

SERVICE-LEARNING PEDAGOGY IN TEACHER EDUCATION: AN EXAMINATION OF
INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP EXPERIENCES

by

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B.S., University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 1981
M.S., University of Nebraska – Kearney, 1988

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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Manhattan, Kansas

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Abstract

There is a call for education, including teacher education, to transform from solely transmitting knowledge to creating dynamic learning opportunities for students to experience real-world situations so they can develop the skills and competencies necessary to navigate a changing and unpredictable world. Service-learning is proposed as one strategy to facilitate this transformation. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to describe how individual or group service-learning experiences might impact the attitudes and beliefs of pre-service teachers in a teacher education course.

This study was guided by two research questions: How do pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences within the context of a required teacher education course? In what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary, based on individual or group service-learning experiences?

The service-learning experiences for this study were designed using experiential educational theory and a blended framework from service-learning common goals (academic enhancement, personal/professional growth, and civic learning) and common components (academic material, critical reflection and relevant service) (Ash, Clayton, & Moses, 2009). Fourteen pre-service students agreed to participate in the study. Two sources of data were identified, (a) individual semi-structured, face-to-face interviews and (b) critical reflective journals written by participants.

Findings suggest that service-learning experiences reinforce academic content including experiential education. Personal and professional growth and an understanding of diversity can result from service-learning experiences. Teacher involvement in the local community was viewed by participants as important for student-teacher relationships and to improve connections

between the school and the community. Participants of the study viewed critical reflection as a fundamental component in service-learning. Self-identified personality type can impact how each participant described their individual or group service-learning experiences, including benefits of social interaction and collaboration. Individual and group service-learning present different challenges in implementing effective experiences. Participants' beliefs and attitudes did not vary based upon individual or group service-learning experiences. In conclusion, incorporating the experiential pedagogy of service-learning in teacher education programs can better prepare pre-service teachers for the very unpredictable nature of teaching.

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Dedication

To God, my family, and those who have the courage to become the teachers their students need them to be.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

The cauldron of discontent regarding the United States educational system and preparation of teachers for professional practice has been simmering for decades. In 1983, the release of *A Nation at Risk* by the National Commission on Excellence in Education warned that education in America was laden with a “rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people” (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 5). This report was followed by a steady drumbeat to narrow the curriculum, standardize testing, privatize schools, and de-emphasize the “professional” educator.

Historically, education has been a popular target of political, social, and commercial interests. Robinson (2015) suggests that education is such a hot topic for the following reasons:

1. Education is economic. In 2013, in the United States education and training cost \$632 billion (Background and Analysis: The Federal Education Budget, 2014). Governments spend billions of dollars on education making it one of the world’s biggest businesses.
2. Education is cultural. It is one of the primary means to pass down community values and traditions to the next generation.
3. Education is social. “Governments want education to promote whatever attitudes and behaviors they think is [sic] necessary for social stability. Those vary...from one political system to another” (Robinson, 2015, p. 8).
4. Education is personal. Educational policy often articulates the need for all students to realize their potential.

These reasons underscore the complexity of education with widely varying perspectives about the goals, purposes, and practice of teaching and learning.

Educators and critics alike agree that some change in the American education system and teacher education is warranted. Boggs (2013) suggests there is “widespread agreement that educational institutions are in need of restructuring” (p. 32). Robinson (2015) declares that our system of education is still a factory model organized on the principles of mass production,

efficiency, and skills designed for the beginning of the twentieth century. Martinez and McGrath (2014) lament that:

While much of society has changed radically in the twenty-first century, the vast majority of the U.S. public school system...still clings to early twentieth-century practices. Teachers lecture while standing in front of rows of desks, students take notes with pencils and lug heavy books, and both groups expect students to memorize content more often than to learn or practice new skills. (pp. 1-2)

Several authors agree that education has not kept pace with the fluctuating environments in which our students live. Darling-Hammond (2010) suggests that our changing world invites us to move beyond focusing on the transmission of information and instead concentrate on helping “students learn how to think critically and learn for themselves” (p. 4). Ravitch (2010) contends that the “new mission of schools is to prepare students to work at jobs that do not yet exist, creating ideas and solutions for products and problems that have not yet been identified, using technologies that have not yet been invented” (p. 2). Daniels, Patterson, and Dunston (2010) agree:

Twenty-first century educators must prepare all students to be creative, innovative, and independent solution-finders who are equipped to deal with problems that they have never encountered while working with people who they have never met before, many of whom have diverse values, cultures, experiences and expertise from themselves. They also must be able to find and effectively use resources that are available to them in their communities. It can be argued that such an education requires that students apply what they are learning in real world settings and that have personal meaning to them. (p. 2-3)

The National Center on Education and the Economy (U.S.) (2007) insists that candidates for the jobs of the future:

will have to [be] comfortable with ideas and abstractions, good at both analysis and synthesis, creative and innovative, self-disciplined and well organized, able to learn very quickly and work well as a member of a team and have the flexibility to adapt quickly to frequent changes. (p. 167)

As cited in Darling-Hammond (2010), the school curriculum should develop in our students the capacity to:

- Design, evaluate, and manage one's own work so that it continually improves
- Frame, investigate, and solve problems using a wide range of tools and resources
- Collaborate strategically with others
- Communicate effectively in many forms
- Find, analyze, and use information for many purposes
- Develop new products and ideas (Drucker, 1994; Wagner, 2008)

To develop these competencies in students, there is a need for teachers who are equipped with the knowledge and strategies to foster this type of learning. Just as with education in general, there are many who are critical of teacher education in the United States. Darling-Hammond (2010) charges that "...the United States...has failed to maintain focused investments in a stable, well-prepared teaching force..." (p. 8). Ravitch (2010) asserts that teacher preparation in the United States is a "hodge-podge" in which many teacher education programs produce teachers with "dramatically different levels of knowledge and skill" (p. 197). Lukenchuk, Jagla and Price (2013) declare that "Teacher education seems to be at a crossroads" (p. 62) and Rust (2010) charges that:

American teacher education is stuck in an unproductive and dysfunctional pattern.... American teacher education programs graduate thousands of newly certified teachers each year, but the evidence that even half of the new graduates are dynamic and capable teachers is weak. (p. 5)

Fullan (1993a) states that "Teacher education has the honor of being the worst problem and the best solution in education....Teacher education institutions themselves must take responsibility for their current reputation as laggards rather than leaders in educational reform" (p. 57). Levine (2005) agrees by stating:

Too often teacher education programs cling to an outdated, historically flawed vision of teacher education that is at odds with a society remade by economic, demographic, technological, and global change....In this rapidly changing environment, America's teacher education programs must demonstrate their relevance and their graduates' impact on student achievement – or face the very real danger that they will disappear. (pp. 1, 3)

Overview of the Issues

To achieve the transformation of education and teacher preparation to meet the challenges of our time, multiple strategies and efforts will be needed. Many scholars promote a return to the theory and practice of experiential education and more specifically a type of experiential education called service-learning (Bates, Allen, & McCandless, 2006; Boggs, 2013; Chambers & Lavery, 2012; Daniels, et al., 2010; Jagla, Erickson, & Tinkler, 2013; Lukenchuk, et al., 2013; Myers & Pickeral, 1997; Root, 1997; Tinkler & Tinkler, 2013; Verducci & Pope, 2001). Zlotkowski (1998) argues that although:

there is not a single strategy capable of bringing about academic renewal...[service-learning] provides a way of grappling successfully with many of the dysfunctions referenced in critiques of...[higher education] but also provides a way of organizing and coordinating some of the most exciting recent developments in pedagogical practice. (p. 3)

Service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities of service and reflection which are intentionally designed to promote learning and development, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. As Price (2011) suggests “Service-learning is compatible with many school and educational reforms” (p. 153). The American Youth Policy conducted a study in 2002 which found that twenty-eight different educational reforms were compatible or highly compatible with the practice of service-learning. The study concluded that:

Service-learning is a powerful tool for reaching both the academic and social objectives of education. It has the potential to reinvigorate the education reform movement by encouraging the creating of a caring community of students to improve the school’s culture and positively impact our world. (Pearson, 2002, p. 11)

Boggs (2013) believes that experiential education pedagogies such as service-learning “can transform teacher education” (p. 32) by engaging and connecting teachers and pre-service teachers with the community. Anderson (1998) contends that service-learning can be considered

as “both a philosophy of education and an instructional method” (p. 9). Philosophically, service-learning encourages the role of education to create an informed and involved citizenry. As an instructional method, service-learning combines engaged service with academic curriculum to address real concerns of the community.

Service-learning has become a popular practice in K-12 schools and higher education. “In the last twenty years, service-learning has become one of the leading practices in educational reform and the restructuring of how we teach students to learn, lead, and serve” (Price, 2011, p. 151). In a survey of K – 12 principals, 24% of schools offer service-learning including 35% of high schools, 25% of middle schools, and 20% of elementary schools (Spring, Grimm, & Dietz, 2008). In 1998, Genzer found that 88% of all private schools included service-learning in their curriculum. “Service-learning forms an integral part of how young adults excel in more than half of our community colleges and over a quarter of our universities” (How widespread is service-learning in the United States?, 2013, para. 1).

Service-learning is a “proven paradigm and educational reform known for building character, leadership skills, and developmental assets in students” (Price, 2011, p. 151). Erickson and Anderson (1997) note that “A growing body of research indicates that well-designed, well-managed service-learning can contribute to students’ learning and growth while also helping to meet real community needs” (p. 1). Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) proclaim that “Bringing students and teachers in contact with the broader community can enhance their learning” (p. 224). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) publication *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A national strategy to prepare effective teachers* states, “We need teachers who...know their communities...” (2010, p. 1). Community contact provides opportunities “to get out of the four walls that enclose the

schools from the rest of the culture and society and open the doors to the larger society, the community” (Gutek, 2004, p. 76). By breaking down the walls of the classroom, service-learning can free learners from the constraints of the factory-model, lecture-style pedagogies and can provide dynamic experiences and engaging exposure to real-life situations.

For teacher education, Lukenchuk et al. (2013) contend that “teaching and learning in the field of the ‘community’ give our teacher candidates the opportunity to encounter, experience, and overcome challenges that are posed, becoming authentic, reflective practitioners in the process” (p. 61). This “living pedagogy” (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006) has the potential to “be a means for overcoming limitations of the traditional education curriculum” (Root, Moon, & Kromer, 1995, p. 31) and help pre-service teachers broaden their understanding of teaching as a career with the needed skills, attitudes, and commitments (Erickson & Anderson, 1997).

Verdicci and Pope (2001) provide the following rationales for including service-learning in teacher education:

- Service-learning is an effective pedagogy for teaching and learning.
- Service-learning is a means to foster social understanding, civic participation, and/or social transformation.
- Service-learning provides civic, social, moral, and personal benefits for participants.
- Service-learning prepares students for the workforce (work-based learning).
- Service-learning aligns with standards. (pp. 3-4)

Jagla, Erickson, and Tinkler (2013) suggest that teacher educators need to become better advocates at the university, local, state, and national levels for effective pedagogies such as service-learning and in doing so, enhance the learning of pre-service teachers and serve as role models for future practice. Fullan (1993b) reminds us that “Faculties of education should not advocate things for teachers or schools that they are not capable of practicing themselves” (p. 12). Without modeling the pedagogy of service-learning in teacher education, it is unlikely that beginning teachers will use service-learning in their classrooms (Anderson & Hill, 2001).

“Teacher educators who believe in the power of service-learning to enhance teaching and learning want to prepare pre-service candidates to use the strategy in their future classrooms” (Verducci & Pope, 2001, p. 6). Myers and Pickeral (1997) conclude that service-learning can impact “all dimensions of school reform...[and] service-learning should be included as a central process within teacher preparation programs in order to increase the ability of students to be successful teachers and leaders in the reform of public education” (p. 13).

Daniels et al., (2010) suggest that service-learning has a long history in teacher education by equating field experiences with service-learning. Ball and Forzani (2009) and Zeichner (2010) note the growing consensus that pre-service teachers need more learning from actual practice in the field. With the difficulty of finding space in local school systems to absorb increased field experiences by pre-service teachers, Hollins and Guzman (2005) propose that teacher education look outside the traditional school setting and use community-based field experiences including service-learning field experiences. “NCATE recently identified service learning as a characteristic of programs at the highest level of proficiency in terms of the design, implementation, and evaluation of field experiences and clinical practice” (Kielsmeier, 2010, p. 12).

Boggs (2013) contends that service-learning offers benefits not found through student teaching and traditional field experiences. Service-learning makes the vital link with the community which is often lacking in more traditional experiences. Boggs (2013) elaborates by stating that:

Service-learning, as a basis for teacher education, acknowledges the goals of target communities where student teaching alone does not. In other words, student teaching as a means of learning to teach is silent in regard to the relationship among student teachers and between teachers and the communities they serve, while service-learning places that relationship at the prefigurative center. (pp. 34-35)

Including service-learning as a part of the teacher education curriculum can augment existing student teaching experiences and serve to strengthen partnerships with the community. This practice has the potential to allow all parties to see one another in a new light and begin to address needed changes in the educational system.

Purpose of the Study

There is a call for education, including teacher education, to transform from solely transmitting knowledge to creating dynamic learning opportunities for students to experience real-world situations so they can develop the skills and competencies necessary to successfully navigate a changing and unpredictable world. Experiential education and more specifically a type of experiential education called service-learning, is proposed as one strategy to facilitate this transformation. “Given that service-learning falls under the general rubric of experiential education, it brings with it all the best empirical support for the theory and practice of actively engaging students of all ages in learning” (Verducci & Pope, 2001, p. 4).

Studies for service-learning and teacher education show relationships between service-learning and development in teaching efficacy (Armor, Conroy-Oseguera, Cox, King, McDonnell, Pascal, Paulty, & Zellman, 1976; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Guskey & Passaro, 1994; Root, Callahan, & Sepanski, 2002); teaching service ethic (Serow, Eaker, & Ciechalski, 1992; Serow, Eaker, & Forrest, 1994); understanding of diversity (Sleeter, 2001) and commitment to teaching (Colardarci, 1992; Schlechy & Vance, 1983).

Since service-learning is a relationship-rich pedagogy, it is important to examine the impact of how a service-learning experience should be structured in a teacher education course. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative case study is to describe how individual or group

service-learning experiences might impact the attitudes and beliefs of pre-service teachers in a teacher education class at Kansas State University.

Research Questions

This qualitative case study examines how service-learning experiences impact the attitudes and beliefs of pre-service teachers in a teacher education program. The study is guided by the following two research questions: How do pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences within the context of a required teacher education course? In what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary, based on individual or group service-learning experiences?

Research Design

For this study, the researcher chose a qualitative design because the primary mode of analysis for qualitative research is an inductive method that uses constant comparisons and a rich descriptive narrative (Merriam, 2009). The researcher selected a single case embedded study research design to provide a rich description of the impact of individual or group service-learning experiences on the attitudes and beliefs of pre-service teachers in a teacher education program. To do so, the researcher gathered data from pre-service teachers enrolled in one *Foundations of Education* course at Kansas State University. Through stratified purposeful sampling, the 25 students enrolled in the *Foundations of Education* class were assigned to participate in group or individual service-learning experiences. Of the 25 pre-service teachers in the class, 14 chose to participate in the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

To answer the research questions, two primary sources of data were identified:

- individual semi-structured, face-to-face interviews (see Appendix A)

- critical reflective journals written by participants (see Appendix B)

In addition, the researcher used observations of participants as students in the *Foundations of Education* course, including: (a) three face-to-face interviews with participants, (b) *Foundations of Education* course assignments, and (c) semester-long interactions with the participants before, after, and during class time. Students were divided into two groups with 12 assigned to group service-learning and 13 designated to individual service-learning. One of the criteria used to divide the class into these two groups was the self-identified introversion or extroversion by each student generally based upon questions derived from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®). Since service-learning is a relationship-rich pedagogy, the researcher sought an even balance of introverts and extroverts in both the individual and group service-learning experiences.

The researcher used several methods of data analysis as suggested by Creswell (2007) including a blended theoretical framework from experiential education and service-learning literature. In addition, Creswell's (2007) data analysis spiral was used with the following steps: (a) data managing, (b) reading, memoing, (c) describing, classifying, interpreting, and (d) representing, visualizing.

Significance of the Study

Education and teacher education are under attack from the public, policy makers, and politicians for allegedly not preparing students adequately for the 21st century (Fullan, 1993a; Fullan, 1993b; Levine, 2005; Lukenchuk, et al., 2013; Ravitch, 2010; Robinson, 2015; Rust, 2010; Wagner, 2008). Many scholars suggest that experiential education in the form of service-learning can help education and teacher education reform (Bates, et al., 2006; Boggs, 2013; Chambers & Lavery, 2012; Daniels et al., 2010; Jagla et al., 2013; Lukenchuk et al., 2013; Myers & Pickeral, 1997; Root, 1997; Shumer, 1997; Tinkler & Tinkler, 2013; Verducci & Pope,

2001). Although “...to date, more than one-hundred studies have been published on the impacts, implementation, institutionalization of service-learning in teacher education programs...many questions remain unanswered, and more research in this area...is needed” (Jagla et al., 2013, p. ix). As stated by Steinberg, Bringle, and McGuire (2013):

Service-learning as an engaging and active pedagogy may have implication for all teaching and learning (e.g., cognitive processes, student-centered instruction, collaborative learning). As assessment of instruction becomes more outcome oriented and assessment of learning becomes more focused on authentic evidence, there will be opportunities to assess how different pedagogical approaches, including service learning, contribute to achieving many desired student learning outcomes. Studies focused only on service learning courses not only can inform practice for service learning but also may have relevance to teaching and learning more generally when the research is testing theory that is relevant to all learning or to particular types of teaching. (p. 48)

In addition to contributing to the growing literature and research on service-learning in teacher education, this particular study also examines the impact of participation in individual or group service-learning. As Vaughn (2010) notes:

Many service learning projects are structured as group experiences, but much of the research in service learning focuses on individual rather than group outcomes. By intentionally structuring group experiences in service learning projects, practitioners can maximize students’ engagement with the community. (p. 10)

To date, research has not focused specifically on the impact of individual and group service-learning experiences on pre-service teachers. The examination of these factors may help practitioners construct more effective service-learning experiences in teacher education and education, in general.

A study by Parker-Gwin and Mabry (1998) did compare whole class, individual required service, and individual optional service in sociology and psychology classes. However, this study more closely examined the idea of “choice” and “reflection” rather than the actual experiences of being in a group or working as an individual. A study by Scales (2006) looked only at group service-learning in a hospitality management class. Therefore, this study seeks to address an

identified gap in the literature by documenting the experiences of pre-service teachers in both individual and group service-learning contexts within one case.

Boundaries of the Study

This study is limited to the bounded system of pre-service teachers in a *Foundations of Education* course at Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas during the Fall 2013 semester. The participants of this study do not represent the experiences and characteristics of all pre-service teachers, so the findings are not intended to be generalized to all pre-service teaching populations.

Definitions of Terms

Academic enhancement: Through the use of service-learning pedagogy to enhance the following: basic foundational learning (e.g., facts, theories) and skills; higher level learning associated with evaluation of knowledge and skills; thinking from disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary perspectives, and critical thinking (Jameson, Clayton, & Ash, 2013).

Attitudes and Beliefs: For this study, these terms will be defined collectively as evaluating an entity with varying degrees of favor or disfavor (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).

Civic engagement: “Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivations to make that difference” (Ehrlich, 2000, p. vi).

Civic learning: “Inviting students to see themselves as citizens, in both their personal and professional lives” (Ash, Clayton, & Moses, 2009, p. ii).

Constructivism: An educational learning theory that proposes that “individuals create their own new understandings, based upon the interaction of what they already know and

believe, and the phenomena or ideas with which they come into contact” (Richardson, 1997, p. 3).

Critical reflection: “[T]he active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends” (Dewey, 1997, p. 9).

Critical thinking: According to the Foundation for Critical Thinking (Paul, 1993), “Critical thinking is a systematic way to form and shape one’s thinking....It is thought that is disciplined, comprehensive, based on intellectual standards, and as a result, well-reasoned” (p. 20).

DEAL model for critical reflection: A way of organizing the thinking process by describing the experience objectively, rigorously examining that experience through the use of prompts that are closely related to the desired learning outcomes and then articulating the learning that arises from that examination (Ash et al. 2009).

Experiential learning: Experiential learning is broadly defined as learning that supports students in applying their knowledge and conceptual understanding to real-world problems or situations where the teacher directs and facilitates learning (Wurdinger & Carlson, 2010).

Experiential Education: Experiential education is a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experiences and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills and clarify values. (Association for Experiential Education, 2007, What is experiential education?). Retrieved from

<http://www.AEE.org/about/whatisEE>

Extroverted: Someone who orients their energy to the outer world and is seen as a “people person” with a wide range of friends. They feel comfortable in groups and like working

in them. They tend to jump too quickly into an activity and sometimes do not allow enough time to think it over (Adapted from Lawrence & Martin, 2001).

Group service-learning experience: Experiencing service-learning with more than two members of the same teacher education class.

Individual service-learning experience: Experiencing service-learning as the only member of the same teacher education class.

Introverted: Someone who orients their energy to the inner world of ideas, pictures, memories, and reactions that are inside their head. They are seen as reflective, reserved, and are comfortable being alone or doing things on their own. They prefer to know just a few people well. They sometimes spend too much time reflecting and don't move into action quickly enough (Adapted from Lawrence & Martin, 2001).

Personal/Professional growth category: For purposes of this study, this category identifies personal characteristics such as attitudes, assumptions, strengths, and weaknesses of the service-learning participants (Ash et al., 2009) that have an impact on decisions, actions, and belief about oneself.

Pragmatism: A theory that emphasizes a “belief in an open universe that is dynamic, evolving, and in a state of becoming....To the pragmatist, knowing is a transaction or a conversation between the learner and the environment. This transaction or conversation between learner and environment alters or changes both the learner and the world” (Johnson, Musial, Hall, & Gollnick, 2014, pp. 87-88).

Pre-service teacher: Students who are in a teacher education program.

Progressivism: An educational theory emphasizing that “ideas should be tested by experimentation and that learning is rooted in questions developed by the learner” (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 111).

Reconstructionism: “A philosophy that contends that educators can analyze societal issues and problems and redesign schools to overcome problems such as racism and sexism” (Johnson et al., 2014, p.192).

Relevant service category: Ash et al. (2009) define service to be relevant if it is “relevant to the academic material and to the needs, interests, and capacities of the community, as they have identified them” (p. 1-4).

Service-learning: A form of experiential education in which students engage in activities of service and reflection which are intentionally designed to promote learning and development, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Teacher education: Professional preparation through formal study and practice teaching to prepare future teachers for professional practice.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations to this study:

1. Participants were drawn from one *Foundations of Education* class. This research was based on participants from only one Foundations class in one teacher preparation program at Kansas State University.
2. The number of participants. Research was based upon the reflections and interviews of 14 pre-service teachers, 9 experiencing individual service-learning and 5 experiencing group service-learning. This may limit the scope of the study.

3. Researcher as instructor. The researcher for this study was also the instructor for the *Foundations of Education* class. This may limit the kinds of responses from participants and the interpretation of findings by the researcher.

Researcher Perspective

As Creswell (1998) states a “study reflects the history, culture, and personal experiences of the researcher” (p. 46). The researcher of this study, is a white, middle-aged female with over twenty years of administrative and teaching experience at the K-12 and collegiate levels. During much of her teaching career, the researcher has used experiential education as a foundational principle of her teaching. In addition, the researcher is also the instructor for the *Foundations of Education* course used in this study. Service-learning has been a pedagogical tool used by the researcher for the past three years. The researcher of this study has also made the assumption that the participants answered interview questions and reflective journal prompts willingly and honestly.

