How service learning enriches the learning experience

How Service Learning Enriches the Learning Experience

Section I: Problem Statement

Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Service learning is an extremely broad range of discussion that it utilized all over the country and all over the world as a teaching strategy. I will analyze this topic from several different angles and perspectives in hopes to answer the question of " How service learning enriches learning experiences, teaches empathy, strengthens communities, and develops participatory citizenship."

To answer the question in the previous paragraph, I will explore into the following topics: service learning as a teaching technique, how service learning provides implications for empathy and community engagement in students, and how service learning develops participatory citizenship. I will also consider the 'real' truth about service learning from a college student's perspective, and the emotions of teaching through service learning. In addition, I will interview an educator with experience, expertise, and knowledge about service learning. After exploring these topics of discussion, it is my hope that the reader fully understands how service learning enriches learning experiences, teaches empathy, strengthens communities, and develops participatory citizenship.

Section II: Literature Review

Service learning as a teaching technique:

Service learning, also known as experiential learning, is a creative teaching technique that incorporates community service with scholarly learning to enhance information and knowledge, educate civic engagement, and fortify communities. The service experience is incorporated into an academic course in which students complete composed and verbal reflection exercises about their bits of knowledge, encounters, and advantages amid the service learning opportunity. (Griffith & Clark, 2016)

Shared endeavors among the community or organization, the scholastic foundation, the course teacher, and the student are essential in a service learning project. The service organization has a need met while the scholarly foundation manufactures a partnership with the organization and surrounding community. The teacher gives significant, frequently difficult, learning encounters, and the students collaborate with people from differing and hindered backgrounds. For students, service learning enhances critical-thinking, leaderships skills, and promotes civil engagement. (Griffith & Clark, 2016)

The students participating in service learning ought to have clear expectations of what they will do all through the service learning venture. The teacher should address the idea of service learning and clarify why it is a piece of the course so students are set up to participate. The students should know the quantity of required service hours, service task depictions, how they will coordinate service learning with course content, and the assessment criteria. In arrangement for the service learning venture, students should recognize the abilities they will convey to the organizations

for which they are working. This self-appraisal constructs students' certainty and recognizes shortcomings they must take a shot at to be successful in the service learning environment. The students likewise should be urged to keep a log or diary of service learning exercises to use as a reference for composing their reflective writing assignments. (Griffith & Clark, 2016)

In addition to setting up the service learning opportunity, the teacher has numerous obligations amid execution. It is urgent for the teacher to give satisfactory direction to students. The measure of direction required relies on the students, the nature of the exercises, and the duration of the service project. The teacher should give students data that portrays the degree and motivation behind the project, organization and teacher desires, exercises, and due dates. Other teacher duties involve talking about scholastic honesty, staying in touch with service organization supervisors, checking students' execution, giving time to students to examine their service, and creating alternate courses of action as required. (Griffith & Clark, 2016)

Service learning is an instructional approach that accentuates scholastic work and community benefit similarly. Furnishing students with hands-on service involvement in the group can improve the nature of a teacher's instruction. Service learning additionally can enhance students' basic intuition and administration abilities while advancing civil engagement. These activities cooperate to reinforce community partnerships between the service organization, the scholastic foundation, the teacher, and the students.

Providing implications for empathy:

Empathy is considered frequently as an identity feature in children on account of the significance of empathy for prosocial behavior, diminishments of withdrawn behavior, and healthy adolescent development. From an early age, both the home environment and parent-child communication are relied upon to impact the improvement and development of empathy. Once the child begins school, this environment turns into another socializing agent. Despite the fact that empathy is currently thought to develop early in life, its improvement proceeds into adolescence. In this manner, programs that advance the development of empathy are essential and valuable over an extensive variety of ages. (Scott & Graham, 2015)

Past reviews have found that empathy checks and moderates many negative identity highlights, particularly with a concentration in interpersonal domains. Furthermore, empathy seems to prompt decreases in reserved conduct, delinquent mentalities, outrage, externalizing practices, and physical and verbal violence levels. While the decline in ominous qualities holds essential clinical ramifications, there are studies that analyze the impacts of empathy training from a positive psychology perspective. The positive psychology perspective takes a gander at the qualities that help individuals and communities succeed and the temperance or circumstances and people as opposed to the pathology and harm that analysts frequently concentrate on. This point of view tried to develop self-assurance, empathy, certainty, and adapting aptitudes to make a perspective of " typical" that does not concentrate on emotional sickness but instead spotlights on the most proficient method to maintain a strategic distance from hindering circumstances. (Scott & Graham, 2015)

Providing implications for community engagement:

Community engagement is characterized as dispositions, practice, information, and abilities intended to work for the benefit of everyone, with duty toward the encompassing group. It can be further clarified as community-oriented participation with an emphasis on humanitarian effort and participation in community organizations. The term community engagement is not common in the child development literature since this idea is typically investigated in older youths. In adolescence, the emphasis on community engagement changes from charitable effort in the community or neighborhood to an obligation toward the community with political ties. Since it is not typically conceivable in the US culture to be involved in political associations before adolescence, the term community engagement will be utilized rather than civic responsibility regarding those under eighteen years old. (Scott & Graham, 2015)

A standout amongst the most essential school components leading to community engagement is an open school atmosphere in which students participate in making rules and arranging events to create and develop democratic skills. A feeling of association with the group can likewise cultivate community engagement. Service learning has ended up being one strategy for reigniting community engagement in today's youth as well as a method for helping adolescents discover that they can change their communities while giving them aptitudes and materials to do as such. (Scott & Graham, 2015)

" Service learning has an overall positive effect on empathy and community engagement in school aged students. Understanding this connection has implications for future citizenship, community engagement, altruism, and empathy. Considering decreasing trends of empathy and community engagement in adolescents and young adults in the past ten years or more, working to instill these characteristics in childhood is becoming more crucial." (Scott & Graham, 2015)

Developing participatory citizenship:

Through service learning, instructors join the most elevated amounts of learning in Bloom's Taxonomy with the largest amounts of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs keeping in mind that the end goal is to create a curriculum that strengthens the bridge from youthfulness to adulthood. By opening the entryway for experiential, applicable learning, service learning permits students to be participatory citizens instead of passive and novice individuals. The benefit of service learning is two-fold: 1. It rotates around sorted and organized active participation inside the community that empowers civic engagement and empathy, and 2. It presents organized opportunities for the application of knowledge and academic skills. (Myers, 2016)

Experiential learning through service, combined with scholastic basic reflection and classroom community, can create participatory citizens who are better arranged for their general surroundings. Rather than putting secondary school ages students into holding tanks, secondary schools should give an extension that interfaces scholarly information with adult citizenship

through service learning. Students could have a perspective of their future on the planet while as yet interfacing with their scholastic past. (Myers, 2016)

Section III: Assessment of Problem Statement

" Service learning has been found to have a wider impact on society than community service or community exploration because it allows students to have a hands-on experience in the community while learning about the community to lessen the knowledge gap between students and the community." (Scott & Graham, 2015) Through collaboration with different community organizations such as nursing homes, homeless shelters, veteran's hospitals, children's hospitals, and parent teacher associations, those participating in service learning can gain insight into the community needs, as well as learn about how service projects can play a role in minimizing serious social issues. (Scott & Graham, 2015) In 2002, " The National Commission on Service-Learning found that students become more engaged in school through service-learning because they are able to take responsibility for their own learning, providing hope for staving off academic disengagement." (Scott & Graham, 2015) Late confirmation has reproduced the aforementioned outcomes demonstrating that service learning can lead to more grounded, scholarly engagement and performance results. A further look into this has demonstrated that students involved in service learning have more positive scholarly results in critical thinking, writing, and overall grade point average. (Scott & Graham, 2015)

Service learning additionally gives an essential extension amongst school and community to advance empathetic development. As far as self-improvement, students who are involved in service yearning have increases in concern, charitableness, duty, social fitness, and obligation. Two results that have been revealed in past studies on service learning are 1. An expansion in compassion and 2. A reinforcing of future community engagement. (Scott & Graham, 2015)

Studies have been completed to determine the impact of a service learning course on students' self-efficacy where analysis resulted in three major themes: 1. Constructive criticism and self-reflection improve self-efficacy, 2. Experience breeds confidence, and 3. Service learning encourages students to obtain more knowledge and experience in areas of deficiency after the service learning experience. (Goodell, Cooke, & Ash, 2016)

Constructive criticism and self-reflection improve self-efficacy:

Students have reported that, while sometimes painful to hear, they believe that constructive criticism improved their skills when working in the community. Most students appreciated receiving constructive criticism from peers and superiors; they looked at constructive criticism comments as opportunities for growth and to adjust accordingly. (Goodell, Cooke, & Ash, 2016)

Experience breeds confidence:

Based on the data gathered in pre-experience interviews and reflections, those who perceived themselves to either have an innate ability to perform

well at a task or who had previous experience with a task were more likely to express higher self- efficacy related to those specific teaching skills prior to the experience. While overall teaching self-efficacy improved in students after their service- learning experiences, the students reported greatest improvements in self-efficacy related to the skills in which they originally lacked confidence the most. Students attributed this newfound confidence to their service-learning experience. (Goodell, Cooke, & Ash, 2016)

Service learning encourages students to gain more knowledge and experience in areas of deficiency:

Reflecting on those weaknesses not fully addressed during the service-learning experience, students expressed a desire to improve on those skills through future experiences. They discussed general and specific ways in which they could obtain training. In addition to the desire to obtain new skill sets, students also discussed a newfound motivation to improve their knowledge because of the service learning experience. Many students were motivated to engage in self-led education to ensure that they were knowledgeable enough to help those they were teaching. (Goodell, Cooke, & Ash, 2016)

I interviewed a special education colleague who instructs service learning as part of her curriculum. I presented her with the emotional satisfactions and emotional hazards that most teachers can identify when they teach through service learning. I used the LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter that reviews the emotions of teaching through service learning to see if my colleague felt any

of these emotions as well. I presented her with the following Emotional
Satisfactions:

1. " Something done, someone reaches: the pleasure and privilege of
   completing benevolent service acts that enhance the lives of those
   involved." (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

2. " Moral purpose: the service encounter is a mutual moral activity; it
   answers a moral call in the whole while strengthening the moral beliefs
   and values of those volunteering." (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

3. " Personal affirmation: the service enables one to rediscover the
   inherent gifts on has to offer the world that are usually taken for
   granted." (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

4. " Stoic endurance: a mix between being fully committed to the work
   and those served, yet remaining somewhat detached." (LeCrom, Pelco,
   & Lassiter, 2016)

5. " Boost to success: the service work is also self-serving, providing
   distinguishing experiences that aid career advancement." (LeCrom,
   Pelco, and Lassiter, 2016)

My colleague said that she has felt all of these satisfactions at one time or
another while teaching through service learning. She also said that she
thinks that these satisfactions are even more satisfying when working with
students with special needs. When I asked her if she had to make a choice as
to which satisfaction was the most satisfying to her, she said that she would
have to pick the " Something done, someone reached" satisfaction. I then
presented her with the following Emotional Hazards:

1. " Weariness and resignation: service work, over time, proves to psychologically draining and increasingly disinteresting to providers who begin thinking of doing something else or, at the very least, taking an extended break." (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

2. " Cynicism: a gloomy doubtfulness about the world, people, and their potential that skeptically overshadows any sense of hope for the service work; results in serious questioning of whether the service work is even impactful." (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

3. " Arrogance, anger, and bitterness: a growing feeling of outrage by the problems the service work is trying to resolve, sometimes enacted on others who are assisting in the work, and becomes embittered with how people in power to nothing; eventually the service provider believes they are the only ones who are doing anything." (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

4. " Despair: a deepening sadness for the impermeable misfortunes of others, making it difficult to notice anything positive from the service work besides the advantages accrued to the service providers." (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

5. " Burnout/Depression: a general sense of utter disappointment, hopelessness, or exhaustion that arise with the arduous duties of service work; a depressive condition takes over the spirit and bring with is devastating feelings of 'going through the motions' or 'terminating the work altogether.'" (LeCrom, Pelco, & Lassiter, 2016)

My colleague shared with me that she has experienced weariness, cynicism, and burnout during times that she was teaching through service learning.

She explained to me that the weariness comes towards the beginning of the school year, the cynicism comes towards the middle of the school year, and the burnout comes towards the end of the school year.

Section IV: Reflection

References

Goodell, L. S., Cooke, N. K., & Ash, S. s. (2016). A Qualitative Assessment of the Impact of a

Service-Learning Course on Students' Discipline-Specific Self-Efficacy. *Journal Of*

Community Engagement & Higher Education , *8* (2), 28-40.

Griffith, T., & Clark, K. R. (2016). Teaching Techniques. Service Learning. *Radiologic*

Technology , *87* (5), 586-588.

LeCrom, C. W., Pelco, L., & Lassiter, J. W. (2016). Faculty Feel It Too: The Emotions of

Teaching Through Service-learning. *Journal Of Community Engagement & Higher*

Education , *8* (2), 41-56.

MYERS, A. (2016). Building Bridges to the World: Utilizing Service Learning During the

Senior Year to Develop Participatory Citizenship. *American Secondary*

Education ,

44 (3), 4-12.

Scott, K. E., & Graham, J. j. (2015). Service-Learning. *Journal Of Experiential*

Education , *38* (4),

354-372.