Student Reflections on an LIS Internship From a Service Learning Perspective Supporting Multiple Learning Theories

Linda Z. Cooper

Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, Rosenthal Library Room 254, Queens College, City University of New York, 65-30 Kissena Blvd, Flushing, NY 11367. Email: linda.cooper@qc.cuny.edu

This paper presents a case study that examines an internship as service learning and participating students' perceptions of their learning in two learning environments. The internship experience in this situation is first examined to ascertain that it qualifies as service learning. At the conclusion of this service learning internship experience, participating students were asked to reflect on their learning in a service learning experience compared to their learning in traditional classroom learning experiences. Students' reflections are examined for evidence linking their perceptions regarding their learning to multiple theories of learning. Findings indicate that (a) the particular internship examined qualifies as service learning; (b) participating students feel they learn more in a hands-on service learning situation than in a traditional classroom learning situation; (c) participating students feel that classroom learning is an important pre- and/ or co- requisite to service learning; (d) multiple theories of learning are supported via a service learning experience thus offering more paths to learning to a broader, more diverse scope of learners; and (e) a service learning experience may open the way to a transformative learning experience while, at the same time, supporting the community and the LIS profession.

Keywords: reflection, learning, service learning, cognitive apprenticeship, communities of practice, situated learning, action learning, transformative experience

Introduction

"*We learn so that we may serve*" is the motto of Queens College, City University of New York. Service learning, however, may be thought in terms of "We serve so that we may learn." For many LIS students, an internship may be the first learning experience out of a traditional classroom or online setting. Participating LIS students from the Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies (GSLIS) at the conclusion of a service learning internship course were asked to reflect on how their learning experience in a service learning situation differed from the learning experienced in prior classroom situated courses. Learn-

ing can be achieved in a variety of ways, numerous theories of learning have been proposed, and numerous definitions of service learning have been put forth. Some of these encompass internship situations and some do not. The address of this investigation is threefold: (1) it investigates whether an internship situation might qualify as service learning; (2) it is an inquiry into how participants think about their learning and what they have come to understand about their own learning process; and (3) it is an examination of participants' reflections as they relate to a number of theories of learning and how these multiple modes of learning might be directly supported by service learning experiences thus offering more paths to learning to a broader scope

of learners. As educators it is incumbent upon us to explore as many avenues to support student learning as we can. This examination builds on earlier research in service learning in LIS schools and elsewhere (Ball, 2008; Becker, 2000; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Cuban & Hayes, 2001; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Furco, 1996; Jacoby, 1999; Riddle, 2003; Yontz & de la Pena McCook, 2003) by specifically examining participating students' reflections on their learning in an internship service situation as compared with a classroom situation.

Literature Review

Experiential Learning

Service learning is a type of experiential learning so it is appropriate to first examine what comprises experiential learning. John Dewey in *Experience and Education* (1938) espouses the philosophy that not only is experience an important element of learning but that it is necessary for learning to take place. David Kolb (1983) builds on this to propose the Theory of Experiential Learning. In Kolb's experiential learning, the learner goes through a cycle including: concrete experience → reflecting on that experience → forming new concepts/ideas based on that reflection → and testing the new concepts. This progression moves the learner to what may loosely correspond to a higher point on Bloom's Taxonomy (1956):

Kolb's Experimental Learing		Bloom's Taxonomy
Concrete Experience	→	Use
Reflection	→	Analyze
Formation of New Concepts	→	Synthesize
Test Concepts	→	Evaluate

Service Learning

Service learning includes all the ele-

ments of experiential learning and requires that the needs of the student and the needs of a community organization are addressed in organized activities that are integrated into the student's curriculum and reflected upon throughout the experience. "Just as librarians have not yet agreed on an exact meaning of the phrase 'information literacy,' so definitions of 'service learning' offer many variants, altering as much by terminological shading and nuance than fundamental divergence" (Riddle, 2003, p. 72). Extensive literature reviews on the subject of service learning have been written by Ball (2008), Becker (2000), Cuban and Hayes (2001), Furco (1996), Eyler *et al.* (2001), Riddle (2003), Yontz and de la Pena McCook (2003), and others. Definitions of various complexity abound and, as indicated in work cited above and throughout this examination, there are multiple perspectives on what constitutes service learning. The following definitions of service learning, generated by researchers from both the LIS community and beyond, have been suggested.

