Service-Learning in Higher Education in Africa

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By

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To my Mother Susana and my Father Paul; for being my first teachers about love and service.

A fundamental concern for others in our individual and community lives
would go a long way in making the world the better place we so
passionately dream of.
(Nelson Mandela, 1918-2013)

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FOREWORD

PROF. DR. GORDON MITCHELL

Higher Education for the Common Good

One of the features of educational initiatives in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa is the way in which they go out of their way to resist compartmentalisation. Institutions of learning do not understand their students as having some future role in society, but appreciate the value, in the present, of community service as part of academic study. Religion is not separated off from a secular world, instead religious institutions see themselves as working for the common good in achieving shared societal goals. There may be a gap between what they profess, and what happens in practice, nevertheless, it is important to note the significance of such holistic thinking at the level of educational philosophy.

Arrupe College's (Arrupe Jesuit University since 2017) Service Learning Programme is built on theological and on educational principles, both clearly articulated and integrated together. Titus Pacho's book explores this continuum: from the ideas driving the programme to the realities of implementation. In so doing, he provides nuanced insight into the learning experiences of participants, thereby contributing to the discussion about transformative reform in Higher Education. The decision was made to examine the initiative from various perspectives: students, alumni, community leaders, faculty members, college administrators. Apart from the obvious benefits of being multi-perspectival, such structuring of the research process makes a statement that education is more than the individual acquisition of competence, but is something that is essentially communal.

The themes which emerged from the interviews were: motivation, service, academic study, and reflection. For the students, learning outcomes included personal development, reflective practice, cognitive skills, spiritual and moral development, career preparedness, perspective change and the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills. This spectrum goes well beyond a narrow emphasis on higher education as providing only for the development of cognitive competence. The service learning clearly provided an excellent setting for professionalization. These findings contribute

to the broader theoretical discussion of Service Learning. Here, the learning outcomes are related to the specific theological and educational objectives of the Arrupe College's Service Learning Programme. The findings of the empirical research are then integrated into the broader African discussion around educational philosophy and societal role of Higher Education.

In these debates, the educational philosophy of John Dewey frequently appears in the argumentation structure. The reception of his ideas in Anglophone Africa is evident in a range of significant publications in Education and Higher Education. Their widespread influence is explained, firstly, in terms of the seminal role of Dewey's thought on Educational Philosophy in the English-speaking world, generally; and secondly, because of the way in which post-colonial thinking provided a fertile setting for its reception. Dewey's emphasis on education as critical engagement with established patterns of thought and institutional structures, resonated with the anti-colonial struggle against hegemonic ideas and institutions. Julius Nyere's "education for self-reliance", was an influential expression of such sentiment. Titus Pacho shows how contemporary writing on African Educational Philosophy often uses Dewey as though he were an insider! He also draws attention to the widespread expectation in Africa (as in other settings where "development" is a priority), that Higher Education demonstrate its specific contribution to societal upliftment. This, he argues, may explain why Service Learning has come to have the status it has in Africa. Furthermore, those elements of Dewey's thought – notably its societal and political activism – which are often downplayed in the North American and European educational debates, are precisely the reasons for his popularity here! This may help to resolve another puzzle. Although Jesuit educational philosophy has a strong emphasis on European metaphysical philosophy, many African Catholic scholars working on an African Philosophy of Education, draw extensively on Dewey, despite his very different philosophical approach. The result is a unique discussion between the work of John Dewey and Catholic educational philosophy.

John Dewey's philosophy calls into question the separation between knowing and doing, and sees them as being mutually supportive. In a little-known study, A *Common Faith* (Dewey, 1934/1986), he also questions the distinction between sacred and secular. He maintains that humane values are not exclusive to either, but are within the domain of ordinary people. Pedagogies and Theologies of Liberation, which continue to inform debates in many parts of the world, share this perspective. They call for ongoing transformation not only at the level of mindset, but also of institutional structures.

