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Market Incentives and International Volunteers: The Development and Evaluation of Fair Trade Learning

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As a component of university international education programming, international volunteerism and global community engagement by university students and faculty are on the rise. While the benefits to student learning related to this kind of programming have been well researched, community impact is rarely assessed. This article considers the community impact of these practices. The evaluation process piloted here grew from a civil society articulation of Fair Trade Learning (FTL), which aspires to ensure community concerns are at the center of community-engaged international education efforts. We begin by clarifying the development of this FTL ideal while documenting the need for it within the international education and international volunteerism sectors. We then situate FTL within the relevant service-learning, international volunteerism, tourism, and international development literature before demonstrating how research on domestic university-community partnerships (Stoecker & Tryon, 2009) led us to develop a mixed methods evaluation of those partnerships in four different locations around the world. We close by discussing the results and sharing implications for FTL, volunteerism, and global university-community engagement.

Introduction

University efforts to offer international education opportunities, create global citizens, and extend the ethos of community engagement around the world are increasingly commonplace (Olds, 2012). Yet the economic structure of this engagement and its effects on the communities receiving students has not been sufficiently considered (Devereux, 2008; Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008). Concurrently, higher education and volunteering are now understood as the largest growth sectors in the youth travel industry, an industry worth $173 billion per year (Staywyse, 2012). Numerous businesses and organizations have emerged to support this work. According to Volunteer Abroad (2012), at least 451 different organizations offer 2,070 programs in Africa alone. Universities offer increasing numbers of service-learning and volunteer programs to sites in the Global South, often through these intermediary organizations, and they do so with varying degrees of familiarity with the receiving community.

International volunteerism and global university-community engagement, in other words, take place within a complex array of institutional,

market, and community incentives and desires. The intrinsic risks of global service-learning (Devereux, 2008; Madsen-Camacho, 2004; Sharp & Dear, 2013; Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008) and ineffective, unwelcome, or inept international development efforts have been amply documented (Easterly, 2006; Escobar, 1995; Shiva, 2008). From this challenging context, Fair Trade Learning (FTL) has emerged as a community-focused, transparent effort to ensure the inclusion of community perspective and community concerns in international education and global service-learning (GSL) programming (Hartman, 2013b; Hartman, Morris Paris, & Blache-Cohen, 2014). This article positions Fair Trade Learning within the literature on university-community engagement and development before sharing the construction and implementation of a community partnership assessment process which is rooted in the same literature and is applicable to other partnerships. This article reinforces the call for transparency in global university-community engagement, offers a theoretically-grounded partnership evaluation process, and provides insights gleaned from the implementation of that process in four different communities around the world. The call for transparency – as modeled below – includes the courage to report and share empirically-derived negative feedback and experiences.

First, we situate global service-learning within the private sector travel and tourism industry, and introduce an alternative to that customer-driven discourse. The alternative – Fair Trade Learning – privileges community voice and equal exchange. Second, we demonstrate the need for an FTL designation within the field of international education by reviewing current codes of ethics and standards of practice for the field, and documenting their strongly student-centered disposition. Third, we demonstrate how FTL is rooted in many of the best practices for community partnership in the service-learning, university-community engagement, and international development literature. Fourth, we examine and assert the value of transparency in international education and associated university-community engagement to better address the perverse incentives that often accompany financial exchange coupled with community development interests. Fifth, we discuss the methods we employed, building upon Stoecker and Tryon's (2009) community partnership research in domestic service-learning in order to explore and document community members' feedback and perceptions in four partner communities around the world: Bolivia, Brazil, Jamaica, and Tanzania. Sixth, we analyze the resulting data. We close by discussing implications and considering pathways for future research on community impact in global service-learning and international volunteering.

The Global Service-Learning Marketplace and the Emergence of Fair Trade Learning

Annually, more than 270,000 American students participate in credit-bearing study abroad programs (Open Doors, 2012). Many different types

of these programs exist, some entirely conventional and others positioned as "community-engaged," offering varying levels of community engagement and voice. Other students participate in non-credit volunteer abroad experiences. Numerous volunteer and service abroad programs operate by focusing solely on the volunteer experience and rarely consider the important value and sacrifice of the communities where they work (AlJazeera, 2012; Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008; Tonkin, 2011). Still other experiences engage community leaders and organizations where they operate, but fail to recognize the importance and power of a mutual learning partnership based on dialogue, transparency and respect (Hartman, Morris Paris, & Blache-Cohen, 2013).

The challenges above are significant enough, but they are even more worrisome when considered in the context of the growing market for study abroad, short-term immersion, and service and volunteer experiences. This marketplace is so unregulated and lacking in transparency that New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo briefly launched an investigation of several university study abroad offices (SAOs) and third-party providers (TPPs) (Redden, 2008). At this past year's International Tourism Fair in Berlin, the founder and CEO of student marketing presented the following data points: The global youth travel industry is currently worth 173 billion dollars per year; youth travel outstripped the global music industry and the top 20 premier football clubs in terms of global revenue generation; higher education and volunteering are the biggest growth sectors of the youth travel landscape; and emerging markets will overtake advanced economies in international arrivals by 2026 (Staywyse, 2012).

In this international education and "voluntourism" environment, corporations specializing in selling tours have a strategic marketing advantage in that they need not engage deeply with community partnerships, fair wage remuneration, long term investment in community relationships, or other best practices from a community partner perspective. Operating in a student-centered and highly monetized study abroad discourse space, two concerns are paramount: the sales cycle and student satisfaction.

The sales cycle is understood in the private sector as the process between first contact with a potential customer and securing a contract with that customer. We have already mentioned above that Attorney General Cuomo was sufficiently concerned with the lack of transparency and the presence of kickbacks in the study abroad sector that he launched an investigation of the relationships between Study Abroad Offices (SAOs) and Third Party Providers (TPPs) (Redden, 2008). In such an environment, particularly when most participants are relatively uneducated about best practices in international community development, selling the product by completing the sales cycle – getting students or SAO staff members to put down deposits and sign on the dotted line – becomes the primary focus. This phenomenon is only further fueled by well-intentioned administrative (university and national) calls for increasing study abroad participation. When study abroad offices

and institutions wish to see greater rates of participation (Salisbury, 2012) and students are often presented with a dizzying array of "service-learning" program providers, well-oiled marketing machines close the sales cycle with skill.