"Service-learning programs are distinguished from other approaches to experiential education by their intention to equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring" (Furco, 1996, p.12). Furco goes on to say that the service learning must have "academic context" and that the "service enhances the learning and the learning enhances the service" (1996, p. 12).

Bringle and Hatcher (1996) define service learning as "a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility" (p. 222). Further, they write that the best outcomes in a service learning situation include "meaningful service ac-

tivities that are related to course material through reflection activities such as directed writings, small group discussions, and class presentations" (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, p. 222)

Becker (2000) writes that service learning supplements "traditional classroom activities with structured opportunities for experiential learning and critical reflection" (p. 287). Further, she notes that "Service learning can assume a variety of forms depending on the method and extent of curricular integration. . . . Graduate students in service-learning program have . . . served as interns . . ." (Becker, 2000, p. 287).

Ball (2008) refers to service learning as a subset of experiential learning in which "the relationship between those serving and being served [is] reciprocal" (p. 72) and considers reflection to be a required component. She notes that "Service activities are tied to specific learning objectives and are reflected upon throughout the semester" (Ball, 2008, p. 71).

Nutefall (2011) defines services learning as an "experiential learning pedagogy that balances the needs of student and community members involved, links the service and learning through reflective processes, and if skillfully managed leads to positive student personal, social or citizenship, career, and intellectual development" (Eyler, 2002 via Nutefall, 2008, p. 16).

The definition of service learning proposed by Jacoby (1999) has been adopted by a number of people and organizations including Yontz and de la Pena McCook (2003), Riddle (2003), and the Center for Teaching and Learning at Queens College, City University of New York (2011). According to Jacoby, service learning is defined as:

a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service learning. (1999, p. 20)

Jacoby's definition will serve as the reference for this investigation.

The National Service-Learning Clearing House gives the following characteristics of service learning, explaining that authentic service-learning experiences, while almost endlessly diverse, have some common characteristics (Eyler & Giles, 1999):

- They are positive, meaningful and real to the participants.
- They involve cooperative rather than competitive experiences and thus promote skills associated with teamwork and community involvement and citizenship.
- They address complex problems in complex settings rather than simplified problems in isolation.
- They offer opportunities to engage in problem-solving by requiring participants to gain knowledge of the specific context of their service-learning activity and community challenges, rather than only to draw upon generalized or abstract knowledge such as might come from a textbook. As a result, service-learning offers powerful opportunities to acquire the habits of critical thinking; i.e. the ability to identify the most important questions or issues within a real-world situation.
- They promote deeper learning because the results are immediate and uncontrived. There are no "right answers" in the back of the book.
- As a consequence of this immediacy of experience, service-learning is more likely to be personally meaningful to participants and to generate emotional consequences, to challenge values as well as ideas, and hence to support social, emotional and cognitive learning and development.

Additionally, Nutefall (2011) notes civic education as an important component of

service learning. One of Nutefall's three key elements of service learning is civic education: "Among the goals of many institutions is to create civic-minded graduates. Service learning contributes to this goal by creating and strengthening the serving-to-learn and learning-to-serve ethic. . . . With service learning, the community becomes an extension of the classroom and the service is a vehicle for students to reach their academic goals" (Nutefall, 2011, p. 17). This brings to mind the motto cited earlier "We learn that we may serve" and additionally supports growth toward the higher levels of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. Laurence Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development (1976) presents the development of the individual in stages beginning from a moral perspective that is self focused and childlike to a mature moral perspective that takes into consideration community issues, and works to support a greater societal good. Service learning supports not only the learning of pragmatic material but growth towards a more civic minded, societal individual.

Internship as Service Learning

While not all internship experiences can be characterized as service learning (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Furco, 1996), internship as service learning is noted in the literature (Becker, 2000, Eyler *et al.*, 2001). Eyler *et al.* (2001), whose work was funded by the Corporation for National Service/Learn and Serve American National Service Learning Clearinghouse, present an extensive examination of service learning including several references to internship as service learning. They cite a study by Mandell (1995) indicating that "More than 82% of all community service courses [examined] were internships, field experiences, or practica" (p. 71).