As a Jesuit institution, Arrupe College has its own self-understanding. In his outline of Ignatian pedagogy, Titus Pacho points out that community service along with *reflection on experience* are its key elements. Prayer is the place where the entire spectrum of daily activity becomes the subject of honest and systematic reflection. Within Service Learning, reflection on the practical involvement in the community is also the essential foundation of learning. What emerges in the book, is a fascinating synergy between Ignatian pedagogy and Dewey's emphasis on learning as reflection on experience.

Service Learning is an important example of the synthesis between African and Western thought. This book is considerably more than a study of the impact of a Service Learning initiative at a theological college in Zimbabwe. Its author integrates the empirical research into a much broader discussion about both the place of education in society and the meaning of education. The result is a valuable contribution to the field of Service Learning. It is also a contribution to the rethinking taking place about the role of religious institutions in relation to public education. Instead of pursuing narrow denominational interests, the notion of "for the common good" offers a way to speak about deep vocational commitment which draws on spiritual and religious resources (Grace, 2004). Higher Education is there to serve not only the interests of individual learners or of institutions, but of society.

PREFACE

Service-learning broadly means educating and encouraging students to actively participate in society by engaging in activities which meets the needs of the community while reflecting upon the services, and learning from the experience. Its key components are service to community, reflective practice, and learning from experience. These components are intertwined and can be expressed as service-reflection-learning.

The origins of this book are in my doctoral dissertation with the title *Service-learning in higher education in Zimbabwe*, submitted in the Faculty of Education at Universität Hamburg, in May 2017. Some of the questions addressed in this book include: (1) How does learning take place in the context of community-service experience, and (2) How does participation in service-learning affect students? The responses to such questions are represented by a synthesis of my research on service-learning with reference to Arrupe College Jesuit School of Philosophy and its service-learning programme known as the Arrupe College Apostolate Programme.

My community service and volunteer experiences contributed immensely to the writing of this book. First, as a member and chairperson of a Christian non-profit student organisation, the International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS), I coordinated and participated in the movement's community service activities at Kenyatta University in Kenya during my undergraduate studies between 1999 and 2003. During the same period, I was also involved in reading for the visually impaired students on campus, environmental clean-up, and helping in orphanages and homes of the elderly and people with physical disability. Second, in 2006, I provided counselling services and facilitated workshops for refugees on re-integration, income-generating projects, and financial management with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Northern Uganda. Third, in 2009, I taught and provided guidance and counselling services to students from Kibera Slum in Nairobi while working with Women for Women in Africa Foundation (Educational Development Programme) in Kenya. Fourth, between 2006 and 2009, I participated at the Arrupe College Apostolate Programme during my Baccalaureate in Philosophy, and Master of Arts in Philosophy studies. I volunteered to work with a group of students at a nearby secondary school on measures to curb HIV and AIDS. Finally, between

2009 and 2010, I taught English, Mathematics, Commerce, and Accounting in two schools in Rumbek, South Sudan.

Although my experiences may have not qualified as "service-learning" in the strict sense of the term, they inspired me to search for deeper insights about service-learning in terms of its theory and practice. The experiences brought me into direct contact with real issues to be addressed. I learnt that community service combined with some form of reflection has a potential of encouraging young people to be active members of society while fostering learning from experience.

Service-learning promotes the discovery and application of knowledge in a manner that it prepares young people for responsible citizenship and social transformation. It focuses on viewing education as a contributing partner in (local) developments for a sustainable economy and social welfare. Research on service-learning is on the increase all over the globe since its emergence in the United States in the 1990s (Hatcher & Erasmus, 2008). The idea of linking the classroom with the larger world, theory with practice, is an idea of worldwide potency (Tonkin, 2004). For example, the 2009 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) acknowledged service-learning as one of the strategies in which universities can engage with the community (UNESCO, 2010). In an ever-changing world, higher education should adopt active and innovative approaches.

