



Chung Chi College
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Impact Study
of The Service-Learning Programme
at Chung Chi College

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Agenda

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- II. Chung Chi Service-Learning Programme**
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I. Introduction

Purpose of survey:

- To understand how the participants of service-learning programme of Chung Chi College think about the impact of the programme on them

Study Population:

- All the participants since 2005 (i.e., 200+ students)



II. Chung Chi Service-Learning Programme

Three components:

1) *Hong Kong (Local):*

- From 2005 to 2007: 5 teams of students, with 4 members in each team, serving five different communities: brain damaged patients, elderly, low-income family children and South-Asian children, juvenile offenders under police supervision and autistic children
- Since 2008, an additional team for secondary school students
- With help of some social workers and NGOs.
- From 2001 till 2008: ~140 students involved



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II. Chung Chi Service-Learning Programme

(con'd)

2) Mainland China:

- From 2005 till 2008: about 16 students each year to the rural areas of mainland China to teach primary school students
- From 2005 to 2007, we also helped primary school English teachers there to learn English.
- Altogether, we have had ~60+ students involved



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II. Chung Chi Service-Learning Programme

(con'd)

3) *International:*

- Exchange programs with International Christian University (ICU) and Seoul Women's University
- Sent students to participate in the International Service-Learning Model Programs organized by ICU in the Philippines (2006) and India (2007)
- Sent students to participate in the Community Outreach Program of Petra Christian University of Indonesia and Silliman University of the Philippines
- Since 2005, 40+ students involved

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II. Chung Chi Service-Learning Programme

(con'd)

- Most participants were second year students who were going to graduate in the following year
- To fulfill their general education requirements, every final year student has to either take a service-learning course or propose a final year project
- Around 40 students admitted each year due to programme size
- In either case, they have to work with three other students from another faculty on something of common interest
- For the students serving in Hong Kong and the mainland, after their service in the summer, they need to attend classes to present their findings during the fall semester. This together with their reflections, journals and comments from the agency, will contribute to their final grades in this course
- Since the course is under the name of General Education, the emphasis is put on the personal growth of the participants rather than any specific skill or knowledge training

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III. Methods

- Questionnaires send through email to the 126 participants since 2005
- The questionnaire was basically designed by Dr. Florence McCarthy.
- The questionnaire has two versions: one for this year's participants (the pre-service version), and the participants of the last three years (post-service version).
- The questions are open-ended and let the respondents freely express their opinions and feelings. Therefore, this is a method using self-assessment, with the guiding of the response kept to a minimum. However, some important questions which may throw light on the real situation may be left out.
- For example, all students responded that they would recommend the service-learning course to other students and that they enjoyed the encouraging experiences in the course (the last two questions). But, at the same time, the huge efforts the students put in the course was not reflected in the response. In our program, students are encouraged to actively plan and participate in the whole process. The time and energy they put in are huge compared to other three-credit academic courses. Yet, they have no complaints.
- During the reflections at the end of the semester, we find that students learn the most since they actively acquire necessary skills, knowledge (the needs of the community) and use it to plan their services. We think that it is the most important part of the programme.

III. Methods (con'd)

- Since we don't have enough manpower, the response rates are not so satisfactory:
- the response rates are 18/40 (45%) and 33/86 (38%) for pre-service and post-service, respectively.
- Here, 40 is the number of current participants in both local and mainland international service-learning programs. The number 86 is the number of students who happened to have email addresses in our record. Nevertheless, since every year we have conducted similar surveys (in class) with the students, we find that the responses are quite similar. Thus the low response rate does not really make the results invalid.

IV. Pre-Service Survey

- The questions below in this section are mostly about the expectation of new students in the service-learning programme. They were going to participate in the local and mainland programs in the summer. The students had a kind of exciting feeling, while unavoidably, a feeling of uncertainty.



IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

Have You Participated in Service-Learning Program Earlier?