Summary

In this qualitative case study, the researcher examined how pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences and the ways in which participants’ attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary based upon their experiences.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the issues, purpose of the study, research questions, research design, data collection and analysis, significance of the study, boundaries of the study, definition of terms, limitations of the study, the researcher perspective, and a summary. Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature related to the theoretical framework of experiential education and service-learning including the importance of experience and social context, pragmatic fluidity,

emphasis on constructivism, and critical reflection and transformational learning. Chapter 2 also details the history of service-learning, defines service-learning, describes the service-learning models of charity, project, and social justice, and examines the benefits of service-learning including academic enhancement, personal/professional growth, civic learning, critical reflection, and relevant service. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology guiding this study and details the purpose of the study, research design, research questions, service-learning theoretical framework, context and setting of the study, data collection, instruments, and researcher assumptions and bias. Chapter 3 also describes the data analysis and trustworthiness. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study, by first providing demographic information and personal depictions of each of the participants. Research questions and the service-learning framework is described. The emergent themes in relation to the researcher are discussed in detail. Chapter 5 provides conclusions and discussion of the findings, suggestions for future practice in teacher education and K-12 education, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This chapter presents a review of the literature of the theoretical framework of experiential education and service-learning. Since John Dewey is a central figure to both experiential education and service-learning, this chapter elaborates particularly upon Dewey's perspectives on the topics of experience and social context, pragmatic fluidity, constructivism, critical reflection, and transformational learning. The review of literature continues with an overview of the history of service-learning, definitions, models, and the benefits of service-learning.

Theoretical Framework of Experiential Education and Service-Learning

The theoretical framework for this study centers upon experiential educational learning theory because service-learning is a form of experiential education (Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). Kolb, Kolb, Passarelli, and Sharma (2014) identify the following important scholars and theories which have contributed to the theories of experiential education and service-learning: William James (Radical Empiricism); Kurt Lewin (Action Research, The T-Group); Carl Rogers (Self-actualization through the process of experiencing); Carl Jung (Development from specialization to integration); John Dewey (Experiential Education); Jean Piaget (Constructivism); Lev Vygotsky (Proximal Zone of Development); Paulo Freire (Naming experience in dialogue) and Mary Parker Follett (Learning in relationships, Creative experience).

David A. Kolb is also viewed as an important figure in service-learning. He developed the Experiential Learning Theory which is built upon six propositions consistent with the perspectives of the aforementioned scholars:

1. Learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes.
2. All learning is re-learning.

3. Learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world.
4. Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world.
5. Learning results from synergetic transactions between the person and the environment.
6. Learning is the process of creating knowledge. (Kolb, 1984, p. 212)

Joplin (1995) further identifies the following as unique qualities of experiential education:

(a) patterns of learning are holistic rather than reductionistic; (b) learning is based on direct experience rather than abstractions; (c) learning starts where the learner is rather than where the teacher wants to be; (d) how something is learned (process) is viewed as equally important as what is learned (product), and (e) learning often takes place outside the classroom... (p. 13)

According to Knapp (1994), the foundations of experiential education began at the turn of the twentieth century with the Progressive Education movement of John Dewey and this “philosophical heritage established the focus on the learner as the center of learning and the value and validity of individual experience” (Lindsay & Ewert, 1999, p. 12). As Dewey (1990) proclaimed, “...the child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve, he is the center about which they are organized” (p. 34). John Dewey is also acknowledged by Deans (1999) as the father of service-learning:

In the ongoing process of constructing a philosophical and theoretical framework for service-learning, John Dewey has been cast, more than any other figure in the role of founding father...Dewey is such a compelling figure because his pragmatic philosophy ties knowledge to experience, his progressive political vision connects individuals to society, his student-centered educational theory combines reflection with action, and his ethical writings emphasize democracy and community. (p. 15)

According to Berman (2006), “In 1903, John Dewey with his students and colleagues published a number of papers that established the intellectual foundations of service learning” (p. xxi).

Dewey's philosophies represent the core principles of service-learning and as Giles and Eyster (1994) observe, "service-learning reflects, either consciously or unconsciously, a Deweyian influence" (p. 78).

In addition, Anderson and Guest (1995) suggest five categories to explain the theoretical underpinnings of service-learning:

1. Experiential learning (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984)
2. Transformational or social reconstructionist philosophy (Allam & Zerk, 1993; Miller, 1988)
3. Multicultural education (Sleeter & Grant, 1987)
4. Critical reflection (Sparks-Langer, Simmons, Pasch, Colton, & Starko, 1990; Sullivan, 1991)
5. Education as preparation for civic responsibility (Coleman, 1974)

The Importance of Experience and Social Context

Dewey's Progressive educational philosophy emphasizes a focus on real-world problems, experimentation, and the importance of the learner, all viewed in a social context. Dewey insists on the "intimate and necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and education" (Dewey, 1938, p. 20). Dewey acknowledges that learning can take place "outside, as well as inside the school room" (Hickman, 2009, p. 9). Dewey (1938) observes that, "...amid all uncertainties there is one permanent frame of reference: namely the organic connection between education and personal experience" (p. 25). Dewey (1897) extols that "...education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience....the process and goal of education are one and the same thing" (p. 79).

In turn, service-learning is based upon the idea of experiences outside a classroom setting. As Hecht (2003) reminds us "Service-learning is neither passive nor solitary. Rather, students deal with real-life activities in naturalistic settings. It is these features that make service-

learning unique from most other types of learning” (p. 28). It is important to recognize that during service-learning:

these interactions occur in multiple settings or contexts, from planning periods to the service site to reflection. Students construct their own understanding of what happens and their role in the events while also making connections with academic, social, or other learning. (Hecht, 2003, p. 27)

Roberts (2003) declares that “Paramount to Dewey’s philosophy is that everything occurs within a social environment”. Dewey (1938) states that “The principle that development of experience comes about through interaction means that education is essentially a social process” (p. 58). Smith and Knapp (2011) observe that:

Dewey...saw education as a social process, beginning in the home and continuing in school. Dewey saw education as a two-sided process, having both psychological (personal development) and sociological (social development) goals, but the final goal was to prepare the child for adjustment to society. Dewey argued that schools would fail if they were not perceived as part of community life. (p. 154)

Dewey (1897) elaborates, “I believe that education which does not occur through forms of life that are worth living for their own sake is always a poor substitute for genuine reality and tends to cramp and deaden” (p. 7).

Reconstructionist philosophers criticized Dewey for not emphasizing the need to create leaders who could challenge and reform the system (Brameld, 1956; Counts, 1932). Counts (1932) exclaimed that Progressive Education had “elaborated no theory of social welfare....[and] must emancipate itself from the influence of class” (p. 9). As Miller (2001) suggests “Dewey recognized the problem....[and] wrote about the importance of schools following the goals of broader society, but warned that the aims of society were ill-defined and thus poorly reflected in schools” (p. 154). Dewey (1916) states, “Conception of education as a social process and function has no definite meaning until we define the kind of society we have in mind” (p. 97).

Dewey further elaborates on education and experience when he states:

I believe that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race. This process begins unconsciously almost at birth, and is continually shaping the individual's powers, saturating his consciousness, forming his habits, training his ideas, and arousing his feelings and emotions. In sum, I believe that the individual is a social individual and that society is an organic union of individuals. If we eliminate the social factor from the child we are left only with an abstraction; if we eliminate the individual factor from society, we are left only with an inert and lifeless mass. (Dewey, 1897, p. 80)

Pragmatic Fluidity

In addition to being a Progressive educator, Dewey was also considered Pragmatic because his general philosophy declared that the world is dynamic and evolving without fixed truths. He was influenced by Darwin's *Origin of Species* and "related pragmatism to evolution by explaining that human beings are creatures who have to adapt to one another and their environments....[For Dewey] the primary unit of life is the individual experience" (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 89). Dewey thought this adaption was "rhythmic, alternating between phases of imbalance and equilibrium" (Hickman, 2009, p. 7) and that "Each learner is a living *organism* with her own history, needs, desires, and perhaps most importantly, her own interests..." (Hickman, 2009, pp. 6-7, 9). As Dewey (1902) stated, "...cease thinking of the child's experience as also something hard and fast; see it as something fluent, embryonic, vital; and we realize that the child and the curriculum are simply two limits which define a single process [instruction]" (p. 11).

Emphasis on Constructivism

Scholars (Garrison, 1997; Hickman, 2009; Neubert, 2009; Reich, 2009) have also linked John Dewey to constructivism which proposes that the learner actively constructs their own understanding of reality through interaction with the environment and reflection (Cohen, 2003). The "basic assumption of constructivism is that people are active learners and must construct knowledge for themselves" (Schunk, 2004, p. 287). Reich (2009) believes that Dewey's work is

a “major precursor of constructivist learning theories” (p. 64) and Garrison (1997) states that “Dewey was a ‘social constructivist’ decades before the phrase became fashionable” (p. 39). As Dewey (1902) states “Learning is active. It involves reaching out of the mind. It involves organic assimilation starting from within” (p. 9). Dewey believed that “truth is neither discovered...nor invented...instead is *constructed* as a byproduct of solving problems” (Hickman, 2009, p. 14). Constructivism, just as pragmatic and progressive perspectives, promote experience as a central tenet.

Critical Reflection and Transformational Learning

Another essential component of experiential education and service-learning is the act of critical reflection before, during and after the experience. Dewey (1933) states that reflection is an important part of learning and suggests that it enables a person to become proactive rather than reactive. Dewey (1997) envisions reflective thinking as a combination of action and thinking and defined reflective thought as “Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 6). For Dewey (1997), reflection can help in “overcoming the inertia that inclines one to accept suggestions at their face value...Reflective thinking in short, means judgment suspended during further inquiry...” (p. 13).

For reflection to be successful, it must be continuous, challenge us to think in new ways, help us to make connections, and based on context (Collier & Williams, 2005; Eyler, Giles, & Schmeide, 1996; Wilczenski & Coomey, 2007). As Mezirow (1991) observes, “John Dewey made the seminal analysis of reflection”. In the following passage, Dewey elucidates the importance of reflection:

A person in pursuing a consecutive train of thoughts takes some system of ideas for granted (which accordingly he leaves unexpressed, “unconscious”) as surely as he does in

conversing with others. Some context, some situation, some controlling purpose dominates his explicit ideas so thoroughly that it does not need to be consciously formulated and expounded. Explicit thinking goes on within the limits of what is implied or understood. Yet the fact that reflection originates in a problem makes it necessary at some points consciously to inspect and examine this familiar background. We have to turn upon some unconscious assumption and make it explicit. (Dewey, 1933, p. 281)

Mezirow (1997) contends that Schön's "frames of reference" are what he calls "meaning perspectives" and that "The process [of transformative learning] involves transforming frames of reference through critical reflection of assumptions, validating contested beliefs through discourse, taking action on one's reflective insight, and critically assessing it" (p. 11).

As discussed earlier, one of the most important opportunities that service-learning provides are real-world "disorienting dilemmas" (Mezirow & Associates, 2000, p. 22) or as Dewey calls "forked-road dilemmas" (1933, p. 14).

Service learning provides...an opportunity for students to face new, possibly dissonant, experiences that can cause them to see persons, places, policies, and problems in new and more complex ways. It invites thinking that, as Dewey advocated, involves more than basic knowledge and indeed requires, as well as fosters, higher levels of cognitive activity. (Jameson et al., 2013, p. 88)

The idea of "disorienting dilemmas" in tandem with critical reflection can lead to transformative experiences. Mezirow (1991) views transformative learning as:

a social process: others precipitate the disorienting dilemma, provide us with alternative perspectives, provide support for change, participate in validating changed perspectives through rational discourse, and require new relationships to be worked out within the context of a new perspective. (p. 194)

Kiely (2005) asserts that the transformational learning model by Mezirow is helpful for service-learning because it targets "how people make meaning of their experiences and, in particular, how significant learning and behavioral change often result from the way people make sense of ill-structured problems, critical incidents, and/or ambiguous life events" (p. 6).

In transformational learning, we struggle to resolve a “problem where our usual ways of doing or seeing do not work, and we are called to question the validity of what we think we know or critically examine the very premises of our perception of the problem” (Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 133). For transformational learning and service-learning, reflection is needed to understand and validate the experiences resulting from the “disorienting dilemma” of navigating in an unfamiliar, real-life situation outside the walls of the classroom. This exposure and subsequent reflection can challenge pre-service teachers’ biased views of the “other” by “*see[ing] through* the habitual way that we have interpreted the experience of everyday life in order to reassess rationally the implicit claim of validity made by a previously unquestioned meaning scheme or perspective” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 102). As described by Schön (1983), the topography of professional teaching practice contains both the “high, hard ground where practitioners can make effective use of research-based theory and technique, and...a swampy lowland where situations are confusing ‘messes’ incapable of technical solution” (p. 42). Schön implores us to understand that reflective practice helps teachers to better understand these messes, which are actually the “problems of the greatest concern” (1983, p. 41).

Disorienting dilemmas or tensions in multicultural teacher education research has shown to be significant in the transformative experience (Dooley, 2007; Freedman & Ball, 2004; O’Grady, 2000). Even micro-transformations which are “smaller, less widespread changes in conceptions (as opposed to large-scale changes in frames of reference or perceptual changes indicated by the word ‘transformative’)...can be essential elements of a larger shift in thinking, or transformation” (Dooley, 2007, p. 65). As Kiely (2005) notes, “the ideal result of transformational learning is that one is empowered by learning to be more socially responsible, self-directed, and less dependent on false assumptions” (p. 7). Taking this a step further in

teacher education, Boyle-Baise (2002) challenges teacher educators to design service-learning programs to create such disorienting dilemmas that will “serve to disrupt [pre-service teachers’] assumptions and biases and how they made sense of these moments” (p. 133). Eyler and Giles (1999) contend that:

Critical reflection – systematic examination of one’s fundamental assumption – is central to the process of perspective transformation. Without this struggle to explore the roots of the disorientation they experience, students are unlikely to restructure the way they view the world or be motivated to try to bring about structural change. (p. 145)

Desrochers (2006) further asserts that “each pre-service teacher carries his or her own understanding or story of diversity, based on direct experience or lack thereof, as well as his or her story of school” (p. 268). Pre-service teachers form their ideas and beliefs prior to teacher education programs and these beliefs “are naïve and mostly based on experiences gained as students in elementary and secondary school classrooms. Having been in classrooms for many years as students, teachers have internalized many beliefs, values, and practices of their teachers” (Bodur, 2002, p. 2). As Mezirow (1991) contends:

Learning means using a meaning that we have already made to guide the way we think, act, or feel about what we are currently experiencing. Meaning is making sense of or giving coherence to our experiences. *Meaning* is an interpretation. (p. 11)

Kiely (2005) lauds the usefulness of Mezirow’s theories for service-learning since “Mezirow’s empirically-based conceptual framework...has explanatory value unique to service-learning contexts because it describes how different modes of reflection combined with meaningful dialogue lead people to engage in more justifiable and socially responsible action” (p. 6).

This section has explored the theoretical framework of experiential education and service-learning including the importance of experience and social context, pragmatic fluidity,

the emphasis on constructivism, critical reflection, and transformational learning. The next section examines the historical origins of the experiential practice of service-learning.

History of Service-Learning

Even though service-learning has become a popular idea in education in the past 30 years, the roots of the practice are very old. When one examines many religious and cultural traditions, the idea of service to others as a noble pursuit is a familiar theme whether that includes the common-good virtue espoused by Native Americans or the Good Samaritan parable of Christian tradition (Olszewski & Bussler, 1993). Pritchard (2002) declares that “The United States has a tradition of people organizing efforts to serve public interests” (p. 40) and he cites de Tocqueville’s famous “nineteenth century study of American society...[which] noted Americans’ habit of forming voluntary associations to advance their own and the community’s interests” (p. 4). Pritchard (2002) asserts that:

Many of these voluntary associations did what we might now call community service...[including] religious institutions and countless other youth and community organizations...[which] sponsored and directed activities that were both personally rewarding to the young people doing them and beneficial to the public. (p. 4)

Pollack (1966) suggests that the conceptual antecedents of service-learning are present in extension education created by the land movement of the 1860s, in the settlement house and progressive education movements, the New Deal work programs, immigrant education, and civil rights movements.

To examine the historical roots of service-learning in America and the many influences that germinated the practice, this section will highlight specific governmental initiatives, political and social movements, contributions by higher education, secondary education, educational associations, and non-profit groups. In addition, the intellectual and philosophical impact of key individuals will be noted. As the review of literature suggests, even though some of the

influences of individuals, movements, and organizations may appear to focus on service to the community without an educational component, each has a role to play in the development of the modern-day practice of service-learning.

Service-Learning History from 1860-1930

This turbulent time period in American history reflected the impact of the Civil War, massive immigration, and the beginning of the industrial age. The establishment of land-grant institutions, extension programs, the rise of the Populist and Settlement Movements, as well as the intellectual foundations of service-learning by Jane Addams, John Dewey, and William James underscore this part of service-learning history.

Land-grant institutions and extension programs. In 1862, the Morrill Act established land-grant institutions (Titlebaum, Williamson, Daprano, Baier, & Brahler, 2004) that focused on rural development and education. During the 1890s to 1910, university extension programs were at their peak as they worked “with farmers and their families, which comprised the majority of the nation’s population, to help improve their quality of life and standard of living” (History of Extension, n.d., para. 6). Even though workers of extension programs may have been paid for their services, this was one of the influences over the eventual development of service-learning.

The settlement house movement. The settlement house movement of the late 1800s, in particular, the establishment of Hull House by Jane Addams in 1889, was important in the development of the idea of service in the community. As Daynes and Longo (2004) note, “Work was much more than a standard application of service-learning practice. It was instead, pioneering work, the understanding of which should reframe thinking about the history and significance of service-learning” (p. 5). Addams was a privileged and educated woman which “Like many of her cohorts...eventually rebelled against the separation of women from the public

sphere...by asserting that in industrial society, the domestic, private work of women was inevitably public, and the public sphere inevitably influenced the quality of family life” (Daynes & Longo, 2004, p. 6).

Addams, in addition to symbolizing the rise of women in public political life, could also be considered one of the reformers that used service in the community as an experimental tool to help the “mainstream culture of the United States...accommodate its contradictory impulses toward capitalism and democracy” (Morton & Saltmarsh, 1997, p. 137). Addams’ Hull House “was involved in service, politics, and research over many years...created the first public playground in Chicago, the first kindergarten, citizenship classes, English classes and labor museum” (Daynes & Longo, 2004, p. 6). Addams’ contribution also “locates the origins of service-learning not in the university, but in the community, with institutions (including institutions of higher education) playing an important supporting role” (Daynes & Longo, 2004, p. 6). In fact, Addams was often approached to work for colleges and universities but refused because she thought the influence of institutionalized academia might impede her ability and that of the programs of Hull House to be flexible and responsive to the local community.

It is interesting to note that as contemporaries, Addams and Dewey met and according to Daynes and Longo (2004), “Addams’ educational practices had a profound impact on Dewey, who visited Hull House in 1891, before he joined the faculty at the University of Chicago” (p. 9). Lasch (1965) recognized this impact but also conceded that “It is difficult to say whether Dewey influenced Jane Addams or Jane Addams influenced Dewey. They influenced each other and generously acknowledged their mutual obligations” (p. 176).

Political and social climate at the turn of the 20th century. It is worth noting the political and social climate of America in the 1890s and early 1900s because this was a pivotal

time in the foundational genesis of service-learning. Morton and Saltmarsh (1997) describe Dewey and Addams' day as one of the "fragmentation of a unified American culture by the combined forces of industrialization, urbanization, and immigration, and by the increasing centralization of political and economic power in the hands of a private, industrial elite" (p. 138). Ryan (1995) suggests that the climate at the turn of the 20th century resembles modern America when he laments that:

Dewey was moved to write about individual unease and social and political failures in a context that resembles our own in crucial ways. Dewey's America was one in which the problems of the inner city were appalling. In the early 1890s homelessness in Chicago sometimes reached 20 percent; unemployment frequently hit one in four of the working population...Social conflict was everywhere. Strikes were physically fought out with...violence...The upper classes were apparently indifferent to the fate of the poor and even to the fate of the working near poor. In the cities the response of the better-offs was to remove themselves to the suburbs...and in the courts it was to make it impossible for unions to strike...Nor was it clear what any individual person should or could do about all this. (p.16)

These conditions all sound eerily familiar and echo many of today's challenges. Both Addams and Dewey thought it crucial to engage in the community through service and "The ideal [for Dewey] was to transform the great society into the great community" (West, 1989, p. 219). As Morton and Saltmarsh (1997) state:

[Dewey's] legacies to us are an abiding faith that education leads to social reform, an expectation that schools are the social center for local communities, an articulation of public and civic roles for ordinary people that would lead them to social and political activism. (p. 138)

But Dewey's child-centered Progressive Education did not go as far as some of his more reconstructionist-minded colleagues such as George S. Counts who challenged Dewey's idea of Progressive Education by stating:

If Progressive education is to be genuinely progressive it must...face squarely and courageously every social issue, come to grips with life in all of its stark reality, establish an organic relation with the community...and become somewhat less frightened than it is today at the bogeys of *imposition* and *indoctrination*. (Counts, 1932, p. 9-10)

Populist movement. The Populist movement was fueled by the social fragmentation and turmoil of the latter 19th century. Populist agricultural lecturers became advocates for change when their “very duties...exposed [them] to the grim realities of agricultural poverty with a directness that drove home the manifest need to do something” (Goodwyn, 1978, p. 45). As Morton (1995) suggests, in the Populist movement “people were educated into advocacy, prompted by their compassion, their anguish (from the Norse for ‘public grief’), and their profound need to change the problem they encountered” (p. 20). Morton (1993) proposes that the educational cycle moved from personal concern, to education and problem identification, to a cycle of action and reflection. The Populist movement clearly embraced the social reconstructionist ideals of challenging the status quo and working for change.

The influence of William James. An American philosopher, William James, was an early proponent of national service. In *The Moral Equivalent of War*, instead of a military draft, James proposed:

a conscription of the whole youthful population for a certain number of years...the injustice would tend to be evened out, and numerous other goods to the commonwealth would remain blind as the luxurious classes now are blind, to man’s relations to the globe he lives on, and to permanently sour and hard foundations of his higher life. (1906, p. 24)

This statement by James cries for “justice” for those existing outside the “luxurious classes”. In the depth of the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt even acknowledged the influence of James on the New Deal initiatives of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Work Projects Administration. Although intended to help unemployed Americans and the society as a whole, historians also recognize the military consequences of these New Deal programs, which, in fact, helped prepare the United States military for combat in World War II (Ermentrout, 1982).

It is ironic that many governmental service programs extolling a non-military purpose have often embraced the military jargon of “corps” (i.e., Peace Corps). War metaphors are copiously utilized to enlist support of service programs (i.e., war on poverty) demonstrating the connection that “service” in America often infers an organized, almost militarized effort to combat some “common” enemy. From the critical theorist perspective, one has to ask “who decides on this common enemy?”

Cooperative education movement. In 1906 at the University of Cincinnati, the cooperative education movement was founded. This unique pedagogy was conceived by Herman Schneider, an engineering professor, who was convinced that “many professional concepts and skills could not be learned effectively in the classroom, but required practical experience for their understanding and mastery. He proposed that...curriculum involve the coordinated alternation of on-campus student and off-campus, real-world, paid experiences” (Sovilla, 1998, p. 18). Even though these experiences resulted in meager compensation versus a volunteer effort, the idea of extending learning outside the classroom contributed to the experiential pedagogy of service-learning.

Folk schools in Appalachia. In the early 1900s, “rural education was in crisis, and the 1910 Census reported widespread illiteracy, particularly in the south” (Stubblefield, n.d., para. 9). The Danish Folk School model promoted the development of a school community, particularly in rural America, in which work, service, and learning were connected (Sigmon, 1995). This movement led to the development of the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee in 1932 which fostered autonomy, minimal bureaucracy, voluntarism, and working together (Toivainen, 1995). The Highlander Folk School was “linked with the history of the South and specifically the struggles of Southern workers and African-Americans for equality, civil rights

and justice” (Titlebaum et al., 2004, p. 2). This movement built upon some of the Populist ideals of the later 19th century and the efforts of extension services in rural communities.

Service-Learning History from 1930 to 1980

The economic depression of the 1930s, World War II, the Vietnam War, and the dramatic social changes of the 1960s and 1970s spawned a steady development of service programs and entities. According to Morton and Saltmarsh (1977):

By the early 1930s, community service led in three quite different directions: toward the non-profit sector; toward education and public policy as the essential tools and primary arenas for citizen action; and toward the development of counter-cultural responses that explicitly rejected most of the assumptions and values underlying both capitalism and democracy. (p. 137)

Programs in the New Deal. In the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) created by Franklin D. Roosevelt, from 1933-1942, millions of youth served six to eighteen month terms to “help restore the nations’ parks, revitalize the economy, and support their families and themselves” (Titlebaum et al., 2004, p. 3). In 1935, President Roosevelt also created the Works Projects Administration (WPA), which provided public work for people who needed jobs. In 1944, Roosevelt signed the GI Bill, which linked service to education to millions of veterans returning from World War II.

