social Justice Issues. Students in both the questionnaire and focus groups highlighted that their participation in CSL resulted in a greater awareness of social justice issues. In the questionnaire, 56% (n=145) of Year 11 students identified awareness of social justice issues as an impact of CSL. In one focus group a student affirmed: "Definitely awareness of issues is a big thing that has been taught from Christian Service-Learning". In another focus group, the students discussed completing service activities with the homeless. One student commented that "you kind of get a deeper understanding of what it is to be homeless and why they're homeless. So it just makes you understand the issues in the world a lot more deeply". A second student added "It's a good opportunity for people to understand what it's like for those that are actually homeless". Students in another focus group also discussed service activities with the homeless. One student summarised their experience stating that "sometimes we forget what they actually have to deal with and the conditions they have. The sleepout (a school-based CSL overnight outdoor sleeping activity) just kind of gives us perspective and reminds us that we're quite fortunate where we are".

In another focus group, a student who had already participated in their school's social justice immersion (an excursion to another country, town, or city where students can undertake service activities whilst immersing themselves within the culture of that location) shared that prior to the immersion they were oblivious to the needs of those around them:

> I used to just walk through the city and was in my own little world… But then after the immersion, I've been like, 'wow.' … there's people suffering everywhere, and if you don't know it's there, you'll completely ignore it. So I think that when I saw those issues, is something that's been really installed in me from Christian service.

A student in the same focus group suggested that "there's actually that many people suffering and not being able to have a home or food every day, and they have to go to these places that offer it".

5.5.1.6 Positive Standing Within the Community. Students in one focus group discussed how CSL can positively impact their standing as well as the school's reputation within the community. One student stated that members of the wider community "like us more because of the school's reputation with the impact the Service-Learning has on them". The students in this focus group agreed that their school has a better reputation than other high schools in their area because of the CSL undertaken. For example, one student reasoned that "the Christian Service-Learning really did help with that. A lot of the places I volunteered at, they were like, 'oh yeah, [school name] kids are always really good'". Another student in the same focus group agreed, noting that organisations within the community could "trust [students at the school] that they will actually help us".

5.5.2 Factors that Influence the Impact of Christian Service-Learning

As well as highlighting various positive impacts of their participation in CSL, students also shared several factors that influenced the impact of CSL. These factors are organised into three sub-themes: the attitude of the individual; friendship and family influence; and preparation for CSL participation.

5.5.2.1 The Attitude of the Individual. Students in three focus groups referred to the impact of CSL being dependent on such factors as the individual students' attitude. A few students commented that CSL is no different to other opportunities for learning at school. Recurring comments included: "some people like it, some don't"; "some people don't want to do it, some people do"; and "it depends on the person". As one student commented:

> the impact is definitely in your own experiences and what you go seeking from
> Christian learning, because if you're not going in there with the mindset of, 'I want to
> get the most out of this,' it's not going to be very impactful.

Students in all focus groups discussed how the amount of effort put in by each individual was related to the impact of the program. One student suggested that the impact of the program was dependent on "how willing [students] are to participate in Service-Learning". In another focus group a student noted that "it is what you make it…if you want to try and make an impact, it's really easy".

5.5.2.2 Friendship and Family Influence. Several students identified that friendship influences and family background impacted their CSL attitudes. For example, a student commented that the impact "depends on the [friends] we're around… because [if] they're

very involved in the community, and you see someone like that and it makes you want to be more involved in the community as well". Another student suggested that "it just depends on where you're from, how your family's like". The same student noted the impact of family background, suggesting that if a student came from a family who had not been involved in a form of service they may ask "why do I have to start now?".

      5.5.2.3 Preparation for Participation in Christian Service-Learning. Several students in one focus group noted that the feeling of being prepared for participation in CSL was important as it gave them a sense of confidence. One student remarked that "preparation improves impact". Another student in the same focus group added that by being prepared "you go in there with a sense of confidence, and with that confidence you go seeking more out of it". The same student commented that without adequate preparation they would "shy away a little bit more from challenges".

      Students attached various meanings to the word preparation in the focus groups. For example, one student described that "there's the actual preparation before you're about to do an activity, or there's one before you actually do Christian Service-Learning". Some students referred to preparation as the induction activities undertaken at the commencement of the CSL program. Several students understood preparation to be the prior research conducted about a service organisation. Others referred to preparation as the specific activities of induction undertaken at the service location. Student responses in the questionnaire reveal that 50% (n=114) of Year 11 participants somewhat agree or strongly agree that they are well-prepared when they go to complete CSL. Only 14% (n=31) of respondents strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7

Student Perceptions on Preparation for Completing Christian Service-Learning Activities
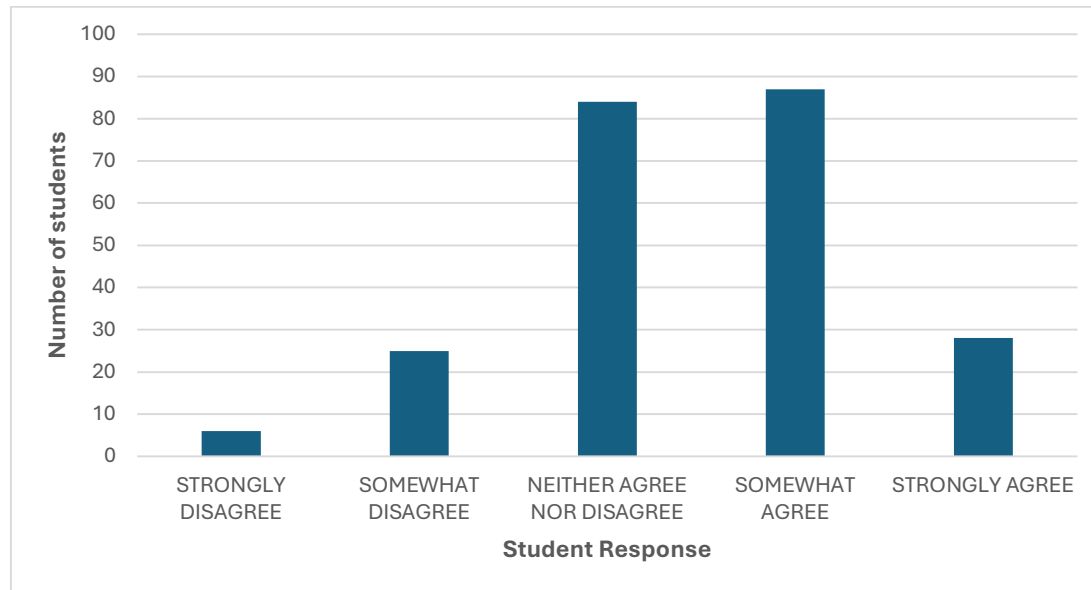
5.5.3 Summary

The Year 11 students' responses revealed two beliefs about the impact of participation in a CSL program. These two beliefs were: the positive impact of participation in a CSL program on the individual and factors that influence the impact of CSL. The students indicated six positive individual impacts of participation in CSL. These impacts were personal growth, making a positive contribution, development of personal perspectives, stepping out of one's comfort zone, an awareness of social justice issues, and a positive standing within the community. Student responses revealed three factors that influence the impact of CSL: the attitude of the individual; friendship and family influence; and preparation for CSL participation.

5.6 What are Key Informant Perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for Students in Year 11?

A key informant (KI) from each of the four schools participated in a semi-structured one on one interview. These interviews initially provided contextual understanding about the delivery of the CSL program within each school, which was included within Chapter Two. The KIs also outlined their perceptions of CSL for the Year 11 students. Three key themes were prevalent from the KI interviews: KI perceptions of Year 11 student positive attitudes

towards CSL; KI perceptions of Year 11 student negative attitudes towards CSL; and KI perceptions of impacting factors in the CSL program.

5.6.1 Key Informants' Perceptions of Year 11 Student Positive Attitudes Towards Christian Service-Learning

The KIs perceived three key positive attitudes held by Year 11 students toward CSL. These positive attitudes were about the notion of helping others, being involved in the community, and completing CSL with friends. The KIs perceived that students viewed participation in CSL as positive and gave various examples of student benefits such as "expanding their horizons", "learning new skills", "developing confidence", "personal development", and "organisational skills" as well as the sense of belonging and a sense of purpose. The KIs also identified that students were "very passionate about [CSL]" and that CSL "opens [students] up to things that they wouldn't get involved in". The KIs highlighted common student responses following participation in CSL such as: "wow, that was really good" and "I found that really interesting".

The KIs stated that students commonly held a positive attitude about helping others and being involved in the community. One KI expressed that students often referred to "the actual feeling you get of helping another person". Another KI's response was "I think they love the community aspect of it… Year 11 students that went to [the immersion] … will talk about how great it was to be in community" Another KI highlighted that students relate to CSL as a learning activity:

> I think the students believe that this is…a learning activity, it's not just volunteering. I
> think in the outset, they think about it as a chore…But if it's done right, then you've
> got something that you can actually say… it's about your own empathy.

The same KI identified that being with friends was another aspect of CSL that students had a positive attitude about. As this KI noted: "being with their mates in a different environment from sport, for example, or music. Just being with their mates and doing something that is profound".

5.6.2 Key Informants' Perceptions of Year 11 Student Negative Attitudes Towards Christian Service-Learning

The KIs also provided various negative attitudes which they believed Year 11 students held toward CSL. These attitudes were finding a placement where an activity of service could be undertaken, related to a reluctance to complete CSL, and the time required to complete

CSL. Three KIs referred to students having difficulties in finding appropriate service placements. One KI observed "that some students feel daunted and diffident in looking for service opportunities or approaching a service provider". In a similar manner, another KI noted that some students "feel a little bit shy to go and explore other areas". A third KI commented that age limitations at some organisations made it difficult for students to complete their service activities. This KI discussed the challenge that students face due to some organisations not accepting students under the age of 18. The KI asserted that "trying to find organisations that want students and that can accommodate students" is not always easy.

Two KIs identified reluctance as a negative attitude held by Year 11 students towards CSL. These KIs gave example of comments heard by students within their schools such as: "Why do I have to do this"?; "Do we have to?"; and "I don't really want to do this". One of these KIs suggested that the students' attitude of reluctance was more prominent towards the end of the CSL program. The second KI commented that "building the why of [the CSL program] into our systems, our processes, our activities, our culture… everything" could support students to better understand the purpose of the CSL program and therefore reduce the attitude of reluctance. This KI continued: "They're basically asking what we haven't answered, and what's the point? This is the point, this is how it's going to benefit you, this is the understanding that comes from it".

All four KIs identified that students held a negative attitude about the time required to complete CSL. The KIs all expressed an understanding of the students' circumstances in terms of academic, work, sport, and other commitments. Two KIs identified that the development of time management skills was essential for the Year 11 students. As one KI noted, the students needed support due to "all those competing agenda…helping them navigate that space". A second KI highlighted that "internal opportunities always help students". This same KI explained that opportunities to incorporate CSL into the R.E curriculum were being explored as a way to support students to complete their CSL hours. On this note, another KI highlighted R.E as having "a natural link" to the CSL program whereby discussions could be had about the activities being undertaken.

5.6.3 Key Informant Perceptions of Impacting Factors in the Christian Service-Learning Program

All four KIs noted that their CSL programs are impactful on the students. The KIs spoke about impacting factors of CSL such as making a difference through contributing to

society, the inclusion of incentives and awards, and parental involvement. The KIs also outlined the impactful role of reflection activities within the CSL program.

5.6.3.1 Making a Difference Through Contributing to Society. The KIs all highlighted that through CSL their students were making a difference and contributing to society. One KI noted that through service, students can realise "that they are valuable as 16 and 17-year-olds, that they can make a difference as 16 and 17-year-olds, that they don't have to wait until they leave school or get rich or money or whatever". The KI continued, observing that through CSL the students have "an opportunity to encounter those who are in need…from that encounter [students can develop] a sense of belief and self-belief and empowerment, justice". Another KI commented that "I'd hope [what] they'd come up with is that they've put their faith into action, and they've seen they can make a difference".

The KIs recognised that CSL provides students with the opportunity to contribute to society. For instance, one KI commented that CSL helps students to "recognise their place in the world and the responsibility they have to see the needs and assist in helping". Another KI stated that students "don't realise what's out there and how they can contribute to the community, because they haven't bothered, or they haven't seen a need for that". The KI highlighted that through CSL students are "doing something that makes a difference in the world". The same KI concluded by commenting that CSL has the impact of helping students realise that "as Christians, we live in a community, and we need to contribute to the community…our service is one way we can do that".

5.6.3.2 The Inclusion of Incentives and Awards. The KI's shared mixed responses to the inclusion of incentives and awards in the CSL program. The inclusion of incentives such as Year 12 school Ball attendance were acknowledged as both "a carrot and a stick approach" and "a good motivational tool". One KI commented that the inclusion of incentives is very impactful because it allows the students to "get the message, how important Christian service is to the school, how important that ethos is and how important it is to the school community". Similarly, another KI justified the inclusion of incentives and awards noting that:

> you need to encourage [the students]. We encourage them in other ways: we give them medals for sport; we put their names in the honour boards for academic. So what I had to do…[was] to try and make those things available for people who do service…You might get the odd saint, but generally speaking you need to encourage them.

Only one of the four KIs did not agree with the inclusion of incentives and awards within a CSL program. This KI highlighted that:

> I haven't got caught up on that celebration…it's the ones who have actually demonstrated a willingness to serve that I look to celebrate… [I have not] given them anything great, just a formal recognition at assembly – as a way of saying we recognise those that do give back to the community.

Another KI appreciated that the incentive of the school Ball does mean that some students are only completing CSL "to tick the box" and thus the impact of CSL is reduced.

5.6.3.3 Parental Involvement. Three KIs highlighted the important role that parents have in impacting their child's engagement with CSL. As an example, one KI indicated "the parents have a lot to do with their [child's] involvement [in CSL] … and that's half the battle…because the parents can see the goodness in there". Another KI suggested that the students' level of engagement in CSL "depends on the family background…whether their parents have support for the program or whether [it is] just tick-the-box". A third KI identified that students could have a deeper sense of joy from service if they "have a strong domestic Church at home – not necessarily Catholic but having values – it may come from Christian values, it may come from another religion, but a strong value system". This same KI highlighted the importance of conversations with parents to ensure they understand the purpose of the program because when "parents are involved [in CSL] with the students, they find it much more meaningful".

5.6.3.4 The Importance of Reflection Activities. All of the KIs highlighted the important impact of reflection activities within the CSL program. All of the KIs linked the importance of reflection activities to the Christian aspect of CSL. For example, one KI commented that "we don't hide from the fact that it is actually a Christian-based program". Another KI stated that through reflection students are asked to connect the service undertaken to "what Jesus taught us".

The KIs also provided other reasons for why reflection is important. As one KI noted: "Reflection is so important… I think the idea of giving kids as much time to do that reflection and having those discussions is important". Another KI comment identified other benefits of reflection activities "I think for some, they don't realise until they've done the reflection how beneficial it is… in terms of their own development and how they've developed as a person,

and some of the skills that they've picked up". Only one of the four KIs discussed alternative forms to written reflection activities. This KI detailed how other forms such as:

> doing a talk at assembly is an example or writing an article on the experience for either the college newsletter or the media. So those students who are invited to do that automatically by default get their reflection essay done.

Two KIs discussed the genuineness of the reflection activities. For instance, one KI asserted that the reflection activities enable students to demonstrate whether they have genuinely engaged with the program or not: "You can tell by their reflections whether it's been a tick-box exercise". The staff member added: "I'd rather have a reflection that's honest, and not necessarily one I want to hear, rather than a fake". The difficulty in ensuring the genuineness of reflections and not diminishing CSL to a "tick the box or fill in the thing" was raised by one KI who asserted that: "I can't see another way. I need to record the hours, and I need to know what's going up in [the student's] head, so we do the report and we do the record of service".

5.6.4 Summary

The KIs raised positive attitudes they believed the Year 11 students had towards CSL such as the notion of helping others, being involved in the community, and completing CSL with friends. The KIs also identified various negative attitudes which they believed Year 11 students held toward CSL, including finding a placement where an activity of service could be undertaken, a reluctance to complete CSL, and the time required to complete CSL. All the KIs believed that their CSL programs are impactful on the students. They highlighted making a difference through contributing to society, the inclusion of incentives and awards, and the importance of parental involvement as impacting factors in the CSL program. The KIs also emphasised the important impact of reflection activities within the CSL program.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results from the instrumental case study involving 261 student online questionnaire responses, four student focus group interviews, and four semi-structured interviews with KIs. The results were presented under the headings of the five research questions. The first question focussed on student understandings of the concept of CSL. The second, third, and fourth questions presented data on the Year 11 students' perceived benefits, challenges, and impacts derived from participation in a CSL program. The final question presented KI perceptions of CSL for students, as well as impacting factors on

students' participation in CSL. The next chapter will discuss and interpret the results in line with relevant literature.