Service-learning is an important tool that encourages students to participate in the learning process and in society. The approach has a positive influence on students' personal and cognitive development. It improves their academic competencies in terms of better appreciation of the relevance of course material, application of course content, active participation in philosophical discourse, and development of methodological competencies. It also enhances students' moral development and their interpersonal, intercultural, and civic competencies while challenging and shaping their career paths by bringing them in contact with real-life issues and with the people they would work with. Students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organised service activities meeting the needs of communities. I therefore suggest that higher education institutions need to support service-learning initiatives as one of the means to enhance critical and creative education, in a manner that prepares young people for problem-solving, civic responsibility, social transformation, and personal development. This should be based on the notion that educational processes take place within experience, and that "a fundamental concern for others in our individual and community lives would go a long way in making the world the better place we so passionately dream of" (Nelson Mandela 1918-2013).

This book is divided into ten chapters. Chapter One introduces the concept of service-learning. It focuses on the various definitions and characteristics of the term, and on what distinguishes it from other service related terms. Chapter Two builds the theoretical and pedagogical foundation of service-learning. Chapter Three explores the activity of reflection as an essential element that gives meaning to serving-learning pedagogy. Chapter Four examines the practice of service-learning in higher education and the reasons for the increase in its research and scholarship. Chapter Four provides practical guidance on how to conduct a qualitative research on service-learning involving a case study to develop a theoretical explanation while paying sufficient attention to potential criticisms. Chapter Six describes the Jesuit education and its key aspects which relates to service-learning with a focus on the Arrupe College service-learning programme. Chapter Seven discusses the major outcomes of service-learning which emerged from my research perspective. The focus is on the students' outcomes from their service-learning experiences. Finally, Chapter Eight looks at some of the challenges and criticisms that one can encounter in the practice of service-learning.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE CONCEPT OF SERVICE-LEARNING

Service-learning is a means to engage in powerful pedagogical and research practices that foster questioning and doubt and that can lead to students' rethinking of themselves and their view of the world
(Butin, 2010)

The term "service-learning" was coined in 1967 from the work of Robert Sigmon and William Ramsey at the Southern Regional Education Board (Eyler & Giles, 1994; Jacoby, 1996). The concept is often confused with other models of *experiential learning*. A review of the definitions of service-learning is useful to develop an understanding of the concept and its use in the educational milieus. Researchers have put forward helpful definitions, criteria, and conceptual frameworks of service-learning. And there is plurality of views of what service-learning is and should be. Belisle and Sullivan (2007), for example, provide a fundamental definition from which other definitions can be derived. They argue that "service-learning ties learning objectives to service objectives with the intent that the participant will acquire greater skills, values, and knowledge while the recipient benefits from the service provided" (p. 23). It follows that service-learning connects service experience with learning objectives while meeting the needs of a community. A commonly cited definition of service-learning is given by Bringle and Hatcher (1995). They contend that:

> Service-learning involves educational experience, in which students (1) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs, and (2) 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).

Similarly, Eyler and Giles (1999) define service-learning as a form of experiential education where "learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection, not simply through being able to recount what has been learned through reading and lecture" (p. 7-8). Service-learning thus

becomes a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study, reflection and analysis to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities (National Commission on Service-learning, 2002; Seifert & Zentner, 2010; Zentner, 2011).

Jacoby (1996) emphasises that service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. This involves reflection and reciprocity which are key concepts of service-learning. As a form of experiential education, service-learning is based on the pedagogical principle that learning and development do not necessary occur because of experience itself but as a result of a reflective component explicitly designed to foster learning and development (Jacoby, 1996). Dewey (1933) emphasises on this point when he asserts that "we do not learn from experience; we learn from reflecting on experience" (p. 78). Reciprocity on the other hand, involves a give and take approach so that there is a mutual benefit between the service-provider (students) and the recipient (community) so that stereotypes of "served and server" are broken or reduced (Sheffield, 2011, p. 153).

