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日本の高等教育機関における「サービスラーニング」が 学生に与える教育効果について

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Analyzing the Impacts of Service Learning among Students in Higher Education and the Role of Universities in Japan

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Abstract

This article examines how Japanese social work students experience self-development as a result of their participation in international and domestic service-learning (SL) programmes in terms of gaining social skills and putting knowledge-based theory into practice. It also tries to identify positive factors in order to help improving the programmes. Findings indicate that students, who participated in overseas SL, indeed, experienced profound development, in particular, in their cross-cultural understanding, flexibility and implementation skills, while those who participated in domestic community SL had marked gains in communication, leadership and human relationship skills. Importantly, the study found that students, who had clear objectives and prepared well in advance, had a particularly strong tendency to end up with a positive self-evaluation after the participation. Also students, who initially expressed a strong willingness to work overseas or obtain some career-related qualifications had a strong correlation with positive results. Relations between theory-based social work knowledge and practice are closer in those who participated in both overseas and domestic SL than those who didn't. The participants reported that leader training, more opportunities to discuss their opinions, closer supervision, information related to career goals and longer and more frequent SL practice were most important for effective SL programme. The representatives of the organizations, which received the students overseas, expressed hopes that the students would be more creative and outgoing while the domestic agencies voiced concerns for better manners and basic life skills. Interestingly, especially when compared with the positive results from SL practice overseas, there are indications that the Japanese students tend to fall short in creativity and in social skills. These patterns may be due to some cultural characteristics and may indicate the presence of community values that hinder the acceptance of new ideas.

Key words : service learning, overseas and domestic programme, certifications,
Service Learning Centre

Introduction

Objectives

The two major objectives of this study are: 1) to explore the effects of service learning on the cognitive and affective development of college undergraduates of Social Work and 2) to identify factors to improve service learning programme for both educational and community development. These questions were explored mainly by means of a self-evaluation questionnaire and qualitative study of students who participated in the service learning programmes of our university.

Back ground

Service Learning (SL) has been actively applied in various manners as educational methods for bridging knowledge and practical skills at all levels in Europe and America. It was in late 1998 that SL was introduced to Japan, and since then, the number of universities which conduct various SL programs in and outside the country in the form of community service or field study has steadily increased. However, neither the concept of service nor community contribution was familiar in Japan, and consequently, SL programmes have not yet been as widely developed and practiced as in the United States or Europe^{1), 2), 3)}.

There is a mounting body of evidence documenting the efficacy of participating in volunteer service during the undergraduate years^{4), 5), 6), 7) 8)}. However, little is known about how the effects of SL compare with the effects of volunteer service in general. Moreover, little is known about what forms of, and approaches to, SL are most effective.

Research that contributes to understanding the educational value of course-based service is important to promote SL. "Faculty are reluctant to invest the extra time that teaching service-learning courses entails, and many are skeptical of the educational value of service-learning"⁹⁾. As a result of research on service learning, faculty may not only gain a broader understanding of how learning takes place, but also be more likely to appropriately support service learning if they see evidence documenting its educational significance.

I Service Learning

Service-learning (SL) is a form of experiential learning where students and faculty collaborate with communities to address problems and issues, at the same time gaining knowledge and skills and advancing personal development. There is an equal emphasis on helping communities and providing practical learning experience to students. SL is a credit-bearing educational experience course in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Unlike extracurricular voluntary service, SL is a course-based experience that produces the best outcomes when meaningful service activities are related to course material through reflection activities such as directed writings, small group discussions, portfolio, and class presentations. Unlike practicum and internships, the experiential activity in a SL course is not necessarily skill-based within the context of professional education. In this sense, the SL programme, which our university offers, includes community service related to credit-bearing courses.