- Most students have no prior experience in service-learning program (17/18)
- Not surprising because:
 - this kind of program not very popular in Hong Kong
 - most secondary students are quite exam-oriented, especially true for form 5 to form 7 students (grade 11 and above) since they have to prepare for public examinations
- They have a lot of volunteer work opportunities in university or even in secondary school, but reflection is not usually required as a component. Thus the concept of service-learning is not really well accepted

IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

The Source of the Information About Service-Learning

- Most students (15/18) get their information from “Assembly”, or past participants (5/18)
- A College Assembly in January held exclusively for promoting the service-learning, which includes:
 - a brief announcement on the development of service-learning programmes
 - presentation with a variety of shows produced by the past participants
- Past participant presentations seem to have quite a big impact on the recruitment of the following year’s students, however, it is hard to predict the students’ response to the presentations, and be able to predict the number of registers for the following year’s program.

IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

Expectations

- Most respondents expect to meet and work with other people who may be their teammates or people they serve.
 - reflects the desire to improve their own interpersonal skills
 - an important driving force for participating in the service-learning program.
- Naturally, “to serve the less advantaged” is also mentioned, but with less frequency.
- Chung Chi students are mostly motivated by understanding (meeting with people), and secondly by values (serving the less advantaged)

IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

What Do You Hope to Accomplish in This Service-Learning Experience?

- Most students put more emphasis on personal growth through meeting and working with others.
- The personal growth here includes interpersonal skills and specific knowledge in certain services.
- Once students know which group of less advantaged people they will serve, they want to learn specified skills or knowledge related to the service in that particular setting.
- For example, some will like to learn more about methods in teaching children when they know that they will serve autistic children.
- Since the limitation in background knowledge and the service period being relatively short, the acquisition of extensive special knowledge in a certain field is quite unlikely and should not be our primary targets in this course.

IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

What Will It Be Like for You to Meet New People and Be in New Places?

- Most people are looking forward to it.
- One respondent said: “Nervous, but excited. [I plan to] be cautious and observe carefully before acting.”



IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

Worries

- Students face a big uncertainty—new environment, new people and even the need to use techniques (such as how to deal with autistic children) which they have never learned before.
- After the service starts, students find that their original worries may disappear and new worries starts.
- During reflection, we remind the students that the situation, or our understanding of the situation is changes and that they need to propose new strategies.



IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

Information Needed

- In most responses, the respondents ask for more information about the people they serve and the agency.
- *Mainland China service-learning programme:* most information about the people to be served is not readily available until physically there
- *Local service-learning programme:* participants have every opportunity to visit the agencies before the program starts. Even so, that kind of uncertain feeling is still there before the start of the program.
- After the program begins, the students will certainly get more information, and they will find new problems and new tasks emerge. For example, when we taught primary students in the mainland, we found that discipline is a problem and an important issue—which was not known before we arrived there.

IV. Pre-Service Survey (con'd)

- To sum up, it is important to let the students be prepared to take time and effort to find out the real needs of the persons they serve.
- When their understanding deepens, the needs as seen by the students may change. The students may need to see where the long-term benefits lie and what they can do in the present.
- Most of them had anxieties about reaching out to the unknown. We need to assure them while helping them to know their limitations.

V. Post-Service Survey (con'd)

- Among the respondents,
 - 23 served in the mainland
 - 6 served in Hong Kong
 - 2 in Korea
 - 1 in Indonesia
 - 1 in India
- The respondents are asked about
 - their expectations before the service and
 - what they thought about their achievements
- They are expected to reorganize their past experiences during the process of writing their responses



V. Post-Service Survey (con'd)

What Did You Hope to Achieve by Participating in Service-Learning?

- students put emphasis on personal growth in terms of relations with other possible objectives.
- The frequency of mentioning serving the disadvantaged is much lower than the personal growth reason.

Through Your Service Experience What Have You Learned About Other People?

- All respondents are positive to meet with others.
- Some observe the difference between those disadvantaged with themselves and note the cultural and social background of the difference.