We use quotation marks in the previous sentence to call attention to the difference between rhetorically claimed and high-quality service-learning, a topic we will explore below. First, however, we consider the role of student satisfaction within the study abroad industry. As is widely acknowledged by preeminent researchers in the study abroad field, students commonly self-report transformative experiences and – just as with conventional classroom learning – self-report is not always a definitive indicator of desired growth (Vande Berg, Paige, & Hemming Lou, 2012).

It is altogether unsurprising that students provided with new and exciting experiences in unfamiliar places report that these experiences are extraordinary. Yet when understanding of the banality of student self-report surveys is combined with a clear-eyed assessment of the sales cycle, one sees the absence of indicators that might capture community-development outcomes or even systematic student learning. Fortunately, increasing amounts of scholarship have emerged to better understand and document the latter (Vande Berg, et al., 2012). Yet community impact remains largely unexplored (Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008), in large part because the financial incentives are not present.

With these concerns in mind, a growing group of individuals, universities, and global nongovernmental organizations (NGO) recently have advanced an articulation of Fair Trade Learning. Drawing on a community partnership approach first advanced in Jamaica, this model recognizes that the individuals and communities that host students and volunteers are uniquely impacted by visitors and should be offered fair working conditions and compensation, hold significant voice in the orchestration of programming, and be offered proper professional development opportunities (Hartman et al., 2013). FTL best practices include:

> Engaging only in community-driven development, in which community leaders and organizations help decide the terms of foreign student projects in their communities; encouraging and opening classes for local students to audit, free of charge; offering fair compensation to all of those who make study and volunteer abroad programs possible, including guides, drivers, home-stay families, cooks, and community organizations; and working to offer partially or fully subsidized opportunities for individuals in our communities abroad to engage in service-learning programs in the United States. (Amizade, 2012)

Fair Trade Learning: A Civil Society Response Articulates a Need for Standards

The FTL movement is a civil society response to an overreaching monetization and marketization of social life. Community-based organizations and their allies realized their community development processes, organizational missions, and community-driven pedagogies were marginalized and defined through a hegemonic market discourse. This discourse positions students as consumers purchasing university experiences and study abroad programs for their pleasure at the most affordable rate possible. Numerous organizations, individuals at universities, and concerned citizens have added their support and critique to the Fair Trade Learning ideal as it has been shared and considered online (globalsl.org, 2013).

While the Forum on Education Abroad has emerged to provide much-needed ethical leadership in the Study Abroad sector through their widely-supported Code of Ethics in Education Abroad (Forum on Education Abroad, 2008), their guiding assumptions reflect long-standing deference to the student experience as the most important component of global partnerships. The Forum's "Four Questions to Guide Ethical Decision Making in Education Abroad," for example, ask:

1. Is it true, fair, and transparent?
2. Does it put the interests of the students first and contribute to their intellectual and personal growth?
3. Does it reflect the best practices of the field?
4. Does it foster international understanding? (2008, p. 13)

These voluntary standards allude to three rather broad ideals (true, fair, transparent; best practices; international understanding) and one reference to a specific population (students), their interests, and their intellectual and personal growth. The Forum's Code of Ethics, in fairness, does contain a section titled, "Relationships with Host Societies" (2008, p. 7). This section has the strongest content relating to community partnership:

> Education abroad organizations should seek to offer reciprocal opportunities that benefit both the sending and receiving country's educational institutions, students and broader communities. Special attention should be paid to the potential economic, political, and personal risks faced by institutions and colleagues in countries where international educational cooperation may create controversy or conflict. (2008, p. 8)

Yet this code of ethics is voluntary, merely suggestive, and largely subjective. Furthermore, while clear and important effort has been made to develop standards relevant to international education, that process has taken place

largely independently of insights regarding best practices in service-learning (Sigmon, 1979), volunteerism within development (Devereux, 2008), and university-community partnerships (CCPH, 2006). Similarly, Higgins-Desbiolles and Russell-Mundine have recognized that the literature in tourism studies “has overwhelmingly focused on the impacts upon the volunteer tourists rather than their hosts or those that are excluded from the volunteer tourism opportunity” (2008, p. 182).

Learning from Service-Learning and the Development of Development

Service-learning traces its roots to John Dewey, but the latest and continuing growth in the field came in the 1990s. A prominent definition in the field suggests that service-learning is a “course based credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets community needs and reflects 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” (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, p 222). Much like leading scholars in study abroad (Vande Berg et al., 2012), service-learning researchers increasingly emphasize the importance of structured reflective practice for achieving targeted learning outcomes (Ash & Clayton, 2009). Additionally, much of the service-learning discourse has turned in recent years to reflect concern for community partnership and community outcomes:

> There has been growing dissatisfaction among many people both inside and outside the service learning movement since the 1990s, particularly when it comes to the issue of whether service learning truly serves communities. In the worst cases, analysts saw poor communities exploited as free sources of student education. Others worried that the “charity” model of service learning reinforced negative stereotypes and students’ perceptions of poor communities as helpless. While lip service is paid to the importance of community outcomes, there are only a handful of studies that look at community impact… The neglect of community impact is a result of the biased focus on serving and changing students, which creates a self-perpetuating cycle. (Stoeker, 2009, p. 3-4)

This sort of concern with community impact comes from a long-standing commitment to reciprocity in the field of service-learning (Dostilio, Harrison, Brackmann, Kliewer, Edwards, & Clayton, 2012). The field’s literature and best practices provide insights to avoid mistakes that may still plague international volunteerism. Sigmon’s classic (1979) three principles for quality service-learning partnerships still articulate the ethos of the field: 1) those being served control the services provided; 2) those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions; and 3) those who

serve are also learners and have significant control over what is expected to be learned. Insisting on such best practices is central to the development of FTL as an actionable approach to implementing reciprocity (Hartman et al., 2014).

