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Teacher And Counselor Perceptions of Implementing Service-Learning at a U.S. Virgin Islands School District

Hester Zaethar Philbert
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Hester Z. Philbert nee Brown

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Marcia Griffiths, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Michael Vinella, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2024

Abstract

Teacher And Counselor Perceptions of Implementing Service-Learning at a U.S. Virgin

Islands School District

by

Hester Z. Philbert nee Brown

MS, Walden University, 2018

BA, University of the Southern Caribbean, 1988

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

May 2024

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning with fidelity to best practices consistently in a school district in the U.S. Virgin Islands and to identify resources necessary to support the implementation of best practices in service learning. With only 21% of high school graduates in the Virgin Islands advancing to higher education, understanding and addressing challenges in implementing service-learning is important for enhancing student outcomes. The study, guided by Dewey's theory of experiential education and Kolb's theory of service learning, used semistructured interviews to gather data from 10 teachers and counselors. The 178 codes that emerged from the interviews were organized into nine themes. The challenges identified by participants included aligning activities with curricular objectives, engaging students throughout the process, maintaining fidelity to best practices, establishing and maintaining meaningful community partnerships, and a lack of awareness about service learning. Resources needed to support implementation include service-learning training and professional development, sustained efforts, transportation assistance, and collaboration among teachers, counselors, and community partners. A comprehensive 3-day professional development plan was developed to address the challenges and support the successful and consistent implementation of service-learning in the school district. The findings have implications for educators, administrators, and policymakers in the U.S. Virgin Islands and beyond as they strive to enhance students learning outcomes through experiential and service-based educational approaches.

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Dedication

This document is dedicated to my family. To my husband Royston, thank you for encouraging me to pursue my studies and for sleeping on the couch next to me while I worked late at night or staying on the phone when you were away. To my children Golden, H.A.R.P., and Blossom, who not only encouraged me along and help me troubleshoot when I could not deal with the technology but also drew encouragement for themselves on their educational journey. Stay with the program, and your end will be achieved. Congratulations to you.

I was looking forward to making my mom the *proudest* mom and grandmom in the world by having two generations of her offspring complete terminal degrees in the same year, but that was not to be. She almost took my breath away when hers ended, but I buried my sorrow in this work and could stand firm. Now, I hope my dad will live to see the day, albeit alone.

To all those who played a part in this achievement, thank you.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The local problem explored in this study is that teachers and counselors are not implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practice consistently at a U.S. Virgin Island school district (USVISD). The philosophy of the governing organization stipulates that students must, upon graduation, have developed strong work ethics and be able to function at the entry level of the workplace with experience commensurate to their interests and abilities (Education, 2017). Policy FE05 and FE10 - Philosophy of Education (2003) identifies the denominational educator as an agent of change to whom the student looks for guidance. The educators are to model and infuse Christian values in the process of designing service-learning courses or modules; teachers are responsible for preparing students for service learning and academics by providing the space for reflection. The school district operates under an organized church body with a designated school board and director at different levels of the organization responsible for accreditation and other school governance. Although each school in the district has its own school board, principal, and administrative body, the church is ultimately responsible for the school.

The student handbook for the district states that students must complete 100 service-learning hours as a prerequisite for graduation from the school. While no phrase in the handbook explicitly states that students must begin service learning in the ninth

grade, the counselor advocates for the students to break down the required hours into four blocks of 25 hours each year in high school. Such practice could ensure that students complete the requisite hours for graduation and service-learning endorsement. Service learning is also a mandate of the legislature. The law states that service learning must happen over 3 years, and funded programs may extend for 4 years. Relating to innovative community-based service learning in section 10 F (1)42 Code§ 12563, the school's counselor is to guide students and help them learn about their interests in areas that do not get much attention (Hermawan & Pransiska, 2020). At the same time, developing relationships with community partners and learning hands-on improve their readiness for life outside the classroom. Teachers must find a way to plan and implement the service-learning project in conjunction with the curriculum.

Rationale

A parochial school district in the U.S. Virgin Islands serves as the setting for this study. A Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (2019) report indicated that less than 21% of students in the U.S. Virgin Islands participated in service learning, certificate training, or technical college; it is therefore critical to explore teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning consistently. While some teachers implement service learning, others seem unaware of what service learning is or how to implement it. Teachers whose early education included service learning (Glazier, 2021) tend to have an affinity for service learning more than teachers who did not

experience service learning as students. Thus, this study was designed to explore teacher and counselor perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning with fidelity to best practice consistently and identify resources teachers and counselors believe are needed to support best practice.

At a staff meeting to plan for the 2021-2022 school year, one teacher suggested that the school adopt an area just outside the school's compound to facilitate an ongoing service learning. Another teacher asked why to adopt anywhere outside the school premises when areas in the compound need care. The ensuing discussion indicated a dissonance in the teacher's perception of service-learning. The principal noted that it was evident that some instructors were not clear about what service-learning entails and, as such, were not able to consistently implement service-learning with fidelity to best practice in their subject area.

Some teachers use community service and service-learning interchangeably as if they are the same and they are not. Although there are similarities, there are some critical distinctions. Service learning connects community activities with academics and makes space for reflection (Palmon et al., 2015). Contrary to this, community service is voluntary assistance to communities, individuals, or organizations or compulsory services performed by law offenders as a penalty for offenses against a community in place of other penalties such as incarcerations. While community engagement can lead to transformational learning, service learning explicitly integrates academics and service

that connects students to real-life experiences and time for reflection (Ho et al., 2021). This basic qualitative study explored teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning with fidelity to best practice consistently and identify resources teachers and counselors believe are needed to support best practice.

Definition of Terms

The following terms and definitions were used throughout this project study:

Best practices: Principles that address different facets of a regulator's governance and identify best practices for role clarity, preventing undue influences and maintaining trust, decision-making and governing body structure for independent regulators, accountability and transparency, engagement, funding, and performance evaluation. (OECD, 2021).

Community partnership: Educational partnerships involving interactions and relationships between a school personnel member (typically a teacher, administrator, or staff member) and/or students in a school setting and a community member or organization working towards academic or nonacademic outcomes. The community member may include but is not limited to, a community-based organization (CBO), a nonprofit organization, a civic organization, a religious institution, a local business, a health care professional or group, or an institution of higher education (O'Connor & Daniello, 2019)

Community service: A form of experiential learning that provides students with

the opportunity to engage in authentic activities outside the classroom (Meyer et al. 2019). This differs from service learning in the absence of curricular objectives.

Curricular objectives: The refinements of curriculum aims/goals that specify performance standards or those skills and knowledge that learners are expected to be able to demonstrate; inferred or precise degree of mastery; and the conditions under which the performance will take place (UNESCO, 2021).

Fidelity of implementation: Fidelity of implementation refers to the degree to which teachers and other program providers implement programs as intended by the program developers. (Caroll et al. 2007)

Reflection: The intentional consideration of an experience in considering particular learning objectives; it is the bridge between community service activities and the educational content of the course (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999). This allows students to think about their experiences and connect to their learning.

Service learning: A community engagement pedagogy or teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. (National Youth Leadership Council- Service Learning Glossary, 2021). It is an intentional pedagogy that “ensures that both the service enhances the learning and the learning enhances the service” (Mason & Dunens, 2019, p. 2). An experiential pedagogy that connects classroom theories with real life through a reflective process.

Significance of the Study

The problem addressed in this study was teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practice consistently and identify resources teachers and counselors believe are needed to support best practice at the USVISD. Understanding such perceptions is crucial in helping the school district implement service learning consistently to enhance student outcomes by helping counselors and teachers understand the values of service learning. Such optimization can improve the course design through training and development for faculty (Choo et al., 2019).

Exploring this problem may provide the potential for positive social change by helping teachers and counselors understand the need to improve the pedagogy and expand their perspectives of what it means to be responsible citizens. Service learning at the high school level in the U.S. Virgin Islands is crucial since only a few graduates are successful in higher education. The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2021) noted that as of October 2020, 67% of high school graduates enrolled in college and university. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2020) and the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (2019) also stated that 77.2% completed high school, and 9.0% of youths between 18 and 24 earned a bachelor's degree or higher education. The Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (2019) further indicated that less than 21% of students leaving high school participated in certificate training, technical college, or in-

service-on-the-job training, which could mean that most graduates are unprepared for the job market. It is, therefore, critical to explore counselors' and teachers' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning with fidelity to best practices consistently and identify resources teachers and counselors believe are needed to implement service learning with fidelity to best practices consistently. Ultimately, stakeholders could use the results to support teachers and counselors in implementing service-learning to enhance positive social change.

Research Questions

The problem addressed in this study was teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning consistently at a USVISD. To successfully implement service learning in a school, teachers and counselors must be willing to spend time planning the service learning (Wurdingen & Allison, 2017). The purpose of the study was to explore teacher and counselor perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning with fidelity to best practices consistently and identify what teachers and counselors believe are needed to support best practices. In this basic qualitative study, I used the telephone and the voice memo on the iPad to interview 10 participants from the school district as they responded to 17 semi-structured questions to address the following two research questions:

- RQ 1: - What are teachers and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practices consistently?

- RQ 2: - What resources do teachers and counselors believe are needed to support implementing service learning with fidelity to best practice consistently?

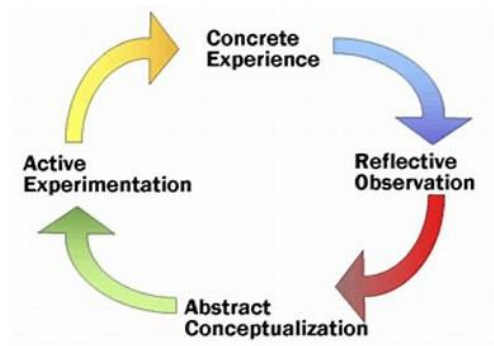
Review of the Literature

The literature review includes peer-reviewed documents between 2017 and 2022, with some references to older documentation, mainly about seminal authors of the conceptual framework that guided the study. Some of the keywords that guide the search include *Service-learning in high school, service-learning in K 12 schools, the counselors' role in service-learning, service-learning in secondary schools, teachers and service-learning, service-learning and workplace readiness, service-learning and community partners, perception of barriers to service-learning readiness, service-learning, and students' outcomes, fidelity to best practices, and established best practices to service-learning*. The articles for this review are available through the following platforms: Google Scholar, EBSCO, ERIC, Science Direct, Academia, Frontier, Walden University Library, Sage Journals, Taylor and Francis, and ProQuest. While each search generates several references to service learning, in some cases, it is necessary to search for updates to some articles to keep current documents no more than 5 years old within the time frame. The review comprises several subsections, covering the conceptual framework, service learning as a tool, service learning for higher education and all levels of learners, the service-learning curriculum, and service learning outside of the United States.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was Dewey's theory of experiential education and Kolb's theory of service learning. Dewey's' experiential education is necessary to a service-learning theory. It suggests that education must be experienced and constructed through group-based activities (Hargraves, 2021). Teachers serve as mentors and facilitators to actively interact with the students to help them create learning that guides their reality.

Kolb's (1984) service-learning theory represents a cyclical experiential learning process and students' reflection (see Figure 1). The learner interacts with the world and then returns to the classroom to reflect and integrate academics with practical experiences. Dewey (1910) stressed experiential education through two lenses: educational processes and educational experiences and experiments. While Kolb also highlighted experiment and experience, he noted that experience consists of abstract experiences and conceptualizations. The experiment consists of active and reflective processes, both of which required learners to use conflict resolution in interacting with the world. Further, Kolb noted that experiential theory combines four dimensions: cognition, behavior, perception, and experience. Experiential learning does not depend on learner outcomes to measure effectiveness but stimulates inquiry (Kolb,1984).

Figure 1*Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning*

Kolb's learning cycle can begin at any stage of learning. While it is ideal to start with concrete experiences, like Kohlberg's stages of moral development, it must follow the sequence (Kurt, 2020). Kolb's theory emphasizes a learner's internal cognitive processes (McLeod, 2023). Hence, the four stages of Kolb's learning cycle. Concrete experiences purported by Kolb means that participants in experiential education experience something mentally or physically that causes them to think more deeply about that experience with the intent of improving the practice. The learner must actively participate in a task for it to become concrete learning (Kurt, 2020). It is after the concrete experience that reflection can happen. In the process, the learner looks for the meaning. Reflective observation reveals discrepancies between one understanding and experiences and asks questions for clarity (Kurt, 2020). At the abstract conceptualization stage, learners interact to classify the learning (Kurt, 2020; Kolb, 1984). They begin to formulate new theories and conclusions based on their experience and learning and add to

the existing truths about the concept. Finally, at the active experimentation level, learners position themselves to act with a goal; they create theories to explain what they observe (Kolb, 1984). They may return to the initial concrete experience, this time to act out what they learned in the three previous stages (Kurt, 2020).

Review of the Broader Problem

Service Learning as a Tool

Intro to service-learning: Service-learning is a tool to prepare students for integration into society with a sense of what they need to know and do as influential members of society (Choo et al., 2019). Dewey, one of the seminal authors of experiential pedagogy, identified service learning as a tool to cultivate democratically minded students through engagement with their community. Service learning promoting civic duty and academic improvement requires sound planning from the teacher, counselor, or school (Choo et al., 2019). Service learning is ideal for all students starting at kindergarten; however, preparation for service learning happens over 4 years, from when students enter high school in the ninth grade to graduation (Curry et al., 2019). Service learning is critical in helping high school students understand classroom theories' usefulness as they successfully navigate real-world experiences (Wilkerson, 2021). Service learning helps students and teachers attain state standards using real-world issues relevant to their immediate environment (Spector et al., 2020). For example, service learning is an effective tool for training preservice teachers to understand and relate to

immigrant students and their culturally and linguistically different parents (Toronyi, 2020).

Benefits of service learning as a way to bridge a gap: Service learning is the bridge that connects high school and university students with the workplace, especially for students with language barriers (Taylor et al., 2019). For those who may experience culture shock, service learning provides the opportunity for students to interact with the community under a protective umbrella while they become acclimatized to the culture and get to know possible employers and the demands of working in a new culture. Service-learning bridges the gap between theory and practice to provide students with avenues to interact with the community to meet their needs and then return to the classroom to reflect on their experiences thereby gaining a deeper understanding of their learning (Resch & Schrittmesser, 2019). Service-learning allows students to interact with the community reciprocally (Dickerson et al., 2020); students who participate in service learning develop civic pride, and their academic outcome improves while providing service to the community (Fung & Fong, 2020).

Service learning as a tool for preservice teachers: Service-learning in the process of teacher preparation programs changes the teacher participants' belief and practice in their role as teachers and students in experiential learning. It has the potential to change the way teachers operate in the K-12 classroom by changing the way they think and act (Glazier & Bean, 2019). Faculty and staff who experience service learning possess

positive perceptions of an employer's support and make employment decisions based on such experiences (Lewing, 2019). Service learning enhances the collaborative skills of teachers (Bonati, 2018). Teacher collaboration works to the advantage of students with special needs is a testament to how collaborative sessions among teachers would create successful outcomes for all students. Service learning is also an effective method for training preservice teachers to interact with diverse student populations. For preservice teachers, learning about inclusive education comes to life when they experience the dynamics of service learning (Austria et al., 2021). Service learning provides the exposure and experience in various aspects of inclusivity, which helped prepare teachers for the inclusive classroom (Austria et al., 2021). This also helps bridge the gap between theory and practice—the preservice classroom and the real world.

Importance of teachers/counselors in service learning: There is a need to explore experiential learning coordinators' opinions, perceptions, feelings, and attitudes and their relationships with the students (Voukelatou, 2019). While the school counselors are the students' advocates, they must also provide support for quality education, promote change, collaborate with the school community, and fill a critical position to coordinate and implement service learning and community engagement that prepares students for life. When teachers can connect with students at an interpersonal level, they are more likely to work and improve outcomes (Han et al., 2022). Teachers' support and providing for the needs of students could determine the success of such students (Cavendish et al.,

2020).

Service-Learning to Prepare Students for the Workplace

Service-learning is for all students: Service-learning for every student is essential as it connects them to the community and fosters civic awareness, improved academic outcomes, and personal growth (Dickerson, 2020). Despite its benefits, only 60% of higher learning institutions and 40% of elementary and secondary schools implement service-learning curricula (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2017). Service-learning is particularly impactful for K-12 students, providing them with the necessary stimuli, interest, and motivation to excel academically, engage with their community (Chiridon, 2017), and enhance their overall outcomes. Inclusive schools should actively support students with service-learning projects to help them identify strength they may not have yet discovered. Spallino (2017) noted that early exposure to service-learning during childhood shapes students' future habits and perspectives, preparing them for success in college/university and beyond. Encouraging student participation in project planning allows for a more meaningful personal, academic, social, and civic-minded growth experience (Billig, 2020). Therefore, it is imperative to promote service-learning initiatives across all educational levels to ensure every student has the opportunity to benefit from its transformative effects.

Service-learning in K-12 pre-service teacher education: Service-learning holds significant potential for shaping future educators into impactful agents of change. While

service-learning remains an under-researched aspect of experiential education in K-12 schools, Glazier et al. (2021) suggests that integrating it into pre-service teacher education programs could empower teacher-learners to become catalysts for positive transformation. Through firsthand experiences teachers gain a deeper understanding of how service-learning impacts students, enabling them to effectively impart these insights to their future students. Moreover, teachers are encouraged to be mindful of the cultural and contextual nuances inherent in service-learning environments, ensuring that students' experiences align with the broader school culture and sensitizing them to potential adjustments needed for successful participation. As highlighted by Wurdinger and Allison (2017), employers increasingly value candidates with experience in service-learning, further emphasizing the importance of incorporating such experiences into pre-service teacher education programs. By nurturing a generation of educators well-versed in the principles and practices of service-learning, we can foster a more inclusive, engaged, and socially conscious educational landscape.

Service-learning is applicable to all students: Service-learning levels the playing field for all students irrespective of race or social status, between privileged and less privileged students; it is imperative for fostering equity and empowering all students. By engaging in service-learning, students develop essential skills such as civic awareness, democracy, and habits that promote continued growth and development (Solano, 2020). Additionally, service-learning interactions with the community foster resilience and

challenge student to strive for success, regardless of their background. Lee et al. (2019) highlights the transformative impact of service-learning on underrepresented students, providing them with opportunities to pursue careers in engineering. Notably, service-learning experiences can also shift the perspectives of privileged students, as evidenced by Lee et al.'s (2019) study, where a privileged student became sensitized to the disparities between different socio-economic groups and committed to addressing them. Moreover, service-learning fosters creativity and critical thinking skills, especially when students are confronted with challenges in the natural world.

Solano (2020) underscores the importance of service-learning in addressing challenges faced by minorities and marginalized individuals, including barriers to school attendance and dropout rates. Service-learning projects within communities offer a supportive environment for nurturing youth successes and reducing school dropout rates among these groups. While financial constraints may pose challenges for some schools in implementing service-learning initiatives, international service-learning projects can serve as a catalyst for encouraging underrepresented students, regardless of their economic background, to pursue careers in fields like engineering. By providing equitable access to service-learning opportunities, we can empower students from all backgrounds to thrive and contribute positively to society.

Why is Service-Learning Necessary?