Service-learning is "intimately connected to the world of everyday living and not bound by the four walls of the classroom" (Barker, 1986, p. 151). In other words, "service-learning invites you to bring who you are, what you know, and what you can do into the classroom and the world beyond (the *wall-less classroom*) in applying your whole self to creating community change" (Cress et al., 2005, p. 33). Students, and sometimes their instructors leave the classroom and engage with the communities to make learning come alive and to experience real-life connections between their education and everyday issues in their cities, towns or states (Cress et al., 2005). In some cases, students might even travel abroad to "serve and learn" (Cress et al., 2005, p. 7). This is termed *international service-learning*, which is a form of an organised excursion taken by students to different countries or cultures, where they work with local organisations where they are staying while engaging in a cultural exchange and learning about a daily reality very different from their own (Grusky, 2000). This experience provides students with the opportunity to develop their international and inter-cultural competence.

The National and Community Service Trust Act (1993) of the United States of America provide another comprehensive definition of service-learning. According to Section 101(23) of this Act, service-learning: (1) is a method under which students or participants learn and develop through

active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community; (2) is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program and the community; (3) helps foster civic responsibility; (4) is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the learners, or the education components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled; and (5) provides structured time for learners or participants to reflect on the service experience.

Despite the varying definitions providing divergent nuances, there is fundamental concurrence that service-learning, as the name implies, involves an equal mix of service to the community and enhanced learning for the student. What follows from the definitions is that the essence of an effective service-learning pedagogy is generally grounded on three essential components of *service*, *reflection*, and *learning*. (1) There must be service to the community, where students address real needs. (2) There must be a link of the service to the curriculum. (3) There must be a reflection, which provides the link between the service and the learning. However, these components do not necessarily have to follow the order in which they are presented; they can occur simultaneously. What is important is for them to be in good balance to help students develop their academic competencies as well as their social, personal, and civic competencies while the community on the other side win active youths who help address real needs or solve real problems (Hatcher et al., 2004; Zentner, 2011). In addition, the society also saves money as the students' engagements tackle social needs.

In a service-learning programme, preparation and knowledge-sharing tied to learning objectives occur prior to the service taking place; the service provided meets a need in the community; and some form of reflection occurs throughout and/or following the service experience (Belisle & Sullivan 2007). The commitment of the student is planned, reflected and linked to the content of education and curricula in the classroom (Seifert & Zentner, 2010). Service-learning involves educators helping students connect their engagement in a learning experience in community settings with the means to use that knowledge in the future (Carver, 2001).

To make the most of a community service-learning experience, Jacoby and Associates (1996) emphasize the following five critical elements. First, the community voice and needs should be included in the programme to build bridges, make changes and address problems. Second, orientation and training for participating students should be carried out. This should include providing relevant information to the students, for

instance, about the community organisation, the issues, and expectations. Third, the service offered by the student should be meaningful in terms of being necessary and valuable to the community. Fourth, reflection should be part of the experience to discuss and place it into a broader context. Finally, evaluation should be carried out to determine the impact of the student's learning experience and the effectiveness of the programme. It should be done by all the key stakeholders in the programme including the participating students, the relevant college's faculty and administration, and the community organisations. Evaluation is important since it provides insights for improvement, growth, and change.

   The various definitions of service-learning described above emphasise its benefit to the participating students and recipient communities or agencies. While the definitions often incorporate its key elements of service, reflection, and learning, they tend to ignore the benefits of the pedagogy to the college and faculty members. Therefore, a comprehensive definition of service-learning, which emphasise its core aspect and the various stakeholders should be developed. For instance, service-learning could be defined as a teaching and learning strategy that combines the curriculum with service and reflection to enrich students´ learning experiences, and provide benefit to the recipients, the college, and the faculty members.

