

SERVICE LEARNING

An Introduction to Its Theory, Practice, and Effects

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After a decade characterized as narcissistic and individualistic (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985), the 1990s appeared to be destined as a time with strong communitarian and service overtones. President Bush's Points of Light campaign, the congressional passage of the National and Community Service Act in 1990, and President Clinton's National Service Trust Act of 1993, were preceded by the foundation of the national Campus Compact by college and university presidents in 1985. Throughout the 1980s, state and local boards of education and hundreds of schools across the country began service-learning programs or required community service for graduation. The decline in volunteerism on college campuses was halted as growing numbers of young adults again found meaning in giving back to their communities.

Although volunteerism has a long and honorable history in American society, community service has often come to mean a court-ordered sentence for misdemeanors. Civic, or citizenship, education has theoretically been part of the school social studies curriculum for a century, but with increasing youth violence and other social pathologies, it has received increased attention in recent years. Until the Republican congressional victories in the 1994 off-year election, there had been a growing acceptance of and coalescence around the concepts of service learning. It remains to be seen how much of the current movement is dependent upon federal funding, and how much will remain as part of a broader movement toward the rebuilding of community and the reform of public education.

In this brief introduction to service learning, an attempt is made to lay out some of the historical and sociological antecedents to the current movement,

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to define some of the related terms, and to report on some of the findings of research and evaluation on the effects that it has on participants and society.

Although service learning and voluntary service in general are not uniquely American concepts, they have taken root in our schools and the broader society in new and powerful ways. It is important to understand some of the historical antecedents of the current movement and the sociological explanations for them as we approach the turn of the century. Bellah et al. (1985) documented in *Habits of the Heart* the constant competing pressures in American society, throughout our history, between what they term *individualism* and *commitment*. They express this dilemma in the following way:

We found the classic polarities of American individualism still operating: the deep desire for autonomy and self-reliance combined with an equally deep conviction that life has no meaning unless shared with others in the context of community. (p. 150)

The oft-quoted and seldom-read de Tocqueville (1835/1969) held in the 1830s that in traditional European societies one's status and role was carefully delineated and people knew where they stood in relationship to others, whereas in the United States, ties between individuals were more casual and transient, in part because of their "restlessness in the midst of prosperity," and because Americans "never stop thinking of the good things they have not got" (p. 565). This restlessness, according to de Tocqueville, is intensified by the "competition of all" (p. 536). Whereas Americans could be characterized as perhaps the most individualistic of all peoples, de Tocqueville went on to show the near equal importance that we as a people place on "being with" others in social relationship (p. 538). Whereas our ancestors may have felt oppressed by the civic, religious, and moral cultures from which they fled, they almost immediately formed similar associations on landing in the New World.

Bellah et al. (1985) conclude that implicit in this penchant for getting involved is the peculiarly American notion of the relationship between self and society. Individuals are expected to get involved—to choose for themselves to join social groups. Barber (1992) and other observers of contemporary society conclude that in the last half century, individualism has triumphed over commitment, citizenship demands, and civic responsibility, and that only as we rebuild a sense of community will we be able to rebalance the two poles of our national dilemma. He and others have concluded that community service, citizenship education, and service learning are crucial to the survival of American society.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is difficult to know where to trace the beginnings of service learning, but if one accepts its antecedents in voluntary service to community, then it can be easily traced to its Judeo-Christian roots, though certainly not exclusively to these two great world religions. Dass and Bush (1992) have connected the roots of helping to the Hindu tradition, and others have presented evidence from other world religions.

Whereas philosophers before him certainly confronted questions of the "good" and "living in community," most scholars trace the tying of service to schooling to the writings of Dewey (1902). His concept of "associated living" as the basis for both education and democracy was a precursor of much later writing about rebuilding the connections between the school and community. In his classic works, *Experience and Education* (1938/1963) and *Democracy and Education* (1916), he provided the intellectual undergirdings for such critical service-learning components as student involvement in the construction of learning objectives; working together rather than in isolation on learning tasks; using "educative" and minimizing "miseducative" experiences; the organic relation between what is learned and personal experience; the importance of social and not just intellectual development; and the value of actions directed toward the welfare of others.

James (1910) stated:

What we need to discover in the social realm is the moral equivalent of war; something heroic that will speak to man as universally as war does, and yet will be as compatible with their spiritual selves as war has proved to be incompatible. (p. 17)

This "moral equivalent of war" theme has been struck by progressive and experiential educators for most of this century and most recently by service-learning advocates, who believe that through service learning, education can again be a moral force, something too often lacking in traditional schooling.

More directly related to service learning, Kilpatrick (1918), a Dewey disciple and leader of the Progressive movement, advocated the adoption of the "project method" as a major curricular and pedagogical tool of education. Social reform, education outside the school setting, and real-life problems became the focus for many progressive schools between the First and Second World Wars. Also during the interim between the wars, the Civilian Conservation Corps, although primarily a youth unemployment program, became a forerunner for countless youth service programs and corps in the 1980s and

1990s. Classic works such as Count's (1932) *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* and Hanna's (1937) *Youth Serves the Community* provided additional underpinnings to the service-learning movement over a half century later.

Although the 1950s are generally not known or remembered as a period of reform or progressivism, the Citizenship Education Project (CEP) at Teacher's College set the framework for a wide variety of "active learning," "community studies," and social and political action programs that came to renewed popularity in the 1970s. Many of the ideas developed and updated by Newman and Rutter (1986) and by Barber (1992) could be found in the CEP materials from the quiescent 1950s.

