

# **How Schools Measure the Impact of Service Learning on Communities: Through the Investigation of Higher Education Institutions in Japan and the US**

**Takeshi MIYAZAKI**

**Soka University, 創価大学, Tokyo Japan**

**takeshim@soka.ac.jp**

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- My profile and Soka University in Tokyo
- Service learning in Japan
- Why is this research needed?
- Research questions and methods
- Findings
- Implication
- Limitation and challenges

# My profile

## My teaching experience in Japan

- Prof. at Soka Graduate School for Teacher Education (since 2006)
- Lecturer at Waseda University (since 2003)
- Former high school teacher in Tokyo Public School System for 23 years

## My experience in service learning in Japan

- Applied it to civics and integrated studies in the high school programs since 1996.
- Applied it to teacher education in the college programs

## Members of research team

-Takeshi MIYAZAKI

Faculty of education; Soka graduate school of teacher education

- Akira ITO

Secretary General;

Japanese Service Learning Clearinghouse for Civic education

-Kayo MADOKORO

Junior high school teacher; Oiwake Junior High School

## Grant

-KAKEN;Japan Society for the Promotion of Science(C); The practical research in how schools explain student's activities to stakeholders; development of a community partner questionnaire.(2010-2012).

-KAKEN;Ibid(c); Making a program and platform to cultivate high school students entrepreneurship mentored by college students using the method of service learning(2013-2016)

# Soka Univ. in Tokyo — 創価大学, Main building

Soka Univ. was established in 1971. The university has had a strong relationship with China. Soka Univ. is the first university in Japan that officially accepted exchange students from China in 1971. One of the first students became the current Ambassador of the Chinese Embassy in Japan. The university is going to establish a center for service learning in 2014.



# Service Learning in Japan

## Service Learning;

- Was introduced the United States to Japan, in the 1990's as an instructional method
- Has been used in some colleges and universities in Japan
- Has been applied to school curriculum by educators in the field of social studies
- Is encouraged by the Japanese government



# Why is this research needed?

## -Literature review

-There is abundant research about the impact of service learning on students

(Astin, A.W., Vogelgesang, L.J., Ikeda, E.K., and Yee, J.A. , 2000; Elyer, Glies, Stenson, & Gray, 2001.; Tannenbaum 2008, et all..)

-Research about impact of service learning initiatives on the communities has been minimal at best

(D'Arlach, Sanchez & feuer, 2009; Glies, 2010; Meehan, 2008;Miron & Moely, 2006)

## -Literature review

What We Know:

1. The effects of service learning on students
2. The Effects of particular program characteristics on students
3. The impact of service learning on faculty
4. The Impact of service-Learning on colleges and universities
5. The Impact of service-Learning on Communities

(At A Glance:What We Know about The Effects of Service-Learning on College Students, Faculty, Institutions and Communities, 1993-2000: Third Edition. )



## -Literature review

### What We Know: The Impact of Service-Learning on Communities

- Satisfaction with student participation:
- Service-learning provides useful service in communities:
- Communities report enhanced university relations:

(At A Glance:What We Know about The Effects of Service-Learning on College Students, Faculty, Institutions and Communities, 1993-2000: Third Edition. )

## -Literature review

“Over time, student end-of-course surveys have given the Center an understanding about how students respond to service-learning courses. However, the information about community perspectives was more anecdotal.”

Worrall, 2007

“Few studies have directly examined how recipients of service view the service.”

d’Arlach, 2009

## -Literature review

“However, despite the vast number of service-learning efforts at universities across the nation, there is often little attention to the intended and actual results of the service learning. A growing body of literature calls for more attention to the impacts of service-learning efforts.”

CHUPP and JOSEPH, 2010

## -Literature review

“Service-Learning can be considered through the social exchange frame of reference. One aspect of quality service-learning is the potential for reciprocity between the universities providing the service and the agency receiving it. It is assumed that both universities and community agencies desire to form and maintain relationships with each other because of potential benefit they each may gain. **If there is equal exchange of resources over time, both parties should view the service learning experience as beneficial.**”

Miron and Moely, 2006

## Purpose of the Study

- These issues- attention to the impacts of service-learning efforts, **will become important** when service learning is introduced in more educational institutions **in Japan**.
- Before measuring/researching the impact on the communities, the priority is;  
**To know how higher education institutions consider these issues.**  
Do these institutions consider it important to measure the impact on communities?
  - If so, how? -If not, why?
  - If they did measure the impact on communities, why did they do it? how did they do it?  
what were the challenges?