Despite this best practice, the extraordinary number of poorly developed international service programs are regularly bemoaned, questioned, and chronicled by the international development blogosphere (Murphy, 2013; Schimmelpfennig, 2010; Tales from the Hood, 2009) and – increasingly – popular press (AlJazeera, 2012; Fuller, 2014; Hopper, 2013; Mohamud, 2013). Indeed, the field of international development has much to add to this conversation; and the call for transparency (discussed below) offers a solution that will at least help address the continuing, deeply troubling rate of international volunteerism done poorly. Make no mistake: The reference to "international volunteerism done poorly" is a euphemism for real harms unintentionally done to communities, individuals, and children in the name of doing good works, particularly and most egregiously in respect to orphanage tourism (Goodwin, 2014).

Like service-learning, international development has benefited from many years of intellectual development and peer review, only more so. Today's global nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations, and peoples' movements benefit from the steady development of understanding regarding what partnership means, what community-based methods are (Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 2013; Wheatley & Hartman, 2012), and what works in quasi-experimental designs (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011). With such a strong and deeply problematic history (through which much has been learned), it should come as no surprise that concern with and even disdain for "development amateurs" is rife.

Seeing Clearly: The Value of Transparency

The insights of the service-learning/university-community engagement and international development communities alone will not be enough, as these standards were developed in contexts that typically do not involve substantial financial transaction with each volunteer or student. In the global service-learning sector, it is common for a week-long alternative break to involve the exchange of *minimally* $10,000 (10 students, transportation, lodging, food, community donations, and logistics), and a semester-length program to see the exchange of easily $150,000. These are both very conservative estimates. This reality calls for deeper transparency.

Transparency compels a "clear instrumental role in preventing corruption, financial irresponsibility, and underhand dealings" (Sen, 1990, p.40). Beyond the value of transparency for citizens in their relationships with voting and governmental institutions, full access to information is understood by economists as one of the necessary ingredients of a perfect market (Debreau, 1972). The value of transparency comes through the develop-

ment literature for multiple rationales to support individuals' ability to make free and conscious decisions about the effects of their actions and the impact of those actions on their communities (near and far), and also to improve the efficiency and social good of market structures by creating conditions of exchange that are optimal for all participants.

In a market with full access to information, there is less opportunity for any one dominant actor or sector to exploit. If universities are serious about their roles as institutional citizens and concerned with their collective ability to promote public social goods through community engagement partnerships, they must take seriously the value of transparency. Without transparency, community engagement and partnership efforts are isolated efforts to do good. With transparency and agreement to sector standards, higher education's study abroad and community engagement efforts become part of a growing network of cooperation and social solidarity around the world (Devereux, 2008), students and volunteers become conscious consumers with clear purchasing power, and study abroad offices step away from ethical dilemmas and moral hazards in favor of open dialogue.

In its community partnership in Jamaica, at the behest of the local partner organization, one Volunteer Sending Organization (VSO) has advanced an approach to participatory budgeting that ensures that community members set rates that visitors will pay for homestays among a network of local mothers. Additionally, this community cooperative dedicates a portion of room and board fees toward funding community projects they choose. This situation contrasts markedly with the typical model in international tourism, where the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) estimates only $5 out of every $100 spent by foreign tourists remains in the host community through developing country tourism. The UNEP's estimates put the average leakage rate – or the direct income for an area that remains locally after all expenses have been paid by foreign tourists – as low as five percent. In the spirit of transparency, this VSO cooperated on participatory budgeting with its Jamaica community partners and calculated a leakage rate specific to that programming. That leakage rate, which includes the costs of international air travel, accommodations, and domestic programming, is sixty-five percent (Hartman et al., 2013). In other words, as a percentage of program costs, thirteen times more money stays in the community through that programming than is likely the case for all-inclusive tourism marketed for nearby Montego Bay.

This may not seem immediately like an apt comparison, yet merely a cursory glance at job descriptions in the international education field (Chronicle Jobs, 2013) reveals that many international education organizations are engaged in activities that parallel the structures that encourage what the UNEP report calls enclave tourism. Students may live, study, eat, and play inside structures owned by US-based multinational companies and organizations, having slight economic impact on locally owned businesses or initiatives: "Buying, leasing, selling, improving, developing, financing,

valuing, and managing all [global] real estate," as one job description recently expressed (Chronicle Jobs, 2013), is the economic structure undergirding a colonialist study abroad mindset (Ogden, 2007) that reproduces the dominant model of neoliberal tourism (Higgins-Desbiolles and Russell-Mundine, 2008).

Economic transparency is only one application of the principle. Consistent with commitment to transparency and continuous self-criticism to support organizational learning and improved practice, a VSO involved with the FTL movement requested support in developing an evaluation of community partnerships. The resulting multi-site evaluation, detailed below, was deliberately rooted in challenges found in the service-learning and international development literature.

Methods

Better Understanding Community Perspectives

We find it essential to frontload our reflections on power. We are attuned to the challenge of inequitable relationships in global service-learning (Crabtree, 2008; Devereux, 2008; Grusky, 2000; Madsen-Camacho, 2004; Sharp & Dear, 2013), international development (Escobar, 1995), and applied research (Wells, Warchal, Ruiz, & Chapdelaine, 2011). We are also deeply embedded within a reality that is backed by other researchers' insights that suggest relationships are vital to quality global service-learning partnerships (Kiely & Nielsen, 2003). Long-standing relationships with the communities surveyed here, combined with the recognition that at least one of the communities involved has previously required that a different northern partner leave the community when the relationship was not working, cause us to surmise that at least some of the community members and partners may be comfortable providing unfiltered or (still helpful) only lightly filtered feedback. Variation in quantitative and qualitative responses suggests this is the case.

The problem of power still exists and indeed is omnipresent in this work, but its presence does not preclude the possibility of communication – nor does its presence indicate all partners are unable to express themselves despite the possibility of economic risks. Even more important, the evaluation of the 10+ years of relationships between the VSO and each of these communities has demonstrated to the community partners that this VSO does not leave due to challenges, conflict, or disagreement. As a matter of practice, this VSO's policy is to regularly ensure that the return of volunteers is desired, yet to also open space for criticism, critique, and adjustment of volunteer and student activities within that discourse.