RSVP and National Senior Service Corps. In the 1960s, as an “outgrowth of efforts by private groups, gerontologists and government agencies...to address the needs of retired persons” (Titlebaum et al., 2004, p. 4), the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparent Program, and the Senior Companion Program (today these entities comprise the National Senior Service Corps) were created.

Peace Corps. In 1961, the Peace Corps was established by President John F. Kennedy to “promote world peace and friendship...[by] men and women of the United States qualified and

willing to serve...to help the peoples of such countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained manpower, particularly in meeting the basic needs of those living in the poorest areas of such countries” (Titlebaum et al., 2004, p. 4). Although with noble intent, this paternalistic proclamation seems to reinforce the deficit paradigm of viewing those with “needs” as “less than”. However, the impact of the Peace Corps has been profound on the growth of service-learning due to the fact that many of the early practitioners of service-learning after the 1960s were alumni of the Peace Corps (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). President Kennedy foretold of this influence as he commented, “The wisdom of this idea [the Peace Corp] is that someday we’ll bring it home to America” (History of national service, n.d., para. 7).

VISTA, National Teacher Corps, and Job Corps. Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA), the National Teacher Corps, the Job Corps, and the University Year of Action were established by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964 in an effort to fight the “war on poverty” (Titlebaum et al., 2004, p. 4). VISTA provided opportunities for full-time service in low-income communities.

Influence of Paulo Freire. In 1970, Paulo Freire published his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* which speaks to the need for a social justice model of service-learning. Freire (2006) states:

True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity. False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the “rejects of life,” to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands—whether of individuals or entire peoples—need to be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, working, transform the world. (p. 45)

Obviously, this influence adds a critical theory philosophical component to service-learning, which will be further elucidated in the discussion on social justice models of service-learning.

National Center for Service-Learning and the National Student Volunteer Program.

The National Student Volunteer Program was established by the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1971 and eventually became the National Center for Service-Learning in 1979 (Titlebaum et al., 2004). Also, in 1971, the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) was formed to serve as a national resource center for development and improvement of experiential education programs such as service-learning (Titlebaum et al., 2004).

Service-Learning History 1980 to Present

This time period was marked by an economic downturn and strong shift to conservative ideals in the 1980s and to the economic boom and progressive influence of the 1990s. The first decade of the 21st century was plagued with terrorist acts, war, and economic collapse. The past few years have seen a slow economic recovery and deepening divide between conservative and progressive politics.

Reagan and Kennedy contrast. The 1980s under President Ronald Reagan represented a period of little government attention to service at the federal and state levels (Sigmon, 1995). Kahne and Westheimer (1996, p. 592) note this shift by highlighting the contrast between Kennedy's society-oriented call of "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" with Reagan's individualistic question "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" This difference is stark and serves to amplify the ongoing American struggle with individualism versus collectivism. Do we have a responsibility solely for our own well-being and happiness or do we have an obligation to work towards the betterment of our communities and society as a whole? The question is clearly important in the idea of service.

Influence of David Kolb. In 1984, the book *Experiential Learning* by David Kolb was published. Kolb was considered to be a “neo-Deweyian” and as such, exerted “an influence on service-learning as one form of experiential learning” (Giles & Eyler, 1994, p. 78).

Campus Compact. In response to various service initiatives on college campuses, in 1985:

The presidents of Brown, Georgetown, and Stanford universities along with the president of the Education Commission of the States joined together to form Campus Compact, a coalition of college and university presidents whose primary purpose is to help students develop the values and skills of citizenship through participation in public and community service. (Titlebaum et al., 2004, p. 8)

Today the Campus Compact continues to be a powerful voice on college campuses to advocate for service-learning.

Office of National Service and Points of Light Foundations. President, George H. Bush ushered in a renewed interest in national service. In 1989, Bush created the Office of National Service in the White House and the Points of Light Foundation to foster volunteering. In 1990, Bush signed into law the National and Community Service Act, which was “designed to combat illiteracy and poverty, provide job skills, enhance educational skills, and fulfill environment needs” (Titlebaum et al., 2004). When Bush signed the act he stated:

I am particularly pleased that [this act] will promote an ethic of community service... Government cannot rebuild a family or reclaim a sense of neighborhood, and no bureaucratic program will ever solve the pressing human problems that can be addressed by a vast galaxy of people working voluntarily in their own backyards. (Quoted in Radest, 1993, p. 8)

Though service was once again emphasized by an American President, some argued that this service was much different than that of the turn of the 20th century, the New Deal, or Kennedy’s call of the 1960s. The 1980s spawned a shift to essentialist notions of education and a “back to the basics” movement (Kauchak & Eggen, 2013) with less emphasis on the progressive,

experiential pedagogy of service-learning. Kahne and Westheimer (1996) further assert that Bush's initiatives were:

advancing voluntary community service as an alternative to government programs... [making] no mention of changes that address the structural injustices that leave so many in need. This kind of service runs the risk of being understood as a kind of noblesse oblige – a private act of kindness performed by the privileged. (p. 597)

This mindset permeates the charity service-learning model which promotes the stubbornly persistent deficit paradigm evident in so many facets of our society. Stukas and Dunlap (2002) declare that an emphasis on community involvement can be “disguised attempts for governments to pull back from delivering social services to the public” (p. 413), which is contrary to a social reconstructionist orientation of service-learning. To emphasize social reconstruction and social justice, all aspects of society including governmental, community, and individual interests should be involved in identifying and then changing the structural impediments that produce the conditions of need in the first place.

Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. In 1993, the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development endorsed the importance of linking service with learning (Sigmon, 1995). This well-respected organization's endorsement of service-learning further strengthened the rationale for including service-learning as an important part of the curriculum.

National Service Bill. In 1994, the National Service Bill was passed to establish the AmeriCorps program which engages 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service. AmeriCorps is part of the Corporation for National Community Service, which oversees Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America (Titlebaum et al., 2004).

King Holiday and Service Act. In 1994, the King Holiday and Service Act was passed by Congress, which created a national day of service (Titlebaum et al., 2004). Combining the

King Holiday with a national day of service suggested the relevance of engaging communities to solve the nation's social problems just as many social movements of the 1960s had done.

USA Freedom Corps. After the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., the USA Freedom Corps (which now includes AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, Citizen Corps, and nationwide local volunteer opportunities) was created in 2002 by President George W. Bush, Jr. “to help every American to answer the call to service by strengthening and expanding service opportunities for them to protect our homeland, to support our communities and to extend American compassion around the world” (History of National Service, n.d., para. 26).

Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. In 2009, President Barack Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which reauthorized and expanded national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (History of national service, n.d., para. 39).

As evidenced by the history of many service programs initiated by the American government including presidents of both political parties, the interest in experiential and progressive pedagogy in the educational setting, and the social movements for social justice, the idea of service-learning has continued to evolve and endure. But to better understand service-learning, we must examine specifically how this practice is defined.

Defining Service-Learning

The term service-learning was first used by Oak Ridge Associated Universities in 1966-1967 for a project describing a TVA, tributary development in Tennessee (Harkavy & Hartley, 2010, p. 420). Educators Robert Sigmon and William Ramsey used service-learning as a “term

that described the combination of conscious educational growth with the accomplishment of certain tasks that met genuine human needs” (Titlebaum et al., 2004, p. 5).

Even though the term has been around for over 40 years, there are more than 147 different words or phrases that have been used to describe service activities by students (Kendall, 1990). This plethora of descriptors can lead to misunderstandings because “not every helping activity is service-learning” (Gent, 2009, p. 3). In particular, there has been a common misconception that service-learning and community service are the same endeavor, although historically some activities, which could be considered as service-learning, were actually called community service. However, today, service-learning scholars promote the distinction between the two terms. As Gent (2009) states, “Simply put, community service is punishment” (p. 3) because it often refers to a required consequence for violation of laws or societal norms. Obviously, as a pedagogical strategy it would be undesirable to have students identify service-learning with “punishment”.

McCafferty (2011) believes that the difference between community and service-learning is important particularly in light of the accountability and standards climate in education. “High-quality service-learning, unlike community service, is an instructional strategy that meets the requirements for being aligned to academic standards” (McCafferty, 2011, p. 26).

Pritchard (2002) further contends that there are several reasons to resist using the term community service:

First, *community service*...[is associated] with an elitist notion of social obligation that implies the moral superiority of those performing the service. Second, ... *community service*...[can be associated] with the other end of the social spectrum, that is, the context of convicts whose sentence includes performing some task which benefits society but may well be personally embarrassing or distasteful...Third...*community service* [can be associated] with purely altruistic or charitable activities in which the personal benefits of the service consist of a positive impact on the souls of those who perform the service, without their really *learning* anything significant in the process...

community service may be right for counts, convicts, and converts, but it does not measure up to the requirements of service-learning. (p. 7)

Some suggest that programs with these “captive audiences” of convicts or students can manipulate these activities to benefit only the agencies, businesses, programs, or universities that sponsor the “service”. As Eby (1998) contends:

Colleges and universities sometimes use service-learning as a public relations device to enhance their reputations in their communities in order to raise funds and recruit students or to mask negative impacts of other actions they take. Students sometimes use service-learning to make themselves feel good or to strengthen their resumes...Agencies use service-learning to get free labor and to gain prestige....Participation in service-learning programs gives agencies access to a college or university and the prestige and help that brings. Religious students sometimes use service as a means to gain converts. Business supports service to enhance their reputations and sometimes to legitimize or divert attention from other practices which may not be in the best interests of the community. (p. 2)

So what definitions of service-learning effectively embody and articulate this practice from other notions of service? Karavan and Gathercoal (2005) state that “*Service-learning* stands in sharp contrast to traditional *community service* in that it includes reflection and extends naturally from organized school curricula” (p. 79). Gelmon, Holland, Driscoll, Spring, and Kerrigan (2001) define service-learning as an “educational methodology which combines community service with explicit academic learning objectives, preparation for community work, and deliberate reflection” (p. v). Welger (1998) describes the definition of service-learning from the perspectives of the community and the campus when stating:

Not surprisingly, definitions of service-learning vary...at least six key elements, taken together help differentiate service learning from volunteerism, community service, and other forms of experiential education...the student provides some meaningful service (work), that meets a need or goal that is defined by a community (or some of its Members). On the campus side, the service provided by the student flows from and into course objectives, is integrated into the course by means of assignments that require some form of reflection on the service in light of course objectives, and the assignment is assessed and evaluated accordingly. (p. 3)

Furco (1996), further delineates service-learning as being different from internship experiences or volunteer work due to the “intention to equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided the learning that is occurring” (p. 5). Stanton et al., (1999) state that “Service-learning joins two complex concepts: community action, the ‘service’, and efforts to learn from that action and connect what is learned to existing knowledge, the ‘learning’ ...” (p. 2). Bringle and Hatcher (1995) define service-learning as:

course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. (p. 112)

From these definitions, it is apparent that an educational component is necessary for an activity to truly be considered service-learning. In defining this educational element in more detail, Jeavons (1995) suggests that service-learning involves students in a process which includes classroom preparation outlining theories and ideas; service activity that evolves and impacts the classroom perspective; and structured reflection that connects the experience of serving to learning objectives. Service-learning represents an intentional academic teaching strategy. As Gent (2009) argues:

Service-learning is *part* of the school day; it is not extracurricular; it is not a mandated add-on; it is not a capstone project or a course. Service-learning is a teaching method mediated and directed by a teacher and thoughtfully and deliberately linked to the curriculum, academic standards, and IEP goals. (p. 6)

The National Youth Leadership Council defines service-learning as a “philosophy, pedagogy, and model for community development that is used as an instructional strategy to

meet learning goals and/or content standards” (2015, para. 2). The Council also developed standards for service-learning which include:

1. **Meaningful Service.** Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.
2. **Reflection.** Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one’s relationship to society.
3. **Youth Voice.** Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.
4. **Progress Monitoring.** Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.
5. **Link to Curriculum.** Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.
6. **Diversity.** Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.
7. **Partnerships.** Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.
8. **Duration and Intensity.** Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.

Kaye (2010) suggests that “Service and learning when linked to the curriculum are like threads woven together through a quilt. The quilt is the curriculum with the service and learning as the threads which reinforce the concepts” (p. 72).

Service-Learning Models

To further illuminate both the definitions of service-learning and the theoretical underpinnings of this practice, it is helpful to analyze some of the dominant models of service-learning. Mitchell (2008) states that his review of literature challenged him “by an unspoken debate that seemed to divide service-learning into two camps – a traditional approach that emphasizes service without attention to systems of inequality, and a critical approach that is unapologetic in its aim to dismantle structures of injustice” (p. 50). Eyler and Giles (1999) suggest a service-learning continuum that transitions from a patronizing charity model to a

“greater sense of the importance of political action to obtain social justice” (p. 47). Foos (1998) depicts this developmental continuum “with [the] charity [model] at the ‘beginning’ end – the place where students can get their feet wet and develop a desire to do service – and social activism at the developmentally ‘mature’ end of the spectrum” (p. 14). Morton (1995) further elaborates on this perspective by observing that a continuum runs from:

charity to advocacy, from the personal to the political, from individual acts of caring that transcend time and space to collective action on mutual concerns that are grounded in particular places and histories. Charity emerges...as giving of the self, expecting nothing in return, and with no expectation that any lasting impact will be made....Advocacy, at the other extreme, is change oriented, and implies an agenda – speaking to others with a powerful voice. Acts of service are steps in a larger strategy to bring about change, quite often assessed as the redistribution of resources or social capital. (p. 20)

Although Morton (1995) recognizes this continuum, he implores us to understand that as practitioners, “we are doing two things simultaneously; challenging and supporting students to enter more deeply into the paradigm in which they work; intentionally exposing students to creative dissonance among the three forms [of service-learning]” (p. 21).

Other suggestions of service-learning models include Boyle-Baise’s (2002) charity, civic education, and community building; Cipolle’s (2010) charity, caring, and social justice models; and Morton’s (1995) charity, project, and social justice models. The next section will concentrate on Morton’s models.

Charity Model

Charity has long been advocated by Christian tradition including the Charity Organization Movement in America in the 1880s, which was expressed by “middle-class, Protestant values...Those values were personified by the ‘charity visitor’, often female, a well-to-do model of middle-class evangelical Christian America” (Morton & Saltmarsh, 1997, p. 139). Protestant values include the belief that man has free will to “control his destiny

commensurate with his abilities and moral fiber...[and failure to meet these ideals] was the result of intemperance, improvidence, indolence, ignorance, or some other personal defect” (Lubove, 1965, p. 13). With this perspective, charity was considered necessary because of “ignorance or deviations from middle-class values and patterns of life organization: temperance, industriousness, family cohesiveness, frugality, foresight, moral restraint” (Lubove, 1965, p. 16). This belief reinforced the promotion of enduring Christian ideals that should be embraced by all. The idea of change was not a central theme of the charity model unless it was for those “being served” to change to the “truth” of Protestant, Christian ideals.

The charity model is infused with a “savior” mentality and charity “is a term that has come to mean the well-off doing service to the poor if and when they feel like it, and then only on their terms” (Morton, 1995, p. 25). Cipolle (2010) contends the charity model can do more harm than good when she asserts that:

Without adequate preparation and knowledge about the populations served... service experiences often reinforce stereotypes and promote a paternalistic attitude toward those they are serving. Seeing these individual acts of kindness as the “least we can do” cements the notion of being saviors for the poor. (p. 45)

This version of service-learning privileges the giver, demotes the receiver and “perpetuates a deficit model” (Desrochers, 2006, p. 274). Pompa (2002) agrees that the charity service-learning model can provide ironic and undesired outcomes:

If I ‘do for’ you, ‘serve’ you, ‘give to’ you – that creates a connection in which I have the resources, the abilities, the power, and you are on the receiving end. It can be – while benign in intent – ironically disempowering to the receiver, granting further power to the giver. Without meaning to, this process replicates the ‘have-have not’ paradigm that underlies many social problems. (p. 68)

Rhoads (1997) refers to this as the “do-gooder model” and as Desrochers (2006) states “perceives service as alms for the less fortunate rather than an act of service in return for learning” (p. 274). Morton (1995) further describes the charity model as a practice where direct

service is controlled by the provider and “the decision making process is closed, and little, if any, attempt is made to understand or effect the structural causes of the problem” (p. 21).

Project Model

The project model is focused on process and structure with less emphasis on the underlying social or “moral” underpinnings as embodied in the charity or social justice models.

As described by Morton (1995) this paradigm focuses:

on defining problems and their solutions and implementing well-conceived plans for achieving those solutions.... The organizing principle...lies in the development of partnerships of organizations that collectively have access to the resources necessary to “make something happen”. (p. 22)

In the project model:

The server carries out a well-articulated plan that was created by an organization or “expert” to produce a useful product for a particular social group...Service from this paradigm is somewhat rigid, based on preconceived notions about the nature of problems and their solutions, so that rather than producing ameliorative effects, ...[there may be] no impact....Even producing negative outcomes. (Moely & Miron, 2005, p. 63)

The project model relies on an “expert” to design and manage a program and this fact can further amplify “inequalities of power, and make the served dependent on the expert” (Morton, 1995, p. 22).

Social Justice Model

The social justice model is considered by some as the evolved expression of service-learning (Cipolle, 2010; Eyler & Giles, 1999). As Moely and Miron (2005) observe “In contrast to the two other models, Social Change [social justice] involves participation by both server and served in a planning and decision-making process through which major, long-term change in a social system is sought” (p. 63). This perspective is consistent with the writings of Robert

Sigmon, one of the early educators of service-learning. Sigmon (1979) promoted three principles of service-learning:

1. Those being served control the service(s) provided.
2. Those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions.
3. Those who serve are also learners and have significant control over what is expected to be learned. (p. 10)

Most social justice models of service “focus on directly and indirectly empowering the powerless” (Morton, 1995, p. 23) and work on determining the root causes of need. This emphasis promotes social reconstruction and is in sharp contrast to the charity model. As Kendall (1990) notes, “a good service-learning program helps participants see their [service] questions in the larger context of issues of social justice and social policy – rather than in the context of charity” (p. 20). In the social justice model, service-learning is an important vehicle to “promote social awareness and civic responsibility” (Desrochers, 2006, p. 275). Service-learning can be a transition from patronizing charity to a “greater sense of the importance of political action to obtain social justice” (Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 47).

The social justice model embodies the pragmatic emphasis of “evolving and change rather than being” (Johnson, et al, 2014, p. 87). Pragmatists embrace change and believe that “we learn best through experiences...[and] the experience changes both the learner and the world” (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 87), which is clearly in concert with the social justice model of service-learning. Unlike the charity model, the social justice model is:

change oriented, and implies an agenda – speaking to others with a powerful voice. Acts of service are steps in a larger strategy to bring about change, quite often assessed as the redistribution of resources or social capital. The risks of advocacy are political. (Morton, 1995, p. 20)

Unfortunately, this risk of a “political curriculum” is not palatable to many teachers so it is not surprising that the “majority of K – 16 service-learning programs are charity based and

apolitical with a primary focus on student development” (Cipolle, 2010, p. 45). Advocates of social justice models contend that “apolitical education is not possible. Education in general and all service-learning programs in particular are political in that they either support the status quo or work to change it” (Cipolle, 2010, p. 45). Regrettably, most teachers and students alike are often “immersed in society’s hegemonic messages and, as a result, do not question underlying assumptions and biases” (Cipolle, 2010, p. 55). This kind of enculturation can lead to a denial that change is needed and in relation to service-learning, will most likely result in a charity-based model devoid of systemic impact.

Mitchell (2008) also observes that a social justice model of service-learning can be difficult because this model:

may not bring immediate results and, therefore, may not offer the type of gratification that students involved in more traditional service-learning classes experience when the painting is completed, homeless person is fed, or child has finished the art project. Social change oriented in service takes time. (p. 54)

Even with the challenges of time and political implications, many contemporary scholars argue that social justice service-learning is desperately needed rather than charity due to our lethargic citizenry. Kahne and Westheimer (1996) assert that a:

lack of connection between individual rights and communal obligations within our culture has left us with a bankrupt sense of citizenshipCitizenship in a democratic community requires more than kindness and decency it requires engagement in complex social and institutional endeavors.... And such action is unavoidably political. (p. 597)

A social justice model of service-learning beckons us to engage in education that dares to question the status quo even when it becomes political because that is what is necessary to impact change. Rosenberger (2000) questions the resolve of service-learning practitioners when he asks:

Is service learning willing to participate in the unveiling and problematizing of the

present reality of our society and to respond to the difficult, complex issues of inequity, oppression, and domination? Is service learning willing to make less-privileged people subjects and not objects. (p. 32)

As the discussion of the service-learning models demonstrates, how service-learning is implemented can greatly impact the benefits derived by both community partners and those engaged in service.

Benefits of Service-Learning

Research over the past 30 years highlights multiple benefits of service-learning for students, teachers, and communities. Service-learning is “a philosophy and a pedagogical approach” (Root, 1997, p. 42) which can foster “the simultaneous renewal of K-12 education and teacher education” (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1995, p. 81). Myers and Pickeral (1997) proclaim that:

The service-learning process is a powerful pedagogy that brings future teachers closer to the notions of what it means to teach and learn and to collaboratively create learning communities and organizations that support lifelong learning and continuous renewal. Service-learning has a vital role to play in formatting new visions of learning at all levels throughout the K-higher education continuum. (p. 38)

Proponents of experiential learning, conclude that service-learning represents “good pedagogy” and thus should be an integral part of any teacher education program. As Billing and Eyler (2003) suggest “service-learning provides an example of a pedagogy that consists of elements that are known to enhance depth of understanding in the learning process” (p. 4). Some of these elements of good pedagogy include active learning, frequent feedback in non-threatening ways, collaboration, cognitive apprenticeship, and practical application where students see real consequences but have a safety net for high stakes mistakes (Marchese, 1997).

Several studies suggest that the “good pedagogy” of service-learning enhances the academic learning of pre-service teachers (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Knutzon, Miller, Yen, &

Merino, 2002; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Shastri, 1999; Steinke & Buresh, 2002) and helps pre-service teachers better understand the complexities of working in the field by improving critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001). Service-learning also has positive results for teacher education in programs which represent all content areas (Kirtman, 2008; Meaney, Griffin, & Bohler, 2009); student ability levels (Jenkins & Sheeley, 2009; Novak, Murray, Scheurermann, & Curran, 2009); educational settings of urban, rural, and suburban (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007); and types of schools (K-12, alternative schools) (Gelmon & Billig, 2007). The ethic of care, empathy, and positive attitudes toward students by pre-service teachers can be positively influenced by experiences in service-learning (LeMaster, 2001; Root et al., 2002; Strage, Myers, & Norris, 2002). Pre-service teachers participating in service-learning have reported more awareness of their future role as a teacher and increased feelings of empowerment and accomplishment (Chen, 2004). Bullard and Maloney (1997) found that pre-service teachers involved in service-learning gained confidence as professionals and were involved in leadership roles following their service.

One of the strengths of service-learning is its varied nature (Billig & Eyler, 2003).

Steinberg et al., (2013) note that service-learning:

(a) draws on multiple theories of learning; (b) focuses on individuals and individual outcomes (e.g., students, faculty, residents); (c) encompasses relationships between individuals (e.g., between students and others, between community-based organizations, between campus and communities); (d) targets a broad range of outcomes (e.g., civic education, character education, student development, academic learning quality of life in communities); and draws on multiple disciplinary perspectives in design, implementation, and application. (p. 27)

Research conducted over the last 30 years suggests there are many positive benefits of utilizing service-learning in K-12 and collegiate settings. Blyth, Saito, and Berkas (1997) found that students who had been involved in service-learning felt positively about contributing to the

community; were less bored than in traditional classrooms; were more engaged in academic tasks and general learning; and were more accepting of diversity. Positive impacts for service-learning in elementary grades ranged from greater levels of behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement to higher test scores (Billig & Klute, 2003; Klute & Billig, 2002). For secondary students, service-learning participation has led to lower dropout rates, higher academic performance, greater interest in civic engagement, greater empathy, and higher interpersonal competence (Billig, 2000; Furco, 2002; Morgan & Streb, 2001; Shaffer, 1993; Shumer, 1994; Supik, 1996; Weiler, LaGoy, Crane, & Rovner, 1998). A longitudinal study by Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, and Lee (2000) found that in undergraduate students' participation in service-learning positively impacted academic performance (GPA, writing skills, critical thinking skills), values (promoting racial understanding), self-efficacy, and leadership (leadership activities, self-rated leadership ability, interpersonal skills). Service-learning is a high-impact educational practice (Kuh, 2008) and research suggests that service-learning is a dynamic strategy that provides possible opportunities for improving all pedagogies across K-12 and higher education (Conway, Amel, & Gerwein, 2009; Eyler et al., 2001).