Service-learning is necessary to provide exposure and experience for learners. It is dynamic and an integral component within specific courses rather than a permanent fixture of one's school life. Whether mandated at particular educational levels, serving as a prerequisite for certain courses, or a requirement for graduation, service-learning presents varying degrees of enthusiasm among students, with some initially resistant to its inclusion in the curriculum. However, research by Chan et al. (2021) suggests that students' attitudes often evolve positively after engaging in service-learning, as they gain exposure and experience, recognizing its inherent advantages. Service-learning is crucial for building students' skills such as civic awareness, democracy, and habits conducive to growth and development, particularly benefiting those from underprivileged, backgrounds who may need to develop empathy and understanding for others. Furthermore, service-learning fosters creativity and critical thinking skills through real-world challenges and interactions with the community.

McKinney et al. (2021) argue that while service-learning is beneficial in preparing student for careers and navigating higher education and the workplace, some students fail to recognize its relevance or connection to academics. However, service-learning is beneficial for all students, regardless of socioeconomic or cognitive background, as noted by Garland (2020). It is also gender-neutral, according to Clifford et al. (2020), although the engagement of community partners may vary based on students' gender and past

experiences. Despite potential challenges, service-learning remains an invaluable pedagogical approach that empowers students and enriches their learning experiences, bridging the gap between academic knowledge and real-world application.

Teachers and Counselors Support Service-Learning

Collaborative efforts from teachers and administrators: Implementing service-learning intentions require a collaborative effort from teachers and school administrators, as they guide students through reflective processes and redefine their roles in the classroom. In the realms of service-learning, teachers and school administrators play pivotal roles in guiding students through reflective processes and redefining their roles in the classroom. Furco and Novell (2019) emphasize the importance of teachers in preparing students for service-learning experiences and facilitating reflective sessions to validate the learning process. Teachers must transition from being the sole authority figure to becoming guides who assist students in achieving academic growth and personal goals through service and reflection (Gargallo et al., 2018). It is essential to carefully design and implement projects to avoid casual contact the real-world activities that may lead to unexpected adverse outcomes (Connor & Erickson, 2017). Moreover, teachers need to share the stage with students, especially during reflective sessions, to ensure that the learning process is collaborative and enriching for all participants.

The crucial role of school counselors: School counselors play a crucial role in guiding students through their service-learning involvement and advocating for their

interests and objectives. Hermawan & Praniska (2020) highlight the responsibility of counselors in providing comprehensive support for students' service-learning endeavors and collaborating with the school community to promote positive change. They must be well-versed in service-learning requirements and curriculum objectives to effectively monitor and guide students through the process (Curry et al., 2019). Additionally, educators and counselors must commit time to collaborate, plan, and design service-learning projects to ensure their successful implementation (Wurdinger & Allison, 2017). By bridging the gap between academics and real-world applications, service-learning equips students with valuable skills for the job market (Glazier et al., 2021). Advocating for service-learning integration, McKinney et al. (2021) stress the importance of connecting academic theories with practical skills acquired through community engagement, ultimately closing the gap between classroom learning and real-world experiences.

Service Learning and Community Partners

Community partners role in service-learning: Community partners play a crucial role in service-learning, yet literature often overlooks the benefit they receive from these partnerships (Matthew, 2019; Mironesco, 2018). While students contribute valuable assistance to community partners through their work, Mironesco noted that community partners desire more input into the structure of service-learning projects and the behavior of students during their time in the workplace. Despite concerns about unprofessional

behavior, community partners recognize service-learning as an opportunity to collaborate with schools in preparing students for post-graduation success. To optimize these partnerships, teachers and counselors must collaborate closely with community partners, leveraging their expertise to better prepare students for the real world (Lebovits & Bharath, 2019; Furco & Norvell, 2019). By working together, educators and community partners can ensure that service-learning projects benefits both students and the community, whether through improved outcomes, free marketing, or other tangible benefits. This collaboration also facilitates better preparation and placement of students based on their career needs and preferences, ultimately enhancing the professional development of students participating in service-learning.

Service-learning strengthens school-community relationships: Service-learning serving as an ideal way to enhance ties between schools, families, and neighborhoods, ultimately benefiting students' outcomes and improving society (Valli et al., 2022). Schools that prioritize building relationships with community partners enable students to easily find service-learning opportunities that support academic growth (Loria, 2018), foster exploration of societal issues, and prepare them for future endeavors. Additionally, some school districts utilize their facilities as community learning centers outside of regular school hours, further integrating service-learning into academic preparation for college and careers (O'Brien, 2015).

In a study examining the perceptions of six teachers, both novice and veteran,

from a K-12 school in San Antonio, Losser et al. (2018) identified various factors influencing the implementation of service-learning. Veteran teachers were more adept at responding to students' needs and navigating the challenges of new strategies compared to their novice counterparts. However, both groups identified 21 factors that facilitate or hinder the implementation of service-learning in schools. Despite the numerous benefits associated with service-learning, its adoption remains relatively low, with fewer than 30% of K-12 schools implementing such programs (Losser et al.) Common deterrents include the pressure of high-stakes testing, time constraints, teachers' lack of awareness, and challenges related to professional development, resources, and funding, particularly for novice teachers who struggle with management issues.

Service-Learning and Students' Motivation

Service-learning serves as a potent motivator for students to achieve their goals and excel academically while preparing for future success through collaborative efforts between school and community partners. Unlike traditional education, service-learning is not mandatory but offers significant motivation for students, as noted by Ceisielkiewicz and Nocito (2018), who found that students were more motivated in service-learning programs compared to traditional learning environments. Students perceive service-learning as providing more utility and relevance to real-world activities leading to increased appreciation and motivation to excel both physically and mentally, as highlighted by Lewing (2019). Furthermore, service-learning enhances students' civic

responsibility, knowledge, skills, collaborative disposition, self-efficacy, work performance, and self-esteem, all vital for success in the workplace.

Service-learning also contributes to the development of Positive Psychological Capital (PsyCap), as demonstrated by research cited by McElvany (2011), which emphasizes its predictive validity in preparing learners for future careers. Students engaged in service-learning demonstrate improved abilities to balance academic and extracurricular activities, thereby enhancing their prosocial skills and fostering a sense of community service. Further, service-learning integrates academic learning with practical application, refining students' decision-making processes and promoting cultural awareness within their communities. Through these multifaceted benefits, service-learning not only motivates students to excel but also equips them with essential skills and values for future success in their careers and beyond.

Service-Learning Online

There are many different ways to do service-learning. The shift to Work-From-Home (WFH) service-learning, brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, has transformed the traditional service-learning landscape, offering students greater flexibility in their schedules while working remotely (Wong et al., 2021). However, this newfound autonomy has also presented challenges, as students and their supervisors forfeit opportunities to immerse themselves in organizational cultures, as highlighted by Wong et al. (2021). WFH service-learning projects, while offering flexibility, have

hindered students' ability to problem-solve in real-time and collaborate effectively due to reliance on virtual platforms like Zoom, as noted by Fede et al. (2018). Additionally, the absence of in-person collaboration with community partners has deprived students of valuable experiences typically gained through traditional service-learning initiatives.

Teachers and counselors, responsible for implementing service-learning projects in K-12 schools, have faced increased challenges in planning, implementing, and monitoring student projects amidst the pandemic (Bolick, Glazier, & Stutts, 2020). Training sessions have become crucial, particularly for educators lacking prior experience with service-learning, to effectively guide and monitor students through these initiatives. Bolick et al.'s (2020) study on teacher beliefs and practices in service-learning revealed the transformative potential of immersive experiences within teacher education programs, highlighting the need for educators to integrate experiential learning, such as service-learning, into traditional classroom settings.

In the realm of experiential education, the community serves as both the student's classroom and partner, fostering mutual growth and learning (Chan, 2021). Despite initial hesitations, students' perspectives on service-learning often shift positively after engaging in such experiences, emphasizing the fluid nature of their perceptions, as noted by Chan et al. (2021). While some may view service-learning skeptically, particularly in terms of child labor and exploitation, for K-12 students facing language or cultural barriers, it serves as a valuable tool for integration into new societies. Ultimately, the evolving

perceptions of both students and educators underscore the transformative potential of service-learning experiences and highlight the importance of fostering knowledge and understanding to promote positive engagement with such initiatives.

Service-Learning: For Higher Education or all Learners

Service-learning is a transformative educational approach that benefits students across all levels of the educational spectrum, including those with special needs. Bonati (2018) emphasizes the importance of collaboration between general and special education teachers in planning and implementing service-learning projects to ensure positive student outcomes. Effective communication and collaborative planning enable teachers to tailor assignments according to individual students' needs, fostering a supportive environment where students can work together to achieve shared goals. However, Choo et al. (2019) highlight the need for pedagogical training for teachers to effectively implement service-learning initiatives, as the success or failure of such projects often hinges on how teachers integrate service-learning into their teaching practices.

In the context of special education, Cavendish et al. (2020) examine how collaboration among special education teachers influences students' learning experiences during service-learning projects. Their qualitative study underscores the significance of teachers' understanding of students' needs and their ability to provide appropriate support throughout the implementation of curricular activities. Teachers' perceptions and support play a crucial role in guiding students through the complexities of service-learning,

ensuring that students derive meaningful learning outcomes from their participation.

Educators' understanding of students' perceptions and experiences of community engagement is essential for shaping effective service-learning practices. Mitchell & Latta (2020) stress the importance of faculty engaging students in critical service learning that challenges existing perceptions and fosters new ways of thinking about service-learning experiences. To facilitate this process, teachers and counselors require specific training to identify innovative service-learning opportunities and the willingness to integrate such projects into their educational practices effectively. By embracing collaborative approaches, providing tailored support, and engaging students in critical reflection, educators can create enriching service-learning experiences that empower students to reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

The Service-Learning Curriculum

The service-learning curriculum paradigm aims to cultivate civic outcomes for students, preparing them for career success and personal growth beyond the confines of traditional schooling. Choo, Kong, et al. (2019) conducted a study at a polytechnic school in Singapore, emphasizing the role of teachers in contributing to the success or failure of service-learning projects. Their research underscored the importance of curricular integration and how teachers' implementation of service-learning methodologies influences student outcomes. Additionally, Curry (2019) highlighted the critical role of counselors in promoting and explaining service-learning programs, ensuring their

effective implementation, and assisting in evaluation efforts within K-12 schools.

Godoy et al. (2021) extended the exploration of service-learning to Astral University in Chile, focusing on the experiences of teacher-tutors and student nurses. Their study revealed the development of students' competencies and the need for additional support, such as dedicated training and policy initiatives, to facilitate effective service-learning implementation. Similarly, Lebovits and Bharath (2019) emphasized educators' responsibility in designing service-learning projects that foster democratic ideals and critical thinking skills necessary for workplace success.

Overall, service-learning plays a crucial role in empowering students to become active contributors to their communities, fostering their personal and professional growth and transforming educators' perceptions of teaching and learning processes. Lewing (2019) conducted a cross-sectional survey to examine individuals' perceptions of remaining employed with organizations involved in community engagement. The study indicated that significant correlation between undergraduate service-learning experiences and participants' decision to remain with such organizations, highlighting the impact of service-learning on future workforce mobilization and community engagement. As educators continue to navigate the complexities of integrating service-learning into curricula, ongoing support, training, and collaborative efforts are essential to maximize its potential in enhancing student outcomes and community impact.

Service-Learning Outside the United States

Service-learning is impactful regardless of students' location, as demonstrated by various studies across different institutions outside the United States of America. At Hong Kong PolyU, Ma et al. (2018) found that service-learning positively influenced university students' perceptions and readiness for their future careers, with subjective evaluation forms and reflective journals supporting this conclusion. Similarly, Natadjaja and Yuwono (2019) explored the effect of service-learning on packaging design students at Petra Christian University in Indonesia. They observed a shift from passive to active learning as students engaged with real-world problems, modifying their designs to address community needs and collaborating with community partners. Shek et al. (2019a) linked service-learning to positive youth development, emphasizing its role in fostering students' personal and academic growth. Spector et al. (2020) demonstrated how service-learning strategies can effectively align with state standards, providing preservice teachers with practical experiences to enhance their understanding and application of educational concepts. These studies highlight the transformative potential of service-learning in preparing students for the workforce, promoting active learning, and fostering civic engagement across diverse educational settings.

Service-Learning and Consistent Implementation

Consistent implementation of the service-learning curriculum significant impacts students' outcomes as highlighted by research findings. Scales et al. (2022) emphasize

the importance of teachers' preparation and implementation of service-learning, indicating that the duration and intensity of students' engagement, guidance from instructors, consistency, and reflection time are crucial factors contributing to successful service-learning experiences. Additionally, the study suggests that dedicating more than 50 hours to service-learning activities is necessary to achieve the desired positive effects on both social and academic outcomes. The effectiveness of service-learning is closely linked to the extent of students' engagement in all aspects of the project and the opportunity for reflection, as noted by Faber (2017) and supported by Conner et al. (2017). Successful outcomes in service-learning projects are also contingent upon the active involvement of program sponsors, who play a vital role in facilitating integration and collaboration between students and community partners, as emphasized by Chang et al. (2011) and Houshmand et al. (2014). Scales et al. (2022) further underscore the correlation between the amount of time students invest in service-learning activities and the subsequent positive outcomes, as evidenced by their study comparing a service-learning group with a controlled group.

Implications

The study explores teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges associated with consistently implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practices in the USVISD. The findings from this study contribute to identifying resources that teachers and counselors believe are necessary to support best practices in service-

learning. This research sheds light on the difficulties encountered by teachers and counselors in maintaining fidelity to best practices in service-learning and highlights the resources they deem essential for enhancing implementation. The implications of this study extend to informing recommendations for addressing the challenges identified, such as the development of a policy on service-learning evaluation and the provision of professional development opportunities. Additionally, the study identifies resources deemed crucial by teachers and counselors to support best practices in service-learning implementation. Moving forward, the project study may explore further recommendations aimed at improving the overall effectiveness and sustainability of service-learning initiatives within the USVISD.

Summary

Section 1 identified a problem relating to service-learning at a school district in the United States Virgin Islands, regarding teachers' and counselors' perceptions of monitoring and guiding students' service-learning projects with fidelity to best practice and identified resources teachers and counselors believed were needed to support best practice. Service-learning is an experiential pedagogy in which reflection plays a pivotal role in connecting service to the community with curriculum and theories from the classroom (Dubinsky, 2021). Experiential pedagogy was Dewey's pragmatic belief that students learn by doing (Hargraves, 2021); as they interact with their environment, they adapt to learn. Similarly, Kolb's (1984) service-learning theory posits that students learn

best when classroom theories to real-life experiences connect. The document included a problem, rationale, evidence of the issue among teachers and administration of the school district, supporting literature, and the methodology. The literature identified resources to investigate service-learning and showed the benefits to students from k-12 schools and beyond to bring about civic awareness and improved academic outcomes. It showed how teachers' and counselors' involvement in monitoring and guiding students' service-learning supports their development and readiness to participate in the larger community. Questions for the study aligned with an experiential service-learning conceptual framework that sought to understand teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service learning with fidelity to best practices and identified resources teachers and counselors believed were needed to improve the pedagogy. Section 2 identified the methodology as a qualitative design that guided the study and data analysis methods.

Section 2: The Methodology

The basic qualitative study was conducted to explore teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of consistently implementing service learning with fidelity to best practice and identify resources teachers and counselors believed were needed to support best practice. The study was a basic qualitative design, as qualitative research is consistent with exploring perceptions. This section includes a description of the methodology and study design, an outline of basic research methodologies, and why the method of choice was most appropriate for the study. The section also outlines the role of the researcher, the data collection instrument, the number of participants, and their relation to the study.

Research Design and Approach

The problem addressed in this study was teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of consistently implementing service learning with fidelity to practice and identify resources teachers and counselors believed were needed to support best practice at the U.S. Virgin Islands School District (USVISD). Based on the purpose of the study, I used the basic qualitative research approach. Basic qualitative research is used to understand how people construct their world.

The research was exploratory and to explain how and why the particular social phenomenon service learning operated the way it did in the context as participants interpreted their experiences and the meaning they gave to those experiences to improve

practice (Mahajan, 2018). I used an inductive method in a basic qualitative design to guide data collection and analysis. I gained an in-depth understanding of the educational processes and practices of experiential learning consistent with Dewey's (1910) and Kolb's (1984) theory of service learning.

Justification for Research Design and Approach

Most research studies employ one of three methods: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed. Quantitative research is a process of collecting and analyzing numeric data to generate new knowledge and understanding of the social world (Bhandari, 2020). The results provide numeric and scientific answers to a phenomenon and its effect on society as realized through the samples (Allen, 2017). In quantitative studies, the researcher seeks to quantify information using variables to test theories and establish facts (Streefkerk, 2022). The study was not intended to quantify information by using variables to test theories and establish the facts; therefore, a quantitative method was not chosen.

Mixed-method study design combines quantitative analytics with qualitative concepts to increase understanding of what works, how, why, and for whom it works. The mixed-method research design offers the best of quantitative and qualitative methods in a way that neither of the other two designs could as separate designs (Caruth, 2013). However, the study was not trying to prove a hypothesis nor combine design elements of quantitative analytics with qualitative concepts to increase understanding of what works, how, why, and for whom it works. Instead, qualitative research methods help the

researcher to take an in-depth look into the lived experiences of the people they study to understand what is going on and how they make meaning of their experiences (Grossoehme, 2014).

The basic qualitative method allowed the researcher to understand the phenomenon in the local setting (Bartunek & Seo, 2016) and does not deem the findings applicable on a larger scale. There are several types of qualitative research methods: ethnographic, narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, and case study. While most of the methods used similar techniques and data collection tools, the one a researcher chooses will depend on the purpose of the study. The current study used a basic qualitative design to identify teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of consistently implementing service learning with fidelity to best practice and identified resources teachers and counselors believed were needed to support best practice. Basic qualitative research is a naturalistic approach based on humanistic perspectives rather than empirical data. It engages minor aspects of other qualitative methods (Averill, 2013). Basic qualitative research design embraces a constructivist paradigm (Biddix, 2009) with small sample sizes and data collection emanating from interviews, observation, and archival data, and interpretations as a combination of data collection and the researchers' perspective.

Narrative research was not ideal for this research because it uses storytelling (Wolgemuth & Agosto, 2019) or pictures and inquiry to tell a story as the primary form

of data collection. I set out to explore participants' perceptions rather than their life stories; therefore, a narrative methodology was not suitable. Although closely related to basic qualitative research, the phenomenological research method was not appropriate either because it focuses on the meaning individuals give to their experiences (Patton, 2002) so that the reader understands the experience. Further, grounded theory methodology sets out to construct or discover a theory from data (Tie et al., 2019), but this research sought to explore perceptions rather than create or discover a theory. Ethnographic research was not appropriate for the study either; it sets out to study people groups within their natural native context. Ethnography involves immersing oneself into a community to get first-hand information about the culture and behavior of the people and then write about it (Caulfield, 2020). Although ethnography provides a deep understanding of a shared culture, it was unsuitable for this study since the emphasis was on the participants' perceptions rather than the community or their experiences. The case study methodology was also unsuitable for this research. A case study does not necessarily focus on people (Rashid et al., 2019). It uses a variety of data sources to inform policymakers, especially in health sciences, and relates to one- person, family, group, organization, or community. To address the purpose of the study, a basic qualitative approach was the preferred qualitative method.