Service-learning and other service experiences

Proponents of service-learning distinguish it from other forms of community-based service experiences such as volunteerism which lack an academic component, and from internships or practicums, in which students acquire practical skills (Egger, 2008). Sigmon (1994) provides a useful service and learning typology with four variations which can be found at various colleges and universities involved in service-learning: (1) Service-LEARNING, in which learning goals are primary and service outcomes secondary; (2) SERVICE-Learning, where service outcomes are primary and learning goals secondary; (3) service learning, where service and learning goals are separate; and (4) SERVICE-LEARNING, in which service and learning goals are of equal weight and each enhances the other for all participants.

   Sigmon's classification does not only establish the criteria for distinguishing service-learning from other types of service programmes, but also in provides a basis for clarifying distinctions among different types of service-oriented experiential education programmes. The hyphen between service and learning symbolizes the central role of reflection in

the process of learning through community experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Service-learning is distinguished from other forms of service mainly by its intention to benefit both the learner and the recipient of the services, as well as the assurance of equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that occurs as a result (Harwood, 2008). It combines community service with academic instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking, and personal and civic responsibility (Prentice & Robinson, 2010).

Although the various forms of student community-based experiences share the term "service", they are distinguished by their learning agenda. According to Kolb (1984), experience and learning are not synonymous; experience is a necessary but insufficient condition for learning since learning requires more than experience, and so one cannot assume that student involvement in the community automatically translates to learning. Gaining academic and/or civic learning from a community experience requires purposeful and intentional efforts through reflection (Howard, 2001). In the following discussion, I focus on the distinction between service-learning and other service-related terms: internship, community service, and volunteerism.

Service-learning can be distinguished from internship because in the latter, "students engage in activities to enhance their own vocational or career development" (Cress et al., 2005, p. 7). Following Sigmon's (1994) typology, internship belongs to the "Service-LEARNING" model. While many internship programmes, especially those involving community services consider themselves as service-learning programmes, the two pedagogical models are not the same (Howard, 2001). In considering the differences, Howard continues to argue that:

> While internships and academic service-learning involve students in the community to accentuate or supplement students' academic learning, generally speaking, internships are not about civic learning. They develop and socialize students for a profession, and tend to be silent on student civic development. They also emphasize student benefits more than community benefits, while service-learning is equally attentive to both. (p. 10).

It can be deduced from Howard's position that service-learning is different from compulsory internship or practicum, which is often a requirement for graduation in some disciplines like the health sciences, education, and engineering. In addition, while internship can be paid or unpaid, service-learning is often voluntary. The equilibrium between the academic and service component demonstrates the difference between academic service-

learning and other forms of student community-based experiences. Flecky and Gitlow (2009) argue that service-learning is not simply the addition of a service assignment to a course; rather it challenges the teacher, learner, and community partners to connect course materials explicitly to service in community with others, thereby necessitating communal and reciprocal theoretical and pedagogical approaches.

In volunteerism, "students engage in activities where the emphasis is on service for the sake of the beneficiary or recipient" (Cress et al., 2005, p. 7). This category is consistent with Sigmon's (1994) "SERVICE-Learning" model. A mere community-service experience without proper reflection does not encourage learning and cannot be properly referred to as service-learning. Student community service, for instance, a student organisation carrying out an environmental clean-up exercise with no link to specific academic goal, rarely involves a learning agenda. This category is compatible with "service learning" model (Sigmon, 1994). Kamai and Nakano (2002) explain that "service-learning is more than just merely volunteering; it provides a level of critical thinking not obtained through regular volunteerism as it integrates community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility" (p. 6). Academic service-learning integrates relevant and meaningful community service with academic instructions to enhance both academic and civic learning (Howard, 2001). The feature of service-learning that distinguishes it from volunteer work is that "it includes a critical (self-) reflective component to the experience" (Smith & Mckitrick, 2010, p. 56).