To better understand the benefits of service-learning for K-12 and college students including pre-service teachers, the next section will utilize a blended framework from service-learning common goals (academic enhancement, personal/professional growth, and civic learning) and common components (academic material, critical reflection and relevant service) described by Ash et al. (2009). The researcher defines personal/professional growth to also include understanding of diversity as a fundamental personal attribute. The common component of academic material proposed by Ash et al. (2009) is not identified separately in this study because it is implied and included in the academic enhancement category. The blended

framework for the study includes the following categories: (a) academic enhancement, (b) personal/professional growth, (c) civic learning, (d) critical reflection, and (e) relevant service.

Academic Enhancement

Service-learning can promote “cultures of thinking” (Ritchart & Perkins, 2008, p. 57) and large-scale studies have found positive impacts of service-learning on cognitive outcomes. Astin et al. (2000) conducted national longitudinal studies that demonstrated increases in self-reported critical thinking for students who participated in service compared to those who did not. Eyler and Giles (1999) conducted two national research projects involving thousands of college students and found that students who participated in service-learning reported greater openness to new perspectives (regarding intellectual development and critical thinking), showed a greater understanding of social problems (related to intellectual development, critical thinking, and solving problems), and greater ability to utilize material from class (related to transfer) than those not engaging in service-learning.

Other studies have found enhanced higher order or critical thinking skills associated with service-learning participation. A study by Strage (2000) compared students who were in different sections of an introductory child development course. Some of the sections included service-learning and other sections did not. The results of the study showed that service-learning students achieved higher scores on the essay portions of all exams and their journal entries suggested increasing ability to assimilate course concepts and experience. However, in this study there was no significant difference on multiple-choice components of exams between those involved in service-learning and those not involved in service-learning. Strage (2000) suggests that higher order thinking skills were enhanced by service-learning experiences but perhaps not basic knowledge acquisition.

Mpofu (2007) found similar results to the Strage (2000) study when examining the academic performances of students in different sections of a rehabilitation services course who chose service-learning and those who did not. He found no significant differences on multiple-choice tests between the service-learning students and those not participating in service-learning. However, service-learning students demonstrated much higher scores on case study assignments suggesting that service-learning enhances higher level learning.

Wurr (2002) researched students in a first-year composition course. He found that service-learning students demonstrated a greater understanding and ability to engage in critical thinking and performed at least a half a letter grade higher than students not participating in service-learning. Additional studies (Braun & Watkins, 2005; Feller, Gibbs-Griffith, D'Acquisto, Khourey, & Croley, 2007) also show that students participating in service-learning activities develop critical thinking skills.

Jameson et al., (2013) believe that "Service learning, with its emphasis on application, integration, and co-creation, lends itself readily to instructional design that fosters deep approaches to learning" (p. 101). As Scales and Roehikepartain (2005) declare "because it [service-learning] represents an 'authentic' approach to teaching and learning, the use of service-learning as a pedagogical practice appears to have the potential to help meet both the academic and broader developmental goals of education reform" (p. 14).

Personal/Professional Growth

Interpersonal skills. It is important to enhance the academic abilities of our teacher candidates but we also need to nurture other attributes which are necessary for good teaching. Many authors agree that the enhancement of social skills is tied to cognitive development, school success, a greater sense of self-worth, competence in working with others, ability to solve

problems, greater empathy, and increased openness to new experiences (Elliott, Malecki, & Demaray, 2001; Vygotsky, 1978; Werner & Smith, 1982). Bringle (2003) notes that “Service-learning compels educators and students to analyze issues in interdisciplinary ways and to consider not only the cognitive development of students but also other facets of students’ development (e.g., affective, social, communication skills, values, attitudes, philanthropic habits, democratic participation)” (p. 4).

Experiential learning can address the learner’s need for an emotive connection with the physical world (LeDoux, 1996), that in addition to the exposure to novel experiences abundant in experiential education, has been shown to trigger a release of dopamine which assists in forming memory (Gazzaniga, Ivry, & Mangun, 2002). Dahms (1994) suggests that service-learning can be an important vehicle for encouraging pre-service teachers to expand their “emotional comfort zones” (p. 92). Parker-Gwin and Mabry (1998) contend that “Requiring students to participate in service-learning can potentially have positive outcomes by ‘pushing’ students into new situations that they may consider ultimately beneficial” (p. 287).

Research has found that service-learning that is well-organized can result in more positive self-image (Braun & Watkins, 2005; Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Crosman, 1989; Switzer, Simmons, Dew, Regalski, & Wang, 1995). An enhanced self-image may result from feeling empowered, which is something that can occur in service-learning experiences when participants realize they have the chance to make a difference (Avenatti, Garza, & Panico, 2007; Hoffman, Knight, & Wallach, 2007). Price (2011) believes that:

Service-learning is a proven assets builder for youths because it helps them develop a positive attitude about themselves and others; teaches them social competencies such as planning and decision making, interpersonal communication, cultural awareness, and conflict resolution; empowers and helps them build a positive identity; and strengthens their commitment to academic learning and creating change in their community. (p. 154)

Students improved their social learning through service-learning art projects in a study by Russell and Hutzler (2007). Service-learning can increase feelings of empowerment, respect for self and others, self-confidence, and help students avoid risk behaviors (Billig, 2000; Laird & Black, 2002).

Some studies suggest that service-learning experiences in college can impact participants' self-image and purpose beyond college and into adulthood. In a longitudinal study two to four years after collegiate students had completed a 10-week leadership theories course, Jones and Abes (2004) found that service-learning had enhanced students' self-authorship (personal authority over one's identity). Participants of this study described how their "service to others [had] become integral to self" (Jones & Abes, 2004, p. 153). Another study examining college graduates 13 years after graduation, suggests that service-learning during college may also help develop a sense of social or moral purpose that persists into adulthood (Hill, Burrow, Brandenberger, Lapsley, & Quaranto, 2010).

Working with groups. Involvement in service-learning can also help pre-service teachers gain the interpersonal skills which are important to effectively work with groups and create dynamic learning communities within their classrooms. Research by Eyler and Giles (1999) found that 40% of their survey respondents revealed that learning to work with others was a significant lesson derived from their service-learning experiences. According to Gent (2009), "data supports the use of service-learning to build community" (p. 36). Calabrese and Schumer (1986) found that service-learning activities can decrease an individual's feelings of isolation from both small and large communities. Toole and Toole (2004) add:

We have called service-learning a 'relationship-rich pedagogy' because it has the potential to increase the amount of teacher collaboration, create new bonds between the school and the community, and encourage teachers and students to refine their roles in the learning process. All of this can feed the formation of a learning community. (p. 21)

Through service-learning, students also gain a greater appreciation for the talents and perspectives of their classmates (Myers & Pickeral, 1997) which in turn, fosters development of collaborative and interpersonal skills. Since productive relationships are important for good teaching, experience in service-learning can strengthen the critical social skills of teacher candidates which will help them to more effectively build a sense of community in their own practice. Kolb, Rubin, and McIntyre (1979) contend that “teaching is above all a profound human relationship....it is something educators do *with* learners in the context of meaningful relationships and shared experiences” (p. 224). Falk (2012) found that service-learning “appears to be a promising vehicle for teaching and learning the attitudes and skills required for effective teamwork” (p. 12). Many of the relationship skills and attitudes about work including responsibility, teamwork, problem solving and learning to learn are fostered in service-learning experiences (Halperin, 1993). Vaughn (2010) suggests that “service learning not only accomplishes civic and academic learning but enables students to better appreciate teamwork...and enhances their appreciation for depending on others” (p. 10). Peterson and Schaffer (1999) agree that “Service learning projects provide an ideal opportunity for students to exercise increasing interdependence....and development in group collaboration...” (p. 13). In service-learning experiences “when faced with real challenges that affect group members and people in the community, students seem more compelled to learn methods of working together as a team” (Yelsma, 1999, p. 87). Literature suggests that small group work can advance academic achievement, critical thinking, social interactions, self-esteem, and motivation (Ashman & Gillies, 1997; Gillies, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1999; Slavin, 1987). Hawk (2010) promotes the concept of group work in relationship to service-learning when she states:

As students work with others to solve problems, they must think about what they already know and what they need to know. They must also consider the point-of-view of other individuals with whom they work. Collaboration encourages students to reason through their own thinking process. (p. 45)

In a study at a large land-grant university, Parker-Gwin and Mabry (1998), found that the students who participated in a group service-learning experience had the greatest gains in analytic and problem-solving skills and critical thinking ability in comparison to students who participated in individual service-learning experiences. Scales (2006) studied students who worked on service-learning projects that functioned together as a team in an introductory course on hospitality management. He found that students improved their interpersonal skills with increased peer-to-peer engagement.

An increase in intergroup conflict and coordination problems can be challenges of working with groups in service-learning (Raskoff, 1997). These intergroup conflicts can include an unequal distribution of labor (Yamane, 1996) or lack of time as articulated by Falk (2012):

Students may also find time to be a major hurdle; their schedules are often rather full with school and work commitments and they may feel they do not have the time to engage in team processes. They may be resentful of the instructor who adds this extra burden to their already complicated lives. (p. 3)

Teaching demands the skills to solve complex problems and complex problems calling for collaboration (Maglaughlin & Sonnenwald, 2005). Gronski and Pigg (2000) argue that more experiential learning should be used at universities to better develop students' collaborative skills. Bourner, Hughes, and Bourner (2001) suggest that, "Service-learning courses can provide a safe space for students to practice their teamwork and collaborative skills" (p. 25). As Castellan (2006) observes in his study with pre-service teachers, service-learning experiences can be "the catalyst for weaving relationships. Because of service-learning experiences, [participants] were able to establish collaborative, reciprocal, connecting, and diverse relationships" (p. 230) and

“building collaborative working groups [can] become an asset to transforming the culture within their own schools” (Myers & Pickeral, 1997, p. 27).

Understanding of diversity. As our society, communities, and classrooms become increasingly more diverse, it is paramount that we seek ways to help our future educators become more culturally responsive teachers. Calderon (2007) suggests that:

Although it is important for students to acquire literacy and numeric skills, students need the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to live, interact, and make decisions with fellow citizens from different racial, ethnic, cultural, language, and religious groups. (p. 189)

Sleeter (2001) contends that while most white pre-service teachers know that they will be working with children of other cultural backgrounds, they are fairly naïve and hold stereotypical beliefs including a deficit concept of abilities about urban children or those of difference cultures. Irvine and Armento (2001) concur that many pre-service teachers lack experience with culturally and linguistically diverse groups. Darling-Hammond (1997) purports:

If teachers are to prepare an ever more diverse group of students for much more challenging work – for framing problems; finding, integrating and synthesizing information; creating new solutions; learning on their own; and working cooperatively – they will need substantially more knowledge and radically different skills than most now have and most schools of education now develop. (p. 154)

Several studies (both qualitative and quantitative) suggest that service-learning is an excellent tool to prepare teacher candidates to teach in culturally diverse classrooms by helping them gain a better understanding and appreciation of diversity (Baldwin et al., 2007; Boyle-Baise, 2005; Domangue & Carson, 2008; Lucas, 2011; Meaney, Bohler, Kopf, Hernandez, & Scott, 2008; Root et al., 2002; Wilson, 2006). A qualitative study of K-12 pre-service teachers determined specific intercultural learning outcomes to include “building cross-group relations, disrupting stereotypes, gaining awareness of community resources and problems, and learning to work positively with diverse youth” (Boyle-Baise & Kilbane, 2002, p. 57). (Desrochers (2006)

suggests that pre-service teachers' knowledge about diversity can be shaped and even reshaped through service-learning experiences. Galvan and Parker (2011) note that service-learning in teacher education can provide, "...valuable learning experiences that permit teacher candidates to increase their culturally response pedagogical skills and dispositions" (p. 12). Wade, Boyle-Baise, and O'Grady (2001) contend that service-learning provides an opportunity for:

pre-service teachers [to] gain an increasing ability to view the world from multiple perspectives. The complexity of today's world requires educators who are culturally literate and adept at seeing situations through more than one cultural lens. This flexibility assists teachers in creating classrooms in which all students are equally valued, feel safe, and are provided equal opportunities to develop to their fullest potential. (p. 249)

Gent (2009) concludes that service-learning is effective in inclusive classrooms because "it gets to the core values of inclusion – establishing relationships, building connections with others and community, and focusing on the strengths of the individuals – in ways that other methods of instruction cannot" (p. 27).

Tinkler and Tinkler (2013) proclaim "Service-learning field experiences can provide valuable cross-cultural experiences since underserved populations are often concentrated at community service sites" (p. 113). These can be valuable experiences because "pre-service teachers see functioning communities and everyday cultural patterns first-hand, form relationships with people, confront stereotypes, and hear stories of lives that reflect abstractions they may have read about in textbooks" (Sleeter, 2008, p. 564). Boggs (2013) agrees that "Service-learning pedagogy strategically combines tacit, hands-on epistemologies with scientific, school-based epistemologies to producing more robust and flexible knowledge that is culturally aware, morally sophisticated, and politically conscious" (p. 39).

Eyler and Giles (1999) warn that "Perspective transformation – questioning and overturning one's fundamental assumptions about society – is not something that happens often

in a lifetime (p. 135). Kiely (2005) also asserts that “...participation in certain service-learning programs can sometimes have a transformative impact on students’ moral, political, intellectual, personal, cultural, and spiritual perspectives” (p. 6). Although these statements are not as declarative as some service-learning practitioners might desire, the pedagogy of service-learning does offer opportunities to foster such a transformation.

However, service-learning programs must be well-conceived and delivered for this type of learning to take place. As Descrochers (2006) observes “...simply putting pre-service teachers in contact with children in culturally diverse settings through service is not enough to ensure that learning about diversity will take place” (p. 276). To nurture better understanding of diverse communities, service-learning programs must refrain from using a “charity” model. Cipolle (2010) contends that this approach can do more harm than good when she asserts that:

Without adequate preparation and knowledge about the populations served...service experiences often reinforce stereotypes and promote a paternalistic attitude toward those they are serving. Seeing these individual acts of kindness as the “least we can do” cements the notion of being saviors for the poor. (p. 45)

Civic Learning

As previously mentioned, service-learning encourages teacher candidates to develop a better understanding of their community. Some suggest that this experience assists service-learning participants to more fully comprehend their civic responsibilities as members of a democratic society (Anderson & Erickson, 2003). One could argue that cultivation of civic duties is a foundational principle of education, so in turn, should be important for future teachers to understand and model for their students. Zlotkowski (1998) declares that:

Through service-learning, students can discover the possibility and the importance of simultaneously attending to their needs as individuals and as members of a community.

By bringing public work into the very heart of the educational system – i.e., the curriculum – service-learning helps students avoid the schizophrenia of private advancement disassociated from public standards and public need. No longer does “doing well” hold center stage, while “doing good,” if it exists at all, languishes somewhere off to the side. (p. 4)

Research demonstrates that involvement in service-learning can lead to an increase in civic responsibility and for college students, can lead to community involvement after college graduation (Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Exley, 1996; Giles & Eyler, 1994, Giles & Eyler, 1998; Kendrick, 1996). Students who participate in service-learning are also more likely to recognize social interests as more personal (Giles & Eyler, 1994; Rhoads, 1997). Hirschinger-Blank and Markowitz (2006) found that students involved in service-learning showed better understanding of the complexity of social problems and consequences of critical thinking, intellectual development, and problem solving than those who did not participate in service-learning.

As part of our civic responsibilities, we must be attuned to the need for changes within our society. Critical theorists have long proposed that our educational system should provide opportunities for students and school personnel to actively engage with the community. As stated in *Educating the good citizen: Service learning in higher education*:

People are beginning to realize that a new kind of knowledge, *socially responsive knowledge* is necessary if colleges and universities are going to be successful in preparing our students to assume the duties of good citizenship in the future. This newly evolving knowledge includes teaching students a sense of community; a sense of responsibility to others; sensitivity and aspirations to help resolve problems of society; a feeling of commitment and obligation to become involved in community affairs; and a general commitment that extends beyond oneself, one’s family, friends, colleagues, and immediate reference groups to the broader concern for one’s society. (University of Utah, 1998, pp. 4-5)

Service-learning exposes students to environments and people with which they do not often have an opportunity to interact with or see. This exposure has the promise of leading to productive change. As Erickson (2009) notes:

Reminding community members of the schools' historic place in educating its citizens in democratic values captures for schools a place at the table as the United States continues to struggle with building a nation out of divergent peoples and their different cultural experiences. (p. 109)

On the flip side of that same coin, service-learning simultaneously creates an opportunity for community members to visualize education in a different light from their own, perhaps, negative school experience. To witness teachers and students vigorously engaged in the community can in turn, motivate community members to become more actively engaged in the local school and in education in general. This synergy and interaction is necessary to nourish an educated, empathetic, and active citizenry that cares about the collective good and is invested in how youth are educated. As Myers and Pickeral (1997) proclaim:

The service-learning process is a powerful pedagogy that brings future teachers closer to the notions of what it means to teach and learn and to collaboratively create learning communities and organizations that support lifelong learning and continuous renewal. Service-learning has a vital role to play in formatting new visions of learning at all levels..." (p. 38)

Through service-learning, students also gain a greater appreciation for the talents and perspectives of their classmates (Myers & Pickeral, 1997) which in turn, fosters development of collaborative and interpersonal skills. Since productive relationships are important for good teaching, experience in service-learning can strengthen the critical social skills of teacher candidates which will help them to more effectively build a sense of community in their own practice.

When service learning is implemented in a way that connects classroom content, literature, and skills to community needs, students will gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their community and society and grow as individuals as they gain respect for peers and increase their civic participation. (Kaye, 2004, p. 7)

A study of 1,799 school principals and other administrators found that service-learning was viewed to have many positive effects but "the highest impact [was] on student's citizenship,

personal and social development, and school-community relationships” (Kielsmeier, Scales, Roehkepartain, & Neal, 2004, p. 140). As Fitch et al., (2013), suggest:

Well-designed service learning experiences serve as bridges between the curriculum and the world outside the classroom, where problems are ill structured and the stakes are often high for communities and students alike. These opportunities build students’ capacities to develop, use, and refine their knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities. (p. 57)

Critical Reflection

The benefits of critical reflection were discussed at length earlier in this chapter under the theoretical framework of experiential education and service-learning. Critical reflection before, during, and after service-learning is fundamental to the experiential practice of service-learning.

Relevant Service

Ash et al. (2009) define service to be relevant if it is “relevant to the academic material and to the needs, interests, and capacities of the community, as they have identified them” (p. 1-4). Research by Crosman (1989) also suggests that service-learning becomes more relevant and effective if participants are allowed to select their own community partner and type of service.

Bradley (2006) agrees:

When students are involved in doing everything from planning to the actual service as a group, they are more likely to gain a sense of responsibility related to civic involvement, but less likely to lose a sense of responsibility for helping others and for the environment. They were also more likely to express intent to continue their service in the future.... Regardless of the project type, the more personally involved youth are in planning and implementing their service activities, the greater the chance it will affect them personally. (p. 58)

Billig and Root’s (2005) research also suggests that positive outcomes in service-learning were highest when the students had a choice in the projects and had direct contact with those being served. Additional studies suggest that when service-learning projects are voluntary, students show a greater increase in social, civic, and personal responsibility (Conrad & Hedin,

1989; Youniss & Yates, 1997). Service-learning can assist teachers in providing students with “authentic learning experiences that capture...[their] interests and talents...Students work longer and try harder to accomplish tasks and develop skills when there are real-life purposes and consequences connected to learning” (Myers & Pickeral, 1997, p. 27). Involving students in real-world experiences, can increase engagement in their education (Feller et al., 2007; Turnley, 2007) and provide a “connectedness” between theory and practice (Miller, 2001). This connectedness serves not only to motivate students to learn but also to persist to stay in school (Furco, 2002). Service-learning can help to:

...keep students in school and engaged as productive learners through to graduation, schools must provide many experiences in which all students do some of their learning outside school. All students need to leave school – frequently, regularly, and, of course, temporarily – to stay in school and persist in their learning. To accomplish this schools must take down the walls that separate the learning that students do, and could do, in school from the learning they do, and could do, outside. The learning in both settings and contexts must be seamlessly integrated. (Washor & Mojkowski, 2013, p. 58)

Service-learning provides benefits for K-12 students, collegiate students (including pre-service teachers), and community partners. These benefits range from enhancing academic achievement to improving the future citizenry of the country. Many of these benefits align with needed educational reforms and further demonstrate the wisdom of integrating service-learning throughout all levels of education.

Summary

This chapter reviewed relevant literature of the theoretical framework of experiential education and service-learning, the history of service-learning, definitions of service-learning, service-learning models, and the benefits of service-learning. Embedded throughout this chapter were references to the role, purpose, and outcomes of service-learning within teacher education.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents the purpose of the study, research design, research questions, service-learning theoretical framework, context and setting of the study, research participants, instruments, and data collection methods including interviews, reflective journals, piloting, and protection of the rights of human subjects. The chapter continues with a discussion of researcher assumptions and bias, data analysis, trustworthiness, and a summary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine how pre-service teacher participants describe their service-learning experiences and in what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary based on individual or group service-learning experiences. Since service-learning is a relationship-rich pedagogy and teaching is a relationship-rich profession, it is important to examine the impact of service-learning experiences in a teacher education course.

Research on service-learning is encouraged to "improve instructional design, enhance abilities, and increase confidence among teachers and learners alike" (Bringle, Clayton, & Hatcher, 2013, pp. 3-4). Scholars (Battistoni, 2006; Billig & Waterman, 2003, Bringle et al., 2013; Root, 2003) suggest that more research in service-learning is needed in K-12 and higher education.

Research Design

In this study, the researcher utilized a qualitative, case study approach which challenges the researcher to "uncover the meaning of phenomenon for those involved" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). A case study is "an exploration of a bounded system or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in

context” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). The strength of qualitative research is the ability to study real-life situations and help the researcher to understand “the meaning that participants attribute to ...actions – their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptive worlds” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 57). Schram (2003) contends that the “value of a case study lies in facilitating appreciation of the uniqueness, complexity, and contextual embeddedness of individual events and phenomena” (p. 107). A case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon with its real-life context” (Yin, 2003, p. 13) is important in expanding the knowledge base of a field of study (Merriam, 1998, p. 41).

A qualitative case study design was selected for this study because: (a) the research was performed in a natural setting, (b) the researcher was the key instrument for data collection, (c) the data were gathered through words and sentences, (d) the data were analyzed inductively, and (e) the study focused on participants’ attitudes and beliefs (Creswell, 2013). The researcher seeks to bring fresh insights and discoveries (Merriam, 2009) to the educational and service-learning literature. This qualitative case study examines how pre-service teacher participants describe their service-learning experiences and how their attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary based upon individual or group service-learning experiences.

As Yin (2009) noted, a single case study may involve more than one unit of analysis. For this study, two units of analysis were embedded in this single case. The two units were the use of two different types of service-learning experiences (individual or group) in the same *Foundations of Education* course in a teacher education program at Kansas State University.

Research Question

The study is guided by the following two research questions: How do pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences within the context of

a required teacher education course? In what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary, based on individual or group service-learning experiences?