V. Post-Service Survey (con'd)

What/How Did You Contribute to Your Agency?

- ALL students think that they contribute to the agency through the service they provide.

What Skills You Have Gained?

- Most students emphasize on interpersonal skills such as communicating better with others after the service
- Some mention specific skills in serving people
- Some mentioned the theories about techniques in dealing with children's psychology

How Was This Service Similar or Different From What You Expected?

- Most students think they are the same
- Some feel they expect more can be done



V. Post-Service Survey (con'd)

What/How Did You Contribute to the Service Users? Any Significant Impact?

- Personal touch or connection is more commonly mentioned

How Have Your Ideas About “Service” Changed?

- Some mention they consider service provides a way of learning → different from usual volunteer services

Did Your Experiences Have Any Effect on Your Future Plans?

- A nursing student said that the service-learning experiences made her feel the possibility to use her knowledge in serving poor countries



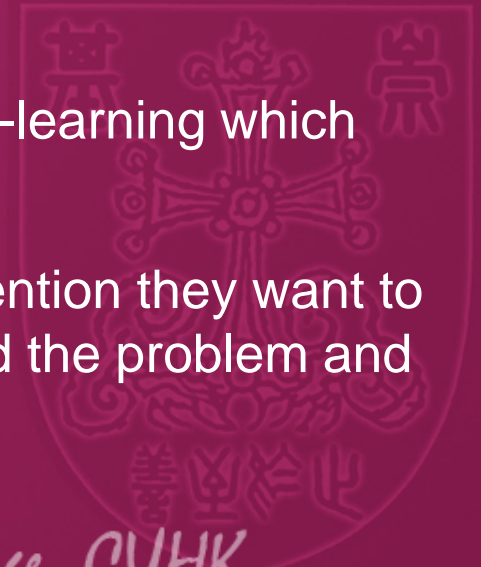
V. Post-Service Survey (con'd)

How Has Participation in Service-Learning Changed Your Life?

- Some say that they will consider serving in other cultures in the future.

Were There Any Activities You Wanted to Do but Were Unable to Do?

- Asked to see if there are any limitations of service-learning which students found in the current structure
- Some participants of the international program mention they want to understand more about the social structure behind the problem and find it difficult to do.



V. Post-Service Survey (con'd)

Were Any Situations or Activities Too Difficult to Handle?

- Some mention the language barrier and children management during service.

What Have Been the Highlights of Your Experiences? The Low-Spots?

- They feel good when people they serve say thank you to them
- Some say that when they have difficulties in communicating with teammates, they feel depressed

Would You Recommend Service-Learning to Your Friends?

- ALL respondents say that they would recommend service-learning to their friends

V. Post-Service Survey (con'd)

Any Final Comments or Reflections You Would Like to Add?

- Some mention encouraging experiences they had during the service

In Conclusion:

- students did enjoy the experiences of service-learning
- they would like to recommend their friends and other students to participate in the program
- they enjoyed the process of service because they not only made new friends, but also were able to know about oneself better in the process

VI. Discussion

- On the whole, all the responses reflect that the participants enjoy the program.
- Our participants appreciate the importance of reflection after the service
 - the major difference between volunteer work and service-learning
- the other difference between volunteer work and service-learning is that the students have great freedom in designing the whole service. They can try different ideas. They are all astonished at this flexibility at first and find it helpful later. In fact, in some cases, the need of service is changing and the students are encouraged to face the changing situation.

VI. Discussion (con'd)

- Service-learning is a kind of situated learning. The students are encouraged to observe and understand the needs of people they serve. With the advance of the understanding, the needs are changed and so are the services they provide. The questions about the impact of their service on the agency and the service users are raised by the participants in the service process. This is partially due to the fact that the service is not linked to any special technical course (such as physical
- the course is under the umbrella of General Education
 - students reflect more on personal growth or interpersonal skills
 - the services we provide are more community oriented and really match the needs of the people we serve



END

Thank you!



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