"A Tree Bears Many Fruit" Undergraduate Service Learning a Redefinition

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“A Tree Bears Many Fruit”
Undergraduate Service Learning-
a Redefinition

A Masters’ Project Presented
By
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Submitted to the Center for International Education
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I. Introduction

"Growing up in the U. S. as a South East Asian refugee, my life has always been dictated and defined by outside forces. Because of the need to assimilate and acculturate into Western society as a means of survival, I have lost a large part of my Vietnamese culture, language and identity. Due to these uncontrollable circumstances, I was always trapped between two worlds, never allowed to be Vietnamese nor American.

It was not until I attended college that I began to question my identity and my parents' experiences as refugees. My involvement with CIRCLE has helped me better understand and link the triumphs and traumas of my past, the realities of the present, and the vision for the future to my own communities. CIRCLE has created a safe environment for me to share my experiences and to support other South East Asian undergraduate students with similar background."(Collective Vision, 1996, p.30)

Across the nation, increasing numbers of refugee and immigrant students in the United States have unique challenges regarding their bicultural identities. Schools and educational systems do not adequately serve their needs and struggles (Banks; 1993, Nieto, 1995, Arches, Dasrington-Hope; Gerson; Gibon; Habana-Hafner; Kiang; 1997) Therefore there is a need for alternative undergraduate course models that educate and empower refugee and immigrant students to become more active citizens and builders of their own communities. But more than this, through courses students will have an opportunity to use their identity and there role in their community as a foundation to reach out and facilitate others to take control over a critical area of their lives. In so doing students will be able to motivate individuals and groups to a new level of psychological existence. In this regard CIRCLE (The Center for Immigrant and Refugee Community Leadership and Empowerment) at the University of Massachusetts has attempted to integrate community service learning into the standard curriculum. In other words CIRCLE is reshaping community service learning by facilitating a process where refugee and immigrant undergraduate students work with newcomer communities.

II. Problem Statement

The central concern of this study is newcomer refugee and immigrant student's identity
and their role in their communities. Specifically, the study attempts to identify in what ways can an undergraduate course on community service learning develop some foundation or ground work to enhance students participation in working in community and exploring development. The context of this study is the Educ. 229, Section two, class; the first class in a series of two undergraduate community development education courses.

The key questions that this study explore are:
* What are the significant learning accrued by these students in this course?
* What activities did students take part in this class or outside the class that lead to significant learning?
* How has this significant learning changed students thinking and attitudes?
* How do students think about their new learning’s in the context of their life?

Most adult learning theorist tend to agree that significant learning and change comes when the learner is willing and ready to work on that change (Roger 1969, and Jeanne, 1984). It has been seen that significant learning takes place when the subject matter is perceived by the learners as relevant to his or her purpose.

Rogers believes that the goal of learning is growth, which involves a change in the self. These changes may be perceived by learners as a threat their current status, which although perhaps desirable, may also be somewhat anxiety producing such learning therefore requires motivation on the part of the learner, to overcome or tolerate there feelings of being threatened (Jeanne, 1984, p. 44)

My interests as an educator seeking out opportunities to better understand how significant learning occurs has lead me to be involved in a variety of community development contexts. My work with CIRCLE (The Center for Immigrant and Refugee Community Leadership and Empowerment) has focused on education for minorities, as a study of society, culture and community development. I envision continued involvement
in adult education for minorities, with a particular emphasis on its collaborative and participatory nature, especially within the context of my current work with CIRCLE.

CIRCLE (The center for Immigrant and Refugee Community Leadership and Empowerment) was established in 1994 with funding from the Massachusetts Office for Refugees and Immigrants as a partnership between newcomer communities and the University of Massachusetts system. The mission is to empower refugee and immigrant communities using informal, democratic, and participatory research that help members understand and make collaborative structures and models collective leadership in their communities.

Amherst CIRCLE is housed within the Center for International Education, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. CIRCLE has been dedicated to promoting grassroots collective leadership and community development with Cambodian, Vietnamese, and Russian-speaking communities. This center is comprised of three components: the learning cart, the helping road, and the giving seed. The first component focuses on established community leaders; the second is a research based collaboration between the community and academia; and the third connects newcomers youth with UMASS undergraduate students in a mentoring relationship.

This study is embedded within the third component of undergraduate education and deals with the first CIRCLE course that undergraduates come into contact with.
III. Literature Review

In reviewing the literature on community service learning, I found that there is no single definition that satisfies my study. I believe that community service learning cannot be packaged into one neat definition. The National and Community Service Act of 1990 and President Clinton's National Service Trust Act of 1993 are two recent examples of national legislation that supports community service learning and is leading to the institutionalization of school-community links.

The 1990 legislation defines community service learning with:
1. Under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community; 2) That is integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provides structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what the student did and saw during the actual activity; 3) That provides student with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities; and 4) That enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps foster the development of a sense of caring for others (Cohen and Kinsey 1994, p. 5).

I have found that these categories are extremely helpful in understanding service learning but there are missing elements to this definition. Critical to further extending a comprehensive definition of community service learning, we as educators need to include important social categories such as culture, ethnicity, gender, race, and sex. Therefore, I suggest an ethnocultural perspective to service learning be considered in order to truly impart democratic and participatory education.

I am looking at an alternative model of community service learning program geared to
the cultural, social and educational needs relevant and appropriate to immigrant students working with their own people. I found the study I am doing to strongly parallel the methods used by nonformal educators.

"Adult education is neither homogenous nor unitary. It is not the preserve of any one kind of organization of institution. What we have done is to take those elements from the adult education curriculum which involve participation, creating learning agendas from people's experience, the desire to know, understand and explore other areas of experience and wed them to FE curriculum" (Jude C.,1997, p.202)

Following a similar line of thought, this literature review is centered around nonformal and adult education. High levels of learner participation in the learning process distinguishes nonformal education from traditional formal education. Formal education is essentially top-down learning process characterized by instructor or teacher developed learning objectives and learning materials.

" Process of prescription is facilitated by a variety of means, including traditional mainstream education. Mainstream education is characterized by what Freer terms 'banking education'(1970: 58), a "top to bottom" approach to knowledge transmission, through which the teacher is the sole dispenser of knowledge and the students are its passive recipients (Golet, 1973: 11, Mayo, 1993:11)."

Coombs has defined nonformal education as:
" Any organized educational activity outside the formal system—whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity --that is intended to serve some identifiable learning clientele and learning objective." (Coombs, 1973, p.11)

Nonformal education is well grounded in adult education theory. The benefits to the learners, and the participants in such educational process are well documented in the
writings of Malcolm Knowls (1973), one of the most respected researchers in the field of adult education. His finding was that a participatory process enrich is the learner's point of view, and is a quick and easy way to acquire information about a learners community. It involves learners in the decision making process which is relevant to their lives. John Dewey's (1938 p. 16-28) premise that all genuine education comes through experience; that growth and development in education is based on a sequence of experiences, is reflected in the group discussion and activity format. According to Jones, Maloy, and Steen (1996, p. 37) community service learning has been widely promoted as a new instructional methodology-albeit one with roots in John Dewey and experiential education.

Community service learning is an integrated, holistic approach to social change, and it should also be an integrated, holistic approach in education for its utilization. The current approach of community service education is based in non-cognitive /fact-oriented type of education where the methods are not lecture and facilitation style is not 'prescriptive' (Freire, 1970.)

To achieve this it is necessary to concentrate on developing students who could be proactive in their pursuit of learning and experience what they felt they need to know and understand. Central to learning theory are the notions of building on students experiences (vs. filling them with knowledge, divorced from experience), and developing their decision-making and problem-solving capacities (vs. prescribing behavior). This
pedagogy has necessitated a move away from the passive environment of a lecture-learner relationship to an active environment of the advisor-participant relationship; away from banking education to liberating education.

In order to make this shift possible, it is critical that the facilitators in such a learning environment similarly move their teaching styles toward a more learner centered model.

"Freire seems to be arguing that, despite having competence, the facilitator must seek every means possible to break any barrier that might exist between her/him and the learners in the interest of creating truly democratic and transformative social relations of education." (Mayo, p. 18, 1993)

In this approach to community service the implication is that the first step is to understand yourself, your own values, biases, before you can begin to learn and understand the values, biases, and behaviors of community people. Habana-Hafner (1997, p. 38) very explicitly writes:

An ethnocultural perspective-exploring ethnic identity, cultural values, and beliefs in the context of self, family, social groups, and community-defines an alternative approach to community service learning. This approach makes use of newcomers multiple identities as they explore ways to best serve their own ethnic communities as both cultural insider and bicultural mediators with the mainstream society.

The model she describes as an alternative focus on an ethnocultural perspective in service learning contexts. It is very important to provide an opportunity for students to explore their identity, cultural values, beliefs, multiple identities, traditional values and cross-cultural adaptation to help them to understand themselves better. I strongly believe in giving immigrant students the time and space to define themselves what being a immigrants means to them in their particular context. Through this process their
individual as well as community identity can be confirmed. Without these prior educational steps students will see community problem as a social problems due to community deficiencies. This kind of individualistic view does not question socioeconomic inequalities but rather is a rather reflection of stereotyped welfare model.

The Center for Immigrant Refugee Community Leadership Empowerment (CIRCLE) has designed a course for undergraduate students who are interested in developing their leadership skills to work with cross cultural groups and communities. This course connects undergraduate students with newcomers communities and provides an opportunity for students to think about serving others, which can lead and contribute to society in ways that cultivate indigenous knowledge and cultural identity as a way to promote newcomers community growth and change.

This course centers on students identity primarily and uses a community outreach activity as a catalyst for further exploring their identity. The facilitators of this course believe it is important for students to know their self identity to locate themselves prior to identifying their family or group identity. When a person is certain about his own identity then he can figure out his group identity and his role in that group and his motivation for being in that group. In order to belong to a group, one must be able to act according to the value of their group to maintain group harmony. These key principles have guided the facilitators of the Educ. 229 course.
IV. HISTORY OF COURSE, LEARNING OBJECTIVES, AND PEDAOGY

As is case with so many exciting new ideas, almost all of the energy in the beginning of
the project was spent convincing the "powers that be" to support newcomer immigrants.
Many things had to be created simultaneously: the infrastructure of the Amherst
CIRCLE and the field i.e., communities and the formation of well trained community
leaders. With so much to do in a very short period of time, CIRCLE offered a graduate
level course to trained community leaders.

After a couple semesters of having graduate students do exploratory research in the
field, a variety of perspectives had been gained on the realities of their work with the
communities. At this time, there was a feeling that CIRCLE could recruit newcomer
immigrant students at the university and students of color from different ethnic cultures
to engage them with newcomer communities to share their leadership skills with the
people with whom they work. This was done by offering independent studies to those
student who were willing to do the community outreach. This experiment was a good
learning lesson for CIRCLE because the students thought that community outreach was
too vague and that it should be dealt with more specifically. The idea was that there
should be a course offered on community service which would solidify a conceptual and
practical framework into which all community outreach strategies and leadership skills
would fit. By and large, the common tone behind much of the justifications was that
solely doing community outreach was not effective or sufficient and a more structured
class would provide students with the space to engage in action and reflection.
However, there was no specific plan as to how, when, and in what particular way students needs would be met. A group of graduate students from within the CIRCLE family decided to do workshops on community service learning. Various other skills and knowledge-based training complementary to community development were imparted in the workshop. The participants in the workshop were primarily immigrant students.

Whether the participants of the workshop would go on to become trainers or practitioners was left to chance, as was the future plan for follow-up. In this phase the issue was to move beyond student's participation to student's control. Finally students and facilitators organized a workshop building a community of learners where the voices and lives of the student became an integral part of the curriculum. This establishment was a participatory and organic process. As Freire says in a conversation with Myles Horton: "We make the road by walking".

The evolution of this undergraduate course finally took shape and it was decided that this course should be listed under Center for International Education course offerings. Over the past three years, this course has been created collaboratively by many of us seeking to bridge newcomers communities and the University Massachusetts through community outreach practices.

When I came to University of Massachusetts in 1996 as a graduate students at the Center for International Education and I was assigned a project assistantship position with CIRCLE. Working in the CIRCLE project I came to know about this course from
Janna Shadduck and Sally Habana-Hafner and I became excited to be part of it. My involvement in this course was due to my similar experiences in community development and cross-culture training in Nepal. One day Janna and Sally asked me to come to this class as a guest speaker to talk about my experiences in Nepal. The experience I had with the students triggered my motivation for several reasons. This class was very different than other traditional university classes because I observed both teachers, Janna and Sally, as a wonderful combination of progressive and critical teachers utilizing critical pedagogy extensively in the classroom.

Upon talking with Sally Habana-Hafner, I decided that I would like my assistantship to be directly involved in working with this undergraduate course. Later I reorganized the curriculum with the help of Janna and Sally the curriculum focus is to educate community developers about the broader social, political, and economic issues which affect community. These include such pedagogical developments as active learning traditions of adult learning, which makes people think more coherently about the world and which enable people to become more critical and reflective about their experiences. It is designed by involving immigrants refugee students in team work and to prepare them for community service learning activities with refugee and immigrant groups living in Western Massachusetts.

The central learning objectives of this revised course are:
Culture and Ethnic Identity

Students will be able to:

* identify their culture and ethnic identity and introduce themselves within the context of their ethnic identity.
* demonstrate an awareness of themselves as product of their own cultural upbringing.
* describe their opinion on culture and world view.
* demonstrate an awareness of concept of teamwork with their experiences in their community.

Dynamics of Cross-Culture Adaptation (Refugee and Immigrant Experience)

Students will be able to:

* identify and discuss their experiences with the different levels of discrimination (individual, organizational Institutional, and cultural).
* describe the stages of cross-cultural adaptation.
* give examples of own ability and skills to watch, listen, and wait for suitable entry points into a community development process.
* identify the crucial issues of trust and respect in doing outreach in the community, and increase awareness of culturally appropriate and different ways of showing respect and trust.

Leadership Skills for Community service learning

Student will be able to:
* explore the different issues of insider and outsider within the context of working with immigrant and refugee communities in the U. S.

* learn how to identify community needs, problems, and resources through Community Mapping Techniques.

* develop strategy for different degrees of interpersonal communication between outreach workers and community members.

Pedagogy-

Many of the pedagogical aspects of this class have been dealt with indirectly in our earlier discussion. The teaching/learning method is based on a variety of pedagogical methods and techniques, problem solving approaches, group dynamics, critical incidents, dialogue, critiquing, and social activism where learner and teacher together regulate, evaluate and review the learning. Throughout this process the action-reflection-action cycle is completely followed. We also do a fair amount of "interactive" type of education, in which the students interact directly with the community people and learn through this direct interaction. This happens especially in the middle of the semester with a community outreach activity/community project. The reflection phase of this activity is done either through more structured discussion and/or journal and self-reflection type of writings. As part of the community project, students are responsible for developing their project activity and finding entry points to do their work at the community.

In order for adults to effectively learn they need to be intrinsically motivated. It is
important to foster adult learning valuing every participant with the hope that this will lead to a critical mind, and self-esteem that is intrinsically formed. This is a challenge for any teacher to make connections between students lives and the curriculum and society. To illustrate that nonformal education and adult education methods can have an impact on participants critically viewing their identity and their society, I will present a series of activities that we have done in education 229.

Four Examples -

Community Mapping- I asked student to draw a social map of their own community, using symbols: what do they see happening there physically, socially, and culturally and ask them to think about what do they need to know more about to work effectively in the community. In addition to that they were asked to draw what they know and to include questions that they don’t know. While doing this exercise student were very engaged drawing this map and I overheard one student saying “Wow, I did not know how much I know about my community now. It is a vivid picture of my realities, my family realities, and my community realities.” I used such comments to foster discussion which will deepen or reconsider their views.

Fotonovela- Fotonovela is a sequence of photographs with written dialogue to tell a story. I followed very simple steps. First student were asked to pick-up an issue in their community or in their family that is crucial at this moment and build a story on that issue. They were given a camera and asked to take pictures which will reflect the story and put
those pictures in sequence to illustrate the story. Student decided on issues focusing on intergenerational conflict and how parents concede to their children wishes. I also tried to draw connections between such problems and issues of conflict that student witness in their daily life at home. This activity addresses many issues and opens discussion among the members affected by the story.

*Oral History*- An oral history preserves a person’s recollections in his or her voice (Johnson, 1990). We asked all students to do live interviews with newcomer immigrants or their parents. This oral interview experience which helps students to remember their family history, culture, and their struggle. Many students said this experience has touched their life. One student said "I do not think I could handle what my family and other immigrant’s and refugee’s have gone through. They deserve a lot of credits as well as our support to make their adaptation into a strange world a little bit easier". This exercise has helped students to explore their own histories and communities and their experiences as refugees and immigrants in the cross-culture adaptation process.

*Multi-Culture Tree*- I drew a multi-culture tree and then I asked students what are the fruits they get from the multi-cultural tree. This multi culture tree provides students visual representation of different cultures fruits with different perspectives. In the discussion that followed, many students shared their experiences and gave examples of how they were discriminated against and how they have dealt with this experiences, their interactions with other cultures, their social positions in U.S., and many other topics. One
of the mainstream student said participating in this activity has forced her to reflect on how little interaction he has had with the many different people that illuminate this world.

**Research Methodology**

This chapter describes how qualitative methods were used to identify and describe in what ways can an undergraduate course on community service learning develop some foundation or groundwork for students participation in working in community and exploring development.

The world is not an objective thing out there but a function of personal interaction and perception .... Research is exploratory, - inductive , and emphasizes processes rather than ends..... One does not manipulate variables or administer a treatment. What one does do is observe, intuit, and sense what is occurring in a natural setting ... (Merriam, 1988, p. 20)

I believe by using qualitative research techniques I was allowed to develop a deeper understanding of community service learning. Patton (1980) said, qualitative measures describe the experiences of people in depth."

This investigation involves students from two different semesters (Spring 1997 and Fall 1997) and the teachers responsible for these courses. The data gathering techniques were used are: participants observation, journals and self reflection papers, class evaluation, and program documentation.

1. **Participant observation**: According to Patton (1980) "the first and most fundamental distinction that differentiates observational strategies concerns the extent to which the observer is a participant in activities of the program being studied (p. 127). Since I have
been part of this program since Spring 1997, "experiencing the program as an insider" was not difficult for me. For this reason I thought that participant observation was an appropriate technique for reviewing the course over the past two semesters.

2. Evaluations: I also conducted mid term and final evaluation which provided me with a great amount of information. This was important for making comparisons among data obtained through the different techniques described in the preceding paragraphs.

3. Reflection Papers: As we know that people can't learn only through theory or only through action but that the two have to go together. Action and reflection is the main theme in this course therefore students were asked to write three reflection papers throughout this course as an integral part of the curriculum to build a community of learners.

4. Weekly Journals: Students were asked to write weekly journals and share with the teachers, who provide, feedback. Sharing feedback by the teacher helps students to improve their analytical skills. This journal sharing was a kind of dialogue between teacher and students where teacher asked students critical questions for deeper analysis. Although these journals were based on class sessions, it gave me a general understanding of students feeling about their learning in their own terms.
5. Ongoing Dialogue: As a researcher, I had conversations with students inside and outside the classroom regarding the content and process of this class. I attended a couple weekend workshops which were organized and conducted by CIRCLE staff (including myself) which gave me more opportunities to have dialogue with the students on their learning and its application in the future. The researcher took field notes when dialogue and discussion took place.

VI. Analysis of Data -

In the first chapter I outlined some key questions that I have used as guiding sources of inquiry to provide information about students learning and how this course has helped them to prepare for community service. To do so I have used five different sources for data collection which are mentioned in the beginning of methodology chapter.

This chapter begins with themes presented by students that relates to those key questions:

Self-identity: The majority of the student voices on the weekly journals and self reflection papers appear to show that they have reached new ways of thinking about themselves and discovering a self identity as an adult. Students have been thinking critically about who they are as individuals and community members. One of the students wrote in her self-reflection papers:

"My name is.........., I am American Born....... That was the first time I gave an introduction like that before and I felt comfortable adding that extra part about being an American Born. Not that I am not proud to be an Asian American, but I think we get so used to being in the American culture that in a sense nobody takes the time to learn about how you identify yourself. People just see that you don't have white skin and consider you are not American, and that's all that matters."
This student doesn't feel that he or she is inferior or less capable due to skin color but she is questioning the values and beliefs of others. Sally Habana-Hafner, in a recent article states that "through increased awareness and understanding of culture and cross-cultural adaptation, newcomers gain adaptive mechanisms and skills with which to retain and reject tradition. At the same time, they create and synthesize new forms of identity, voice, and space for themselves and their communities." By having the space to write about being Asian, American born, this student was able to use her own text as a way of negotiating identity and coming up with her own adaptive strategies to understand this.

_Culture Group:_ Discovering one's self-identity thus also requires social group identity where individual identities find meaning in collective expression with other cultures even though there is cultural differences. The composition of this class which has diverse ethnic representation gave an opportunity to students to hear different student voices and lives. Students, of course, talk about their lives constantly and find that similar stories from others tie them together.

"I feel that the class itself has taught me more about my culture. For one reason being that at least half of the class is Asian, whether it be Chinese, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Korean, etc. This helps because many of the Asians will speak about their family or friends, and all I can do is nod and agree, because I understand everything they are saying. I feel that I can relate to them very well. Even people that aren't Asian..... whether it be Latino or African American, their stories and feelings about society, their way of being brought up and their family life all sounds so familiar to me."

This quote highlights specifically how through a collective process, an individual can understand and articulate their own identity. This has been a critical area, and finding that I have developed in my work with CIRCLE.
Racism and Discrimination: I showed them a documentary on how a community deals with immigration. The documentary dealt with a town that was predominantly white until a large number of a particular Asian group resettled in search of refugee and opportunity. This immigration process started about ten years ago and by now the town has about the same number of Asians as mainstream population. The mainstream people had an image of Asians as all being on welfare, not willing or wanting to get off the system and causing all the new crime in the area. Another heated topic was the school system where mainstream parents felt that these Asian children were hindering the American children's everyday education and some of the parents were pulling their children out of the schools and enrolling them in other schools.

This documentary brought up a lot of issues about racism and discrimination and many students were able to discuss their different views. Many students expressed the feeling that this class has helped them to learn critical aspects of community work that will allow them to promote cultural unity and strengthen the identity of (Asian)immigrants and refugee communities in their struggle for justice as community workers.

"The entire situation of discrimination bothered me and made me realize that there are a lot of communities out there that are still fighting for their deserved rights. Rights that should have been their rights to begin with. We, as a society, should make it our responsibility to make ourselves aware as to what is happening to our people."

History demonstrates that newcomers cross in this country is not an easy process. Newcomers have had to face poverty, isolation, and discrimination. Even Irish Catholics with strong religious beliefs have suffered a lot of persecution from the Protestants and
the English.

**Gaining Confidence:** This class appears to have increased students confidence and self esteem. More importantly, some students became more comfortable in explaining opinions. As one student put it:

“Taking this International Education course has taught me a lot about myself and the people around me. During the spring break I was not really myself. I was never the one receiving all of the phone calls at home. I was never the "popular one". I was, well it seemed to me, more outgoing. I know what has come over me. I used to be a shy girl without much social life. Now, look at me. I have changed a lot personality wise. I have the courage to do things I would have never done before. I am not saying that taking this class has changed my life, but it has changed the way I view life and society.

Students are able to share problems in a safe environment where they are encouraged to self-disclosure and reduce feelings of isolation. If learning activities share something of the participants and allow enough time for discussion, they will be directly relevant, and therefore interesting to the students.

In traditional teaching, students are treated as empty vessels and knowledge is produced or constructed from the teacher or book and it is transmitted to the student. In this class students and teacher collectively constructed the knowledge, breaking the traditional University classroom dynamics.