Despite a few such curricular efforts, little in the way of gains was made during the 1950s and 1960s, but with the 1970s came a host of state and national reports on educational reform and the need to escape the passivity of schooling and the "irrelevance" of school to either students or the broader society. The Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (1972), the National Committee on Secondary Education's (1972) *American Youth in the Mid-Seventies*, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1973), Coleman's (1974) *Youth: Transition to Adulthood*, the National Manpower Institute (1975), the National Panel on High School and Adolescent Education (1976), and Martin's (1976) *The Education of Adolescents* made a host of proposals on a range of topics: service programs; experience-based learning; job preparation; service graduation requirements; real and meaningful tasks; interaction with a greater range of people; reintegration of the young into the community. Little in the way of broad reform, however, was started until the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), and by then the pendulum had swung away from the "progressive" aspects of the 1970s reports and had returned to a focus on the basics.

In spite of the emphasis on basics in many of the reform documents in the 1980s, there still were a considerable number of commissions and influential individuals calling for one form or another of community service. Goodlad (1984), in *A Place Called School*, included community service, as did Boyer (1983) in *High School*, which called for a service requirement for graduation from high school. Two Carnegie reports (Harrison, 1987; Carnegie Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents, 1989) focused on the needs of middle school youth and also called for service opportunities.

Suffice it to say that service learning is the most recent manifestation of what is now almost a 100-year history of American educational reform attempts to bring the school and community back together, to build or rebuild

a citizenship ethic in our young people, and to bring more active forms of learning to our schools. Service-learning advocates are generally careful to not claim the movement as a panacea for all that ails American schools. With strong evidence that classroom pedagogy and curriculum has not changed significantly in the 100 years since Dewey began to call for reform, there are those who see the service-learning components of citizenship education, caring, community building, and active pedagogies as a possible “Sleeping Giant of School Reform” (Nathan and Kielsmeier, 1991). Whereas national and state commissions have provided political support for service learning, it has been primarily a grassroots movement, with thousands of teachers and professors discovering the power of the methodology and using it with their classes, or developing programs, often with little or no money or external support. This grassroots nature would appear to indicate a longer life than the more typical autocratic, top-down reforms that have generally failed in recent decades.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Volunteerism has a long and honorable tradition in our society and generally refers to the millions of citizens who perform some service or good work of their own free will and without pay. Scouting, coaching, church work, community food share, Meals on Wheels, crisis lines, and thousands of other voluntary organizations and opportunities make up the voluntary sector.

Whereas service learning has obvious roots in traditional volunteerism, it is the traditional volunteer ethic that has proved troublesome for those seeking to bring service learning into the schools. When states, schools, or colleges mandate service for graduation or as part of course requirements, there has been a public outcry about the oxymoronic nature of “mandatory volunteerism.” Only as service-learning advocates have more carefully defined it as a pedagogical tool, rather than as voluntary activity, has the negative rhetoric lessened, though it certainly has not yet disappeared.

Community service, as indicated earlier, has several meanings. Those familiar with the criminal justice system recognize the punitive aspects of its current meaning, whereby thousands of adolescent and adult offenders are sentenced each year to picking up trash or doing other menial tasks in the community in exchange for jail time. Because of the negative and punitive connotations of the words, those within the service-learning movement have generally abandoned the use of the term community service. In the school

definition of the word, it has generally meant volunteering in the community, although that might also include a range of tutoring or other programs on the school campus. Volunteering alone generally is differentiated from service learning by having an emphasis on service without a formal, structured learning component. *Community-based learning* also involves learning that occurs out in the community through outdoor education, field trips, internships, or apprenticeships, but it generally does not involve any service component.

Many schools have a wide range of *peer-helping* programs. These are generally cocurricular and involve students in peer or cross-age helping services. Although such programs are good examples of many aspects of service learning, they tend to be separated from the regular curricular subject areas. Among the many such programs begun or continued in recent years with state or federal service-learning funding have been conflict mediation, peer and cross-age tutoring, health and drug education programs, and counseling programs.

SERVICE LEARNING: DEFINITION AND PRINCIPLES

Whereas there is still much discussion in the field about what actually constitutes service learning, the Commission on National and Community Service (CNCS; 1993) provides perhaps the most widely accepted definition:

A service learning program provides educational experiences:

- a. under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with school and community;
- b. that are integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provides structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what the student did and saw during the actual service activity;
- c. that provide a student with opportunities to use newly-acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities; and
- d. that enhance what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others. (p. 15)

Other definitions of service learning speak to the blending of both service and learning goals in such a way that both occur and are enriched by the other. Most service-learning advocates also emphasize the importance of a reflec-

tive component where students use higher order thinking skills to better understand and extend the formal learning from the service experience.

The principles that often guide the creation of service-learning programs are those created by the Johnson Foundation (1989) in the *Wingspread Special Report*. In the report are 10 principles preceded by the following preamble:

We are a nation founded upon active citizenship and participation in community life. We have always believed that individuals can and should serve. It is crucial that service toward the common good be combined with reflective learning to assure that service programs of high quality can be created and sustained over time, and to help individuals appreciate how service can be a significant and ongoing part of life. Service, combined with learning, adds value to each and transforms both. Those who serve and those who are served are thus able to develop the informed judgment, imagination, and skills that lead to a greater capacity to contribute to the common good. (p. 1)

The principles that follow claim to provide criteria for effective programming. The resulting model is one that

1. Engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.
2. Provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.
3. Articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved.
4. Allows for those with needs to define those needs.
5. Clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.
6. Matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstance.
7. Expects genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment.
8. Includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.
9. Insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved.
10. Is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations. (Johnson Foundation, 1989, pp. 2-3)

CRITICAL QUESTIONS ABOUT SERVICE AND SERVICE LEARNING

Although these principles have been widely disseminated and accepted, it is important to raise some critical questions about them. Principle 1 states

that effective service learning “engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.” How is this common good determined? Are agencies identifying and representing individual strengths and weaknesses of their clients in service-learning projects with the same rigor that students are being assessed and represented by the schools? Is the common good a service ethic that responds to the equally important needs of both partners in service or is it simply a chance to cure the ills of society by one group serving people whose needs are collectively predetermined? The common good must reflect an empowering benefit for both partners in the service relationship. Both partners should be provided an opportunity to feel responsible and challenged as the service project is designed to enhance the individual growth of all partners: *That* is common good.

