

**INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDIES
IN SERVICE LEARNING**

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

Senior Series Editor: Patrick Blessinger,
St John's University and Higher Education
Teaching and Learning Association, USA

Associate Series Editor: Enakshi Sengupta, American
University of Afghanistan

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AND LEARNING VOLUME 47

**INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDIES
IN SERVICE LEARNING**

EDITED BY

ENAKSHI SENGUPTA

American University of Afghanistan, Afghanistan

And

PATRICK BLESSINGER

St. John's University, USA

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SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

The purpose of this series is to publish current research and scholarship on innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education. The series is developed around the premise that teaching and learning is more effective when instructors and students are actively and meaningfully engaged in the teaching–learning process.

The main objectives of this series are to:

- 1) present how innovative teaching and learning practices are being used in higher education institutions around the world across a wide variety of disciplines and countries;
- 2) present the latest models, theories, concepts, paradigms, and frameworks that educators should consider when adopting, implementing, assessing, and evaluating innovative teaching and learning practices; and
- 3) consider the implications of theory and practice on policy, strategy, and leadership.

This series will appeal to anyone in higher education who is involved in the teaching and learning process from any discipline, institutional type, or nationality. The volumes in this series will focus on a variety of authentic case studies and other empirical research that illustrates how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning is any approach, strategy, method, practice, or means that has been shown to improve, enhance, or transform the teaching–learning environment. Innovation involves doing things differently or in a novel way in order to improve outcomes. In short, innovation is positive change. With respect to teaching and learning, innovation is the implementation of new or improved educational practices that result in improved educational and learning outcomes. This innovation can be any positive change related to teaching, curriculum, assessment, technology, or other tools, programs, policies, or processes that leads to improved educational and learning outcomes. Innovation can occur in institutional development, program development, professional development, or learning development.

The volumes in this series will not only highlight the benefits and theoretical frameworks of such innovations through authentic case studies and other empirical research but also look at the challenges and contexts associated with implementing

and assessing innovative teaching and learning practices. The volumes represent all disciplines from a wide range of national, cultural, and organizational contexts. The volumes in this series will explore a wide variety of teaching and learning topics such as active learning, integrative learning, transformative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, meaningful learning, blended learning, creative learning, experiential learning, life-long and life-wide learning, global learning, learning assessment and analytics, student research, faculty and student learning communities, as well as other topics.

This series brings together distinguished scholars and educational practitioners from around the world to disseminate the latest knowledge on innovative teaching and learning scholarship and practices. The authors offer a range of disciplinary perspectives from different cultural contexts. This series provides a unique and valuable resource for instructors, administrators, and anyone interested in improving and transforming teaching and learning.

Patrick Blessinger
Founder, Executive Director, and Chief Research Scientist,
International HETL Association

Enakshi Sengupta
Chair of the Business Department and Director – Centre
for Teaching Learning & American University of Afghanistan

PART I

**INTEGRATING SERVICE
LEARNING INTO CURRICULUM**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDIES IN SERVICE LEARNING

Enakshi Sengupta and Patrick Blessinger

ABSTRACT

The field of service-learning (SL) remains obscure as it has been variously defined and often misunderstood by many. There is a confusion in the academic literature and in practice as to what exactly service-learning means, and this confusion has been exacerbated by the way it has been misunderstood and implemented in various institutions. The aim of this volume dedicated to international case studies on service learning is to gain deeper insight into the multifaceted nature of this subject and the perplexities associated with it. The authors of this volume have adopted a holistic approach and have captured various interventions and approaches to find out the most accurate path toward gaining a complete picture of how service-learning impacts students with its emphasis on problem-solving, experiential learning, and community engagement. The volume will shed light on how successfully service-learning has been adopted to the existing curriculum with the emergence of a new breed of students who are aligned with the needs of the community and undertakes collaborative work to solve real-world issues.