Chapter Six: Discussion of Research Results

6.1 Introduction

This study explored Year 11 student perceptions towards Christian Service-Learning (CSL). CSL is based on the same theoretical and practical principles that underpin Service-Learning (SL), however, also includes a faith-based focus. CSL is an example of faith-based SL (Chambers & Lavery, 2018) that is inspired by the life of Jesus Christ as portrayed in the gospels (Engebretson, 2014). The previous chapter presented the results of this study. The results were derived from a combination of the qualitative data collected from the four focus group interviews with the Year 11 students, four semi-structured interviews with key informants (KIs), and the quantitative and qualitative data collected from 261 Year 11 student structured online questionnaires. In addition, a document search provided contextual information.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss and interpret the results in light of the literature presented in Chapter Three. The discussion of results is divided into five sections based on the five research questions.

1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?
2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?
5. What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

Table 6.1 outlines the structure of Chapter Six.

Table 6.1

Outline of Chapter Six: Discussion of Research Results

6.1	Introduction
6.2	Year 11 Students' Understanding of the Concept of Christian Service-Learning

6.2 Year 11 Students' Understanding of the Concept of Christian Service-Learning

The discussion of Year 11 students' understanding of the concept of CSL is divided into four sub-sections. These sub-sections include: the Christian aspect of CSL; the purpose of CSL; the differentiation between CSL and volunteering; and the compulsory nature of CSL.

6.2.1 The Christian Aspect of Christian Service-Learning

Many students provided examples to indicate how the life of Jesus Christ is central to CSL programs. Responses highlighted that through CSL students can be Christ-like for others, respond to Jesus' call of helping others, follow Jesus' example and teachings, and follow the teachings of the church. These responses are also present within literature on CSL (CEWA, 2021a; Lavery & Hackett, 2008; Lavery & Hackett, 2011; Schaffer, 2010). For example, Lavery and Hackett (2008) indicated that through Christian service, students can follow Jesus' command to serve others. Several students used examples from both the Old and New Testament to emphasise the faith-based element of CSL. These biblical references included the teachings of being created in God's image (Genesis 1:27), showing love (Luke 10:25-37), and the importance of helping others (John 10:10). The students' inclusion of these biblical references, in particular references to the gospel stories, mirrors the significance of the gospel values which are highlighted within definitions of CSL (CEWA, 2021a; Devlin & Warner, 2017; Engebretson, 2014; Price, 2021). Researchers have noted that the CSL program and the Catholic identity of a school are often linked (Engebretson, 2014; Lavery, 2007b), though this link was not apparent in the students' responses.

As outlined in Chapter Two, three out of the four participant schools named the CSL program according to the school's vision, heritage story, tradition or patron. In these three schools the name of the program did not feature any of the words Christian, service or learning. This alternative terminology might well explain why some of the students'

understandings and perceptions regarding CSL did not include a Christian aspect and were more reflective of SL.

6.2.2 The Purpose of Christian Service-Learning

The Year 11 students identified three purposes of CSL. The first purpose, identified by many participants, was that a principle of CSL is to help others. Students commented that by helping others, they were able to have a positive impact on the recipient of the service activity. Christians are called to love and care for others through service, just as Jesus did (Lavery & Hackett, 2008; Pope Francis, 2015; Schaffer, 2010). The purpose of helping others can lead students to develop the value of altruism (Liu, 2015; Miller, 2015). The second purpose also derived from the concern for helping others whereby students believed that they had opportunities to make an impact within the community. Research identified on CSL does not specifically relate to making an impact within the community. However, research on SL does outline that having an impact on the community and society is considered part of the purpose of SL (Helms et al., 2015; Kaye & Connolly, 2018). All forms of experiential learning are impactful at varying levels, depending on the intended beneficiary and focus of the activity being undertaken (Furco, 1996).

The Year 11 students suggested a third purpose of CSL was for the service activities to be of equal benefit for themselves and the service recipients. This concept of equal benefit is known as reciprocity or reciprocal benefit (Felten & Clayton, 2011; Petri, 2015) and is considered a crucial element of SL. However, reciprocity is not explicitly identified in the literature as a purpose of CSL. Possible reasons for this absence include that reciprocity may be considered an inherent Christian aspect or that it has not been a focus within previous research.

Most Year 11 students did not explicitly describe living out Christ-like values, their relationship with God, or putting their faith into action, which the research highlights as purposes of CSL (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Devlin & Warner, 2017; Feenstra, 2011; Roso, 2013; Schaffer, 2010). There are a number of different reasons as to why the students may not have connected the Christian aspect of CSL with the purpose of CSL including: the language used within the context of the program; the emphasis on the Christian aspect of the SL may not have been evident; the link between the Christian aspect and the SL have not been made clearly; and that the students may not have the depth of faith because of their own faith background, to make this connection.

6.2.3 The Differentiation Between Christian Service-Learning and Volunteering

The Year 11 students perceived three differences between CSL and volunteering. These differences were related to the Christ-like perspective of CSL, the inclusion of reflection activities in CSL, and the informal nature of volunteering. Whilst the students did not identify the religious component as one of the purposes of CSL, they highlighted that the Christ-like perspective of CSL was a distinguishing factor between CSL and volunteering. Students referred to the life of Jesus, Christian values, and Christian teachings as forming this Christ-like perspective. These responses are consistent with the research on CSL, whereby definitions on Christian service and CSL include reference to the Christian perspective as a foundational principle of CSL (CEWA, 2021a; Engebretson, 2014; Fourré, 2006a; Lavery & Hackett, 2008).

The definitions of volunteering found in the literature do not appear to include a religious perspective, rather, they outline details about who is volunteering, the beneficiary, where the volunteering takes place, what is being achieved, and the absence of links to curriculum (Furco, 1996; Knapp et al., 2020; Phelps, 2012). It is important for students, as pupils in a Catholic school, to know the difference between CSL and volunteering, and to understand that they are participating in CSL. CSL, opposed to volunteering, is about the students living out the call of Jesus to serve others (Lavery & Hackett, 2008) by putting faith and the gospel into action (Devlin & Warner, 2017; Price, 2021; Schaffer, 2010).

A few students discussed the inclusion of reflection activities within the CSL program as a point of difference with volunteering. Reflection is not considered part of volunteering (Knapp et al., 2020). Various scholars have also highlighted the importance of reflection activities in CSL (Engebretson, 2009; Rieger, 2014; Schaffer, 2010). One student commented that the reflection activities in CSL allowed students to connect the service to their own faith, which is a point of difference with volunteering. Certain scholars (Fourré, 2006b; Rieger, 2014) have suggested that through reflection activities students can connect their faith with the service undertaken.

Several students suggested that volunteering was more informal than CSL. Student responses referred to the opportunities for learning provided by CSL, the school-based nature of CSL, links to academic subjects, and the compulsory nature of CSL, to distinguish the formality of CSL opposed to the informal nature of volunteering. These students identified aspects of CSL that are more reflective of SL (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010) which may suggest that whilst the students can differentiate between SL and volunteering, they are less able to differentiate between CSL and SL.

6.2.4 The Compulsory Nature of the Christian Service-Learning Program

A few Year 11 students positively perceived the compulsory nature of the CSL program. These positive perceptions were related to the fairness of the requirements, expectations of the program, the support provided by the school, the opportunity to experience CSL and its benefits, and the opportunities for learning derived from CSL. Such perceptions reinforced the notion raised by Karasik (2005) that through participation in compulsory SL students are exposed to, and can experience, the benefits of SL. Moreover, Stewart (2009) found that the compulsory nature of the SL program in a Catholic school had a positive impact on students.

Many students identified a negative perception towards the compulsory nature of the CSL program. The students perceived this compulsory nature to be stressful, worrisome, and an inconvenience. Several students commented that they were already busy with so many commitments and felt that CSL was onerous. Many students questioned the value of mandating the CSL program with some suggesting that the compulsory requirement decreased the genuineness of the SL actions being undertaken. Jacoby (2014) also questioned the value of compulsory SL in comparison to when students have the choice to complete SL. Several students proposed that CSL should instead be compulsory in the early years of secondary schooling. These students suggested that CSL for younger students could be more impactful than for Year 11 students who are already so busy. Year 11s are known to have busy schedules including academic, work, sport, and family commitments.

The students' overall negative perceptions towards the compulsory nature of CSL reflect the research on SL whereby scholars raised various concerns about mandating SL (Cloyd, 2017; Jacoby, 2014; Jones et al., 2008). One such concern was that students developed a feeling of resentment towards compulsory SL (Jacoby, 2014; Jones et al., 2008; Warburton & Smith, 2003). Such a feeling is clearly evident within the students' responses. The research on SL highlights other concerns which were not evident in the students' responses. One of these concerns is about the compulsory requirement of SL and its impact on graduation (Cloyd, 2017; Jacoby, 2014). Cloyd (2017) also argued that some students may drop out of school and not graduate because of the compulsory requirement of SL. Moreover, Warburton and Smith (2003) found that making SL compulsory may not generate potential benefits such as a sense of civic responsibility amongst participants. The research on the compulsory requirement of SL (Cloyd, 2017; Jacoby, 2014; Jones et al., 2008) may raise the need for the schools involved in this study to reflect on the inclusion of such a requirement in their CSL programs. Some alternatives to a compulsory requirement of CSL could include the

CSL program being embedded into the curriculum; the CSL program being offered as an elective, thus giving students a sense of choice; and students having opportunities to engage in CSL activities as part of a non-compulsory program (Engebretson, 2009; Filges et al., 2021; Pawlowski, 2018; Warburton & Smith, 2003).

6.2.5 Summary

The discussion of results on the Year 11 students' understanding of the concept of CSL revealed that the students were able to outline various examples of the centrality of the life of Jesus Christ to CSL programs, consistent with the literature (CEWA, 2021a; Lavery & Hackett, 2011; Schaffer, 2010). Whilst the students identified the Christian aspect of CSL, this understanding was not evident when outlining the purposes of CSL. The students' understanding of the difference between CSL and volunteering included the absence of a Christian perspective within definitions of volunteering, as well as the inclusion of reflection activities within CSL programs (Engebretson, 2014; Knapp et al., 2020). The students also noted that CSL programs feature formal requirements which are absent in volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010). Such understandings are reflective of knowledge around SL which may indicate that many students involved in this study appear to not associate a Christian component to CSL. The students in this study did not clearly differentiate between CSL and SL. Although several students indicated that they were in favour of the compulsory nature of the CSL program, many students were not. This ambivalence reflected the research on SL whereby there appears to be no consensus amongst scholars (Flanagan et al., 2015; Kackar-Cam & Schmidt, 2014). The student responses towards the compulsory nature of CSL raises questions for the mandating of such programs.

6.3 Year 11 Students' Identified Benefits of Christian Service-Learning

The discussion of Year 11 students' identified benefits of CSL is divided into four sub-sections. These four sub-sections include: positive attributes of CSL; personal growth; learning opportunities; and civic responsibility.

6.3.1 Positive Attributes of Christian Service-Learning

Year 11 students identified various positive attributes of CSL. The students' positive attributes towards CSL were related to its value, connection with others, reflection activities, personal enjoyment, and development of a positive attitude towards CSL.

6.3.1.1 The Value of Christian Service-Learning. Many students provided positive responses when asked about the value of CSL. The students connected the value of CSL with the benefits that can be achieved from CSL participation such as stepping out of one's comfort zone, development of leadership skills, awareness of world issues, and personal growth. The students did not mention growth from a faith perspective. Prior to their CSL experiences, the Year 11 students may not have received instruction about the potential for growth from a faith perspective or the reflection activities within the program may not have provided the students with the opportunity to assess their growth from a faith perspective.

Various authors indicate that a core value of CSL lies with students putting the Catholic faith and the gospel into action (Devlin & Warner, 2017; Price, 2021). The student responses about the value of CSL, however, were more reflective of the general value of SL. This value of SL for students lay within the achievement and receipt of the benefits (Fourré, 2006b; Kuhn, 2017; Caspersz & Olaru, 2017). Students indicated that the value of participation in CSL was related to learning about others, the world, and further opportunities for learning. These perspectives on the value of CSL appear to reflect what Di Giacomo (2007) identified as "secular humanism without any faith dimension" (p. 15). Prior to participating in CSL, students could be informed about the potential outcomes of the activities such as a growth in faith perspective. The reflection activities included within the CSL program could also support students to make the links between the activities undertaken and the faith perspective of CSL, with questions specifically asking students to identify and make links between the activities and their faith perspective.

6.3.1.2 Connection with Others. The students identified three examples of connection with others: the people they were serving; the organisation providing the service; and their peers. By participating in CSL, students interact with different people, including those who are marginalised in society, and learn how to get along with others (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Jones et al., 2008). Many scholars highlighted that through providing service students can develop their concern and care for others (Miller, 2012; Pendergast et al., 2017; Winans-Solis, 2014).

Lavery and Hackett (2008) emphasised that through participation in CSL, students can act in solidarity with others whilst reflecting Christ-like values. Through such actions students can learn more about themselves and others, by following the call of Jesus to serve (Lavery & Hackett, 2008). While the students did not verbalise the connection between Christ-like values and forming connections, the way they connected with others could be seen

as living out Christ-like values such as love, justice, and compassion (Kaak & LaPorte, 2022; Lavery & Hackett, 2008).

6.3.1.3 Positive Perceptions of Reflection Activities Within Christian Service-Learning. There were a few students who were positive about the importance of reflection activities within CSL. These students commented that these activities allowed them to recognise the impact of their actions as well as what else they could have done during the experience. Literature on both CSL and SL strongly emphasises the importance of the inclusion of reflection activities within these programs (Billig, 2018; CEWA, 2021a; Kaye, 2010a; Moak, 2020). A point of difference between CSL and SL reflective activities is that CSL-based reflection should be linked to the gospel and to Catholic Social Teachings (Engebretson, 2009), whereas SL reflection activities are not. The students' positive perception about the reflection activities did not refer to the gospel or Catholic Social Teachings. The students' responses were more consistent with the literature on reflection in SL, whereby students understood the service they undertook and were able to learn from it (Moak, 2020; Nickels, 2018).

In the Christian context, reflection enables students to consider their service involvement from a Christian perspective (Rieger, 2014). This consideration is possible if the Christian perspective is emphasised to the students. An emphasis on the Christian perspective of CSL highlights the need for the students to be guided through their reflections, otherwise the link to the Christian perspective of CSL may be missed. The literature on CSL outlined that guided reflections, linked to the gospel values, should be implemented within CSL programs to enable the students to follow Jesus' call to serve (CEWA, 2021a). Di Giacomo (2007) asserted that, in a Catholic school, the absence of guided reflection removed the faith dimension from the activity.

6.3.1.4 Personal Enjoyment. The Year 11 student responses indicated that many students enjoyed participating in CSL and found their experience to be fulfilling. Students used words such as "enjoyable", "fulfilling", and "satisfaction" to describe their experience. Several students linked this enjoyment and fulfillment to the completion of service activities with their friends and the feeling of helping others. Nabors et al. (2018) found that students felt rewarded by SL participation because they liked helping others and the community. Furthermore, several students gave examples of other students they knew who were still completing service activities long after reaching the minimum requirement of hours due to

the sense of enjoyment they felt. There appears to be limited research about the enjoyment students derive from participation in CSL. Nabors et al. (2018), however, did find that students enjoyed their participation in SL. The opportunity to complete SL with friends (Chambers & Lavery, 2022; Liu, 2015) and providing help to others (Liu, 2015; Nabors et al., 2018) are both highlighted within the literature on SL. Liu (2015) asserted that completing SL with friends could strengthen a student's willingness to participate in SL.

6.3.1.5 Development of a Positive Attitude Towards Christian Service-Learning. Several students identified that over their years of involvement in CSL they had developed a positive attitude towards the program. The students indicated that this development was due to growing in age and maturity, appreciating the impact their service had, and finding a sense of fulfillment. These students shared that in the early stages of their CSL involvement they held negative attitudes. The negative attitudes were toward the requirement to complete CSL, in particular the time required for the activities. Over time the students were able to appreciate the impact of CSL for themselves, others, and the community. There appears to be no mention of development of a positive attitude towards CSL within the research. The research on SL does include the development of a positive attitude, whereby students' attitudes towards SL changed throughout their involvement in the program (Colvin, 2020; Price, 2018; Schneller et al., 2022). These scholars identified that over time, students recognised a change in their outlook and perceptions of SL based on their own learning and engagement with others and the community.

6.3.2 Personal Growth

Many students identified personal growth as a benefit of participation in CSL. The students' perceptions of personal growth were related to personal development, development of values, and leadership development.

6.3.2.1. Personal Development. Several students identified personal development as a personal growth benefit of CSL participation. These students outlined elements of personal development such as increased confidence, self-esteem, self-improvement, motivation, and a sense of fulfillment. One student described that they felt increased self-esteem and motivation because when they were completing CSL they were doing something without receiving anything in return. Another student outlined how their confidence had increased through completing a peer mentoring CSL activity with younger students. This student described how

they felt good about themselves by seeing the growth in the younger students. Similarly, Nabors et al. (2018) also found that students perceived a positive sense of self-worth when they were leading younger students, helped others, and helped in the community. Several students believed the CSL activities had led to them learning more about themselves and therefore experiencing personal growth. These students identified elements of personal development that mirror the literature on SL, describing benefits on character development (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010; Ocal & Altınok, 2016).