Service-Learning Theoretical Framework

The service-learning experiences for this study were designed using experiential educational theory and a blended framework from service-learning common goals (academic enhancement, personal/professional growth, and civic learning) and common components (academic material, critical reflection and relevant service) described by Ash et al., (2009). Please note, the researcher defines the common goal of *personal/professional growth* to also include understanding of diversity as a fundamental personal attribute. The common component of *academic material* proposed by Ash et al., (2009) is not identified separately in this study because it is implied and included in the academic enhancement category. The blended framework for the study includes the above mentioned categories and will be defined in the following sections.

Academic enhancement

Service-learning experiences can help to “build students’ capacities to develop, use, and refine their knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities” (Fitch et al., 2013, p. 57).

Participants in service-learning can identify and connect the academic material from their course work to their service-learning experience (Ash et al., 2009).

Personal/Professional growth

This category examines attitudes, assumptions, strengths, and weaknesses of the service-learning participants (Ash et al., 2009) that have an impact on decisions, actions, and beliefs about oneself.

Civic learning

This category is focused upon “Inviting students to see themselves as citizens, in both their personal and professional lives” (Ash et al., 2009, p. ii).

Critical reflection

Critical reflection is “[t]he active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends” (Dewey, 1997, p. 9). The hyphen in service-learning can represent reflection (Eyler & Giles, 1999) because it takes “two otherwise separate processes – service and learning – and integrates them into a new, interactive, and interconnected whole” (Ash et al., 2009, p. 1-5).

Relevant service

Ash et al., (2009) define service to be relevant if it is “relevant to the academic material and to the needs, interests, and capacities of the community, as they have identified them” (p. 1-4).

For service-learning to be distinguished from community service, an academic component must be included. In this study, participants were asked to examine the learning objectives of the *Foundations of Education* course in which they were enrolled to find relationships and connections with what they learned in the service-learning experiences and the course learning objectives. Critical reflection, which is a key component of experiential educational theory and service-learning, was encouraged in this study through the use of critical reflection journals. Participants were asked to answer journal prompts prior, during, and after their service-learning experiences. Relevant service in the community is also important for a quality service-learning experience. For this study, students were presented with many options

for community partners within the surrounding communities and with the approval of the instructor, they made their choices.

Context and Setting of the Study

Creswell (2007) encourages a well-articulated description of the case and its setting. This case study is bound by time, geographic location, and enrollment in one *Foundations of Education* course in a teacher education program at Kansas State University, a land-grant institution. The study took place in the fall semester of 2013. The case includes 14 pre-service teacher participants enrolled in the same section of a *Foundations of Education* course.

In the fall 2013, the enrollment for Kansas State University was 20,169 students (Student Reports and Historical Data retrieved 3/12/16) and the College of Education included 1,203 undergraduate students (College of Education Enrollment retrieved 3/12/16). The university is located in Manhattan, Kansas with a population of 52,281 (U.S. Census retrieved 3/12/16) not including the student body of the university and has 25.4% of its residents living below the poverty line compared to a 13.8% poverty rate for the state (U.S. Census retrieved 3/12/16). Manhattan, Kansas is located near a large military base of over 18,000 active duty service members and over 24,000 family members (Department of Defense retrieved 3/12/16). The state has a total population of 2,853,118 with 83% of residents identified as white (U.S. Census retrieved 3/12/16).

The College of Education is the largest teacher preparation program in the state with graduates living in all 105 counties, all 50 states, and in 40 countries (College of Education website retrieved 3/12/16). The College of Education has a nationally recognized Professional Development Schools partnership program using *Danielson's Framework for Teaching* (Danielson, 2007). The College offers a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education (7-

12) and a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education (K-6). Secondary education students can concentrate in the following areas: Agricultural education, art education, biological science, business, chemistry, earth science, English, English/journalism, family and consumer sciences education journalism, mathematics, modern languages, music education, physics, social studies, and speech/theatre. Elementary education students can choose from the following concentrations: English, ESL, mathematics, modern languages, science, social science, and special education (College of Education website retrieved 3/12/16).

Foundations of Education is a three-credit course that meets twice a week for a total of 150 minutes per week. The course is part of a pre-professional component consisting of ten hours for Elementary education majors and eight hours for Secondary education majors. Prior to taking *Foundations of Education*, most students have taken at least one field experience course.

Foundations of Education typically includes sophomore students enrolled prior to their formal admission into the professional teacher program. Several students in this stage of their undergraduate studies are making their final decision as to whether they want to become a teacher or not. The *Foundations of Education* course examines the historical, political, philosophical, and sociological foundations of education in the United States. Discussions include career and technical education, changing demographics, ethical and legal issues, governance and financial support and curriculum issues. (KSU undergraduate course catalog retrieved 3/12/16).

The political environment in the state in which the university is located has been hostile to K-12 and higher education with multiple funding cuts leading to conflict over many years between the governor, legislature, and the Kansas Supreme Court. The Court has ruled multiple funding plans by the state as unconstitutional in violation of the 2005 school finance law

(Carpenter, 2013). The governor and legislature have supported legislation to eliminate teaching tenure, reduce the influence of teacher unions, and allow individuals to teach without licensure. As a result of this atmosphere, the state has encountered a teaching shortage (Klein, 2015) and the College of Education at this university has seen a decreased enrollment (College of Education Enrollment retrieved 3/12/16).

Service Locations

Participants of the study were given an opportunity to select their service-learning community partners from an approved list from the researcher. The following sites were chosen by the participants: (a) Meadowlark Retirement Villages, (b) Via Christi Retirement Villages, (c) St. Joseph's Senior Community Center, (d) Manhattan high school extended hours tutoring, (e) T. Russell Reitz animal shelter, (f) Custer Hill elementary school, (g) HandsOn K-State campus volunteer organization, and (h) Flint Hills Breadbasket. Meadowlark Retirement Villages serves 200 residents in independent living apartments and cottages, 40 residents in assisted living, and 130 residents in healthcare households. Volunteers assist with socializing with residents including reading, playing games, or watching movies (Meadowlark Retirement Villages website retrieved 3/12/16). Via Christi Retirement Villages provide independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing facilities for senior citizens (Via Christi Retirement Villages website retrieved 3/12/16). St. Joseph's Senior Community Center provides short-term rehabilitation, long-term and hospice care for senior residents. Volunteers socialize, assist in letter-writing, read, play cards, garden, join in sing-a-longs or special events, and exercise programs (St. Joseph's Senior Community Center website retrieved 3/12/16). Manhattan High School includes an enrollment of 1,920 students. The extended hours involve tutoring in many subjects including math, English, biology, physics, and history (Manhattan High School website retrieved 3/12/16).

The T. Russell Reitz animal shelter provides sheltering of unwanted companion animals and promotes humane treatment and responsible pet ownership. Volunteers can work with socializing and playing with animals, cleaning of the facility, giving animals daily exercise, and helping to train some dogs with basic manners prior to entering the home (City of Manhattan website retrieved 3/12/16). Custer Hill Elementary School is one of five elementary schools located on a nearby military base. This public elementary school of approximately 388 students has 75% of students that are considered economically disadvantaged. The ethnicity of the school includes 52% White, 18% Hispanic, 13% African American and 15% Other (United School District 475 website retrieved 3/12/16). HandsOn K-State campus volunteer organization provides meaningful volunteer and service opportunities between the campus and the community (Kansas State University Leadership Studies website retrieved 3/12/16). The Flint Hills Breadbasket is a community food network founded in 1983 with the mission to “minimize hunger and poverty through the distribution of available food and to nurture projects that help alleviate hunger and poverty” (Flint Hills Breadbasket website retrieved 3/12/16).

Research Participants

According to Creswell (2013) between 5 and 25 participants is acceptable in a qualitative study. Through a combination of stratified purposeful and convenience sampling (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009), 25 pre-service teachers enrolled in a Foundations of Education class in the fall of 2013 were assigned to participate in group or individual service-learning. Twelve students participated in group service-learning and thirteen were involved in individual service-learning. Of the 25 pre-service teachers in the class, 14 chose to participate in the study (see Table 3.1). Of those 14, 9 were involved in individual service-learning (3 males and 6 females) and 5 participated in group service-learning (4 males and 1 female). All but two subjects were

traditional-aged (18 to 22 years old) college students and the sample included three Elementary and eleven Secondary Education pre-professionals. Content areas for the 14 participants included special education, social science, math, science, and family and consumer sciences. Thirteen participants were United States citizens from Kansas and one participant was a Chinese citizen (see Table 3.1).

According to Merriam (2009), purposeful sampling is “based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 77). This type of sampling makes it particularly effective for case study research because the sample is chosen to provide the richest data for the study. Convenience sampling was used to gain access to the *Foundations of Education* class since the researcher was the instructor for this course. Stratified purposeful sampling was used to divide the class of 25 students into two groups – one group of 13 students who experienced individual service-learning and one group of 12 students who experienced group service-learning. The criteria used to purposely divide the two groups was determined by the participants. Each participant self-identified as either an introvert or an extrovert. Since service-learning is a relationship-rich pedagogy, the researcher sought an even balance of introverts and extroverts in both the individual and group service-learning experiences. Each participant identified their personality type at the beginning of the semester during a regular meeting with the researcher in her role as instructor of the *Foundations of Education* course. Every student in the *Foundations of Education* class met regularly with the instructor (researcher) for a minimum of two hours per student throughout the semester. During these meetings, the instructor and participant discussed a wide range of topics including their self-identified personality type (introvert or extrovert) generally based on questions from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

(MBTI®) that was developed by Isabel Briggs Myers (1962) and her mother, Katherine Cook

Briggs to classify individuals by four distinct bipolar personality types including introversion and extroversion.

Table 3.1 Participant Demographic Information

Pseudonym	Gender	Content Area	Self-Identified Personality
ISL 1 (Individual Service-Learning 1)	Female	Secondary Math	Introvert
ISL 2 (Individual Service-Learning 2)	Female	Elementary	Introvert
ISL 3 (Individual Service-Learning 3)	Male	Secondary Science	Introvert
ISL 4 (Individual Service-Learning 4)	Female	Secondary Science	Introvert
ISL 5 (Individual Service-Learning 5)	Male	Secondary Social Studies	Extrovert
ISL 6 (Individual Service-Learning 6)	Female	Secondary FACS	Extrovert
ISL 7 (Individual Service-Learning 7)	Female	Secondary FACS	Extrovert
ISL 8 (Individual Service-Learning 8)	Female	Secondary Math	Introvert
ISL 9 (Individual Service-Learning 9)	Male	Elementary	Introvert
GSL 1 (Group Service-Learning 1)	Male	Secondary Social Studies	Extrovert
GSL 2 (Group Service-Learning 2)	Male	Spanish	Extrovert
GSL 3 (Group Service-Learning 3)	Male	Secondary Social Studies	Introvert
GSL 4 (Group Service-Learning 4)	Male	Elementary	Introvert
GSL 5 (Group Service-Learning 5)	Female	Secondary Math	Introvert

Data Collection

To answer the research questions, two primary sources of data were identified:

- individual semi-structured, face-to-face interviews (see Appendix A)

- critical reflective journals written by participants (see Appendix B)

In addition, the researcher used her observations of participants as students in the *Foundations of Education* course, including: (a) three face-to-face interviews with participants, (b) *Foundations of Education* course assignments, and (c) semester-long interactions with the participants before, after, and during class time.

Instruments

Critical reflection, which is a key component of experiential educational theory and service-learning, was encouraged in this study through the use of critical reflection journals utilizing the DEAL Model (Ash et al., 2009) for critical reflection. The DEAL Model (see Appendix C) is a way of organizing the thinking process by describing the experience objectively, rigorously examining that experience through the use of prompts that are closely related to the desired learning outcomes and then articulating the learning that arises from that examination. Participants of the study were asked to answer journal prompts prior, during, and after their service-learning experiences.

After service-learning experiences were completed, the researcher conducted a semi-structured, face-to-face interview with each participant lasting up to 45 minutes (see Appendix A). Collecting information through interviews is a valuable method for qualitative studies and, to truly understand how the different service-learning experiences impacted the participants, it was important to talk to the participants about their experiences. Yin (1994) claims that interviews allow the researcher to keep the focus on the case study topic and provides insightful responses as to how the participants perceive their experiences. Eisner (1998) suggests that “the interview is a powerful resource for learning how people perceive the situations in which they work” (pp.

81-82). Stake (1995) adds that the interview helps the researcher, and the reader, to discover multiple views of the case.

Interviews

Creswell (2007) contends that interviewing is a valid form of data collection. After service-learning experiences were completed, the researcher conducted a semi-structured, face-to-face interview with each participant lasting up to 45 minutes. The use of prompts and follow-up questions is a common qualitative research practice to garner a better understanding of the responses (Merriam, 2009). An interview guide (Appendix A) was utilized and the conversation was electronically recorded and transcribed by the researcher for analysis.

Reflective Journals

The DEAL Model by Ash et al. was used for critical reflection journals. The DEAL Model (Appendix C) guides participants through critical reflection in three sequential steps: (a) description of experiences, (b) examining experiences in concert with learning objectives or goals, and (c) articulating the learning including goals for future experiences and improvements (Ash et al., 2009). Participants were asked to answer journal prompts prior, during, and after their service-learning experiences. These journals were submitted online to the researcher through a secured university online site.

Piloting

The semi-structured interview was piloted to increase the validity of the instrument. The semi-structured interview questions were posed to a small sample of pre-service teachers who had been enrolled in different sections of the same *Foundations of Education* class the previous year. The researcher asked the interview questions to each pre-service teacher in individual interviews with the researcher. As a result of the piloting, some questions were slightly modified

but overall, the pre-service teachers concurred that the instrument and approach of the researcher were clear.

Protection of human subjects

This study followed Kansas State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol for research involving human subjects (see Appendix D for IRB informed consent). The subjects were protected by:

- Each participant signed consent forms (Appendix D) to participate in this study before interviews began.
- Each participant was given a pseudonym to be used to schedule the interview.
- All electronic recordings were stored on a password-protected computer which was only accessible to the researcher.

Three years after the completion of this study all paper and digital files will be destroyed.

Researcher Assumptions and Bias

In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is that of the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Merriam (2009) noted that “the human instrument, which is able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data” (p. 15). As the lone researcher conducting this study, the researcher was responsible for selecting the research site and participants, conducting the interviews, and obtaining online responses from the participant's reflective journals. In addition, the researcher analyzed all data collected from interviews and journals, determining themes and recommendations. Because the researcher was the sole person responsible for data collection and analysis, the potential for researcher bias exists.

Qualitative studies are inherently inductive and interpretative and with the researcher as the primary instrument for data analysis, researcher bias is possible. However, Sword (1999) contends that, “Although some would criticize the subjectivity that is inherent in interpretive work, no research is free of the biases, assumptions, and personality of the researcher. We cannot separate self from those activities in which we are intimately involved, (p. 277). Creswell (2007) acknowledges, “The researcher, as a sociohistorical interpreter, [who] interacts with the subject matter to co-create the interpretations derived” (p. 206). To help minimize researcher bias, Creswell (2007) suggests self-reflection to help validate the work. The researcher took reflective notes throughout the research process and also consulted frequently with a peer debriefer.

The researcher was also the instructor for the *Foundations of Education* course so this could contribute to bias by the researcher and the participants. To protect each participant from any possible consequences of their involvement or non-involvement in the study, the researcher/instructor did not know which students chose to participate in the study until the end of the semester. All students in the *Foundations of Education* course completed all requirements of the service-learning assignment except for the end-of-the-semester semi-structured interview with the researcher. The researcher did not know which students had chosen to participate in the study until meeting with each participant during the semi-structured interview after the course had concluded.

Data Analysis

Qualitative research data analysis can be difficult (Moustakas, 1994) and “there is no standard format for reporting case study research” (Merriam, 1988, p. 193). I followed Stake’s (1995) four forms of data analysis and interpretation in case study research which include: categorical aggregation (researcher seeks a collection of instances from data in hopes that issue-

relevant means will emerge), direct interpretation (looking at a single instance and making meaning from it without looking for multiple instances of it), establishment of patterns (looking for relationship between two or more categories), and naturalistic generalizations (where people can learn from the case either for themselves or to apply to a population of cases).

Creswell (2007) suggests that qualitative data analysis can be represented by a spiral process of “moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach” (p. 150). This image represents the fluid processes of qualitative research that commonly go on simultaneously as qualitative researchers often “learn by doing” (Dey, 1993, p. 6). In Creswell’s (2007) data analysis spiral, the first loop begins with data management and the final loop results in an account or narrative. For this study, the Creswell’s (2007) data analysis spiral was used with the following steps: (a) data managing, (b) reading, memoing, (c) describing, classifying, interpreting, and (d) representing, visualizing.

Data Managing

Data managing is the first loop of Creswell’s (2007) data analysis spiral. The researcher organized all the data including signed consent forms, critical reflective journals, audiotaped and transcribed interview material, and notes into both electronic and physical files. The material was organized further by interview question, by journal prompt, and into individual and group service-learning categories.

Reading and Memoing

As suggested by Creswell (2007), the researcher read all the material for each participant multiple times to allow for deeper immersion into the data. The researcher then systematically read all the responses to each interview question. The researcher did the same for each journal prompt. This allowed the researcher to better understand the responses to each question and

prompt from all participants. During each round of reading, the researcher made memos on the transcripts and journals. These memos included short phrases, ideas, key concepts, or specific words.

Describing, Classifying, Interpreting

To begin the process of describing, classifying, and interpreting, the researcher used a “prefigured” coding scheme for the initial coding categories derived from a blended framework of the service-learning common goals (academic enhancement, personal/professional growth, and civic learning) and common components (academic material, critical reflection and relevant service) described by Ash et al. (2009). This “prefigured” coding scheme was chosen because it was representative of experiential learning and service-learning literature and corresponded with the way in which the service-learning experiences were constructed. As suggested by Creswell (2007) for those researchers who use a “prefigured” coding system, the researcher was also “open to additional codes emerging during the analysis” (p. 152). Hence, several sub-codes emerged from the initial coding categories (see Table 4.1).

As Creswell (2007) suggests, classifying involves “taking the text...apart, and looking for categories, themes, or dimensions of information” (p. 153). After taking apart the data by question and journal prompt, for the next round of analysis the researcher re-read all the material from the individual service-learning participants. The researcher did the same for the material from the group service-learning participants. To better answer the second research question related to the attitudes and beliefs of participants based upon their individual or group service-learning experiences, and due to the embedded single case study research design of this study, the next round of analysis also included the additional analytic aspect (Yin, 2003) of individual or group service-learning experience.

Representing and Visualizing

For the final phase of Creswell's (2007) data analysis spiral, representation and visualization of the data is presented in text format utilizing Stake's (1995) data analysis strategies and the theoretical framework categories with corresponding themes.

Table 3.2 Data Analysis Matrix

Sources of data	Data Analysis Strategies (Stake, 1995)	Alignment to Theoretical Framework (Initial Coding Categories and General Themes Explored)
Critical Reflection Journals	Categorical Aggregation Direct Interpretation Establishment of Patterns Naturalistic Generalizations	Academic Enhancement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and relationships Experiential pedagogy Connection to content Personal/Professional Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpersonal skills Understanding of Diversity Outside of comfort zone Civic Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future teacher in community Civic responsibility Critical Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical thinking/enhanced learning Process Relevant Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personality Collaboration Choice and logistics Type of service Prior service experience
Semi-structured interview	Categorical Aggregation	Academic Enhancement

	Direct Interpretation Establishment of Patterns Naturalistic Generalizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and relationships • Experiential pedagogy • Connection to content Personal/Professional Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal skills • Understanding of Diversity • Outside of comfort zone Civic Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future teacher in community • Civic responsibility Critical Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking/enhanced learning • Process Relevant Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality • Collaboration • Choice and logistics • Type of service • Prior service experience
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Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is “the judged credibility of a qualitative research study based upon the appropriateness of the data gathering and analytical process and their resulting interpretation” (Kratwohl, 1998, p. 694). Creswell and Miller (2000) focus on eight validation strategies:

- Prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field
- Triangulation – use multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories.

- Peer review or debriefing
- Negative case analysis
- Clarifying researcher bias from the outside
- Member checking
- Rich, thick description
- External audits

Creswell (2007) suggests using at least two of these strategies for any study. The researcher utilized the following approaches to ensure trustworthiness: triangulation of data; peer debriefing; member checks; rich, thick descriptions; and purposeful sampling.

Triangulation of data was achieved by analyzing data from each participant's reflective journals and interview responses. Notes were made by the researcher during and after each interview. These were used in analyzing the data from journals and interviews. The researcher provided rich, thick descriptions of the data gathered and purposefully sampled pre-service teachers in a teacher education class. A Kansas State University faculty member served as a peer debriefer by reviewing protocol, instruments, and meeting with the researcher on a regular basis throughout the study. Member checking is crucial in demonstrating credibility for any study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, participants were asked to review transcripts from their interviews and make any changes necessary to assure accuracy. None of the participants chose to amend or change their interview transcripts.

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the purpose of the study, the research design, research questions, the service-learning theoretical framework, context and setting of the study,

research participants, and instruments used. Methods for data collection and analysis, researcher assumptions and bias, and trustworthiness were also described.

Chapter 4 - Findings

In this qualitative single case study, the researcher examined how pre-service teachers described their individual or group service-learning experiences and how their attitudes and beliefs toward service-learning might vary based upon their experience. In this chapter the researcher provides a general summary of participants' demographics as well as short narrative summaries of each individual participant, based on data collected throughout the study. She then presents the findings as they related to stated research questions.

Demographic Information

Through a combination of stratified purposeful and convenience sampling (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009), 25 pre-service teachers enrolled in a *Foundations of Education* class in the Fall semester of 2013 were assigned to participate in group or individual service-learning. Service-learning was one of the required assignments for the course. Twelve students participated in group service-learning and thirteen were involved in individual service-learning. As stated in Chapter 3, of the 25 pre-service teachers in the class, 14 chose to participate in this study. To participate in the study, the participants completed all the requirements of the assignment and were interviewed by the researcher for up to 45 minutes following the completion of the semester. In an effort to increase trustworthiness, the researcher did not know which students would select to participate in the study until after the completion of course requirements. This was done in order to limit any perception of potential impact on students' grades for the course.

During the researcher's 17 years of teaching experience, she routinely met with students on an individual basis as a way to better understand each student's unique background and learning preferences. Since the researcher emphasized the formation of a learning community in her classroom and frequent group work, she often asked questions of students to determine their

self-identified introvert or extrovert characteristics generally based on questions from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®). Since this study used both individual and group service-learning, the researcher used this information to purposefully place an even balance of self-identified introverts and extroverts in each type of service-learning. Of the students who chose to participate in the study, nine identified as introverts and five as extroverts.

Personal Depiction of Participants

In order to provide a deeper understanding of the individuals and their service-learning experiences in the study, this section provides contextual information about each participant. This information is from the perspective of the researcher and not self-reported statements from the participants. As outlined in Chapter 3, the researcher summarizes in narrative format, the demographic data.

Individual Service-Learning 1 (ISL 1)

ISL 1 was an international student from China. Her English language skills were good and she was not afraid to engage in discussion throughout the duration of the course. She was well liked by her peers with a very positive and uplifting demeanor. ISL 1 indicated that her goal was to change education in China to more closely reflect a progressive style of teaching that encouraged creativity and innovation.

Individual Service-Learning 2 (ISL 2)

ISL 2 was a soft-spoken elementary teacher who was also drawn to early childhood education. She embodied an empathetic, caring, and almost maternal presence in the classroom learning community. She was averse to conflict and when she did state her opinion, she often appeared to be convincing herself of the merit of her suggestions. She was not confident in her

ability to teach even though she did exceptionally well in all of her teaching opportunities throughout the semester.

Individual Service-Learning 3 (ISL 3)

ISL 3 was a non-traditional student who already had earned a bachelor's degree in another field. He was extremely bright and enjoyed research. He often shared thought-provoking and introspective perceptions during class discussions and possessed a well-articulated critical theorist's viewpoint. Although vocal in class, he confessed to feeling somewhat awkward with some social interactions. He displayed a great deal of passion for his content area and throughout the semester, shared a greater empathy for his classmates and future students.

Individual Service-Learning 4 (ISL 4)

ISL 4 was a highly structured and extremely intelligent future science teacher. She often completed assignments above and beyond the course requirements and frequently asked for additional information from the instructor. She did not actively seek a great deal of social interaction in the class and expressed a preference for working alone. Early in the semester, her view of teaching was often technical and content-driven rather than student-centered. But as the semester progressed, she displayed a greater understanding of student-centered instruction including an interest in teaching in diverse classrooms.

