



Service-learning, inclusive learning

The challenge of combining learning and community service processes in the same project



by Rafael Mendia Gallardo

For some time now, a prominent social debate has been taking place. Is it possible for an inclusive school to exist in a non-inclusive community?

Building an inclusive community is a process that requires the intentional action of the living forces in a community to promote certain mediations of mutual support among the neighbourhood, the students of a class or a school, or an educational leisure time centre in any of its facets. An inclusive community refers to the inclusion of ALL people.

It is not only about welcoming or having everyone in the community or the school, but it is also about them feeling

part of a group and having meaningful friendships and social relationships.

The first step in building an inclusive community, whether it is a civic community, a school or an educational community, is to identify the multiple barriers that may limit all people's presence, learning, and participation in one way or another. The next step is to actively and decisively work to overcome these barriers in the different situations experienced by people of all ages in their life cycle.

BUILDING INCLUSIVE, RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP



Is an inclusive school possible in a non-inclusive community? The first step is to identify the barriers

Generating active citizenship is the primary social function of education. This active citizenship aims to transform reality by making it increasingly inclusive, more participatory, more supportive and compassionate, knowing that personal development and citizenship training are achieved by acting in specific situations to transform it.

Service-Learning is an educational proposal that combines learning and community service processes in the same project. Participants learn while working on real community needs to improve it.

It proposes that children, adolescents, young people and any other group become the protagonists of transformative experiences, favouring their personal development through the planning, developing, and evaluating activities to improve the community. In this transforming action, inclusive proposals must guide the option for an egalitarian society which everyone must be part of.

HOW IS AN INCLUSIVE SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT DEVELOPED?


Let us consider the proposals at different stages of constructing a Service-Learning project.

In the group Configuration: it is a group where there are no exclusions, but rather facilities for everyone to express themselves and contribute according to their possibilities, abilities, and initiative. It is a group in which everyone is assigned a task to develop a joint project for the community's transformation. It is also a group in which mutual help, complementarity, support, participation in its life and decision-making are put into action regardless of personal characteristics.

In the Analysis of reality, to improve it, everyone can contribute their point of view and identify situations that could be improved. This analysis must be carried out in a participatory way among all the members of the group, valuing their opinions and points of view. The different possibilities, capacities, cultures, languages, etc., must be considered in this analysis.

At the Beginning of the PSA project, the aim is to adjust the analysis of reality and actions that emerge from the group to the real possibilities of carrying them out. The groups are organised so that the participants empower each other and mutually support each other's needs for action to carry out the project as one.

In Planning the project: it is essential to know the strengths and limitations of each participant and the group as a whole to be able to materialise an affordable action for the group's possibilities, concrete and feasible, and that does not become a source of a reason for group and individual frustration, especially for the weaker people.



Crises can be opportunities to work on inclusive attitudes, assertiveness, management of emotions and problems

During the Implementation of the project: it is expected that discrepancies and different ways of interpreting the same fact arise. These moments of crisis can become real opportunities to work on inclusive or exclusive attitudes, assertiveness, the management of emotions and feelings and the solution of problems and conflicts.

Evaluation is not only about assessing the activity by the group, but also the feedback returned by the facilitator of the learnt skills, favouring the critical analysis of the objectives achieved and how the members of the group have been seen, their degree of involvement and their inclusive attitudes.

At the closing Celebration: The celebrations aim to fix the acquisitions, awaken the desire to continue, and manifest the joint and inclusive work of the group.

Service-Learning is an inclusive process of learning and participation, of citizenship involved in the transformation

of reality where ALL people fit in, and all of them have a role in the transformation of reality.

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- 1. Destination
- 2. Eager
- 3. Isolated
- 4. State
- 5. Ultimate
- 6. Balance
- 7. Magnificent
- 8. Prohibit
- 9. Rank
- 10. Spoil

- 1. Reliable
- 2. Perspective
- 3. Archangel
- 4. Eastern
- 5. Immense
- 6. Subsequent
- 7. Migrate
- 8. Genetic
- 9. Republic
- 10. Denial

- 1. Architectural
- 2. Award
- 3. Convert
- 4. Core
- 5. Migrate
- 6. Literally
- 7. Spectacular
- 8. Tension
- 9. Naturally
- 10. Monster