**Pedagogical Aspects:** Most of the student thought that community outreach, group project, oral interview, small group activities were the important sources of their learning.
Many of them expressed the feeling that if there hadn't been journaling they wouldn't have learned as much as they did. One student was very explicit on his journal reflection. He stated that reflection is not something that most people do but reflecting on an issue can help you see why you might think the way you do. "Now I can find it easier to reflect on certain situations so I can learn from them." Some of the students thought the dialogue between the teachers and students was very powerful learning and helped them to understand the larger issues at hand as well as one's self-identity within that world.

One of the students described the following:

"I think that this EDUC. 229 class is very unique and everyone seemed extremely comfortable with each other, especially since both of our teachers pull teeth every class to get us to speak out and ask questions and answers. This aided in my thinking and understanding of how my beliefs, my family, my culture, and my community was different and similar to the families, culture and community of my classmates."

Along the same lines, another student wrote:

"Sometimes even when I was not in the mood for discussion at all, but because of their (teachers) enthusiasm and provocative questions, I then have my spirit back to get involved. However, I think most of the students are just like me, they have some good ideas and opinions. It is just that they need someone to open up his/her mind."

It seems that students perceived this class away from the passive environments of lecture-learner relationship to an active environment of dialogue method. To initiate dialogue, the use of story, pictures, case studies, and poems "trigger" big group or small group discussions. Students found this dialogue method very effective and engaged them in class activities. In this approach to cross culture and community development, the implication is that the first step is to understand yourself, your own values before you can begin to
learn and understand the values of a new culture and a new community.

*Implication of their new learning in their life:* This was a crossroads for many of the students. Some of them thought they will be engaged in community work sometime in their life. Some of them are thinking of going overseas and work and learn more about a different culture. Some thought they will be majoring in education and some of them wrote that this course has prepared them with community organizing skills.

"Being in this class has made me think of my future. This was brought up because when I called home and I spoke to my mother, she would ask me how school was going. Without realizing, I was constantly talking about my International education class. I soon came to realize that I was very interested in both these subjects, education and service learning. I told my mother that I am interested in service learning."

Like a tree that bears many types of fruit, some students were "ripe" and ready for becoming involved in community development. These students are then the students who become excited about continuing with other CIRCLE events and courses.

**VII. Summary and Conclusions:**

This study has analyzed service learning from an ethnoculture perspectives. Based upon the researchers experience teaching immigrants and refugee undergraduate students, it was possible to make sense of what students say about their experiences in community service learning. From this description we could see that there is a need to identify a theoretical and structural base for a redefinition for service learning.
Several findings surfaced as a result of this study. The first was that students self
identity and better understanding of themselves is important for meaningful learning. I
believe that students need to know who they are, where they want to go, and what are
the motivational factors that lunch them into working in community. Exploring their
immigrant experiences, their community history and cultural identities played crucial
roles in student leadership development. Perhaps some of the most striking finding were
the connections with other culture groups where these immigrant students felt there
was a space to raise their voices confidently and ultimately encourage positive dialogue
around community issues.

A another major finding of the study explored how service leaning and adult education
theories view how people learn and change. Through a review of the literature
connections were reached as to have an ethnoculture approach to service learning can
be tailored to effective pedagogical methods that encourage newcomer academic
success and their leadership skills in the community.

A third finding is directly linked to the activities of the teacher and his/her enthusiasm
toward alternative pedagogy. This study suggest that teachers who tend to use methods
like problem posing and questioning and dialogue in a very deliberate way, contributed
to students significant learning. In this type of learning environments, student seem to
genuinely like the teaching aspects of the class and felt that the roles they played in the
group were both enjoyable and meaningful to them.
A last finding focuses on more student leadership development with community service as a platform for experiential learning or "learning by doing". This development phase serves as basis for learning practical skills about community outreach and builds supportive structures for future community leaders.

**Suggestions for Further Study**

Recommendations outline for this study are necessary based on nature of the inquiry. This study has been limited to one semesters. Additional insights might be derived by specifically comparing three or more semesters. Comparisons could be drawn on the basis of race, sex, and community service experiences.

The qualitative research is just one of several approaches that might be employed in further investigation. The use of comparative studies is already been suggested. Grater depth might be achieved through interviews with the students.

There is much room for further exploration in the field of ethnocultural approach to service learning and there is certainly a pressing need for the work to done and the word to be spread.
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