Keywords: Community; collaborative learning; curriculum; service learning; problem-solving; holistic; experiential learning

INTRODUCTION

Academics have always been intrigued by the question as to how to connect the classroom teaching to real life example for a greater good. The quest has been to fulfill the role of an academic in finding out the real need for education and its role in shaping the identity of the students. Service-learning (SL) is a concept that has found its place to link both disciplinary learning and commitment toward community linked programs for the betterment of general well-being. *Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility* (2003) by Colby et al. and *How Civic Engagement Is Reframing Liberal Education* (2003) by Rhoads are two influential documents that summarize the concept of community involvement. Also, in 2006 the Carnegie Foundation launched an elective "Community Engagement" that interconnect civic learning with academic courses.

Service-learning has been categorized as high impact pedagogy that creates the scope of community engagement and several curricula designed by various institutions in both undergraduate and graduate levels. Post Sigmon's foundational article "Service-Learning: Three Principles" (1979) as a form of formalized pedagogy, numerous definitions of service-learning have been noted. Ehrlich (1996) provided a general framework for service-learning as the various pedagogies that link community service and academic study so that each strengthens the other. The basic theory of service-learning is Dewey's: "... the interaction of knowledge and skills with experience is key to learning" (p. xi).

Bringle et al. (2006) offered perhaps the most cited operational definition:

Service-learning is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility. (p. 12)

There are several core characteristics that are common in every form of service-learning experience which entails advanced learning goals combined with community purposes, collaboration among students and faculty members with community organizations toward a fulfilled shared objective, critical reflection of intentionally designed curriculum that produces meaningful learning experience and service outcome for the well-being of the greater good. These concepts are imbibed in short-term learning courses, in modules, multiyear projects and semester long activities.

Reciprocity is an important component of service learning where collaboration between university and community is an essential part to create strong ties between both. Another important component of service-learning is the component of reflection which imbibes the context of critical thinking. Critical thinking involves feedback and the frequency of it depends on institution of higher education. Critical reflection is an essential component of service-learning that generates, deepens, and documents learning of students (Ash & Clayton, 2009a, 2009b).

Despite this concept being age old, controversy and criticism surrounds it. Academics and practitioners are yet to come to an understanding as to how best to characterize this form of pedagogy (Furco, 2011). The nature of the subject makes it complex and hence cannot be easily understood or explained by those

practicing it (Billig, 2002; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2005). All academics have tried to interpret it in their own version having substantial variations in each of its form (Billig, 2000; Billig et al., 2005; Bringle, 2003; Flecky, 2011). Furco (2011) further emphasized this problem of definition in his comment, “by perusing service program brochures, one realizes that the definition for service is as varied as the schools in which they operate” (p. 71).

The obscurity of the concept has led the term service-learning to be used interchangeably with other terms such as experiential learning, internship, volunteerism, community service, social responsibility, and others (Billig & Eyler, 2003; Eyler, 2009). If we avoid getting entangled in terminologies the basic concept is rather straight forward, it is the interaction of community with the curriculum which leaves the students and academics with a myriad of possibilities and learning outcomes (Astin, 1999).

CHAPTERS OVERVIEW

“Case Studies of Community-Based Service Learning in Honors Psychology at Rhodes University, South Africa” written by Jacqueline Akhurst, Lindy Wilbraham, Lisa Saville Young, Benita Bobo talks about as the only research-intensive university in South Africa outside a metropolitan area, Rhodes University’s mission has foregrounded community engagement for over a decade, in order to contribute to the development of the surrounding region. This involves building stronger social compacts with community partners through meaningful student engagement in socially accountable ways. In psychology as a discipline within South Africa, there are strong imperatives for transformation, and decolonization of psychological theory, research and therapeutic practice require re-examination of curricula, in conjunction with contextual needs for increasing access to psychological assistance. This chapter aims to illustrate ways in which the researchers have worked to translate ideas from the Psychology discipline into community engagement activities which in turn has created new knowledge. Community-Based Service Learning (CBSL) has been embedded into three Psychology Honors-level modules, resonating with the students’ desires to contribute to greater social justice through translating theory into “real-world” activities. This research draws from the experiences of the module coordinators (the authors), providing perceptions of coordinating a CBSL module. The researchers assess the contributions and benefits for both students and community partners, also highlighting the challenges encountered. The case studies of modules outline their philosophy, content, and value. Partnership development is described, and students’ reflections on two modules (Community Psychology and Childhood Disability & Mental Health) provide examples of some of their shifts in understanding applied psychology and increased social awareness. The accounts show how students provided assistance and support in their contributions to the different settings. Recommendations are made for enhancing CBSL, including considerations when planning for students, community partners, and faculty staff.