Participants

Criteria for Selecting Participants

The participants for this study were 10 teachers and counselors from a population of 35 possible participants in a small parochial school district within the U.S. Virgin Islands, referred to as USVISDS, where community service forms part of the general curriculum. Service learning differs from community service by placing a stronger emphasis on academic and personal growth (Furco, 1996); unlike community service and voluntarism, service learning intentionally and explicitly links community service to academic instructions (Filges et al., 2022). The participants came from the pool of counselors, homeroom and subject teachers, and one substitute who worked as teachers within the school district for two or more years.

Participants were recruited for the study by employing data sampling and convenience sampling. There are two types of convenience sampling: common and probability (Stratton, 2021). I used probability convenience sampling based on regular or average availability, which helps to reduce the risk of biases in the research results (Stratton, 2021). All the participants for the study were recruited based on the following criteria: (a) teachers and/or counselors, (b) were from K-12 schools within the district, and (c) each participant had worked in the district for at least 2 years. Since the study was conducted to explore the perceptions of teachers and counselors, and the district was small, it was decided that the confidentiality of participants was important. Therefore,

each participant was contacted individually. The superintendent who authorized my study also provided a list of the teachers and counselors in the district from which I drew the samples.

Accessing the Participants

After Walden University's Institutional Review Board permitted me to begin contacting participants for the research (approval no.04-06-23-0870741), I began to identify possible participants. While I was acquainted with some of the possible participants, I was not familiar with the available population since the district included more than one school. I randomly selected participants from the list who taught middle to high school and sent them letters of invitation using my institution email. The letter was sent as an attachment, and participants were notified that they would have 1 week to review the document and respond or I would contact them by phone. Two individuals responded within the week and indicated that they would be happy to participate but were unable to do so due to the 2-year limit of employment in the district.

Establishing a Researcher-Participants Working Relationship

Since I did not receive any response from the invitees within the week except for the two who could not participate, I decided to contact each person either by phone or in person. A few of those contacted in person apologized for not responding and those I contacted via phone, most of them accepted the invitation, and two of them turned down the invitation for various reasons. Once participants accepted the invitation, I proceeded

to negotiate an accepted time for the interview. All participants were required to sign the consent form before arranging an interview time and date. During the pre-interview sessions, I took time to encourage the participants to read the document explaining what the interview would be about. Each participant was informed that the decision to participate was theirs and that there were no consequences or repercussions for choosing not to participate. Each recruit was allowed to choose the date and time of their interview with strict instructions that it was confidential, and the participant should choose a safe space to interview in.

Setting and Sample Participants

This study took place in a small school district in the U.S. Virgin Islands; the schools in the community are part of a larger organization with six schools, including one preschool, two K-6 schools, and three K-12 schools. All counselors and teachers within the USVISD who were employees within the district for at least 2 years were candidates for participating. However, since I needed to figure out the employment span for each person, I sent invitations to about 15 recruits. Those who were not eligible to participate due to the limitation of 2 years quickly responded, and the others I had to contact by phone. A few teachers and counselors who did not respond to my letter also never responded to my call, as they had ended their tenure at the study site. Some were excited to participate, while others who I felt would have been excellent participants expressed their preference not to participate, and another group kept promising to get back to me

but never did. However, 10 participants consisting of counselors and teachers formed the sample size for this study.

The 10 participants in this study served the school district at the middle to high school level for an accumulated 112 years. Table 1 represents the demographics of the 10 participants who consented to participate in this study. The participant with the highest number of years totaled 35 years in various positions at one study site, and the participant with the lowest number of years had 3 years. While most of the participants reported some involvement in service learning, others were not aware of the term service learning.

Table 1

Demographics of Study Participants

Participant	Gender	Years employed	Grade Level
1	Female	3	7-11
2	Female	2+	8-11
3	Male	4	4-12
4	Male	19	7-12
5	Male	13+	7-9
6	Male	17	All grades
7	Female	11+	4-6
8	Male	3	6-8
9	Male	4	Undisclosed
10	Male	35	All Grades

Note. Participants with all grades have direct contact with all students at the study site.

The participant marked undisclosed did not mention the grades taught during the interview.

Data Collection

Instrument

The instrument for data collection in the study consisted of semistructured interviews with open-ended questions developed by me. Seventeen open-ended questions were asked of each participant, and they were allowed to respond and elaborate on their assertions. All the interviews were one-on-one telephone interviews recorded on voice memos and later transcribed into text. Semi structured interviews allow researchers to gather more in-depth information from participants than other types of interviews (Ruslin & Alhabsyi, 2022). Each recording was transcribed using Amber Script and then imported to ATLAS.ti.23. Atlas.ti is a qualitative research tool used for coding and analyzing qualitative data. This promoted an opportunity for the research to reach saturation—a point at which there are no new emerging themes and respondents' answers provide the same or very similar results (Weller et al., 2018).

Each session began with a briefing session in which each participant was informed that the interview would be recorded; they were also informed of their rights relating to their participation and the option to end the interview at any time without repercussions. All participants completed the interview and each interview ended with a debriefing session. During the debriefing session, each participant was informed that they would receive a copy of the transcribed interview, which they were to read through and clarify any statement that did not convey their thoughts before I continued. Member

checking is critical to establishing the credibility of data in qualitative research (Candela, 2019). The interviewees were also assured that no one else would have access to the recording or the transcripts which would be held for the next 5 years before disposal. Each participant was further promised a gift card in appreciation of their participation; they were assured of an invite when the findings were presented at the end of the study.

Before I began the interviews, I identified participants from a list of employees from the two study sites. I sent each participant a letter explaining the purpose and process of the interview and requesting their signature as consent to participate. All participants were consenting adults. I follow Kadam's (2017) approach, which refers to the consent process as the cornerstone of ethical research. This process allowed me to clearly inform participants about the research in language they understood and seek permission to use their data as part of a larger study. I assured participants of confidentiality and made it clear that the data would not implicate them in any way.

Before interviewing began, participants were identified from a list of employees. After waiting for seven days, I began contacting the invitees to secure their consent and provide further details about the purpose of the interviews. Some invitees declined the request for various reasons; however, since only I knew identities of the invitees, their acceptance or refusal did not affect the confidentiality of the study. The invitation letter and the consent form (see Appendix 2 & 3) emphasized the confidentiality of participants' information and their right to decline participation at any time without

facing any consequences.

Once the invitees agreed to participate in the research and sent their signed consent form, we scheduled a time for the interview. At the beginning of each interview, I expressed gratitude to each participant for consenting to take part in the research and assured them that they could withdraw from the interview at any point if they wished. Participant was encouraged to elaborate on any question they deemed important to the study. they were also reminded that the interviews would be recorded, transcribed and used as part of the data, to which they all agreed. All participants completed the interview, and at the end of each session, they were promised a gift card as a token of appreciation for their participation.

Systems for Keeping Track of Data

Prior to commencing the data collection process, I obtained permission from the superintendent of the district to conduct my research within the designated area. I ensured the superintendent of the confidentiality of the information collected, emphasizing that no school administrators should be notified about the research. Subsequently, I received lists of employees from the study sites, facilitating the recruitment process. However, I encountered challenges with an outdated list from the distant sites, leading to redundant efforts to contact some recruits. Despite initial difficulties, I successfully connected with the recruits, and in instances where the initial invitation was not received, I promptly resorted to alternative communication methods, such as modified email addresses.

All written correspondence with recruits, participants, and myself was conducted through my Walden email, dedicated exclusively to matters related to Walden University. This ensured the confidentiality of participants' information, as accessing the student portal required Microsoft two-way verification. I conducted interviews with nine participants via phone and one participant in person, with the decision influenced by factors such as travel cost limitations and participant comfort. Telephone interviews also aligned with ethical considerations, ensuring the separation of work time for work-related activities and avoiding interviews with participants at the same site.

All interviews were recorded with participants' consent using voice memos on my personal iPad, which only I had access to. Subsequently, the voice memos were securely transferred to a locked notes folder accessible only through a password known to me. Participants were provided with transcribed copies of their interviews via email, with instructions to review and make any necessary corrections. In instances where no response was received after two weeks, I followed up with three participants via phone to confirm receipt of the transcript. Participant checking, as identified by Candela (2019), was emphasized as essential for establishing and maintaining data credibility in qualitative research, enabling clarification of transcription errors and the addition of new information. Additionally, participants were assured that their information would be kept confidential for five years before being discarded, aligning with ethical standards and research practices.

I informed participants that their information would be maintained confidentially for a period of five years before being securely discarded. The process of sending the transcript back to participants for verification is commonly referred to as member checking. As outlined by Candela (2019), member checking plays a crucial role in enhancing the credibility of qualitative research data by providing an opportunity for participants to verify the accuracy of their contributions, identify any transcription errors, and offer additional insights or information.

Role of the Researcher

As an educator with nearly a decade of experience in the school district, I've observed firsthand the challenges students face in transitioning to the workforce post-graduation. My interest in experiential education stems from my previous role in a school system that prioritized such programs, requiring students to complete experiential learning hours as a prerequisite for graduation. Witnessing the positive impact of experiential education on student attitudes and performance inspired me to explore its potential further.

During my pursuit of a master's degree, I encountered a course focused on service-learning, which resonated deeply with me. Recognizing the transformative potential of service-learning, I advocated for its implementation within my school district, urging colleagues and counselors to consider its benefits over traditional community service programs. As a business educator, I faced the challenge of engaging

students in subjects like Office Procedures, where traditional classroom instruction often fell short. Inspired by service-learning principles, I sought to provide students with real-world experiences by connecting them with community partners. This approach not only enhanced student engagement but also fostered meaningful learning experiences, as evidenced by the outcomes observed in my Office Procedures class, aligning with findings by Li, Ochsner, and Wayne (2019).

In designing my doctoral research, I aimed to investigate the impact of service-learning within the district, opting for semi-structured telephone interviews to minimize potential bias. Following Creswell's (2012) guidance, telephone interviews were chosen to ensure a neutral environment for participants, allowing for candid discussions without the influence of in-person interactions. By expanding the scope of my research to the district level, I aimed to gather diverse perspectives from participants unaffiliated with me personally, maintaining the integrity of the study and avoiding potential biases.

Data Analysis

Bowen (2009) and Yin (2014) emphasized the importance of data analysis in qualitative research, highlighting its role in interpreting and attributing meaning to collected data. Following transcription of voice recordings, data analysis commenced, with a key step being member checking, as outlined by Candela (2019), to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the data. Securing participants' permission for member checking was crucial in mitigating potential researcher biases. Each session concluded

with a debriefing, underscoring confidentiality and addressing participant concerns. Raw data, obtained through voice recordings, underwent transcription using Amber Script. Subsequently, transcripts were shared with participants for verification and correction, facilitating member checking.

The analytical process commenced with open coding, a pivotal step identified by Linneberg and Kersgaard (2019) in transforming raw data into a coherent narrative. Following transcription, participants were invited to engage in member checking, after which data documents were exported to ATLAS.ti.23 software for coding. Employing Bhandari's (2019) inductive/bottom-up coding approach, I iteratively identified and entered possible codes into the software, guided by research questions and literature review findings. Leveraging the software's AI-enabled capability, additional codes were generated, modified, and integrated into the codebook.

Initial coding yielded 178 codes, which increased to 188 codes upon further examination, eventually consolidating into 159 codes organized into color-coded groups. Codes sharing similar characteristics were merged to form networks for comprehensive coding, aligning with Tomaszew et al.'s (2020) observations regarding qualitative research decision-making. While navigating software challenges, I attended a webinar and reviewed its recording multiple times to create and validate codes. I then focused on data categories emerging from open coding, identifying relationships and addressing redundancies through code integration. Concept maps, bar charts, and co-occurrence

tables were utilized to visualize data relationships and enhance triangulation, ensuring data validity and trustworthiness as recommended by Noble & Heale (2019).

Discrepant Cases

In this study, I conducted interviews with ten participants and transcribed the audio data into written transcripts. Subsequently, I thoroughly reviewed each transcript, a process which served multiple purposes including the identification of new codes to facilitate the development of emergent themes and the identification of discrepant cases. Among the interviewees, I identified one participant, referred to as D7, as a discrepant case.

Participant D7's experience with service-learning differed significantly from the other participants. In their educational setting, service-learning was emphasized as a means of reintegrating individuals into mainstream society rather than as a method of connecting classroom learning with real-world experiences. For instance, when asked about their substantive role at the study site, Participant D7 responded by highlighting the role of their educational institution in facilitating students' reintegration into society through human services and treatment. Similarly, Participant D7's response to a question about their comfort level with implementing service-learning was ambiguous, indicating a desire for students to "get away" and engage in hands-on learning without directly addressing their comfort level with service-learning.

Upon reviewing the transcribed document, Participant D7 did not identify any

inaccuracies or offer any corrections. However, during the coding process, their responses formed standalone codes as they did not connect to any neighboring comments or themes. This suggests that Participant D7's perspectives and experiences regarding service-learning were unique and did not align with the broader themes identified in the study.

Researcher Bias

Asfaw et al. (2019) emphasized the significance of debriefing sessions in mitigating potential preconceived biases among data collectors and researchers. To address personal biases, I ensured that each participant received comprehensive instructions regarding the topic and definition of service-learning in the invitation letter. Additionally, at the outset of each session, participants were thanked for their consent to contribute to the data and informed about the recording, transcription, and subsequent member checking process.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, with one participant interviewed in person and the remaining nine via audio-only telephone conversations. Participants were explicitly informed of their freedom to discontinue the interview without repercussions, aligning with Creswell's (2012) assertion that telephone interviews aid in minimizing researcher biases. Furthermore, participants were notified that they had a two-day window to withdraw their interviews, with detailed explanations provided regarding data storage and confidentiality measures

While exploring participants' perceptions at the study sites, many individuals drew upon past experiences from previous settings. I facilitated an environment where participants felt comfortable leveraging their past experiences to guide the conversation, thus reducing my potential influence on their perceptions. This approach aimed to foster candid discussions and enhance the authenticity of participants' responses.

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study stemmed from the small population size, consisting of only 20 potential participants, which consequently impacted the sample size. Out of the 20 possible participants, one individual expressed regret due to not meeting the minimum two-year employment requirement in the school district. Another invitee cited ill-health as a barrier to participation, while one more struggled to find a suitable time outside of school hours. Consequently, the number of participants was reduced. Additionally, 10 participants represented 50 percent of the available pool. Interviews were predominantly conducted over the telephone, with only one participant interviewed in person. While Creswell (2012) suggests that telephone interviews mitigate researcher bias, Gray et al.'s (2020) findings in the Qualitative Report indicate limitations due to the absence of physical presence, which precluded the observation of body language and other non-verbal cues.

Achieving data saturation, a key objective of thematic analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018), involves continuing data collection until responses consistently convey similar

themes. However, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019), the interpretation of data, rather than exhaustive data collection, determines when data collection ceases. Based on the 17 interview questions (see Appendix B), along with follow-up inquiries, notes, and submissions from participants, it is evident that this research reached a point where emerging themes authentically represent the participants' perceptions.

Data Analysis Results

In this study, my aim was to investigate teachers' and counselors' perspectives on the challenges associated with consistently implementing service-learning according to best practices, and to identify the resources they deemed necessary to support such implementation. Drawing on the guidance of Tomaszew et al. (2019) and Bhandari (2019), I employed an inductive logic approach, also known as bottom-up coding, to analyze the qualitative data obtained from transcribed interviews.

Through the process of inductive logic, I identified similarities among the transcribed documents, leading to the emergence of initial codes. These codes, totaling 181 in number, formed the basis for the subsequent development of overarching themes that addressed the research questions at hand. Specifically, the themes that emerged from the data provided insights into teachers' and counselors' perceptions regarding the challenges of implementing service-learning consistently in adherence to best practices. The analysis delved into identifying the resources deemed necessary by teachers and counselors to support the consistent implementation of service-learning in alignment with

best practices. By iteratively analyzing the transcribed documents from the ten interviews, I was able to uncover these themes, shedding light on the practical needs and perspectives of educators and counselors in the context of service-learning implementation.

Emerging Themes

In the process of identifying themes, initial codes were subjected to further refinement through a second coding cycle, where similar and recurring codes were merged, connected, or linked to reduce redundancy. This iterative process resulted in the consolidation of codes, ultimately yielding a total of 174 distinct codes. Subsequently, during the third round of the coding cycle, these codes were grouped into nine overarching categories, with one additional category labeled as "miscellaneous" due to the presence of infrequent quotations within it. Upon closer examination, these categories coalesced into nine distinct themes.

These themes encapsulated the essence of the study's findings in response to the two research questions (RQ 1 and RQ 2). Addressing RQ 1, which focused on exploring teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges associated with consistently implementing service-learning in adherence to best practices, participants highlighted several key challenges. These included the difficulties in aligning service-learning activities with curricular objectives, maintaining consistent student engagement throughout the service-learning process, ensuring fidelity to best practices, establishing

and maintaining meaningful relationships with community partners, and addressing a general lack of awareness regarding service-learning initiatives.

Analysis pertaining to RQ 2, which aimed to identify the resources perceived as necessary by teachers and counselors to support the consistent implementation of service-learning in adherence to best practices, revealed five distinct themes. These themes encompassed the perceived need for service-learning training and professional development, the importance of sustained effort, the necessity of adequate transportation facilities, and the significance of fostering collaboration among teachers, counselors, and community partners to enhance the effectiveness of service-learning initiatives. Together, these themes elucidated the multifaceted challenges and resource requirements associated with the consistent implementation of service-learning practices, providing valuable insights into the study's overarching research questions.

Research Questions

Research question 1 delved into teachers' and counselors' perceptions regarding the challenges associated with consistently implementing service-learning in adherence to best practices. Through this exploration, five overarching themes emerged, as illustrated in Table 2. The table presents a selection of questions and corresponding codes from the data that contributed to the identification of these themes, thereby addressing the objectives outlined in RQ 1. This analysis provided valuable insights into how educators draw upon their past experiences and knowledge of service-learning to guide their

instructional practices across various subject areas, as well as their strategies for overcoming challenges and integrating service-learning effectively into their pedagogical approach.

Despite variations in individual experiences and perspectives, participants collectively identified five primary themes in response to RQ 1. These themes encompassed the challenges associated with aligning service-learning activities with curricular objectives, maintaining consistent student engagement throughout the service-learning process, ensuring fidelity to best practices, navigating the complexities of establishing and sustaining meaningful partnerships with community stakeholders for service-learning initiatives, and addressing the broader issue of awareness regarding the importance and benefits of service-learning practices within educational settings. Through the examination of these themes, the study offered a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted obstacles encountered by educators in the implementation of service-learning initiatives, thus contributing to the scholarly discourse on effective pedagogical strategies and instructional practices in the context of service-learning.

