Exploring Deweyian Experiential Learning Pedagogy as Citizenship Development

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ABSTRACT: Developing good citizens is one of the root theoretical justifications and purposes of public schooling and social studies. Much discussion exists, however, over what good citizenship entails and how it can best be achieved. One approach—experiential learning and its associated service learning—is currently popular in a number of disciplines. It is argued to be an invaluable way of developing students' citizenship through experience based learning. This paper begins by reviewing Dewey's educational theory, which encompasses experiential learning with the aim of developing citizenship, thus setting the foundations for current experiential and service learning pedagogies. It then presents the findings of a qualitative interview study with high school students and teachers who have taken part in overseas service projects. The discussion illustrates the benefits and challenges of citizenship development through experiential curricula and concludes with recommendations that aim to strengthen this form of learning.

I Theories of Citizenship

Many philosophers (including Plato, Rousseau, Kant, and Dewey) have argued that the aim of education is the creation of good citizens which includes knowledge learning, ethical education, and the disposition to act on right morals for the betterment of their societies. They have theorized how good citizens can be developed through education. One of the key thinkers of the twentieth century was Dewey (1916). For Dewey (2007), experiential, project-based learning would shape individuals who could contribute positively to a continuously developing democratic society. His theory laid the foundation for experiential learning and democratic education out of which current service learning theories and methods have developed.

Dewey had a broad conception of education, viewing it as a social process, as learning that occurred in both informal and formal (school) settings through experiences. Informal settings, both within the family and social group, had a significant impact on the development of individuals. Schools also had a role to play in societies where informal learning was insufficient to master the depth and breadth of social knowledge and where they could help to further develop students' capacities, temper bad habits acquired, and increase their understanding and connections to each other through a "common subject matter [that] accustoms all to a unity of outlook" (Dewey, 2007, section 2). A shared program of study

provided students with the possibilities of developing similar outlooks and dispositions; that is, it developed the ground work for a common community consciousness.

However, schools had a major shortcoming: they were subject to the danger of becoming places of dried out, overly abstracted knowledge that was meaningless to students, for learning is not a process of "telling" (direct teacher instruction) but rather of "doing" (student-centred learning). As life is a process of continuous growth and learning through experience, schooling should also be living and should provide students with the conditions that nurture their continued growth. Teachers should begin by understanding where their students are at and what they understand and then develop an environment that simulates their students' development. This leads to individuals' (and by extension, society's) "progressive" or continual growth. As Dewey stated:

> While a careful study of the native aptitudes and deficiencies of an individual is always a preliminary necessity, the subsequent and important step is to furnish an environment which will… shape the experiences of the young so that instead of reproducing current habits, better habits shall be formed, and thus the future adult society be an improvement on their own. (Dewey, 2007, section 6)

Aims of education are embedded in, contiguous with, process.

Dewey argued that the best pedagogy was "education of, by and for experience" (Dewey, 2007, section 2). Experiences were interactions between individuals and their social and physical environments, which provided opportunities for learning through reflection:

> To "learn from experience" is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence…. Under such conditions, doing becomes a trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like; the undergoing becomes instruction-- discovery of the connection of things. (Dewey, 2007, section 11)

As knowledge is created in these situations, it is living. Knowledge formation follows a process similar to that scientific hypothesizing: incomplete understanding leads to hypotheses that one further refines through inquiry, research, and testing. Knowledge is, thus, socially and historically constructed and open to future refinement and amendment. Best teaching practices engage students in experiences that are meaningful to them and lead to issues (or problems) that the students address through conducting research and developing and testing tentative answers. It embeds subject learning in authentic experiences emerging from daily social life. A vital feature of this education is making "experience intelligent" (Rocheleau, 2004) through democratic (or social) inquiry, discussion, and reflection. The aim of this education is to create individuals with shared common interests, that is, with a shared conception of the public good who freely cooperate with a number of social groups and, as a result of the many "complicated conversations" (Stoddard and Cornwell, 2003) that result from this open and respectful interaction, continue their own (and society's) growth.

With foundations in Dewey's theory, service learning has become a widely advocated method for developing worthy citizens (Speck and Hoppe, 2004). Models developed from Dewey's theory include Kolb, Zull, Pritchard and Whitehead (2004). These approaches involve students in authentic community learning experiences that are integrated with classroom content learning and reflection. The experiences are developed through reciprocal community relationships that meet authentic community needs (Pritchard and Whitehead,

2004). They can occur inside and outside of school, at both the local community and wider cross-cultural level.