6.3.2.2 Development of Values. Most students highlighted the development of values as a benefit of CSL participation. These values included compassion, empathy, and understanding. These values are examples of Christ-like or gospel values (Kaak & LaPorte, 2022). The development of Christ-like values (Lavery & Hackett, 2008) and the enacting of the Catholic Social Teachings which encompass gospel values (Fourré, 2006a; CEWA, 2021a) are known benefits of CSL participation. The students in this study did not specifically identify the values they developed through CSL participation as Christ-like values.

Various scholars have also discussed the development of values for students through SL (Fourré, 2006a; 2006b; Maher & Hanley, 2013; Price, 2018). For example, Price (2018) emphasised that SL could be a vehicle for students to examine their own values. Maher and Hanely (2013) suggested that participation in SL can assist students to challenge the values held within society. Reflection activities are one such way that students could examine their own values as well as challenge the values held within society (Fourré, 2006a; 2006b).

6.3.2.3 Leadership Development. Over half of the Year 11 students recognised leadership development as a benefit of participation in CSL. Furthermore, students referred to the development of leadership qualities because of their participation in CSL. Several students identified their own responsibility to act as role models for future generations by sharing their own experiences to younger students. The schools involved in this study may like to explore the possibility of current students speaking to their younger peers, or even alumni members visiting the school, to speak about CSL and the impact that it can have. There is also the potential for mentoring, whereby older students, or alumni, support younger students with their CSL engagement. Leadership development has been identified as a benefit of both CSL (Lavery, 2007b) and SL participation (Moak, 2020; Ocal & Altınok, 2016; Pendergast et al., 2017). The number of students who identified leadership development as a

benefit of CSL participation may suggest that CSL has potential as a means to develop leadership in senior students. Alternatively, the students' identification of leadership development may indicate that leadership was emphasised as a benefit of CSL participation to the students before and after undertaking the service activities.

6.3.3 Learning Opportunities

The Year 11 students identified two learning opportunities as benefits of their participation in CSL. These opportunities were: life lessons and skills; and preparation for future careers.

6.3.3.1 Life Lessons and Skills. Several Year 11 students identified that CSL participation had enabled them to learn life lessons and develop skills for the future, enhancing their classroom learning. These skills included time management, organisational skills, and prioritisation of tasks. Participation in CSL provides students with the opportunity to recognise their own skillset and how they can apply these skills to serve others (Devlin & Warner, 2017). Students can develop a variety of skills by engaging in service to others (Jones et al., 2008). These skills include job-related skills of time management, getting along with peers, and working with different people. Wang and Calvano (2018) identified that SL was a fertile ground for the development of skills which could then support students' career development. Both Kaye (2010b) and Miller (2012) argued that SL enhances classroom learning because in SL students can apply life skills in practical situations which complements their academic learning.

The combination of academic and real-life learning is considered a purpose of SL (Furco & Norvell, 2019; Kaye, 2013). The student responses and the research on SL highlight that the development of life lessons and skills is a benefit of SL involvement. There may be potential for schools to utilise CSL as a vehicle for building job-related skills, to ensure that the students are ready for the workplace when they finish their schooling.

6.3.3.2 Preparation for Future Careers. Several Year 11 students identified participating in CSL as a way of preparing for future careers. That is, they felt that CSL participation could lead to experiences and opportunities that prepared them for the real world. Moreover, the students suggested that CSL could lead to direct employment opportunities. Numerous scholars described this preparedness for future professions as a benefit of SL (Kaye, 2010a; Kuhn et al., 2017; Moak, 2020). Through involvement in SL,

students can discover new career paths or more ambitious job selections (Miller, 2012). Additionally, participating in SL provides students with practical experiences where they can develop skills such as networking with community members which could be beneficial for their career development (Wang & Calvano, 2018). Jacoby (2014) highlighted a correlation between students who participated in SL and the selection of careers in the service industry. This correlation suggests that there is scope for school career advisors or counsellors to be involved in the CSL program to support students with the selection of future careers.

6.3.4 Civic Responsibility

Many Year 11 students perceived a feeling of responsibility to others as a benefit of their CSL participation. This development of civic responsibility is considered a purpose of SL (Furco & Norvell, 2019). Lavery and Hackett (2008) also identified this civic responsibility as a benefit of CSL participation. Lavery and Hackett referred to the term discipleship to relate civic responsibility to the teachings of Jesus Christ. The student responses did not specifically mention discipleship. The students did, however, include elements of civic responsibility which relate to discipleship such as the realisation of the plight of those who are struggling, the desire to do more to help others, and the positive feelings derived from participating in service activities where they assisted those who may be struggling (Pendergast et al., 2017; Winans-Solis, 2014). It is evident that the students were not familiar with the term discipleship. It is possible that the term discipleship has not been used within the schools involved in this study, or that it has not been used within the context of the CSL program.

6.3.5 Summary

The discussion of results on the Year 11 students' identified benefits of CSL highlighted various positive attributes and benefits. These positive attributes were related to the value of CSL, connection with others, reflection activities within CSL, personal enjoyment of CSL, and a positive attitude towards CSL. These attributes aligned with some elements of the literature on CSL (Engebretson, 2009; Rieger, 2014) but were more reflective of the literature on SL (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Liu, 2015; Schneller et al., 2022).

The students identified numerous benefits of their participation in CSL. These benefits were personal growth, learning opportunities, and civic responsibility. Personal growth encompassed personal development, development of values, and leadership development (Lavery, 2007b; Price, 2018; Wang & Calvano, 2018). The students identified that through

CSL participation they had learning opportunities related to life lessons and skills, and preparation for future careers. These learning opportunities were not exclusive to CSL but were also benefits associated with participating in SL (Moak, 2020; Wang & Calvano, 2018). Many Year 11 students also perceived civic responsibility as a benefit of their CSL participation (Lavery & Hackett, 2008).

6.4 Year 11 Student's Perceived Challenges of Christian Service-Learning

The discussion of Year 11 students' perceived challenges of CSL is divided into four sub-sections. These sub-sections are: students' negative perceptions of CSL; personal challenges faced by students when participating in a CSL program; challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL; and student perceptions for overcoming the challenges associated with CSL and improving CSL programs. Generally, the research on CSL does not appear to outline the challenges, whereas certain research does explore the challenges associated with SL, primarily within the university context (Hahn et al., 2020; Karasik, 2004; Morin, 2009).

6.4.1 Negative Student Perceptions of Christian Service-Learning

The Year 11 students identified four negative perceptions towards CSL. These negative perceptions were about the requirement of written reflection activities within the CSL program, the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities, the minimum number of hours for successful completion of the CSL program, and the use of incentives and awards in a CSL program.

6.4.1.1 The Requirement of Written Reflection Activities Within the Christian Service-Learning Program. Many students highlighted a negative perception towards the requirement of written reflection activities within CSL. Students across all focus groups suggested that when Year 11 students completed the reflection activities, many students either lied about their feelings, put in minimal effort, or did not take the activities seriously. Students spoke negatively about the reflection activities, noting that these activities had negative impacts on their feelings towards CSL and were detrimental to their overall experience of CSL.

The student responses reflect the research on SL, which outlined that reflection is not popular amongst students (Price, 2021). Moreover, the student responses supported research by Kaye and Connolly (2018) who identified that students perceived reflection activities to be

a burden or a tick the box activity. However, reflection is a key component of both CSL and SL (Billig, 2018; CEWA, 2021a; Kaye, 2010a; Moak, 2020). Rieger (2014) used the metaphor of eating food without nutritional benefit to describe SL without reflection. The schools involved in this study all used written forms of reflection activities within CSL, which most students disliked. The students' negative perception appears to be more towards the written aspect of reflection rather than the practice of reflection overall. The schools in this study may need to explore alternative forms of reflection. The students proposed a range of alternative forms of reflection activities, and these will be addressed later in this chapter.

6.4.1.2 The Requirement of Photography to Demonstrate Evidence of Abilities.

Several Year 11 students disliked the requirement, set by their schools, for photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities. As outlined in Chapter Two, students enrolled in the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) Authority-Developed Endorsed Program: Community Service (ADCS) course are required to demonstrate evidence of abilities (SCSA, 2015). The students perceived this requirement, specifically the need for photographs as evidence of abilities, to be inappropriate in certain contexts and made them feel uncomfortable. There is no specific mention of the requirement of evidence of abilities within the research on CSL or SL. However, the requirement of evidence of abilities could be considered an example of demonstration.

Demonstration is considered a key component for the effectiveness of SL for students (Billig, 2011; Kaye 2010a; Kaye, 2013). Within this component students can demonstrate what they have learnt, realise the impact of their efforts, and display the outcomes they have achieved (Billig, 2011; Kaye, 2013; Nickels, 2018). It should be noted, however, that there are various ways that demonstration can be displayed (Billig, 2018; Chambers & Lavery, 2018). SCSA (2015) outlines a non-exhaustive list of items that students could use to demonstrate evidence of abilities, with photographic evidence being one such form. Other forms of items to satisfy the requirement for evidence of abilities include letters from a supervising staff member outlining competency, certificates, diagrams, and performance analysis.

6.4.1.3 Minimum Number of Hours for Successful Completion of the Christian Service-Learning Program. Many Year 11 students were negative about the requirement of a minimum number of hours for successful completion of the CSL program. Students enrolled in the ADCS are required to demonstrate evidence of participation and engagement,

by completing and recording 55 hours of service over three years (from Year 10-12). Students can complete activities on or off campus, in or out of school time, to gain credit for completion of one ADCS unit (SCSA, 2022). There appears to be no explanation given by SCSA for the reasoning of this number of hours. Students questioned the need for the minimum number of hours and shared strong feelings about the negative impact this requirement had on them. Students also commented how the requirement of a set number of hours detracted from the importance of both the service and the learning that was being undertaken. The word flawed was used by two students to describe the implementation of a CSL program that included a target number of hours to be completed.

The research does not appear to highlight student negativity towards the number of hours required for completion of SL. However, scholars are divided on the issue of a set number of SL hours. Billig (2002), for instance argued that high quality SL approaches included the completion of over 40 hours of service. Alternatively, Kackar-Cam and Schmidt (2014) found that the number of hours spent completing SL is not directly linked to academic, behavioural, or civic outcomes. Filges et al. (2021) cautioned that SL should not be reduced to the requirement of a set number of hours. The perceptions of the students within the present study are more in line with Filges et al. (2021). It is possible that the perceptions held by the students may change depending on when the CSL is undertaken.

Pawlowski (2018) suggested that instead of crediting the completion of a set number of hours, students should be given credit for the actual learning. Similarly, Karasik (2005) proposed reducing the total number of hours required for SL completion. This reduction in the required number of hours together with an allocation of credit for classroom learning could also decrease the challenge of finding the time to complete SL hours (Karasik, 2005). Whilst Karasik (2005) and Pawlowski (2018) did not nominate a number of hours, they proposed that particular attention be given to the selection of a number of hours for students to have meaningful experiences of SL.

6.4.1.4 The Use of Incentives and Awards in a Christian Service-Learning Program. Students provided various examples of incentives and awards attached to the CSL program that are used within their schools but questioned their use. Many students believed that the use of incentives and awards was counterproductive to the purpose of CSL and reduced the overall value of their CSL experience. Many students were less critical of awards, but still not in favour of their use in CSL programs. There was also the situation where several students overtly admitted that they had only participated in the CSL activities

because of the incentives that were being offered rather than any other reason. The research on CSL does not appear to address the use of incentives and awards. There also appears to be a very limited amount of research into the use of incentives and awards in SL.

The use of incentives and awards in CSL may be considered an example of celebration, whereby students can exhibit and receive recognition for their achievements (Billig, 2011; Lavery, 2007b). Billig (2011) included celebration as one of the key components for the effectiveness of SL. Menezes et al. (2020) used the term "valorisation" (p. 120) to describe the recognition of students' effort in service activities. The use of colours and honours awards, by one school in this study could be considered an example of valorisation. Werner and McVaugh (2000) suggested that there are two types of rewards which are not contradictory with the purposes of SL. These are unexpected rewards and feedback rewards. They argued that these rewards simply inform the student that they are doing well (Werner & McVaugh, 2000). The types of incentives and awards used by the schools within this study are neither unexpected nor feedback rewards. Students were made aware of the incentives and awards available to them at the commencement of the CSL program and these incentives and awards did not provide students with feedback other than that they were meeting the expected requirements.

The students' perceptions in this study about the use of incentives and awards reflects Billig's (2011) perspective on extrinsic rewards. She suggested that the use of extrinsic rewards in SL may give students the impression that the awards are more important than the learning being undertaken. The Year 11 students' perceptions together with current research about celebration may indicate that the schools within this study need to re-consider the types of incentives and awards being offered in CSL. The use of incentives and awards may also need to be explained to the students, as many students in this study did not hold positive perceptions of these.

6.4.2 Personal Challenges Faced by Students When Participating in a CSL Program

The Year 11 student responses revealed that CSL participation presented them with various personal challenges. These personal challenges included the time required to complete CSL and individual circumstances.

6.4.2.1 Time Required to Complete Christian Service-Learning. Many Year 11 students identified the time required to complete CSL as a challenge. These students shared how they already had numerous commitments including academic, work, sport, and family.

The time required to complete CSL therefore added to their already full schedule of activities. Karasik (2004) identified time as one of the greatest challenges of SL. The challenge of time within SL or other forms of experiential learning was two-fold: the time required to participate in SL (Karasik, 2005; Steele, 2023); and meeting the number of hours required for SL completion (Karasik, 2005). Student perceptions on the requirement of the number of hours have already been addressed.

The development of better time-management skills was raised by one student who recognised that this skill could be developed with age and maturity. Some scholars (Jones et al., 2008; Morin, 2009) have also proposed the development of time-management skills to overcome scheduling issues whereby students could prioritise their tasks better, a skill which can be developed through the completion of service activities. Pawlowski (2018) contended that in the same way students dedicate time to their academic classes and learning they could also dedicate time to SL. CSL is not currently offered as a timetabled class or lesson within the schools involved in this study. Strategies that minimise the impact of time on students, such as including CSL activities within school time could be considered (CEWA, 2021a).

6.4.2.2 Individual Circumstances. Several students identified that certain individual circumstances presented challenges to completing CSL. These individual circumstances mainly focused on transport and the home situation. The students commented that most pupils in Year 11 are too young to have their driver's license which can make it challenging to travel to and from their CSL activities. Some students shared personal stories of their home life circumstances and how these situations challenged both their ability and the type of CSL activities they could participate in. The research on SL identified transport, school, family, and work commitments as individual circumstances that presented challenges for students in completing SL (Bennett et al., 2016; Karasik, 2004). Chung and McBride (2015) highlighted the importance for staff members who are responsible for SL programs to have an awareness of the individual circumstances of their students. This is an important consideration for staff members who oversee CSL programs.

The staff members who oversee CSL programs need to know their students and have an awareness of their individual circumstances, which can be achieved through the use of school databases and records which are easily available to school staff. The knowledge of the students' individual circumstances would form part of the staff member's risk management planning. This awareness will assist in avoiding students being placed into potentially

difficult service placements, which may isolate them from their peers but also draw unwanted attention to their personal situation (Chung & McBride, 2015).

6.4.3 Challenges Associated with the Purpose and Programming of Christian Service-Learning

The Year 11 students identified two challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL. These two challenges were understanding the purpose of CSL and liaising and connecting with service placement providers.

6.4.3.1 Understanding the Purpose of Christian Service-Learning. Several students identified the challenge presented by a lack of clarity regarding the purpose of CSL The students suggested that this lack of clarity may have a negative impact on student engagement in CSL programs. Some students called for more information to be provided about the purpose of CSL which could lead to increased student levels of engagement. Neither the research on CSL nor SL appears to refer to the understanding of the purpose of the program as a potential challenge. As discussed earlier, it is important for the students to understand why they are participating in CSL. CSL programs may need to include more specific information about the purpose of CSL to support an increased understanding for students.

6.4.3.2 Liaising and Connecting with Service Placement Providers. Several Year 11 students identified challenges linked with liaising and connecting with service placement providers. These challenges were communication with placement providers, finding suitable placements, and overcoming age restrictions linked to certain placements. Students discussed how various placement providers were disorganised, unprepared for the students' visits, and difficult to communicate with. Some students commented that they found it challenging to organise a suitable placement. Several students also shared how meeting the placement provider's participant criteria generated confusion and created obstacles for them in completing their service. Several Year 11 students outlined that some placement providers imposed age restrictions on volunteers which also made it a challenge for students to find an appropriate CSL placement. Segrist (2013) suggests that the development of community partnerships between school and organisations is a potential benefit of SL. The age restrictions imposed by some placement providers could indicate that partnerships between

schools and service placement locations need to be strengthened or that students need to be better supported to find appropriate placements.

Communicational challenges were deemed the most difficult of all the challenges faced by students in SL (Morin, 2009). Hahn et al. (2020) indicated that staff at placement locations could improve their communication with service participants. This communication was related to logistical matters. Furthermore, Hahn et al. (2020) argued that the staff at placement locations needed to ensure they were prepared for the service participants' visits. This preparation, which would involve school staff and the service placement staff, could include clear communication about what constitutes SL and what is required of the students during the service visit (Hahn et al., 2020).