The determination of whether or not an internship course can be considered service learning depends on the conceptualization of the particular internship course. The particular internship experience in which participants in this study engaged, authored by Valero (2012), qualifies as service learning according to the definitions and characteristics noted above.

- Students participating in this study found their own internship placements, placements within the community that were meaningful and important to them, thus supporting Eyler and Giles (1999).
- The service aspect of this method of internship is imbedded in the manner in which the course is constructed and accomplished. Students and mentors from the participating community organizations are required to collaborate to articulate an action plan that outlines the learning experience and is designed to meet the needs of both the student and the community organization, thus supporting Eyler and Giles (1999). The final iteration of the action plan is written by the mentor with whom the student works. Thus the service activities supporting the venue are tied to unique learning expectations for each individual student and the needs of both student and community are balanced, supporting Nutefall (2011). Because the activities addressed in this internship course have been agreed on by the student and the mentor as supportive of their needs, both the student and the community organization benefit as a result of service learning, thus meeting reciprocity, a major requirement in service learning, and supporting Jacoby (1996, 1999). This satisfies the requirements noted by Furco (1996), that "the program intentionally benefits both the student who provides the service and the [organization] for whom the service is provided" (p. 12) and that "service enhances the learning and the learning enhances the service" (p. 12).
- Action plans comprise real life activities that involved problem solving, creative thinking, and decision making, thus supporting Eyler and Giles (1999).

To accomplish these activities, students need to work with others at their sites and apply knowledge attained in the classroom to the real life situations as specified in the action plan. Some examples of action plan activities from this class include development of guides for the use of specialized technology in the library, presenting workshops for both library users and employees, organization of document archives, and development of a reading program to serve the community.

- Students' service learning experience is directly linked to course content and the course is integral to the service learning in several ways. Students meet as a class throughout the semester, both in person and online. The course objectives, articulated as student learning outcomes, are directly tied with class assignments and activities such as "directed writings, small group discussions, and class presentations" prescribed by Bringle and Hatcher (1996, p. 222). When students meet with their cohort their class discussions take on several aspects. Students share the basics of their particular venues with each other so that all may become aware of the breadth of experiences in which their classmates are participating. As the term progresses, students move on to discuss the broader aspects of working within a community and the real life problems that come up in each organization. They come to understand the similarities and differences inherent in community service and a service profession. Lastly, students share an overview of their entire experience followed by a question/answer and comment session with their classmates. The exchange of ideas is intense and students become extremely engaged in the discussion of their experiences, the differences and also the commonalities that become apparent across different venues of the same type (i.e. different school libraries) and across all types of venues (school libraries, public libraries, archives, etc.).

- Students are required to keep an ongoing, reflective journal of their daily experiences at their venue throughout the term as well as write a culminating reflective paper at the end of the term. Reflection is considered a major aspect of the service learning experience as noted by Ball (2008).

- This internship class is available to students who have completed 21 credits of a 36 credits program. It is not confined to a 'culminating experience' at the end of the program and can be taken concurrently with other classes thus further tying the experience to course content in the broader program.

This particular internship experience, therefore, meets the requirements of a service learning experience.

Adult Learners

Learning is a constructive process (Vygotsky, 1978) in which new information is assimilated into each individual learner's prior stock of knowledge (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973)—all the knowledge the individual has accumulated during his or her life. Since each individual has a different stock of knowledge, each person will ultimately assimilate a different interpretation of new information: one that fits in with, and makes sense with, the knowledge base they already have in place. All participants in this study were adults. The stock of knowledge and extent of life experience that an adult learner brings to a new learning experience is far greater than that of a child. Knowles (1980) writes that in addition to bringing a great deal of prior experience to a learning situation, adult learners also expect to have more influence, more 'say,' in how they are educated and what they are educated for. Additionally, they want to know specifically how the new learning can be applied to their life situation, job, etc. They are understandably

more self-directed than children and the learning experience should be designed to support their unique needs. Knowles *et al.* (2011) write that adult learning should be autonomous and self-directing, encompass the prior experience of the learner, relate to real life, be problem centered and contextual, and have intrinsic value to the adult learner. One participant in the present study wrote about how prior educational background affected his/her view on what is most important in a graduate level learning experience:

> Personally, I feel that if you are pursuing a Master's degree in any subject you probably have a basic educational groundwork and are able to complete tasks such as papers without a problem. I don't know that these sort of things are so important in this stage of one's education.

