

Service-Learning: What Motivates K-12 Teachers to Participate In and Sustain Service-Learning Projects?

[Marjori M. Krebs, Ed.D.]

Abstract

This phenomenological study describes the essence of the service-learning experience for the K-12 teacher, specifically exploring teacher motivations for initiating and sustaining service-learning in the classroom. Service-learning is defined as an educational methodology that incorporates student preparation, service to the community, and reflection, with links to the academic curriculum (Billig, 2002).

The author and primary investigator for the study was a former K-12 teacher with experience implementing service-learning in a secondary setting. Co-researchers were six K-12 teachers who had implemented service-learning in the 24 months prior to the study. The author interviewed each co-researcher, transcribed the interviews, and used the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen Method of Analysis of Phenomenological Data for data analysis. Three major themes emerged to describe the essence of implementing service-learning from the K-12 teacher's perspective: a) Connections, b) Resonation in the Heart of the Teacher, and c) The Right Fit with a Teacher's Philosophy and Teaching Style.

Motivational, rejuvenating, purposeful, gratifying, heartwarming, relevant, exciting, necessary. These are just a few of the adjectives K-12 teachers used to describe their service-learning experiences. There are many rich, textural stories to support these terms. What motivates teachers to implement service-learning? What is the essence of the service-learning experience for K-12 teachers? Why do they continue to implement service-learning even when they are crunched for time, pressured by testing, and inundated with paperwork? The three themes that emerged to describe the service-learning experience for K-12 teachers are Connections (involving students, teachers, parents, administrators, the curriculum, and the community-at-large), Resonation in the Hearts of Teachers, and the Right Fit with the Teacher's Philosophy and Teaching Style.

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the service-learning experience for K-12 teachers—to determine what motivates teachers to incorporate service-learning as a pedagogical technique. In order for students to experience the positive benefits of service-learning in the classroom, the leader of the

classroom—the teacher—must first choose to incorporate service-learning as a teaching method. The key to broader infusion of service-learning in the curriculum is in the hands of teachers. Much research has been conducted on the motivations and experiences of faculty implementing service-learning in higher education (Abes, Jackson, & Jones, 2002; Hammond, 1994; McKay & Rozee, 2004; Palmer, 2003); however, there is a considerable dearth in the research on motivations for K-12 teachers to implement service-learning. This study serves as a partial step to filling that gap. In 1998, Giles and Eyler wrote that the key question for the service-learning agenda regarding faculty should be “what factors explain faculty involvement in service-learning and how they are affected by participation” (p. 65). If teachers are motivated to incorporate service-learning into their classes, more students may reap the many benefits of participation in service-learning activities and develop a greater sense of passion and purpose in their young lives. In order for teachers to incorporate this method, they must first be motivated to do so.

Methodology

Co-Researchers and their Backgrounds

Participating in this study were six co-researchers, who were teaching in kindergarten through grade 12, and the primary researcher who was a former K-12 teacher. Each teacher’s background is briefly described below.

Jill: Jill is a middle school Family and Consumer Sciences teacher in a suburban district, whose students learn core standards of the curriculum through planning, implementation, and reflecting on service-learning projects of their own design. She has been teaching for 30 years.

Nancy: Nancy has been an elementary school teacher for 27 years currently teaching fifth grade in a suburban school district. Every year she and her students participate in the Grandpals Project with a local retirement center.

Andy: Andy is a sixth grade teacher who has been teaching for six years, with experience in suburban and urban districts. He teaches social studies, math, and literacy through a variety of service-learning projects, including a community Civil War Day and a fund-raising assembly for a school in South Africa.

Bonnie: Bonnie teaches third and fourth grades in a suburban district and has taught for 17 years. She incorporates all subject areas into her Buckeye Bonanza and Kids for

Critters projects, both which raise funds and awareness for non-profit organizations chosen by her students each year.

Kim: Kim is an eighth grade American History teacher, and has been teaching for 30 years with experience in suburban and urban districts. Kim's students participate in a year-long project providing food to the homeless population in an inner city.

Erin: Erin teaches high school social studies in a rural district, and has been teaching for six years. Her students teach U.S. History concepts to students with special needs.