6.4.4 Student Suggestions for Overcoming Their Perceived Challenges Associated with Christian Service-Learning to Improve Christian Service-Learning Programs

The Year 11 students raised numerous suggestions to overcome the challenges associated with CSL and in such a way improve CSL programs. There were a small number of students who were satisfied with the current format of their CSL program and its requirements. However, most of the students provided suggestions for improving the CSL program including: the importance of support from school staff; the need for support with transport; alternative forms of reflection activities; undertaking CSL during school time; incorporating CSL into the Religious Education (R.E) curriculum; the potential for connection between CSL and other learning areas; and flexibility with completion dates.

6.4.4.1 The Importance of Support from School Staff. Several students identified that the support of school staff is important when completing CSL. Students detailed how some staff members in their schools modelled service within their own lives and that this role-modelling had encouraged them to complete CSL. Students also shared how the staff in their schools communicated with them, providing information about CSL activities in which they could participate in. There were some students, however, who explained that they did not receive much support from the staff. The student perceptions about the importance of staff support mirrors the research which noted that active support from all school staff is an important factor in both CSL and SL (Hackett & Lavery, 2011).

Staff support for students undertaking CSL is an important consideration for schools undertaking CSL programs. This staff member support could assist students to remain engaged in the SL and to learn from their SL experiences (Karasik, 2004; Kaye, 2013). This

support could take the form of regular and ongoing communication regarding the service activities and program between staff and students, improved preparation activities prior to undertaking the service activities, and staff member availability (Hahn et al., 2020; Pawlowski, 2018, Playford et al., 2019). Conversely, the lack of staff support, in particular communication about the service activities and program, can lead students to develop negative perceptions towards their SL experience (Hahn et al., 2020). Further communication between students, staff, and placement providers would be beneficial.

6.4.4.2 The Need for Support with Transportation. Several Year 11 students suggested the need for support with transportation. The research identifies transportation as a challenge for students participating in SL (Bennett et al., 2016; Karasik, 2004). There appear to be limited solutions for overcoming this challenge within the research on SL. One potential solution for overcoming this challenge is that schools develop partnerships with local transport authorities (Bennett et al., 2016). These partnerships could enable students to receive reduced-rate or free transportation to access their SL activities (Bennett et al., 2016). Students in one school shared how they had been supported with transport to activities. These students explained that their school organised buses and provided them with public transport information. These transport support processes enacted by this school could be emulated by other schools to assist students to access their CSL activities.

6.4.4.3 Alternative Forms of Reflection Activities. Many students were not in favour of the current written reflection format providing negative commentary about the word count and the nature of the questions within the reflection activities. The students suggested various reflection activities as alternatives to the currently used written format. These suggestions included students sharing their CSL reflections in the form of one-on-one interviews with a staff member, journalling, artwork, and scrapbooking. These suggestions mirror the literature which highlights different forms of reflection within SL (Jacoby, 2014; Kaye & Connolly, 2018; Pawlowski, 2018). The students reasoned that these differing formats would allow them to explain themselves more clearly, remove the stress caused by the currently employed written format of reflection, and would be more meaningful. Written reflection activities can allow students to improve their written communication skills (Jacoby, 2014) so should not be completely removed as a form of reflection activity. Moreover, it could be taken into consideration, that it is a reasonable expectation that a student in Year 11 can articulate their thoughts in a written format.

All students enrolled in the ADCS course are required to demonstrate evidence of knowledge and understanding. Reflection activities fit within this requirement (SCSA, 2022). SCSA (2015) outlines a non-exhaustive list of items that students may use to demonstrate evidence of knowledge and understanding, including reflective journals, oral or written reports, completed workbooks, and presentations. The students' suggestions for improvements to the requirement of reflection corresponded with items on the list outlined by SCSA (2015) as well as the research on SL. This research included numerous examples of written, oral, and artistic formats of reflection (Felten & Clayton, 2011; Kaye & Connolly, 2018; Pawlowski, 2018; Rieger, 2014). The similarity between the students' proposals of alternative reflection activities and what the research includes about reflection activities suggests using a range of alternative forms of reflection within CSL programs.

6.4.4.4 Undertaking of Christian Service-Learning During School Time. Many Year 11 students raised the suggestion that CSL should be undertaken during school time. They believed that such a suggestion would assist with overcoming some of their perceived challenges associated with CSL, specifically the challenge of finding the time to complete CSL. As already discussed, various scholars have proposed that finding the time to complete service activities is one of the key challenges associated with SL (Karasik, 2004; 2005; Steele, 2023).

Some students suggested that participation and willingness levels in CSL could increase if CSL were held during school time. Several students proposed a CSL day within the school calendar. One student underscored that the CSL day would remove the challenge faced by students of finding the time to complete CSL. Some students recognised that within their school calendar various days were already set aside for sport and wellbeing activities and questioned why CSL could not be included within this rotation of activities with its own day. The student comments are consistent with the CEWA (2021a) CSL guidelines, however the inclusion of CSL during school time is not evident within the schools in this study. The students' suggestion whereby they are given school time to complete CSL would seem to have merit as a way of addressing time concerns for completing CSL activities.

6.4.4.5 Incorporating Christian Service-Learning into the Religious Education Curriculum. Many students supported incorporating CSL into the R.E curriculum. Students suggested that CSL, as part of R.E, could be used to contribute to their overall R.E academic grade. The students believed that as a result of incorporating CSL into R.E, the level of

engagement with CSL could increase. Some students recognised that their CSL program was already linked to the R.E curriculum in such ways as learning about social justice organisations, the lives of the Saints, the patron story within the school, and stewardship of creation. Whilst these links between CSL and the R.E curriculum are in place, there is potential for more explicit links to be made between the two. Many students identified that CSL was a practical way to live out the learning undertaken in R.E. Several students even made the comment that they preferred CSL over R.E. Some of these students emphasised that together with their peers they would prefer completing service activities rather than being in a classroom.

The research on both CSL and SL outlined that service activities are a practical way to live out the faith and religious tradition of the faith-based institution (Lavery & Hackett, 2008; Schaffer, 2010). Di Giacomo (2007) argued that the inclusion of R.E within the curriculum of a Catholic school does not suffice for evangelisation. Evangelisation can be considered as how the students' actions and words are Christ-like for others (CECWA, 2009). This evangelisation is a crucial purpose of Catholic schools (CEWA, 2021a) and CSL is one such way to live out this evangelisation.

CSL is a catechetical activity which can enhance the evangelisation of students in Catholic schools (CEWA, 2021a). Catechesis is the passing on of Jesus' teachings (CECWA, 2009). Given that the R.E curriculum can be complementary to this catechesis, the suggestion raised by the students in this study of incorporating CSL into the R.E curriculum has merit. The inclusion of CSL within the R.E curriculum could enable students to engage with the important aspects of CSL such as living out faith and gospel values (Devlin & Warner, 2017; Price, 2021) and to draw closer to Jesus (CEWA, 2021a).

6.4.4.6 The Potential for Connection Between Christian Service-Learning and Other Learning Areas. Many Year 11 students did not perceive a connection between CSL and their learning undertaken in the classroom. However, the Year 11 students did raise several suggestions for connecting their classroom learning with CSL. They suggested specific examples relating to the learning areas of Humanities and Social Sciences, Biology, Mathematics, English, and Home Economics. Research on SL outlines that SL allows students to combine life skills and academic knowledge which can improve learning across a variety of learning areas (Kaye, 2010a; 2010b). Various scholars have highlighted the link between SL and the academic curriculum (Filges et al., 2021; Liu, 2015; Wodon, 2022). This link is considered a distinct characteristic of SL in comparison to other forms of experiential

learning (Phelps, 2012). There is a higher likelihood of positive outcomes occurring when the service activities undertaken by the students are connected to the curriculum (Miller, 2012; Pawlowski, 2018; Pendergast et al., 2017). Creating links between CSL and the curriculum may be a way to enhance the achievement of positive outcomes for the students.

6.4.4.7 Flexibility with Completion Dates. There were several students who called for flexibility with the completion date for the number of hours and reflection tasks. These students believed that this flexibility could enable them to overcome the previously outlined challenges of time requirements and individual circumstances. The students suggested that this flexibility could be applied in special circumstances so that students who were facing personal challenges, for example an extended absence, could still engage in CSL. The students did acknowledge that they felt supported by the staff in their schools and that they did receive flexibility with the completion dates. There appears to be no mention of this flexibility of completion dates within the research on CSL or SL.

6.4.5 Summary

This discussion of results on the Year 11 students' perceived challenges of CSL focussed on four factors: students' negative perceptions of CSL; personal challenges faced by students when participating in a CSL program; challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL; and student perceptions for overcoming the challenges associated with CSL and improving CSL programs. The Year 11 students identified four negative perceptions towards CSL: the requirement of written reflection activities within the CSL program; the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities; the minimum number of hours for successful completion of the CSL program; and the use of incentives and awards in a CSL program. Whilst the research on CSL did not appear to include these negative perceptions, the students' negative perceptions did mirror the research on SL (Billig, 2011; Kaye & Connolly, 2018; Price, 2021). The students identified the time required to complete CSL and individual circumstances, specifically transport and home situation, as personal challenges that they faced. Both personal challenges reflected the research on SL (Bennett et al., 2016; Karasik, 2004;).

Students raised two challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL, understanding the purpose of CSL and liaising and connecting with service placement providers. Some students identified that they did not understand the purpose of CSL. Understanding the purpose of CSL or SL did not appear to be included within the research on

either CSL or SL. The students outlined three challenges when liaising and connecting with service placement providers: communication with placement providers; finding suitable placements; and overcoming age restrictions.

The Year 11 students provided seven recommendations for overcoming the challenges associated with CSL thus improving CSL programs. These suggestions were: the importance of staff support; support with transport; alternative forms of reflection activities; undertaking CSL during school time; incorporating CSL into the R.E curriculum; making the connection between CSL and the classroom; and flexibility with completion dates. Many of these recommendations reflected various ideas put forward within the literature on both CSL and SL (CEWA, 2021a; Kaye & Connolly, 2018; Pawlowski, 2018; Wodon, 2022).

6.5 Year 11 Students' Beliefs About the Impact of Participating in Christian Service-Learning

The discussion on Year 11 students' beliefs about the impact of participating in a CSL program is divided into two sub-sections. These two sub-sections are: the positive impact of participation in a CSL program on the individual and factors that influence the impact of CSL.

6.5.1 The Positive Impact of Participation in a Christian Service-Learning Program on the Individual

The Year 11 student responses indicated that there is a general belief that CSL has the potential to have a positive impact on participants. Many students noted that the impact of the CSL program on the individual was related to the amount of effort put in by the individual. The students discussed various positive impacts including the feeling of making a positive contribution, development of perspective, stepping out of one's comfort zone, an increased awareness of social justice issues, and positive standing within the community.

6.5.1.1 Making a Positive Contribution. Many Year 11 students identified that they felt they were making a positive contribution through their CSL participation. The student responses highlighted a sense of satisfaction that was derived from these positive contributions. Making a positive contribution through SL is highlighted within particular key components of SL (Billig, 2011; Kaye, 2010a). For example, within demonstration, students can identify what their contribution to society has been (Kaye, 2013). Through celebration students are able to recognise this contribution as well as what they have learnt (Nickels,

2018). The students' responses associated a positive contribution with a sense of helping others, society, and having an impact on the lives of others. Williams (2016) outlined that by completing SL students can realise that their actions do have an impact on those whom they are serving. Moreover, through SL students have the potential to make a noticeable contribution to the communities in which they live (Williams, 2016).

6.5.1.2 Development of Personal Perspectives. Many students noted that CSL had impacted their personal perspective. Student comments indicated that they were able to see the world differently because of their involvement in CSL. Many students connected empathy to the development of their personal perspective. These students spoke about a feeling of gratitude for their own situations in comparison to those who are struggling. Some students also realised after participating in CSL that their own situation was not as bad as they thought.

Several scholars found that because of participation in SL, students were able to develop their perspectives on, as well as change their preconceived ideas about, various issues such as the predicament of homeless people, refugees, and the environment (Colvin, 2020; Price, 2018; Schneller et al., 2022). The development of perspective is included within literature on both CSL (CEWA, 2021a) and SL (Fourré, 2006a; Rieger, 2014). Within CSL, it is a development of a faith perspective (CEWA, 2021a). Whereas in SL, scholars have discussed the positive impact of students' understanding of the world around them (Fourré, 2006a; Rieger, 2014). The student responses reflect the research on SL rather than on CSL. A guided reflection could support students to develop their faith perspective (Engebretson, 2014). Two potential ways a guided reflection could support the students' development of a faith perspective are: a reflection activity prior to undertaking CSL activities, with questions specifically related to students identifying their existing understanding of their faith perspective; and a reflection activity after undertaking CSL activities, whereby students can identify and reflect on any changes to their pre-existing faith perspective.

6.5.1.3 Stepping Out of One's Comfort Zone. Many students identified that participating in CSL had helped them to step out of their comfort zone and to connect with individuals and communities that they would not normally encounter. Furthermore, several student responses demonstrated that their CSL involvement had enabled them to try new activities and learn to do things for themselves. The results of the present study mirror the research on SL whereby stepping out of one's comfort zone is considered a key impact of SL

participation (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Nabors et al., 2018). Stepping out of one's comfort zone in SL can be defined as students participating in new, diverse, and potentially uncomfortable experiences (Chambers & Lavery, 2018). By stepping out of their comfort zones students are able to participate in experiences in which they would not normally engage, and develop confidence (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Nabors et al., 2018).

6.5.1.4 Awareness of Social Justice Issues. Many Year 11 students identified awareness of social justice issues as an impact of CSL participation. Students commented that through their involvement in CSL their awareness of the world around them had increased and therefore also an awareness of the issues being experienced by others. For example, students recounted experiences where they completed service activities with the homeless. These students noted that through such experiences they were able to develop more of an understanding of the issues faced by the homeless as well as gaining some contextual knowledge of their situation. Other students had a similar realisation that CSL involvement had enabled them to become aware of current issues and how so many people are in need of assistance. The awareness of social justice issues was broadly referred to by Pope Francis (2015) when discussing Christian service. Pope Francis (2015) outlined that Christians, who are inspired by Christ, must make an effort to serve the most vulnerable and stand up for the dignity of all people. SL allows people to serve and connect with the most vulnerable in society (Chambers & Lavery, 2018; Williams, 2016). Numerous scholars have emphasised that engagement in SL can generate an increased awareness of social justice and environmental issues (Ocal & Altınok, 2016; Schneller et al., 2022; Williams, 2016). In light of this research, students need to be supported to realise how their involvement in CSL is increasing their awareness of social justice issues in their community (Williams, 2016).

6.5.1.5 Positive Standing Within the Community. Year 11 students in one school spoke about the positive impact of CSL on the school's reputation within the community. The students believed that because of their participation in CSL within the community, they were more well-liked, and that organisations within the community had more trust in them and their peers, than other schools. These students believed that their school had a better reputation than other nearby schools because of their involvement in CSL. Research has found that both CSL and SL have an impact on students' feelings of worth and self-esteem (Engebretson, 2009; Lavery & Richards, 2006; Nabors et al., 2018)

As outlined earlier, the development of community partnerships through SL is a potential benefit of SL (Segrist, 2013). There appears to be limited research on the benefits of SL on the community (Jacoby, 2014) however the limited research does outline the importance of connection between students and the community (Karasik, 2005; Kaye, 2010a). Karasik (2005) highlighted that students and communities must interact, whilst Kaye (2010a) suggested that SL supports collaboration and the building of community. A positive standing within the community, as a result of CSL participation does not appear to be included in the research on CSL or SL.

6.5.2 Factors that Influence the Impact of Christian Service-Learning

The Year 11 students identified two key factors that influence the impact of CSL. These factors were friendship and family influence and preparation for CSL participation.

6.5.2.1 Friendship and Family Influence. Several students identified that friends and family members had an impact on their attitude towards CSL involvement. Student responses suggested that participation in CSL could be impacted by the extent to which their friends and family are involved in the community. The students believed that if friends and family were already involved within the community then they would have a greater willingness to participate in CSL. As mentioned previously, research outlined that a students' willingness to participate in SL is impacted by the influence of their friends (Chambers & Lavery, 2022; Liu, 2015). In particular, the willingness to be involved in service activities is increased when students complete service with their friends (Chambers & Lavery, 2022; Liu, 2015).

Family members also play an important role in influencing a student's decision to be involved in SL. Liu (2015) asserted that family members act as role models and so their involvement in service activities can impact the way the students become involved in SL. The impact of family members on students' willingness to complete CSL raises the prospect of schools enhancing relationships with family members to include them within the CSL program.

6.5.2.2 Preparation for Participation in Christian Service-Learning. Several students believed that the feeling of being prepared was important for generating a sense of confidence when participating in CSL. These students raised various understandings of the concept of preparation. Some students defined preparation as that which was undertaken prior to completing a service activity. Other students defined preparation as the induction at the

beginning of the CSL program or the induction that took place at their service placement. Some students defined preparation as the research that they undertook before completing a service placement.