Individual Service-Learning 5 (ISL 5)

ISL 5 was a student-athlete who was very well-liked by his peers and demonstrated subtle leadership within the class. He led even though he was not overwhelmingly vocal. When he did speak, his peers eagerly listened and responded. He articulated a strong sense of purpose and responsibility as a future teacher and had already assumed the mantle of role model in his current

athletics career. He was very humble and he looked forward to making a positive impact on his students as a teacher and coach.

Individual Service-Learning 6 (ISL 6)

ISL 6 was a very social student who sometimes seemed bored with the academic content of the course. However, throughout the semester, she demonstrated tremendous growth in her commitment to teaching and working to develop each student's potential. She was not afraid to speak her mind and her final teaching opportunity was extremely creative. She had excellent interpersonal skills and was motivated to work with her peers.

Individual Service-Learning 7 (ISL 7)

ISL 7 was exceedingly social and often made humorous comments throughout class. She was not afraid to make fun of herself and her role as class clown was celebrated by the entire class. At the beginning of the course, she failed to take some of her assignments seriously and did not demonstrate an understanding of the effort required to be successful. She made great improvement throughout the semester and in the end, performed well in the course. She was much more intelligent and insightful than she gave herself credit for, and her humor appeared to be a way to deflect her lack of confidence.

Individual Service-Learning 8 (ISL 8)

ISL 8 was a student who had just recently transferred from another major and was in the process of trying to decide if teaching was for her. She was passive during the beginning of the semester and was hesitant to voice her opinions. As the semester progressed, she became much more vocal and comfortable with the prospect of teaching. She was an empathetic and caring student who provided honest and insightful responses.

Individual Service-Learning 9 (ISL 9)

ISL 9 was a non-traditional, married student who had earned an undergraduate degree in another major. After working a few years, he did not have a sense of fulfillment in this occupation. He had always wanted to be a teacher but was encouraged by others to pursue a more lucrative field. The desire to teach continued to beckon him and he decided to return to school to get an elementary teaching degree. It was obvious that he had made the right choice because his teaching in the course was impressive and he radiated enthusiasm whenever he spoke of teaching. He was bright, articulate, and possessed an empathetic and nurturing demeanor. This student was highly regarded by his classmates and they often sought his advice.

Group Service-Learning 1 (GSL 1)

GSL 1 was an enthusiastic and articulate secondary major who spoke often in class. He was someone who often “thought out loud” by ruminating on an idea while responding to a discussion question. He was not afraid to try something new or be wrong. He was very socially adept and demonstrated skillful leadership capabilities. He was well-liked by his classmates for his caring and outgoing personality.

Group Service-Learning 2 (GSL 2)

GSL 2 was a highly intelligent, mature, and verbal student who was the “voice” of the learning community from the first day of class throughout the semester. He was fiercely analytical and unafraid to make statements contrary to the ideas of the group or instructor. The instructor encouraged this kind of questioning, but few students have the confidence and skill to do this early in the semester. He made these contrary comments in a respectful and empathetic way and his ability to play the “devil’s advocate” encouraged the learning community to think more deeply. He often shared his experiences as an only child and one who was also

homeschooled. He was a fiercely honest and ethical student and his classmates applauded his authentic, helpful nature.

Group Service-Learning 3 (GSL 3)

GSL 3 was a student who had switched majors to education after his experiences with a person with special needs. He was strongly committed and passionate about working with students with special needs especially at the elementary level. He had a very empathetic and caring nature and was always volunteering to help his classmates. To the researcher, he privately expressed his desire to listen rather than speak up in class. However, he impressively pushed through these fears and became someone who provided thoughtful comments each and every class period. Through this experience, he grew in self-confidence and expanded his social skills with his fellow classmates.

Group Service-Learning 4 (GSL 4)

GSL 4 was a highly intelligent, introspective, and introverted student. He had excellent ideas but lacked confidence and social skills to articulate thoughts even to small groups. He was conflicted about whether he could really be an effective teacher with these interpersonal and confidence challenges. Through teaching experiences and class discussions, at times, he ventured beyond his comfort zone and showed signs of great progress by the end of the semester. However, in our final meeting, he still expressed his concerns about whether he could successfully break out of his shell to become the teacher he passionately wanted to be.

Group Service-Learning 5 (GSL 5)

GSL 5 was a very intelligent student who was soft-spoken except when it came to topics of great interest to her. In particular, she was very passionate about the need for culturally responsive teaching so that every student could succeed. She was eager to share her experiences

about being in a diverse, low socioeconomic classroom as a student. Her ability to convey these stories with great empathy and understanding had an important impact on her classmates.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following two research questions: How do pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences within the context of a required teacher education course? In what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary, based on individual or group service-learning experiences?

Service-Learning Framework

As indicated in Chapter 3, the analysis was guided by a blended theoretical framework, based on the literature on high impact practices and service-learning use in education. As mentioned given the cohesive and concrete structure of Ash et al.'s (2009) service-learning framework, such as the common goals (academic enhancement, personal/professional growth, and civic learning) and common components (academic material, critical reflection and relevant service), the researcher used this work, both in designing the service-learning component of the *Foundations of Education* course, as well as in informing her initial approach to data analysis. The Ash et al. (2009) framework played a significant role in shaping the prefigured coding categories that guided the researcher's initial organization of the sub-codes found during the first phase of data analysis (see Table 4.1). More specifically, the following categories (based primarily on Ash et al.'s (2009) service-learning framework) were chosen because they are cohesive and representative of the experiential learning and service-learning experiences of participants in the study. The categories include: (a) academic enhancement, (b) personal/professional growth, (c) civic learning, (d) critical reflection, and (e) relevant service.

As specific sub-codes were identified in the data, the researcher clustered these sub-codes around the above categories (see Table 4.1).

It is important to note that while Ash et al. (2009) did not specifically include diversity within a specific framework category, the researcher chose to include students' understanding of diversity as a fundamental personal attribute within her coding category, *personal/professional growth*. Furthermore, the common component of *academic material* proposed by Ash et al. (2009) is not identified separately in this study because it is implied and included in the *academic enhancement* category.

Table 4.1 Initial Coding Categories and Sub-Codes

Initial Coding Categories (derived from Ash et al., 2009)	Sub-Codes
Academic enhancement	Critical thinking, relationships, collaboration, diversity, experiential pedagogy, learning objectives, modeling, qualities of a teacher, connections, personalize instruction
Personal/Professional Growth	Self-image, empathy, social skills, service to others, self-assessment, self-confidence, collaboration, diversity, outside of comfort zone, communication skills
Civic Learning	Active member of society, volunteer, empathy, diversity, connections, role model
Critical Reflection	Critical thinking, self-talk, analyze, enhanced learning, self-awareness, assessment of change, deep understanding, process
Relevant Service	Collaboration, service to others, personality, scheduling, choice, compromise, prior service, individual or group service, communication skills, autonomy, expectations

In a second round of data analysis, emphasis was placed upon how the attitudes and beliefs of the participants varied based upon individual or group service-learning experiences. When examining the data from this perspective and being informed by the initial prefigured coding categories and sub-codes, several themes emerged (see Table 4.2). While it will be discussed in greater detail later, it should be noted that whether the service-learning experience

was individual or group, the participants responded similarly to the interview questions and journal prompts, thus creating the same themes.

Table 4.2 Emergent Themes Organized by Initial Coding Categories & by Type of Experience

Individual Service-Learning		Group Service-Learning	
Initial Coding Categories	Themes	Initial Coding Categories	Themes
Academic enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to academic content including experiential pedagogy 	Academic enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to academic content including experiential pedagogy
Personal/Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships, interpersonal skills, and personal growth • Understanding of diversity in context of the classroom and community • Reflection as important component in learning and personal growth 	Personal/Professional Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships, interpersonal skills, and personal growth • Understanding of diversity in context of the classroom and community • Reflection as important component in learning and personal growth
Civic Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future teacher in community • Understanding of diversity in context of the classroom and community 	Civic Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future teacher in community • Understanding of diversity in context of the classroom and community
Critical Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection as important 	Critical Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection as important

	component in learning and personal growth		component in learning and personal growth
Relevant Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality and collaboration • Logistics and choice • Type of service and prior service experience 	Relevant Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality and collaboration • Logistics and choice • Type of service and prior service experience

Emergent Themes in Relation to Research Questions

The researcher presents these findings in relation to the two established research questions.

Research Question #1: How do pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences within the context of a required teacher education course?

Theme 1: Connection to academic content including experiential pedagogy. In this study, participants were asked to examine the learning objectives and materials of the *Foundations of Education* course in which they were enrolled to find relationships and connections with what they learned in their service-learning experiences. This academic content was not only reflected in the responses to questions about academic enhancement but permeated responses throughout all questions and the eventual themes.

Thirteen of the fourteen participants found their service-learning experience to be in line with the learning objectives of the *Foundations of Education* course and all participants stated that they understood why service-learning was included in the course. As one participant

observed, "...everything from EDSEC 310 can be used during service-learning" (GSL 5, journal). Another participant acknowledged the connection to academic content by stating that service-learning "is a way that we can tie our pedagogies and our knowledge of the class to our practice" (ISL 1, interview). Thirteen of the fourteen participants also indicated that they were likely to utilize some form of service-learning in their future classrooms.

Experiential pedagogy is a cornerstone of the *Foundations of Education* course associated with this study and many participants made this association with their service-learning experiences. One participant remarked that "first-hand learning is the best approach in this situation, and it allows us to practice the different ideas we have discussed throughout the semester.... Until we experience it first-hand, we have no idea how it will really affect us" (ISL 9, journal). Another participant lauded the benefits of expanding learning beyond the walls of the classroom by stating, "I would not have gained the insight I did exclusively in a classroom setting.... By actually experiencing the topics, I was able to gain a true understanding of the course material" (ISL 4, journal). Participants generally agreed that even with excellent textbooks or making efforts to imagine or replicate situations in a classroom, real-world experiences are much more impactful. As one participant noted:

You can't get everything out of a textbook...just seeing some of the things we talked about in class brought it home more. I could actually visualize it and not just imagine it because I had some background in it. It is like taking a book and making it into a movie. Like "Oh, that is what that interpretation looks like. (ISL 4, interview)

Another participant summarized her connection with service-learning and academic enhancement by explaining that:

In a service-learning experience, I connect my experience with our discussion and learning in class, then the connection and comparison lets me think deeper and deeper. So I will continue to use it as a way to stimulate students to think...The more students experience, the more they think; the more they think, the more they learn. (ISL 1, journal)

Overall, participants understood why service-learning was included in the *Foundations of Education* course and they were able to make connections with the academic content of the course to their service-learning experiences.

Theme 2: Relationships, interpersonal skills, and personal growth. The importance of relationships in the professional practice of teaching is a major emphasis of the *Foundations of Education* course associated with this study. Overall, participant responses demonstrated evidence of this emphasis. Expounding upon the importance of relationships, a participant observed that, "...teaching is about relationships and so for me this service-learning project really illustrated relationships in a concrete way in my mind" (GSL 2, interview). Another participant noted that service-learning was included in this course "because it helps you build one-on-one relationships, helps you get to know your community and its needs and promotes good pedagogy. These are all things that are important for a teacher to know and have" (GSL 3, journal).

Many participants found that their service-learning challenged them to grow personally and professionally especially in their social and relationship skills which they deemed to be important for their future teaching career. One participant acknowledged that service-learning is an opportunity to "help us grow as a person [and].... provides excellent insight about where we excel and where we need improvement" (ISL 4, journal). Another participant agreed that "Service-learning helped me understand that I am not who I entirely want to be. I want to be more involved with others and giving of my time and effort to benefit others" (GSL 1, journal).

Most participants recognized the emotional and social aspects of service-learning and how their experiences had reinforced the importance of relationships and their understanding of

themselves. As one participant mused about his service-learning experiences and potential impact on the world:

In the process, I realized that I learned a great deal about myself and how I can work with fellow students and colleagues to make the world a better place. And improving our world is not just something that happens physically, but emotionally, mentally, and spiritually as well.... It is so easy to become comfortable in my little sphere, that I neglect the important things ‘out there’, and miss out on building relationships and encouraging others along their way in life’s journey. (GSL 2, journal)

As a part of this personal growth in the *Foundations of Education* course, students were encouraged to embrace the idea that “We teach who we are” (Palmer, 2007, p. 1). This concept extols the importance of understanding ourselves first before we can be effective in our relationships with students and others. In this study, many participants discovered that service-learning placed them in situations where they were forced to more closely examine themselves in relationship to others. As one participant observed:

I feel like it [service-learning] shows the fact that...in even connecting between your personal life with your professional life.... all aspects...can affect your pedagogy as a teacher...you as a person. And [it] can affect you completely as a teacher, you as a person...in both ways. You can be a teacher and things that students do can change you as a person. You can grow. (GSL 1, interview)

Several participants were deeply impacted by their personal interactions with others during their service-learning experiences. When describing a situation with an elderly resident who suddenly became disoriented and demanded that her family come to take her home, one participant lamented that she was personally, “broken by the woman’s loneliness” (ISL 7, journal). Another participant who was initially ambivalent about service-learning and working with the elderly, acknowledged that he “really didn’t expect the people [at the retirement village] to have such an impact on me” (ISL 5, journal). One participant joyfully testified how her heart was made to “sing” (ISL 8, journal) by the enthusiastic stories of an elderly retired teacher at the retirement home.

This feeling of empathy and desire to serve others was echoed by many participants. As one participant stated, "...teaching is such a service-based profession...you are not always going to get paid or tangibly rewarded for all you do but you need to love what you do for the intrinsic value" (ISL 6, interview). Another participant proposed that both service-learning and teaching offer many intrinsic rewards because as teachers, we dedicate "our lives to teach for others and their betterment, not for ourselves. I think doing this service-learning is a reminder of that" (ISL 7, journal). Another participant noted that the service-learning experience "...helped reinforce my values and beliefs.... helped show me that I truly want to continue to help others" (ISL 2, journal).

Many participants acknowledged that their interactions with those they were assisting in their service-learning experiences could easily translate to how they might interact with their future students. As one participant who worked with the elderly confessed, "The idea that every student is valuable and worth attention and effort really resonated with me while helping these elderly" (ISL 6, journal). Another participant added:

In the end I learned a lot about patience, understanding, and passion. Not every student I will have in the future will be an ideal student for me but I need to be patient, understanding and passionate enough to help them succeed in anything they want to do in life, not just my class. (ISL 8, journal)

Cited by several participants, service-learning can also encourage personal growth by really getting "people out of [their] comfort zone" (ISL 4, interview). For example, one participant "was really nervous going into it [service-learning] ...I haven't always felt comfortable working with elderly people.... I guess it's something most young people deal with that. Just the thought of getting old and being sick and stuff made me uncomfortable" (ISL 5, interview). Another participant acknowledged that:

Service-learning taught me that I am still a little apprehensive to step out of my comfort zone, and that is something I am striving to do. I want to be an educator that really understands my students and their backgrounds and is willing to adapt my lessons to meet their needs. (ISL 9, journal)

Concurring with this assessment, another participant stated that service-learning, “taught me that I have a lot of work to do. I need to force myself out of my comfort zone in order to become an effective leader. It also reinforces...the essentialness in building that trusting relationship” (ISL 6, journal).

As cited in Chapter 2, real-life “disorienting dilemmas” (Mezirow & Associates, 2000, p. 22) that are touted as a benefit of experiential education and service-learning can provide an opportunity for personal and transformational growth. The very nature of disorienting dilemmas puts individuals outside of their comfort zone and forces new ways of problem-solving. A particularly challenging disorienting dilemma was described by one of the group service-learning participants. The group service-learning participants had spent a good deal of time planning a special event at one of the elderly living facilities. On the night of the planned event, the staff member with whom they had been working, was ill. When a few of the participants arrived early at the facility, they were told they would have to leave and no event would take place. Other participants arrived soon after. As one of the early participants confessed:

Even though we had not actually had any service-learning, each of us wanted to lie and make up what we had ‘experienced’...The decision was untruthful and we understood that once others had arrived...we did not want to force them into the lie...We had been forced into a situation where we had no control over the failure and we had to make a decision to lie and break trust with other students and with you. Although we were unable to engage in any service-learning, we did learn a greater sense of morality and how to persevere by trying to make new plans after the service-learning had failed. (GSL 1, journals).

Despite this initial moral dilemma, the students made the decision not to lie and actually told the researcher about it the next day in class.

Theme 3: Understanding of diversity in context of the classroom and community. As emphasized in the *Foundations of Education* course, the understanding of diversity in the context of the classroom and the community is viewed as an integral personal and professional skill for future teachers. As one participant observed:

Each one of these [Foundation of Education] learning objectives deal with some form of understanding each student is different and we need to not only be aware of that but also we need to teach in a way that all of our students learn. (ISL 8, journal)

Service-learning provides an “insight into a community that is otherwise not experienced....” (ISL 9, journal) and it enables pre-service teachers to connect to the community from which their students live. All of the participants of this study acknowledged the importance of an understanding of and involvement in the local community. Several participants considered this involvement to be “highly critical for teachers” (GSL 2, interview) and can assist teachers in understanding such things about students as, “Are both parents still around? Do they [students] get food every morning or every night?” (ISL 9, interview). Service-learning can help teachers recognize “how other people are different and this will help us understand how to work with all kinds of learners when we become teachers” (ISL 8, journal). The dynamic relationship between the community and the classroom was recognized by one participant as she stated:

The environment outside of schools will have a huge impact on the environment inside of school and our classrooms. If we know where our students are coming from then we can understand them on a deeper level. This can greatly impact our style of teaching and our day-by-day lesson plans. We can individualize the lessons to create more interest and ultimately deeper learning in the students. (ISL 4, journal)

Exposure to diversity through service-learning was considered by another participant to be beneficial for his future students to:

...get a sense of “how the other half lives”. Particularly in the upper middle class neighborhoods some of us will surely be teaching in, there will certainly be kids who haven’t ever had to work hard to achieve anything. They’ll be the ones whose parents are respected members of the community with money, and the kids will never have been

exposed to any other lifestyle.... Anything that exposes them to a different section of the population than the one they live in is valuable. (ISL 3, journal)

Other participants commented that service-learning is “both about giving back to the community and building those relationships” (ISL 5, interview) but also “learning about ourselves as teachers and individuals” (ISL 4, journal).

Due to the lack of ethnic/racial diversity within the *Foundations of Education* class, the community partners, and the populations involved in the service-learning experiences for this study, social economic status and age were the primary areas of diversity experienced by the participants. Only one participant (ISL 4) worked in a racially and culturally diverse setting in an elementary school on a nearby military base.

Even with a lack of diverse settings, the participants made several connections to class discussions of diversity and their personal growth in this area. One participant applied the idea of preconceptions and stereotypes with his experiences working with the elderly:

I figured they [elderly] were going to be very boring but they turned out to be very interesting people and taught me a lot about myself. This situation has taught me that I need to not underestimate the value of someone because of their age or social status.... The biggest difficulty I had to overcome was my preconception that older people were not fun to be around and that I would not learn anything from this experience. (GSL 3, journal).

Another participant referenced a diversity book used in the *Foundations of Education* course when he observed:

We talked about the Deculturalization book...it was really about stereotypes basically and about deculturalizing people because they weren't White, upper class Americans. So, I guess that ties in with my preconceptions about the elderly and trying to be open-minded with them. (ISL 5, interview)

This specific participant was not enthusiastic about the course discussions about diversity, so it is noteworthy that through his service-learning experiences, he was able to make a connection with

a book about deculturalizing racial and ethnic minorities to elderly residents in a retirement home.

Theme 4: Future teacher in community. In addition to recognizing the diversity within a community and gaining insight into the backgrounds of each of their students, participants were eager to describe other reasons why they felt it was important for teachers to be involved in their local communities. Several participants discussed how students viewed teachers who are involved in the local community with respect and those who did not with indifference. One participant described how at her high school, there were many teachers who “would get shipped in there...teachers that just came to work and then went home who never got involved in our community at all. Like they were stuck up and snooty and had their own thing” (ISL 6, interview). In contrast, one participant noticed the respect given to teachers:

Kids really look up to their teachers. I know I did. So, if they see them out and about that is the coolest thing. Oh, there is my teacher! If you see them care about your community, you know they care about the students in the classroom as well. (ISL 4, interview)

Another participant added that if students “see their teachers as role models and if the teacher is giving back, they will be more likely to give back and be participatory in the community” (ISL 5, interview). Recognizing that service-learning could have an impact on his future student’s ability to interact with their own community, another participant stated:

Because as an educator, you are teaching those children who are the future and have parents who make up the broader community so...not only are you making the schools present in the community but you are teaching your students how to work within that community. (GSL 4, interview)

Participants acknowledged the symbiotic relationship between the community and the classroom and the role of educators to connect “students to our communities and to the world around them. And helping them to realize what happens in the school doesn’t just stop there. It has greater relevance” (ISL 3, interview). Participants recognized the potential of service-learning to

illuminate the benefits of civic learning for themselves and their students. Eleven of fourteen participants in this study indicated that they experienced civic learning in their service-learning involvement. As one participant confessed:

I used to feel like service learning was basically community service or volunteer work. It is more. It's learning to be an active member in society.... I learned how important service to our community is and how much of a difference it could make.... because you feel responsible for the community and more in tune with it. (ISL 6, journal)

Another participant agreed and contemplated his own future civic engagement:

I also want to be able to do more for my community and this really shows how easy it is to play a part in it. I feel like I am always quick to make excuses for why I don't have time to volunteer, but the truth is there is more than ample time, and even the smallest amount of volunteering makes a huge difference. (ISL 9, journal)

Several participants in the study also described the importance of service-learning and involvement in the community from the perspective of a college student and pre-service teacher. Participants generally acknowledged that there is often a disconnect between college students and the local community but service-learning "just opens it up...you just get to see some things that you would not normally see. As a student you mostly stay around campus and see what's there.... [service-learning] gives you a different perspective" (ISL 4, interview). Another participant recognized that, "We are college students and that doesn't mean that we should feel disconnected to the community and what is going on around us. So I know it [service-learning] was as much for us as for our future teaching" (ISL 3, interview). For one participant from China, her interaction with the community was of particular importance. As she noted, "The local community...that's a BIG impact on me because I had no idea what an American school was before" (ISL 1, interview). Service-learning experiences allowed the pre-service colleges students to engage with their local communities in a way that they had not previously considered.

Theme 5: Reflection as important component in learning and personal growth. As has been described in Chapter 2, critical reflection is an essential component of experiential education and service-learning. One participant contended that, “the greatest benefit [of service-learning] would be the reflection of it” (GSL 1, interview). Participants in this study, unanimously agreed that critical reflection enhanced their learning and personal growth. All participants articulated that they will utilize critical reflection in their future teaching.

Many participants acknowledged that critical reflection encourages critical thinking. One participant confessed “...prior to this class, I hadn’t really done a whole lot of critical thinking. I hadn’t kept a journal or reflected on anything” (ISL 5, interview). Participants felt that critical reflection made service-learning “exponentially better” (GSL 1, interview) and required students to think more deeply by asking questions like “Why did we do that?” (ISL 1, interview) rather than simply “yes or no answers” (ISL 7, interview). As one participant exclaimed, “Critical reflection is amazing! I mean every student learns a lot more if they critically reflect on anything they do” (ISL 8, interview).

Several participants remarked at how surprised they were to see how much they learned through the process of reflection. One participant noted that “when I was writing the journals each day, I didn’t feel I changed that much until I got to the final reflection” (ISL 5, interview) and another participant agreed that “...sometimes students feel like they didn’t do anything all semester but this [critical reflection] gives them a step by step, this is what you completed” (GSL 1, interview). Another participant purported that critical reflection allowed him to actually track “how I had grown and matured and how my thought process changed to where I was more comfortable and confident not only in myself but in the other members of the group” (GSL 2, interview). In agreement, another participant stated that critical reflection can help students to

“see how they have grown because sometimes the letter grade does not let you see how you have grown unless you actually know where you started” (ISL 4, interview).