Marjori: Marjori, the primary researcher, taught high school social studies for 14 years in a suburban district, teaching concepts in U.S. History through service in the inner city and through interviews and service with senior citizens.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Data were collected and analyzed in four phases. Phase One, the Pre-Interview, included an interview of the researcher by a colleague, to strive to achieve *epoch*—a state in which the researcher sets aside beliefs, judgments, and perceptions to focus fully on the experience (Moustakas, 1994). In Phase Two, the Interview, the author conducted an interview, lasting from one and one-half to two and on-half hours, with each co-researcher (see Appendix A). Questions in the interview addressed teachers' backgrounds, their general knowledge of service-learning, and their personal experiences with service-learning both as participants and as teachers. These questions specifically asked teachers about their experiences with student outcomes, support and sustainability issues, and implementation of their first service-learning experiences. The author audio-taped each interview and recorded personal field notes. In Phase Three, the Post-Interview, each co-researcher completed a Post-Interview Reflection Form, three days following the interview (see Appendix B). Questions on this form concerned the participant's response to the interview process itself and any information the participant thought of following the interview that she might want to include. In Phase Four, Transcription and Analysis, the researcher transcribed all interview audio tapes, and coded those transcriptions along with the Post-Interview Reflection Forms using Moustakas' (1994) modifications of the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen Method of Analysis of Phenomenological Data. This analysis procedure involved considering each individual statement with respect to significance for the description of the experience; listing each non-repetitive, non-overlapping statement; clustering these statements into meaningful themes; and synthesizing the themes into a description of the experience as a complete, woven texture—or essence.

Findings: Emergent Themes from Teachers' Service-Learning Experiences

Three major themes emerged from the interviews that relate to teachers' motives for implementing and sustaining service-learning in the classroom: (a) Connections, (b) Resonation in the Heart of the Teacher, and (c) the Right Fit with Teaching Philosophy and Style. Connections refers to the extreme importance of creating, maintaining, extending, and nurturing connections between teachers and the people with whom they work: including students, other teachers, parents, administrators, and the community-at-large, as well as to linking different areas of the curriculum. The second theme, Resonation in the Heart of the Teacher, involves a deep, personal belief about the importance of making a positive difference in the world and teaching this belief to students. The third theme, The Right Fit with Teaching Philosophy and Teaching Style, concerns the importance of creating a well-balanced, harmonious relationship between service-learning and a teacher's philosophy, particularly as it involves student-centered and experiential learning and preference for an experiential teaching style.

These themes are cyclical in nature. That is, a teacher who is implementing service-learning must first make connections in a variety of ways and with a variety of individuals and the curriculum. Second, for the implementation of service-learning to be effective, it must resound in the heart of the teacher. In addition, service-learning must also fit a teacher's teaching philosophy and teaching style, making it a comfortable, yet energizing, way to teach students. When service-learning meets these conditions, it leads that teacher to continue the practice and to share his or her experience with other teachers, hence expanding connections with others. The following section describes these themes in more detail.

Theme One: Connections

The most obvious theme to surface during the coding process was the importance of connections and links teachers made when planning and implementing service-learning projects. Teachers repeatedly mentioned connections with other teachers, administrators, students, and parents. They also explained the importance of connections made with the curriculum, as evident in their understanding that service-learning must include a purposeful link between service and academic learning. Finally, teachers described the important connections made with members of the community, through various service agencies and organizations, from local to global. Kim explained about the connections she made during her project to feed the homeless:

Cooperation from all areas—not only between the teachers and the students, but all of the outside elements come into play, and I feel the number one word is

'cooperation'...Getting the administration on your side. You have to get your other colleagues on your side....And then the parents. That's another group that also becomes very educated through this program.

The Student Connection.

Teachers in this study explained that the connection with students begins with the planning and preparation stages of a service-learning project. It is important to find a way to relate the topic or issue of the service-learning project to students' concerns. It is also important for teachers to listen to students before, during, and following the project. Erin stated that, "This project [students teaching American History concepts to students with special needs] probably worked well because it was something that kind of arose with the kids."

Listening to student feedback after a project is completed is valuable as well, as Jill explained:

I got smart and started talking with the kids and asking them to reflect upon what worked and what didn't work and did they have any suggestions for our students and improving it in the future and all that, so I started to gather that information.