Principle 2 states that effective service learning “provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.” Based on the service-learning models in literature, “people” in this statement refers exclusively to the student: Students are required to keep journals that allow them opportunities to reflect upon their experiences in the service project. The *Wingspread Special Report* (Johnson Foundation, 1989) elaborates:

This reflective component allows for intellectual growth and the development of skills in critical thinking. It is most useful when it is intentional and continuous throughout the experience, and when opportunity for feedback is provided. Ideally, feedback will come from those persons being served, as well as from peers and program leaders. (p. 25)

Besides being a blatant exclusion of the partner in service, this principle merely suggests rather than requires a discourse between the service partners. It assumes that the student engages in service, thinks about what he or she has done, writes down reflections, then hopefully receives feedback on these observations. Without a foundation grounded in the quest for shared understanding, only the student is encouraged to reflect, and he or she may do so in a vacuum.

In research on service learning conducted as a result of CNCS venture grants in Colorado (Maybach, 1994), reflection for or with service recipients was reported in only 1% of the grant recipients’ projects, and in only 4% of the projects was discourse encouraged among students and recipients regarding the effects and/or design of the service. Discourse throughout the project between service partners should be the hallmark of the service experience. Freire (1970) makes the point:

For us, however, the requirement is seen not in terms of explaining to, but rather dialoguing with the people about their actions. The pedagogy of the oppressed, which is a pedagogy of the people engaged in the fight for their own liberation, has its roots here. (p. 35)

The important thing, from the view of libertarian education, is for people to come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades. Because this view of education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with people, it serves to introduce the pedagogy of the oppressed, in the elaboration of which the oppressed must participate. (p. 105)

The opportunities for cross-cultural learning are greatly enhanced if the service partners are engaged in written and verbal reflection that is shared with each other throughout the service experience. In this interactive, dialogical form of reflection, individuals can explore each other's opinions, thoughts, desires, and perspectives. Noddings (1992) writes that "dialogue is a common search for understanding, empathy, or appreciation. . . . It is always a genuine quest for something undetermined at the beginning" (p. 23). Without this emphasis on dialogue between individuals, service learning again becomes one-sided, focusing on the isolated views and perceptions of the student without true understanding of each individual's perspective. Misunderstandings and missed opportunities for learning can occur in isolated reflection.

Principles 3 through 10 are closer to acknowledging more or all voices in the service relationship. However, as Cruz (1994) points out, a perspective of diversity must be the lens from which these principles should be conceptualized. Emphasized in these principles is the need to include all participants in the goals, outcomes, process, evaluation, and publicity of service-learning ventures. As the report expands upon these principles, it continues to frame the involvement of service partners as service providers and recipients. As previously stated, this focus does not go far enough in acknowledging the strengths of the served, and it does not adequately address the barriers keeping these individuals from fully participating in society. The concept of "partners in service" needs to be embraced in the principles themselves for programs to emulate a paragon of equality.

Which vision of service are we supporting through service learning? Do we only go so far to embrace a vision of service in which people are serving others in need? Or do we expand upon that vision to include a more empowering model of service that acknowledges the strengths and weaknesses we all bring to a relationship, a vision that moves people away from

the margins of society through partnerships based on equal concern, equal voice, equal opportunity to serve and explore new perspectives, a vision that allows each partner to learn from the other, an opportunity for every participant to grow in an environment that nurtures social, cognitive, emotional, physical, spiritual, and occupational growth. The latter should be our service ethic. It is only when equal consideration and voice is acknowledged from all members of a community that we begin to move toward a truly democratic society. In an effective service-learning model, no voice is silenced, no role is invisible.

The questions above must be revisited if we are to equally address the needs of all individuals in the service relationship. It is only through this equal consideration that service can truly be mutually beneficial: to allow for growth in both the student and his or her partner in service. What is needed is a new paradigm of service learning in which the service ethic involves students engaged in projects that do not focus solely on the learning and growth of the student but that focus also on the voice and empowerment of the individual involved with the student in service.

THE PRACTICE OF SERVICE LEARNING

Whereas some agreement on the definition of service learning has been achieved in recent years, its practice in schools and colleges varies widely. Many of the practices do not strictly fit the definition and guidelines described above but still are listed under the general rubric. Cocurricular service activities with special clubs or through a volunteer clearinghouse are generally not directly connected to the curriculum of the school, although students can often receive academic credit for their involvement in the community. One of the most dominant forms is that of individual or group class projects. When they are carefully tied to curricular objectives, contain academic content, involve the student in reflection, and contain an evaluative component, they can be considered service learning. If these components are missing, they fit more comfortably into community-based learning or volunteerism. The following list, prepared by the National Youth Leadership Council (Cairns & Kielsmeier, 1991), is exemplary of the types of projects carried out by literally hundreds of thousands of school and college students today:

bicycle shop, Big Buddies, blood drive, board membership, building projects, clothes collection, community education classes, community history, cooking

meals, crisis centers, day care, emergency services, environmental research, environmental cleanup, fund-raising for charities, gardens, helping the homebound, home chores, hot lines, Meals on Wheels, overseas volunteers, paint-a-thons, peer helpers and tutors, performing arts, planting trees, public awareness, public media, reading for the blind, recreation programs, recycling, research, special equipment, Special Olympics, tax preparation, tutoring, victim aid, visiting institutionalized people, visual art, voter education, youth agencies, youth leadership, and youth sports.