In describing the process of critical reflection, a participant shared his sequential critical reflection experience as a way to address various learning styles:

Before I prepped my mind. This is what we are going to do. [This] helped to sort the objectives and what to expect along the road. During the service learning, I used the journal to organize the thoughts I was getting from each of the experiences. This is what we did and the effects it had on me and everyone else. And then at the end it really helped me to get to what was the point of doing all of that. And it helps you to use all your learning aides. You can just do it, but typing it down is like a visual aide in addition to your kinesthetic having done it. Typing it out, reading it aloud to yourself also gets the auditory part so you have all three elements...kinesthetic, visual, and auditory. (GSL 4, interview)

Another participant noted that critical reflection journals are helpful for him because he has a bad memory and writing things down can help him to remember. He added that he also benefits from “sort of conversing with myself...having a dialogue with myself...it is helpful for me” (ISL 3, interview).

Only 5 of the 14 participants shared their critical reflections with others. One explanation included:

I am a really private person...If it was anonymous it might have been okay [to share journals] so that maybe we could have done a peer edit... maybe that would have helped me learn from their different experiences. But otherwise, I don't like people reading my stuff because I get really self-conscious about it. Are they judging me? (ISL 4, interview)

Another participant agreed, “If I would have shared with someone else, I don't think I would have been able to write down everything I really wanted to say” (GSL 4, interview). However, one participant found it to be very beneficial to share his reflections with his family and he stated that during his service-learning experiences “you meet different people and you want to share that.... So, I definitely talked [with my family] about it every time” (ISL 9, interview). This sentiment concurs with the idea that sharing reflections about service-learning experiences can

help broaden perspectives and identify personal assumptions in a way that reflection alone may not achieve (Ash et al. (2009).

Theme 6: Expectations and observations before and after service experiences.

Participants expressed several emotions and thoughts prior to service-learning. One participant acknowledged, “There are many emotions going through my head as I prepare to start my service-learning experience. I am excited, nervous, anxious, and honestly, kind of scared” (ISL 4, journal). Many participants had a negative attitude about service-learning prior to their experience but reported a favorable attitude following their service-learning experience. For example, participants stated misgivings such as, “Before I did service learning, I doubted the value of it” (ISL 1, journal) and “I went into it [service-learning] just thinking okay this is something I have to do and came out of it liking it” (ISL 1, interview). Another participant agreed, “I mean my general attitude for it to begin with...I wasn’t quite sure what to think of it. After having done it, I really, really did enjoy it. It was a good learning experience” (GSL 3, interview). Another participant concurred, “I went into it [service-learning] just thinking okay this is something I have to do and I came out liking it...It has been a long time since I have had that feeling...since I have done anything to help” (ISL 3, interview). One participant who also had early doubts about service-learning confessed, “When I was actually there, it was hard to leave. I actually had all my hours done and I just kept going” (ISL 2, journal). Another participant acknowledged that:

I really didn’t have the best attitude towards it going in, not that I had a bad attitude, but I wasn’t looking forward to it. After my first trip I was actually looking forward to coming back and now that it’s over, it’s almost sad. I feel like its purpose and value are significantly more than I initially thought. (ISL 5, journal)

Agreeing, another participant stated:

I thought initially that this assignment was going to be pointless and wouldn't relate well to the class but after completing it, I can see why and how it relates to this course. It helps us as people grow and gets us in touch with our community, these are skills that can be and should be used as a teacher. I plan on building a community relationship with my peers, kids, and parents of my students. This experience has also helped me increase my social skills and was overall worthwhile. (GSL 1, journal)

From the responses of participants, it is clear that their involvement in service-learning helped to change their understanding and appreciation of the practice.

Research Question #2: In what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary, based on individual or group service-learning experiences?

During the second round of data analysis, the researcher specifically examined the data for ways in which the participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning varied based on individual or group service-learning experiences. Throughout the interview and reflective journal responses, the researcher found that participants expressed similar attitudes and beliefs irrespective of their type of service. Several themes emerged in the participants' responses to questions about their individual or group service-learning experiences. These themes are explored in the following section.

Theme 1: Personality and collaboration. Many participants considered personality and the opportunity to collaborate as important factors when considering the benefits and challenges of individual or group service-learning. As one participant observed, "some people just jive better in a group setting whereas others just are individual go-getters" (GSL 2, interview).

For the participants who self-identified as introverts, many were not looking forward to the collaborative aspect of their service-learning experience. As one participant admitted, he was concerned about "working so close to my peers.... I'm not always the best at interacting with new people in new environments.... I do not have the best people skills so I was a bit worried"

(GSL 3, journal). Another participant lamented about his struggles with group projects by stating, “I think I am terrible at group projects. I don’t feel comfortable in voicing my opinion in the group. Things only got better when I only had to interact with one or two people” (GSL 4, journal).

On the other hand, a self-identified extrovert participant was “excited I was in a group because as an only child, I do a lot of individual things...I was looking forward to a group project” (GSL 2, interview). Another participant who also identified as an extrovert, decided that the greatest benefit of group service-learning was that students:

...would be able to collaborate, understand and grow collectively but also be able to use that collaboration to understand what we just did...I got to talk with [colleagues] and connect... [there was] exponential change...you can see a difference in someone. It becomes more than just a basic view. It becomes a deep, and very, very broad understanding. (GSL 1, interview)

Other participants who were extroverts complained about the difficulty of individual service-learning and the joy of group service-learning. As one participant confessed, individual service-learning is hard because “you have to come up with it all on your own. I feel that would be a lot easier in a group of other people suggesting things and kind of getting all their ideas” (ISL 5, interview). Another participant decided that group service-learning is:

...so much more fun and makes so much more of an impact...You actually feel like you are doing something at the end of the day... [in individual service-learning] I don’t feel like I got out as much...there was a lot of alone time. (ISL 6, interview)

Other participants who considered themselves extroverts, agreed that the “alone time” (ISL 7, interview) of individual service-learning placed them outside of their comfort zone. They also noticed that other participants of individual service-learning remarked that they, too, were anxious about working by themselves.

Even with the references to personality types, both self-described extrovert and introvert participants could see the potential positive benefits of being involved in service-learning that did not necessarily appeal to their personality and preferences. For example, an extrovert participant thought that her biggest difficulty in service-learning was “doing it alone...but I am glad I had to experience this because when I graduate I will not be surrounded by people that are always volunteering. I will have to take it upon myself...” (ISL 6, journal). The same kind of revelation was true of a self-identified introvert:

I traditionally do not do well working in groups. I have gotten a lot better at it but I am just better working alone. So being in a group I would have benefited sort of from the practice of dealing with other people and working in a group setting. And I know that some of the people who were in the groups were saying the opposite. They would have liked to work on their own...I am sure that some people's personality would have been better for groups. Either that is how they worked better or it kept them on task. Same thing about the individual, it is just sort of what people like. (ISL 3, interview)

Although not looking forward to group work, one participant who was an introvert experienced the benefit of building relationships with peers in group service-learning and found that after his “initial anxiety, it was smooth sailing and I fit right in” (GSL 3, journal). He went on to note that in his group service-learning experience, “We kind of bonded as peers...and that is definitely something I would want to use when I am a teacher even with co-workers” (GSL 3, interview). Another self-identified introvert participant agreed that one of the benefits of group service-learning was “the chance to talk about what they experienced together. Such as the community feel, you don't feel lonely” (GSL 5, interview). Even though he preferred working alone, another participant who was an introvert confessed that individual service-learning does not provide important collaborative opportunities so “...you would feel like no one else is having this type of experience. Like who do I tell about this? It is so amazing!” (GSL 4, interview).

These results suggest that students may benefit from service-learning even if the type of service they are engaged in, is not what they preferred.

Theme 2: Logistics and choice. When reflecting upon the advantages and disadvantages of individual or group service-learning, most participants of the study identified challenges associated with logistics and choice. Participants observed that generally it was more difficult to negotiate scheduling and choice of community partners with group service-learning. One participant noted that “Every time we would talk in class, the groups would always talk about how they couldn’t get anything together because of the time and schedule” (ISL 8, interview). As one group participant described “...in the group setting it was give and take...compromise. I like working with animals, but nobody else really cared for that so I had to go with visiting the elderly facility” (GSL 2, interview). Another participant agreed that scheduling for group service-learning was difficult at first:

But, once the activities were planned, a strong service-learning opportunity occurred.... a sense of enthusiasm...that allowed a more cohesive experience with the other students...I believe the group service-learning activity allows a more holistic experience because of the multiple aspects and ability to discuss individual experiences that are completely different due to the varying personalities and decisions. (GSL 1, journal)

Even though many participants agreed that scheduling was easier for individual service-learning because participants could decide “this is what I wanted to do and did not have to consider that maybe other people did not want to do this” (ISL 7, interview) perhaps easier is not necessarily best because “you don’t always get a lot out of something that is easier” (ISL 7, interview). However, several participants viewed the scheduling autonomy of individual service-learning to actually force them to venture further outside of their comfort zone because everything was their responsibility and they had no one else to rely upon.

Other positive attributes of individual service-learning proposed by several participants was that it allowed for a more “personal connection with the people you were helping” (ISL 5, interview) and because it is just you working with one schedule:

...you may get more out of it because [you] are focused more on you than your peers in that setting. I focused on observing and interacting with the kids and if one of my peers had been there, I probably would have been talking to them rather than focusing on the students. (ISL 4, interview)

Another participant surmised that individual service-learning could provide an appropriate “intimacy” with the people you were assisting by creating situations where:

You could talk to them one-on-one. You could stay as long as you want. There would be no time limit. People aren’t pushing you out the door or holding you back from leaving. It would be a lot more personalized and you could do it any time you chose. You would not have to work around others’ schedules and it would be a lot easier. (GSL 1, interview)

It was interesting to note that participants also discussed how choice and independence could impact their motivation to engage in service-learning. One participant described that with individual service-learning “there may not always be the motivation to want to do it. I can do it anytime. I don’t really need to do it for a while. That can definitely be a con” (GSL 1, interview). One participant admitted that he procrastinated with his individual service-learning. “I waited until the last possible minute to do service-learning and I am sure if I would have been in a group that would not have happened” (ISL 3, interview). However, another participant cautioned that group dynamics can also foster negative motivation. He shared that sometimes, “...complacency loves friends and if someone was complacent in the group, he had friends. So you just had to work through it” (GSL 1, interview).

When recognizing the many aspects of individual or group service-learning, participants also acknowledged that some attributes could be viewed as both an advantage and a disadvantage. As one participant explained:

With the group, I think it forces you to work together to plan things out.... I mean the bigger the group is, the harder it will be...[we] did have some success finding things and the other part of the group joined in. I mean it did work out for us...I guess it was a pro and con because we couldn't necessarily go do the things we wanted to do but do the things that were available for the group. But the pro of that was it forced us to get out of our comfort zone and plan and engage our other co-workers. (GSL 3, interview)

Another participant anguished, "I wish I would have done something better for my service-learning. I honestly just did something to get it done.... I could have used better preparation to make a better decision on the kind of service-learning I chose to do" (ISL 6, interview). Even though this participant admitted to making a poor decision, she still believed that "someone who self-selects gets more out of it [their service-learning experience]" (ISL 6, interview) and that the best solution would be a combination of group and individual service-learning opportunities. Other participants agreed that with the unique benefits derived from both individual and group service-learning, it would be advantageous to provide opportunities for students to experience both kinds of service.

Theme 3: Type of service and prior service experience. Participants for this study were involved in individual or group service-learning and were given the opportunity to choose the community partner with whom they worked from a list provided by the researcher. The community partners for this study included: assisted living facilities, nursing homes, an animal shelter, a food pantry, an elementary school, secondary school, and a college service-learning organization.

Some participants indicated that the community partner and the type of work they did for their service-learning greatly influenced the significance of their experiences. As one participant noted, "where you go, what kind of service you do [impacts the connection to course content]. Because for me going to a school, there was a lot of connections" (ISL 4, interview). Another participant took a different approach and emphasized that the attitude which is brought to the

service-learning experience is crucial. She observed that any service-learning experience might connect to teaching even if it is not in an educational setting because “it depends on how you mentally make those connections to pedagogy and education” (ISL 1, interview).

Regarding prior service experience, 11 of 14 participants of this study indicated they had done some type of volunteer work in the community but only 4 of the 14 participants specified that their experiences were actually service-learning. As described in Chapter 2, to qualify as a service-learning experience, there must be an academic component. As one participant noted, “I don’t think I’ve done anything that’s considered ‘service-learning’ prior to this semester, but I have done lots of community service” (GSL 4, journals). The overall responses from participants, showed a strong connection to academic content from their service-learning experiences related to this study and generally, a better understanding of the definition of service-learning. However, throughout the responses, many participants still confused the terminology of community service and service-learning.

Summary

In the above sections, the researcher provided demographic information of the participants including a personal depiction of each participant. She provided a brief review of the service-learning framework that influenced the prefigured coding categories used to organize emerging sub-codes during the first round of data analysis (see Table 4.1). In the second round of analysis, emphasis was placed upon how the attitudes and beliefs of the participants varied based upon individual or group service-learning experiences. After examination of the data from this perspective in concert with the initial prefigured coding categories and sub-codes, multiple themes emerged (see Table 4.2).

Chapter 5 - Conclusions, Discussions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The educational system in the United States, including teacher education, has been criticized for clinging to outdated modes of teaching and learning that ill-prepare students for the rapidly changing environment of the twenty-first century. Many classrooms still rely heavily upon teacher-directed instruction (e.g., lecture) that fosters passive learning and singular responses tailored to standardized tests rather than to the uncertainty of real life outside the walls of the classroom. There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that experiential education, particularly in the form of service-learning, can provide authentic learning opportunities necessary for students to gain valuable academic, interpersonal, reflective, and social/civic skills (Astin et al., 2000; Billig & Klute, 2003; Blyth et al., 1997; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Erickson & Anderson, 1997; Jameson, et al., 2013; Root et al., 2002).

To propagate the practice of service-learning throughout the K-12 landscape and to improve the pedagogy used to teach future teachers, it is suggested that teacher education incorporate the use of service-learning in the curriculum. Providing service-learning experiences in teacher education, models a dynamic and effective teaching strategy that is in concert with necessary educational reforms and also enhances existing field experience and student teaching opportunities for pre-service teachers.

Teaching is a relationship-rich profession and service-learning exposes students to collaboration, teamwork, and social understanding. Therefore, this study examined individual and group service-learning experiences in a teacher education program. The study was guided by the following two research questions: How do pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences within the context of a required teacher

education course? In what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary, based on individual or group service-learning experiences?

To answer these questions, the researcher used two primary sources of data:

- critical reflection journals completed before, during, and after the participant's service-learning experiences
- individual, semi-structured interviews

In addition, the researcher used observations of participants as students in the *Foundations of Education* course, including: (a) three face-to-face interviews with participants, (b) *Foundations of Education* course assignments, and (c) semester-long interactions with the participants before, after, and during class time. The data analysis was guided by Ash et al.'s (2009) service-learning framework of common goals (academic enhancement, personal/professional growth, and civic learning) and common components (academic material, critical reflection and relevant service). These prefigured coding categories helped to shape the researcher's initial organization of the sub-codes found during the first phase of data analysis. A second round of analysis focused on how the attitudes and beliefs of the participants varied based upon individual or group service-learning experiences. After reviewing the data, several themes emerged as detailed in Chapter 4. The findings of this study will be useful for teacher education and K-12 educational personnel as they work to reform educational practices to better engage and prepare their students.

This chapter contains the following: an introduction; conclusions and discussions of the findings; and recommendations for future practice and research.

Conclusions and Discussion of the Findings

Research Question #1: How do pre-service teacher participants describe their individual or group service-learning experiences within the context of a required teacher education course?

Conclusion A: Service-learning experiences in this study reinforced academic content including experiential education. Educational reform often focuses upon mechanisms and strategies to enhance the acquisition of academic content and service-learning delivers on this important goal. Data from this study concur with prior service-learning literature suggesting that service-learning can enhance student learning of course content (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Mpofu, 2007; Strage, 2000; Wurr, 2002). In this study, academic content from the *Foundations of Education* course was evident throughout the participants' journal reflections and interview responses. As described in Chapter 2, the inclusion of an academic component distinguishes service-learning from other types of volunteer or community service and the results of this study confirm that important connection.

Experiential education was an area of academic content frequently mentioned by the participants of the study and was a prominent feature throughout the *Foundations of Education* course. On a daily basis, students were exposed to experiential pedagogy through a myriad of strategies devised to engage students in active learning while fostering positive relationships between students and with the instructor. Partner and small group work were routinely used to increase interactions between student "colleagues". Students focused on purposefully building an engaged, dynamic "learning community" through collaboration and shared responsibility working toward common goals. Lessons were designed to help students "experience" the academic content of the course and class discussions often focused upon the merits of

experiential education. Students in the course were also given several opportunities to develop their own experiential lessons and teach those lessons to their colleagues.

Specific books, assignments, and class discussions from the *Foundations of Education* course were frequently cited by participants of the study. Most participants anticipated that course discussions and readings would help to prepare them for their service-learning experiences but few participants fully comprehended how their service-learning experiences could change their understanding of the content. Participants described a fluid reciprocity of academic content and experience that echoed Dewey's declaration of an "organic connection between education and personal experience" (1938, p. 25).

One of the objectives of the *Foundations of Education* course was to model service-learning pedagogy so pre-service teachers would be encouraged to use service-learning in their future practice. All but one participant indicated that they would use service-learning as a future teacher and the one participant who stated he would most likely not use service-learning, also did not completely rule out the possibility if the culture of his community and school district were conducive to the practice. Overall, participants demonstrated an understanding of how service-learning might work best in their content areas and several elaborated upon specific strategies they would employ. One participant elaborated how he would use service-learning to bolster the self-confidence and social skills of his special needs students. Another participant described how he could use his science classes to help with ecological and recycling projects in the community. These responses further demonstrate the power of experiential education since many students had expressed doubts about the value of service-learning prior to actually experiencing it.

Conclusion B: Personal and professional growth and an understanding of diversity can result from service-learning experiences. Participants of this study overwhelmingly

recognized the opportunity for personal/professional growth and an understanding of diversity through their service-learning experiences. This connection signals a desire for participants to develop the social skills that most participants deemed crucial for future teachers. Many authors agree that the enhancement of social skills is tied to cognitive development, school success, a greater sense of self-worth, competence in working with others, ability to solve problems, greater empathy, and increased openness to new experiences (Elliott et al., 2001; Feshbach & Feshbach, 1987; Vygotsky, 1978; Werner & Smith, 1982). Just as in Castellan's (2006) study with pre-service teachers, it could be said that participants of this study saw "service-learning experiences as the catalyst for weaving relationships. Because of service-learning experiences, [participants] were able to establish collaborative, reciprocal, connecting, and diverse relationships" (p. 230).

Participants of this study recognized that service-learning can provide opportunities to foster greater cultural understanding. Even though many of the service-learning experiences of the participants in this study did not involve working with ethnically or racially diverse populations, participants were able to relate their experiences to diversity anyway. For example, several participants were able to connect their pre-conceived notions of the elderly with a general bias towards those that are "different". As one participant observed, "This situation has taught me that I need to not underestimate the value of someone because of their age or social status" (GSL 3, journal). Service-learning was seen by the participants as a vehicle to access segments of the population that they would not otherwise encounter and the personal and social contact with these unfamiliar populations forced participants to challenge their own preconceived notions of the "other". However, it should be noted that some remarks by participants bordered on the charity or "do-gooder model" Rhoads (1997) of service-learning described in Chapter 2.

This model “perceives service as alms for the less fortunate rather than an act of service in return for learning” (Desrochers, 2006, p. 274).

Another opportunity for personal growth cited by most participants during their service-learning experiences was the inherent unpredictability of the real-life environment of service-learning. As mentioned in Chapter 2, because service-learning is situated in naturalistic settings, participants can be challenged to navigate outside of their comfort zones to build the emotional and social capacity needed to better understand, interact, and problem-solve. Mezirow and Associates (2000) refer to these unpredictable situations as “disorienting dilemmas” (p. 22) that “provide us with alternative perspectives.... and require new relationships to be worked out within the context of a new perspective” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 194). Service-learning, in particular, provides such opportunities to venture far beyond comfort zones into the reality of dissonant experiences that “can cause them [participants] to see persons, places, policies, and problems in new and more complex ways” (Jameson et al., 2013, p. 88).

One example of an unpredictable experience that occurred in this study was the disoriented elderly woman who was suddenly lost and longing for her family. The participant working with this resident expressed the empathetic feelings of being “broken by the woman’s loneliness” (ISL 7, journal) and was at a loss herself for what to do for her new friend. The experience of establishing a relationship with the resident and then sharing this difficult moment with her, made a lasting impression on the participant and undoubtedly, challenged her to grow personally in ways she had not anticipated.

Another example of a “disorienting dilemma” occurred in this study when three students were tempted to lie about engaging in group service-learning when, in fact, they had not completed any service. Overall, the group service-learning participants encountered several

challenges in organizing service opportunities to fit with the schedules of multiple participants. This particular event had required much time and effort to coordinate so when the participants were told they would have to cancel the event, frustrations ran high. This real-world dilemma challenged participants to problem-solve in a social context because one participant's actions directly impacted other participants. From the description provided to the researcher, it appears that if only the first three participants had been involved, they might have proceeded with the lie. However, when the rest of the participants arrived, the first three participants "did not want to force them into the lie" (GSL 1, journal). This situation presents questions regarding the dynamics of a small group versus a large group and the composition of individuals in each of those groups. Were the number of participants important in the decision or was it "who" was in each of the groups that was the deciding factor?

The differences between group and individual service-learning could also be explored in this real-life situation. Without the social context of other participants, would a participant of individual service-learning have lied? It is important to note that for the class assignment, all students were required to provide contact and log information for each of their service-learning experiences so eventually the lie would have been exposed. It should also be mentioned that even though only one participant included this dilemma in his journals, other participants and students did reference this situation during a class discussion in the *Foundations of Education* class. As the researcher probed further to determine why the participants ultimately decided to be truthful, the accountability culture of the *Foundations of Education* learning community was frequently referenced. In this case, the service-learning experience provided an opportunity in a real-world setting to test the ethical responsiveness that was cultivated in the classroom.

Conclusion C: Teacher involvement in the local community was viewed by participants as important for student-teacher relationships and to improve connections between the school and the community. All participants from this study expressed the belief that teachers should be involved in the local community to foster better cultural awareness and a deeper knowledge of their students. Immersion into the local community in which their students live was viewed as a necessary strategy for teachers to fully recognize the challenges and concerns facing their students and their families. Conversely, it was noted by several participants that engagement in the community by teachers also helps students and the community to better understand the teachers in their schools. Participants acknowledged that the action or inaction of teachers in the community influence their impact as a positive role model and teachers who “just came to work and then went home” (ISL 6, interview) were not highly regarded by students or community members. Another participant noted that when students and community members see a teacher invested in the local community, they know he or she is also invested in the well-being of the students.

Participants of this study recognized an increased sense of community through their service-learning experiences. One participant observed, “I used to feel like service-learning was basically community service or volunteer work. It is more. It’s learning to be an active member of society” (ISL 6, journal). Another participant recognized the imperative for educators to help students connect to their communities and the world in general. He stated that service-learning can help students to “realize what happens in the school doesn’t just stop there” (ISL 3, interview). Research has shown that “breaking down the walls of the classroom” through service-learning can encourage students’ civic sense of responsibility and engagement and for

college students can lead to community involvement after college graduation (Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Exley, 1996).

With the deteriorating relationships between many schools, state governments, media, and local communities regarding the teaching profession and funding of schools, there is a desperate need for proactive measures to help the community better understand and appreciate the impact schools have on the future of every community. Educators also need to recognize opportunities to join with community members to address community concerns. Service-learning uniquely situates students, faculty, and community members in positions to create positive partnerships.

Conclusion D: Participants of the study viewed critical reflection as a fundamental component in service-learning. Participants in this study consistently lauded the value of the critical reflection component of service-learning and enthusiastically supported using it in their future practice. Similar to the plethora of references to academic content, critical reflection was cited frequently by participants in their journal and interview responses regarding academic enhancement, personal/professional growth (including diversity), civic learning, critical reflection, and relevant service. One participant summed up the sentiments of many participants by stating that, “the greatest benefit [of service-learning] would be the reflection of it” (GSL 1, interview). As research suggests, guided reflection can enhance critical thinking about complex issues encountered in service-learning experiences (Ash, Clayton, & Atkinson, 2005; Grossman, 2008; Jameson, Clayton, & Bringle, 2008). Critical reflection is one of the key components of experiential learning and service-learning.