The partnership evaluation was developed through consideration of lessons learned to date as well as ease of study implementation given that there was no outside financial support for study development. It consists of

a mixed-methods study, employing a close-ended survey questionnaire to develop quantitative data and a set of open-ended qualitative questions to look for emerging themes.

The quantitative component of the survey urged respondents to choose among the following response options: strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree, or N/A. The prompts were developed by reviewing the patterns and concerns illuminated by Stoecker and Tryon's (2009) study of domestic university-community partnerships. Stoecker and Tryon's framework was chosen, rather than relationship-centered evaluations of community partnerships utilized in local campus-community partnerships (Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, & Morrison, 2010; Enos & Morton, 2003), because upon reflection it became apparent that the structure of distant partnerships, often mitigated by a third party provider, is significantly different from local campus-community partnerships.

Clayton, et al., for example, summarizes Enos and Morton's conceptualization of partnerships as follows:

> *Transactional* relationships are instrumental and often designed to complete short-term tasks. Persons come together on the basis of an exchange, each offering something that the other desires. Both benefit from the exchange, and no long-term change is expected. This is distinct from *transformational* relationships wherein both persons grow and change because of deeper and more sustainable commitments. In a transformational relationship, persons come together in a more open-ended process of indefinite but longer-term duration and bring a receptiveness – if not an overt intention – to explore emergent possibilities, revisit and revise their own goals and identities, and develop systems they work within beyond the status quo. (2010, p. 7-8, emphasis in original)

In a GSL partnership, a third party provider or VSO is often in a long-term, possibly transformational partnership with community organizations, while universities engage with those partnerships on a single or sometimes continual basis over many years. Alternatively, universities may have direct relationships with community organizations, but they rarely have the capacity to offer continuous presence in that relationship. Because of these conceptual and structural inconsistencies between domestic and GSL community-engagement relationships, we chose to focus primarily on community member perceptions of relationships, following Stoecker and Tryon's lead. Additional efforts are needed to document any shifts in a list of host community attributes including social, economic, environmental, or political conditions, intercultural knowledge and skills, international knowledge and understanding, global engagement, paternalism and dependency, and organizational capacity (Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008), yet this research is the first to clearly document a range of host community member opinions

regarding this major global practice of international volunteerism and GSL.

Stoecker and Tryon interviewed 64 diverse community organizations concerning the impact of service-learning on their organizations. They found "The most consistent theme that emerged was the frequent reference to challenges associated with short-term service learning" (p. 16). Survey prompts in this area, influenced by Stoecker and Tryon's findings discussed below, were therefore designed to verify the outcomes reported in that earlier research, or at least to better assess its relevance to GSL.

It would seem that program brevity could challenge international volunteer and GSL programming; working with numerous alternative spring break programs leads to a situation in which the average participant with the VSO reviewed here completes a program of only twelve days in length. Indeed, in many ways, evaluating this VSO provides an ideally challenging test case: the organization offers programs ranging from a week to six months in length, cooperates with skilled and unskilled volunteers, and works with participants ranging in age from the early teens through late retirement. The average immersion experience with this organization lasts only ten days. What is represented here, then, is not the specific community outcome or observation stemming from one tightly targeted intervention. What is represented are community member opinions resulting from an array of program possibilities over 10+ years of partnerships.

Short-Term Experiences

General trends in programming emerge with this VSO, including: most of their Jamaica programs are closer to a week in length, while programs in Bolivia and Brazil are longer and programs in Tanzania are rarely less than a month. This variation is due to an array of factors, with airfare costs and travel convenience as most important among them. Additionally, the typical participant is a college student taking part in a structured program through an institution of higher education; there is a high degree of variation regarding whether the program is connected to an academic course, and if so, the extent to which the course is relevant to the experience or community project. In all cases, the community project is selected and continuously evaluated in conjunction with local community organizations that partner with the US-based VSO. Prompts on the survey related to the short-term theme included[1]:

- <VSO> projects cause immediate positive impacts in <the community>.
- <VSO> programs are not long enough to make an important impact in the community.
- <VSO> programs are not long enough for visitors to learn meaningfully about <the community>, community organizing, or service.

- <VSO>-<community organization> programs provide visiting students and volunteers with meaningful education about <the community>, community organizing, and service.

The VSO and specific communities where the surveys were administered were mentioned by name in the surveys. For the purposes of this article, those diverse community names are represented collectively by <community organization>, <the community>, or <community>.

Exploitative/Voyeuristic Practices

The Stoecker and Tryon study also documented concerns that relationships can be "'exploitative' or feel 'voyeuristic' to the organization's clientele" (Lin, Schmidt, Tryon, & Stoecker, 2009, p. 129), a concern also shared in Devereux's (2008) review of international volunteerism. Prompts related to this exploitative/voyeuristic theme include:

- <Community> residents benefit from cultural exchange with visitors.
- <Community> residents develop friendships or connetions with visitors that outlast an individual program.
- <VSO> visitors are rude and disrespectful toward locals.

Motivations

Finally, Bell and Carlson (as part of the Stoecker and Tryon study), examined interviews and focus groups with community organizations to classify four types of motives that support their involvement with university service-learning programs. Those motivations are listed below, along with the prompts developed to verify them in this global service-learning context. Motives that were not explored through using the prompts in section six on the survey were examined using a different format in section seven, which will be detailed below. The motives are:

The Altruistic Motive to Educate the Service-Learner: Agencies sometimes believe that part of their mission includes a responsibility to help students understand the issues facing their clients.

Long-Term Motives for the Sector and the Organization: Some community organizations worry about the long-term support for their work. Who will be working at and donating to agencies and organizations like theirs?

The Capacity-Building Motive: Organizations sometimes engage service learning to expand their organizational capacity. (Bell and

Carlson, 2009, p. 20)

Motive prompts related to the above insights included:

- <VSO> projects jumpstart <community> residents to participate in local service.
- Through the partnership, <the community> develops local leaders.