Service within the school is one of the largest forms of service learning, with numerous opportunities for students to tutor, counsel, mediate conflicts, mentor, and address other needs within the school community. Often these activities tend to be internships rather than service learning, or to involve minimal skills development with little or no connection to the curriculum. Many teachers use service as an extension of their regular classroom. Service-learning activities become a means for completing course requirements and going into greater depth into a topic. Community service classes and programs can be found in many schools, with colleges even developing complete interdisciplinary majors with service as the focus.

The ultimate goal of many in the service-learning movement is to have service integrated into the curriculum of all subjects and at all levels. It thus becomes an ongoing part of the curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation, and ethic of the class or school, and not an add-on, dependent on external funding or the particular philosophical whims of the teacher, administration, or board. This goal has been reached in a minority of colleges, particularly many religiously based institutions that have a long history of service as part of their educational philosophy. It is also becoming increasingly common in the elementary and middle schools, where greater philosophical compatibility exists than is generally true at the high school level. Active, interdisciplinary, community-based, cooperative, and other forms of learning have long been part of primary education and are now deeply embedded in the more recent "middle school philosophy." The pressures for college admission, academic rigor, and success on standardized examinations make the high school perhaps the weakest link in the current service-learning movement.

THE EXTENT OF SERVICE LEARNING IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

It is difficult, if not impossible, to give an exact number of schools and colleges that have developed service-learning programs of one form or

another. The following statistics are taken from the 1994 report of Abt Associates (Melchior, Jastrzab, Bailis, & Frees, 1994), the national evaluator for CNCS, which awarded \$64 million in grants to 150 states, colleges, community-based organizations, Indian tribes, and other institutions. These organizations, in turn, distributed the funds to literally thousands of school, college, and community organizations. Among the many findings of this first-year report to Congress are those enumerated in the list that follows. The statistics do not include the thousands of programs that involve students in service to their communities without external funding, but the data do give a snapshot of the extent to which service learning is now going on in our schools and society.

1. Approximately 200,000 young people and adults took part in ongoing community service programs. An additional 45,000 took part in short-term or onetime events.
2. CNCS-funded programs generated nearly 6 million hours of community service.
3. CNCS-funded programs also involved participants in another 4.2 million hours of nonservice activities. These activities were generally basic education and/or service learning.
4. The average hours of direct service per participant varied widely among the programs. Serve-America (K-12 programs) participants provided an average of 16 hours of direct service, compared to 39 hours in Higher Education programs and averages of 344 and 507 hours in Service Corps and National Service Demonstration programs, respectively.
5. Community service programs engaged a broad range of individuals, from kindergarten students to senior volunteers, representing a diverse array of racial, ethnic, educational, and economic backgrounds. The vast majority of participants were school-aged youth and young adults. Of the total, 56% were women, 36% were non-White, and 19% were economically disadvantaged.
6. Community service programs also provided a broad range of services. Approximately 40% of service hours were focused on conservation and environmental projects and 22% on education and human needs.
7. Federal CNCS funds were matched significantly from other sources. Local programs contributed an additional \$1.38 from other government and nongovernment sources for every \$1.00 of federal CNCS funds.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION OF SERVICE LEARNING

Whereas service learning, community service, and volunteer programs have been a part of schools and colleges in the United States for decades, and

there have been a range of research and evaluation studies, there is a general lack of solid evidence on the effects of these programs. One of the major difficulties in evaluating or researching service-learning programs is the lack of agreement on what is meant by the term service learning and exactly what it is meant to accomplish. Whereas some programs emphasize social growth, character development, or civic responsibility, others attempt to study psychological development and effects of programs on self-concept. Moral judgment studies have sought to evaluate the effects of service on moral and ego development, and other studies have attempted to measure the effects of service on the broader community. Perhaps the most difficult arena has been in the area of intellectual, cognitive, and academic effects. It has been difficult to design tight experiments to isolate the effects of service on specific academic achievements. A recent experimental study (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993) of students in a university political science course provides some of the first evidence of the positive academic effects of service learning.

A challenge for evaluators and researchers in the field is the dramatically different nature and duration of the programs that go under the guise of service learning. It is difficult to compare one-term service events for a group of 8-year-olds in an elementary classroom with full-time, paid programs for young adults in conservation corps. In-depth, semester-long academic courses in international settings for college students differ greatly from once-a-week volunteer visits to a senior center. Yet all of these can and do meet basic criteria for service learning.

GENERAL SURVEYS

Krug's (1991) research was on the effects of service learning on four groups of high school young people: at-risk youth in a special program, student assistants (primarily minority) within the school, nature guides, and tutors at a primary school. Preliminary results indicate that although all the experimental groups gained on measures of potency, activity involvement in the community, self-concept, and other factors, the statistically significant growth at the .01 and .05 levels was found almost exclusively with the at-risk and minority young people. The control group, as predicted, did not change on the pre- and post-instruments.