“SL is a structured learning experience that combines community service with preparation and reflection. Students engaged in SL provide community service in response to community-identified concerns and learn about the context in which service is provided, the connection between their service and their academic coursework, and their roles as citizens. In SL, there is the integral involvement of community partners –SL involves a principle-centered partnership between communities, agencies and campus. SL emphasizes reciprocal learning – In SL, traditional definitions of "faculty," "teacher" and "learner" are intentionally blurred. We all learn from each other. SL emphasizes reflective practice – In SL, reflection facilitates the connection between practice and theory and fosters critical thinking. SL places an emphasis on developing citizenship skills and achieving social change– many factors influence community health and quality of life. The provision of services is not often the most important factor. In service learning, students place their roles as citizens in a larger societal context”^{11), 12), 13)}.

I – 1 SL in the United States—Campus Compact

As I mentioned earlier, SL has been practiced widely and actively in the United States. Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 1,000 college and university presidents and was founded in 1985 by the presidents of Brown, Georgetown and Stanford Universities and the president of the Education Commission of the United States¹⁴⁾. Campus Compact promotes public and community service that develops students’ citizenship skills, helps campuses forge effective community partnerships, and provides resources and training for faculty seeking to integrate civic and community-based learning into the curriculum.

In the mid-1980s, the media in the United States portrayed college students as materialistic and self-absorbed, more interested in making money than in helping their neighbours. The founding presidents believed this public image was false; they noted many students on their campuses who were involved in community service and believed many others would follow suit with the proper encouragement and supportive structures. The same thing could be said to the Japanese college students in 1990s, but the social values allowed them to be materialistic and the profit-oriented companies welcomed those values.

Campus Compact in the states was established to help colleges and universities create such support structures. These include offices and staff to coordinate community engagement efforts, training to help faculty members integrate community work into their teaching and research, scholarships and other student incentives, and the institutional will to make civic and community engagement a priority. Today more than 98% of Campus Compact member campuses have one or more community partnerships, and more than 90% include service or civic engagement in their mission statements. In Japan, unfortunately, there have not been such initiatives due to unawareness of citizen/community responsibility for community service by universities.

I – 2 Recent Highlights and Trends in the States

Nearly a third of students participated in volunteer and service-learning work coordinated by campuses, performing an average of 5.6 hours of work each week, for a total of 377 million hours of service. The most common service programs on member campuses focused on tutoring and mentoring, a reflection of the high number of member institutions that

have partnerships with local primary, junior and high schools and other youth-serving organizations. Other commonly addressed issues included poverty, reading/writing, housing/homelessness, hunger, the environment, and health care. Campus Compact activities mainly focus on domestic and community services but recently they recognize social services in international context contribute in solving global issues such as peace, poverty, environment and development. International Partnership for Service-Learning was established in 1982 and they started to send students to NGOs in developing countries for cross cultural experiences. They have been trying to develop overseas programmes for students to learn in different culture and different environment to have broader capacity to solve international problems¹⁵⁾.

II The present situation of service learning in higher education in Japan

According to the survey by the Japan Association of Student Support Organizations in 2009¹⁶⁾, the present situation of SL carried out in higher education is as follows; Among 1212 public and private universities and colleges who received questionnaire by mail, 903 schools replied. 320 schools (35.4%) out of 903 have volunteer related courses available to the students and 45.9% of those are SL programmes. 38.6% of those have out campus partnership. Some major results of the questionnaire are as follows;

Q1 having full-time staff corresponding to outside the campus in charge of SL (81.7%)

Q2 active area of SL programmes (multiple answers)

Instructing and Conducting children's sports and recreational activities (54.4%)

Helping elderly and disabled people (50.7%), Community development (31.3%)

Environment related (27.0%), Cross-cultural understanding (15.3%)

Q3 emerging demand and issues related SL (multiple answers)

Helping more elderly and disabled people (50.7%), How to contribute to community life effectively (60.6%), Evaluation of students (44.6%), Accident or other crisis management (35.1%), Facilitating SL centre (30.1%)

Q4 out-campus collaboration, if any (multiple answers)

Volunteer centre and local social welfare board (31%), Community group and NPOs (23%), Neighbourhood association (26.6%), Social welfare institutions (35%), Institutions and NGOs overseas (3%)

Q5 difficulties faced by the staff and teachers involving with SL (multiple answers)

A lack of understanding and support inside campus (54%). A Lack of student's interest (38.6%). A lack of data and study available on SL efficacy (38.9%)

The percentage of students participated in SL varies from 30% to less than 1%. As I mentioned earlier, SL hasn't received wide-spread acceptance in Japan because of a lack of understanding of effectiveness on students' education and

community welfare.