Additionally, Bell and Carlson identified:

> *The Higher Education Relationship Motive*: Some organizations take on service learners to build, strengthen, or preserve connections to colleges and universities. (2009, p. 20)

This insight was examined through:

- <The community> receives resources through the partnership that it would not otherwise receive.

As is already evident, Stoecker and Tryon's study, which was situated to examine direct relationships between universities and community organizations in the United States, did not translate perfectly to a situation in which a community-based organization or third party provider served as a network facilitator between higher education institutions and communities around the world. This fact itself served as an insight: NGOs that are mission-driven to serve community organizations may find it easier to commit to community goals over several years than it is for universities to make a similar commitment. As is clear from section seven on the survey, and from additional prompts listed below, our survey also included content developed through practice, experience, and consideration of the international development literature. Question seven examined motivations another way:

> 7. Please rank the importance of outcomes of the <VSO>-[Partner organization] from your perspective. Please use a "1" to indicate the outcome you believe is most important, a "5" to indicate the outcome you believe is least important, ranking your preferences in between. Please use "NA" if you believe that an outcome is not applicable.
> a. _____ Generates income for host families
> b. _____ Provides volunteer support for community projects and initiatives
> c. _____ Provides some material or financial support for community projects
> d. _____ Educates visitors about [the community] life, community organizing, and service

e. _____ Offers opportunity for cross-cultural exchange and connection between locals and visitors

Organizational Reputation

The remaining prompts in the survey, gathered under the theme of organizational reputation, included:

- Overall, the <VSO>-<community organization> relationship is very positive.
- <VSO> is a trusted organization.
- <VSO> works collaboratively with others.
- <VSO> visitors, when volunteering, take away jobs that could provide locals with paid employment.

These prompts examined overarching issues and perceptions related to the relationship as well as one concern that is more frequently mentioned in respect to community engagement in developing countries: concern that volunteers may be taking jobs away from locals (Devereux, 2008). Open-ended questions in the survey prompted respondents to add additional possible motivations or concerns, expand upon previous answers, offer suggestions for improvement, and describe the relationship between the VSO and partner organizations (full survey is available in the Appendix).

Survey Implementation

The survey was administered by site directors in each partner community. Site directors are VSO employees who are either from the local community or, in rare cases, long-term residents of the community. The particular nature of the community organization partner, the site director, the local literacy rate, and the VSO's ongoing relationship with each individual or organization proved to be highly deterministic in terms of how the surveys were actually administered. This, of course, is a challenge. Yet, as will be further expanded below, there was variation in responses and clear critique indicating that many community members across partnerships felt comfortable expressing themselves. Future studies, with more funding and time, may be able to engage in broader, perhaps even random, sampling of community members. As a first effort for this field, however, convenience sampling (Creswell, 2007) of individuals loosely connected to the organization has yielded interesting data.

As suggested in our discussion of power above, different contexts yielded different dynamics. In particular, feedback from the site director in Bolivia (who shared the survey with community members) suggested that community members from rural villages outside of the city of Cochabamba were much more reluctant to consider criticisms than those respondents from

the city itself. Additionally, the rural community members required more directions and explanation through the process. For every site, the site director was charged with survey distribution and collection. In each case, through long-standing relationships, they (as local community members or long-term expatriates) requested honest, direct feedback and critique.

In Bolivia, Brazil, and Tanzania, the surveys were shared with community members who then completed the survey at home and returned it to the site director within a three week time period. In Jamaica, where the community meets every Thursday evening to co-plan, co-budget, and discuss upcoming opportunities and challenges, the group chose – despite evaluators' desires – to discuss the survey together and then fill it out individually. At all sites, some respondents reported that question number seven, the one that asked respondents to rank motivations for partnership, was somewhat confusing.

Results

The results presented are organized according to the distinct prompt sets indicated above: short-term, exploitative/voyeuristic, motives, and organizational reputation. Response options were strongly agree (SA), somewhat agree (SWA), neutral (N), somewhat disagree (SWD), and strongly disagree (SD). Seventy-eight respondents completed the survey, representing community members in Bolivia, Brazil, Jamaica, and Tanzania.

Short-Term Prompts

The data present a compelling, yet complex picture. The vast majority of respondents agreed that <VSO> projects cause immediate positive impacts and that programs provide visitors with meaningful educational experiences (89% and 95%) – and for both of those categories only one respondent actually disagreed. Yet when the prompts are arranged to put an explicit focus on the relationship between the length of the program and student learning or community impact, the responses are much more mixed. Thirty two percent of respondents expressed concern that programs are not long enough for meaningful learning and 34% percent suggested that the short length prevents making an important impact in the community. Still, in both cases, most respondents maintain the position that the programs are educative for participants and have an important impact on the community. We explore variation in responses regarding community development impact and program length in the qualitative data discussion below.

Table 1
Short-Term Experiences

Short-Term Prompts	SA	SWA	N	SWD	SD
<VSO> projects cause immediate positive impacts in [the community]	74%	15%	9%	0%	0%
<VSO> programs are not long enough for visitors to learn meaningfully about [community], community organizing, or service.	16%	16%	12%	32%	24%
<VSO> programs are not long enough to make an important impact in the community.	14%	20%	12%	25%	29%
<VSO>-[partner org.] programs provide visiting students and volunteers with meaningful education about [community], community organizing, and service.	81%	14%	4%	0%	1%

Exploitative/Voyeuristic Practices

There was very little variation in responses to the prompts that related to whether the community members feel that they benefit from exchange, connect authentically, or are treated poorly by visiting VSO participants. Ninety-three percent of community members agreed that residents benefit from cultural exchange with visitors; 95% of community members reported developing friendships or connections with visitors that outlast programs; and 97% disagreed (87% strongly disagree) that VSO visitors are rude and disrespectful toward locals. This high rate of disagreement with the perception that VSO visitors are rude or disrespectful differs from a concern in Stoecker and Tryon's (2009) work, which suggested this kind of concern was prevalent among community members. The discrepancy here may be due in part to the typically higher rate of self-selection and sacrifice necessary for participation in a GSL program. This reality may be changing, however, as more institutions require study abroad, reflective intercultural immersion, or both (Lassahn, forthcoming).

Table 2
Exploitative/Voyeuristic Practices

Exploitative / Voyeuristic Prompts	SA	SWA	N	SWD	SD
[Community] residents benefit from cultural exchange with visitors.	74%	19%	3%	1%	3%
[Community] residents develop friendships or connections with visitors that outlast an individual program.	78%	17%	4%	0%	1%
<VSO> visitors are rude and disrespectful toward locals.	2%	0%	2%	10%	87%

Motives

The responses here were consistent with support of GSL, with 91% of respondents suggesting <VSO> projects jumpstart residents to participate in local service; 90% indicating the partnership develops local leaders; and 92% suggesting the community receives resources through the partnership that it would otherwise not receive.

Table 3
Motives

Motive Prompts	SA	SWA	N	SWD	SD
<VSO> projects jumpstart [community] residents to participate in local service.	68%	23%	8%	0%	1%
Through the partnership, [the community] develops local leaders.	70%	20%	7%	0%	3%
[The community] receives resources through the partnership that it would not otherwise receive.	71%	21%	4%	1%	1%

Table 4 presents the results for the following item asking participants to rank various motives: “Please rank the importance of outcomes of the <VSO>-[community partnership] from your perspective. Please use a ‘1’ to indicate the outcome you believe is most important, a ‘5’ to indicate the outcome you believe is least important, ranking your preferences in between. Please use ‘NA’ if you believe that an outcome is not applicable.”

Table 4
Motives Ranking

Motives	Most important	Important	Neutral	Less Important	Least Important
Generates income for host families	16%	16%	10%	24%	33%
Provides volunteer support for community projects and initiatives	36%	34%	22%	8%	0%
Provides some material or financial support for community projects	23%	25%	29%	13%	10%
Educates visitors about <community> life, community organizing, and service	23%	38%	13%	15%	10%
Offers opportunity for cross-cultural exchange and connection between locals and visitors	29%	15%	13%	19%	23%

The data from this prompt suggests significant diversity of opinion regarding the purposes of VSO activities. According to the respondents, the rationales for VSO partnership rank as follows: (1) volunteer support for community projects and initiatives (70% most important or important), (2) educates visitors about community life, community organizing, and service (61% most important or important), (3) provides some material or financial

support for community projects (48% most important or important), (4) offers opportunity for cross-cultural exchange and connection between locals and visitors (44% most important or important), and (5) generates income for host families (32% most important or important).

After the initial use of the survey in Brazil, the researchers made slight adjustments to question seven. It originally only offered the prompt and the opportunity to rank responses numerically. After hearing that it was confusing, however, the grid above was generated and made part of the surveys in the other communities. Many respondents did not rank-order, but rather assigned multiple "most important" or "important" statuses. Future surveys will need to address this and develop techniques to increase clarity.

Organizational Reputation

The results indicate this VSO's organizational reputation is strongly positive, that this VSO is trusted, and that this VSO has a reputation for working collaboratively with others. One prompt was added to this set to address a concern specific to GSL – that volunteers might take jobs away from local community members (Devereux, 2008). Sixty-eight percent of respondents did not agree that this occurred, but 26% agreed or somewhat agreed that it did. Even more worrisome, almost a fifth (19%) of respondents strongly agreed that volunteers take jobs away from locals.

Table 5
Organizational Reputation

Organizational Reputation Prompts	SA	SWA	N	SWD	SD
Overall, the <VSO>-[partner organization] relationship is very positive.	79%	17%	3%	0%	1%
<VSO> is a trusted organization.	77%	17%	6%	0%	0%
<VSO> works collaboratively with others.	82%	18%	0%	0%	0%
<VSO> visitors, when volunteering, take away jobs that could provide locals with paid employment.	19%	7%	6%	8%	60%

The VSO's Jamaica partner organization has a regular practice of democratically deciding what project volunteers will address and then – before volunteers arrive – checking with local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community stakeholders to determine whether there are other ways to fund the project with local labor. Only if the answers are "no" throughout the community, suggesting that the resources are not locally available, will the volunteers participate in the project. The precision of this process is specific to the Jamaica partnership. The data suggests it should occur at every site and that it should occur more publically in Jamaica (where the pattern of respondent distribution on this prompt was similar to the pattern on this prompt overall). This data point indeed deserves further examination in Jamaica in particular, where 65 host individuals regularly generate income through the model of community tourism developed through the partnership there.

Qualitative Data

Examination of qualitative feedback through an iterative coding process based on standard practices in grounded theory development (Creswell, 2007) suggested several distinct themes. Those themes include:

- desire for improved communication
- desire for increased length of programs
- positive feedback on community projects that included a desire for more
- critical feedback on community projects (including critique that the scope of projects or project expenditures were insufficient)
- the desire for more volunteers
- the value of friendship
- the importance of language learning
- desire for more co-planning and information sharing in respect to program activities
- the desire among some partner community members to visit the United States.

Critical Qualitative Feedback

Themes often tracked to specific communities. For example, respondents in Tanzania were far more likely than the Brazilian or Bolivian respondents to focus specifically on community development projects when offering either positive feedback ("We love the organization a lot because it has helped the community of Tanzania a lot. We would like you to help us more."), or negative feedback ("Financial support and volunteers for my organization is too small to satisfy the community."). These comments are likely due in part to the economic status of the communities that are this

VSO's partners.

Among the communities that completed survey responses considered here, the community in Tanzania faced the most severe economic shortages. This placed the VSO, which has dual roles as a community development organization and an educational organization, into more of a development role in this setting than may have been the case with other community partners, where the critique tended to focus more on language learning. The status of English as an official language in Tanzania, despite wider comfort with Swahili and lack of English proficiency for a large portion of Tanzanians, may have also prevented Tanzanian respondents from focusing on the need for students' linguistic skills development.

It should be noted that the negative feedback above, in this context, is actually a request to further develop presence and activities in the community. This concern was repeated many times in different ways, including suggestion to stay longer in the community[2].