Some participants were surprised at how critical reflection, before, during, and after their experiences helped to broaden their understanding. From their responses, it appeared that many

participants had not experienced this type of critical reflection prior to the service-learning assignment. It was surprising that one highly intelligent participant confessed that throughout his educational career he had never been challenged to think critically. He said he easily passed through high school completing assignments and taking tests that primarily required memorization skills not critical thinking skills. His remarks should give us pause and the knowledge that critical reflection can nourish critical thinking should motivate us to include critical reflection throughout the curriculum.

Research Question #2: In what ways do participants' attitudes and beliefs towards service-learning vary, based on individual or group service-learning experiences?

Conclusion E: Self-identified personality type can impact how each participant described their individual or group service-learning experiences, including the benefits of social interaction and collaboration. As was evidenced in Chapter 4, many participants felt that personality type played an important role in how individual or group service-learning was viewed by the participants. Many self-identified introverts generally expressed anxiety in working with others in a service-learning setting and preferred working alone. Conversely, many extroverts craved the collaboration and social interaction of group service-learning and lamented the “alone time” and autonomy of individual service-learning. This result might have been predictable but the question remains, “Do we place students in comfortable environments suited for their personality types or do we challenge students to move beyond their comfort zones?”

In this study, the researcher purposefully placed a mix of self-identified introverts and extroverts in individual and group service-learning experiences knowing that this might be more uncomfortable for some participants than others. This strategy was consistent with the *Foundations of Education* course where students were often encouraged to try new things even if

it made them uncomfortable or they “failed”. In this course, failure was viewed as a necessary step in the learning process and the idea of a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) was promoted. Participants were given the opportunity to structure their service-learning experience on their own (individual service-learning) or learn to collaborate and work with others (group service-learning).

In this study, even though self-identified introverts and extroverts had differing opinions about their own interpersonal skills and varying comfort levels with collaboration, all participants viewed collaboration and interpersonal skills to be highly important for future teachers. Most participants also stated that they felt their service-learning experiences helped them to grow personally, in particular, in the area of interpersonal skills. Parker-Gwin and Mabry (1998) suggest that “Requiring students to participate in service learning can potentially have positive outcomes by ‘pushing’ students into new situations that they may consider ultimately beneficial” (p. 287).

Conclusion F: Individual and group service-learning present different challenges in implementing effective experiences. Research by Crosman (1989) has suggested that participants enjoy greater benefits from service-learning if they can self-select their community partner and specific type of service. To provide options, the researcher gave participants in this study the opportunity to select community partner(s) (from an approved list) and determine the specific details of their own service-learning experiences. The participants were responsible to contact the community partner and determine when and how they would engage in their service. With this choice, it was interesting to note that some participants viewed this autonomy as increased motivation to participate. Other participants considered it a burden because they had to take the initiative and follow-through with communication and action. Some participants

admitted to procrastination and poor decision-making in their selections, opting to engage in what was easiest to complete rather than most beneficial. The researcher views the fact that students admitted their failures in this area as a demonstration of personal growth. By experiencing service that was not as fulfilling or engaging, these pre-service teachers will have a better idea of what kinds of experiences they will want to provide for their future students.

Many of the participants agreed with Raskoff's (1997) research that found group service-learning has the benefits of shared experiences and forming social bonds with one another and also has the potential for coordination problems. However, participants of this study did not refer to intergroup conflicts as described by Raskoff (1997). One reason for this lack of conflict might be the relationships that participants built in the *Foundations of Education* course that emphasized mutual respect and accountability. Rather than personal conflict, most participants complained of scheduling and logistical challenges with group service-learning. This result was consistent with Falk's (2012) research that suggested scheduling and time for team processes in group service-learning can be difficult with the complicated academic and work commitments of students.

Conclusion G: Overall, participants' beliefs and attitudes did not vary based upon individual or group service-learning experiences. The analysis of the data from this study show that the beliefs and attitudes of participants did not vary based upon individual or group service-learning experiences. As has been previously mentioned, the self-identified personality of each participant was noted with more frequency and impact. Participants from individual and group service-learning experiences expressed comparable responses regarding academic content, personal/professional growth, civic learning, critical reflection, and relevant service. Although some participants involved in individual service-learning regretted their specific choice of

community partner, group service-learning participants also complained about their group's decision of community partners.

One reason for similar beliefs and attitudes by participants could be the shared exposure to the deeply connected learning community in the *Foundations of Education* course. Since there was overlap of course content and the experiential practice of service-learning, many participants most likely used their prior knowledge from course readings and class discussions to guide their experiences and reactions to it. Even though participants were engaged in different experiences in individual and group service-learning, together they were also concurrently involved in common experiences in the classroom learning community. Participants enjoyed approximately 37 hours in the classroom with one another versus 7 to 10 hours in service-learning experiences. In a lecture-style class with less participation and accountability to their colleagues, perhaps the influence of the shared class would be less noticeable.

Suggestions for Future Practice

Service-Learning in Teacher Education Curriculum

As Chapters 1 and 2 elaborate, there is a need for educational reform in the United States and for any reform to be substantive and effective, teachers must play an integral role. Therefore, teacher education must lead this change rather than simply react to it. As a way to lead necessary change based upon the results of this study, the researcher recommends that service-learning become an integral part of every teacher education program.

It is interesting to note that Dewey (1938) extolled the virtue of experiential education at the beginning of the 20th century; others have called for more engaged pedagogy at the end of the 20th century (Boyer, 1990; Edwards & Marullo, 1999; Kolb, 1984); and yet, today too many teacher educators still fail to model engaging and experiential pedagogies in their own practice.

Fullan (1993a) charges that teacher education has the “current reputation as laggards rather than leaders in educational reform” (p. 57).

To help change this perception, teacher education must embrace a pedagogy, such as service-learning, that will help prepare pre-service teachers for the very unpredictable nature of teaching. In teaching, each student is unique; each classroom is unique; each year or semester is unique. As teachers, we work with unique and unpredictable human beings. Teaching is not an exact science in which actions can succinctly forecast results and further reactions.

To thrive in this constantly changing environment, pre-service teachers must learn to be comfortable with the messiness of the real world and model this for their students. Great teachers know that they must be willing to put themselves “out there” as they genuinely engage with their students and their content. To engage on that level creates vulnerability and discomfort. As Parker Palmer (2007) extols, “...teaching is a daily exercise in vulnerability.... As we try to connect ourselves and our subjects with our students, we make ourselves, as well as our subjects, vulnerable to indifference, judgment, ridicule” (p. 17-18). Pre-service teachers need opportunities throughout their undergraduate experience to step outside of their comfort zone so they can learn how to problem-solve and adjust to the unexpected. Service-learning provides an exit lane for pre-service teachers to venture beyond the well-worn path...to dip their toe in unfamiliar pools...to move beyond the fear of the *other* and ultimately to foster deeper learning for themselves and their future students.

There are many ways that service-learning could be organized in teacher education. Even though in this study, the participants’ beliefs and attitudes did not vary based upon individual or group service-learning experiences, the researcher recommends that teacher education programs create opportunities for both individual and group service-learning. This study did reflect

different perspectives of service-learning based upon self-identified introversion or extroversion. To help students move beyond their introverted or extroverted comfort zones, both individual and group service-learning experiences are needed to develop collaborative, interpersonal, and autonomous skills.

The researcher recommends that service-learning be incorporated in multiple classes in teacher education. Parker-Gwin and Mabry's (1998) study suggested that a "sequence of service-learning courses might maximize the potential civic and academic outcomes of service learning for students. In this way, students could build upon their prior experiences and better integrate their ...activities with course concepts and issues" (p. 288).

The number of hours of service required for the *Foundations of Education* class associated with this study was purposely modest (7 to 10 hours) to model what the researcher deemed as realistic for most faculty to include into their course curriculum. To maximize the use of service-learning in her class, the researcher followed the advice of Erickson and Anderson (1997) by using service-learning as a pedagogy to teach academic course content while modeling this strategy for pre-service teachers to incorporate into their own practice. The results of this study demonstrate that participants did enhance their academic understanding of course material and overwhelmingly, supported using service-learning in their future practice. From that perspective, the results of this study suggest that this approach was effective and can be similarly incorporated into other education courses. The researcher also recommends that pre-service teachers have the opportunity to develop service-learning lessons or unit plans and specifically use them in practicum or student teaching settings. The National Center for Accreditation of Teachers (NCATE) supports the concept of implementing service-learning in schools of education particularly in field experiences (Kielsmeier, 2010). Implementing service-learning in

school settings will give pre-service teachers more confidence and experience to successfully use service-learning as an instructional strategy early in their careers.

To better address the goal of promoting the social justice model of service-learning, the researcher also suggests that service-learning be included as part of a diversity course in teacher education. In this study, the researcher recognized that even though participants benefited from exposure to different populations, several comments from participants reflected the charity or project model of service-learning rather than the social justice model as described in Chapter 2. The researcher believes that pre-service teachers will benefit from ongoing, in-depth diversity course content with service-learning to more fully understand the reciprocal, rather than deficit relationship needed with community partners. The researcher also suggests that when possible, faculty develop partnerships with community organizations that will provide more racially and ethnically diverse settings for service-learning participants.

To improve group service-learning, the researcher recommends that more structure be provided to assist students with scheduling and logistical issues. This may require greater preparation and communication with community partners by the faculty member to establish multiple group experiences from which the students can select. Given the time and work demands of students, this preparation may allow students to spend more time working with community partners rather than logistics. In addition, the researcher suggests that specific discussions take place in class to address the idea of introverts and extroverts and how this may impact collaboration and social interactions in both individual or group service-learning experiences.

Based on the results of the study, the researcher also encourages the use of the DEAL model of critical reflection not only in service-learning but as an integrated component of the

classroom throughout teacher preparation programs. Participants overwhelmingly supported the use of critical reflection as an important pedagogical tool.

Service-Learning in K-12 Education

With the myriad of well-documented benefits of service-learning for K-12 students, the researcher recommends that service-learning become an accepted part of the K-12 curriculum. As more pre-service teachers are well trained in service-learning pedagogy, the ripple effect has the potential to help reform K-12 education by situating students outside the walls of the classroom where they can develop real-world skills (Myers & Pickeral, 1997). These skills will include the ability to collaborate and work well as a team. In an era of globalization, change, and connectedness, service-learning can also prepare students to think critically, be comfortable with abstractions, and “adapt quickly to frequent changes” (The National Center on Education and the Economy (2007, p. 167). The benefits of service-learning sound almost too good to be true but the theoretical framework and rationale behind experiential education and service-learning is compelling. Service-learning puts experience and the student at the center of learning. In addition to educating pre-service teachers about service-learning pedagogy, the researcher recommends that teacher education programs sponsor workshops to encourage veteran teachers to learn more about the practice of service-learning.

As was discussed earlier, the researcher also recommends that K-12 teachers and administrators use service-learning as a way to develop partnerships and increase positive communication between the community and the school to combat the current political culture that often demonizes the teaching profession and public education. The civic involvement experienced by the students in service-learning can also create the next generation of involved citizenry who has a better understanding of the value of education in the local community.

Suggestions for Future Research

The results of this study confirm much of the service-learning literature and research cited in Chapters 1 and 2. However, further research specific to individual and group service-learning is needed. The researcher recommends study on teacher education courses that include both individual and group service-learning. In addition, it is recommended that research focus more specifically on personality as an important factor when designing and evaluating the impact of service-learning programs. The group dynamics of group service-learning is also an area that needs further study.

The results of this study demonstrate that a modest service-learning component in a teacher education course can augment and enhance course objectives. Additional research on incorporating service-learning in a programmatic way throughout the teacher education program needs further study. Additional research should also include more longitudinal studies that examine pre-service teachers prior to service-learning experiences in teacher education and measure the impact of service-learning throughout their undergraduate preparation into their first few years of teaching.

Since the results of this study demonstrated that students did see diversity as an important component of service-learning but several responses portrayed a charity model perspective, the researcher suggests future study of service-learning in teacher education diversity classes. Further study of service-learning in racially and ethnically diverse settings in teacher education is also recommended.

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Appendix A - Interview Guide

Question 1: Describe your attitudes and beliefs regarding the pedagogy associated with service-learning.

- Probes:** What is your understanding of experiential learning pedagogy?
- Do you plan to use this pedagogy in your future teaching? Why or why not?
- After completing this service-learning assignment, how has your understanding of service-learning changed?
- How did your feelings and anticipations of service-learning prior to this assignment compare with your actual experience?

Question 2: Describe the critical reflection and critical thinking aspects of your service-learning experience.

- Probes:** How did the critical reflection journals assist you with your learning?
- Describe your use of reflection, before, during, and after your service-learning experiences.
- How did you share your reflections of your service-learning experience with others? Was this helpful?
- If you did not share your reflections with others, why didn't you?
- How useful was the DEAL model in your process of critical reflection?
- Do you plan to use critical reflection in your future teaching? Why or why not?

Question 3: How did the service-learning experience enhance your realization of academic learning objectives for this course?

- Probes:** How was the academic material we have learned in our class similar or different to what you experienced in your service-learning assignment?
- How has your understanding of service-learning changed after completion of this assignment?

Describe your understanding of why service-learning was included in this course.

What specific elements of academic material (theories, concepts, ideas, class discussions, readings, etc.) relate to your service-learning experiences?

How were you able to use a skill, perspective, or concept related to academic material, or where did you find your lack of knowledge or ability limiting your actions in your service-learning experience?

Question 4: Describe your attitudes about utilizing service-learning as a teacher in your future classrooms.

Probes: What do you perceive are the possible benefits of using service-learning in your curriculum?

What do you perceive are the possible challenges or negative aspects of using service-learning in your curriculum?

Describe how you would incorporate service-learning into your curriculum.

Do you plan to utilize service-learning in your future teaching? Why or why not?

Question 5: Describe how your participation in service-learning impacted your understanding of local communities.

Probes: Is it important for teachers to be involved in the communities from which their students live? Why or why not?

How does service-learning help teachers connect with local communities?

Question 6: Half of our class was involved in individual service-learning and the other half in group service-learning. What do you perceive to be the benefits and challenges of each type of service-learning?

Question 7: What other comments do you have that would be beneficial for the researcher to know?

Closing comments to each participant: Thank you for your participation in this study! You will be contacted to verify the accuracy of your comments. At the conclusion of the study, you will be provided with the overall results. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 785.761.6292.

Appendix B - Critical Reflection Journal

Journal Prompts

These prompts are designed to maximize your ability to reflect deeply and critically. Please respond to the prompts individually or in combination, whichever is appropriate for your response. Feel free to include additional insights which may not be directly contained within these prompts.

Prior to Service-Learning Experience

1. Describe your understanding of service-learning. What is it and why do you think it is included in this course?
2. Look at the Foundations of Education course syllabus. What learning objectives or academic content might be associated with your service-learning experience?
3. Describe at least three ways in which you anticipate using our course content in your service-learning experience.
4. Describe your feelings and expectations of your service-learning experiences this semester. What do you predict will occur?
5. Have you been involved with other service-learning experiences prior to this assignment? If so, describe your experiences and how you felt about them.

During Service-Learning Experience

1. How is the academic material learned in your Foundations of Education class similar or different to what you are experiencing in service-learning? Explain why you think these similarities or differences exist.
2. Describe the what, where, when, who, and why of your experiences.

3. What assumptions or expectations did you bring to each service-learning situation?
How did they affect what you did or didn't think, feel, decide, or do? To what extent did they prove true? If they did not prove true, why was there a discrepancy?
4. How did your experiences make you feel (positively and/or negatively)? How did you handle your reactions? Should you have felt differently? Why or why not?
5. How did you interpret the thoughts, feelings, decisions, and/or behaviors of others (e.g., How do you think others felt? What assumptions and expectations do you think others brought to the situation including their assumptions about you)? What evidence do you have that my interpretations were or were not accurate?
6. In what ways did you experience difficulties (e.g., interacting with others, accomplishing tasks) and what personal characteristics contributed to the difficulties (e.g., skills, abilities, perspectives, attitudes, tendencies, knowledge)?
7. In what ways did you succeed or do well in this situation (e.g., interacting with others, accomplishing tasks, handling difficulties) and what personal characteristics helped you to be successful (e.g., skills, abilities, perspectives, attitudes, tendencies, knowledge)?
8. How did this situation challenge or reinforce your values, beliefs, convictions (e.g., your sense of right and wrong, your priorities, your judgments)?
9. How did this situation challenge or reinforce your sense of personal identity (e.g., how you think of yourself in terms of gender, education, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, mental or physical health)?
10. What specific elements of academic material (theories, concepts, ideas, class discussions, readings, etc.) relate to your service-learning experiences?

11. How were you able to use a skill, perspective, or concept related to course academic material, or where did you find your lack of knowledge or ability limiting your actions?

After Service-Learning is Completed

1. After completing your service-learning, how has your understanding of service-learning changed? Please elaborate upon your definition of service-learning and why it was included in this course.
2. Of the learning objectives or academic content you identified in your first journal, which were associated with your service-learning experiences this semester?
3. In your first journal, you articulated three ways in which you anticipated using course content in your service-learning experience. Please compare and contrast what you anticipated and what actually occurred in your service-learning experience.
4. In your first journal, you described your feelings and expectations prior to your service-learning experiences this semester. Please describe the accuracy of your predictions and the reasons for the results.
5. Do you plan on using service-learning when you teach? Why or why not?
6. What did you learn? How did you learn it? Why does it matter? What will you or others do in light of what you learned?

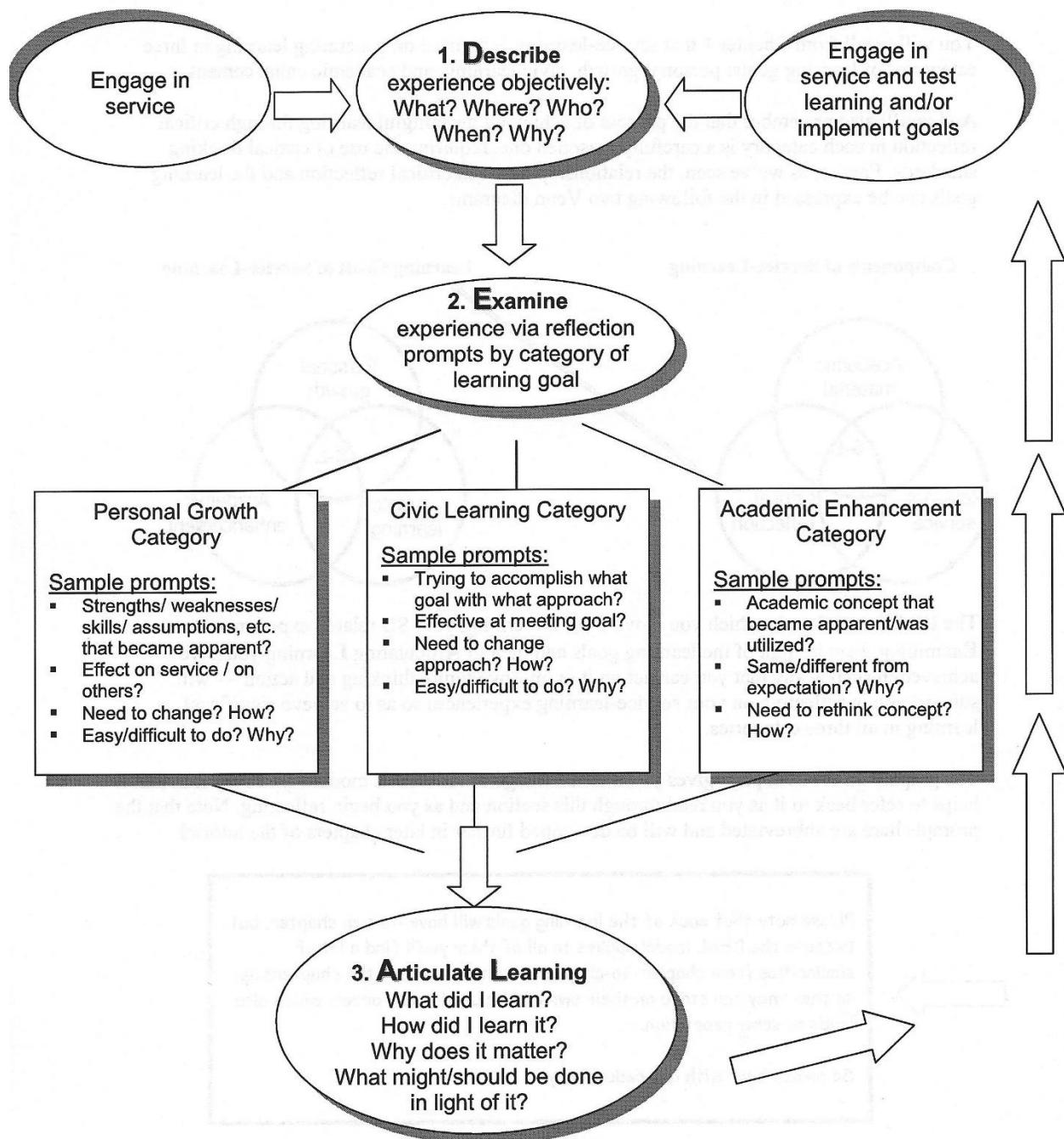
Appendix C - DEAL Model of Reflection

Ash, Clayton, & Moses (2009) developed a framework to help guide students through their written and oral reflections of their service-learning experiences. To develop this framework, they drew upon Pam Kiser's *Integrative Processing Model* (1998), Bloom's *Taxonomy* (1956), and *The Standards of Critical Thinking* (Paul & Elder, 2002). Ash et al. (2009) suggest that the DEAL model not be viewed as a "rigid series of steps designed to constrain learning, but as a structure designed to facilitate and support learning" (p. i). They encourage practitioners to modify the model to fit their categories of learning based upon their own definitions. On the next page is a schematic of the DEAL model.

References Cited

- Ash, S. L., Clayton, P. H., & Moses, M. G. (2009). *Learning through critical reflection: A tutorial for service-learning students (instructor version)*. Raleigh, NC: NC State University
- Bloom, B.S. (Ed.). (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives, handbook I: Cognitive domain*. New York, NY: David McKay Company.
- Kiser, P. M. (1998). The integrative processing model: A framework for learning in the field experience. *Human Service Education*, 18, 3-13.
- Paul, W. L., & Elder, L. (2002). *Critical Thinking: Tools for taking charge of your professional and personal life*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Schematic Overview of the DEAL Model for Critical Reflection



Ash, Clayton, & Moses. (2009). *Learning through Critical Reflection: A Tutorial for Service-Learning Students*. Raleigh, NC.

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Appendix D - Kansas State University Informed Consent

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY INFORMED CONSENT

December 2013

Dear Student,

You are invited to participate in a study I am conducting as a part of my doctoral studies in the College of Education at Kansas State University. This study will examine the impact of individual and group service-learning activities on subjects' attitudes and beliefs regarding the following: (1) the experiential learning pedagogy associated with service-learning; (2) the critical reflection and critical thinking aspects of service-learning; (3) the realization of academic learning objectives for the course associated with service-learning; (4) the use of service-learning as a teacher in future classrooms; (5) and the impact of service-learning on the understanding of local communities.

If you decide to participate, you will agree to engage in an in-person interview with me. The interview will include questions about your service-learning experience and will last approximately 30 minutes. You will have the right to refuse to answer any of the questions asked of you for any reason. The interviews will take place in Bluemont Hall Room 357. Your confidentiality will be protected throughout the study. All data obtained from you will be kept confidential and will not be viewed by anyone except my major professor and myself. The responses to the interview questions will be coded.

Your involvement or non-involvement in this study will have no impact on your grade in your EDSEC 310 course. Service-learning is a general component in this course and your grade will be determined and submitted to the Registrar's Office prior to your decision to participate or not participate in the interview process.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

Listed below are the terms of participation. Please read them carefully and if you choose to participate, please sign, date, and return to me today. Thank you!

Respectfully,



Laura Tietjen
Instructor
College of Education
Kansas State University
laurat@k-state.edu
785-761-6292

TERMS OF PARTICIPATION: I understand this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

Participant Name (Please Print):

Participant Signature:

Date: