EVALUATION/REFLECTION

Reflection in Service Learning: Making Meaning or Experience

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Abstract
Traditional methods of instruction based on lectures and textbook readings can be effective in some instances and for some types of! earning, yet many educators seek methods to enhance traditional student learning and to expand educational objectives beyond knowledge acquisition. Two related issues illustrate the limitations of traditional methods. The first is context-specific learning. Students are taught a particular module of content, they are provided examples of how to solve particular types of problems, and then they practice solving these types of problems. However, when the nature of the problem is varied, or when similar problems are encountered in different contexts, students fail to generalize prior learning to these new circumstances or situations. The second issue that frustrates educators is the shallow nature of the content learned through traditional instruction and the degree to which it does not promote personal understanding. That is, although students may demonstrate rote learning of a particular educational module, that new information does not always enlighten understanding of their own lives and the world outside the classroom. When knowledge acquisition is viewed as the most important goal of education, the educational system fails to develop intellectual habits that foster the desire and capacity for lifelong learning and the skills needed for active participation in a democracy.[1]

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They miss the meaning of the experience. Reflective exercises help students to make appropriate connections between the service and significant areas of learning. John Dewey (1910)