The Significance of Community-based Citizenship

Our world faces many problems, including environmental degradation and individualism (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2006), which are the products of human action. Such action denies the potential of people to transform our world for the better, understood by some scholars to be *humanity* (Broom, 2010). The latter involves living ethically and engaging in moral activities of value that are embedded in a recognition of our common humanity. These activities improve the social community for all and actualize individual human potential. Well known scholars, including Dewey and Aristotle, have argued that individuals can best be educated to act with humanity through experiential learning: "It is well said, then, that it is by doing just acts that the just man is produced, and by doing temperate acts the temperate man; without doing these no one would have even a prospect of becoming good" (Aristotle, 2009).

Emerging from this attractive theory, then, is a question: is experience based learning an effective method of nurturing students' sense of community consciousness (and thus their humanity)? The next section of this paper explores this ideal in practice. It describes the findings of a research project that analysed the inter-relationships between high school students' experiential projects and the ideal described. We end the paper with recommendations that aim to strengthen this pedagogy.

II. A Case Study Exploration of Service Learning & Humanity

Twenty high school students who have taken part in overseas service were interviewed by the researchers, both arms-length scholars, in the winter and spring of 2010. Each interview was structured around seven, open-ended questions that gave students flexibility in their answers and lasted from fifteen minutes to half an hour. (See Appendix One for the questions as well as sample representative answers, divided by the country, Nicaragua or Kenya, visited by students.) The questions were developed by the researchers, based on their experiences in the field and with the aim of highlighting the theoretical frame that informed the paper. The interviews were anonymous. Students' answers were qualitatively analysed by the principal investigator and grouped into themes using content analysis, which involved studying and interpreting student and teacher interviews by identifying commonly repeated concepts. The interpretation also had a phenomenological angle in the sense that studying the interview data used horizontalization and linked the significant and repeated concepts that were identified to common themes that described the "what" and "how" elements of students' service learning experiences (Creswell, 1998). Four teachers who organized service activities were also interviewed following the same procedures. The student and teacher findings are presented separately as the researchers understand that teachers and students differ in their ages, orientations, and relations to the experiential projects. The student interviews focused on understanding the students' perspectives of the trips; the teacher interviews explored the teachers' aims and methods, as well as details of their trip planning and organization.

The students participated in overseas service projects. Some went to Nicaragua where they worked with a couple to build a sustainable village for orphan children. They built structures in the village (such as a milking pad for cows and water troughs). Other students went to Kenya

where they helped to build a school kitchen and garden. Both groups also interacted with orphans and took part in some sightseeing trips.[1]

Student Remarks

Prior to participating in the trip, students had little knowledge of the nations they were to visit. This made some students feel nervous and stressed. Although they were prepared for the trips by teachers, most students held stereotypes of the people, nations, and cultures. The majority imagined the countries to be poor both economically and culturally and perhaps hostile and dangerous. They were not sure what to expect regarding the people. Most of the students, particularly those who went to Nicaragua, were positively surprised after they arrived: they found the people to be warm, kind, appreciative, and welcoming; the culture to be colourful and vibrant; and the natural environment beautiful: "It was honestly the most amazing place I've ever been, some parts were so beautiful and pure" (student, interview). Another student stated, "I loved every bit of Nicaragua, the heat, the people, the culture, the sites. We slept outside and couldn't have had a better bedroom. The showers were outside which is interesting because there were a lot of bugs. The beach was amazing" (student, interview). Students found the culture to be richer than they imagined, and the people happy, hardworking, and welcoming. Students were interested to learn about different cultural values, such as a strong family focus and a different conception of time, and enjoyed the active cultural life.

Many students mentioned that they valued the way Nicaraguan and Kenyan people enjoyed life, despite having less monetary wealth than North Americans: "They made me appreciate what we have here. They're always happy there and they have nothing" (student, interview). Those who went to Kenya found it easier than they expected and found most of the people welcoming and helpful, but some came home still feeling that the place was unsafe. One student mentioned, for example, how armed police escorted the students to and from their worksites and how police were at their hotel all the time. Others, on both trips, were surprised by the physical poverty, or by the amount of "Westernization" and the decline of the traditional cultures and languages they saw: "Coca cola was everywhere," one student mentioned. They came to understand cultures as fluid and open to change. In all cases, one of the students' main insights was increased ("eye-opening") cross-cultural knowledge and awareness, as well as increased acceptance and respect for different ways of being in the world--"not to judge by first sight" (student, interview). They viewed all nations "with a different mind set," (student, interview) but all people as "no different than us" (student, interview).