- <VSO> is wanted to strengthen/establish its plans and budget in order that even partners and local people benefit.
- <VSO> is completely good, except for our others, in other words, we have been happy with the students a lot, but we beg of the students that they increase the time they are here, at least to begin one month to twelve months.
- I would advise students or visitors be given enough time in order to obtain more time for bringing development to the community. The time that they have to visit because they help a lot during the time that they are here.

Other critical feedback did question the VSO's sustainability and commitment to co-planning:

- <VSO>'s projects are not sustainable, (2) <VSO>'s budget is not clear/is not understandable, (3) <VSO>'s goals/objectives are not measureable
- Community members should be permitted to create <VSO> projects and participate in the current programs where a lot of <VSO> money is used at the expense of Tanzanians.

One of the critical comments was reminiscent of Zemach-Bersin's (2008) scathing critique of international education, "<VSO>'s projects are not sustainable for people of Karagwe. Me myself, I consider them to be only tourists." This utterance is troubling and important, but it must be considered in light of overwhelmingly positive quantitative and qualitative feedback.

While community project feedback, both positive and negative, was more common on the Tanzania surveys, Brazilian and Bolivian community

members commented frequently on the importance of language learning, and often the need for more of it:

- They should know a little bit of Spanish or study Spanish here.
- Despite having good communication, a lot of times we need people to always translate.
- I believe that communication could improve if we knew their language.
- Classes of Portuguese and English to communicate better.
- I learned English.

This phenomenon seemingly relates to a theme that strongly emerged across all represented sites, which is the suggestion that the students should stay longer. In addition to the critiques and concerns mentioned above, positive feedback was significant.

Positive Qualitative Feedback

Community projects.

- We love the organization a lot because it has helped the community of Tanzania a lot. We would like you to help us more.
- It should continue to help community and to increase students also it should help with the community for example sewing machines, suitable computers, and other things for society.
- I am completely satisfied because their aid helps even those in secondary school.

Friendship.

- <VSO> is very important because it strengthens friendship between local people and guests.
- <VSO> has importance because it has helped to build friendship together with assistance in Tanzania.
- We gain much friendship and companionship when they visit us.

Implications for the Future of Fair Trade Learning

This evaluation speaks to only one component of the articulation of Fair Trade Learning shared above: degree of community satisfaction with the partnership and transparency in respect to community concerns. The evaluation grew from Stoeker and Tryon's (2009) work, which was a strength in terms of examining assertions within the service-learning/university-community partnership literature, but a weakness insofar as precisely matching an operationalization with the conceptualization of FTL. What

seems to be demonstrated here is that the ethos of FTL – in terms of quality community partnership, sense of voice, and genuine co-contribution to community-driven development – is present in the communities that responded to the surveys. Flaws exist that must be addressed, most notably the sense that volunteers may be taking local jobs, but the predominant assertion from the data is that the programming and relationships are positive.

What is not captured in this particular evaluation is the extent of the VSO's success on some of its related goals, including opening classes to the host community students, ensuring fair compensation for all involved community members, and subsidizing bi-directional exchange to ensure community members have opportunities to participate in programs or their leakage rate. This study, therefore, while interesting and informative, is in no way complete or conclusive as a model for comprehensive FTL or international volunteer program evaluation. Future work in this area will require participation from multiple organizations and institutions, and the evaluative process must necessarily include broader assessment that addresses the key components just mentioned.

Contribution, Conclusion, and Criticism

This article has examined some of the concerns articulated about international volunteers and global university-community partnerships by: (1) demonstrating the location of these practices within market relationships, (2) articulating one VSO's response to the perverse incentives that stem from those market relationships, (3) situating that response within service-learning and development literature, (4) adopting a community perspectives evaluation modeled on a prominent work in the field of service-learning (Stoecker & Tryon, 2009), and (5) analyzing data from that evaluation in light of the aspirations of FTL.

The findings are limited to one VSO and four of its community partners who have had working relationships lasting at least ten years. As Kiely and Nielsen clarify (2003), relationships are central to strong GSL programing, yet as we have argued above, the structure of relationships in GSL vary considerably from domestic service-learning partnerships. Future research should isolate different kinds of relationship structures, such as direct university-community relationships, programs that do not take place within a decade of relationship, or programs developed through private sector organizations, along with a host of other program factors articulated by Sherraden, Lough, & McBride (2008). Comparative data would be instructive. Additionally, Banerjee and Duflo's (2011) work developing quasi-experimental designs with communities that do and do not experience specific development interventions may offer an interesting model of assessing community development with and without GSL partnership.

This article represents one of the first forays into systematically gathering evidence regarding community perspectives on GSL. The data is

positive in the direction supporting community-driven GSL as it is organized through the Fair Trade Learning partnerships in the four communities considered here. The findings indicate broad satisfaction with the partnerships and strong senses of community development benefit, student learning, and community learning. Findings also indicate frustration with the short-term nature of much programming, along with community members' desire for visitors to have or build better language skills. Notably, these community-articulated concerns are in direct conflict with trends in the international education sector, where short-term programming is the largest growth area (Open Doors, 2012).

The question at the core of the Fair Trade Learning ideal is: Why are we in the community? Its response is that we are there to cooperate with community members and individuals on mutually beneficial learning and development. A dialogue on this ideal and a related set of standards continues to develop (globalsl.org, 2013). This approach places the community at the center of all considerations, from economic decisions to development efforts through pedagogical choices and course participation. It is in these commitments, radically different from a student-centered international education industry, which most fundamentally adheres to the assumptions of neoliberalism. More research is needed to systematically document comparative community and learning outcomes within these and other frameworks.

Yet it is not data alone that is needed. Ongoing dialogue reveals a multitude of ways in which the profoundly complicated nature of this work becomes ever more apparent. Better Care Network, Save the Children, and UNICEF have recently cooperated to begin a campaign designed to end "orphanage tourism." This move comes as agencies involved in child protection around the world witness unscrupulous individuals' efforts to profit from outsiders' desire to "do good" by starting orphanages not intended to support children or communities, but specifically intended for the purpose of profit (Goodwin, 2014). This phenomenon begs the question of whether the community, transparency, and reciprocity-oriented commitments embedded in Fair Trade Learning are enough, or if some minimal commitments to rights – such as child rights – are necessary as well. Democratic education (Hartman, 2013a) and global citizenship education (Hartman & Hertel, 2014) require clear values commitments, both of which happen to be centered within a human rights thinking and theoretical tradition.

