

Analysis of Dental Medicine students' perceptions before and after participating in Service-learning

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Palabras clave / Términos relevantes

"Service learning", "Oral health literacy", "Dental medicine", "Community-based learning", "Impact"

1) Abstract

Introduction: Service Learning (SL) and Community Based Learning are similar pedagogical strategies widely used in the training of healthcare professionals. Literature focuses mostly on the training of nurses and other allied health professionals and is scarce on the training of dentists.

Methodology: At the Faculty of Dental Medicine of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, SL has been formally implemented in the Integrated Master of Dental Medicine since 2020 through a project for the institutionalization of SL at Católica. SL was formally applied in the curricular units of Oral Medicine, Preventive Dentistry and Gerodontlogy. A total of 150 students participated in experiences with nursing homes, schools and institutions for disabled individuals. Questionnaires before and after participating in the SL experience were applied. Questions were focused on previous experience on community work and volunteering as well as expectations for the participation in SL, professional and personal development perception and challenges faced during the experience.

Results: Most students had previous experience with volunteering and believed (pre-test questionnaires) the SL experience would improve their professional skills, make them more conscious of prejudice, become more comfortable in working in different contexts and more conscious of the real community needs. The analysis of the post-test showed that students fulfilled their expectations in some of the dimensions (improve the ability to work in different contexts) but lowered the agreement within other dimensions (the need to provide resources to excluded individuals or people under the risk of social exclusion).

Conclusions: Students appreciate SL participation mainly because of the possibility of addressing the real needs of the community. Results are discussed in light of the literature and implications for future studies are presented.

BOOST ME UP!: PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT, LEARNING AND WELLBEING

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Palabras clave / Términos relevantes

Engagement, learning, wellbeing, students' perceptions, SL experiencial

1) Abstract

Service-Learning (SL) is a teaching methodology that values the active participation of students. This qualitative study focuses on the experience "Boost me up!: Promoting and supporting engagement, learning and wellbeing" implemented in a third-year class (n=32) of the Psychology degree. A partnership was established with an Education-Training Centre, where training is developed for young people and adults who want to develop skills and increase their school and professional qualifications. It was proposed to the students to prepare a set of workshops aiming to promote in the target group the development of relevant personal and social skills such as self-knowledge, exploration of professional opportunities or promotion of well-being. Some other students prepared a visit of the target group to the University. To evaluate the experiential process in the ApS service, students were then asked to prepare a written reflection: "Reflect on the meaning of this experience for you both in personal terms and in terms of your future performance as a psychologist". Content analysis of the students' answers allowed us to identify 5 thematic categories: 1) impact on personal and interpersonal development (e.g. "I broke the bubble of my vision, allowing me to step out of my comfort zone"); 2) impact on academic development (e.g. "it helped us put into practice the knowledge acquired in the classroom"); 3) affective valuation of the experience (e.g. "I felt much more fulfilled than in other schoolwork because I realized that they valued our work"); 4) contribution to the good of others (e.g. "I felt that I may have interfered a little in the lives of those people"); and, 5) impact on the future usefulness of the skills developed (e.g. "...it was a key element for training as a psychologist"). In a transversal way, the students understood the experience as positive for all the intervening parties, which encourages the use of this teaching-learning methodology in the university.

Data Driven Evaluation of Service-Learning Internships: Impact on Student Learning about Self and the Society

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Palabras clave / Términos relevantes

service learning internships, questionnaire, data-driven evaluation, improvement of delivery, learning about self and society, enhancement of student learning, community engagement

1) Abstract

?Since the introduction of service-learning graduation requirement at Tulane University, many students in their junior and senior years of study apply and complete internships with local non-profit and community-based organizations in New Orleans. The structure of the experience differs from traditional internships in that it consists of both service activities AND an accompanying service-learning academic course with readings, reflections, and class discussions.

At the end of each semester, each student in the program submits an anonymous evaluation, answering questions related to their pre- and post- perceptions of learning about self, future plans, understanding of global and local issues, and ethical challenges surrounding community engaged work.

In our presentation, we will share the questionnaire and analyzed data sets from several years (for comparison: pre-, during-, and post-pandemic with n>100 in each cohort) to show what aspects of the program had the biggest impact of this academic service course, e.g., impact on students' knowledge of challenges facing local citizens, accepting different perspectives than own, future career plans, overall growth/self-assessment.

These survey results shed light on various elements of the internship program that contribute to the enhancement of student learning, empathy, and understanding of issues of social justice. The introduced interventions include: decolonization of the syllabus, adding readings relevant to current social and political situation, including EDI training, enhancing community partner input and voice in the selection (for the internship) and delivery.

To conclude: the thorough evaluation process, based on a well-designed methodology and survey instrument that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods, helps the program administrators and educators improve the outcomes and achieve desired goals of creating a lasting impact on the participants.