Preparation is considered a key component for the effectiveness of SL for students (Jacoby, 2014; Kaye, 2010a; Kaye, 2013). Research on SL outlined that preparation allows the students to complete prior learning about the service they are to undertake and the potential impacts of their service (Kaye, 2010a; Pawlowski, 2018). Given the importance of preparation, students should be adequately prepared for their service activities (Jacoby, 2014; Pawlowski, 2018). This preparation needs to include an opportunity for students to ask questions, information about the logistics relating to the service activity to be undertaken, and behavioural expectations (Jacoby, 2014; Pawlowski, 2018).

6.5.3 Summary

The discussion of results on the Year 11 students' beliefs about participating in CSL highlighted two themes: the positive impact of participation in a CSL program on the individual and factors that influence the impact of CSL. The students indicated that CSL involvement had the following positive impacts on them: the sense of making a positive contribution; development of their personal perspectives; opportunity for stepping out of their comfort zone; an increased awareness of social justice issues; and a positive standing within the community. A positive standing within the community, as a result of CSL participation, was one impact that did not appear to be included in the research on CSL or SL. The Year 11 students articulated that there were two factors which influenced the impact of CSL. These factors were friendship and family influence and preparation. These factors were highlighted as important factors of SL engagement within the research on SL (Chambers & Lavery, 2022; Liu, 2015).

6.6 Key Informant Perceptions of Year 11 Student Attitudes Towards Christian Service-Learning

The discussion on KI perceptions of CSL for students in Year 11 is divided into three sub-sections. These sub-sections are: KI perceptions of Year 11 student positive attitudes towards CSL; KI perceptions of Year 11 student negative attitudes towards CSL; and KI perceptions of impacting factors in the CSL program.

6.6.1 Key Informants' Perceptions of Year 11 Student Positive Attitudes Towards Christian Service-Learning

The KIs identified various positive attitudes they believed Year 11 students held towards CSL. These positive attitudes were related to the notion of helping others, being involved in the community, and completing CSL with friends. The KIs also provided examples of benefits of CSL participation that they perceived for the students such as personal development, learning skills, and developing confidence. These same benefits were expressed by several students. One KI expressed their hope that students would be able to connect their involvement in CSL with putting their faith into action (Devlin & Warner, 2017; Feenstra, 2011; Roso, 2013). The Year 11 students however appeared not to connect the purpose of CSL with putting their faith into action, indicating that this was not a successful outcome.

6.6.2 Key Informants' Perceptions of Year 11 Student Negative Attitudes Towards Christian Service-Learning

The KIs detailed several negative attitudes they believed the Year 11 students held towards CSL. These negative attitudes related to finding a placement where an activity of service could be undertaken, reluctance to complete CSL, and the time required to complete CSL. Three KIs explained how students faced difficulties in finding appropriate service placements. Two of these KIs spoke about the students feeling shy and daunted about approaching service placement providers whilst a third spoke about age restrictions. Student comments reflected these KI perceptions whereby students identified both organising a suitable placement and meeting age restrictions set by placement providers, as challenges.

Two KIs identified reluctance as a negative attitude held by students towards CSL. Karasik (2004; 2005) highlighted the importance of understanding where student opposition to SL derives from. One of the KIs suggested that the attitude of reluctance was more prominent towards the end of the CSL program but did not specify why. A second KI highlighted that students needed to understand why they are participating in CSL. The comments by this KI support the Year 11 students' suggestion that a lack of clarity about the purpose of the CSL program could have a negative impact on student engagement within these programs. Whilst the research on CSL and SL does not appear to include reluctance as an attitude held by students, the literature on SL did outline that not all students want to be involved in SL (Chung & McBride, 2015). This resistance to SL was related to the already outlined compulsory nature of the SL program, the students being asked to participate in a

new activity, and general disengagement from schooling (Chung & McBride, 2015; Fourré, 2006b; Jacoby, 2014).

The research suggests that these negative feelings can be reduced in such ways as: ensuring that meaningful and wide-ranging activities, that are mutually beneficial to the students and those whom they are serving, are included within the SL program (Lavery & Richards, 2006; Schneller et al., 2022); and by ensuring that there are explicit links between the learning outcomes in SL and the academic curriculum being studied by the students (Jacoby, 2014). The KI who spoke about the necessity for students to understand why they are participating in CSL also suggested that the purpose of the CSL program needs to be developed and embedded into all aspects at the college which would then support students to understand the purpose of the CSL program and in turn reduce their attitude of reluctance. This KIs suggestion would seem to have merit as a starting point for CSL programs.

All KIs believed that students found it challenging to find the time to complete CSL activities (Karasik, 2004; Morin, 2009; Norhafezah et al., 2020). Many Year 11 students also identified the time required to complete CSL as a challenge. Two KIs provided suggestions for supporting the students with this challenge. These suggestions were that staff teach students to develop time-management skills and students have opportunities to complete service activities within school time. The first suggestion could be broadly linked to the students' call for the importance of staff member support (Hackett & Lavery, 2011; Hahn et al., 2020). The second suggestion of activities within school time reflects the previously raised student suggestion for opportunities to undertake CSL during school (CEWA, 2021a). Furthermore, two KIs noted that R.E was linked to CSL, with one of these KIs noting that opportunities to incorporate CSL into the R.E curriculum were being explored by the relevant staff at their school. Students made a similar suggestion of incorporating CSL into R.E class time.

6.6.3 Key Informant Perceptions of Impacting Factors in the Christian Service-Learning Program

All KIs believed that CSL programs are impactful on students. They outlined various impacting factors of CSL such as the feeling of making a difference through contributing to society, the inclusion of incentives and awards, parental involvement, and the role of reflection in CSL programs.

6.6.3.1 Making a Difference Through Contributing to Society. All KIs noted that through CSL their students were able to make a difference by contributing to society. The KIs outlined various ways that the students were able to make this difference such as encountering those in need, the realisation that they can make a difference, and recognising their responsibility to help others. These factors reflect the research on SL, whereby students highlighted their positive contribution to society (Jones et al., 2008; Williams, 2016). Two KIs connected the faith-based aspect of CSL to the notion of making a difference through contributing to society. These KIs identified that through CSL the students were putting their faith into action, and that it was necessary for Christians to contribute to society. Research by Engebretson (2014) supported this perception which underscored that through acts of service students could live out their faith. Many Year 11 students also believed that making a contribution was a positive impact of their involvement in CSL. These students' identified impacts of CSL were similar to those of the KIs except that they did not refer to the faith-based or Christian aspect of CSL. The students did, however, identify both aspects when describing how the life of Jesus Christ is central to the CSL program.

6.6.3.2 The Inclusion of Incentives and Awards. The KIs provided varied responses towards the inclusion of incentives and awards within their CSL programs. One KI acknowledged that the inclusion of incentives, such as attendance at the school Ball, meant that the impact of the CSL was reduced. This comment was mirrored by the students' responses, whereby many students believed that the inclusion of incentives and awards was counterproductive and detracted from the overall purpose of CSL.

The KIs also described the incentives and awards as a motivational tool for the students. One KI reasoned that the inclusion of incentives demonstrated the importance of CSL to the students. Another KI explained that the incentives and awards were a form of encouragement, similar to how students received awards for academic and sporting achievements. This reasoning appears to fall into the SL component of celebration, whereby students' achievements are recognised and celebrated at the conclusion of the program (Billig, 2011; Lavery, 2007b; Menezes et al., 2020). Whilst the reasoning outlined by the KIs for the inclusion of incentives and awards has merit, it is diametrically opposite to the students' negative perceptions towards the inclusion of incentives and awards within CSL programs.

One KI commented that they preferred formal recognition at an assembly rather than other forms of celebration such as incentives and awards. This form of recognition is aligned

with the suggestion by Werner and McVaugh (2000) for the use of unexpected and feedback rewards for service activities. Werner and McVaugh (2000) believed that these rewards do not interfere with the integrity or intrinsic motivation to complete service. The schools in this study may need to further explore these forms of rewards in light of the students' comments.

6.6.3.3 Parental Involvement. Three KIs identified the important role that parents play in impacting their child's positive involvement in CSL. This role was related to factors such as family background, the significance of parental support, and a strong value system. As discussed earlier, the Year 11 students noted that pre-existing family involvement in the community could lead to a greater willingness to participate in CSL. The Year 11 students however did not specifically mention the role of their parents in impacting their involvement in CSL. Liu (2015) also described the important role that family members have on impacting their child to participate in SL. These results suggest that parents and the wider family may have a role in supporting CSL. Further research could explore what form that support might take.

6.6.3.4 The Importance of Reflection Activities. All the KIs noted the importance of reflection activities in the CSL program. The KIs reasoned that reflection activities are important because they allow the students to consider their service actions from a faith-based perspective as participants in a Christian program (Rieger, 2014; Schaffer, 2010). The majority of students did not make this connection when discussing reflection activities. The importance of reflection activities is clearly identified in the research on both CSL and SL (Billig, 2018; CEWA, 2021a; Kaye, 2010a; Moak, 2020). The KIs also explained that in addition to the faith-based learning, the reflection activities enabled students to identify the extent of their development and the skills they had learnt. Similar comments were made by the small number of students who provided positive perceptions towards reflection.

One KI outlined that the reflection activities served to determine if the students had genuinely engaged in the service activities. Another KI noted that it was difficult to ensure that the students' reflections were genuine, which reflected the student responses in all of the focus groups. The same KI, however, concluded that the hours needed to be recorded and that the written report was the only way the students could share their thoughts on the service undertaken. These KI perceptions were different from the students' perceptions on reflection activities. There are multiple reasons that could explain why the students are not being genuine in their reflection responses. These reasons could include: that the students are

worried about being judged about what they write; they do not want to miss out on the incentive attached to the CSL program and so they write what they think their assessor would like to read; or a possible trust issue with their assessor, which prevents them from writing openly and honestly. Kaye and Connolly (2018) suggested removing the formal assessment of reflection activities which could support the development of students' positive perceptions towards reflection activities. They proposed that reflection is promoted as part of SL rather than as an assessment.

Only one of the KIs spoke about different forms of reflection activities to the currently employed written format. This KI outlined that speaking at assembly (Jacoby, 2014) and writing a newsletter article (Pawlowski, 2018) could be considered suitable reflection activities. The alternative formats of reflection activities detailed by the students earlier may be a good starting point for the schools involved in this the study to review the presently used written format of reflection.

6.6.4 Summary

The discussion of results on the KI perceptions of CSL for students in Year 11 included three themes: KI perceptions of Year 11 student positive attitudes towards CSL; KI perceptions of Year 11 student negative attitudes towards CSL; and KI perceptions of impacting factors in the CSL program. The KIs believed that the students held positive attitudes about the notion of helping others, being involved in the community, and completing CSL with friends. These KI perceptions mirrored some of the benefits identified by the students. There were three common themes amongst what the KIs perceived as negative attitudes held by the Year 11 students towards CSL. These three negative attitudes were finding a placement where an activity of service could be undertaken, reluctance to complete CSL, and the time required to complete CSL (Chung & McBride, 2015; Norhafezah et al., 2020). All KIs noted that their CSL programs are impactful on students. This impact was related to factors such as the feeling of making a difference through contributing to society, the inclusion of incentives and awards, parental involvement, and the role of reflection in CSL programs. Additionally, the KIs highlighted the connection between the faith-based aspect of CSL and living out one's faith and the opportunity to make a difference in society (Engebretson, 2014), an aspect which was absent in the students' responses.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed and interpreted the results of this study outlined in Chapter Five, in light of the literature presented in Chapter Three. This discussion of results was divided into five sections based on the five research questions:

1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?

2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?

5. What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

This chapter provides the basis for the final chapter: Review and Conclusions.

Chapter Seven: Review and Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

This research had two purposes. Firstly, it explored the perceptions of Year 11 students in four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia towards Christian Service-Learning (CSL). Specifically, the research sought to understand the benefits, challenges, and impacts that CSL presents for students, how students feel about CSL, why they feel this way, and their experiences that led to the construction of these perceptions. Secondly, it aimed to assist improvement in the delivery of CSL programs through an understanding of the students' perceptions.

The epistemology underpinning this qualitative research was constructivism. Interpretivism, specifically symbolic interactionism, was the theoretical perspective selected for this research. Interaction is integral to symbolic interactionism. It is through interaction that individuals can share their viewpoints, feelings, and perceptions, and then these can be interpreted (Crotty, 1998). The methodology employed in this research was case study, specifically instrumental case study. The specific issue being explored in this research was student perceptions of CSL and the instrumental case study of the four Catholic secondary schools was the means to explore the issue. Five methods of data collection were used in this research. These were: document search; semi-structured interviews with a key informant (KI); structured online questionnaire with the Year 11 students; focus group interviews with the Year 11 students; and a researcher reflection journal. The analysis of the qualitative data from this research followed the iterative process outlined by Miles et al. (2020); data condensation, data display, and the drawing and verifying of conclusions. The quantitative responses from the structured online questionnaire were reported through the use of descriptive statistics and graphs.

The research design was structured around one overarching question: What are the perceptions of Year 11 students towards Christian Service-Learning in four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia? Five specific research questions underpinned the overarching question:

1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?
2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?

5. What are key informant perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for students in Year 11?

The discussion in Chapter Six drew from the analysis of the data and critical reflection of the relevant literature.

7.2 Research Questions Answered

This research sought to explore understanding of the perceptions of Year 11 students towards CSL in four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. The following sections provide answers to the five research questions proposed by this inquiry.

7.2.1 What Do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Understand by the Concept of Christian Service-Learning?

The Year 11 students shared four key understandings of the concept of CSL. These understandings were: the Christian aspect of CSL; the purpose of CSL; the differentiation between CSL and volunteering; and the compulsory nature of the CSL program. The students demonstrated an understanding that the life of Jesus Christ underpins CSL programs and that there was a faith-based element of CSL, making reference to various biblical passages. The students identified three purposes of CSL which were: helping others; giving back to the community; and mutual benefit. The student responses highlighted the importance of giving back and helping others. The purposes of CSL, identified by the students are more reflective of the literature on SL than CSL.

The Year 11 students were able to differentiate clearly between CSL and volunteering. The students used the Christ-like perspective of CSL, reflection activities, and the informal nature of volunteering to describe the differences between CSL and volunteering. The students referred to the title of CSL, being Christ-like, and the enacting of Christian values to describe the Christ-like perspective of CSL. The student responses indicated an understanding that CSL was more formal than volunteering because of factors such as opportunities to learn from the service, that CSL was school-based and therefore linked to some of their academic subjects, and that CSL was a compulsory school program.

The factors outlined by the students were more reflective of elements of SL (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2010).

Some Year 11 students held a positive attitude about the compulsory nature of CSL. These students perceived the CSL requirements to be fair, the opportunity to complete CSL to be unique, and that there was a possibility to learn from participating in the CSL activities. Many students, however, held a negative perception towards the compulsory nature of CSL. These students commented on the stress caused by this compulsory requirement. Students explained that they were already busy with school commitments. Students also noted that the compulsory nature of the program meant that some students were not completing the activities genuinely. Several students proposed that CSL should be compulsory in the early years of secondary schooling, whereby students can learn values and the importance of being involved within the community without the pressure of commitments such as study and work.

7.2.2 What do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Identify as the Benefits of Participating in a Christian Service-Learning Program?

The Year 11 students identified a range of benefits of participating in a CSL program. These benefits included: personal growth; learning opportunities; and civic responsibility. Most students held a positive perception of CSL. Moreover, student responses indicated five positive attributes related to CSL participation: the value of CSL; connection with others; the importance of reflection activities within CSL; personal enjoyment; and the development of a positive attitude towards CSL. Most students spoke positively about the value of CSL. The students gave numerous examples to describe the value of CSL. The connection with others was identified as a positive attribute of CSL. The students listed three forms of connection: connection with the people they were serving; connection with the organisation providing the service; and connection with their peers.

A small number of students identified the importance of reflection activities within CSL. These students noted that the reflection activities allowed them to realise the impact of the service undertaken. Many students indicated that they enjoyed participating in CSL. This enjoyment came from the knowledge that students were helping others, as well as completing CSL with their friends. Several students also recognised the development of a positive attitude towards CSL over time. Whilst these students initially felt that CSL was a burden, they acknowledged that as they matured, they came to realise the benefits for themselves and for others.

The Year 11 students identified personal growth as a key benefit of CSL participation. Student responses included various elements of personal growth such as personal development, development of values, and leadership development. The students described personal development in the form of increased confidence, self-esteem, and motivation as a result of their participation in CSL. The students perceived the development of values to be a significant benefit of CSL participation. These values included empathy, compassion and understanding. These are examples of Christ-like values. The development of Christ-like values (Lavery & Hackett, 2008) is a known benefit of CSL participation. Leadership development, relating to learning leadership skills, development as leaders, and positive role modelling was also outlined by many Year 11 students as a personal growth benefit of CSL participation.