Newman and Rutter (1986) estimated that in 1984, approximately 27% of all high schools offered some form of service program, involving 900,000 students in 5,400 schools. Service took on the form of (a) school clubs or cocurricular organizations; (b) service-learning credit or requirement; (c) a

laboratory for an existing course; (d) a service-learning class; or (e) a schoolwide focus. Nonpublic schools were more likely to offer service, and suburban and large schools did so more often than urban, rural, or small schools. Alternative public and Catholic schools were more likely to offer service than were regular public or non-Catholic private schools. An estimated 6.6% of all high school students were involved in 1984, with 2.3% of their activities tied to the curriculum. This compared with 52% of seniors involved in team sports and 34% in the performing arts. Time spent was an average of 4 hours per week across all programs, and 6 hours in elective programs. Those with service as a high school graduation requirement spent 1 hour per week. Schools where a majority of students were non-White were more likely to offer programs than White majority schools; they also were three times as likely to offer community service as an elective course and to award academic credit. Programs involved students in near-equal proportion from the college prep, general, and vocational tracks. At-risk students and those with behavioral problems were found to be nonexistent in service programs. Thirty-four percent of programs were in schools, not in the community.

Harrison (1987) reported that among voluntary programs, most (61%) involved less than 10% of the student body. Ninety percent of the students put in less than 200 hours, about half the time required by one season of high school football. Sixty-five percent of service programs were within the schools themselves.

Whatever the actual numbers of students involved in service learning might be, the surest conclusion that can be drawn is that school-based service learning is an educational concept that has endured throughout this century but has not yet become an integral part of the high school experience for more than a small group of students. In addition, few programs involve participation by at-risk and minority youth, and a majority of school-sponsored programs are focused on college-bound White students.

SOCIAL GROWTH

Riecken (1952) studied college students involved in 2 months of intensive, full-time summer experiences designed to strengthen humanitarian ideals by having youths participate in physically useful labor in an economically deprived community. Using a questionnaire, he discovered that participants became less prejudiced, more democratic, less authoritarian, and more service oriented, and they developed greater ego strength.

Smith (1966), in a study of 44 Peace Corps volunteers who taught in Ghana during a period of 2 years, discovered that after the first year in which the volunteers displayed initial and perhaps naive optimism, a more reasoned but no less committed moralistic philosophy emerged. They demonstrated more realism, autonomy, and independence, and significantly increased levels of self-worth and insight. In addition, they became more service oriented in terms of their own career aspirations.

Hunt and Hardt (1969) found that both White and Black groups in a Project Upward Bound, precollege enrichment program for high school students achieved nearly identical increases in motivation, self-esteem, and academic achievement. Other researchers have indicated positive results in social growth from less intensive school service programs. Marsh (1973) concluded that participation in community affairs as part of a high school experimental course increased, as did interest in political activities and a desire to support political issues.

Using a model based on Mosher's moral education, Newman's citizen education, and Hampden-Turner's psychosocial development, Bourgeois (1978) concluded that democratic values were accepted by young teenagers, that an urgency for personal competence existed, and that community activities helped to develop civic competence.

Wilson (1974) examined open-mindedness and a sense of political efficacy in a community-based alternative education program. Wilson concluded that because the learning environment became one of openness, changed authority relationships between students and teachers, and student self-selection of the subject matter and process of curriculum, greater open-mindedness and political efficacy on the part of participants were able to occur.

Corbett (1977) studied the effects of high school students' participation in a yearlong community program that aimed to develop student commitment to the solution of social problems. He found that during the first year when the program was teacher centered and teacher directed, gains in student moral and psychosocial development were nonsignificant, but in the second year, when it became student centered and reflective in nature, significant gains on personality measures and emotional and task competence were found. He concluded that students who worked with individuals in providing service developed more commitment to the solution of social problems than did the students whose volunteer work was focused upon group situations.

Stockhaus (1976) sought to determine if 20 hours of helping in social service agencies would positively affect self-esteem, political efficacy, social responsibility, and community responsibility in high school seniors. Stock-

haus found that participants in one school developed a greater sense of social responsibility, community responsibility, and altruism than did nonparticipants and controls, but that strong support for community involvement programs to bring about positive changes in citizenship attitudes was lacking. Changes were too small to be of practical significance.

Broudy (1977) delineated problems that limited the effective development of moral/citizenship, experiential, and service-learning programs in the public schools. They included heterogeneity of values and lifestyles, discrepancies between educational objectives and community behaviors, discrepancies between structured classroom teaching and students' informal community learning, and community experiences of differing intensity and quality. Conrad and Hedin (1982) found that students in service and other experiential programs developed more favorable attitudes toward adults and also toward the type of organizations and people with whom they were involved.

Luchs (1981) reported that high school students involved in community service gained a more positive attitude toward others, a greater sense of efficacy, and higher self-esteem than nonparticipating comparison students. Calabrese and Schumer (1986) reported lower levels of alienation and isolation, and fewer disciplinary problems among junior high school youth involved in service as part of a program for students with behavioral difficulties.

In summary, the research findings on social outcomes as a result of students' involvement in experiential and service-learning programs are mixed. Intensive, full-time, communal living programs have generally proven to be more successful in changing attitudes; these programs also have usually included older students who may already have committed themselves to achieving program objectives, primarily because they entered the programs as volunteers. Too many of the studies suffer from small sample size, lack of strict controls, the effect of previous volunteer experiences on the part of students, and the uneven quality of students' experiences in the program.

THE IMPACT ON PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

A number of research studies have concentrated on the student's psychological development as a result of participation in experiential education and service-learning programs. Taking full responsibility for one's own actions, developing a sense of self-esteem and ego strength, reaching a high level of moral reasoning, and becoming psychologically mature were seen to be key determinants for success in school and for active involvement in positive

citizenship (Stockhaus, 1976). Unfortunately, traditional school curricula frequently not only do not promote these aims but, conversely, appear to affect them negatively (Bidwell, 1965; Coleman, 1961; Cusick, 1973; Goodlad & Klein, 1990; Jackson, 1990; Martin, 1975; Silberman, 1990; Sturges, 1979).

Advocates of experiential education and service-learning programs believe that development of psychological strength will occur more strongly in such programs than in traditional school programs (Coleman, 1974; Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Dewey, 1938/1963; Erikson, 1968; Frankena, 1965; Kohlberg, 1970; Piagét, 1970; Rich, 1962; Rogers, 1969; Schwebel & Ralph, 1973).

Bontempo (1979) conducted field interviews with students and coordinators, and studied program documents from the various schools. Her conclusions were that this type of learning was clearly grounded in consistent philosophies of learning and was making valuable and extensive use of community resources in students' education. Students who were enrolled demonstrated positive self-concepts and increased feelings of self-worth.

Kazunga (1978) concluded that voluntary youth helping experiences promoted a more positive self-concept among youth and significantly helped to improve the community.

Sager (1973) studied 22 high school seniors who volunteered for 9 weeks during their summer vacations at state hospitals. Young people increased their self-esteem and self-confidence significantly on 30 of 34 subscales on seven personality inventories. In addition, they were more self-accepting and felt more adequate and worthwhile in interactions with their peers and with the persons they were helping.

Kelly (1989) found that therapeutic helping behavior generated positive changes in self-concept and other self-perceptive dimensions on the part of the helper. He found that students who helped on a one-to-one personal level underwent significantly greater positive changes in self-concept and other related measures than did those in more general types of service activities.

To determine whether self-concept of students who had experienced school behavioral problems of apathy, vandalism, and delinquency would be improved by enrollment in a voluntary curriculum with a traditional school setting, Martin (1977) employed a case study approach to a yearlong study of 30 male and female high school students. By the end of the year, student behavior had positively changed as measured by teacher interviews and by students' own self-reflections as reported to the researcher. Both teachers and students believed that students had also developed more positive self-concepts as they changed their former negative behaviors.

Exum (1978), in addition to investigating interpersonal behaviors and ego development, also studied the results of systematic reflective discussions of college students' helping experiences upon the development of self-concept. Conclusions indicated that a combination of actual experiences and systematic reflective discussions were the most important components in the curriculum and that participants showed significant growth in self-concept and ego development.

Rutter and Newman (1989) found that the potential for service enhancing social responsibility was dependent on the presence of a reflection seminar. The opportunity to discuss their experiences with teachers in small peer-group settings greatly affected whether students reported a positive interaction with the community. Saunders (1976) investigated whether junior and senior high school student tutors would demonstrate a positive attitude change in self-concept, in reading, and toward school when compared to student nontutors. Although no significant difference was found, Saunders concluded that the program had an effect on maintaining positive attitudes.

Soat (1974) examined college students in an introductory psychology course as to whether one's cognitive style and self-concept were related to expressed willingness to help others. He found no significant relationships.

In summary, the research evidence does give some indication that experiential and service-learning programs may have a positive effect upon the development of a positive self-concept in those students involved in such a program. More research must be done for that evidence to be definitive.

SERVICE LEARNING AND MORAL JUDGMENT

Alexander (1977) investigated whether moral thinking, ego development, and the presence of prejudice in youth could be changed by an alternative education curriculum. Significant changes were discovered in moral reasoning, ego development, and level of prejudice. Edwards (1974) studied experiential education as it relates to moral development and explored the influence of environment upon moral reasoning development. Studying 103 high school and university students in Kenya, she confirmed the following hypotheses relating to the effects of intellectual and social experiences:

1. Students who attended multicultural secondary schools displayed higher levels of moral judgment than did students who attended ethnically homogeneous schools.

2. An atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation stimulated students in pre-conventional (Stages 1 and 2) reasoning postures to develop toward more adult postures (Stages 3 and 4).
3. Students who resided at boarding schools displayed more Stage 3 and 4 moral reasoning than did students living at home.
4. Students who studied law and social sciences displayed more Stage 3, 4, and 5 moral reasoning development than did students who studied primarily science and engineering.

Reck (1978) attempted to determine whether participation in a school service-learning program was positively related to moral development, whether the amount of time given to service was related to students' positive moral development, and whether students with little experience in service activities experienced more moral development than did students with more prior experience. On only 2 of 16 variables were there significant differences between experimental and control groups: (a) Students who pretested low in moral development demonstrated greatest gains in the posttest, and (b) students who served only during the program in their assigned tasks showed significant growth.

Mosher (1977) concluded that moral and ego development can be enhanced by service-learning programs, with the most powerful being those that combine discussion of moral issues with the experiences.

Although the research results in the area of moral judgment are mixed, they do tend to indicate that experiential and service-learning programs may have an impact upon the development of moral judgment. What has not been answered is whether there are consistently effective ways in which moral judgment may be developed, what types of students will benefit from what programs, and what formats will be most successful.

THE IMPACT ON ACADEMIC LEARNING

Houser (1974) recorded significant gains in an experimental group versus a control group in the development of both reading skills and self-concept at the seventh- and eighth-grade level for students participating in a student-aide program involving elementary school students. Lewis (1977) recorded significant gains in his investigation of whether learning by doing (experiential learning) was as effective a method of teaching subject matter concepts to adolescents and adults as was expository learning. Although expository

learning was effective in a number of situations, learning by doing coupled with receipt of procedural knowledge learned both by declarative and procedural knowledge was more effective.