Development cooperation activities as a service-learning complement in students of mining engineering

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Palabras clave / Términos relevantes

Service-learning, cooperation for development, competencies

1) Abstract

Students and professors from the area of Mining Engineering of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) cooperate regularly with artisanal mining sites in developing countries, in the framework of the Cooperation Center for the development of the UPC, which announces yearly calls for cooperation projects proposals in developing countries or locally.

These cooperation activities have a dual purpose. On the one hand, these actions aim to provide a social service. Metal supply of metals is fundamental for the progress of society. Mining must be developed safely and with the least possible environmental impact. However, in developing countries it is often carried out artisanally, with few technical knowledge to perform it optimally. To improve the conditions in which artisanal mining is carried out, contributes to making it safer, environmentally cleaner and more resource-efficient, i.e., making it more sustainable.

The other aim of these activities is to contribute to the training of undergraduate and master's degree students in Mining Engineering, so they are related to learning itineraries. Students have the opportunity to acquire a social sensitivity that can be of great value through the development of their professional career. In addition, many of the students complete their degree or master project, and even doctoral theses, within the framework of the cooperation project, so impact on research is also valuable.

More than 20 projects have been developed between 2012 and 2022 in Bolivia and Peru, with 42 students involved. An analysis of the impact on students and entities of these projects implementation over the years has been conducted through formularies and interviews to students, and mineral measures. Conclusions confirm the positive impact on the students learning process and the contribution to making mining increasingly sustainable, including for instance the reduction in the use of mercury for gold processing.

Effects of Service-Learning as Opposed to Traditional Teaching-Learning Contexts: a Study with Three Different Courses

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Palabras clave / Términos relevantes

service-learning, traditional teaching-learning contexts, expectations and impact, social and civic skills, life goals.

1) Abstract

Service-Learning (SL) is an innovative teaching-learning proposal with an increasingly wide application in higher education. Previous studies show its potential to generate positive personal, academic, social and citizenship outcomes among students who participate in it. But studies that help understand in depth its real impact, particularly in comparison with more traditional teaching-learning contexts, are still scarce.

Thus, this study aims to explore the effects of using this pedagogical model on 122 students from a Portuguese university, who were attending the different curricular years of the Psychology (Psy; n=80), Social Work (SW; n=19) and Applied Foreign Languages (AFL; n=23) degree courses. These participants were organized, within each course, into experimental (service-learning) and control (traditional teaching-learning) groups, to whom instruments were administered, at pre- and post-test times, to assess their expectations and perceived impact of the experience, the development of social and civic skills, and life goals.

The results show no significant differences between the pre- and the post-tests for the various experimental groups in most of the analyzed variables, with the exception of life goals, where there is an increase in hedonistic and wellbeing goals for Psychology students, political, hedonistic, religious, personal development, and wellbeing goals for Social Work students, and social and well-being goals for Applied Foreign Languages students. Also, students in Psychology and AFL courses increased their expectations with the service and students in the AFL course developed more pro-social behaviors. These results are encouraging for the expansion of this transformative teaching-learning practice to courses of different scientific areas, although with some specificities, with the purpose of contributing to a more responsible, critical and participatory society in the creation of the common good.

Evaluating the Impact of Electronic Service-Learning on Civic Learning in STEM and Non-STEM Students

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Palabras clave / Términos relevantes

Electronic Service-Learning, Civic learning, STEM schools, non-STEM schools

1) Abstract

Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) adopted Service-Learning (S-L) as its signature pedagogy in 2016. All NP students take at least one module with a S-L project in which they apply their course skills and knowledge to address community needs. In October 2021 and April 2022 semesters, electronic Service-Learning (eS-L) was used in the design and delivery of a number of modules within NP science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and non-STEM diploma programmes. This study aims to examine the impact of eS-L on students' civic learning within and between the STEM and non-STEM schools.

This mixed methods study facilitated the triangulation of the quantitative survey and qualitative interview findings with students and staff. NP students (N=1012) completed a survey before and another after their eS-L experience. A 9-item civic learning scale was used in pre and post eS-L surveys, to measure students' pre- and post-civic learning scores respectively, along with an additional 30 items in the post eS-L survey measuring other learning outcomes and elements. Staff and community partners also rated their perception of students' civic learning outcomes through a quantitative survey.

Results suggested that eS-L is effective in facilitating civic learning for both STEM and non-STEM students, with improved civic learning scores. No particular school or comparison between STEM and non-STEM indicated significant advantage of a certain school over the other schools in improving civic learning scores. There was no statistically significant difference in civic learning scores between the STEM and non-STEM schools. Findings imply that eS-L as a teaching pedagogy is highly applicable and equally beneficial in nature. It's application is not limited to certain diploma programmes, STEM or non-STEM schools. This means that eS-L can be adopted as a teaching pedagogy to improve students' civic learning at a much greater scale such as within and even across institutional levels.