While service-learning may seem different by its intention and dimensions, practically it is difficult to distinguish it from other forms of service related terms. In all cases, service is involved, reflection may take place, and *collateral learning* may occur. Dewey (1938) describes collateral learning as follows:

> Perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time. Collateral learning in the way of formation of enduring attitudes, of likes and dislikes, may be and often is much more important than the spelling lesson or lesson in geography or history that is learned. For these attitudes are fundamentally what count in the future. (p. 48).

Collateral learning involves add-on learning from experience apart from the intended learning goals. For instance, in a community service activity, the intention may be to improve students' teaching skills through offering tuition to academically poor students in a college's neighbourhood school.

In the process of this service-activity, the students offering tuition service may end up learning how to work collaboratively, how to network with others, and even improve their communication skills, apart from the intended aim of improving teaching skills. This is possible because "education is – like any form of life – an uninterrupted experiment, which knows no epistemological special status" (Oelkers, 2005, p. 4). Collateral learning could also result from what Dewey (1916/2011) refers to as *purposeful doing* and *active connections* (p. 103). According to Dewey, the two aspects involve some form of relationship with persons and things through intercommunication, which can result in learning from other people's experiences. Therefore, teaching and learning activities should not be compartmentalised.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND SERVICE-LEARNING

*Education is not an affair of telling and being told, but an active
and constructive process*
(Dewey, 1916)

The theory of service-learning begins with the assumption that experience is the foundation for learning; and various forms of service activities are employed as the experiential basis for learning (Morton & Troppe, 199, p. 3). It reflects the belief that education must be linked to social responsibility and that learning must be meaningful and active (Kolb, 1984; Zentner, 2011). The theoretical and pedagogical roots of service-learning are founded on John Dewey's (1859 – 1952) theory of experience and education, including his ideas of democracy as a way of life, where everybody should participate to bring democratic values to life, the idea of learning from experience, and linking the school to the community (Dewey, 1916/2011, p. 196). Giles and Eyler (1994) maintain that many scholars look to Dewey as an influential theorist in laying the foundation for service-learning. Although Dewey did not coin the phrase "service-learning," he has historically been associated with the pedagogy and is often called the "father" of service-learning (Zentner, 2011, p. 10). Carver (2001) places service-learning on the experiential education continuum, where experience is comprised of sensory awareness, emotions, physical conditions and cognition. Carver names Dewey as an influential scholar in the field of experiential learning and directly links his theory to service-learning by explaining that, learning takes into consideration not only the curriculum of the course, but the learning acquired through the participation in activities. As a result, the student's community-service experience is central, serving as both a process and an outcome.

Dewey (1938) situates the principles of continuity and interaction as the starting point for his philosophy of experience and education, which have implications for service-learning as well. His principle of continuity implies that all experiences are carried forward and influence future

experiences; every experience in one way or the other influences all potential future experiences. Alternatively, it could involve carrying on of a habit of action with readaptation to changing conditions necessary to keep it alive and growing (Dewey, 1916/2011). His principle of interaction, on the other hand, builds upon his concept of continuity and implies the interaction between the learner and what is learned, and how past experience interacts with the present situation to create one's present experience. Dewey (1938) explains that the fundamental purpose of education is to prepare students to function productively as adults in a democratic society that could afford equal opportunity for all, regardless of social class, race, or gender.

He continues with his conviction that "democratic social arrangements promote a better quality of human experience, one which is more widely accessible and enjoyed, than do non-democratic and anti-democratic forms of social life" (p. 34). Furthermore, Dewey (1916/2011) connected the purpose of education to promoting democratic society when he argued that:

> A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustments of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder. (p. 56).

He continues to posit that "the devotion of democracy to education is a familiar fact" (p. 50). To explain this assertion, he identifies "voluntary disposition and interest" among the citizens as an important feature, which he argues, "can be created only by education" (p. 50). The "deeper explanation," however, he finds in the essential quality of democracy as

> primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity. (p. 50).