“Food Systems as a Civic Lens to Design Critical-Service-Learning” by Julia L. Angstmann and Francesca A. Williamson explores Service learning as a pedagogical approach that primarily focuses upon achieving student learning outcomes through meaningful community engagement. While service-learning pedagogies

provide “service” to community, the view of community partners from a deficit-oriented perspective can render service-learning ineffective and, at worst, potentially harmful to the community served. This chapter presents a course that uses food as a civic lens through which to engage community, instructors, and students in CRITICAL-SERVICE-LEARNING where systemic inequities that contribute to community needs are focused upon, community partners are co-creators of course design, outcomes to student learning and community benefits are equitably considered, and collective knowledge and experience of stakeholders is valued.

“Benefits of Service Learning for Student Participants and Older Adult Recipients” by Krista M. C. Cline and Catherine Bain talks about research on intergenerational service learning which has focused on the benefits for the students, very few studies have focused on the older adults who are the recipients of the service learning. For the current study, the researchers were interested in the benefits of service learning for both the college students and the older adults who participated in a service-learning course. Qualitative data were collected from both the students in a sociology of aging service-learning class, and the older adults who participated as recipients of the service learning. Data from the students were collected via student journals and open-ended questionnaire responses written by the students. Data from the older adults were collected via interviews by the students as well as open-ended questionnaire responses written by the older adults. The following themes emerged as benefits to students: (1) a better understanding and less fear of aging; (2) a desire to learn more about older adults; and (3) a desire to engage more with older adults. The themes for the benefits to the older adults included: (1) improved social connections and companionship; and (2) becoming family. The researchers found that engaging in intergenerational service-learning courses is beneficial to all those who are involved.

“Service-Learning Experiences in Spanish Universities” by María R. Belando-Montoro, María Aranzazu Carrasco Temiño and María Naranjo Crespo writes about Spain, where despite the increase of initiatives that promote the institutionalization of the Service-Learning methodology in the university sphere, the development of SL has been slow. The academic literature has noted this normative support, and in recent years there has been a proliferation of publications collecting research results, teaching innovation projects, and theoretical reflections on the benefits of SL. However, a current situation analysis of SL in Spain is still to be performed. Hence, this chapter aims to provide an overview of the current situation of SL in Spanish universities. A qualitative systematic review of the Spanish literature on SL in higher education is carried out by searching for original articles in English and Spanish in several databases. The principles established by PRISMA declaration for systematic reviews were followed. The study reveals an increasing trend in the number of publications on the subject, although with significant differences between territories. Likewise, most of the studies used descriptive methods. In relation to the categories analyzed, the interest of the literature in the benefits obtained by university students through their participation in the experiences stands out, compared to the benefits obtained by the target group, the university–community relationship or the promotion of university social responsibility. The 50% articles included in the review refer to

the effect of SL on the curriculum through teaching practices. Others evaluate the impact of the service, analyze dissemination actions of the experiences carried out, the future challenges for research on SL in Spanish universities, and the obstacles in the implementation of the experience.

“The Changing Face of Community Engagement in a Time of Crisis – Insights Into an Undergraduate Service-Learning Course” by Martina Jordaan and Nita Mennega is a case study about the Joint Community-based Project (code: JCP), a compulsory macro undergraduate course offered by the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. The decision to create this independent course was motivated by the need to integrate community service and service-learning projects into the curriculum of all the faculty’s undergraduate programs, while adhering to the University’s strategic social responsiveness goal. The project-orientated course must be completed within the allocated 80 notional hours. Students do at least 40 hours of fieldwork and reflect on their experiences through various assignments. Since the advent of the module in 2011, an average of 1,600 students have registered for the course annually, which boasts a 95% average completion rate. Students form, on average, 500 groups and partner with more than 350 different university–community partners annually. The students are required to engage in a community service project to apply their knowledge to uplift the community. They have to address a specific need in a community to benefit that society. The exposure to authentic challenges afforded by means of their projects allows students to increase their awareness of their social responsibility and learn to work collaboratively in a multidisciplinary and multilingual environment, applying various life skills such as communication, interpersonal, technological and leadership skills. During the nationwide lockdown brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, students had to identify alternative ways to assist the communities.