Table 2

Alignment of Research Question 1 to Data Collection Question, Items Codes, and Theme

Research question	Data collection questions	Codes	Themes
What are teachers and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of consistently	3) What do you know about service learning	Challenges or lack of awareness Respondent unaware	Perception of Challenges
	6) What would you say are the challenges you've experienced	Aligning service learning.	Perception of Challenges

implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practice?	in consistently implementing service-learning?	Preparedness to implement service-learning.	
	4) How comfortable are you implementing service-learning? Elaborate. What makes you comfortable or uncomfortable?	Lack of awareness. Clear guidelines and curriculum	Issues of curriculum
	9) How do you ensure community projects are linked to curricular activities?	Socio-economic status awareness Get out of the classroom Bater time SL is not part of curriculum	Perception of Challenges Issues of curr. Perception of Challenges
	15) What aspects of service-learning do you value the most?	Perceived challenge stemming from lack of admin support Students' appreciation It's a matter of creativity S-L at previous school Comfortable with S-L	Valued aspects of SL Sentiments on service learning Miscellaneous
		That was the hardest part of this whole thing, aligning service-learning activities with curriculum objectives x challenge of preparedness to implement SL	Issues of curriculum Monitoring S-L Perceived Challenges
		challenges aligning service-learning activities with curriculum objectives Internal service learning at the school Challenge related to assessing and evaluating SL.	Monitoring S-L Perceived challenges Issues relating to curriculum Perceived challenges
		Clear guidelines No service-learning curriculum	Perceived challenges Values aspects of SL
		Challenge of preparedness ...Of engaging students	
		...Establishing relations with community partners Educators guide students Expose students more to SL	

Theme 1: Perception of Challenges of Implementing Service Learning

The primary objective of the first research question was to uncover the perceived challenges associated with the implementation of service-learning among participants.

All participating teachers and counselors, comprising 100% of the sample, identified multiple perceived challenges, resulting in the identification of over 25 distinct challenges. Through the process of sorting, grouping, and coding these challenges, five prominent themes emerged. While various challenges, such as internet connectivity issues, accommodating students with special needs, and excessive cellphone usage among students, were noted, these were identified by no more than two participants each. Only challenges that garnered over 72% agreement among participants were utilized in generating the emergent five themes. These challenges included inconsistency in implementing service-learning, difficulties in assessing students' outcomes, establishing connections with service-learning facilitators, addressing internet connectivity issues, lack of transportation, and inadequate budget and resources for promoting service-learning initiatives. Among these, the top five challenges, in terms of their prevalence, were identified as aligning service-learning activities with curriculum objectives, engaging students consistently throughout the process, ensuring fidelity to best practices, establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships with community partners, and addressing the lack of awareness regarding service-learning.

In this study, the alignment of service-learning activities with curriculum objectives emerged as the most significant challenge reported by teachers and counselors. There is a notable relationship between the integration of service-learning activities into the curriculum and the support for curriculum objectives and educational goals, as

highlighted by participants' insights. While this relationship is contextualized within the scope of this research, its broader implications warrant consideration for future investigation.

Participant D1 emphasized the systemic challenges encountered due to the existing structure and students' interpretations of service-learning. The participant suggested immersive experiences during specific semesters, facilitating peer collaboration, and integrating service-learning activities into the curriculum to enhance students' understanding. Similarly, Participant D11 discussed challenges in aligning service-learning activities with curricular objectives, proposing tailored experiences to align with students' career aspirations and foster proactive engagement.

Participant D9 underscored the significance of real-life immersion in enhancing learning outcomes, advocating for a shift from passive instruction to experiential learning. Participant D1 further emphasized the need for curriculum restructuring to accommodate diverse ideologies and facilitate effective planning and implementation of service-learning initiatives. Participant D4 echoed the importance of clear expectations and proactive preparation, emphasizing the alignment of activities with curriculum objectives to gauge progress effectively.

Roberts, Daly, et al. (2017) highlighted various forms of service-learning, including experiential, peer, and work-based learning, emphasizing the importance of aligning defined learning outcomes with appropriate assessment and student support.

Additionally, Briffa and Porter (2013) underscored the role of program design in creating engaging service-learning opportunities by encouraging active student participation and experiential learning approaches.

Theme 2: Challenges Engaging Students Consistently Throughout the Process

The second emergent theme highlighted challenges related to consistently engaging students throughout the service-learning process. A unanimous acknowledgment among all participants indicated that implementing service-learning is perceived as more manageable in certain subject areas compared to others. However, 63% of teachers and counselors expressed challenges in maintaining student engagement throughout the process, which could lead to frustration among educators, counselors, community facilitators, and even students themselves. Participant D12 exemplified this by noting instances where subjects like Geography, despite their compatibility with service-learning, posed challenges in sustaining student engagement. Participant D12 suggested potential strategies to enhance service-learning implementation based on specific social science topics, such as land usage and topography, to facilitate broader school-wide adoption.

Participant D1 emphasized the influence of student interest on the effectiveness of service-learning initiatives, highlighting the disparity that may arise when educators suggest service-learning areas that do not align with students' preferences. Additionally, Participant D1 underscored the importance of implementing service-learning within the

school environment before extending it to the home and community settings. However, challenges were noted regarding educator encouragement and motivation, with instances where students were allowed to divert their attention to personal devices rather than engaging in additional service activities after completing initial assignments. Appendix C Table 1 demonstrated a strong co-occurrence between consistent student engagement throughout service-learning and the alignment of the school curriculum with service-learning practices. Supporting this challenge, Smith, Brown, and Cooper (2009) emphasized the difficulties in supervising a growing number of students involved in service-learning activities, making it challenging for service providers to establish and maintain reliable relationships with educational institutions.

Participant D9 highlighted the challenge of motivating students to engage in activities benefiting the wider community, while Participant D10 advocated for integrating service-learning as a mandatory component of the curriculum to ensure students' active participation. Similarly, Participant D12 stressed the importance of relevance in service-learning activities, emphasizing that students are more likely to participate and find success in activities aligned with their interests and future aspirations, and Participant D11 emphasized the significance of aligning service-learning activities with students' career interests to enhance their motivation and proactiveness.

Meanwhile, scholarly literature by Spier and Harris (2015) and Burgess, McGregor, and Mellis (2014) echoed the challenges of consistently engaging students,

especially in rural communities, due to heavy professional workloads and limited resources. Peer learning was proposed as an effective strategy to address these challenges, fostering student engagement and enhancing professional skills beyond the service-learning curriculum.

Theme 3: Inconsistent Implementation with Fidelity to Best Practice

While 72% of participants acknowledged the enhancement of students' outcomes through service-learning, only 63% admitted to consistent implementation of this pedagogical approach. The third theme of this study revolves around the inconsistent implementation of service-learning by certain educators, a concern echoed by Dicks and Mitchell (2019). They highlighted how such inconsistency can disrupt intended pedagogical benefits, leading to disparities in learning experiences and hindering students' development of crucial skills and values. Ensuring consistent integration and support for service-learning across the educational system is essential to maximize its positive impact.

Five teachers disclosed their attempts to introduce service-learning at their current school site, having previously implemented it elsewhere. Additionally, one counselor recognized the importance of proactive measures to ensure the implementation of service-learning among all students, despite lacking daily classroom responsibilities. However, five teachers cited adjustment challenges due to their recent transition to the area, necessitating familiarization with the system and community before full

implementation of service-learning with fidelity to best practices. Two teachers mentioned using technology to facilitate student participation in service-learning activities, albeit facing occasional challenges with unstable internet connections. For example, Participant D4 described conducting service-learning activities via Zoom with a school in India.

In response to a question about challenges faced in the current school district, Participant D10 emphasized the need for gradual adjustments and advocated for mandatory service-learning integration into the curriculum from middle school onwards. Participant D8 shared experiences of community-oriented service activities practiced at their school, initially unaware of their classification as service-learning. This revelation occurred during the interview, prompting a realization of the community service's educational value.

Participant D4 highlighted the benefits of experiential learning even when teachers lack confidence or consistency in implementing service-learning. Reflecting on their experiences, Participant D6 acknowledged awareness of service-learning concepts but limited involvement in their current role, contrasting with past experiences in community engagement abroad. Similarly, Participant D7 emphasized the necessity of educator commitment for effective service-learning implementation.

During an interview, Participant D11 admitted challenges in consistently implementing service-learning due to frequent interruptions, aligning with Theme 3,

which addresses inconsistent implementation issues in the school district. Despite these challenges, participants emphasized the importance of proactive efforts, teacher commitment, and curriculum integration to ensure successful service-learning implementation. Additionally, positive experiences from previous schools underscored the value of experiential learning, even amidst uncertainties in implementation confidence.

Theme 4: Challenges of Establishing and Maintaining Meaningful Relationships With Community Partners

The fourth theme identified from the coded data pertained to the perceived challenge of establishing meaningful relationships with community partners. It is imperative for schools to cultivate lasting partnerships with community entities that can consistently provide placements for students engaged in service-learning, and vice versa, where the community partners can rely on the school to send students regularly. Additionally, the challenge of connecting with service-learning facilitators was intertwined with this theme to enhance its depth. Meaningful relationships entail reciprocal interaction between students and the community. While some participants indicated limited acquaintance with community partners, others acknowledged existing opportunities for service-learning placements, emphasizing the need for proactive efforts by administrators in identifying such opportunities. Furthermore, participants noted a sense of competition among schools for student placements, with more prestigious

districts often given priority.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenge of establishing meaningful relationships, with schools encountering reluctance from companies and businesses that previously supported service-learning programs. The pandemic was cited as a reason for businesses closing their doors to service-learning opportunities, thus hindering students' engagement in such activities. Despite these challenges, there is optimism among participants that as the pandemic recedes into memory, businesses will gradually resume their support for service-learning initiatives.

Participant D9 highlighted the challenge of motivating students to engage in community-beneficial activities, stressing the importance of proactive measures by educators in creating opportunities for student involvement. Participant D11 urged teachers and counselors to compile a list of potential service-learning sites, advocating for proactive engagement with businesses and individuals willing to offer service opportunities. Additionally, Participant D12 emphasized the necessity for schools to initiate outreach programs and establish partnerships with businesses to facilitate service-learning initiatives effectively. Notably, while some community partners may offer stipends for student involvement, others are content with receiving unpaid assistance.

Three participants identified the COVID-19 pandemic as a significant challenge in maintaining meaningful relationships with community partners. Participant D3 noted the closure of businesses during the pandemic, which limited service-learning

opportunities for students. However, there is hope that as the pandemic subsides, businesses will resume their support for service-learning initiatives. Participant D9 highlighted the issue of inequity in student placements, emphasizing the need for a fair distribution of partnership opportunities among schools.

Regarding how participants connect with service-learning facilitators, Participant D11 expressed challenges, while Participant D12 elaborated on the complexities, especially with larger companies. Billett (2015) underscored the importance of educators in creating programs that align students' experiences with professional practices. Furthermore, educators must prepare students to become proactive learners who can glean insights from diverse sources beyond traditional classroom settings.

Theme 5: Challenge of Service-Learning Awareness

Theme 5 derived from the data, highlighted a lack of awareness regarding service-learning as a major emerging theme in response to RQ1. Only three participants, constituting 28% of the sample, demonstrated familiarity with the term "service-learning" and acknowledged its incorporation into their high school or university curriculum. For 52% of participants, service-learning was represented through various synonyms, while the remaining 24% required prompting to equate service-learning with their past activities. Some participants viewed service-learning merely as isolated projects and expressed a need for more information before implementation. Despite some knowledge, several teachers and counselors believed that confining service-learning to the classroom

did not fulfill its purpose, while others contemplated it from the perspective of an internship.

Participants responses to inquiries about their knowledge of service-learning contributed to the emergent theme of "lack of service-learning awareness." Participant D1 candidly admitted a lack of knowledge, while Participant D6 acknowledged a vague idea but insufficient understanding of the school's service-learning initiatives. Similarly, Participant D8 expressed uncertainty and indicated limited exposure to the concept. Participant D9 refrained from forming an immediate opinion, emphasizing the need for further understanding. Participant D12, in line with others, professed a lack of awareness regarding the term "service-learning."

However, Participant D9 presented a distinct viewpoint, acknowledging familiarity with service-learning despite not implementing it with fidelity. Drawing from prior experience, Participant D9 highlighted the school's proactive engagement in activities promoting welfare and well-being, positioning it favorably for government recognition. Furthermore, Participant D9 reflected on experiences in Pakistan, where physical service-learning activities were hindered by COVID-19, affecting job training and work experience opportunities. Pereira and Costa (2019) emphasized the importance of adopting alternative pedagogical practices, such as service-learning, to address the limitations of traditional teaching methods. Moorer and Christian (2009) echoed similar sentiments, advocating for the swift integration of service-learning into school curricula.

The co-occurrence analysis chart (see Appendix C) revealed a significant challenge in integrating service-learning activities with curriculum objectives. Teachers and counselors' lack of awareness regarding service-learning poses an obstacle to its adoption and effective implementation. This challenge underscores the importance of raising awareness and aligning service-learning initiatives with educational goals. Addressing these challenges necessitates proactive measures, curriculum integration, engagement strategies, and community involvement to foster a successful and meaningful service-learning culture and experience. Teachers and counselors must be equipped with comprehensive knowledge of service-learning to facilitate its seamless integration and effective implementation within the educational context.

Research Question2

The second research question (RQ: 2) delved into the resources perceived as necessary by teachers and counselors to consistently implement service-learning with fidelity to best practice. Table 3 presents the alignment between various data segments, interview questions, codes, and emergent themes vis-à-vis the data collection questions and RQ2. This tabular depiction illustrates the contribution of interview questions 11, 12, 13, 14, and 16 from the semi-structured interviews in generating codes and themes pertinent to answering RQ2. While other questions served auxiliary roles, such as establishing interviewee eligibility and providing context, questions like 5 and 7 facilitated rapport-building and primed the interviewees for more substantive discussions.

Regarding the resources deemed essential for effectively implementing service-learning, participants identified five key codes: the necessity for service-learning training and professional development, the need for clear guidelines and structured curriculum, the importance of sustained effort and commitment, and the requirement for transportation. While these four themes emerged prominently, additional themes surfaced during the analysis, including the need for mentorship and support from service-learning coordinators, parental involvement, inter-collaboration among educators and community partners, a formal grading system for service-learning, and curriculum structuring.

It must be noted that I selected themes with nine or more responses for inclusion in this study, thereby focusing on the most salient themes. However, it is essential to acknowledge the broader spectrum of themes that emerged during the analysis, as they offer valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of resources required to facilitate effective service-learning implementation. These themes underscore the comprehensive framework necessary to support educators and counselors in their endeavors to integrate service-learning with fidelity to best practices.

Table 3

Alignment of Research Question 2 to Data Collection Question, Items Codes and Theme

Research question	Questions aligned to Research Question 2	Themes aligned to RQ 2
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RQ 2: What resources do teachers and counselors believe is needed to support consistently implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practice?	11) What would you say you need to improve service-learning delivery to the students?	Theme (ii): Need clear guidelines and curriculum to provide structure for implementation.
	12) What resources would you say is needed for you to support service-learning in your classes?	Theme (i): Need for service-learning training
	13) If you were asked to make a list of all you need to consistently implement service-learning according to best practice what would that list look like?	Theme (i): Need of professional development
	14) If you were asked to break down that list in order of importance, what would be at the top of the list?	Theme (iv): Need for transportation
	16) What are some activities and resource you perceive would assist you in implementing service-learning?	Theme (iii): Need for sustained effort and commitment

Although not included in the analysis due to having fewer than nine quotes, these other emergent themes remain noteworthy and will contribute to a comprehensive list of recommendations for future studies focusing on the resources necessary for teachers and counselors to implement service-learning with fidelity to best practice. Through their insights, educators identified several resources deemed essential for consistent service-learning implementation, resulting in the identification of four overarching themes.

Theme 1: Need for Service-Learning Training/Professional Development

All ten participants in the study contributed to building the theme of the need for professional development. Their insights reflected both similar and contrasting perceptions regarding the resources necessary for consistently implementing service-learning. While three participants (D3, D4, and D7) indicated prior experience with service-learning, one participant expressed unawareness of the term, and another recalled

encountering service-learning solely as a high school student. Additionally, four participants mentioned previous involvement in service-learning at other school settings but acknowledged a lack of full engagement at the current study site. However, all eleven participants unanimously underscored the necessity for specialized training to implement service-learning with fidelity to best practices.

Participant D8 suggested the involvement of professionals and facilitators visiting the school site to train both teachers and students on various project types. Participant D6, while acknowledging familiarity with service-learning, emphasized the lack of training despite previous implementation at a different school district. This highlighted the need for professional development at the current site. A detailed examination of the data revealed that although not all participants had direct experience with service-learning, all expressed a willingness to engage in it given adequate training.

The emphasis on service-learning varied across different cultural backgrounds within the study sites. Given the diverse workforce and cosmopolitan nature of the study sites, professional development emerged as a crucial factor in enabling teachers and counselors to consistently implement service-learning. Participants articulated the need for professional development through various insights. For instance, Participant D1 emphasized the importance of professional development tailored to meet individual student needs amidst teachers' heavy workload. Participant D3 stressed the need for collaboration with like-minded individuals, while Participant D4 highlighted the

significance of consistent inclusion of service-learning in practice through adequate training. Participant D7 underscored the importance of understanding students' needs and advocating for them in service-learning initiatives.

Participant D9 emphasized the progressive nature of knowledge and advocated for access to workshops and professional development to equip teachers with the necessary skills to support students and the community effectively. Collectively, these insights underscored the participants' recognition of the pivotal role of professional development in enhancing their abilities to guide and engage students effectively in service-learning activities.

In summary, the participants recognized professional development as crucial in enhancing their capacity to effectively implement service-learning. They emphasized ongoing training, collaboration, and clear guidelines to serve students and communities better. Participants highlighted the demanding workload of educators and the need for specialized training to tailor service-learning to meet individual student needs effectively. Their insights underscored the importance of ongoing support and collaboration in integrating service-learning into their teaching roles according to best practices.

Theme 2: Need Clear Guidelines and Curriculum

During the interviews, it became evident that 55% of teachers faced challenges in implementing service-learning due to the absence of a written curriculum to provide guidance. One participant even suggested integrating service-learning into the existing

school curriculum rather than having a separate curriculum dedicated to it. As part of a larger organization, one participant explored other schools within the organization for guidelines and curriculum related to service-learning, only to discover significant variations among schools.

Participant D1 emphasized the importance of ensuring that schools have comprehensive curriculum guidelines to govern their service-learning practices. They advocated for service-learning to be integrated into the curriculum from kindergarten to high school, emphasizing the need for adherence to curriculum guidelines rather than leaving implementation to individual teachers or schools. Similarly, Participant D12 and D8 highlighted the absence of clear guidelines and a specific service-learning curriculum in their schools. Participant D9, in seeking clear guidelines, expressed challenges faced when dealing with classes of more than ten students, particularly when students are at different levels of learning. This difficulty underscores the need for structured guidance to support teachers in developing engaging service-learning activities.

While 55% of teachers and counselors proactively created outlines to guide their service-learning practice, all participants unanimously expressed the need for more explicit curriculum guidelines. (see Bitmap Appendix C) titled "Need Clear Guidelines and Curriculum", it illustrates the intricate relationship between the need for clear guidelines, student engagement, teacher training, and the absence of comprehensive curriculum standards. These findings underscore the critical importance of clear

guidelines and comprehensive curriculum standards in facilitating effective service-learning implementation, ensuring student engagement, and supporting teacher training.

Theme 3: Need for Sustained Effort and Commitment

All participants in the research unanimously recognized service-learning as a continuous and ongoing process that demands dedication and investment of time and energy (Mutambara, 2023). This sustained effort and commitment entail understanding that service-learning cannot be approached casually or sporadically but requires a long-term commitment. Teachers and counselors acknowledged the need for patience and persistence in overcoming challenges to provide quality service-learning opportunities. Participant D12 emphasized the importance of educators advocating for support and resources to sustain service-learning programs over time. Additionally, sustained effort and commitment entail ongoing learning and growth, with participants highlighting the necessity for access to training and professional development opportunities to continually enhance their implementation of service-learning projects.

Although participants familiar with service-learning acknowledged its positive impact on students, they noted various reasons for not following through or continuing service-learning initiatives. They believed that while the classroom is suitable for theoretical work, students should engage in practical activities to better understand society. Notably, participants observed that students often inquire about when they can participate in service-learning activities again, indicating the positive impact of such

experiences. For instance, Participant D8 recounted a specific service-learning activity that significantly impacted students, prompting them to request further opportunities to serve and interact with the community.

Participant D1 highlighted the need for resources, particularly a list of cooperative individuals and organizations in the community that schools can rely on for service-learning opportunities. They suggested specific areas within the community where schools could engage in service-learning activities. Similarly, Participant D6 proposed increasing presence in places like parks and nursing homes, emphasizing the importance of engaging students in diverse service-learning experiences. Participant D9 emphasized that teachers not only instruct students but also contribute to their character development. Participant D4 echoed this sentiment, noting the challenges that arise when students are at different developmental stages and advocating for the use of paraprofessionals or additional staff to assist in service-learning projects. Furthermore, Participant D4 highlighted the potential of technology and technological tools to facilitate international engagement in service-learning activities, indicating the need for incorporating such resources into service-learning initiatives.

Eraut's (2007) concept of non-formal learning and tacit knowledge in professional work suggests that informal social learning, including ad hoc reflections and informal conversations with peers and administration, contributes significantly to students' skill development. Perkins et al. (2002) and Furco (1996) emphasize the role of

peer learning and community engagement in enhancing students' learning outcomes through service-learning initiatives. Mason and Dunen (2019) further emphasize the intentional incorporation of community engagement into course curricula to enhance students' outcomes and advance community efforts.

In summary, the research findings underscored the unanimous recognition among participants of service-learning as a continuous and ongoing process that demands dedication and investment. They emphasized the importance of long-term commitment, patience, and persistence in overcoming challenges to provide quality service-learning opportunities. Additionally, participants stressed the need for ongoing learning and growth through access to training and professional development. Despite acknowledging the positive impact of service-learning on students, participants identified various factors hindering the continuity of such initiatives and suggested structured support systems and innovative methods to facilitate sustained service-learning efforts.

Theme 4: Need for Transportation

Service-learning projects can occur both on and off the school campus, with many meaningful projects requiring students to leave the campus premises. Off-campus projects necessitate transportation for students to access and return from service-learning sites promptly. It is essential to budget for transportation costs rather than relying on students to cover these expenses individually. In response to the question regarding improvements needed for service-learning delivery, Participant D3 emphasized the

critical importance of transportation. They noted that while some students may drive themselves to school, relying on students for transportation to service-learning sites is unreliable, given insurance policies often prohibit unauthorized passengers. Participant D3 suggested that having dedicated transportation would facilitate more convenient and accessible scheduling for students. Similarly, Participant D12 highlighted the need for logistical planning to transport students off-campus, emphasizing the importance of arranging resources for transportation to and from service-learning sites. Participant D8 stressed the necessity for school-provided transportation to ensure students' access to service-learning opportunities.

Transportation arrangements do not necessarily entail school ownership of vehicles but underscore the school's responsibility for ensuring student safety during service-learning activities. This need for transportation underscores the importance of parental involvement, as noted by Participant D4, who emphasized the necessity of parental support and consent for off-campus activities. Participant D4 suggested that rather than relying on parents to cover transportation costs, schools should explore funding options or collaborate with bus owners to facilitate student transportation.

Participant D10 and Participant D11 both prioritized transportation as a crucial resource for consistently implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practices. While 45% of teachers and counselors identified transportation as a key resource, this issue has been previously acknowledged as a challenge in other studies. The Urban

Institute (2017) highlights transportation issues faced by students in various large cities, underscoring the need for school districts to develop transportation plans to support students' movement between school and service-learning partners.

Teachers and counselors identified four emergent themes as essential resources for consistent service-learning implementation with fidelity to best practices: service-learning training/professional development, clear guidelines and curriculum, sustained effort and commitment, and transportation. These themes, contributed by all eleven participants, collectively address the needs of educators and students and establish a foundation for successful service-learning implementation in educational settings. Sustained effort and commitment are crucial aspects of service-learning, involving addressing students' varying developmental levels, providing continuous motivation, and instilling a sense of purpose beyond the classroom.

Participants shared similar yet contrasting perspectives on these themes, unanimously agreeing on the necessity of ongoing service-learning professional development. Both experienced and less experienced educators expressed a need to enhance their understanding and skills related to service-learning. Professional development serves as a means to equip educators with the tools and strategies for effective implementation (Onalan & Gursoy, 2020). Collaboration and learning from peers are also valued, with inconsistent guidelines and curricula across schools within the organization identified as a challenge. The need for a standardized curriculum integrating

service-learning principles was seen as beneficial, providing educators with a standardized framework for implementation.

Evidence of Quality

Research endeavors are undertaken with the objective of producing reliable data through rigorous methods, ensuring quality, data integrity, and reliability at each stage (University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2020). While quantitative research demands evidence of internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity, qualitative research focuses on credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). This basic qualitative research follows a naturalistic approach rooted in humanistic perspectives rather than empirical data.

The interview questions were designed to elicit responses corresponding to the research questions, ensuring credibility. Following each answer, subsequent questions aimed to confirm participants' understanding and align responses with the research focus. In some instances, brief explanations were provided to clarify questions and ensure participants' comprehension. Member checking further bolstered credibility, allowing participants to review transcripts for accuracy. While no corrections were made, participants expressed anticipation for the study's outcome, indicating engagement and interest. Additionally, phone calls and face-to-face meetings were conducted to verify receipt and understanding of transcript review requests, enhancing credibility.

Varpio et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of data collection in ensuring

transferability, where collected data must address research questions. The interview questions and emerging data fulfilled this criterion, facilitating triangulation and crystallization of findings (Varpio, 2017). Although Merriam (2009) suggests data collection should continue until saturation, Braun and Clarke (2019) argue that interpretation rather than saturation determines its conclusion. In this research, codes continued to emerge, necessitating interpretation and thematic grouping to derive meaningful insights.

Dependability and crystallization, other hallmarks of quality, was ensured through a constructivist approach, although replication of results by another researcher is unlikely. However, the research process's rational and clearly defined coding steps attest to its high dependability. The analysis phase further substantiated quality by incorporating participant quotes and linking findings with existing literature, reinforcing the study's credibility (Stenfors, Kajamaa, & Bennett, 2020). Crystallization methodology was employed to enrich the research process, blending grounded theory with social scientific analyses for comprehensive data presentation. This approach revealed interconnected codes and identified needs and challenges articulated by teachers and counselors (Ellingson, 2008). The accompanying bitmap (see Appendix B) further elucidates these connections, contributing to the study's quality evidence.

Summary

Section 2 meticulously delineates the research design and methodology employed

to investigate teachers' and counselors' perceptions of implementing service learning in the USVISD. Utilizing a basic qualitative research design, the study adopts an exploratory and inductive approach to delve into participants' interpretations of service-learning experiences. The rationale for selecting basic qualitative research over quantitative or mixed-method approaches is justified, considering its suitability for exploring participants' subjective viewpoints.

The study comprises ten teachers and counselors from various schools within a small district, with participants randomly selected after obtaining approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board. Recruitment efforts involved sending email invitations along with subsequent follow-ups via phone and in-person interactions to establish a researcher-participant rapport. The significance of maintaining confidentiality during pre-interview sessions, as well as participant apologies, acceptances, or refusals, is emphasized to uphold ethical standards.

Data collection entails semi-structured interviews featuring 17 open-ended questions, recorded on voice memos and later transcribed using Amber Script. This methodological choice is justified by its ability to facilitate in-depth information gathering, including participant briefings, debriefing sessions, and member-checking processes to ensure data credibility. Additionally, the section elaborates on obtaining research permissions, outlining communication protocols, and implementing data tracking systems to mitigate potential biases.

Furthermore, entails semi-structured interviews featuring 17 open-ended questions, recorded on voice memos and later transcribed using Amber Script. This methodological choice is justified by its ability to facilitate in-depth information gathering, including participant briefings, debriefing sessions, and member-checking processes to ensure data credibility. Additionally, the section elaborates on obtaining research permissions, outlining communication protocols, and implementing data tracking systems to mitigate potential themes.

Section 3 delineates the subsequent phase of the project, focusing on the development of a 3-day professional development program. This shift from methodological exploration to practical application and evaluation sets the stage for a deeper understanding of the professional development program's design and its potential impact, thus contributing to the broader implications drawn from the study.

Section 3: The Project

The project to accompany the research is a 3-day professional development program for teachers and counselors in K-12 schools in the USVISD. My focus is on professional development because the data showed that participants in the school district requested professional development to inform them about how to implement service learning. The literature also showed that professional development empowers educators to implement effective service-learning programs and collaborate across physical and social barriers.

The goal of this professional development program is to provide teachers and counselors in USVISD an opportunity to collaborate, learn, and practice methods of implementing the service-learning curriculum in their classroom or subject areas and to inform those who did not receive sufficient exposure to the service-learning pedagogy during their preservice training (see Appendix A). Teachers and counselors will meet at the start of each day to guide the day. Together, teachers and counselors will explore theories and methods that support service-learning and the effects on student outcomes, and participants will work in preplanned sessions and also spontaneous random grouping during breakout sessions.

Rationale

The rationale for this study's project design comes from the data collection. Data indicate that a 3-day professional development program is the most appropriate genre to

close the gap in theory and practice relating to service learning for teachers and counselors in K-12 schools. The 3-day professional development program will provide teachers and counselors with the tools to implement service learning with fidelity to practice consistently. It will inform teachers and counselors of the benefits of service learning in K-12 schools and beyond and provide an opportunity for them to collaborate and plan service-learning projects that can be implemented across various grade levels and subject areas including mandatory community service.

From my research, seven of 10 participants requested professional development; the other three participants, although they did not use professional development, used words and terms such as need guidance, training in service learning, and personnel to facilitate, training, and collaboration, indicating the need for professional development. Professional development can provide the tools to facilitate the needs of teachers and counselors in my study and beyond. Professional development is crucial in effectively supporting teachers to deliver curricular content (Dinh & Idowu, 2023). Contextual professional development meets the needs of a culturally diverse student population (Szelei et al., 2020). Collaboration in learning communities can also continuously inform and support teachers and counselors (Woodland et al., 2023). The exchange of experiences and ideas by grouping experienced educators with less experience can enhance capacity and effectiveness (Adarlo & Pelias, 2021). Service learning spans all areas and levels of school life, so interdisciplinary professional development can be

helpful (Hall & Hite, 2023).

In summary, a 3-day professional development program stems from data indicating a significant need for bridging the gap between theory and practice in service-learning among K-12 teachers and counselors. This program aims to equip participants with the necessary tools and knowledge to consistently implement service-learning best practices. By addressing the identified need for professional development, the program seeks to contextualize learning to diverse cultural settings while fostering collaboration (see Adarlo & Pelias, 2021; Woodland et al., 2023). With 100% of participants expressing a desire for professional development, the program aims to empower educators to effectively incorporate service learning into various grade levels and subjects, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration (see Hall & Hite, 2023).

Review of the Literature

Service-learning has gained recognition for combining experiential learning with other educational approaches and community service with academic learning. Service-learning offers students a hands-on experience that bridges the gap between theory and practice, promoting civic engagement and personal growth. However, the success of service-learning depends mainly on the educators and administrators who design and implement these programs. As noted, the data gathered from the study indicates the need for professional development. This literature review presents current research about professional development (PD) programs for teachers, and counselors, who play a pivotal

role in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of service-learning initiatives in school districts. This literature review explores professional development as a method of adult learning (andragogy), the role of seminal authors such as Malcolm Knowles and others who contributed to the theory of adult learning, and the significance of professional development in bridging the gap between theory and practice in service learning, focusing on its benefits, strategies, and challenges.

The databases searched to provide documents for this literature review include EBSCOR, Google Scholar, Taylor and Francis, IGI Global, Frontiers, ProQuest, Sage, Science Direct, ResearchGate, and Education Source. The search terms included *professional development, andragogy, adult learning, seminal authors of andragogy, preservice and in-service teacher professional development, and professional development-best practices*. My research reached saturation as the same concepts and theories appeared in various search engines.

Based on the literature, professional development is essential for enhancing career competencies and promoting positive educational changes (Segarra & Gentry, 2021). It influences beliefs, attitudes, and actions at micro, meso, and macro levels, impacting individuals, institutions, and policies. However, despite the extensive focus on teachers, educational leaders, and policy makers need to give attention to the professional development of policymakers (Nguyen, 2019). Policy makers responsible for creating academic regulations themselves need systematic professional development. While

professional development can transform educational systems and student outcomes (Ventista & Brown, 2023), school directors and policy developers need to be actively involved in the professional development of the institutions they oversee to guide policies and practices that enhances the professional development of educators (Sodiya & Hajiveva, 2022).

Professional Development and Adult Learning

One of the needs of the participants in this research is training or professional development. Professional development for teachers and counselors means that the theory of andragogy must be considered. Andragogy is a theory in higher education practice, as adults have specific reasons for learning (El-Amin, 2020). Andragogy is learner-directed; the learners choose what they want to learn, unlike pedagogy, in which children have limited or no choice about what they must study (Anderson & Boutelier, 2021). Adults learn differently than children (Purwati et al., 2022); the original intent of andragogy was to help adults within the learning process through self-education (Loeng, 2018). Andragogy is concerned with more than enhancing the outcome of students in the K-12 schools, it caters to the adult's need for professional growth (Marshall, 2019). Andragogy is dynamic, allowing students to practice by linking content and context to the workplace (El-Amin, 2020). Adult facilitators use andragogy to deliver content knowledge effectively, focusing on stakeholder involvement, curriculum adjustments, and teaching methods tailored to adult learners' experiences (Cantrell et al., 2023).

Seminal Author of Andragogy

Malcolm Knowles was named “the father of adult learning theory” in the United States in 1968. Several earlier contributors include Alexander Kapp (Loeng, 2018) and Eduard Lindeman (Brookfield, 1984) and others in Europe. While Lindeman did extensive work on adult learning, the work remained incomplete until Knowles completed it in 1968. The six assumptions of andragogy (Brookfield, 1984) are rooted in the belief that adults are ready to learn, they are more apt to learn when they believe that learning is relevant to their personal development and advancement, they are motivated to learn, they have a reason to learn, they are self-directed, and past experiences influence their perspectives.

Best Practices for Professional Development for Teachers and Counselors

Curriculum implementation best practices include effective planning, professional development, stakeholder involvement, adaptability, and assessment and evaluation to ensure a curriculum meets the intended goal. Professional development is done in context to meet the needs of participants (Dinh & Nguyen, 2023). While teachers in a diverse cultural setting become acclimatized through interaction, more is needed to help them build proficiency such as collaboration (Baecher & Chubng, 2019; Biasutti et al., 2021; Szelei et al., 2020). There is also a connection between the quality of professional development and teachers’ efficacy and beliefs about themselves as mediators (Yoon & Goddard, 2023). Professional development is crucial in supporting teachers in effectively

delivering curriculum content (Ogunseemi & Idowu, 2023). Field experiences are essential for preservice teachers transitioning from theoretical knowledge to practical teaching skills to enhance their professional development and understanding of teaching and learning that prepares them for the real world (Hamilton & Margot, 2019). Effective professional development is crucial for improving student outcomes, but one-shot fragment workshops have minimal impact (Ventista & Brown, 2023). It is coaching and modeling by experienced educators that help teachers effectively implement new skills.

Benefits of Professional Development

The benefits of professional development in service learning include but are not limited to enhancing pedagogical skills, cultivating reflections by students, and creating avenues for collaboration and networking, adaptation, and innovation. The conduct of a professional development program is as diverse as the need for the program and the people it serves. For example, teacher-practitioner inquiry is a form of professional development, also referred to as the PD theory faction, that aims to provide a framework for future research and facilitation of practitioner inquiry (Rutten, 2021). Learning communities are also a form of professional development that can enhance continuous collaboration between teachers and helps remedy disorganized and unproductive discussions (Woodland et al., 2023). Professional learning communities exist across physical and social barriers, creating a global community of educators (Hall & Hite, 2022). Given the shift in the practice of teachers' global movement, enhancing

pedagogical skills through professional development is necessary to empower educators to implement and evaluate effective service-learning programs. Enhancing pedagogical skills helps teachers learn how to align service experiences with curriculum objectives, ensuring that theory is applied meaningfully. Thus, there is a need for attention to teachers' professional development practices and how different teachers interpret and make sense of those experiences (Woodcock & Hardy, 2023).

It is essential to recognize the capacities of efficacious teachers and involve them in developing and cultivating a learning environment that fosters inclusion (Woodcock & Hardy, 2023), including teacher development (Diep et al., 2019). Unconference, also referred to as Ed Camp, personalizes professional development according to the needs of educators (Shore & Morris, 2019). The framework traces the history of professional development to teacher learning and student outcomes; professional development emphasizes connecting teacher learning to improved student outcomes.

Professional development must be ongoing and should promote feedback and collaboration to enhance teacher efficacy (Diep et al., 2019; Zepeda & Jimenez, 2019). Through professional development, teachers and counselors can stay updated with best practices and emerging trends in service learning, and professional development empowers them to adapt and become innovative in keeping their programs relevant and impactful. Teachers must engage in continuous, sustained, and meaningful learning opportunities as they carry out their daily classroom work and collaborate with their

peers. Collaboration may sometimes seem boring when the group of collaborators is small, especially in small school districts, but online teacher professional development can eliminate such challenges (Dinh & Nguyen, 2023). Social interaction and community engagement in the modern online approach offers flexibility, accessibility and personalized learning experiences that cater to the personalized experiences of the educator and the changing needs and preferences of the educator (Wasserman & Migdal, 2019). It is important to examine online teacher professional development to understand the impact on teacher practice and student learning outcomes and teachers' total development (Powell & Bodur, 2019).

Strategies for Effective Professional Development in Service Learning

In response to the growing demand for effective professional development programs for educators, Abakah (2023) suggests that school districts should invest in comprehensive training programs covering various aspects of service-learning, including principles, curriculum integration, reflective practice, assessment, and community engagement. Abakah's study with 16 Junior High school teachers highlighted the iterative nature of learning, emphasizing the importance of continuous engagement and reflection for educators. Similarly, Kerkhoff and Cloud (2020) underscore the necessity of ongoing, tailored professional development for in-service K-12 teachers, particularly in teaching global competence, given the inadequacies in pre-service education preparation in this area. They advocate for experiential learning opportunities to enhance educators'

understanding of students' perspectives, fostering more authentic and empathetic support for students' service experiences.

Mentoring and peer support, as advocated by Baumgartner et al. (2019), establish developmental relationships between experienced professionals and newcomers, facilitating the exchange of experiences and ideas to enhance service-learning implementation quality. Adarlo and Pelias (2021) stress the importance of collaboration and understanding in shaping teacher identity within the context of service-learning experiences, examining aspects such as the teacher's role, educational goals, self-efficacy, and professional identification. Radford (2017) defines the mentor's role as reflective, facilitative of adult learning, observant, and providing feedback, while Wagner and du Toit (2023) highlight the significant impact an excellent mentor can have on the mentee across interdisciplinary lines.

Given that service-learning often spans multiple subject areas, interdisciplinary professional development becomes essential to facilitate collaboration and integration of service-learning across academic disciplines. Hall and Hite (2022) emphasize the importance of preparing and supporting K-12 teachers in integrating global teaching practices, with their study revealing that teachers' ability to integrate global competencies improved following professional development interventions. Additionally, Baecher and Chung (2019) discuss the transformative potential of international service-learning participation in reshaping teachers' practices, contributing to their professional

development and teaching approaches.

Dewey's Experiential Learning and Professional Development

Dewey's influence as a proponent of experiential learning remains significant, with Pappas (2023) highlighting his philosophy that emphasizes learning through practical experiences both within and beyond of the classroom. As a pragmatic thinker, Dewey is renowned for championing democratic ideals through public education, exemplified by his establishment of the first Laboratory School at the University of Chicago. Goldberg's (2019) discussion of a mathematics teacher's experiences at the EdTech Summit Africa (ETSA) underscores Dewey's enduring relevance, particularly in the context of technology integration in professional development and the emergence of international communities of practice in education technology.

Atta, Acheampong, and Atta-Asiamah (2022) stress the importance of educators continuously evolving as professional learners to enhance both their own knowledge and student outcomes. They align Dewey's vision of community schools and communities of practice with contemporary movements led by teacher-educators, connecting his ideas to ongoing developments in educational reform, globalization, and critical reflection. Similarly, Goldberg (2019) explores how Dewey's perspective on reflection and communities of practice informs discussions on technology integration and instructional approaches in diverse educational settings, emphasizing the transformative potential of technology in fostering communication and global networks among educators.

Chengbing and Ming (2019) discuss the alignment between Dewey's vision of a "Great Community" and the contemporary international movement among educators to establish global networks for sharing knowledge and expertise. This movement, facilitated by technology such as the Internet and the World Wide Web, aims to empower educators and citizens alike through collaborative learning and professional development initiatives. Ajani (2023) and Siddiquah and Batool (2023) further advocate for linking experiential learning theory to professional development for teachers, emphasizing the importance of experiential learning in enhancing teaching practices and facilitating teachers' ongoing learning and development.

Challenges and Considerations

Professional development has its many challenges. Professional development (PD) poses several challenges, including resource constraints, resistance to change, alignment with standards, and sustaining efforts over time. Resource constraints encompass costs related to trainers, materials, and educator release time, necessitating prioritization and allocation of resources to ensure quality PD opportunities. High-stakes testing and adherence to educational standards further complicate access to quality PD due to time, financial, and geographical constraints (Powell & Bodur, 2019). While online PD offers a solution, Powell and Bodur (2019) stress the need for more rigorous research, empirical evidence, and teacher input in designing online teacher professional development (OTPD) programs. Woodcock and Hardy (2023) highlight teacher self-

efficacy as another challenge, emphasizing the importance of personalized PD programs tailored to individual needs and facilitating learning.

Resistance to change among educators poses another significant challenge, necessitating clear communication about the benefits of PD, ongoing support, and incentives for participation. Reina et al. (2019) highlight resistance to PD stemming from self-efficacy issues, underscoring the intervention potential of PD for teachers. Palo, Virga, and Crasovan (2022) attribute resistance to cognitive rigidity, routine-seeking behaviors, and emotional reactions, impacting job satisfaction. Aquino, Culajara, and Culajara (2022) identify financial literacy, time management, and teacher workload as factors contributing to resistance in the Philippines, emphasizing the importance of ongoing PD to address these issues.

Alignment with standards presents another challenge, particularly in the context of service-learning integration into educational frameworks. Chalies et al. (2021) stress the importance of mentoring and building professional competencies of preservice teachers to address this challenge. France's notional framework for preservice teachers highlights the importance of experiential education activities to bridge the gap between classroom activities and professional growth competencies (Lomba et al., 2022). Atchison et al. (2022) emphasize the need for rigorous standards to improve student outcomes, advocating for high-quality, standards-aligned materials and PD to effectively align instruction with state standards.

Sustaining PD efforts over the long term poses yet another challenge, requiring continual support and engagement beyond one-time events (Shore & Morris, 2019). Powell and Bodur (2019) stress the importance of compelling on-the-job PD experiences, emphasizing follow-up, reflection, collaboration, and ongoing support for teachers. Effective PD strategies include comprehensive training, experiential learning, mentoring, and interdisciplinary collaboration. However, addressing challenges such as resource constraints and resistance to change is crucial to ensure the sustainability of service-learning efforts.

Addressing deficit thinking among preservice teachers is vital for effective service-learning implementation. White (2021) emphasizes the importance of PD for preservice teachers in preparing them to implement service-learning, highlighting concerns about deficit thinking and the need to examine students' conceptions of service. Continuous self-assessment and reflection on biases and stereotypes throughout the service-learning experience are recommended (Van Winkle et al., 2023). Filges et al. (2022) identify service-learning as a pedagogy linking service and academics, emphasizing the need for conclusive evidence on its effectiveness among K-12 students. Gudeta (2022) and Yusof et al. (2020) underscore the importance of PD for educators in addressing challenges and enhancing the effectiveness of service-learning in various educational contexts.

In conclusion, PD is essential for addressing challenges and enhancing the

effectiveness of service-learning initiatives. Best practices in PD involve stakeholder involvement, adaptability, assessment, and continuous reflection. Bridging the gap between theory and practice in service-learning requires ongoing PD efforts that promote collaboration, support, adaptation, and innovation. Investing in high-quality PD is crucial for successful service-learning implementation and positive outcomes for teachers, students, communities, and schools.

Needed Resources

The essential resources for the forthcoming 3-day professional development workshop encompass a variety of items, including but not limited to venue rental, a designated Zoom link for virtual attendees, audiovisual equipment rental, provision of meals and refreshments (including lunch and snacks for three days to accommodate 25 attendees), handouts and materials, stationery and supplies, marketing flyers, certificates of participation, printing of certificates, and tokens for presenters, along with any fees associated with guest speakers.

Existing Support

While exploring the option of hosting the workshop at an alternative venue may initially appear innovative, such a decision must be carefully considered in light of potential financial implications that could impact the feasibility of the workshop. Fortunately, each campus within the district boasts spacious halls equipped with large high-definition monitors, thereby reducing the need for external audiovisual rentals.

Additionally, every school is equipped with at least one computer lab, which can serve as the main venue for the workshop while providing convenient computer access for all participants. Furthermore, the presence of Promethean boards and WIFI in each classroom facilitates breakout sessions. Moreover, the school district possesses its own Zoom platform, which can accommodate attendees unable to attend in person.

Furthermore, federal funding allocated under Title V is accessible for professional development initiatives within the school district. This funding source also extends to support ongoing assistance and follow-up visits for coaches and mentors, although applications for such assistance must be submitted in advance. Additionally, there exists a collaborative group comprising teachers and counselors from across five schools, which can provide valuable support and synergy for the workshop's success.

Potential Barriers

The school district encounters financial challenges, potentially stemming from declining enrollment, which poses a hurdle to funding the service-learning professional development program. Brunello et al. (2022) elucidate that financial limitations may impact the school district's ability to prioritize investments in professional development initiatives. Additionally, the diversity of participating grade levels during the training sessions presents another obstacle. Professional development for K-12 schools necessitates accommodating educators from elementary, middle, and high school levels, potentially exacerbating the challenge of bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge

and practical application.

Potential Solutions

Planning fundraising initiatives to address financial challenges within the district is imperative to alleviate the financial burden associated with the professional development program. Additionally, seeking support through federal funding avenues such as "Title V" presents a viable option, as it provides financial backing to facilitate ongoing educational opportunities for educators.

Moreover, the program structure incorporates breakout sessions, which offer a practical solution to the challenge posed by multigrade classrooms. By allowing educators to convene in groups according to grade level during these sessions, collaborative planning and discussion can be effectively facilitated. Bichler (2021) underscores the efficacy of utilizing breakout sessions to address the complexities associated with teaching multigrade classrooms. Originally introduced as a response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, this approach proves to be equally effective in resolving this particular issue.

Participants with no previous experience in service-learning and who may initially struggle to reconcile theoretical concepts with practical application will benefit from comprehensive sessions designed to elucidate the theoretical underpinnings and frameworks governing service-learning. Through the examination of successful case studies and active collaboration, participants will gain insights into devising service-

learning projects tailored to their specific grade levels. This holistic approach ensures that participants acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively bridge the gap between theory and practice in the realm of service-learning.

Project Description

The upcoming 3-day professional development workshop is tailored for a diverse array of attendees, including teachers, counselors, substitutes, and supporting classroom staff. Scheduled to occur during the last week of the academic year, this strategic timing allows teachers to participate without the added burden of preparing work for their students during their absence. Furthermore, this timing affords substitutes the opportunity to actively engage in the workshop, fostering a collaborative learning environment.

Participation in the workshop during this period also offers teachers the advantage of incorporating newly acquired knowledge and skills into their planning and preparation for the upcoming school year. This proactive approach ensures that the insights gained from the workshop are seamlessly integrated into their professional practice, enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom.

Upon receiving clearance for funding from the Title V program, attendees will receive detailed information regarding the workshop schedule by mid-March. As the workshop dates approach, potential participants will receive personalized emails containing essential details such as the date, time, location, and overarching themes of each session. Additionally, the workshop's promotional materials, including marketing

flyers, will be disseminated to principals for posting in staff rooms and other frequented areas, ensuring widespread awareness and participation.

The workshop agenda spans three days, each dedicated to distinct themes and activities aimed at enhancing participants' knowledge and skills in service-learning implementation. The first day will commence with an in-depth introduction to service learning, encompassing its theoretical foundations, models, and frameworks, as well as an exploration of its benefits and impact on student outcomes. Throughout each day, participants will engage in reflective discussions, pose questions, and receive additional support to prepare for the subsequent sessions.

On the second day, the focus will shift to adapting service-learning methodologies for different grade levels, ranging from kindergarten to high school. Breakout sessions tailored to participants' specific areas of work will facilitate collaborative brainstorming and problem-solving to address challenges associated with service-learning implementation. Additionally, sessions on classroom management and assessment strategies will enhance participants' pedagogical repertoire.

The culminating day of the workshop will emphasize team building and practical application of service-learning principles. Participants will collaborate in groups to design and implement service-learning projects tailored for high school students. Through the examination of case studies and collaborative troubleshooting sessions, participants will gain valuable insights into overcoming potential challenges.

Furthermore, the integration of service-learning across various subject disciplines and the development of major projects will underscore the interdisciplinary nature of service-learning initiatives.

The final day will conclude with a token of appreciation and the distribution of certificates to acknowledge participants' commitment and contributions. A survey will be administered to gather feedback, and participants will have the opportunity to exchange contact information to facilitate ongoing collaboration beyond the workshop.

Roles and Responsibilities

In the capacity of the facilitator, my role encompasses various responsibilities integral to the successful execution of the professional development workshop. Firstly, effective communication with administrators is paramount to coordinate and schedule the workshop, ensuring alignment with organizational objectives and logistical requirements. This includes supplying invitations to potential attendees and disseminating flyers to maintain awareness and anticipation of the upcoming workshop among educators.

Attendees are entrusted with the responsibility of arranging their transportation to and from the workshop venue each and committing to the full duration of the sessions. To facilitate seamless participation, I will engage in negotiations to secure provisions for snacks and lunch on each day of the workshop, thereby enabling attendees to adhere to punctuality and remain engaged following the lunch break.

Upon the workshop's conclusion, I will administer a comprehensive survey to

solicit feedback from participants, aiming to gather valuable insights into their experiences and perceptions. Additionally, I will collect email addresses from each participant, fostering ongoing communication and support to enhance their professional practice beyond the workshop setting.

Subsequently, I will compile and analyze the survey findings, preparing a detailed report to be presented to the administration. This report will serve to inform organizational decision-making processes and address any follow-up inquiries or requests from participants, thereby ensuring continuous improvement and responsiveness to stakeholders' needs.

Project Evaluation Plan

The project evaluation plan encompasses a strategic combination of formative and summative assessment methodologies to comprehensively gauge participant learning and program effectiveness. Ismail (2022) underscores the importance of summative assessment in measuring student learning outcomes, positioning it as an essential component to finalize and validate the educational experience. Thompson (2021) advocates for a feedback-oriented approach that bridges formative and summative assessment, nurturing independent learning among participants while providing valuable insights for program enhancement.

To facilitate critical thinking and self-directed learning, Dutta, He, and Tsang advocate for observation and reflection as integral components of the evaluation process.

However, Gundumogula and Gundumogula (2020) caution against the limitations of focus group interviews in the context of large-scale programs, citing cost implications and participant group size constraints.

In light of these considerations, the project evaluation plan will adopt a dual approach, comprising formative assessment at the conclusion of each session and summative assessment at the culmination of the three-day workshop. This blended approach aims to capture nuanced qualitative feedback on participant perceptions, satisfaction levels, and overall learning outcomes.

By leveraging both formative and summative assessment tools, the evaluation process will offer comprehensive insights into the program's impact and effectiveness. This data-driven approach will enable the facilitator to identify areas for improvement, make necessary adjustments for future iterations of the program, and ensure continual enhancement of program quality. Moreover, the integration of multiple assessment methods will facilitate data triangulation, enhancing the reliability and validity of the evaluation outcomes. Through meticulous evaluation and iterative refinement, the project evaluation plan seeks to uphold scholarly rigor and optimize the educational experience for participants.

Project Implications

The 3-day service-learning professional development program endeavors to equip K-12 educators and counselors with the requisite knowledge, tools, and practical skills to

seamlessly integrate service-learning into their educational practices. By bridging the gap between theoretical concepts and practical application, the program aims to empower participants to plan and execute service-learning initiatives effectively while fostering collaborative communities to support implementation endeavors. Through hands-on training and immersive experiences, educators will gain insights into the nuances of service-learning pedagogy, enabling them to navigate challenges and adhere to best practices consistently.

The insights gleaned from my research underscore the critical need for ongoing support and professional development initiatives to facilitate the consistent and faithful implementation of service-learning among educators. By addressing this need, the program holds significant implications for fostering positive social change within educational contexts. As students engage in experiential learning and immerse themselves in service-oriented activities, they develop a broader worldview and acquire invaluable life skills that transcend traditional classroom boundaries.

The program's impact extends beyond individual educators to encompass broader stakeholders within the educational ecosystem, including counselors, community partners, and local businesses providing service-learning opportunities. By cultivating a culture of civic engagement and instilling a sense of community pride among students, the program lays the groundwork for transformative change within the school environment and the wider community.

The ripple effects of student engagement in service-learning initiatives are profound, potentially leading to shifts in school dynamics and increased enrollment as families recognize the value proposition of a community-oriented educational approach. As students become more socially aware and actively contribute to their communities, schools stand to benefit from enhanced student retention rates and heightened community engagement, thereby solidifying their position as pillars of positive social change within the broader educational landscape.

In summary, the service-learning professional development program holds significant implications for educators, students, community stakeholders, and the broader educational ecosystem in the United States Virgin Islands. By equipping educators with the knowledge and tools to implement service-learning effectively, the program paves the way for transformative educational experiences that transcend traditional classroom boundaries and foster a culture of civic engagement and positive social change.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The findings of my study indicated that teachers and counselors in the K-12 setting needed help in implementing service learning with fidelity to best practices. Teachers and counselors said they needed professional development, guidance, support, structure, clear guidelines, and collaboration to help them implement service learning with fidelity. Therefore, I created a 3-day professional development program to encompass these areas and allow teachers and counselors to understand and practice service-learning pedagogy using the hands-on method for planning and presenting service-learning projects. This section describes the 3-day professional development workshop to allow teachers and counselors in a small U.S. Virgin Islands school district to learn, collaborate, and plan using hands-on methods how to implement service-learning management and assessment of the service-learning class to improve their delivery of the pedagogy and their students' outcomes. I also describe the project, its goals, schedules, activities, and final assessment as positioned in Appendix A. In Section 4, I will discuss my reflections on the project and my practices as a scholar-practitioner, including the project's strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. I will also discuss the project's implications for my personal and professional growth.

Project Strengths and Limitations

Project Strengths

Data analyses indicated that teachers and counselors need training, support,

collaborative opportunities, and professional development to implement service learning with fidelity to best practice consistently. Seven of the 10 participants stated that they needed professional development, while the other four used synonyms of professional development to describe their needs. Professional development covers training, support, and other areas identified as needs of teachers and counselors; thus, the project genre chosen was professional development. The content of the 3-day training focuses on the theoretical framework and foundations for implementing service learning, guided practice in identifying and planning service-learning projects across class and subject levels, promoting collaboration, and hands-on experiential learning.

The training aims to provide teachers and counselors with the knowledge, tools, and hands-on experience to implement service learning with fidelity to best practice consistently in K-12 schools. One of the strengths of this professional development program is the timing. Conducting the training at a time when students are not in school ensures that all teachers, counselors, substitutes, and classroom aides can attend. Providing lunch reduces time lost if participants have to leave for lunch. Another strength relating to timing is that it brings about an awareness in the educators that allows them to include their learning during their planning sessions and prepare to implement it upon their return for the new school year. Data from the research represents a cross-section of teachers and counselors in the school.

Project Limitations

Due to the diversity among teachers and counselors from international schools outside the United States, some teachers did not participate in service-learning training during their preservice years. However, the 3-day professional development program will introduce them to the theories and principles of service learning. Another limitation would be that teachers and counselors may need further training, and more than the 3-day professional development may be needed to enhance their efficacy toward service learning; they may need a curriculum to guide service learning. The third limitation is the spread of the school district; the geography of the district, separated by the sea, limits accessibility, and teachers must depend on technology to interact with each other. As a result, there may be a need to have separate sessions to interact with all the teachers, which would cause added expense, or there will be the need to use Zoom to incorporate all teachers and counselors.

Recommendation for Alternative Approaches

There were four approaches to developing a project for the research. The four approaches include a 3-day professional development workshop, a curriculum plan with units, a program evaluation report, and a policy evaluation. Findings from the study indicated an overwhelming desire for the 3-day professional development program, which was the chosen genre. Recommendations for alternative approaches would eliminate the evaluation report since, according to Pendergast and Brewsaugh (2022),

evaluation reports assess products or service's strengths, weaknesses, quality effectiveness, and results. The data shows that the district needs to implement service-learning with fidelity to best practices, meaning that there is already some form of evaluation that indicates the need and an evaluation report would not be an ideal project genre.

The policy evaluation genre would not initially get consideration; however, it is a workable alternative. Golden and Figueroa (2020) noted that the current trends in education policies require efficient management and evidence-based decisions to get new funding, and governments may require multiple accountability methods to examine teachers' and counselors' perceptions of the challenges of implementing service-learning with fidelity to best practice therefore a policy evaluation genre could be an alternative approach.

Implementing a curriculum plan as the project genre received much consideration since as many as 50% of participants asked for curriculum and guidance in implementing service-learning. However, for teachers and counselors who still need to complete a service-learning component during in-service training, professional development is a critical component in curriculum development (Ogunseemi & Idowu, 2023), leading to learning outcomes that align with the mission and vision of an institution (Mendoza et al., 2023). According to UNESCO (2023), curriculum planning is dynamic and can be organized by competencies and interdisciplinary topics like service learning.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

My scholarly journey has been characterized by a discerning pursuit of knowledge, distinguishing between scholarly and non-scholarly material to inform my research endeavors effectively. Non-scholarly sources, such as articles found in magazines, newspapers, or general websites, while informative, lack the rigor and peer-reviewed scrutiny characteristic of scholarly literature. Conversely, peer-reviewed articles undergo rigorous evaluation by subject matter experts to ensure the integrity and quality of the research presented.

Through this scholarly odyssey, I have come to realize that not all issues warrant investigation and that identifying authentic research problems is essential. The trajectory of my research underwent significant evolution during its nascent stages, culminating in the current iteration that reflects my refined understanding and critical examination of factors influencing student outcomes. This journey of scholarly inquiry has catalyzed my professional growth, imbuing me with a heightened sensitivity to issues impacting student success, particularly within the context of legislative frameworks like the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002.

This scholarly voyage has instilled in me invaluable attributes of self-discipline, unwavering dedication to tasks, and an indomitable spirit to see projects through to completion. Beyond personal and educational enrichment, this journey holds profound significance as a benchmark for my role as an educator and mentor. By positioning

myself as a lifelong learner committed to excellence, I aspire to inspire my children and students to pursue their aspirations relentlessly and strive for nothing short of their best.

Despite the challenges encountered along this journey, including the profound loss experienced over the course of three years, the scholar within me persevered, urging me to forge ahead. Like a resilient plant emerging from the dormancy of winter, I am poised to embrace new challenges with renewed vigor and scholarly fortitude, driven by a steadfast commitment to continuous learning and scholarly pursuit.

The processes on the journey helped me develop greater self-control, dedication to tasks, and a determination to finish whatever I started. This journey is not only for my personal and educational development and fulfillment. At the same time, I hope to position myself in education better; this journey serves as a benchmark for my children and students whom I mentor and wish to inspire to settle for nothing but their best. I am committed to being a lifelong learner, and while I want to avoid the expenses associated with studying, I am already thinking about the next goal. This journey has been a struggle for me, marred by successive deaths over three years. At times, I felt like I could not survive, but the scholar in me challenged me to press on, and I am now emerging like a plant in spring, ready for new challenges.

Project Development

My study in service-learning has equipped me with the insights and tools necessary to advocate for meaningful changes within the school district. By integrating

service-learning into our educational philosophy, we aim to cultivate a holistic approach to education that engages students intellectually, emotionally, and experientially. This transformative endeavor seeks to prepare K-12 schools in the US Virgin Islands to nurture well-rounded individuals poised for success in higher education or vocational pursuits, thereby addressing societal needs and fostering positive societal change. As I embark on this journey, I recognize that obtaining a doctoral degree is not merely the culmination but rather the commencement of transformative change within the US Virgin Islands' educational landscape.

Leadership and Change

Teacher leaders play a crucial role in driving educational improvement and enhancing student outcomes, as emphasized by Sharp, Pijanowski, and Hughes (2021). Despite not holding administrative positions, these educators, who actively lead within classrooms and engage with principals, possess the capacity to instigate positive changes in educational practices. Leadership opportunities within K-12 schools contribute to enhancing teachers' knowledge and fostering their active participation, thereby facilitating improvements in student outcomes.

My journey as a teacher leader has been characterized by a deep understanding of the pivotal role, I play in shaping educational practices, even without formal administrative responsibilities. Through my experiences in three distinct school systems, I have consistently demonstrated leadership qualities, exemplifying the essence of teacher

leadership. As I pursue my doctoral degree, I am committed to further developing my leadership skills by collaborating with fellow educators to design and implement professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing student outcomes.

The focus of my study in service-learning has equipped me with invaluable insights into the methods and rationale behind advocating for changes within the school district. By integrating service-learning into the educational framework, we aim to cultivate a comprehensive approach that engages students intellectually, emotionally, and experientially. This paradigm shift seeks to prepare K-12 schools in the US Virgin Islands to better equip students for higher education or vocational pursuits, addressing societal needs and fostering positive change within the community.

In essence, this doctoral degree marks the beginning of a transformative journey towards effecting meaningful change within the educational landscape of the US Virgin Islands. It signifies a commitment to fostering innovation and excellence, ensuring that every student receives a holistic and enriching educational experience.

Analysis of Self as a Scholar

My scholarly journey has been characterized by self-discovery and a deep-seated commitment to understanding the factors that influence student outcomes. While my initial interests centered around the intersection of music and education, my exposure to service-learning during coursework sparked a profound realization of its potential to positively impact student learning. Balancing personal and professional obligations

during this journey has been challenging, yet immensely rewarding. I am eager to leverage my newfound expertise in qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to undertake future research endeavors aimed at enhancing educational practices within the school district.

Analysis of Self as a Practitioner

Navigating this doctoral journey has facilitated my growth as a practitioner, equipping me with the skills to conduct rigorous research and utilize qualitative data analysis to inform project development. Armed with this knowledge, I am confident in my ability to advocate for change and drive initiatives aimed at improving educational practices within the school district. The culmination of my project development efforts marks a significant milestone in my journey as a practitioner, serving as a blueprint for future professional development endeavors geared towards advancing educational excellence.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

Transitioning from researcher to project developer has been a transformative experience, underscoring the importance of translating research insights into actionable strategies to address educational challenges effectively. Engaging with participants and identifying their professional development needs served as the catalyst for conceptualizing and executing the 3-day professional development project. This experience has not only deepened my understanding of the intricacies of implementing

service-learning but has also positioned me to undertake future projects aimed at fostering educational innovation and excellence within the school district.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

This work explored teachers' and counselors' perceptions regarding the challenges of implementing service-learning. Determining what they need to implement service-learning with fidelity to best practices consistently has led to developing a 3-day professional development plan. This reflection on the importance of the work has implications for stakeholders such as community partners, the school district, and student outcomes. The professional development plan will raise awareness of service-learning, its foundations, and its framework – a crucial step in empowering teachers and counselors. The 3-day program addresses the educator's identified training needs and provides the knowledge and skills for effective implementation. By engaging participants in team-building skills and collaborative sessions, the professional development responds to participants' requests for support by creating an inclusive environment to encourage sharing ideas and best practices to enhance the potential for successful integration. Acting as the bridge between theory and application, it equips educators with a deep understanding of the pedagogy that can translate into impactful experiences for teachers and counselors who will transfer it to their students, enhancing their outcomes. This professional development program will transfer from educators to students, preparing them for life beyond the classroom as students and developing problem-solving skills,

critical thinking skills, and practical communication skills necessary for living. Service-learning offers holistic education, helps build civic pride, and creates the foundation for life, leaving a positive, lasting effect on participants and students.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

This study delves into the perceptions of teachers and counselors regarding the challenges encountered in implementing service-learning initiatives. Through this exploration, the study aims to identify the specific needs essential for the consistent implementation of service-learning practices in alignment with best practices, thereby laying the groundwork for the development of a comprehensive 3-day professional development plan.

Reflection on the significance of this endeavor underscores its implications for various stakeholders, including community partners, the school district, and ultimately, student outcomes. The envisioned professional development plan stands as a pivotal mechanism for raising awareness surrounding service-learning, elucidating its theoretical underpinnings, and delineating its overarching framework. By fostering a deeper understanding among educators and counselors, this initiative serves as a catalyst for empowering them to navigate the complexities of service-learning implementation effectively.

The proposed 3-day program is meticulously crafted to address the identified training needs of educators, equipping them with the requisite knowledge and skills for

proficient implementation. Through immersive sessions encompassing team-building activities and collaborative discourse, the professional development endeavor responds to the expressed need for comprehensive support, fostering an inclusive environment conducive to the exchange of ideas and best practices. This collaborative ethos not only nurtures a sense of community among participants but also augments the potential for successful integration of service-learning principles within educational settings.

Functioning as a conduit between theoretical concepts and practical application, the professional development initiative endeavors to furnish educators with a profound understanding of service-learning pedagogy. This experiential knowledge, once internalized by educators and counselors, holds the promise of catalyzing transformative experiences for students, thereby enhancing their overall educational outcomes. Consequently, the ripple effects of this professional development intervention extend beyond educators to directly impact students, arming them with indispensable life skills such as problem-solving acumen, critical thinking prowess, and effective communication abilities.

The holistic nature of service-learning engenders a multifaceted educational experience that transcends conventional classroom boundaries. By fostering civic pride and instilling a sense of community engagement, service-learning lays the foundation for lifelong learning, leaving an indelible and affirmative imprint on both participants and students alike. Through this comprehensive approach, service-learning emerges as a

transformative force capable of effecting enduring positive change within educational ecosystems.

Applications

The outlined structure of the 3-day professional development program underscores its primary objective: to furnish educators and counselors with a comprehensive understanding of service-learning, encompassing its theoretical underpinnings and exemplar case studies. By delineating explicit directives, this program aims to empower participants with a nuanced appreciation of the purpose and potential inherent in service-learning initiatives. Although this professional development initiative does not furnish a prescriptive curricular guide, it equips educators and counselors with the requisite tools to seamlessly integrate service-learning pedagogy into existing curricula. Ogunseemi and Idowu (2023) posit that while curricular frameworks provide direction, professional development assumes paramount importance in actualizing and implementing these curricula effectively.

The 3-day professional development program adeptly responds to the expressed need for support and guided practice articulated by teachers and counselors. Through collaborative endeavors and interactive simulations, this program endeavors to augment participants' practical skill sets essential for the consistent and efficacious implementation of service-learning methodologies. By facilitating opportunities for peer consultation, collaboration, and mentorship within a simulated environment, this initiative seeks to

engender a sense of community among participants. Through engagement with real-world case studies and interactive sessions, the program cultivates a collaborative ethos, fostering an environment conducive to ongoing professional growth and mutual support.

The envisioned 3-day professional development program is poised to catalyze the establishment of collaborative teams and networks among participants. Beyond the temporal confines of the program, these collaborative structures are intended to serve as scaffolding mechanisms, providing ongoing support and resources to participants beyond the culmination of the program. By forging enduring connections and networks, this initiative aims to extend its impact beyond the immediate confines of the program, fostering a culture of sustained collaboration and professional development among educators and counselors.

Direction for Future Research

Future research endeavors could delve more deeply into the multifaceted challenges encountered by teachers and counselors in the implementation of service-learning initiatives, aiming to elucidate viable solutions to mitigate these obstacles. A prospective longitudinal study could serve as a robust methodological framework to assess comprehensively the impact of professional development interventions on educators' pedagogical practices and counselors' guidance strategies. By meticulously tracking changes in instructional methodologies and community engagement strategies over an extended period, researchers can elucidate the sustained efficacy of professional

development initiatives in fostering meaningful pedagogical transformation and nurturing robust community relationships.

While the current professional development program predominantly adopts an in-person instructional modality, leveraging the district Zoom platform to accommodate participants' geographical dispersion, there exists a compelling avenue for future exploration regarding the efficacy of alternative professional development approaches. Investigating the comparative effectiveness of diverse instructional modalities, including online courses in service-learning, mentorship programs, or fully online professional development initiatives, could yield valuable insights into optimizing professional development interventions. Such research endeavors could illuminate the differential impact of various instructional modalities on student outcomes, educator efficacy, and counselor practices, thereby informing the design and implementation of future professional development initiatives.

Future research endeavors could seek to unravel the nuanced benefits accrued by students through their engagement with professional development programs. By employing robust qualitative and quantitative methodologies, researchers can probe into the multifaceted dimensions of students' holistic educational experiences, elucidating the tangible and intangible benefits derived from their educators enriched pedagogical practices and counselors' enhanced guidance strategies. Such investigations hold the potential to shed light on the intricate interplay between professional development

interventions and students' academic achievement, socio-emotional development, and civic engagement, thereby elucidating the broader implications of professional development initiatives on student learning outcomes and overall educational experiences.

Conclusion

This research endeavor initiated within a localized educational setting within the US Virgin Islands, setting out to explore the nuanced perceptions held by teachers and counselors regarding the intricacies inherent in implementing service-learning initiatives within the confines of the school district, with a steadfast commitment to fidelity to best practices. Through the conscientious engagement of ten educators in semi-structured interviews, a comprehensive elucidation of the perceived challenges and essential resources requisite for the effective execution of service-learning endeavors transpired.

The culmination of these dialogues yielded a resounding consensus among participating teachers and counselors, underscoring the imperative necessity for targeted professional development initiatives to navigate the intricacies of service-learning implementation.

In light of the discernments gleaned from data analysis, the genesis of a 3-day professional development program emerged as a consequential response. This service-learning professional development endeavor aspires to furnish educators with a robust theoretical framework and foundational knowledge aimed at cultivating a nuanced

understanding of the pedagogical intricacies inherent in service-learning modalities. It endeavors to provide a hands-on, collaborative platform intended to embolden educators to seamlessly integrate service-learning methodologies within their curricular frameworks, thereby proffering the requisite support, guidance, and training essential for bridging the chasm between theoretical paradigms and practical application.

The culmination of this scholarly journey has engendered profound growth in scholarly acumen, heralding the advent of a transformative phase poised to catalyze future professional development endeavors.

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Appendix A: The Project

3-day Professional Development Workshop for K-12 teachers and counselors: Implementing Service-Learning: Empowering Educators for Engaged Learning.

Purpose

The purpose of the 3-day service-learning professional development program is to inform K-12 teachers and counselors of how to use service-learning to bridge the gap between theory and practice by providing the tools and hands-on practice in planning and implementing service-learning and building collaborative communities to guide and support service-learning implementation.

Goals:

There are three main goals of this professional development program

1. **Activate understanding of the theoretical framework and foundations of service-learning:**

Objective: To inform and enhance participants' understanding of service-learning, its theoretical foundations, and its potential impact on stakeholders.

Activities: identifying the proponents of the pedagogy and their rationale for the pedagogy, examining case studies, and discussing ways to benefit from service-learning

2. **Provide practical hands-on tools and strategies for implementing service-learning at grade levels**

Objectives: To equip participants with the strategies and hands-on tools needed for planning, designing, and implementing service-learning projects with age appropriateness.

3. **Create collaborative groups to address the needs and concerns of teachers and counselors and provide support.**

Objective: Build and foster a collaborative community among educators to support each other in the implementation of service-learning, address the challenges and share best practices.

Activities: share case studies, plan class-appropriate service-learning projects, brainstorm solutions to challenges, and discuss information on resources for further learning and support.

General Learning Outcomes:

1. Equip participants with a comprehensive understanding of service-learning and its applicability across K-12 schools
2. Participants will possess the knowledge and skills to plan and design grade-appropriate service-learning projects.
3. Create a collaborative network of colleagues to support ongoing service-learning implementation.
4. Participants will compile a list of sites, links, and available resources for continuing education and support.

Specific Daily Learning Outcomes:**Day 1****At the end of this day, participants will be able to:**

1. Identify the seminal authors of service-learning, and articulate the theoretical and foundational framework.
2. Recognize the potential impact of service learning on stakeholders including educators, students, and the community
3. Familiarize themselves with various service-learning models and frameworks
4. Gain insights into effective service-learning case studies.

Day 2**At the end of this day, participants will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate the ability to modify and craft service-learning for different elementary students with a special focus on K-6 grades
2. Understand the significance of incorporation service-learning into middle-school
3. Explore methods for mitigating challenges in service-learning implementation and brainstorm solutions.
4. Relate to strategies for classroom management and assessment in the context of service-learning.

Day 3**At the end of this day, participants will be able to:**

1. Identify practical tools for implementing service-learning in the high school setting.
2. Collaborate and brainstorm service-learning project ideas for middle to high school levels.
3. Troubleshoot potential challenges and devise strategies to overcome them.
4. Explore the potential of service-learning to lead to job opportunities after high school

Daily Program Guide

Day 1 Agenda 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

First session: 9:00 AM-1030 AM

- Welcoming remarks and introductions **(10 minutes)**
- State the objectives of the workshop such as defining service-learning and its benefits and expected outcomes **(10 minutes)**
- Ice breaker **(5-8 minutes)**
- Introduce of first session speaker: -Theoretical foundations and research supporting service-learning **(2 minutes)**

Topics to cover on the first day

- i. Overview of Service Learning
 - a. Theories and foundations of service learning **(15 minutes)**
 - b. The impact of service learning on all stakeholders **(15 minutes)**

- c. Service-learning models and Framework **(15 minutes)**

Fifteen-minute tea break

ii. Second session 10:45 AM-12:15 AM Service-Learning Theories

- a. Exploring various service-learning Theories **(20 minutes)**
- b. Exploring the ways and benefits of effective service learning **(20 minutes)**
- c. Examining effective service-learning case studies **(25 minutes)**

Forty-five minutes Lunch Break 12:15-1:00 PM

Session 3: 1:00-2:30 PM Planning and Designing Service Learning-Projects

- Methods and ways of service-learning development **(15 minutes)**
- Service-learning focus areas **(20 minutes)**
- Devising possible service-learning projects **(30 minutes)**

15-minute Break

Closing exercises: 2:30-3:00 Overview of the day

- Question & Answer and Discussion
 - Allocate time for questions, answers, and open discussion among participants. **(25 minutes)**
 - Encourage participants to share their insights, concerns, and ideas for addressing service-learning planning and implementation. **(15 minutes)**

Closing Remarks

- Summarize the key points discussed during the workshop. **(15 minutes)**

- Express gratitude to participants for their active engagement. **(5 minutes)**
- Provide additional resources for further learning and support. **(5 minutes)**

DAY 2 Agenda 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Session 1: 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM Session Title: “Adapting Service-Learning for K-6 Grades”

- Welcoming remarks and introductions **(5 minutes)**
- State the objectives of the day 2 workshop **(10 minutes)**
- Team Building activity **(15 minutes)**
- Introduce of speaker: **Introducing the concept of service learning to elementary school 5 minutes)**

Topics to cover on the second day

- Modifying Service Learning for Elementary School **(15 minutes)**
- Introducing service learning for middle to high school **(15 minutes)**
- Mitigating possible challenges and brainstorming solutions **(30 minutes)**

15-minute - Tea break

Session 2: 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM Session Title: “Integrating Service-Learning into

Elementary Curriculum”

- Discuss the development and implementation of service learning in middle

to upper school. **(20 minutes)**

- Highlight the significance of incorporating service learning in the middle school curriculum **(20 minutes)**
- Explore the various topics that can be used at the level **(15 minutes)**

Forty-five minutes lunch break 12:15-1:00 PM

Session 3: 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM Session Title: “Classroom Management and

- Assessment in Service-Learning”
- Policies for executing service learning in elementary schools **(25 minutes)**
- Assessing student learning and project outcomes **(20 minutes)**
- Drafting ideas for service-learning projects **(30 Minutes)**

Closing Remarks 2:30-3:00

- Summarize the key points discussed during the workshop. **(15-20 minutes)**
- Express gratitude to participants for their active engagement. **(5 minutes)**
- Provide additional resources for further learning and support. **(5-10 minutes)**

Day 3 Agenda 9:00 am – 3:00 PM

Welcome and opening remarks **(10 minutes)**

- Team Building Activity **(20 minutes)**

Introduction of speaker: **Designing and implementing service learning for High**

School (2-5 minutes)**Topics to cover on the third day**

Case Studies and Best Practices

- a. Share case studies of successful service -learning
- b. Individuals who have implemented service-learning activities will be invited to share their experiences.