Teachers also found it valuable to help students connect with themselves, getting to know their individual strengths and weaknesses, as they worked toward completing their projects. The teachers saw personal investment and reflection as a way of helping students with future career choices. Jill shared that:

The career component combined with service-learning has just been a real eye-opener for me, and I think it is an eye-opener for the kids. I hope it has made a difference as they are moving in those career directions into high school, into college, that it has made life a little easier and maybe more directed.

Students also connect to each other through service-learning. During Nancy's Grandpals Project, a few of the Grandpals passed away. She noted that, "The kids were very supportive of each other; it is emotional because they don't want that to happen [to their Grandpals]. The other kids are good about giving support."

In addition, the teachers observed the students discovering and beginning to appreciate the skills other students brought to the projects in order for the group to be successful. Several of the teachers designed student-to-student mentoring, so that those who had

experienced a project could teach those who were about to embark. In Nancy's Grandpals Project, "The sixth graders go and show the fifth graders around [the retirement center] so they are mentoring those kids. It empowers the sixth graders who do this."

At the conclusion of Bonnie's two service-learning projects, the students write letters to the students in the younger grade level who will complete the project the next year, explaining what they have learned and accomplished. These letters also serve as assessments of student achievement for the teacher.

The Teacher Connection.

Not only were connections made between teachers and students through service-learning, but connections were also evident between teachers themselves. Every teacher told at least one story of another teacher with whom they worked who made the project(s) more manageable and more enjoyable. It was important for teachers to have another teacher to assist in planning and working through details. Even difficulties served as opportunities for teachers to connect to one another. For example, Jill reported:

The good thing about struggling with that [transportation] was we would have to get teachers to volunteer to help us drive and then they got to know what we were doing, so in a round-about way, that was a good thing.

Another positive way for teachers to connect with other teachers is through curriculum planning. When teachers are in team-teaching situations, the benefits of service-learning can be shared and may touch students in many different academic areas. Jill, the FCS teacher, who was a member of a content-area team in her middle school, commented:

I am meeting with those people [content-area teachers] on a daily basis; they understand what I'm doing [through service-learning] and now they've bought into it like crazy, especially the English teachers, and it just became a part of what we do as a team.

Teachers not only connect with other teachers in their own schools or districts, but also with other service-learning teachers through more formalized professional development opportunities. Often ideas for projects arose from the connections with other teachers made during professional development. For example, Nancy gained many of her ideas from attending conferences and talking with teachers of other grade

levels. As she commented, “Getting to talk to other people who are doing it [service-learning] was really good for me.”

The Parent Connection.

Service-learning also affords teachers a unique opportunity to establish meaningful connections with parents. Service-learning provides opportunities for greater communication with parents and for parents to see and understand what is happening in the classroom and how the curriculum connects with what is happening in the community. Parents can be instrumental in facilitating connections between the school and the community because of their many contacts and networks within the community-at-large.

Parents can also serve as classroom aides during service-learning project implementation. During Kim’s homeless shelter project, parents volunteered to transport food and help with food preparation and serving. In Jill’s projects, parents provided after-school transportation for middle school students to and from their service sites. Parent-teacher organizations at each school provided funds for many service-learning projects. As Kim summarized it, “As a teacher, it [service-learning] taught me how to work with parents.”

An integral part of Bonnie’s service-learning projects are the connections with families. At the elementary level, Bonnie believes this connection is a necessity.

I think with true service-learning, there has to be an investment by the child—by the child, by the teacher, and even by the families....I think really the most dramatic moments [of service-learning experiences] would probably be shared at home with their families.

Jill concurred, saying, “I think it [service-learning] helps build some really good relationships between the parents and the students and then it gets a conversation going between the parent and the teacher.”

The Administrator Connection.

Administrators, like parents, play a key role in making connections with teachers through service-learning. The teacher co-researchers in this study noted that administrators can provide personal mentoring and encouragement, a framework for professional development in service-learning, and funding for projects. They pointed out that service-learning offers administrators authentic opportunities to support and appreciate the efforts of their teachers. Finally, service-learning provides administrators

at both the building and district levels with the chance to connect in a positive way with teachers, students, parents, and the community. Jill captured the importance of administrative support for her service-learning work:

The funding support was there. There was already grant writing going on district-wide. There were suggestions for whom to contact, and people to call if we needed something. All I had to do was get on the phone and call

The Curricular Connection.