Overseas SL programme in higher education in Japan

As I am in charge of overseas SL and take students to India every year, I explain brief picture of overseas SL carried out in higher education in Japan. According to the "Survey of the field study overseas in 2007" (117 universities of the Kantô area were asked about their SL overseas) by Keisen Jogakuen College, the present condition is as follows. In spite of its effectiveness of SL overseas, the programmes in Japanese universities haven't developed widely due to naïve understanding that the risk is more than the benefit. Safety and crisis management are the main focus and always the biggest interest among the board members.

- 1) Only 48 schools out of 117 offer overseas SL programmes. 90% of the programmes were started after 2005. And less than 50% (45.5%) have an overseas counterpart.
- 2) Evaluation: report and diary 80%, active participation 68.2%, presentation 39% (multiple answers)
- 3) Financial aids for the students: yes: 27%, no: 59%
- 4) Insurance: insured by the student 61%, insured by the university 39%
- 5) Problems faced by the staff (multiple answers)

A lack of understanding of parents and faculty 51%, No financial assistance for students 50%, No clear evidence of contribution for local community life 23%. As you can see from the results above SL overseas has received less favorably in Japan.

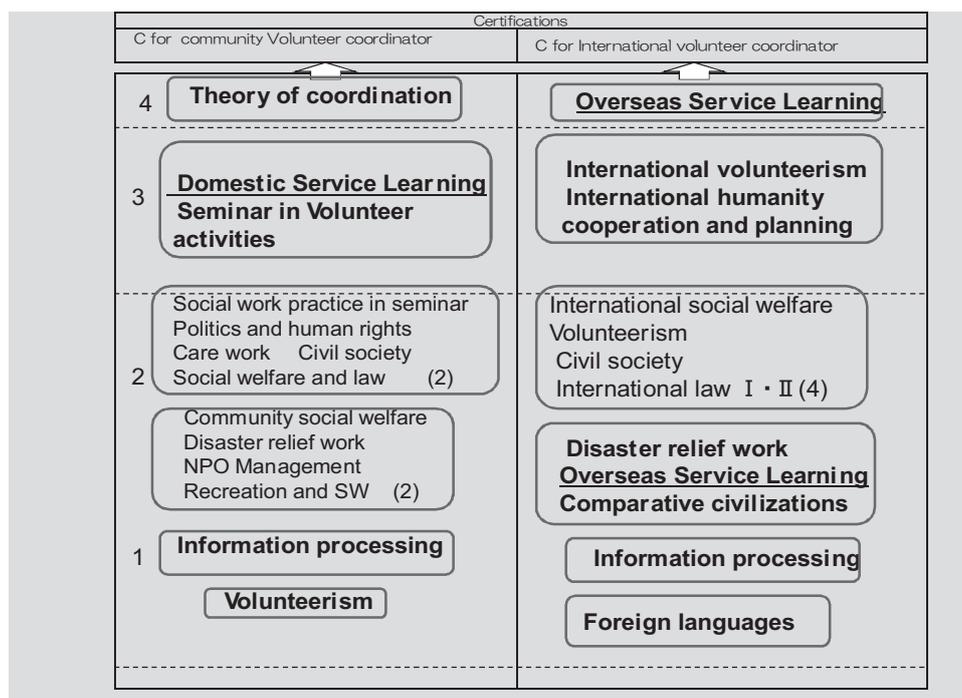


Figure 1 Certification and courses

III Our university SL programme

Our university, social welfare department in particular, tries to build practical capability and encourage students' self-development and empowerment through domestic SL and SL overseas. We have a wide range of counterpart such as local NPOs, NGOs and educational institutions overseas. The programme focuses on sustainability and certification related so that students relate future career goals through the experiences.