- b) Participants will be encouraged to discuss their own experiences, challenges, and successes.

First Session; 9:00-10:30: Implement service learning in high school

Brainstorming service-learning high ideas for middle to high school **(30 minutes)**

Trouble shooting possible challenges and problems that might occur **(15 minutes)**

Using service learning to create job opportunities after high school **(15 minutes)**

Fifteen Minutes Break**Second Session 10:45-12:30**

Review of case study

How to implement service learning/experience Guest Presenter **(30 minutes)**

Experience as service learning presenter. **(25-30 minutes)**

Forty-Five Minutes Lunch Break**Session 3: 12:30-2:00**

- a) Implementing service learning across subject disciplines **(30 minutes)**

- b) Designing service major project **(30 minutes)**
- c) Designing service learning and policies **(30 minutes)**

Closing Activity 2:00-3:00

- Allocate time for questions, answers, and open discussion among participants. **(10 minutes)**
- Closing Remarks **(10 minutes)**
 - Summarize the key points discussed during the workshop. **(10 minutes)**
 - Express gratitude to participants for their active engagement. **(5 minutes)**
 - Provide additional resources for further learning and support. **(5 minutes)**
- Distribution of participation certificate and tokens
 - Give the administrators who participated in the three-day workshop a certificate of participation. **(10 minutes)**
 - Give tokens to specially recognized participants **(20 minutes)**

Budget for 20 Teachers and counselors + 5 Administrators

1. Venue and Facilities:		
	• Workshop venue rental:	\$1,500
	• Audiovisual equipment rental:	\$200
2. Meals and Refreshments:		
	• Lunch (3 days, 25 attendees):	\$1,500
	• Snacks and beverages (3 days, 25 attendees):	\$300
3. Materials and Resources:		
	• Handouts and materials:	\$200
	• Stationery and supplies:	\$100
4. Speakers and Trainers:		
	• Guest speaker fee:	\$1,000
5. Marketing and Promotion:		
	• Creating and distributing flyers and banners:	\$50
6. Certificates and tokens		
	• Printing and creating of Certificates of participation	\$50
	• Tokens for participants and presenters	\$100
7. Miscellaneous Expenses:		<u>\$100</u>
Total Budget Estimate:		\$5,100

The schools will raise funds and seek sponsorship from corporate citizens to help offset expenses.

3-day Professional Development Program

Implementing Service-Learning: Empowering Educators for engaged
Learning

By

Hester Z Philbert nee Brown

Be present by 8:45 a.m. and ensure that things are the way you want them to ensure that there are name tags for the first day and all electronics and projectors are in place.

Identify the space for breakout rooms if that is necessary and also that the Zoom link is up for those who may join us via Zoom.

Welcome and Introductions

I am Hester Philbert and my two presenter along with me will take you on a journey for the next three days that will change the way you do school forever

Welcome to this 3-day professional Development program. You are here to be empowered to consistently implement service in this school district. Please ensure that you complete your name tag and keep it on today so can learn each name. There is a printed program for the workshop in your folder, please follow it. I expect everyone to be

here on time every day and stay for the duration of the program. There is a sign-in sheet that you are required to complete within the first 10 minutes of the morning and afternoon sessions to certify that you have completed the hours.

Welcome

- SL theories, foundations and framework and its benefits to student outcomes
- Adapting SL to K-12 schools- mitigating possible challenge and solutions
- Team Building: designing and implementing SL projects
- Importance of implementing SL in education

Here is a quick overview of what we hope to achieve over the 3 days of training. Please check your folder/pouches take out the name tag, write your name, and position it on your person so we can get to know each other names quickly.

Purpose of the PD program

The purpose of the 3-day service-learning professional development program is:

- To inform K-12 teachers and counselors of how to use service-learning to bridge the gap between theory and practice by
- Providing the tools and hands-on practice in planning and implementing service-learning and
- Build collaborative communities to guide and support service-learning implementation.

The purpose of this professional development program is to inform 2. Provide support and 3. Build collaborative communities

Training Objectives/Goals

- To inform and enhance participants understanding of Service-learning, inform participants of the theoretical foundation and potential impact on stakeholders.
- To equip participants with the strategies and hands-on tool needed for planning, designing and implementing service-learning.
- Build a collaborative community among educators to provide support in implementing service-learning and address challenges

Please read together the training objectives/goals with me as they fly across the screen

Day 1: Overview of the days' schedule:

- Session 1: 9:00 – 10:30
- Welcome and opening remarks and objectives
- Overview of Service-Learning
- 15 minute break
- Service-learning theories: benefits, effects and case studies
 - 12:15- 1:00 PM Lunch (will be served)
 - 1:00-2:30 Planning and designing Service-learning projects
 - 2:30 – 3:00 Overview of the day –question & answers and discussions
 - Provide additional support for further reading

Each day will be divided into two sessions and I'm happy to let you know that lunch is provided (and snacks too) so you don't need to leave and you may use the time for lunch to come chat with us if you need to. Every day ends with questions and answer section and some form of formative assessment

Service-learning theories

- David Kolb's : the four stage cycle
 - John Dewey's experiential learning
 - Paulo Freire's concept of critical pedagogy
-
- We will consider only two:
 - Kolb's four-stage cycle
 - Dewey's experiential learning

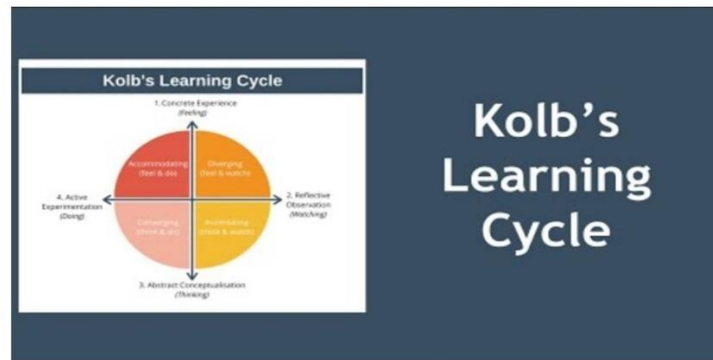
On the screen, you will see the names of some of the seminal authors associated with experiential learning. Does anyone want to give an idea of what you know about folk?

Today we will consider two: Kolb and his 4-stage cycle and Dewey's experiential learning. Look at the charts below

Kolb's four-stage Cycle

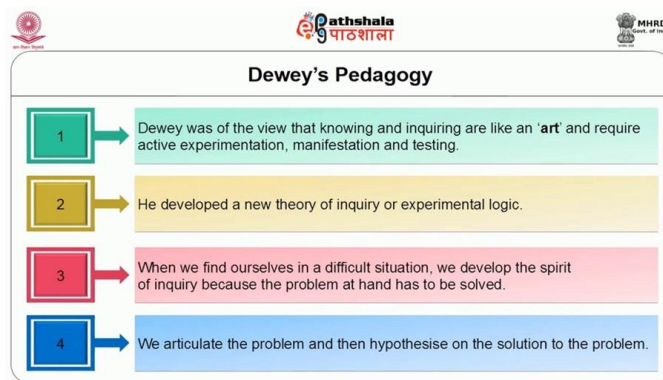


In brief: a learner can enter at any stage but they must complete the cycle. The next slide has a short video for you



The reference is at the end so you can go back and review it and do your research

Dewey's Experiential Learning



This is Dewey's experiential learning: Let us read each color and then discuss them one by one. We are discussing how inquiry and experience affect learning

Day 1: Formative Assessment Workshop understanding and Expectations

- Assess participants understanding of the workshop content and their expectations.
- 1 Mentimeter Polls: log into mentimeter and respond to the following:
 - Has your expectations been met?
 - Identify the most valuable concept of the day
 - In what area do you need more information?
- Use the space to share details of what went well for you, and suggestions to improve tomorrow.

Type in www.mentimeter, log in using the code: ____, and complete the assessment.

Day 2: Adapting service-learning for K-6 grades

Team building activity: Collaborative puzzle. Distribute puzzle pieces to participants upon arrival. At the appropriate time ask them to find their matching pieces, complete the puzzle and form a group

- Introducing the concept of service-learning to Elementary school
- Present interactive case studies or scenarios related to service-learning in K-6 settings and encourage participants to discuss how they would handle them.

How many of you implement service-learning? Assess yourself, I'm sure your group will want to hear from you.

Understanding Service-learning

- **Service-learning defined:** It is an educational approach that integrates meaningful community service with academics, providing space for reflection to enhance civic responsibility and personal growth
- **Key features**
 - Engage in real-world experiences
 - Students apply academic skills to meet community needs
 - Students reflect on their work and its impact on community

Use the puzzle pieces you collected earlier to form your groups. The other presenters

and I will move around to guide your discussion.

Groups will discuss the benefits and share their experience of service learning

Goals and Benefits of service-learning

Goals:

- Build civic pride, promote personal development, enhance students academic outcomes.

Benefits to students:

- Students learn by doing, prepare themselves for life outside of school, develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

Benefit for the community

- Promote positive social change, address needs of community and students in a reciprocal manner that all gain.

Have the groups discuss the benefits and share experiences of service learning:

facilitators will move around.

Service-learning Standards for K-12 Schools

- Meaningful service that creatively engages participants
- Service must be linked to curriculum
- Sufficient duration and intensity to meet community needs
- Incorporate challenging reflection activities that enhances analytics
- Youth voice must be strong in planning, implementing and evaluating
- Progress monitoring
- Diversity
- Partnership
-

National Youth Leadership Council

My colleague will now make a 15-minute presentation on service-learning models and frameworks. You can stop us for clarification, or better, write your questions in the chat and I will monitor and give feedback as much as possible.

Service-Learning Models and Frameworks

- Social learning theory:

Bandura's observational learning. Incorporating social learning into service-learning activities

- Constructivists learning

. Overview of constructivism in education.

Designing service-learning projects aligned with constructivist principles.

- Project-Based Learning

The connection between project-based learning and service-learning. Structuring service-learning projects using PBL frameworks.

Quotes about service-learning

- **"I think students see hope when they're engaged in service-learning."**

- **Elaine Fitzgerald**

- Principal, Satellite Center, St. Charles Parish, Louisiana

- **“In service-learning we’re design thinking and problem-solving all the way.”**

• **Brian Gough**

Digital Media instructor, Satellite Center,
St. Charles Parish, Louisiana

National Youth Leadership Council

Designing Effective Projects

Sample Title of project “ Conservation in Action: Restoring a Local Park”

- Present interactive case studies or scenarios related to service-learning in K-12 settings and encourage participants to discuss how they would handle them.
- Look at the video in the next slide then Identify a project or discuss how you could use the same – similar project in your school

Let’s take our break here. As you go look around your school and think about the neighborhood, think of ways you can contribute to the community through service learning

Interactive Service-learning Project



Before we look at this video, I would like some feedback on your thoughts about a project. Let's look at the video then you will get back to planning.

Implementing SL in K-6 classrooms

Separate into your groups formed earlier

- Identify elements from the video that would fit your age group or subject.
- Make a list of subject areas and activities that you could include in your class

Work in your groups, again we will be assessing and giving guidance and feedback.

Integrating Service-Learning into curriculum

Referencing the video:

- Come together as a group and create one big service-learning project for your school.
- Now! DO NOT FORGET THE REFLECTIVE SECTION!

I need three individuals to present a quick reflection on what they just did. 1 teacher from middle and high school, 1 counselor, and 1 elementary teacher.

Classroom Management and Assessment

Classroom Management

- Establish norms of respect and inclusiveness
- Establish norms and expectations for respectful collaboration
- Communicate clear guidelines, expectations and project goals
- Define clear roles and responsibilities for students and facilitators
- Address any challenge promptly

All along the journey, you must maintain order and equity for all students. Play is not work and work is not play. Every session must have an equal balance of enjoyment and application.

Classroom management in service-learning



Let's Look at another video to help us understand how to maintain balance, discipline, and equity for all student. Service-learning is all-inclusive.

Day 2: Formative Assessment

- Describe how you plan to adapt service-learning concepts learned for your grade level.

Share with your group from today, insights and challenges you foresee and brainstorm solutions. One member of the group will share with the whole group.

This is time to begin your reflective journal: Jot down key take aways, questions and areas of needed support

Service-learning assessment:

- Self reflection journals
- Develop clear rubrics for assessing service-learning projects.
- Implement on-going formative assessment to gauge understanding.
- Showcase the learning outcomes of service-learning projects

Planning for service-learning is like planning for any other class. Failure to plan is a plan to fail.

Day 3: Implementing SL for High School

- Using the same project, high school students can participate in grant writing to get funding for the project
- Service-learning is holistic, you can incorporate every aspect of the curriculum

Welcome to the third and final day of this professional development program. How is it going for you?

For this first session we are going to put elementary into one room so that they can continue working on their service-learning plan and brainstorm how they will fit it into the already existing curriculum.

At the same time, my other colleague will deal with implementing service-learning for High School.

Community Partnership and Sustainability

- Ensure that projects design have long-term impact
 - Notice in the video that students made preparation for the next year at the end of the current year
- Plan your strategy ahead of time for handing over a project
- Stay in touch with community partners
- If possible find ways to new student in get involved in the project; as old students go get new students connected

I want to reference the SL video from yesterday. How did they plan for sustainability?

Let us imagine that was here, how could the school maintain the project over the

summer? There are no students to eat the vegetables during the summer (hint) and sell to

the community store.

Closing Session: reflection and Action Planning

- Have groups present their service-learning plans to the entire body of participants
- Groups will critiques and ask questions to have the group reflect on ways to improve the project.

Participants Action Plans

- Participant will: submit their Service-Learning Implementation Plan electronically
- Evaluation will be based on the clarity, feasibility, and alignment with workshop concepts and best practices
- This summative assessment allows participants to apply the knowledge gained during the workshop to their specific educational context, fostering a practical and actionable understanding of service-learning implementation.

Day 3: Formative Assessment Implementation, Planning and Integration

- Outline a brief plan to implement service-learning in your teaching or counseling role based on the concepts covered today.
- Open question: I need three of you to identify specific strategies you plan to use to integrate service-learning into the curriculum.
- Look at the short video below and then let us discuss how we would and should handle the situation

Thank you

- Questions

Resources

- Google Images <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/john-deweys-theory>
- National Youth Leaders Council: <https://nylc.org/k-12-standards/>
- Veno, E. (2023). Service Learning Projects for kids
<https://www.joinprisma.com/blog/service-learning-projects-for-kids>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=rycjUldMI3k>

conclusion

- A final message:
- It was great being with you all of the three days. You seem to understand and enjoy the workshop. I hope that this in the beginning of your service-learning JOURNEY. It continues.

Please copy my email address and be sure to contact me whenever you think you need a boost. I am leaving a summative assessment of this program which you must complete and send to me in 21 days (three weeks) from today. Be sure to share your contact so that you can collaborate as you plan. Thanks

Summative Assessment: Service-learning Implementation Plan

- Participants will demonstrate their understanding and ability to apply the concepts, strategies, and tools learned during the workshop by creating a comprehensive service-learning implementation plan tailored to their specific K-12 educational context.
1. Provide a brief overview of your school, grade level or counseling context.
 2. Clearly state the purpose and goals of your proposed service-learning initiative.
 3. Discuss the theoretical foundations of service-learning that aligns with your proposal.
 4. Identify a specific service-learning project you want to implement; include focus areas, objectives and outcomes
 5. Detail how the project will integrate into the existing curriculum: identify subject(s) where it will have the most impact
 6. Describe assessment methods (formative and summative).
 7. Explain how you will establish and maintain meaningful relationship with community partners.
 8. Develop a realistic timeline for implementation
 9. Identify any challenges you anticipate and possible solutions
 10. Reflect on what you learned during the workshop and how it influenced your plan.
 11. Identify specific actions you will take in the immediate future to start implementing your plan.
- Submit your plan to your principal by July 15. Plans should reach head office by July 20th

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Thank you for accepting the invitation to participate in this interview. Please relax and give your responses to each question as it relates to you. Please be aware that this interview will be audio recorded to allow you to revise and verification of the answers you want to give; at a later date, you will have access to the transcribed document for verification purposes. Be aware that you do not have to answer any questions that you are uncomfortable with, and you can choose to end this interview at any time you feel necessary. The interview should last between 45 minutes and an hour, any extra time will be left to your discretion.

1. THE QUESTIONS:
2. What is your substantive role at the study site, and how long have you been an employee?
3. What do you know about service learning? Elaborate
4. How have you implemented service-learning in your subject area? (*School for the counselor*)
5. How comfortable are you in implementing Service-learning? Elaborate on what makes you comfortable or uncomfortable in implementing service-learning.
6. Can you give at least one example of service- learning you implemented in your classes?

7. What would you say are the challenges you've experienced in consistently implementing service-learning?
8. What are the students input as to the choice of service-learning they participate in?
9. How do you connect with service-learning facilitators in the community and decide on appropriate projects?
10. How do you ensure that community projects are linked to curricular objectives?
11. What service-learning guidelines or curriculum do you follow? – Explain
12. What would you say you need to improve service-learning delivery to the students?
13. What resources would you say are needed for you to support service-learning in your classes?
14. If you were asked to make a list of all you need to consistently implement service-learning according to best practices What would that list look like?
15. If you were asked to break down that list in order of importance, what would be at the top of your list?
16. What aspect(s) of service-learning do you value the most?
17. What are some activities and resources you perceive would assist you in implementing service-learning?

18. Please provide any additional information you think could be useful for this study?

Thank you.

ADDITIONAL (SUBSTITUTE) QUESTIONS FOR THE COUNSELOR

1. How do you monitor service-learning at your school?
2. What kind of guidance and training do you give the teachers relating to service-learning?
3. How do you connect with community partners?

Appendix C: Co-occurrence Analysis

	aligning service learning activities with curriculum objectives Gr=17	Awareness of service learning Gr=10	challenge of preparedness to implement SL Gr=16
challenges aligning service learning activities with curriculum objectives Gr=20	2	0	4
challenges in engaging students consistently throughout the service learning process Gr=18	1	0	3
challenges of establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships with community partners for service learning Gr=12	0	0	1
challenges or lack of awareness of	1	0	1

SL

Gr=12

Bitmap: Need Clear Guidelines and Curriculum