For Dewey (1916/2011), education "to personal initiative and adaptability" is a precondition for the validity of democracy (p. 50). Dewey's view on democracy corresponds with Putnam's (2000), who considers a "healthy

democratic society" as one in which citizens are actively engaged in influencing the operations, decisions, and actions of their communities, as well as their local and national government beyond voting for representatives, resulting in a government and society that is strongly influenced by, and responsive to, the needs and opinions of its citizens (p. 336).

Thus, for Dewey (1916/2011), learning becomes the accompaniment of continuous activities or occupations which have a social aim and which utilize the materials of typical social situations. For under such conditions, the school becomes itself a form of social life, a miniature community and one in close interaction with other modes of associated experience beyond school walls. All education which develops power to share effectively in social life is moral. It forms a character which not only does the deed socially necessary, but also one which is interested in that continuous readjustment which is essential to growth. Interest in learning from all the contacts of life is the essential moral interest.

Dewey (1934) views an experience as a product or by-product of continuous and cumulative interaction of an organic self with the world. It is the result, the sign and the reward of that interaction between organism and environment which, when it is carried to the full, is a transformation of interaction into participation and communication. The consequence of such interaction is development of intimate participants in the activities of the world to which they belong rather than unconcerned spectators, making knowledge a mode of participation, valuable in the degree in which it is effective (Dewey, 1916/2011). Dewey emphasises the importance of connecting learning institutions with communities when he states that:

> the school must itself be a community life in all which that implies. Social perceptions and interests can be developed only in a genuinely social medium – one where there is give and take in the building up of a common experience. (p. 184).

He adds that the learning in school should be continuous with that out of school so that there should be a free interplay between the two. To achieve this, Dewey (1916/2011) suggests that there should be numerous points of contact between the social interests of the school and the community. Since a human project cannot be achieved in isolation but demands collective responsibility, learning institutions should provide some opportunities that can enhance the connection between the academy and the community "to make school life more active, more full of immediate meaning, more connected with out-of-school experience" (Dewey, 1916/2011, p. 173). Service-learning is one of the strategies that can

enhance this connection. Dewey warns that isolation renders school knowledge inapplicable to life and so infertile in character leading to what he terms "academic exclusion." In which case, "social concern and understanding would be developed, but they would not be available beyond the school walls; they would not carry over" (p. 195).

Philosophy of experience and education

Service-learning is founded on the philosophy of experience and education. Dewey (1916/2011) declares that education is not an affair of "telling" and being told, but an active and constructive process (p. 25). He insists that students must always be involved in "an actual empirical situation as the initiating phase of thought" (p. 85). Experience, according to Dewey, involves "trying to do something and having the thing perceptibly do something to one in return" (p. 85). This implies learning from experience.

Experienced-based education has become widely accepted as a method of instruction and a central lifelong task essential for personal development and career success in colleges and universities (Kolb, 1984). According to the experiential-learning model, learning is defined as the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience; knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it (Kolb, 1984). Smith and McKitrick (2010) adds that experiential learning can be viewed in terms of a learning model which:

> begins with an experience followed by reflection, discussion, analysis and evaluation of the experience. The assumption is that we seldom learn from the experience unless we assess the experience, assigning our own meaning in terms of our own goals, aims, ambitions and expectations. (p. 58).

From these processes come the insights, the discoveries, and understanding (Wight, 1970). Experiential education posits that learning is best done by direct participation in the activity (Dewey, 1916). It emphasizes the importance of learning through experience, learning both within and outside the classroom, and embedding learning in one's own goals, beliefs and expectations (Smith & McKitrick, 2010). The importance of experiential education lies in its ability to offer "increased opportunity for facilitating transformative learning, teaching on social responsibility, citizenship, public policy, and the social economy, and for upholding a commitment to the principles of mutuality and reciprocity between schools and communities" (pp. 57-58). In relation to service-learning, the two