The GSLIS internship course supports the unique needs of adult learners in several ways. It is both student centered and collaborative in that the student together with the site mentor design an action plan articulating what they hope to accomplish during the experience. Points in the plan support both the student's learning and the needs of the organization with whom the student will work. Learning is affected both by the prior life experience and learning of the student (these things cannot but affect new learning) as well as the new experiences the student will have on site during the internship. These new experiences will involve problem solving, sometimes under the mentorship of the supervisor and occasionally as the sole responsibility of the student. Students are responsible for contacting potential mentors and arranging for their own placements additionally supporting a sense of self direction and the needs of adult learners.

Methodology

Fourteen students from the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies (GSLIS) at Queens College, CUNY were asked to reflect on their learning at the conclusion of their internship experience. They were asked to think about how they learned during their service learning experience as compared with how they learned in traditional classroom settings. Students responded by writing their thoughts in short narratives ranging from 100 words to 318 words with an average response of 173 words. The prompt for the students was a paragraph distributed in writing and spoken to students as well. The paragraph asked students to:

> ". . . take a few minutes to think about your learning experience this term and in previous terms and compare your internship, or service learning, with your classroom learning. Each has pros and cons. Please reflect on the types of things you learned in each setting, the different 'ways' you learned, how you felt during the learning, how the different settings supported your learning and personal growth. Feel free to write about anything you wish to say regarding your learning experience in your internship service and in your past classroom experiences. This should not be an evaluation of the course or your internship site or your mentor or instructor. *This should be a reflection on how different types of experiences (service v classroom) impacted on how, what, and how much you learned and how you felt about your learning."*

The instructor stressed that this was not to be an evaluation of the course, syllabus, instructor, mentor, or site but rather a meta-cognitive exercise and that responses would support the instructor's research in the area of learning as well as ongoing course development based on student feedback. Students were asked to think about how they learned in the two settings (classroom and service). Participation was anonymous and voluntary. The instructor was not present while students wrote their reflections. Reflections were deposited into a common envelope so that there was no way of knowing who responded and

who did not. A count of the submissions (all anonymous) indicated that everyone attending class that evening participated. The one absentee that evening was not asked to submit a reflection because it would not have been anonymous. The researcher was the instructor for this class.

Reflections were transcribed by the researcher. First, all reflections were read and discrete thoughts, feelings, observations, comments were noted on individual cards. Cards were then sorted into groups that had a common theme. Reflections in each group were examined for their insight into the learning experienced and also for possible support of documented learning theories. Participants were all students in the LIS program who had completed at least 21 credits, but the group included participants from several focus areas including academic, public, special, and school librarianship. Venues in which participants served included both traditional liberal arts and science college libraries and a library in a specialized college; urban, suburban, and rural public libraries; archival libraries in a state park and in a major urban institution; a science library in a prestigious research laboratory complex; and school libraries on all levels, both urban and suburban.

Results of this study reflect only the thoughts of the participating students as interpreted by the researcher and cannot be construed to represent a wider population. However, the insights gleaned in this instance add to the knowledge base on students' perceptions of their learning. This study does not attempt to assess formally the efficacy of any particular method, but is rather an examination of the participants' perception of their learning.

The Import of Classroom Learning and Discussion

While all participants indicated that their service learning was important and most indicated that they preferred their service learning to their classroom learn-

ing experience, participants also noted the importance of their classroom learning in preparation for their internship and that both types of learning were important to them. For example, students wrote:

- I strongly believe the classroom learning prepared me for the internship. Without the coursework I would not have had a idea as to what to expect in or what the role and responsibilities . . . entail.

- I personally like hands on learning but for it to be beneficial one has to have some understanding of how a library should be run so as to benefit.