As you can see from the Figure 1, the certification of community volunteer coordinator and international volunteer coordinator will be issued by the leading private organization after the students complete certain courses (courses in bold letters are compulsory to acquire the certification). In spite of the benefit and our efforts the number of participants is very small.

III-1 Domestic SL programme

The domestic SL programme started in 2006 and the students can obtain Community Volunteer Workers Certificate issued by the private organization after participating the SL overseas. The students choose activities and agencies to be placed and give more than 60 hours of service a year. Activities include environment, community events volunteer, children support. The programme focuses on community based, students' individual choice, and students' participation in planning. Evaluation will be carried out by teachers and partner organizations as well as students themselves on the bases of active participation and report writing.

Evaluation: method

Students who participated are 8 in 2006, 15 in 2007, 30 in 2008 and 33 in 2009.

The subjective data was collected in 2008 from 30 students who participated in the domestic SL programme. The impact of SL before and after the participation was assessed on 18 measures (communication skills, interpersonal skills, positive commitment, flexibility, self-efficacy, coping skills, cross-culture understanding, leadership, broader view, problem solving skills, implementation, respect from others, planning, teamwork, information sharing, autonomy, practical skills). They responded on a 5-point scale. The qualitative portion of the study involved in-depth case studies focused on students' reflection and suggestions how to improve the programme. One additional measure was assessed on academic scores: community welfare theory, and social work theory.

Table 1 self-evaluation by the students who participated in Domestic SL

before	2	1.944	1.778	1.889	1.833	1.889	2.278	1.667	1.722	1.72	2	1.78	1.833	2.167	1.61	1.89	1.67	2
after	2.346	2.138	2.154	2.038	1.962	2.331	2.354	2.215	1.869	2.18	2	1.99	1.846	2.364	1.75	1.89	2.08	2.12
non	1.765	2.118	1.765	1.941	1.941	1.882	1.882	1.941	1.588	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.824	2.294	1.71	1.77	1.94	2.18
a-b	0.346	0.194	0.376	0.149	0.129	0.442	0.126	0.548	0.147	0.46	0	0.21	0.013	0.197	0.14	0	0.41	0.12
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Note) b indicates before the actual service learning, a indicated after the SL, non indicates non-participation N=30

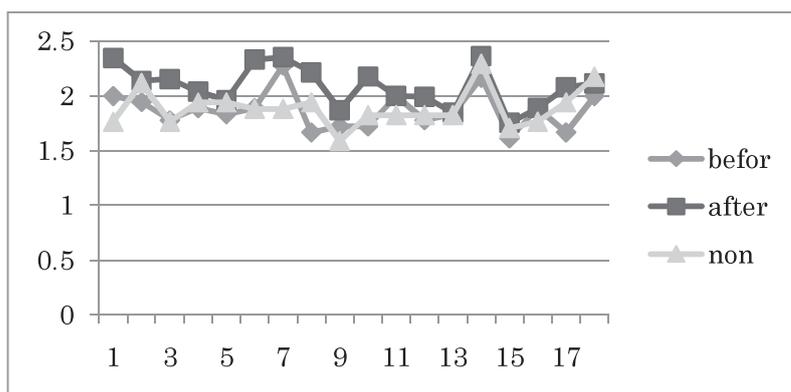


Figure 2 self-evaluation by the students who participated in Domestic SL

Note) b indicates before the actual service learning, a indicated after the SL, non indicates non-participation in SL N=30

Findings:

The result (Table 1) shows significant positive effects on interpersonal skills (0.376 up), broader view (0.442 up), self-understanding(0.548 up), problem solving skill (0.46 up), team work skill (0.41 up). These findings replicate a number of recent studies using different samples and methodologies in Japan. Results with academic theory scores were generally non-significant, with one exception: service participation can have a positive effect on the student’s academic score if the faculty gives opportunities to relate experience and theories in the class after. Generally Japanese students’ practical skills don’t have significant relations with academic scores compare with those of other countries students.

III-2 Overseas SL- International Cooperation Field Study

Overseas SL- International Cooperation field study program is a part of the curriculum to understand world issues and learn social work in different situations through SL in developing countries. The time period: two weeks in summer.

The number of students who participated are 5 in 2002, 5 in 2003, 13 in 2004, 14 in 2005, 10 in 2006, 13 in 2007, 18 in 2008 and 12 in 2009.

Agencies and organizations for the placement: non- formal education NGOs, community development NGOs, HIV/ AIDs NGOs, challenged people NGOs, women’s empowerment NGOs, special schools for the challenged in India and Thailand

Activities: helping with textbooks and repairing class rooms, exchanging cultures, research on social issues and social

Table 3 self-evaluation by the students who participated in SL overseas

before	1.705	2.018	1.7	1.901	1.901	1.802	1.802	1.901	1.508	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.804	2.204	1.7	1.71	1.9	2.11
after	1.769	2.154	1.923	2.077	2.231	2	2.154	1.923	1.692	2	2.46	2	1.846	2.231	1.69	1.85	2.08	2.17
non	1.765	2.118	1.765	1.941	1.941	1.882	1.882	1.941	1.588	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.824	2.294	1.71	1.77	1.94	2.18
a-b	0.064	0.136	0.223	0.166	0.33	0.198	0.352	0.022	0.184	0.2	0.66	0.2	0.042	0.027	0.01	0.14	0.18	0.06
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Note) b indicates before the actual service learning, a indicates after the SL, non indicates non-participation N=16

work in developing countries.

Data collection: The subjective data was collected in 2008 from 18 students who participated in SL overseas.

The result shows significant positive effects on implementation (0.33up), flexibility(0.352up) and cross-cultural understanding(0.66up). Positive results for the academic theory scores are boarder line (i.e., $p < .05$). Benefits associated with SL are not strong for the academic outcomes although relations between theory-based social work knowledge and practice are closer in those who participated in both overseas and domestic SL than those who didn't.

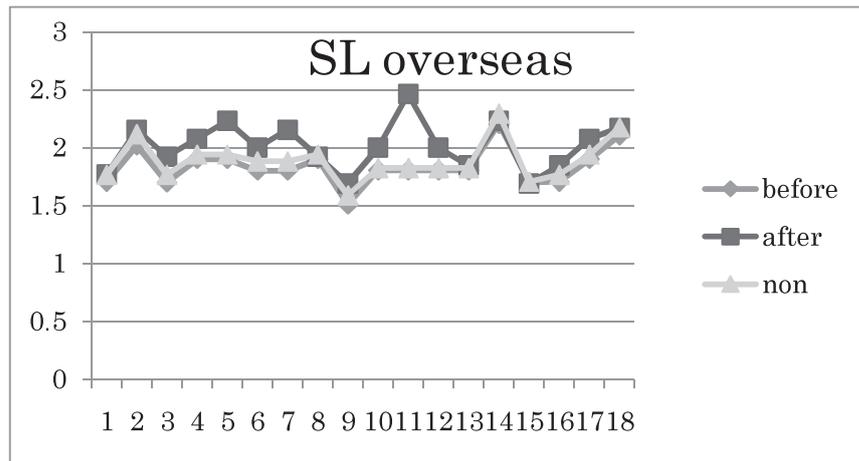


Figure 3 Self – evaluation by overseas SL participant

Note) b indicates before the actual service learning, a indicated after the SL, non indicates non-participation

Qualitative data– Impact on the students participated in SL overseas

Qualitative data shows, positive impact on the students participated in SL overseas include increased personal development, finding new sense of self, understanding their own country more, improving non-language communication skills, realizing what we are losing which we shouldn't, such as humanity and appreciation for others. Strong impact by the street children and social workers with whom they worked with made the students aware of human rights, quality of life as well as understanding our own country.

Student A reports, *“I admire street children's smile although they lead such a hard life. They try to make the most of their lives and they don't complain. They appreciated what we did and I am confident and proud that I did something helpful for others.”* *“I want to work for NGOs who work for street children's education.”*

Student B reports, *“I was lost in India. I regretted not carrying my mobile phone. Soon local people found out my trouble and kindly took me to the agency I was supposed to go by relay play, one lady first and the other next and the third man finally found the place where I was supposed to go. Now I realize we sometimes appreciate humanity more without technology like a mobile phone. I want to work for Indian people and reciprocate them”*

Student C reports *“I taught Japanese ‘origami’ or paper craft to slum children. Unexpectedly they sat quietly for more*

than 30 minutes to finish making paper birds. The social workers at the agency were surprised because they had been trying to make them to sit quietly but always failed. I am very glad that I made them concentrated. I am sure they enjoyed and got satisfaction to complete something and built confidence. That made me confident, too. Children in Japan are usually not interested in simple things like paper crafting and we don't usually have chance to feel any achievement to encourage children.” “I want to convey this message to Children in Japan” “I want to work utilizing this experience.

Student D reports *“I was so worried to attend the SL India because I don't know the local language. But I wanted to deal with children with disabilities in India because I only knew the situation in Japan. First I didn't know what to do but gradually I was able to make myself clear using body language and at the same time I understood what they wanted to say by non-verbal communication. Now I am confident that I can communicate with even children with hearing and speaking problems using nonverbal communication skill” “I didn't have any chance for developing my confidence in Japan, because I was afraid of making mistakes too much. I want to have chance to share my experience.”*

Student E reports *“I was placed at NGO who works for street children's education and I learned the workers knew well which skills were better to deal with the problem. I wish we had more chance to practice to utilize knowledge in Japan, because knowledge doesn't work without practice.”*

Positive subjective evaluation on the students is clear. The students become confident themselves and demand more job opportunity to utilize those experiences. Qualitative findings suggested that service-learning courses should be specifically designed to assist students in making connections between the service experience and the academic material. Students' participation seemed to be very important for sustainability of quality SL programme in order to build their leadership and ownership. And also the students expect some links with their future career and SL experience. The students motivated by SL programme are often disappointed at the reality of job situation in Japan as soon as they return to Japan.

IV Recommendations

The following four key recommendations can be drawn from the earlier sections in order to sustain quality SL for educational benefit and community benefit.

1. Establish more systematic and effective partnership among campus, organizations and the community.
 2. Encourage more students' participation in planning and implementation of SL.
 3. Develop better programmes to promote SL courses related to certifications.
 4. Promote networking for more job opportunity and fund raising.
1. For establishing a more systematic and effective partnership, we need more regular personnel who can work whenever

needed and coordinators who coordinate those stakeholders. The university SL centre can play an important role to organize SL programme. Quick response to community organizations can develop good relationship between the centre and the organization and create more job opportunities for the students.

2. For encouraging more students' participation, faculty and teachers' supervision and support from community are crucial by group discussion and group reflection as well as public relations.
3. For developing and promoting SL courses which issue some certifications so that students can achieve higher status and have more choice. More active non-profit organizations can take responsibility to offer jobs.
4. Promote networking for more job opportunities and fund raising. The SL Centre can hold nationwide conferences to advocate the government officials, local leaders, and corporate people for fund raising. Those conferences play an important role to advocate public and political awareness. A wider range of roles of SL centre to function can contribute to the community welfare and develop job opportunity for the students by partnership among stakeholders^{17), 18)}.

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