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[1] Both trips happen annually at the schools and have about 10 to 15 student participants. Students are in grades 10 to 12 for the Kenya trip, and in grade 12 for the Nicaragua trip (ages 15 to 17). Both trips are optional. The Kenya trip preparations happen outside of regular school hours, and the Nicaragua trip is embedded in a grade 12 course. Students self-identified themselves as "middle class" and paid their way. Both trips are about 10 days long and are organized by travel agents and international foundations with local experience who liaison between the students and teachers' needs and interests and local community needs. The community projects are identified and organized by the foundations and include hands on work, such as building schools (Kenya) or sustainable farms (Nicaragua). These are supplemented with opportunities to interact with locals, ongoing reflection in groups, and some local sightseeing. The relationships are developed and nurtured on a continual basis. Both projects aim to develop students' awareness, interest, and sense of empowerment in addressing global issues. While community members and teachers receive and provide feedback to students, short term and long term evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs can be improved, which is one of the questions investigated by the researchers. Both researchers are university scholars who are "outside" of the projects: they do not participate in the planning or execution of the trips and are not affiliated with the schools in any way. The principal investigator's research focuses on Citizenship and the second author's work focuses on Moral Philosophy.

Students' Individual Growth through Service Learning Curriculum

All students valued the experience of hands-on, applied learning. They felt it was a different kind of learning to that found in their classrooms. The ability to be in a different place that one could personally take in through one's senses—to see, feel, taste, hear and smell another place for oneself—was particularly valued. This embodied learning experience opened students to new realities in a manner that was not possible through information-based learning in the closed and isolated space of the school: "it made what we read in textbooks etc. a reality" (student, interview). They felt they learned information that could not have been learned in class.

They all discussed developing new insights to people, culture, the world, and life *for themselves*, and they appreciated this individualized learning. They learned about environmental issues such as wastage and political issues such as corruption. They felt that they grew as people ("it's character building" [student, interview]) and that they increased their empathy and knowledge of our world. They appreciated the good work of some people and organizations, and enlarged their efficacy to bring change ("how you can change the world"; how "help goes a long way"; how "everyone can help everyone"; and how "if you want to do something just do it and don't worry about the bad" [students, interviews]). They expanded their critical awareness of themselves, and how their actions impact on others, as well as their feeling of community with (and for) others. They realized how relationships with people, not materialism, are essential for happiness and came to "treasure life" (student, interview). They developed a sense of agency: "I learned that I'm going to have to do more for my fellow man…it also just made me want to be better and more helpful everyday" (student, interview). Other students realized "how much [they] love to help people in need," (student, interview) and how "the world has good in it" (student, interview). They felt happy helping others. The students thus felt that they developed humanity (connections to others) and happiness. For some, helping others fulfilled them on a spiritual level.[2]

Students also stated that they improved their people skills by learning how to work collaboratively with others, trusting them and accepting different world views and people "for who they are" (student, interview). They realized the challenges of community building and explored ways of achieving it through open communication that included listening to others, problem and conflict resolution, and confidence-building. They developed more positive attitudes and their confidence and sense of responsibility and self-sufficiency as young adults. Others stated that they cultivated their leadership skills and that they saw a lack of global leadership ("Someone needs to take charge and do something" [student, interview]). For some, the trip was life changing: "I learned so many lessons that changed my life" (student, interview). Some students even stated that they have changed their career and life goals as a result of the trip and found their "life passion" (student, interview).

Teachers' Reflections on their Service Learning Pedagogy

Despite the amount of work involved, all of the teachers organized the experiential activities as they appreciated the opportunity and benefits of service work, and valued the

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[2] Both trips are carried out at secular schools and do not include any mention or proselytizing in any form of organized religions.

pedagogy. Some felt that the educational experience provided students with possibilities for growth through reflection. The main aim for the majority of teachers was the moral and ethical dimensions of the trips, in terms of their potential to nurture student growth as students explored the meaning of life and the value of global citizenship. A key question for one inspirational teacher was: "what does a successful life look like?" (teacher, interview).

All teachers used external travel agencies (such as Developing World Connections) and groups, such as International Children's Care (ICC) and Comfort the Children International (CTC), to aid them in arranging details of the trips and felt that this took away some of the organizational stress. They felt confident in the abilities of these groups to plan details and appreciated their local knowledge. The teachers stated that they felt supported by the parents, many of whom did not ask many questions about the trip or appear concerned: they trusted the teachers and the school. Teachers did not express much anxiety about organizing the trips as they felt they were worthwhile and well organized, and they had confidence in their students. Teachers felt they had community support.

All teachers worked to prepare the students for the trips through holding discussions and workshops prior to the service work. They discussed with their students what they could expect in terms of culture, economic poverty, and environment, as well as what their expectations were for students. They asked the students to respect people and their varied life situations. One teacher assigned students topics about the trip to research and present to their peers during orientation meetings as well as invited guest speakers on topics such as the history, language, and culture of the area. Another teacher, who organized local community service projects, devolved organization to the students: they worked in groups to choose and plan their activities, with teacher guidance and support. These projects were encased in class lessons that explored ethics, such as the challenges of judging moral actions.

After the overseas trips, teachers helped students to make meaning out of their experiences through discussion and reflection activities in open, honest and supportive forums as well as through projects on key topics such as sustainability and ethics. Teachers wanted their students to critically reflect on their own and society's social values and the purpose of life itself. Post-trip reflection was a key element for one teacher who felt that most of the learning occurred once the students were home again and struggled to integrate the experience into their lives. Dewey (2007) also commented on the value of such reflecting with these words: "…extending the limits of experience…to enlarge the mind…by remaking…meaning" (p. 8). That is, associated with the concepts of constructivist learning theory that developed from Dewey's problem based model of learning and Bruner's (1987) work, learning is understood to be concept-based. Students learn through connecting new material to the concepts they already have. The teacher can help students re-shuffle students' concepts through the presentation of new information that does not fit comfortably with students' current concepts. This cognitive dissonance provides spaces for changed thought, in a manner similar to Vygotsky's (2004) theory of teacher scaffolding of student learning. In the case of the students in this study, the cognitive dissonances provided by the trip fuelled changed thought for many students.

Teachers had students apply for the trips and used sorting criteria for deciding which students they would take on the trips with them. They stated that they selected students who they felt would benefit from the experience (that is those who were perceived to be reflective, open-minded, relational, and resilient) as well as students who were reliable and responsible. They did not want to have behavioural problems overseas. As teachers felt responsibility for the students, they wanted to ensure that they could rely on the students they took. Passion and interest in service were more important than grades for all teachers. Indeed, one teacher stated

that the experience could be particularly difficult and challenging for high achieving students who were not as relational and oriented towards experiential learning.

One teacher mentioned concerns about how the selection process limited the experience to a particular kind of student and thus made an effort to expand the experience by accepting students who were of possible concern due to past behavioural or emotional issues. The teacher found that not only did the students behave during the trip, but that they also demonstrated growth and maturity and—at times—unknown talents such as artistic ability. The teacher also engaged students in group fundraising projects prior to the trip. Another teacher provided service work for all students in their regular academic classes and attempted to deal with motivational issues by finding service experiences that matched students' interests.

During the trips, many of the teachers felt that the experiential curriculum for their students was best "taught" through the stepping back of the teacher. That is, their pedagogy was one of mediating and facilitating personal interaction between student and experience. The teacher was there as a guide and a mentor. This kind of pedagogy had the potential for magnifying the individual ethical agency of the students as their lived experiences were opened to the endless possibilities of personal meaning making through the skilful mediation and facilitation of the teachers. Teachers viewed leadership as that of relinquishment, of giving power to the students themselves, in order to provide them with opportunities to grow, to develop understanding of life, to make meaning through the "testing" of experiences, and to "find" themselves. Teachers found that the students matured when they were given this responsibility. During the trips, the teachers interwove service with some travel opportunities. They also included group discussions on issues and experiences that furthered reflection and social cohesion and respect among group members and provided journal writing opportunities for self-reflection.

The teachers felt the experience positively affected students with the "right mindsets" (teacher, interview) by helping them to develop deeper (and transformed) knowledge of life and themselves, community and civic mindedness, the ability to live with uncertainty and change (i.e. adaptability), the development of increased awareness of what is of value in life, and the development of a number of skills, such as social skills. They valued the experience for helping to break down students' stereotypes of place (how stunning the physical place was), culture (how complex, how similar, yet different), people (how kind and warm people can be), and poverty (what does poverty mean?). Students developed open-mindedness (Hare, 1979), which is essential to cultivating citizenship.

Teachers felt the pedagogy changed students' understanding of the world by transforming their own lived reality: school learning and life learning became integrated and meaning-making became knowledge. Teachers appreciated the changes they saw in their students, some of whom wanted to continue to do further service work. They saw their students develop new cross-cultural friendships, and they valued the realness of the experience. One stated, for example, how students had a chance to visit the family of a child with AIDS who was supported by the school. The teacher stated that to actually see and play with the child in person made the reality "hit home" for students in a manner that isn't possible in the impersonalized, segregated walls of the school. The pedagogy engaged students by making learning personally meaningful.

Teachers also encountered challenges in delivering service learning pedagogy, some of which included school administrative structures (such as district policies or lack of support among some administrators), the significant time commitment on top of all the regular duties of teaching, managing all the organizational details (e.g., paperwork), language and cultural differences, the difficulty of developing and coordinating community connections, as well as

the trouble and frustration of having certain types of students (such as academically driven perfectionists) open themselves up to experiences that had transformative potential. Some of these teachers described the challenge of students who "failed" the experience by not opening themselves up to change and reflection. One teacher also felt challenged by the immensity of the global issues experienced and the difficulty of helping everyone.

III. Necessary Conditions for Pedagogical Success

All research participants, both teachers and students, found the experiential-based, service learning experiences to be effective and valuable in developing students' citizenship, as theorized by Dewey.[3] They stated that it transformed students' understanding of life as well as developed empathy, or engagement, in the life situations of others. The trips thus had ethical importance. Students also developed understanding of the connections that bind us all together and the power of action to bring positive change. Generally, then, the trips were authentic examples of Deweyian experiences.

Our analysis, however, revealed that certain factors are required for such trips to be pedagogically successful and identified some areas of concern. These are addressed next.

All students stated that the teacher was crucial to the success of the experience; the teacher "was the course." They respected and valued their teachers, who they saw as providing them with support and encouragement to grow. The students described the organizing teachers as people who *modelled* citizenship: they understood students' individual personalities and strongly encouraged them to step outside of their comfort zones by giving students focused problems to solve and bringing relevant issues to students' attention. These teachers intuitively grasped the fine but crucial line between freedom and discipline, responsibility and trust. At the same time, the teachers provided spaces for reflective exploration of lived experiences that led to deepened comprehension and new insights, and helped students to feel respected and valued as individuals. Further, the teachers prepared the students well for the trips beforehand, teaching them the history of the nation and preparing them for the conditions they would see (such as poverty) and have to cope with (such as heat). For example, the Nicaraguan trip combined a grade 12 board approved course on Global Studies with the service learning experience. This was valuable in providing learning guided by a teacher in class in combination with individualized experiential learning during the trip.

However, some areas of concern did emerge from the interviews as well. Five of these are described next, along with recommendations for addressing them. As we shall see, these shortcomings also relate to the Deweyian theory used to frame this paper.

Areas of Concern

1) Who Benefits?

All students who participated in the interviews stated that they were glad they took part in the service learning as they benefited from the experience in numerous ways. One student stated it was "the best three weeks of my life" (student, interview). However, they also stated

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[3] This does not mean that all participants on the trips valued the experiences. The research participants were invited to take part in the interviews by the researchers, and these interviews happened after school. The students individually agreed to be interviewed. These are most likely to be the students who found the experience to be valuable. Students themselves (as well as teachers) mentioned that a few of the participants on the trips did not appear to enjoy or benefit from the trips.

that they did not feel *all* students would benefit from such work. They stated that some of the students complained about the trip and didn't want to complete the physical work, that some students were too selfish or self-absorbed to learn from the trip, and that some students were isolated by their peers. Students thus felt that students had to be particular *kinds of people* to benefit; in particular, students were seen to need to be open-minded and interested in going. They said that no one should be forced to go.

The problem, then, is how to provide the valuable experience embedded in the trip to students who are not already open and drawn to service learning because their sense of citizenship (in the sense of feeling a sense of connection to, concern for and desire to help other people) is not as strong to begin with, or to students who are at risk for a number of different reasons. That is, how can at-risk students with behavioural issues be involved in such trips, and benefit from them, assuming the experiential learning is valuable for all learners? (The latter is an assumption to be tested in future research.) Many students stated that they became interested in the trip because of the allure of travel, the positive comments made by their peers, a desire for a new experience, curiosity, and/or their family philosophy of care for others. High school students are well known for their valuation of peer comments. Some at risk students might be encouraged to participate through peer encouragement, but this does not solve the problem of how to *open* them to the experience. The teacher's influence might help, but family philosophy and conditions seem to matter critically: structural societal issues are definitely a factor. However, if individuals can be transformed, they can go on to change their social environments for the better as adults. Thus, expanding the service learning experience to more students would be beneficial to all individuals and to all society.

The Deweyian theoretical framework used in this paper could be strengthened through an increased sensitivity to the multiple characters and personalities of students in school, some of whom are not open or predisposed to learning, especially experiential learning. Dewey recognized that individuals had varied personalities and that they were influenced by their family backgrounds. His solution lay in making education relevant to these students. In this case, however, relevance may not be sufficient to engage students in the experience, as it was a voluntary one. The authors recommend that all students should be invited to participate in the trips and that certain teaching methods can be used to reach out to these students.

Possible methods of incorporating potentially disruptive students include understanding the root of the student's behaviour and addressing it. For example, if a student exhibits depression or anger due to social exclusion, providing the student with a caring space of belonging could be potentially transformative for that student. Mentoring and including these students can teach other students to value the inclusion of all. A student with a "bad attitude" may not realize all the privileges and advantages in life they have as a "rich kid" ("he/she is spoiled"). For these students, the opportunity to see alternative realities can be life changing if the students can be helped to "see themselves" as they are seen by others and to understand how lucky they actually are in their lives. For students who act out, perhaps greater freedom and leadership is needed, as these students are acting out because they are bored or not given the opportunity to express their increasing drives to be independent. For example, the well-known British school headmaster Dr Arnold gave leadership positions (such as proctor) and responsibility to potentially problematic boys at his school along with firm guidance as to acceptable behaviours, and thus was able to help these boys to mature and develop awareness of responsibility (Hughes, 1993).

Secondly, some students may act out because they lack self esteem. People who are critical of others are often so as they are unhappy. Providing a safe and positive environment and believing in these students can address this issue. Trip guidelines can be illustrated to be in

the interest of all. They can aim at developing a common community spirit that is citizenship. Kalbach and Forester (2006) describe the successful teaching practices of a high school teacher at an alternative school. They provide similar recommendations that include: building relationships; empowering students in the Deweyian tradition that conceives the teacher's role to be that of a guide, facilitator, or mentor; helping students develop personal connections to the material studied and feel a sense of engagement with it; and exploring meanings through critical dialogue on content in a welcoming and inclusive community of learning.

Possible methods of fostering the open-mindedness necessary for cultivating compassion and community-mindedness include: creating cognitive dissonance and allowing students to "see" themselves as others see them and to develop understanding of how "no man is an island," as John Donne's celebrated poetic line states, through discussions that foster reflection on the manner in which we are all dependent on each other. Cognitive change can occur through reading, speaking and writing activities that incorporate techniques such as *displacement* (exploring word and concept choice to uncover multiple perceptions of meaning) and critical questioning that identify *connections, contradictions and tensions* in different perspectives to "develop a multilayered foundation for their perspective. From this, they are able to understand how their reality may mirror, differ from, or be at odds with" those of others (Kalbach and Forester, 2006, p. 78). Other methods include cooperative learning, hands-on activities, teacher modeling and peer instruction, all of which place learning and leadership in the hands of students (Tam et. al, 2001). Needlessly to say, the service learning experience should remain one of choice: forcing students to take part will deny its value. However, if students with previous problematic histories show interest in the trip, they might be signalling a change. The teacher is then encouraged to support these students. For those students who show no interest, peer presentations at assemblies can be a starting point.

2) Access

Students had to pay thousands of dollars for the overseas trips. Many students paid by working part time jobs and getting help from their parents. Some of the students, consequently, stated that they felt access was a problem, as students who could not afford to raise the funds for the trip were not able to take part. Dewey argued for openness and inclusion of all learners in school, for it was through the processes of interaction with, discussion of, and debates over multiple points of views and perspectives that students developed their democratic spirits. The access problem can be addressed by collaborative funding activities. For example, the Kenyan trip group conducted fundraising and used the money raised to support their service work. Perhaps, fundraising could also be done to provide students from less wealthy families with the opportunities to go. Support might also be found through community sponsorship or by linking with local non profit agencies that conduct service work in the areas travelled to.

3) Long Term Behavioural Change?

While the students clearly valued the experience and developed new knowledge and insights about life from their service learning, the question remains as to how permanent the changes made in students' actual behaviours were. For a couple of students, the changes were definitely enduring, as the students have changed their life plans as a result of the trips. However, others seem to have gone back to their pre-trip behaviours. When one student was asked whether her behaviours with regards to environmental action had changed, her answer

was that she was certainly aware of the issues: she said, "I think about it" (student, interview). Thinking and doing can be two different things. Indeed, one could argue that knowing and not doing is more problematic than not knowing and not doing. For service learning pedagogy to be completely effective, explorations need to occur as to how it can permanently change students' mode of being. This concern is also relevant to Dewey's theory. Dewey argued that education could develop citizens who contributed to a continually growing democracy. He did not explain, however, how teachers could ensure that their teaching would create permanent changes in their students' behaviours. The authors argue that the educational process should not end with the experience, but rather that continued, interactive, and thoughtful experiences should continue the process of educational growth throughout students' lives. That is, education is not over with the end of schooling. In relation to this trip, this process can begin through post-trip discussions about long term action. Providing opportunities for continued involvement through the formation of an "alumni club" that continues community service work and critical reflective dialogue is another option. Further, mentorship is an excellent tool for continued engagement. Students who have taken part in the trip can become mentors for those planning to go on trips.

4) Perception of the Other

In all their reflections, students stated the benefits of the trip from their points of view only. They specifically had to be asked to describe how they thought that those to whom they provided service benefited from the service, or how they believe individuals in the culture they visited viewed them as service providers. In both cases, students paused and had to think about their answers to these questions. Students would benefit, in other words, with reflective dialogue on the meaning of the service experience for the people for whom the service is provided. Further, many of the students viewed the Nicaraguan and Kenyan people to be less developed than Canadians. In other words, they maintained a Western modernist worldview of the West as most developed without giving a thought to the fact that Western colonial and post-colonial nations have been responsible for leading actions that exacerbate world issues such as environmental degradation and increased divisions of wealth. The students will thus also benefit from exploring the meaning of "development" and "Westernization" and the purpose of service for those for whom the activities were carried out (Stoecker et al., 2009). This also relates to Dewey's theory. Dewey's work argued for an open and inclusive democratic society in which all types of learners (both manual and intellectual) studied together in a program that weaved together and valued both programs. However, he said little of students from varied cultural backgrounds, tending to the argument that all students should study a common curriculum and so become "American citizens." For the twenty first century, we should expand Dewey's openness to varied learners to an openness to varied cultures where all cultural groups are treated with the equal respect and value. The process of education can include multiple, multicultural perspectives. Through exposure to these multiple cultures and the democratic processes of debate and discussion, students and society can benefit. We can also expand Dewey's nation-based program to one that is global in scope, viewing all peoples as part of a global Democracy.

5) A Class and Ethnicity Issue

All students self-identified themselves as *middle class*. Why did no working class students take part? Perhaps access has a role to play, but family beliefs about service work might play a role as well. A key issue thus remains: how can service learning be expanded to include working class students? Further, students of varying ethnicities took part in the trip, but none (to our knowledge) were First Nations students. Organizers of service learning projects should consider how they can expand experience to students of varying backgrounds and classes, for respectful inclusion of all in collaborative projects is a foundational principle of Deweyian citizenship and democratic societies.

Conclusion

Student and teacher interviews demonstrate that international experiential, or service, learning projects can nurture students' sense of connection and care for others, important dimensions of citizenship, as theorized by Dewey. However, this was only if the learning projects embedded in the trips were carefully structured and if students were open to the experiences. The most important "lessons learned," as stated by the majority of students, were cross-cultural awareness and acceptance of cross-cultural difference; appreciation for North America's privileged lifestyle; and individual efficacy—these are all key components of global citizenship. However, questions remain. In particular, students self-selected themselves to participate as they were open to the experience or already valued helping others. The experience thus became a self-affirming one. How can those who are not open to such trips be invited in and given the space to experience this potentially transformative pedagogy?[4] Further, and significantly, is this experiential pedagogy equally effective for all kinds of students?

Finally, how can this pedagogy bring about enduring change in students' thoughts and actions? These are key questions that remain after this research study and will serve as the basis for future research. Recommendations to address some of these potential shortcomings were described in the final part of the paper, and revolve around the need to extend the potential benefits of this experience-based learning to a wider selection of students and to provide possibilities for change through positive modelling, care, belief in potential, the giving of leadership, and teacher guided reflection on experiences that have initiated cognitive dissonance.

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[4] This statement assumes that this experiential pedagogy can be valuable and potentially engaging and transforming for all students. Future research will be carried out with the aim of identifying whether this assumption is valid or not.

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Appendix One

Comparison of Findings by Country (Nicaragua (13 students); Kenya (7 students), using most commonly repeated words/phrases

1. Please describe the international service project you took part in. Consider: where you went, what you did, and for how long, plus any additional details you might want to add.

Nicaragua: making a sustainable village by building milking pads for cows or a cattle corral, digging out water troughs, helping at an orphanage, sightseeing

Kenya: building a school kitchen and garden, playing with children at an orphanage, sightseeing

2. What were your thoughts about the country you travelled to, and the trip itself, before going there? That is, how did you imagine it to be? Consider: the people, living conditions, environment and any other factors in your answer.

Nicaragua: expected poverty, country to be hostile, scary, dirty and hot, unsure what to expect, nervous

Kenya: thought it would be difficult to travel there (food/accommodation would be poor, hot, dry, dangerous), nervous, curious to learn about another place, not sure what to expect or whether should go

3. Did your thoughts about the country, and the service, change after completing your service project? If yes, describe how. Then, please answer why you think your thoughts did or did not change.

Nicaragua: changed view of the country: friendly, happy, kind people and rich, active culture, beautiful landscape, and changed/more global view of the world, changed life goals, loved the service work, more modern/Westernized than expected

Kenya: thoughts changed a little, reality was hard, lots of work, difficulty, a little more comfortable after it started, police at the hotel all the time, Westernization was apparent, got easier, great organization helping others, some people are scary/dangerous, others are very nice and helpful

4. What did you learn by taking part in this project?

Nicaragua: the importance of relationships, self sufficiency, life lessons, collaboration/team and other skills, there are good people in the world, if you want to do something, just do it, about myself and other cultures/the world, growing as a person, happiness isn't related to money, how help goes a long way and is internally satisfying, appreciate what Canada has, acceptance of others and community mindedness, how my actions affect others, about global issues

Kenya: responsibility, like helping others, some people really need help and some are trying to help, someone needs to take leadership to help others, people there are no different than us, to be active, everyone can help a little, leadership, open-mindedness, appreciation for what we have

5. Are you glad that you took part in the project? Why or why not?

Nicaragua: yes, it was life changing, want to go back, learned a lot, fulfilling, loved it, biggest experience of my life, learned more than from texts, learn your own way/yourself, bonded as a group, opened my eyes (no students said no)

Kenya: yes: it changes/develops you, develop leadership skills, see another part of the world, learn about the importance of action, understand others better (no students said no)

6. Do you think other students will benefit from taking part in projects like this? Why or why not?

Nicaragua: yes, hands-on learning/experience-based learning is the best way, don't force people but make accessible to all and encourage all to go, personal experience learning is better, its character building, have to be open minded and a personal choice to go, most will benefit if run by the same teacher, depends on the person (some changed forever; others not)

Kenya: yes, allows you to interact with others, learning experience, everyone will change and be more open-minded and appreciate, don't force but encourage participation, develop cultural awareness, maturity and bonding with others, everyone will benefit

7. Why did you decide to take part in the trip?

Nicaragua: like helping people, friends, wanted to travel, slide show about it, thought it would be fun and different to being in school

Kenya: wanted to see the reality of Kenya, friends, teacher encouraged, wanted to help others, different type of learning to that of school