- I do think there should be some structured curriculum standards that must be met to attain one's degree. And I think if this was solely apprentice-type work, it would be easy to have holes in one's education.

- Service and classroom learning both have pros and cons and I think the ideal is to have a combination of both when possible.

- Purely service learning would probably not be the best approach as I do think it is important to take the time to learn the basic tenets from experienced librarians who are able to effectively communicate and instruct us students. Practical minded individuals would logically prefer service learning, yet I have found previous classroom learning to be indispensible in service learning. My service learning has shown me the importance of classroom learning.

- Classroom learning seems more appropriate to learn about theoretical issues, to explore research issues, and to obtain a baseline of skills that you will need in the workplace.

- My service learning has shown me the importance of classroom learning. Similarly service learning can be seen to compliment classroom learning. The two forms of learning are so intertwined and assist and develop one another to such a degree, that defining one exclusively of

the other is only to provide an incomplete description.

Participants noted the importance of discussion and classroom meetings with their cohort during the learning experience, writing:

- I like that this class met monthly as a whole group but also required individual input. I liked that I was able to be in class with students that were in the same program as me. It helps reflect and compare for my understandings.

- I get more out of conversation and discussions.

- By sharing experiences in the classroom beyond what each of us will be able to experience individually we are able to broaden our knowledge base and better prepare ourselves.

The importance given by participants to group meetings in the classroom and discussion with instructor and classmates during their internship class meetings in addition to experience on site highlights the social nature of constructed learning and Vygotsky's (1978) Theory of Social Constructivism. Students' learning was a result of social interaction with instructors, classmates, and mentors.

Service Learning and Theories of Learning

Service Learning as Situated Learning

The majority of participants expressed a definite preference for learning on site rather than in a classroom. The service learning experienced by participants took place in authentic surroundings rather than a classroom. The learning was part of something that 'happened' rather than an informative lecture or discussion. In situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) learning takes place in an authentic context which necessitates specific knowledge in order to participate in an activity. The knowledge becomes

meaningful since its value becomes clear in the context of the situation. One participant observed that the experience afforded both opportunity and motivation to move to a higher level of skill:

- The classroom is the place to get the basics but the internship is the place to take those basics and move your skills to the next level. Also, in an internship the desire to move things to the next level is always present because our audience is always present.

While "audience" was not specified in the student's comment, both mentors and people served might be included in that category. It may be construed from this last comment that participants not only want to satisfy and support their mentor but also the community whom they are serving. This reflects a growth towards a more mature professional aspiration that could not be accomplished via classroom learning since students do not have the opportunity to directly serve the community in that venue.

Service Learning, Facilitation Theory, Cognitive Apprenticeship, and Communities of Practice

Participants commented on the importance of the one-to-one mentor-student relationship in their learning as well as the importance of associating with a broader spectrum of professionals who can contribute their perspectives:

- Feedback on the site was based on whether or not your work would actually be used for a broader purpose. It, i.e. your work product, also had to rise to a level that the institution would be willing to share it publically since it would reflect on the institution.

- Being in an internship with a personal mentor really does have its advantages over the classroom setting since you have a person on the job ready to answer all your questions.

- The internship gave me more varied perspectives.

- I thought that spending time interacting with professionals was very important.

These observations tie in with several perspectives on learning including facilitation theory (Laird, 1985), cognitive apprenticeship (Brown *et al.*, 1989), and communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1998). In facilitation theory, the instructor is considered a facilitator in the learning process rather than in control of the process. Learners take more responsibility for their learning and are supported by the instructor. In the service learning situation, the mentor often has the role of facilitator, rather than director, of student learning. This mode of learning is particularly appropriate for adult learners as described earlier. The service learning experience also supports cognitive apprenticeship in which students learn by observing others and modeling their behavior on more experienced professionals. Similarly, in communities of practice a group of people who share a common interest interact and learn from each other and thus experience professional growth. When students are able to participate in a service learning experience they glean the benefit of their co-workers' experience and ideally contribute to the learning of their co-workers, as well. All members of the community of practice benefit from the relationship. This is also an example of Vygotsky's Social Constructivism (1978) noted above.