The student responses indicated that learning opportunities are a benefit of CSL participation. These learning opportunities related to life lessons and skills and preparation for future careers. In particular, the students commented that through CSL they were able to learn life lessons and skills for the future. These life lessons and skills included time management and organisational skills. The Year 11 students noted how their participation in different CSL activities gave them real-world experiences that would be valuable for the workforce. Student comments also revealed the belief that having CSL on their resume would be advantageous. Civic responsibility, or the feeling of responsibility for others, was another commonly identified benefit of CSL participation by the Year 11 students. This feeling of responsibility was linked to learning about the plight of others and a desire to do more to help others.

7.2.3 What do Year 11 Students in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia Perceive as the Challenges of Participating in a Christian Service-Learning Program?

The Year 11 students perceived various challenges of participating in a CSL program. These challenges related to: students' negative perceptions of CSL; personal challenges faced by students when participating in a CSL program; and challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL. The Year 11 students identified four negative perceptions towards CSL. These perceptions were associated with the requirement of written reflection within the CSL program, the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities, the minimum number of hours for successful completion of the CSL program, and the use of incentives and awards in a CSL program. Many students were resentful towards the requirement of a written reflection. Numerous students stated that they disliked the written

reflections and detailed how they put in minimal effort in the reflection tasks. Furthermore, students believed that the reflection tasks negatively impacted their overall experience of CSL. Some Year 11 students also described a negative perception towards the requirement of photography to demonstrate evidence of abilities. Students raised concerns about the appropriateness and viability of taking photographs in certain settings.

The Year 11 students questioned the need for a minimum number of hours for the successful completion of the CSL program. One student described these hours as a currency, whereby students completed CSL activities and in return received hours towards the completion of the program in order to be able to attend the school Ball. Many students were negative about the use of incentives and awards in the CSL program. The students felt that the inclusion of these incentives and awards detracted from the overall purpose and value of CSL.

The Year 11 students identified various personal challenges that they faced when participating in a CSL program. These personal challenges included: the time required to complete CSL; individual circumstances; and academic requirements of other courses. The Year 11 students noted how their already busy schedules impacted their ability to complete CSL, using examples such as such as after-school commitments, working, studying, and playing sport. Some students identified transport and the home situation as challenging individual circumstances impacting on their ability to complete CSL. The students emphasised that most Year 11 students do not have their driver's license which meant that it was difficult to get to some CSL activities. Furthermore, a students' home situation may influence the type of activities they can participate in. The personal challenge faced by the academic requirements of other courses was specifically related to the time, rigour, and study requirements required by their ATAR (Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank) courses, which are intended for students wanting to go to university at the conclusion of Year 12 (SCSA, 2019).

The Year 11 student responses revealed two challenges associated with the purpose and programming of CSL. These challenges were related to an understanding of the purpose of CSL and liaising and connecting with service placement providers. Several students commented that understanding the purpose of CSL was a challenge. Student responses revealed three challenges faced in liaising and connecting with service placement providers. These were communicating with the service organisation to complete appropriate activities, finding a suitable placement location, and overcoming age restrictions. Some students noted that service organisations were disorganised and challenging to communicate with. The

challenge of finding appropriate activities to complete was related to criteria imposed by the service organisation, which the students described as an obstacle to overcome and confusing.

There were a small number of students who were satisfied with the current structure of the CSL program and believed it did not require any changes. Many Year 11 students, however, proposed various suggestions for overcoming their perceived challenges associated with participating in CSL. These suggestions included: the importance of support from school staff; help with transportation; alternative forms of reflection activities; undertaking of CSL during school time; incorporating CSL into the Religious Education (R.E) curriculum; the potential for connection between CSL and other learning areas; and flexibility with completion dates.

7.2.4 In What Ways do Year 11 Students Believe Participating in a Christian Service-Learning Program has Impacted Them?

The Year 11 students believed there were a number of ways that participation in a CSL program had a positive impact. These positive impacts included personal growth, making a positive contribution, development of perspective, stepping out of one's comfort zone, an increased awareness of social justice issues, and positive standing within the community. Several students specifically stated that participation in CSL impacted their personal growth. This growth was related to becoming the best person they could be, performing better for others, and learning how to complete tasks independently. Many Year 11 students suggested that through CSL they developed the feeling of making a positive contribution.

As a result of their involvement in CSL, the students believed that they had developed their personal perspectives. Students provided examples of how their perspective had changed after their involvement in CSL. Many Year 11 students connected stepping out of one's comfort zone as an impact of CSL, highlighting it as a valuable characteristic of their participation in CSL. The students also believed that they had a greater awareness of social justice issues as a result of their participation in CSL. Several students described how previously they did not have a good understanding of some of the issues in society. Some students shared examples of CSL experiences where they served food to the homeless, to highlight how they had developed an increased awareness of the issue of homelessness. In one focus group, the students described how CSL participation had positively impacted the standing of school members within the community. The students believed their school had a better reputation within the school's local community, because of the CSL undertaken.

The Year 11 students shared several factors that they believed influenced the impact of CSL. These factors were: the attitude of the individual; friendship and family influence; and preparation for CSL participation. Students referred to the impact of CSL being dependent on such factors as the individual student and their attitude. Students discussed how the amount of effort put in by each individual was related to the impact of the program. Friendship influences and family background were also highlighted as having an impact on students' attitudes towards CSL. The feeling of being prepared for participation was noted as giving students a sense of confidence. Various understandings were attached to the word preparation, including: the preparation prior to completing an activity; prior research about a service organisation; and induction activities at the service location. However, only half the respondents believed that they were well-prepared when they went to complete CSL.

7.2.5 What are Key Informant Perceptions of Christian Service-Learning for Students in Year 11?

All four KIs believed that CSL programs are impactful on students. The KIs perceived that Year 11 students had both positive and negative attitudes towards CSL. The KIs identified that students held positive attitudes towards CSL, such as the notion of helping others, being involved in the community, and completing CSL with friends. The KIs also shared their own perceptions of the benefits of CSL participation for the students such as personal development, learning skills, and developing confidence. One KI hoped that the students could connect their CSL participation to putting their faith in action. The KIs also identified that students held negative attitudes towards CSL such as having difficulty finding a placement where an activity of service could be undertaken, reluctance to complete CSL, and the time required to complete CSL.

The KIs stated that the impact of CSL on students was related to factors such as the feeling of making a difference through contributing to society, the inclusion of incentives and awards, parental involvement, and the role of reflection in CSL programs.
All KIs identified that through CSL their students were able to make a difference by contributing to society. This contribution was related to the students encountering those in need, the realisation that students can make a difference, and students recognising their responsibility to help others. The KIs identified that through CSL the students put their faith into action. The KIs were ambivalent towards the inclusion of incentives and awards within CSL. There was general acknowledgement that incentives and awards could reduce the impact of CSL, but that they were a motivational tool for students to complete CSL. The KIs

highlighted the importance of parental involvement in CSL. They believed that this importance was related to factors such as family background, the significance of parental support, and a strong value system. Finally, all the KIs highlighted the important impact of the reflection activities within the CSL program. This importance was linked to the Christian aspect of CSL, the realisation of the impact of CSL, personal development, and the learning of skills.

7.3 Benefits and Limitations of the Research

There are a number of potential benefits of this research. Firstly, this is the first study to include student perceptions towards CSL in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. This research contributes the valuable addition of student voice to the limited existing literature on CSL in Western Australia. Secondly, by using student perceptions, this study has the potential to inform and assist practitioners and proponents of secondary CSL within Western Australian Catholic secondary schools with decision-making, and program creation and delivery. Thirdly, elements of this research could potentially be useful for proponents of CSL and SL in other educational sectors in Western Australia as well as Catholic education in Australia.

There are three potential limitations to this study. The first is related to the study's generalisability. This research involved only four Catholic secondary schools from a total of 54 in Western Australia. This limitation was addressed through the purposive selection of the four schools to provide some variation. The schools are currently facilitating a CSL program and varied from co-educational to single-gender cohorts from Pre-Kindergarten-12 and 7-12 schools, with differing Index of Community Socio-Educational (ICSEA) scores. The results of this research are most likely to be generalisable to Catholic secondary schools with similar contexts rather than all secondary and composite schools within Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA).

The second potential limitation is related to self-selection bias, due to the voluntary nature of the participation by the Year 11 students. Whilst this form of bias was unavoidable (Tripepi et al., 2010), the use of consistent methods of data collection, employed in this research, reduced the overall impact of the bias. All Year 11 students in the four participating schools were invited to participate in the structured online questionnaire and within this questionnaire the participants then had the opportunity to nominate for the focus group interviews. Moreover, all Year 11 students were provided with information about the anonymity and confidentiality of their participation through the participant information sheet

(Appendix D). The third potential limitation is related to the participation of only Year 11 students and KIs from each school.

7.4 Knowledge Added to the Field of Study

This thesis added knowledge to the field of study in four ways. Firstly, this research is the first qualitative study to include student perceptions of CSL in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. Specifically, the students' perceptions were related to their understanding of CSL, their perceived benefits and challenges of CSL, and their beliefs about the impacts of participating in a CSL program. Previous research on CSL in Western Australia had focussed on student participation in CSL and the impact of this participation on students' leadership capabilities. The present study therefore adds knowledge to the field about the important, yet often missing, component of student voice. Secondly, this research was focussed on CSL. Whilst there is a substantial body of literature about SL in general, there does not appear to be the same amount of literature on CSL. As such, this research adds to the apparent limited amount of literature on CSL, and consequently adds knowledge to the field about CSL.

Thirdly, the research adds knowledge to the field of study about student proposed improvements for CSL programs. These suggested improvements included: the use of alternative forms of reflection activities; undertaking of CSL during school time; and incorporating CSL into the R.E curriculum. Fourthly, the students shared perceptions about a number of areas that appear not to be included within current literature on CSL or SL. The research adds knowledge to the field about: understanding the purpose of CSL; the use of incentives and awards in a CSL program; flexibility of completion dates; and positive standing within the community as a result of CSL participation.

7.5 Implications of the Study for Christian Service-Learning Program Delivery

The results of this research have implications for CEWA, Principals in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia, and staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. Firstly, the research has implications for CEWA as CEWA oversees all aspects of education within Catholic schools in Western Australia. Secondly, this research has implications for Principals in Catholic secondary schools, who acting on behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Western Australia have authority for decision-making within their schools. Thirdly, the research has implications for Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. The results of this research provide the

Catholic secondary schools with student perceptions towards CSL. These student perceptions could be used by staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia to develop and improve the delivery of CSL programs.

7.6 Implications for Further Research

This study provides a basis for further and extended research into CSL. As initially outlined in Chapter One, there appears to be a gap in the literature regarding Western Australian Catholic secondary school students' perceptions towards CSL, as well as CSL in general. The results of this study indicate that further research could be undertaken in three specific areas. Firstly, further research could be conducted into student perceptions towards the Christian aspect of CSL. The results of the current research indicate that the Year 11 students did not explicitly connect the Christian aspect of CSL with the understandings, benefits, and impacts of CSL participation. Secondly, the results of this study suggest that parents and family members have a role in supporting their children's CSL engagement. Further research is recommended to explore how, and through what forms, this support can be given to students. Finally, the current research included the perceptions of Year 11 students and KIs from four Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. The perceptions of other stakeholders such as students in other year groups, staff in general, and service placement providers were not included. Further research could investigate the perceptions of these stakeholders to further develop the limited literature on CSL.

7.7 Recommendations

Eight recommendations are drawn from the results of this study. In making these recommendations it should be mentioned that there appears to be not one single approach to Year 11 CSL in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia. These recommendations are made to CEWA, Catholic secondary school Principals, and Catholic secondary school staff members.

Recommendation 1: Include Christian Service-Learning Within the Religious Education Curriculum

It is recommended that CEWA explore the possibility of formally including CSL within the R.E curriculum. Both the Year 11 students and the KIs identified incorporating

CSL into the R.E curriculum as a suggestion for improving CSL programs. This suggestion was based around the notion that CSL is a practical way to implement the learnings within R.E because of the natural link between CSL and R.E (Lavery & Hackett, 2008; Schaffer, 2010). Such an implementation could include research service, advocacy service, and time to complete activities of service and reflection activities. The inclusion of CSL within the R.E curriculum would also mean that it is overseen by the CEWA Religious Education and Faith Formation Team (REFFT). The REFFT is made up of a number of consultants who have responsibility for different elements of both the primary and secondary school R.E curriculum, and other aspects of Campus Ministry including retreats and faith formation. There is currently no specific CSL consultant.

Recommendation 2: Appoint a Christian Service-Learning Consultant to Support Schools

It is recommended that CEWA consider appointing a CSL consultant, as part of the REFFT. This person would have direct responsibility for overseeing CSL within Catholic schools in Western Australia. This consultancy-based role could have the purpose of providing support to school-based staff with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs. The consultant could support school-based staff with making the Christian aspect of CSL more apparent and establishing and developing connections with service placement providers. The consultant could be a direct point of reference for schools to seek advice, ideas, and suggestions for overcoming challenges so that students can improve their engagement in CSL.

Recommendation 3: Allocate Time Within School Calendar for Christian Service-Learning

It is recommended that Catholic secondary school Principals consider allocating time within the school calendar for students to complete CSL activities. Both the Year 11 students and the KIs identified that finding the time to complete CSL activities was a challenge (Karasik, 2004; Steele, 2023). This recommendation would aid the Year 11 students, or students from other year groups, to overcome the challenge of finding time and support them to engage in CSL activities. The implementation of this recommendation could further expose students to the benefits and positive impacts available to participants of CSL. Possible examples of how CSL could be included into the school calendar include a CSL day each Term or an annual CSL week, whereby students complete CSL activities. The chosen method

for the allocation of school time for CSL would be up to the discretion of the school Principal.

Recommendation 4: Make Explicit the Christian Aspect of the Christian Service-Learning Program

It is recommended that staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs within schools make the Christian aspect of the CSL program explicit for students, staff, parents, and service placement providers. This Christian aspect needs to be explicitly linked to: the purpose of the CSL program and the reason why the students are involved in the program; the Christ-like nature of the service actions being undertaken; the service actions being a witness of the school's faith in action; the concept of discipleship; and the overall Catholic identity of the school (Devlin & Warner, 2017; Price, 2021). For the Christian aspect of CSL to be explicit, it is recommended that the naming of the school's CSL program include the words Christian and Service-Learning. The staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs, supported by all staff within the school, need to ensure that the Christian aspect of CSL permeates through all aspects of CSL, including the preparation phase, and through the use of guided reflection activities (Di Giacomo, 2007).

Recommendation 5: A Variety of Ways for Offering Christian Service-Learning Programs

It is recommended that staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs within schools consider offering CSL programs in a variety of ways. This recommendation could be enacted in conjunction with Recommendations 1 and 3. Such ways could include students participating in the Authority-Developed Endorsed Program: Community Service (ADCS), and students participating in a flexible school-based program. The Year 11 students who opt to complete the ADCS would be required to complete the SCSA requirement of 55 hours, which would count towards the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) that students receive at the completion of Year 12. The promotion of this ADCS program would be no different to schools promoting completion of other academic subjects. The Year 11 students who opt to complete the school-based program would be required to complete service activities and reflections but the number of hours would be reduced, at the discretion of the staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL. These students could receive a certificate of completion at the end of Year 12, acknowledging the number of hours of service activities they completed.

Recommendation 6: Remove the Inclusion of Incentives for the Completion of Christian Service-Learning

It is recommended that staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs within schools remove the inclusion of incentives or consequences attached to the completion of a set number of hours of CSL. One concern highlighted in this research was that many Year 11 students believed that the use of incentives and awards was counterproductive to the purpose of CSL and reduced the overall value of their CSL experiences (Billig, 2011). This current study does support the inclusion of awards in a CSL program as examples of celebration and valorisation (Menezes et al., 2020). Each school would set their own criteria for these awards, which would have the purpose of recognising student effort and achievement within the CSL program, rather than punishing those who did not complete the requirements.

Recommendation 7: Include and Implement Alternative Forms of Reflection Activities for Participants

It is recommended that staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs within schools implement a variety of forms of reflection activities for the students (Jacoby, 2014; Pawlowski, 2018; Rieger, 2014). Many Year 11 students highlighted a negative perception towards the currently employed written format of reflection within their school's CSL program. Possible examples of alternative forms of reflection activities include one-on-one interviews with a staff member, journalling, artwork, scrapbooking, and oral presentations. Irrespective of whichever form is used, the use of a guided reflection is encouraged, to enable students to reflect on the service undertaken through a Christian lens (Engebretson, 2014). Staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs are encouraged to highlight to the students the importance of reflection activities as well as the purpose for their inclusion within CSL programs.

Recommendation 8: Promote Christian Service-Learning to Parents and Guardians of Participants

It is recommended that staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs within schools promote CSL to parents and guardians. Firstly, staff members with responsibility for overseeing CSL programs need to ensure that parents and guardians are aware of the purpose and key information about the CSL program. This key information relates to the Christ-like nature of the program, the rationale for its inclusion within the

programs available to students at the school, and the requirements and expectations about the CSL program. The purpose of CSL and key program information could be promoted in a variety of ways, which include being delivered at an information night, in the form of a letter sent home, within the school newsletter, or other forms of communication employed by each school. The delivery of this information could assist parents and guardians to know more about what their children are doing, and are expected to do, and allow them to show interest in what their children are doing.