The projects in which the students provided assistance included the following:

- Creating a mobile application (an app) for a homelessness project.
- Assisting teachers with their online teaching.
- Developing websites to assist with Mathematics.
- Teaching learners Mathematics via WhatsApp.
- Developing educational videos.
- Making masks for clinics and old age homes.
- Developing educational resources for disadvantaged pre-schools.

The chapter discusses how the module adapted to off-site community projects, the students’ various projects, and the lessons learnt by the students and course coordinator on changing the module’s format in a time of crisis.

“Service Learning as an Approach to Teaching Small Business Management” by Thomas Behrends and Larissa Binder writes about Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are a central backbone of (most) national economies. Research shows, that due to their smaller size, SMEs not only have comparatively less formalized, less complex, and less specialized organizational structures, but a somewhat different social character as well. It is in particular the interplay of these structural

and cultural peculiarities of SMEs that is difficult to impart perceptibly in regular university courses on Small Business Management. From a managerial science perspective, the structural as well as social characteristics of small non-profit organizations are quite similar to the above-mentioned features of SMEs. Both types of organizations usually function in a less bureaucratic and more personal way, while also being a bit more chaotic sometimes. In addition, both are often facing the challenges of severe resource scarcity as well as a lack of management competencies. In view of these fundamental similarities between SMEs and small non-profit organizations, the practical seminar Service-Learning Project was designed to provide management students at Europa-Universität Flensburg with the opportunity of experiencing typical small business work realities. Here, student teams support local non-profit organizations in meeting typical management challenges ranging from the conception and implementation of fundraising or image campaigns to internal consultancy projects. In this way, the seminar offers the possibility to deal with real-world practical management issues while concurrently strengthening students' civic societal awareness, fostering empathy, and overcoming the oftentimes overly pronounced distance between science and lifeworld practice.

"Spreading Our Wings Toward Collaborative Service-Learning: A South African Case Study" by Anna J. F. (Hanlie) Dippenaar, Candice Livingston, Joanne Arendse, Pieter Boer, Kobie Meiring and Valencia Cloete speak about the changes to a democratic society and government in South Africa. Lecturers and students in Higher Education have collaborated with community partners to establish sustainable initiatives to enhance students' social responsibility and benefit communities. This chapter shares insights on a collaborative service-learning project where different arts-based literacies, including art, reading, poetry, human movement and writing were used to enhance reading and writing, culminating in an annual interactive Community Engagement Day on the campus of a higher education institution. The day was organized by a team of staff and students and attended by 50 learners and three teachers from three schools in the area. The chapter describes different stations and activities which included topics such as safety, human movement programs, reading and writing activities and writing of poems. The art lecturer and her team helped each learner to paint a "feather," culminating in the theme of the day, which was to "spread your wings." The learners and students completed evaluation forms after their experiences, followed by interviews with lecturers. Data show the value of the day for all participants, emphasizing collaboration across faculties. It shows that true, integrated effective community engagement is built on reciprocal partnerships and collaborative service-learning projects.

"Nursing Students and the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation" by Julia Mattingly provides a description of an ongoing service-learning initiative and exemplars of reflection on service for nursing students at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The service, health promotion is provided to the Oglala Lakota, or Lakota, on the reservation through community screenings for adults and health education for the prevention of children's health issues. Nursing student participants have the unique experience of learning about the Lakota culture, while also offering service via health promotion to a population that experiences ongoing health disparities and inequity. The Lakota and the Pine Ridge Reservation are examined, including the