Service Learning as Action Learning

Participants noted how the ability to put the theoretical learning they gleaned from the classroom into practice (or action) during their service learning supported their growth:

- [The experience] put me in touch with librarians who are "on the ground," dealing with classes, lesson-planning, and administration. They often gave me the

real, non-PR story of the professional library or teaching worlds.

- The biggest difference between interning and classroom courses was the kids. Getting more experience with real students, and lessons, was the most valuable aspect of an internship.

- Classes where you are out in the field are most helpful because it is hands-on. In this type of setting you get more of a handle on what is and isn't important and I think you are better equipped to make educated decisions in your specialty area.

- [I] prefer being able to work in the field and go to school simultaneously because I can put the theory into practice.

- It is helpful to learn the theory and methodology of the course work, however as someone who's a hands on learner I will say that my internship was the best course that I've taken in my GSLIS studies. I say that because I feel like it was the best thing that I could have done to prepare myself to go and work in the field.

Participants also noted the importance of being able to practice the skills that had been addressed in classroom learning, writing:

- Not only was I able to "practice" my skills but I gained insights that I would not have otherwise gained without the experience.

- I think internships are extremely important for any job in any career. I think that for a new student it's a safe way to get your feet wet.

- [You] have an opportunity to practice a skill long enough [so] that you can actually improve your skill.

- Being able to apply what I have learned and reinforce it in a real setting [was important].

In action learning (Revens, 2011), learning involves "[d]irect purposeful experiences, such as those resulting from

an action plan" (Stappenbelt, 2010, p.2). All participants constructed action plans in collaboration with their mentors. In the comments above, participants indicate that action or concrete practice of their classroom learning enabled them to gain a more complete understanding of the responsibilities they would soon undertake as professionals.

Service Learning, Problem Solving, and Personal Growth

Participants noted the importance of problem solving to their individual learning experiences:

• In a classroom I get taught theory and am given "tasks" on which to practice. On a site, I am facing problems and need to determine how to solve them. My solutions may not be elegant or even useful, but formulating them helps me understand in ways a classroom never can. . . . Being able to get my hands dirty, to err and get immediate feedback, to ask questions based on experience make experiential learning a much richer source of growth.

• Service learning was better for me because I got to see my mistakes and learned from them.

Problem Based Learning originated at the McMaster University Faculty of Health Sciences with Howard Barrows. In problem based learning, students are confronted with open-ended problems - problems that are situation specific to which there may be no one correct response. Students need to solve problems in context based on their knowledge, experience and judgment. Critical thinking is enhanced and connections are made between prior learning and real life experience (Barrows, 2002). Service learning presents an ideal problem based learning situation in which students must confront real life problems and devise viable ways of dealing with (if not solving) them to the satisfaction of customer, mentor, and student.

Participants indicated that they experienced a growth in confidence during their experience:

• Being able to apply what I have learned and reinforce it in a real setting increased my confidence in my abilities to transition into this career.

• Applying our knowledge and learning from mentors in real life settings helps to reinforce that knowledge and increase the confidence of the students.

• The internship gave me the confidence to know that I have the skills and personality that I will need in order to succeed.

• Having had both the course-work and the internship under my belt I now have the confidence and skills to promote myself.

A number of participants wrote about how their service learning supported their individual growth more than classroom learning:

• Service learning is an individual process while class learning is a group process. Even if service learning has a group aspect, I tend to do things my way.

• Sometimes I felt that classroom classes actually got in the way of my education and wished I could spend more time at work.

• I was able to feel my projects and really see my strengths and weaknesses and made adjustments according to me only. This can't be said in classroom learning . . . because the instructor can't read the student heart, brain, mental capacities to see what adjustments are really needed. Service learning is far superior than classroom service.

The last comment above regarding the ability to "feel" projects and really "see" personal strengths and weaknesses suggests qualities that are both visceral and supportive of imagery as though the active experience melded understanding to both body and brain. It highlights the im-

portance of the whole in learning. That is, we do not learn only with mind or heart or body but rather as a whole person with cognitive, affective, and physical aspects. And, importantly, as a whole person who is interacting socially with other persons through discussion as well as nonverbal modeling.