7.8 A Framework for Christian-Service Learning

As a result of this study, Figure 7.1 presents a framework incorporating the recommendations for CSL emerging from this research. This framework may be considered a starting point for the development of a CSL program. The delivery of the CSL program is dependent on the individual context of the school and additional elements may be applicable for other settings and/or organisations. Each element of the framework is linked to one of the recommendations outlined in the previous section. It is hoped that this framework will support the delivery of CSL in Year 11 in Catholic secondary schools within Western Australia. The framework could also have implications for CSL in other year levels. It could also have relevance for CSL and SL at a national level.

Figure 7.1

A Framework for Christian Service-Learning
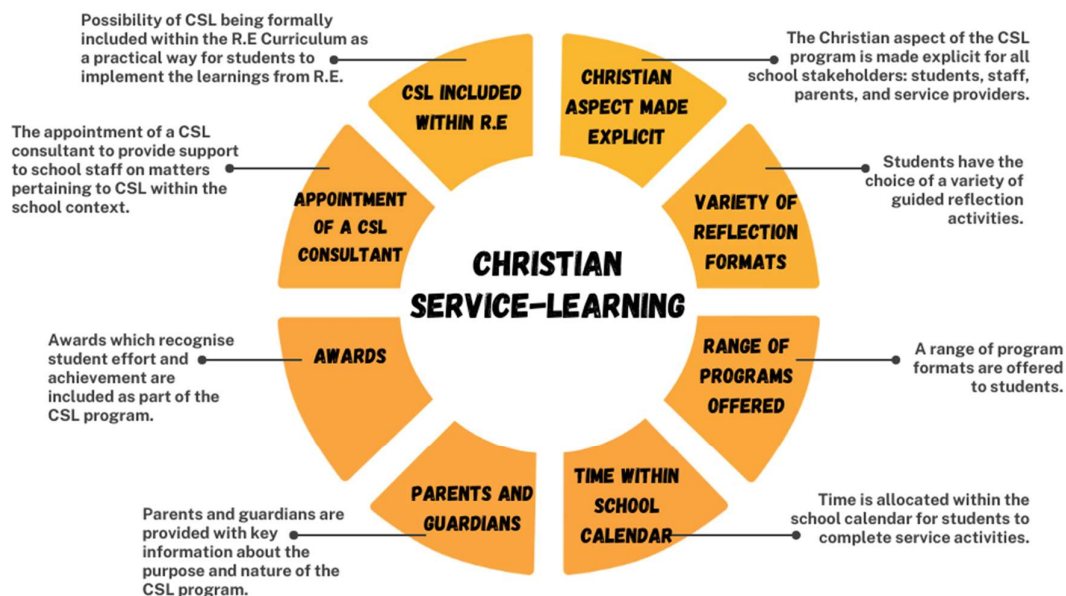
7.9 Conclusion

This study was concerned with the exploration of the perceptions of Year 11 students from four Catholic schools in Western Australia towards CSL. The intent of the study was to explore the benefits, challenges, and impacts of CSL from the perspective of students, how students feel about CSL, why they feel this way, and what their experiences were that led to the construction of these perceptions. The study has given Year 11 students a voice about their CSL experiences, has identified their understanding of CSL, has provided insight into the perceived benefits, challenges, and impacts of participating in a CSL program, and has allowed the students to share their thoughts and ideas for improving the delivery of CSL programs. The students' understandings and perceptions were compared with those held by the four KIs.

7.10 Personal Impact Statement

The opportunity to engage with the Year 11 students was personally invaluable, both in the focus group interviews, and through their responses in the structured online questionnaire. The students' perceptions have given me a profound understanding of their feelings, thoughts, and ideas about CSL. I feel inspired and empowered by their perceptions and feel a strong sense of responsibility to continue to strengthen the areas of CSL that they spoke positively about, to work towards solutions to the challenges they outlined, and to incorporate their suggestions for improvement. The students clearly enjoy numerous aspects of CSL and it is hoped that the insights, opinions, and ideas that they shared in this study can be taken into account in the development and delivery of CSL programs moving forward. I hope that this research, the eight recommendations and the framework for CSL presented within this chapter, provide purposeful support to all relevant staff in the development and delivery of CSL programs. The engagement with the KIs was also impactful, as it allowed me to gain a contextual understanding as well as an understanding of the perceptions of colleagues who are in a similar professional role to mine.

I have thoroughly enjoyed undertaking this research. The underlying motivations for undertaking this research were drawn from my long-standing passion for CSL and what I believe is its contribution to improving communities, as well as my belief in the important role that student voice plays in forming a high-quality and engaging curriculum. Throughout the journey of this research, both motivational factors have been affirmed and strengthened.

7.11 Addendum

This research has already generated interest amongst secondary schools, tertiary institutions, and religious organisations. Several Principals and Deputy Principals from Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia, as well as inter-state, have expressed interest in reading this thesis, particularly the results of the research in relation to student perceptions towards CSL. Leaders from several religious-based organisations have also expressed interest in reading the thesis. Lecturers from one tertiary institution have expressed an interest in the results and how the results of the thesis may be relevant to tertiary students studying SL units. The researcher has also been approached by several Deputy Principals from Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia and lecturers from one tertiary institution about the possibility of speaking to cohorts of staff and students about CSL.

The researcher, as a Deputy Principal in a Catholic secondary school in Western Australia, has within his role responsibility the co-ordination and implementation of CSL programs within his own school. The researcher has therefore already been able to implement some of the results of this study within their own school. These implementations include an explicit focus on student understanding of the purpose of CSL and its Christ-like foundations, providing opportunities for students to undertake CSL during school time, and the incorporation of CSL into the R.E curriculum.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Key Informant Information Sheet and Consent

Key Informant PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

The research project investigates Year 11 student's perceptions towards Christian Service-Learning. The research is significant because it will address a gap in the literature regarding Western Australian Catholic secondary school students' perceptions towards CSL. The research will attempt to contribute student voice to the existing literature and add to knowledge in the field. The research could be of interest to those practitioners involved in secondary CSL, given the focus on student voice. It is anticipated that this research will provide insight into the value of SL and ways programs can be improved from a student perspective.

Who is undertaking the project?

This project is being conducted by Salvatore De Luca and will form the basis for the Doctor of Education degree at The University of Notre Dame Australia, under the supervision of Associate Professor Shane Lavery and Associate Professor Dianne Chambers.

What will I be asked to do?

If you consent to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the tasks that you and your students will be asked to complete. Please make sure that any questions that you have are answered to your satisfaction before you agree to participate. Your involvement in the project may consist of:

• Participating in a 1 hour semi-structured interview with the researcher onsite at the College which will be audio recorded for later analysis. The semi-structured interview will be undertaken using an online platform if visitors on site at schools are not permitted.

• Collecting permission forms and administering an anonymous structured online questionnaire, to all participating students in Year 11. Within the structured online questionnaire, students will have the opportunity to nominate to participate in a focus group interview which will be organized and conducted by the researcher.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

There is a potential risk with participation in this project. As a key informant, you may be identifiable due to the small number of people in this field. All efforts will be made to avoid any identification. All COVID19 safety requirements will be respected during the research. If required, during the semi-structured interviews, safe distancing or mask wearing requirements will be strictly adhered to.

What are the benefits of the research project?

This project will enable you to share your thoughts, opinions, and perspectives towards Christian Service-Learning. More broadly, it is anticipated that this research will provide insight into the value of Service-Learning and ways programs can be improved from a student and staff perspective.

What if I change my mind?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you consent, you can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and with no negative consequences. If you decide you no longer want to participate in the study, you only need to let the researcher know. If you withdraw, all information can be removed if you choose.

How will you keep my information private and confidential?

Information gathered about you will be held in strict confidence and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law. All data will be de-identified and will remain confidential and anonymous. The data will be stored securely as per the university policy for research data management. Data will be stored in Microsoft Azure for five years after the study concludes and will then be permanently deleted, as per the UNDA Research Data Management Procedure. The data will only be shared between the researcher and supervisors of this project. The results of the study will be published as a Doctoral Thesis and published in quality journals.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

Once the researcher has analysed the information from this study an executive summary of the research will be provided to the Principal of each participating school. This feedback will be provided within 12 months after the completion of the study. If you would like a copy of the executive summary, a copy can be provided to you on request.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact Salvatore De Luca at ▮▮▮▮▮▮ or ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ Alternatively, you can contact Associate Professor Shane Lavery at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ I am happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have about this study.

What if I have a concern or complaint?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at The University of Notre Dame Australia (approval number 2022-086F). If you have a concern or complaint regarding the ethical conduct of this research project and would like to speak to an independent person, please contact Notre Dame's Research Ethics Officer at (+61 8) 9433 0943 or research.ethics@nd.edu.au. Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

How do I sign up to participate?

If you are happy to participate, please sign both copies of the consent form, keep one for yourself and email the other to me.

Thank you for your time. This sheet is for you to keep.

Yours sincerely,

Salvatore De Luca

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KEY INFORMANT CONSENT FORM

The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

- I agree to take part in this research project.

- I have read the Information Sheet provided and been given a full explanation of the purpose of this study, the procedures involved and of what is expected of me.

- I understand that I will be asked to:

  •Participate in a 1 hour semi-structured interview with the researcher, onsite at the College which will be audio recorded for later analysis.

  • Collect permission forms and administer an anonymous structured online questionnaire, to all participating students in Year 11.

- The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained possible problems that may arise as a result of my participation in this study.

- I understand that I may withdraw from participating in the project at any time without prejudice.

- I understand that all information provided by me is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.

- I agree that any research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name or other identifying information is not disclosed.

Name of participant			
Signature of participant		Date	

- I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this research project to the above participant, explained what participating involves and have answered all questions asked of me.

Signature of Researcher		Date	

Consent Form template (October 2017)

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Question Guide

Semi-Structured Interview Questions – Key Informant

Setting the scene
-Safe space- confidentiality and privacy. Your name will not be connected with any of the comments you make.
-This is your opportunity to share your thoughts, feelings, ideas and opinions about Christian Service-Learning (CSL).
-No judgements will be made by me about the comments you make.
-This is how it will work- I'll ask a series of questions about CSL, all opinions are important and valued.

Lead-in questions
1. What is your role in the CSL program at the school?
2. Can you tell me about the CSL program within your school and how it is delivered?
3. What are the CSL requirements for Year 11s within the school?
4. What opportunities are provided for the Year 11 students to engage with CSL?

Research Sub-question 1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?
1. What do you believe Year 11 students understand by the concept of CSL?
2. In what ways do Year 11 students define CSL?
3. Are students able to identify the difference between CSL and other forms of service such as volunteering?
4. What opportunities are Year 11 students provided with to reflect on the meaning of CSL?
5. What role do you believe the Catholic faith plays in underpinning the CSL program? What makes CSL different to SL?
6. What are two perceptions of CSL that you typically hear from Year 11 students?
7. How is the CSL program promoted to students at the College? Do you think it is effective in eliciting positive perceptions of CSL in students?

Research Sub-question 2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
8. In what ways do you believe Year 11 students enjoy participating in CSL?
9. Do Year 11 students recognise any benefits of CSL?
10. What benefits are promoted to Year 11 students to encourage participation in CSL?
11. What do you think staff identify as the benefits of CSL?
12. Do you believe staff not directly involved with the CSL program see the benefits of CSL and do they communicate this with their students?

Research Sub-question 3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

13. What do you believe are the challenges that Year 11 students have when completing CSL?

14. How are the Year 11 students supported to overcome these challenges?

15. What do you believe are the challenges that staff see in Year 11 students undertaking CSL, as identified by staff?

16. How did COVID impact the CSL program and was this impact overcome?

Research Sub-question 4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted on them?

17. What impact do you think the CSL program has on Year 11 students?

18. What impacts do you believe students associate with CSL?

19. In your opinion, how impactful is the CSL program on the students? The people they are serving. The organisations?

20. What changes, if any, do you think could be implemented to your college CSL program to increase the impact on either the students involved, the people and organisations they serve, or the college community as a whole?

Closing question

1. Is there anything you would like to say about the CSL program or your role in the program that has not been addressed in this interview?

Appendix C: Structured Online Questionnaire

Structured Online Questionnaire- Year 11 Students

1.I have read the Participant Information Sheet and agree to proceed with this anonymous questionnaire.
- ○ Yes
- ○ No

2.Gender:
- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ Non-binary / third gender

3.Which pathway are you currently enrolled in?
- ○ ATAR
- ○ General
- ○ Both
- ○ Neither

4.Select the years in which you have participated in Christian Service-learning?
- ☐ Year 7
- ☐ Year 8
- ☐ Year 9
- ☐ Year 10
- ☐ Year 11

5.Do you like undertaking Christian Service-learning?
- ○ Yes
- ○ Maybe
- ○ No

6.Which of these do you feel are benefits of Christian Service-learning? Select all that apply:
- ☐ Improved academic achievement
- ☐ Development of personal values

☐ Increased feeling of responsibility to others

☐ Preparation for potential career paths

☐ Leadership development

☐ None

☐ Other (Name below)

7. Which of these do you feel are challenges presented by Christian Service-learning? Select all that apply:

☐ Time required to complete the activities of service

☐ Communication between myself and the school and the organisation

☐ Support from the school

☐ Requirements of Christian Service-learning

☐ None

☐ Other (Name below)

8. Which of these do you feel are impacts of Christian Service-learning? Select all that apply:

☐ Engagement with school

☐ Awareness of social justice issues

☐ Challenging personal comfort levels

☐ Engagement with community

☐ None

☐ Other (Name below)

9. I enjoy completing reflections on the Christian Service-learning activities I have completed:

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

10. I feel well-prepared when I go to complete Christian Service-learning activities:

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

11. Christian Service-learning has had an impact on my life

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

12. Christian Service-learning is linked to what I am learning in class?

○ Strongly disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Strongly agree

13. When you complete a Christian Service-learning activity, do you feel you are making a worthwhile contribution? (Explain why)

14. Is Christian Service-Learning valuable? Please explain your reasons for your response?

15. What is your overall perception of Christian Service-learning?

16. Describe your Christian Service-learning experience in three words?

If you would like to participate in a face to face small group interview, please click on the below link:

Nomination for face to face small group interview

Your Name

Your School's Name

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

Appendix D: Year 11 Student Information Sheet and Consent

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Student PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

Dear Student

My name is Salvatore De Luca and I am a researcher from the School of Education at The University of Notre Dame Australia. I would like to invite you to take part in a research project that I am doing about to find out more about what students in Year 11 Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia think about Christian Service-Learning.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to:

• Participate in a 20-minute online questionnaire to share your thoughts, opinions and feelings about your Christian Service-Learning experiences.

• During the online questionnaire you can nominate to be part of a small group interview, by completing a separate form. The small group interview will take place on site at school and will last approximately 1 hour and will be audio recorded. The small group interview will be undertaken using an online platform if visitors on site at schools are not permitted. In this interview the researcher will ask you and the other members of the small group questions about your Christian Service-learning experiences, to enable me to understand thoughts, opinions, feelings and ideas about Christian Service-learning. Your name will not be included at any time.

If you do not want to participate in some of the activities or answer questions that are personal to you that is okay. You will not have to do or say anything that you are not comfortable with.

Do I have to take part?

No you don't. You are free to say yes or no. The researcher will respect your decision and will not question it. Even if you agree to participate, you can change your mind at any time and no longer take part. If you do change your mind, all information you have provided can be removed from the project if you choose.

Is there risk to me if I take part?

The researcher does not think there is any risk of harm if you take part in the study but if you find that you are becoming upset please let the researcher know so that assistance can be provided or you can access your school Pastoral Care Team for help with what you are feeling. All COVID19 safety requirements will be respected during the research. If required, during the focus group interviews, safe distancing or mask wearing requirements will be strictly adhered to.

What are the benefits of the research project?

This is your opportunity to share your thoughts, feelings, ideas and opinions about Christian Service-Learning. No judgements will be made by the researcher about the comments you make. The

researcher wants to hear what students think about Christian Service-Learning and would like to improve Christian Service-Learning programs based on what students have to say.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?

Information gathered about you will be held in strict confidence. This confidence will only be broken if required by law.

The information you share in the online questionnaire will only be seen by the researcher. You will not need to include your name in the online questionnaire so you can speak openly and honestly. If you would like to be part of the small group interview, you will need to include your name but this is only so the researcher knows to include you. During the small group interview all students will be reminded that what is shared during the interview must remain confidential. Your name will not be connected with any of the comments you make.

Once the study is completed, the data collected from you will be de-identified and stored securely in the School of Education at The University of Notre Dame Australia for at least a period of five years. The results of the study will be published as a Doctoral Thesis and published in quality journals.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

Once the researcher has analysed the information from this study an executive summary of the research will be provided to the Principal of your school. This feedback will be provided within 12 months after the completion of the study. If you would like a copy of the executive summary, a copy can be provided to you on request.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

Please talk about the project with your parent/guardian or {insert Key Informant's details} first. Then if you have questions for me, you can contact me by email salvatore.deluca1@my.nd.edu.au. Alternatively, you can contact Associate Professor Shane Lavery at 94330173 or shane.lavery@nd.edu.au. I am happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have about this study.