Hedin (1987), in a comprehensive meta-analysis on peer tutoring by high school students involved in service, found increases in reading and math achievement scores both on the part of the tutor and tutee. Although the achievement score increases in reading and math were modest, the author defends the analysis on the basis that small increases are evident with most learning and growth in general.

Hamilton and Zeldin (1987) found that when the measuring instrument is a general test of knowledge, there is usually no difference between students in service programs and those in conventional classrooms who do not participate. Consistent gains in factual knowledge have been found, however, when researchers have used tests designed to measure the kinds of information students were more likely to encounter in their field experiences.

Braza (1974) studied 15 experimental and 8 control group students in an attempt to discover significant improvements in knowledge, behavior, and attitudes recorded as a result of a community-based service-learning procedure. Control group students received traditional classroom instruction in health problems of disadvantaged groups, whereas the experimental group students were given intensive community experiences. Posttest results demonstrated that both methods were equally effective in promoting knowledge gains; in addition, both groups expressed essentially identical increased commitment to the study of health problems of disadvantaged persons.

Markus et al. (1993) reported results of an experiment in integrating service learning into a large undergraduate political science course. Students in service-learning sections of the course were significantly more likely than those in the traditional discussion sections to report that they had performed up to their potential in the course, had learned to apply principles from the course to new situations, and had developed a greater awareness of societal problems. Classroom learning and course grades also improved significantly as a result of students' participation in course-relevant community service. Finally, pre- and postsurvey data revealed significant effects of participation in community service upon students' personal values and orientations. The experiential learning acquired through service appears to compensate for some pedagogical weaknesses of classroom instruction.

Thus the findings on intellectual learning and participation in experiential and service-learning programs are mixed. It may be that positive intellectual outcomes are found most frequently for tutoring because it is the form of service learning that is most school-like, and the knowledge and skills

examined are most like those the tutors have been using. In the instances when students in other forms of experiential and service learning have been tested for gains in factual knowledge, the results have been less conclusive. In most cases, the test instruments used to measure intellectual gain were developed by the same individual responsible for the service-learning program, therefore raising questions of researcher bias and lack of test validity.

COMMUNITY IMPACT AND EFFECTS ON THOSE SERVED

Ellington (1978) studied the effects of contact with and education about the elderly in three experimental classes of high school seniors. Although no differences were discovered between students who received only contact with the seniors and the control group, and none were discovered between the attitudes of the two groups receiving inductive and deductive teaching, the study did find that a combination of contact with the seniors and learning about their problems appeared to positively change young people's attitudes.

Glass and Trent (1979) concluded that adolescents' attitudes toward the elderly can be changed through classroom experiences. Owens (1979) sought to determine whether student attitudes toward academic and vocational goals would change in a positive direction after involvement in a yearlong service-learning program. He concluded that students in the experimental group experienced significantly larger attitudinal changes than did the control group in the areas of more positive self-confidence and more clarity in educational direction and career paths.

Shoup (1978) saw service learning as a viable alternative to the set secondary curriculum, and as a valuable method for expanding the traditional classroom experiences to promote citizenship attitudes. Clayman (1968), in a study of a program to train preservice teachers to become familiar with community resources, discovered that although student teachers were committed to using the community as a resource, supervision of their activities was complex and difficult.

Conrad (1979) chose 11 experiential and service-learning programs from various cities for intensive study. The 11 programs from nine schools involved more than 600 students in nine experimental and four control groups; foci included community service, outdoor adventure, career exploration, and community action. The overall conclusions of the study were that experiential education and service-learning programs can promote social, psychological, and intellectual development; that they appear to do so more effectively than

classroom-based programs; and that the key factors in promoting growth are (a) that the experiences be significant and provide for the exercise of autonomy and (b) that there be opportunity for active reflection on the experience.

Keene (1975) examined whether students involved in an elective sociology high school course where classroom instruction was coupled with 5 hours of volunteer direct experience per week for one semester at various social agencies would have a more positive attitude change toward poverty and minority problems than would students who took only a required political science and economic course. She found no significant difference in the groups, but the experience was perceived as positive by parents, students, and the community, and so was continued.

Newman (1978) found a negative impact on attitudes toward the disabled held by elementary students placed in contact with severely emotionally disturbed children, as compared to attitudes held by students who received classroom instruction about handicapped children. Tobler (1986) conducted a meta-analysis of 143 studies on drug prevention programs and found that peer-helping programs were identified as the most effective on all outcome measures. Sprinthall and Sprinthall (1977), reporting on a series of studies of high school students engaged as teachers, tutors, and peer counselors, observed that in addition to showing other gains, many students had developed higher-level counseling skills than those achieved by graduate students in counseling.

The findings on community impact and the effects on those served are primarily positive, indicating that young people enrolled in experiential education and service-learning programs that focus upon making a difference in terms of community do, in fact, positively affect community members. In addition, the attitudes of young people frequently are significantly changed in the process of helping others.

The evaluation of Service-Learning Colorado was conducted by a team of researchers from the University of Colorado at Boulder (Kraft, Goldwasser, Swadener, & Timmons, 1993). It looked at all K-12 Serve-America, Youth and Conservation Corps, and Higher Education programs funded from grants made by the Commission on National and Community Service to the Colorado State Commission. To give a sense of the wide range of possible outcomes of service learning, the following list indicates the impact domains, participant and teacher attitudes, participant behaviors, and institutional and community impacts that were looked at in the Colorado research:

civic/social responsibility, self esteem, leadership, poverty, career aspirations, moral development, empowerment, service/community, gender, alienation,

social justice, race, efficacy, environment, peers, elderly, younger children, handicapped, family, reflection, and cross-cultural experience.