- How much the institution considers the significance and the importance of investigating the impact of service learning on the community?
- How the institution has measured the impact of service learning on the community so far, and what they think should be done in the future.
- How the institution created mutual benefits for both the campus and the community.

- The study was designed to interview staff and faculty at six universities in Japan and one university in the US.

These universities took the lead in applying service learning into the curriculum and obtained external grants.

- Several open-ended questions were sent out in advance by e-mail and interviews were conducted with the staff and the faculty members.

# Multiple challenges in collecting feedback from community members

- Verbal, not written
  - Completed in relatively short time
  - Can be done in community setting – go to them
  - Personal- value of human connection
  - Can/should be culturally sensitive
  - Can use primary language for conversation

Young, very old, illiterate, no computer access,  
language barriers, lack of transportation

Shumer, 2011



# Summary of SL in the Top 6 Japanese Universities

	Curriculum Outline	Learning Evaluation Method	Current status of coordination with recipients
A.	Has a total of 7 classrooms and practical courses. There are international and community SLs in the hands-on courses, and each holds activities for over 30 days. Elective subject.	The students choose a professor to be their advisor, and that professor assigns grades based on presentations, reports, and field evaluations.	The basic rule is that each student searches for places of activity, but some places have already been established.
B	Provides a systematic learning system which takes into consideration the students stage of learning and activities. Elective subject.	Professor evaluates based on course participation, activity time length, journals (designated class record and form), and the final report.	Questionnaires are given once a year, and once or twice a year a conference is held. The conference is used to exchange recipient groups opinions and gives them the opportunity for discussions. This allows for future planning for the next year.
C	Required for all first year students in their spring semester.	Professor creates a common rubric and evaluates based on students reports.	Coordination based on a stance of helping with local community needs. Recipients were invited to the university and information exchange sessions were held. This became an opportunity for student learning feedback and coordination between recipients.

# Summary of SL in the Top 6 Japanese Universities

	Curriculum Outline	Learning Evaluation Method	Current status of coordination with recipients
D	Contains philanthropy theory (in-class) and SL hands-on courses. Elective, but if chosen, both the philanthropy theory and SL practical courses are registered.	Professor evaluates the course by giving a guidance report based on a 1-on-1 interview after the hands-on practice.	Carefully chosen hands-on practice locations conducive to student development. Makes comparisons and adjustments at operation meetings with the practice places, and holds a yearly review at the end of the year review meeting.
E	One of five special courses is focused on SL. Elective subject.	General evaluation based on participation situation, report contents, level of proactiveness and activity contribution, leadership, etc.	Because they have rented a local shopping street shop, operating a delivery business, they participate in various shopping street gatherings.
F	There are in-class learning and projects, and each has various activities. The projects are extracurricular activities, and there are both projects conducted by the Center and projects proposed by students which are approved by the Center. Elective subject.	In-class learning is evaluated based on standards for each class. A reflection is held at each level - before the project, during, and afterwards. There are teacher to student 1-on-1s, student with recipient participants, and student with student configurations.	The professors responsible hold hearings with the recipients. Professors gather to share information once every two weeks

# Grasping the top 6 Japanese Universities' Community Impact

	Regarding the significance of the investigation	Which investigative methods have been used?	How should they be moving forward with measuring impact?
A	No investigative mechanism exists, but this is being considered. As a university, they stress students to contribute to communities, but ultimately they are concerned with whether or not an activity is useful for student learning.	Not conducted.	They will likely need to think of an effective investigative method which considers the various hands-on practice places.
B	Long-term, integrated investigations are necessary, but because students have a limited time to be involved in the area, around half a year, it is difficult to investigate the impact they have on the area during that period.	Once or twice a year, holds conferences to exchange opinions between students and recipient groups.	Long-term, integrated investigations are necessary. During these, not only professors but also coordinators will likely be necessary as well. External evaluation is also probably necessary.
C	Are focused on student learning and have not reached the stage of contributing to the community.	Not conducted.	This may become necessary once the student activities reach a level of completion that can be called contribution.