Another important connection teachers make when implementing service-learning is a meaningful connection to the curriculum. Service-learning afforded teachers the opportunities to make the content more meaningful to their students. Jill described the curricular connections as one of the most important parts of the service-learning experience for her students.

The whole service piece is really good, and the fact that we can tie it to the curriculum and make the curriculum more meaningful to the kids and to the teachers—to help the teachers make it [the curriculum] more tied to real life.

Nancy explained the importance of the learning element of service-learning and the various academic components in her Grandpals Project.

The academic piece of the puzzle that goes with the service-learning is the learning that goes along with it. Is it great to volunteer? Yes. The learning through literature, the empathy, and some of the details that go with Alzheimer's, or heart disease, or dementia, and then learning what they [the students] could do. You've got the science part of aging of the body and emotional needs of a person and the isolation that they can feel when they are in a nursing home. So it is tying all those learning processes in, not just 'Show up here, let's collect cans or clean up the park,' you know, which are all wonderful things that need to be done in our society, but it doesn't have the learning.

Through their projects, teachers have incorporated reading, writing, music, art, technology, and other subjects enabling students to learn and change in a number of areas.

The Community Connection.

School-community connections are rarely more clear and concrete than when students are participating in service-learning activities. For example, the retirement center found the service of Nancy's students and their Grandpals Project so valuable that when the

district decreased funding, they donated money for the transportation needs of the class.

Students in Andy's South Africa program performed for the public, and the media provided positive publicity. Andy believed that school districts should take greater advantage of these public relations opportunities:

If we can get kids out in the community and make them [the general public] aware of what we are doing, I think it is going to be extremely powerful. I think a lot of teachers do different projects that are kind of community-based or volunteer-based, but I don't think we really get the message out there that we are doing that, you know.

Summary of Theme One: Connections.

The importance of Connections when implementing service-learning cannot be overstated. Every teacher interviewed expressed the importance of various connections as a primary motivator for implementing and sustaining service-learning. As Marjori explained, "It was because of these meaningful connections that students learned their content. More importantly, I believe they still remember."

Theme Two: Resonation in the Hearts of Teachers

The second major factor motivating the teachers who were the subjects of this study to implement service-learning was that it resonated in their hearts. This resonance came from a deep, personal belief about the importance of making a positive difference in the world and teaching this belief to students. Almost every teacher mentioned the importance of helping students develop a commitment to improving others' lives, and they literally touched their hearts as they expressed these feelings. As Kim put it, tapping her heart, "I am looking at the word 'emotional.' You have got to do things for the goodness of mankind."

Teachers who implemented service-learning were motivated by several core values and experiences: past personal experience with service in their own lives, professional development experiences featuring service-learning, and a desire to mentor and motivate other teachers.

Resonation from Past Personal Experiences.

Each of the teachers had a role model who introduced him or her personally to service and almost all participated in service at a young age. One remarkable commonality among the teachers interviewed was the importance of parents, and in particular,

mothers, who modeled service for their children and included them in service to others. Jill's mother was a member of a Wednesday Club where she and other mothers practiced good deeds around the community. Nancy's mother cared for the elderly in her community; her father took Nancy with him when he personally delivered legal documents to the home-bound or nursing home residents. Andy's mother helped him prepare and deliver Easter baskets to the women's shelter and was instrumental in getting him to join a high school service club.

These teachers experienced the rewards of service as young people, such as increased self-esteem, organizational skills, and the positive feeling of making a difference. Now, as teachers, they were eager to provide these types of experiences for their students.

Resonation from Professional Development Experiences

From a foundation of past experience, the teachers in this study knew of the power of service to others. Professional development in service-learning gave them opportunities to see how they could not only help their students experience the benefits of service to the community, while meeting curricular goals.

Through professional development opportunities, teachers were afforded the gift of time—time to connect, plan, learn, and think about potential service and learning connections, along with other interested, motivated teachers. Two teachers, Kim and Bonnie, participated in the same hands-on service-learning workshop entitled “Beyond the Freeway,” where they were introduced to the needs of those less fortunate in the greater community in which they lived. Other teachers attended “Everyday People Make a Difference” workshops as an introduction to the power of service-learning for both personal and academic benefits for students.

Several teachers pursued or are pursuing their graduate degrees with an emphasis in service-learning. Nancy, who earned graduate credit in service-learning stated:

I learned a lot. When I was there I put together a lot of literature research on service-learning and did papers on it so I was getting a chance to look at some of those studies that had been done and I realized, ‘You [college researchers] should be using us for research.’

Similarly, Jill's experience of taking workshops and classes was...“an energizer for me...learning all about service-learning and it really motivated me to do my master's work.”

The two younger teachers, Andy and Erin, were introduced to service-learning through the undergraduate curriculum in their teacher education programs. Both experienced actual service-learning in their college classes and both found these experiences to be beneficial.

Resonation in Mentoring and Motivating Other Teachers.

Once teachers see the benefits of service-learning both for themselves and for their students, they are motivated to share this method with other teachers. The teachers in this study found service-learning to be so purposeful, helpful, and meaningful, it was as if they had to share it with other teachers—a service in and of itself to other colleagues.

For example, Nancy worked hard to convince her teaching partner that service-learning was an effective way to teach and helped her find literature that fit with her partner's community service with Habitat for Humanity. As she reported, "I keep trying to get her to do more literature, because I am saying, 'You know you could,' but now she finally got a book that talks about people being without homes, so she is coming along."

Nancy is not alone. Every other teacher interviewed expressed the importance of encouraging and mentoring other teachers to implement service-learning. Even as a new teacher in his building, Andy is motivating his team teacher to implement service-learning in her classroom.

I am looking forward to getting more involved from what we have done this year with the South African visitors and she [Andy's team teacher] wants to be a part of it too. I mean, she knows community service, but the word 'service-learning' is not something that she has been in touch with.

When state standards for her content area were revised to include service-learning as a requirement, Jill began sharing with other teachers around the state through workshops and conferences.

People panicked when they realized service-learning was going to be tied to funding, so we did some workshops. [A teaching colleague] and I presented our "Walk With Me" [Alzheimer's project] thing to FCS groups...mainly through state conferences with Family and Consumer Sciences or career education conferences.

Jill also presented workshops at the district level after experienced service-learning teachers retired or left the district. As she explained, "We are doing that because there are so many [personnel] transitions and we don't want to lose...the service-learning focus."

Teachers also enjoyed sharing their expertise in service-learning with teacher education students at local universities. For example, Andy eagerly accepted the challenge of teaching a graduate workshop and described the experience:

They [university representatives] approached me with some of the experience that I had previously, and it is something I jumped on right away...just trying to encourage people to get out there and do something, especially when some of the tougher inner city schools...it might be an avenue to get these kids to cooperate with you and to develop that rapport.

When sharing their expertise, teachers often have to work to change the mentality of other teachers and administrators in order to convince them to attempt this type of teaching method. The process can be challenging. For example, when Erin was trying to stimulate other teachers to adopt service-learning, she found the process difficult, but she got support from her own mentor, a college professor for her master's degree program who advised her:

It's okay...No one's doing it, but if you start it, it will catch on.... If you're doing something good and you know it's good, just do it and if there's good results, people will catch on and they'll start doing it.

Erin took her mentor's encouragement to heart and was able to serve as a mentor and role model for other teachers in her building. Bonnie is a formally appointed mentor for a younger teacher in her building and includes service-learning as one of the practices she shares with her mentee. She recommends that teachers new to service-learning, "Start small and let it grow as your comfort level increases."

Bonnie also works to lead by example:

If you build it, they will come. If you try it, you will do it again. If you try it, you will appreciate the value of it in ways that you didn't anticipate.

Summary of Theme Two: Resonation in the Hearts of Teachers.

Teachers who implement service-learning believe that caring and making a difference in the world can be purposefully taught, both to students in their classrooms and to colleagues next door or across the country. They have experienced the benefits of service first-hand, and through professional development opportunities, have learned to connect service to the community with curriculum standards. The resonating power

of service-learning inspires them to mentor and motivate others to participate with their students as well.

Theme Three: The Right Fit with Teaching Philosophy and Teaching Style

Because their beliefs about service-learning are so strong and do resound in the hearts of teachers, a final motivating and sustaining factor is the fit between service-learning and teachers' personal philosophies and teaching styles. The teachers interviewed explained how their hands-on, student-centered style and their belief in the importance of serving the community created an opportune environment for service-learning.

The Right Fit for a Teacher's Philosophy

The teaching philosophies expressed by the teachers included the importance of educating children to be functioning members of society, helping students find purpose and meaning in their lives, demonstrating the importance of helping and serving others, and connecting students with their community. Teachers saw it as their responsibility to create links between learning and purpose, between students and society. Service-learning was more than just a teaching strategy for these teachers; it reached to the core of why they wanted to be teachers. As Kim explained:

We have to realize our children are changing, our society is changing, so we have to keep up with it. Service-learning is part of it. Kids have to learn, we as human beings have to learn, to give and share with one another. And what better way to do it than with service-learning?

Bonnie concurred, saying, "Service-learning to me just makes sense.... Just service is important. You need to think of others." In describing her teaching philosophy, Jill also captured the need for students to gain a spirit of service:

It has got to be purposeful; I want them to find something that ties into their gifts, their talents, what they are interested in, what they are passionate about, tie it into the real world...find a way to improve the situation—tying it all together so it is meaningful in their lives.

The Right Fit with Personal Teaching Style.

Not only was service-learning compatible with the teachers' philosophies, it was also congruent with their teaching styles. The teachers in this study believed in serving as facilitators of learning who provide hands-on, authentic learning opportunities for their students. For example, Erin explained that she is a "guide in the classroom, guiding

them to discover the knowledge themselves; to let them discover the stuff on their own.”

Key to enacting this style is flexibility in teaching and a willingness to allow students to influence the direction of a lesson, while maintaining a focus on established learning goals. For example, Nancy commented:

Flexible, spur of the moment, like ‘Okay, we can do this.’ One thing leads to another and I guess standing in front of a classroom the light bulb goes on and you think, ‘Hey, I can...oh, this would be great.’ And then we go that direction and going where I feel the kids need to go.

And Bonnie pointed out, “Learning can be group learning; it can be spontaneous, but the learning is deliberate.”

In addition to flexibility, another important element in teaching style involves creating a strong, personal rapport with students. Andy believed incorporating service-learning projects into his curriculum created a more trusting environment for his classroom. As he explained, “They really trust me...I think it is because of these [service-learning] projects that we do earlier [in the school year] that help out with that rapport.”

Other key aspects of the teaching styles of these service-learning teachers included being organized, and being willing to be uncertain about the end result when entering into a project.

Summary of Theme Three: The Right Fit with Teaching Philosophy and Teaching Style.

Teachers who are motivated to implement and sustain service-learning believe their jobs are more than just teaching content to students. They are quite comfortable with hands-on, experiential approaches to teaching and believe they are teaching for the greater good; that they are producing the future leaders of the world who must know about important issues and develop confidence and skills to solve them. It is a deep, philosophical drive that keeps these teachers going, even when resources, such as funds for a bus for the field trip, are lacking.

The words teachers used to describe their service-learning experiences explain the rewards of The Right Fit between service-learning and their own teaching philosophies and styles:

- Jill: “Motivational...rejuvenating...purposeful...habit of the heart.”

- Nancy: "Gratifying...expect the unexpected...heartwarming...self-satisfaction...all the stars are in the right place."
- Andy: "It benefits school, teachers, and community."
- Bonnie: "Meaningful...important...enlightening...relevant...exciting, ...enriching...valid...opportunity...memorable...significant...magical...incredible...worthwhile...valuable."
- Kim: "Worthwhile...educational...motivational...cooperation...emotional."
- Erin: "Necessary...learning-by-doing."
- Marjori: "Meaningful work...connection to the curriculum... motivational...fun...purposeful."

Summary

Teachers in this study were motivated to initiate and sustain service-learning for both personal and professional reasons. Through implementing service-learning, they found unique connections with their students, with other teachers, with parents, administrators, the curriculum, and with the community.. In addition, they met a personal need to serve the community and to teach the value of service to their students, a need that resounded in their hearts. Finally, teachers found that service-learning fit their teaching philosophy and teaching style. The positive connections and personal feelings they experienced when implementing service-learning led these teachers to motivate others to participate. Service-learning was a valuable pedagogy for these teachers. It also met an important personal need to make the world a better place.

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APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Establish contact with participant.

Contact Information:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ (H)

_____ (O)

_____ (C)

_____ (F)

2. Set up meeting date, time, and place.

Location of Interview _____

Time of Interview _____ to _____

3. Scripted interview permission form reviewed and signed.

4. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Background Information

Where do you teach?

How long have you been teaching?

What grade and subject area do you teach?

Have you taught in other schools, in other grades, or other subject areas?

How would you describe your typical teaching style and philosophy?

Service-Learning: General Information

How would you define service-learning?

What would you say are the key components in implementing service-learning?

Did you personally participate in service or volunteerism as a student? Now?

Did you participate in service or volunteerism with your family?

What differences, if any, do you see between service-learning, community service, and volunteerism?

Personal Service-Learning Experiences as a Teacher:

Thinking back over the last 2 years, would you describe 1 or 2 of your most successful service-learning experiences students have participated in as members of your class?

Student Benefits:

Did or do you see any direct benefits to students who participated in service-learning? If so, what are they?

What, if any, academic student achievement did you observe?

What, if any content standards were you able to meet when implementing service-learning?

Can you recall any particular students in whom you saw changes? If so, what changes did you see?

Did you see any changes in yourself as a teacher when you implemented service-learning? If so, how so?

Support/Sustainability:

In thinking about past projects, what support did you have?

What support would you describe as being “critical?”

Was there any other kind of support you could have benefited from? If so, what?

Did you face funding issues? If so, how did you handle these issues? Were you a part of any grants?

What roadblocks did you face?

First Service-Learning Experience:

What do you remember about your first experience of incorporating service-learning in your class?

What motivated you to implement that first project--colleagues, community need, community partnership?

Did you have a mentor as you implemented service-learning? What was helpful about that situation?

Do you believe you have had an impact on any other teachers to motivate them to implement service-learning?

Overall Comments:

Have you shared your experiences with any other teachers?

Do you see service-learning as a part of overall school reform? How so?

Have you taken any classes or workshops that have taught you about service-learning? If so, what were they?

If so, did you receive course credit, a stipend, CEUs, or other incentives?

What advice would you give someone who was considering implementing a service-learning project in his or her classroom?

In looking back over your experience in implementing service-learning, what parts have been the most rewarding for you?

Would you change anything?

What 3-5 words would you use to describe service-learning?

Any final thoughts?

APPENDIX B. POST-INTERVIEW REFLECTION FORM

Contact Information:

Name : _____

Location of Interview: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Thank you again for your time in participating as a co-researcher in my doctoral dissertation research. As we discussed at the close of your interview, the following questions are for your reflective comments regarding the interview process. Would you please answer the following questions openly and honestly?

Upon completion, please return this form in the self-addressed stamped envelope enclosed. Feel free to answer on this page, on the back, or on a separate page.

1. What was your initial response to the interview process? Were you physically comfortable during the interview? Did you feel comfortable in answering the questions asked?
2. Is there any other information that you would like to share with me that you did not have an opportunity to share during the interview?
3. If you thought of other information to answer question 2, why do you think this information occurred to you after the interview? Did something occur to make you think of this information?
4. Do you have any other documentation or "artifacts" for me to use during my research?
5. Do you have any other comments or questions for me?

Thank you for your participation.

AUTHOR

Marjori Krebs, Ed.D., is a newly appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Teacher Education at the University of New Mexico, and formerly served as a Post-Doctoral Fellow and instructor at UNM during the 2006-2007 academic year. Previously, Marjori was a full-time instructor in the College of Education and Human Development at Bowling Green State University since 1999 where she taught both undergraduate and graduate courses. She received her doctorate in Educational Administration and Leadership Studies from BGSU in December of 2006.

From 1985-1999, Marjori taught high school Social Studies in the Worthington School District in Worthington, Ohio. Along with her teaching position she served as part-time teacher leader for Career and Vocational Education. During this time she earned her Master's Degree for Ohio State University in Teaching and Learning. She earned her B.A. from the University of Oklahoma in History with an emphasis in Education in 1985.