What if I have a concern or complaint?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at The University of Notre Dame Australia (approval number 2022-086F). If you have a concern or complaint about how the project is carried out and would like to speak to an independent person, please contact Notre Dame's Ethics Officer at (+61 8) 9433 0943 or research@nd.edu.au. Any complaint or concern will be treated privately and you will be informed of the outcome.

How do I sign up to take part?

If you are happy to participate, please sign both copies of the consent form, keep one for yourself and give one to {insert Key Informant's details}.

This sheet is for you to keep.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
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AUSTRALIA

STUDENT CONSENT FORM

The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

- I agree to take part in this research project.

- I have read the Information Sheet provided and have discussed taking part with my parent(s) / guardian.

- I understand that I will be asked to:

    - Participate in a 20 minute online questionnaire to share my thoughts, opinions and feelings about my Christian Service-learning experiences.

    - Nominate and then participate in a small group interview held on site at the College. The small group interview will last approximately 1 hour and will be audio recorded.

- The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained possible problems that may happen during the research project.

- I understand that I can change my mind about taking part in the research project at any time.

- I understand that taking part in this research project will not affect my grades or my relationship with my teacher(s) or my school.

- I understand that nothing about me will be given by the researchers to anybody else except where the law says they must.

Name of participant			
Signature of participant		Date	

- I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this research project to the above child and parent/guardian, explained what participating involves and have answered all questions asked of me.

Signature of Researcher		Date	

Appendix E: Parent/Guardian Information Sheet and Consent

THE UNIVERSITY OF
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AUSTRALIA

Parent/Guardian INFORMATION SHEET

The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

Your child is invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

The research project investigates Year 11 student's perceptions towards Christian Service-Learning. The research is significant because it will include what students think about Christian Service-Learning which has been missing in previous research. It is hoped that this research will improve Christian Service-Learning programs using student input and ideas.

Who is undertaking the project?

This project is being conducted by Salvatore De Luca and will form the basis for the Doctor of Education degree at The University of Notre Dame Australia, under the supervision of Associate Professor Shane Lavery and Associate Professor Dianne Chambers.

What will my child be asked to do?

If you consent for your child to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the tasks your child will be asked to complete. Please discuss this with your child and make sure that any questions that you and your child have are answered to your satisfaction before you agree to allow your child to participate.

Your child will be invited to be involved in the following:

• Participate in an online questionnaire to share their thoughts, opinions and feelings about their Christian Service-Learning experiences. The questionnaire will be administered by the school and will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

• During the online questionnaire your child can nominate to be part of the small group interview, by completing a separate form. The small group interview will be undertaken using an online platform if visitors on site at schools are not permitted. The small group interviews will last approximately 1 hour and will be audio recorded. Your child's name will not be included at any time.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

It is possible that your child may have concerns with sharing their responses during the small group interviews. Before commencing the small group interview, all students will be informed that the setting is a safe space and their thoughts and opinions will be welcomed. Students will be informed that their thoughts and opinions will not be the subject of judgement from the researcher and that they can speak openly and honestly about their perceptions towards CSL. Students will also be reminded to access the support services (Pastoral Care Team/Student Services Team) within their school, should they feel the need following their participation. Students will be reminded that they will remain anonymous. All COVID19 safety requirements will be respected during the research. If required, during the focus group interviews, safe distancing or mask wearing requirements will be strictly adhered to.

What are the benefits of the research project?

This research is your child's opportunity to share their thoughts, feelings, ideas and opinions about Christian Service-Learning. No judgements will be made by the researcher about the comments they make. The researcher wants to hear what students think about Christian Service-Learning and would like to improve Christian Service-Learning programs based on what students have to say.

What if my child changes their mind?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you consent, you can withdraw your child from the study at any time without giving a reason and with no negative consequences. If your child decides they no longer want to participate, they only need to let their teacher or someone from the research team know. If your child withdraws, all information you and your child have provided can be removed if you choose.

How will you keep my child's information private and confidential?

Information gathered about you and your child will be held in strict confidence and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law. All data will be de-identified and will remain confidential and anonymous and stored securely as per the university policy for research data management. The results of the study will be published as a Doctoral Thesis and published in quality journals.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

Once the researcher has analysed the information from this study an executive summary of the research will be provided to the Principal of each participating school. This feedback will be provided within 12 months after the completion of the study. If you would like a copy of the executive summary, a copy can be provided to you on request.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact Salvatore De Luca at   or ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ Alternatively, you can contact Associate Professor Shane Lavery at ▮▮▮▮▮ or shane.lavery@nd.edu.au. I am happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have about this study.

What if I have a concern or complaint?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at The University of Notre Dame Australia (approval number 2022-086F). If you have a concern or complaint regarding the ethical conduct of this research project and would like to speak to an independent person, please contact Notre Dame's Ethics Officer at (+61 8) 9433 0943 or research.ethics@nd.edu.au. Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

How does my child sign up to participate?

If you are happy for your child to participate, please sign both copies of the consent form, keep one for yourself and give one to {insert Key Informant's details}

Thank you for your time. This sheet is for you to keep.

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Yours sincerely,

Salvatore De Luca

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
AUSTRALIA

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

- I agree to allow my child to take part in this research project.

- I have read the Information Sheet provided and been given a full explanation of the purpose of this study, the procedures involved and of what is expected of my child.

- I understand that my child will be asked to:

    - Participate in an online questionnaire to share their thoughts, opinions and feelings about their Christian Service-Learning experiences.

    - Nominate and then participate in a small group interview. The small group interview will last approximately 1 hour and will be audio recorded.

- The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained possible problems that may arise as a result of my child's participation in this study.

- I understand that my child may withdraw or that I may withdraw my child from the research project at any time without the need for an explanation.

- I understand that all information provided by me or my child is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.

- I agree that any research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name or my child's name or other identifying information is not disclosed.

Name of parent/guardian			
Signature of parent/guardian		Date	

- I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this research project to the above participant, explained what participating involves and have answered all questions asked of me.

Signature of Researcher		Date	

Appendix F: Focus Group Interview Guide

Focus Group Interview Questions – Year 11 Students

Setting the scene
-Safe space- confidentiality and privacy. Your name will not be connected with any of the comments you make.
-This is your opportunity to share your thoughts, feelings, ideas and opinions about Christian Service-Learning (CSL).
-I want to hear what you think about CSL and would like to improve CSL programs based on what students have to say.
-No judgements will be made by me about the comments you make.
-Please speak with your school Pastoral Care Team for help with what you are feeling.
-This is how it will work- I'll ask a series of questions about CSL, all opinions are important and valued. Speak up

Lead-in questions
1. Can you tell me about the CSL program within your school and how it is delivered?
2. What are the CSL requirements for Year 11s within the school?

Research Sub-question 1. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia understand by the concept of Christian Service-Learning?
1. What do you understand by the concept of CSL?
2. How would you define CSL?
3. What do you believe makes CSL different to volunteer work?
4. Can you tell me about the preparation that takes place before you undertake CSL activities?
5. Are you provided with opportunities to reflect on the meaning of CSL?

Research Sub-question 2. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia identify as the benefits of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?
6. What do you see as the individual/collective benefits of CSL? (What good things come out of it for you)
7. When you complete a CSL activity, do you feel you are making a worthwhile contribution?
8. Is CSL valuable? Please explain your reasons for your response?

Research Sub-question 3. What do Year 11 students in Catholic secondary schools in Western Australia perceive as the challenges of participating in a Christian Service-Learning program?

9. What challenges do you see presented by CSL?

10. How are you supported to overcome these challenges?

11. How do you believe these challenges can be overcome?

Research Sub-question 4. In what ways do Year 11 students believe participating in a Christian Service-Learning program has impacted them?

12. What impact does CSL have on you? (What do you get out of it)

13. In your opinion, how impactful is the CSL program in the whole school/on Year 11s?

14. How can the CSL program be more impactful?

15. If you were in charge of CSL program- how would the program be designed?

16. In what ways do you believe CSL can be linked to what you are learning in the classroom?

17. How would you improve the CSL program?

18. What is your overall perception of CSL?

19. How would you say Year 11 students feel about CSL?

Closing question

20. Is there anything you would like to say about the CSL program or your role in the program that has not been addressed in this interview?

Appendix G: Formal Approval from The University of Notre Dame Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
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19 Mouat St (PO Box 1225) Fremantle WA 6959
+61 8 **9433 0555** | enquiries@nd.edu.au

21 July 2022

A/Prof Shane Lavery & A/Prof Dianne Chambers
School of Education
The University of Notre Dame Australia
Fremantle Campus

Dear Shane and Dianne

Reference Number: 2022-086F

Project title: "*The Perceptions of Year 11 Students towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia*"

Your responses to the conditions imposed by the University of Notre Dame Human Research Ethics Committee has been reviewed in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007 updated 2018). I am pleased to advise that ethics approval has been granted for this proposed study.

It is noted that formal permission to approach Catholic Schools will be sought from Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) and that approval will be sought from these principals as well as from Principals of schools that do not come under the umbrella of Catholic Education WA.

Other researchers identified as working on this project are:

Name	School/Centre	Role
Mr Salvatore De Luca	School of Education, UNDA	Student Researcher

All research projects are approved subject to standard conditions of approval.

Please read the attached document for details of these conditions.

On behalf of the Human Research Ethics Committee, I wish you well with your study.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Erica Lewin
Research Ethics Officer
Research Office

Cc: Dr Annette Pierdziwol, Associate Dean Research, Faculty of Education, Philosophy & Theology

Broome Campus 88 Guy St (PO Box 2287) Broome WA 6725
Sydney Campus 140 Broadway (PO Box 944) NSW 2007

| Fremantle | Broome | Sydney |

ABN 69 330 643 210 | **CRICOS Provider Code:** 01032F

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Appendix H: Formal Approval from the Executive Director, Dr Debra Sayce, of Catholic Education Western Australia

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CATHOLIC EDUCATION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

8 August 2022

Mr Salvatore De Luca

█████████████

Email: ████████████████

Dear Mr De Luca

THE PERCEPTIONS OF YEAR 11 STUDENTS TOWARDS CHRISTIAN SERVICE LEARNING IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA – CEWA REFERENCE RP2022/28

Thank you for your completed application received 18 July 2022 where your research will focus on Year 11 students in five Catholic secondary schools to determine their perceptions of the role of Christian Service Learning in enriching their school experience.

I give in principle support for the selected Catholic schools in Western Australia to participate in this valuable study. The research is classified as;

IMPORTANT

noting that the research focus is an important element of the Catholic education experience.

Consistent with CEWA policy, participation in your research project will be the decision of the individual principal and staff members. A copy of this letter must be provided to the principal when requesting their participation in the research.

You are advised that CEWA has no jurisdiction over one of your proposed schools – Newman College. You must approach the College directly regarding participation in your study The principal of the College will decide on any conditions they wish to impose, if they agree to participate, and CEWA takes no responsibility for the College's involvement.

The conditions of CEWA approval are as follows:
1.   A final copy of the survey questions is to be provided to CEWA, if they differ from the current draft provided; and
2.   The list of schools selected must be provided to CEWA if they vary from that list.

CEWA notes that the conduct of your research will be overseen by The University of Notre Dame Australia Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval Number 2022-086F).

Any changes to the proposed methodology will need to be submitted for CEWA approval prior to implementation. The focus and outcomes of your research project are of interest to CEWA. It is therefore a condition of approval that the research findings of this study are forwarded to CEWA.

Further enquiries may be directed to John Nelson at ███████████████ or
███████

I wish you all the best with your research.

Yours sincerely

████████

Dr Debra Sayce
Executive Director

Appendix I: School Principal- Information Sheet and Consent

THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Principal PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

Your school is invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

The research project investigates Year 11 student's perceptions towards Christian Service-Learning. The research is significant because it will address a gap in the literature regarding Western Australian Catholic secondary school students' perceptions towards CSL. The research will attempt to contribute student voice to the existing literature and add to knowledge in the field. The research could be of interest to those practitioners involved in secondary CSL, given the focus on student voice. It is anticipated that this research will provide insight into the value of SL and ways programs can be improved from a student perspective.

Who is undertaking the project?

This project is being conducted by Salvatore De Luca and will form the basis for the Doctor of Education degree at The University of Notre Dame Australia, under the supervision of Associate Professor Shane Lavery and Associate Professor Dianne Chambers.

What will I be asked to do?

If you consent for your school to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and what you will be asked to do. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have and that all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction before you agree to participate.

The project involves the following:

• The researcher conducting a document search of College documents including: the school CSL rationale/program, school annual report, the school strategic plan along with any additional relevant documents that may be located.

• The researcher conducting a 1 hour semi-structured interview with a key informant from the College, onsite at the College which will be audio recorded for later analysis. The semi-structured interview will be undertaken using an online platform if visitors on site at schools are not permitted.

• All students in Year 11 will be invited to participate in an anonymous structured online questionnaire, administered on site at the College. Within the structured online questionnaire, students will have the opportunity to nominate to participate in a focus group interview.

• The researcher conducting a 1 hour focus group interview with Year 11 students who nominate to be part of the focus group which will be audio recorded for later analysis. This will take place on site at the College with the students who nominate to be part of this. The focus group interview will be undertaken using an online platform if visitors on site at schools are not permitted.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

There are two potential risks with participation in this project: The key informants may be able to be identified and student emotional considerations. It is possible the key informants may be identifiable (due to the small number of people in this field), they will be informed of this prior to their participation. All efforts will be made to avoid any identification. Before commencing each focus group interview, all students will be informed that the focus group interview setting is a safe space and their thoughts and opinions will be welcomed. Students will be informed that their thoughts and opinions will not be the subject of judgement

from the researcher and that they can speak openly and honestly about their perceptions towards CSL. Students will also be reminded to access the support services (Pastoral Care Team/Student Services Team) within their school, should they feel the need following their participation. Students will be reminded that they will remain anonymous. All COVID19 safety requirements will be respected during the research. For example, during the semi-structured interview with a key informant and the focus group interviews, if there a safe distancing or mask wearing requirements these will be strictly adhered to. Alternatively, the semi-structured interview with a key informant ad focus group interviews will be undertaken using an online platform (Zoom/Microsoft Teams) if visitors on site at schools are not permitted.

What are the benefits of the research project?

This project will enable your staff and students to share their thoughts, opinions and perspectives towards Christian Service-Learning. More broadly, it is anticipated that this research will provide insight into the value of Service-Learning and ways programs can be improved from a student and staff perspective.

What if I change my mind?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you consent, you can withdraw your school from the study at any time without giving a reason and with no negative consequences. If you decide you no longer want your staff or students to participate in the study, you only need to let the researcher know. If you withdraw, all information can be removed if you choose.

How will you keep my information private and confidential?

Information gathered about your staff and students will be held in strict confidence and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law. All data will be de-identified and will remain confidential and anonymous. All data will be stored securely as per the university policy for research data management. Data will be stored in Microsoft Azure for five years after the study concludes and will then be permanently deleted, as per the UNDA Research Data Management Procedure. The data will only be shared between the researcher and supervisors of this project. The data may be used in future research but you will not be identifiable. The results of the study will be published as a Doctoral Thesis and published in quality journals.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

Once the researcher has analysed the information from this study an executive summary of the research will be provided to you. This feedback will be provided within 12 months after the completion of the study.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact Salvatore De Luca at   or ████████████████████████ Alternatively, you can contact Associate Professor Shane Lavery at ███████████████████████. I am happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have about this study.
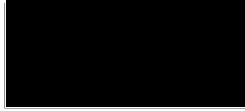
What if I have a concern or complaint?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at The University of Notre Dame Australia (approval number 2022-086F). If you have a concern or complaint regarding the ethical conduct of this research project and would like to speak to an independent person, please contact Notre Dame's Research Ethics Officer at (+61 8) 9433 0943 or research.ethics@nd.edu.au. Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

How do I sign up to participate?

If you are happy to participate, please sign both copies of the consent form, keep one for yourself and email the other to me.

Thank you for your time. This sheet is for you to keep.

Yours sincerely,

Salvatore De Luca

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
AUSTRALIA

PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

The Perceptions of Year 11 Students Towards Christian Service-Learning in Catholic Secondary Schools in Western Australia

- I agree to staff and students from my school taking part in this research project.

- I have read the Information Sheet provided and been given a full explanation of the purpose of this study, the procedures involved and of what is expected of me.

- I understand that my staff and students will be asked to:

    Staff:

    - Participate in a 1 hour semi-structured interview with the researcher, onsite at the College which will be audio recorded for later analysis. The key informant will be asked to administer the structured online questionnaire to Year 11 students.

    Year 11 Students:

    - Participate in an anonymous structured online questionnaire, administered on site at the College.

    - May elect to participate in a 1 hour focus group interview which will be audio recorded for later analysis.

- The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained possible problems that may arise as a result of my participation in this study.

- I understand that I may withdraw from participating in the project at any time without prejudice.

- I understand that all information provided by me is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.

- I agree that any research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name or other identifying information is not disclosed.

Name of participant			
Signature of participant		Date	

- I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this research project to the above participant, explained what participating involves and have answered all questions asked of me.

Signature of Researcher		Date	

Consent Form template (October 2017)