# Grasping the top 6 Japanese Universities' Community Impact

	Regarding the significance of the investigation	Which investigative methods have been used	How should they be moving forward with measuring impact
D	Feel that the impact survey is important so the students feel themselves “being useful”	Observation during practice Meetings with the recipients.	They ought to examine the way in which they conduct investigations
E	Not conducted regular and systematic surveys, but the actual community response was positive.	Have received feedback from the shopping street meeting chairman that activities have had an impact.	They have no plans to conduct investigations.
F	Do not conduct them as part of the system, but think that they are necessary.	The professors responsible hold meetings about students' performance with the community partners, and they think that this process includes community surveys unintentionally. In addition, information is shared at a regular meeting of previous professors (once every 2 weeks) based on the contents of review meetings which include students.	Necessary to improve investigative methods. Necessary to overcome issues such as how to investigate unquantifiable information, what demographic to investigate, and how to elicit people's true feelings.

In Japan,

- At the six universities, standardized methods for evaluating community impact were not implemented
- Even when the schools receive evaluations from the community partners, the evaluations are still centered around student efforts.
- The universities are aware of the importance of investigating the community impact for good relationships

In Japan,

-The challenge are

1. Measuring the impact over the long-term.
2. Introducing objective third party evaluations
3. The potential to burden community organizations
4. The difficulty of investigating a wide range of recipients or community

-Tried to collect information related to the impact on the community from evaluations of students' performance and learning

- founded in 1969
- has 37,000 students with around 2100 full-time professors
- Service learning course was developed in 1993
- The center for service learning is an important facility that is one of the university's special features.

	Regarding the significance of the investigation	Which investigative methods have been used	How should they be moving forward with measuring impact
A case in the US.	The university's mission is to contribute to the community, and they feel that SL is the most important element. It is also important to see things from a perspective in which they are responsible for explanation.	They hold external evaluations and investigations held by the university (Community Partner Survey).	Strengthening partnerships with the community and improving the quality of SL courses are always an issue.



## -Regarding the Relationship between Service and Learning

“An effort is made to achieve a balance between student learning, faculty research, and community contribution. These three things don’t always take place at the same time, and there is at times a conflict of interest that results from a lack of compatibility or from a disagreement.”

A Service Learning Specialist, Aug.24, 2011

-Regarding the Relationship between Service and Learning

“A special importance is given to community impact over student learning, in accordance with the university’s mission. This is because SL at the university is implemented as one aspect of Civic Engagement, the mission of the university.”

A Service Learning Specialist, Aug.24, 2011

## -Regarding challenge

“Because the effect of service learning at the university is extremely large, there aren’t any serious issues or difficulties. it is **necessary to continue efforts to create better relations with the community**, and to deal with the effects of almost certain budget cuts.”

A Service Learning Specialist, Aug.24, 2011

- To measure the community impact of service learning is necessary in order to have accountability
- A special importance is given to community impact over student learning, in accordance with the university's mission.
- The institution was using “Community Partner Survey” regularly to assess the needs of the community.

# Difference between the 6 universities in Japan and a case in the US.

- Accountability was required for all universities
  - At Japanese universities, the only required outcome of service learning was students' learning,
  - At a case in the US., faculty research and community impact were also required components.
- The community impact was a vital element for a case in the US, but for Japanese universities, the matter of community impact was not taken so seriously, or seen as so important
- Japanese six universities have information about how community partners view the students and their performance

In Japan,

- the universities are the “active agent”, the side that creates initiatives, and the community is the “passive agent,”
- important to start with the creation of a program in which the community and schools are of equal position and have the same goals
- The research might give a chance to reconfirm the necessity of benefiting the community.

- Limitation
  - Was not able to show the concrete existence of a community impact that is rooted in Japanese culture
- Future challenges
  - Ask community organizations hosting service learners how they prefer evaluation or feedback from colleges.
  - To propose effective methods and contents for community impact surveys

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