As an academic who has spent his career within university-community engagement and service-learning research, practice, and discourse, I am accustomed to the notion of applied research and community-engaged work. Yet this particular area of research and discourse – situated as it is so clearly near an increasingly abusive phenomenon of orphanage tourism– has challenged me to think in new ways about communicating beyond these engaged university discourses. When idealistic teens, church groups, and families turn toward their web-browsers or existing relationships to consider "international service," they do not even necessarily know to look around for best

practices. Service is so often an unquestioned good.

Within universities we must continue to engage this effort to ensure best practices in global partnerships, but it is also incumbent upon community-engaged academics to develop more and better communication strategies. If our conversations are democratic and thoughtful, yet remain isolated from dominant culture, we will not yet have risen to the challenge of becoming social-serving institutions.

Notes

[1] Some discussion of the quantitative components of this survey is also included in a chapter featuring a broader discussion of community impact assessment (Hartman, 2014), including domestic and international, immersive and non-immersive partnerships.

[2] English is one of the official languages in Tanzania, but it is most frequently a second or third language for Tanzanian English speakers; it is of course also its own dialect with its own patterns and vocabulary. The quotes shared here were not altered.

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Appendix: Community Survey

Thank you for working with <VSO>. Your feedback and partnership is incredibly important to us. Therefore, please take a moment to complete this brief survey. The information will be used to learn about and improve our Fair Trade Learning partnership. Fair Trade Learning is a concept that grows from our [community] partnership – it focuses on community strengths, equitable partnership, and mutual exchange and learning.

All responses are anonymous and will remain confidential. Please take a moment to provide additional information about our partnership in the open-ended section.

1. Please indicate your level of involvement with the <VSO>-[Partner organization] (circle all the apply):
   a. I am a member of a host family for visitors
   b. I am involved in coordination or planning for <VSO> visitors
   c. I lead activities or presentations for <VSO> visitors
   d. I work with or volunteer at a partner organization
   e. I am a member of a host family for <VSO> visitors
   f. Other. Please describe: ______________________________

2. What year do you first remember working with <VSO>?
   Year: ________ (<VSO> began working in [location of partnership] in [Year]).

3. During a week when an <VSO> group is present in [the community], about how many hours do you dedicate to the <VSO>-[Partner organization]?
   a. 0-10 hours
   b. 10 - 20 hours
   c. 20 - 30 hours
   d. More than 30 hours

4. When an <VSO> group is not present in [the community], about how many hours per week do you dedicate to the <VSO>-[Partner organization]?
   a. 0 hours
   b. 1 – 5 hours
   c. 5 – 10 hours
   d. More than 10 hours

5. What is your overall satisfaction level with the <VSO>- <VSO>-[Partner organization] partnership?
    a. Completely satisfied
    b. Satisfied
    c. Unsatisfied
    d. Completely unsatisfied

6. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following sentences. Check one response for each.

	Strongly Agree	Some-what Agree	Neither	Some-what Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
a. <VSO> projects cause immediate positive impacts in [the community].						
b. <VSO> projects jumpstart [the community] residents to participate in local service.						
c. Through the partnership, [the community] develops local leaders.						
d. [Community] receives resources through the partnership that it would not otherwise receive.						

	Strongly Agree	Some-what Agree	Neither	Some-what Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
e. <VSO>- [Partner organization] programs provide visiting students and volunteers with meaningful education about [community], community organizing, and service.						
f. [Community] residents benefit from cultural exchange with visitors.						
g. [Community] residents develop friendships or connections with visitors that outlast an individual program.						
h. Overall, the <VSO>- [Partner organization] relationship is very positive.						
i. <VSO>- [Partner organization] visitors, when volunteering, take away jobs that could provide locals with paid employment.						
j. <VSO>- [Partner organization] visitors are rude and disrespectful toward locals.						

	Strongly Agree	Some-what Agree	Neither	Some-what Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
k. <VSO>- [Partner organization] programs are not long enough to make an important impact in the community.						
l. <VSO>- [Partner organization] programs are not long enough for visitors to learn meaningfully about [community], community organizing, or service.						
m. <VSO>- [Partner organization] is a trusted organization.						
n. <VSO>- [Partner organization] works collaboratively with others.						

7. Please rank the importance of outcomes of the <VSO>- [Partner organization] from your perspective. Please use a “1” to indicate the outcome you believe is most important, a “5” to indicate the outcome you believe is least important, ranking your preferences in between. Please use “NA” if you believe that an outcome is not applicable.
    a. ______ Generates income for host families
    b. ______ Provides volunteer support for community projects and initiatives
    c. ______ Provides some material or financial support for community projects
    d. ______ Educates visitors about [the community] life, community organizing, and service
    e. ______ Offers opportunity for cross-cultural exchange and connection between locals and visitors

8. The list above was generated using previous feedback, but there may be other outcomes you think are important. Are there any outcomes you would add to the list?

____

____

9. What is your level of satisfaction with communication between <VSO> and- [Partner organization]?
    a. Completely satisfied
    b. Satisfied
    c. Unsatisfied
    d. Completely unsatisfied

10. If you answered unsatisfied or completely unsatisfied in number 9, please indicate why:

____

____

11. What could be done to improve the communication between community members and <VSO>?

____

____

12. If applicable, please list areas where you are unsatisfied with the <VSO> - [Partner organization] partnership:

____

____

13. In your own words, what one sentence would you use to describe the value of the <VSO>- [Partner organization]?

____

____

14. How would you describe <VSO>?

____

____

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is incredibly important to us. We will do all we can to honor your answers and integrate them with our ongoing partnership efforts.

Authors

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Cassandra Chaire is an advocate of intercultural education, which stems from her own experiences abroad, including studies in France and volunteer work in Brazil and Mexico. Her current role at Plan International, an international development organization, focuses on providing assistance to marginalized communities in developing countries. Cassandra holds a master's degree in international development from the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs of the University of Pittsburgh.