More than 2,000 students and staff from middle school through higher education responded to the pre- and post-attitude survey. The survey instrument was developed by the researchers and was based on previous research on the effects of service learning. Among the results gleaned from the pre- and post-attitude survey were the following.

1. There were few items on which the students made statistically significant gains in positive attitudes toward service, possibly due to the short time frame of most of the programs, often only once a week for 6 to 8 weeks.
2. Teachers, all of whom had received grants to administer service-learning programs, were significantly more committed on almost all items to the goals of service learning than were their student participants.
3. There were few statistically significant differences between middle school service-learning participants and those in high school as far as their attitudes toward items on the service-learning instrument. This could be seen as a surprising finding, because research by the Search Institute (Benson, 1993) found that high school students were significantly less committed to serving others than were younger students in grades six through eight.
4. Students in higher education tended to be more positive in their attitudes toward service learning than were students at the younger grades.
5. Short-term service-learning experiences did not have a statistically significant effect either way on attitudes of students.
6. On almost all attitudinal items, girls were significantly more positive in their attitudes to service and related values than were boys.

CONCLUSIONS

It is too early to predict the long-term impact of service learning on educational reform, citizenship education, community building, or pedagogical and curricular change. There were great hopes during the Bush and early Clinton administrations that a consensus had been reached on the value and importance of involving the young in their communities and of reforming the public schools through the use of service learning and community service. Service has again become a political football between liberals and conservatives, and this may well end much, if not most, of the federal funding for K-12, Higher Education, and Americorps programs. If the movement is a genuinely grassroots one, as many of its advocates claim, and if the effects

are as positive as some of the research and personal testimony indicates, then it is likely that service learning will continue as one of the educational reform mechanisms into the next century.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The articles in this issue provide a broad range of approaches to service learning. Barbara Gomez of the Council of Chief State School Officers takes a national look at how service learning relates to the school-to-work transition programs. The older definitions of service or volunteerism generally did not include career preparation, but many urban areas today are experimenting with ways that service in the community can not only prepare students in citizenship and academic achievement but also give them marketable skills.

James C. Kielsmeier provides a detailed description of the WalkAbout summer program now being implemented in urban settings around the country. This program involves a high degree of hands-on service learning emphasizing the importance of students being authentically invested in their own learning. The program has a range of goals: increasing academic achievement, providing opportunities for community-based learning, providing genuine community service, developing a service ethic in youth, and improving problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The model makes use of young people, college students, teachers, and community members in meeting the range of academic, personal, and community goals.

Carole MacNeil and Beth Krensky discuss Project YES, a model of urban programming that provides youth with a support structure wherein their voices about pressing social issues can be heard by a wider audience. Using the visual and performing arts, video, and photography as tools, youths participate in project-based workshops in which they develop critical-thinking, problem-solving, leadership, and consensus-building skills, and, at the end, walk away having completed some artistic, socially oriented project. The workshops seek to explore the ways in which voices of marginalized groups are silenced, finding ways to validate their voices. Project YES is about both social commentary and social change, and develops critical thinking and leadership skills in the participants.

The teacher-education arena has become a focus for many service-learning programs. Jennifer A. Vadeboncoeur and her colleagues sought the development of democratic character in their preservice teachers through the use of service learning in a single-semester undergraduate class on social foundations of education. The goals of the class and service experiences were to

improve students' understanding of and tolerance for racial, ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic, and gender diversity; to reduce their biases by engaging them in critical self-reflection; to increase their commitment to social justice; and to help them learn how to collaborate with community members. Special emphasis was placed on offering the students various sites or opportunities to critically reflect upon the course material. Overall, the course did increase students' awareness of societal problems, their interest in the social dynamics of schooling, and their readiness to internalize new ideas and beliefs, but although consciousness-raising was achieved by most students, and personal growth was evident, few students really increased their level of social activism.

Robert Shumer and Brad Belbas describe the founding of the National Clearinghouse for Service-Learning at the University of Minnesota. Following a description of the political, institutional, and technical difficulties in structuring the clearinghouse, they go on to describe the nature of service learning, as they have been able to collect data from throughout the country. Activity areas included under service learning nationally include education, human services, community development, conservation and the environment, public safety, and disaster response. Among the specific activities most often mentioned were mentoring, cross-age tutoring, academic instruction, hospital service, social service, neighborhood improvement, service in inter-generational programs, peer tutoring, peer mentoring, and service in food banks. Whereas urban, suburban, and rural programs are often similar in programming, there is a greater urban focus on disadvantaged youth and at-risk students than is true in the other settings, and urban programs are more likely to focus on literacy training activities.

A more theoretical focus is provided by Carol Maybach, who gives a critical theoretical perspective on service learning. She raises issues about focusing on the growth of students, while often ignoring the service recipients or failing to ask how service is affecting the communities in which it is being performed. Many of the critical assumptions behind service learning are analyzed for consistency and results. Insights from Paulo Freire are used to critically analyze the movement, and a new service-learning paradigm is offered to overcome some of the more obvious inconsistencies in the existing one.

Finally, Novella Z. Keith provides a theoretical perspective on how urban school reform can be joined with community development to bring about genuine community schools. Certain tendencies and biases running through much of service-learning practice are teased out to reveal the contours of a model defined by its emphasis on service provision. Service learning is placed in the broader context of community schools and community devel-

opment. The model presented in the article does not reject the role of partnerships with outside agencies that form the centerpiece of community schools as currently conceptualized; it does, however, put such partnerships in a context that emphasizes the centrality of community involvement and community priorities and, further, is informed by the new socioeconomic and cultural realities that are upon us.

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