Service Learning as Transformative Experience

A transformative experience is "a learning episode in which a student acts on the subject matter by using it in everyday experience to more fully perceive some aspect of the world and finds meaning in doing so" (Pugh, 2011, p.111). The learning and the experience, thus, become interdependent. According to Pugh, who coined the term in 2004, "[T]ransformative experiences occur when students actively use curricular concepts in everyday life to see and experience the world in a new, meaningful way" (Pugh, 2011, p. 107). When students engage in service learning, they become part of a community of practice and actively engage in problem solving to support others. Information learned previously in theory can become truly integrated into their individual schema so that it changes their world view—the way they think. One student puts it this way:

• Service learning differs from classroom learning in that service learning proceeds as a process of nonverbal subconscious absorption while classroom learning involves the conscious absorption of verbal concepts.

That is, classroom learning involves a purposeful memorization of information presented via lectures and reading. Salomon writes that "reduction of real world phenomena to discrete components results in some loss of connection to the original phenomena of interest " (Pugh, 2011, p. 107). Service learning, on the other hand, is learning that occurs naturally as a result of observation, personal involvement, and

problem solving in a real life situation. All components of these are intertwined, not artificially dissected for examination and discussion. Since the problem solved resolves some cognitive dissonance, that is, something that needs to be fixed on the part of the learner, the learning that occurs is naturally more meaningful. It is learning that occurred as a result of analysis of a problem and a synthesis of the components needed to resolve that particular problem, activities high on Bloom's taxonomy.

Conclusions and Implications

Internship as Service Learning

An examination of the literature in service learning indicates that it is possible for an internship to qualify as service learning according to widely accepted definitions of service learning in LIS and other areas. It appears, however, that the general concept of what constitutes an internship may be too narrow. All internships are not created equal and it is possible and perhaps highly desirable that an internship experience should not focus only on the student intern but on the student-community collaboration that can be achieved in an internship situation. Such a partnership benefits the student not only in the extrinsic experience and information learned by the student but also the intrinsic learning in community service ethic that is at the core of service professions. Clearly such a partnership equally benefits the community agency being served, both extrinsically in the concrete services provided and also intrinsically in building a strong corps of incoming service professionals who will enter the profession with a deeper understanding of the ethics of community service.

Service Learning and Classroom Learning

Examination of participating student reflections on how their learning in a service learning experience compares to their

learning in a classroom experience indicates that participants feel that while the learning that takes place in a classroom is an important precursor and/or co-requisite to service learning, the majority feel the learning that occurs in a service experience is highly preferred. Participants specified their preference for a "hands on" learning experience, strongly supportive of Dewey (1938), rather than a lecture type experience. Learning by doing and serving and working directly with community and mentor gave participants a strong scaffold on which to build from the foundation knowledge imparted in the classroom and enabled participants to move to a higher level of understanding.

Service Learning and Theories of Learning

Additionally, examination of participants' reflections of their service learning in the context of multiple theories of learning, including situated learning, facilitation theory, cognitive apprenticeship, communities of practice, action learning, problem solving, and transformative learning, indicates that service learning can support numerous perspectives and modes of learning, thereby enhancing the experience for individuals having different needs and preferences. As noted earlier, as educators it is our responsibility to support the learning needs of a widely diverse student population. The possibility of moving a student to a transformative learning experience, one in which the learner is able to 'see' the information differently, to experience a change in broader understanding, is a remarkable opportunity and certainly a gift waiting to be given. In order to do this, it may be necessary to broaden present perspectives regarding internships and thus our possibilities.

Service Learning Internship as a Better Way

Finally, if one purpose of learning is to increase understanding of the human condition and how it might be improved, it would seem that a learning situation that supports the assimilation of information into a personal schema so that it takes on meaning to become knowledge and, at the same time, helps people is highly desirable. Pugh (2011, p. 108) puts it eloquently: " [w]e get so caught up in the details of how learning works that we lose sight of the larger purpose, that is we fail to consider how learning contributes to and expands the quality of life." Service learning is a means to help students learn on multiple levels while supporting the needs of the community and the profession both in the present and moving forward—a golden opportunity.

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