

## Learnings and Motivations Related to Social Service and Volunteer Work in a Community Attention Program of Technological Literacy

Armenta-Zazueta Lizeth\*

Education Department of Sonora Technological Institute, Mexico

Quiroz-Campas Celia Yaneth

Administration Department of Sonora Technological Institute, Mexico

### Abstract

This article aims to explore the learnings and motivations of university students who participated in the realization of their social service and voluntarily, as instructors of technological literacy with a community group. The study involved 55 students from various disciplines, and was done through qualitative and quantitative tools. Through frequency measurement and analysis of participants responses, it was found that the main motivation to participate in the technology literacy program is related to desire to help people, along with a sense of personal satisfaction, in addition to the opportunities for coexistence that the program provides. Among the learnings, they highlighted with greater indexes, awareness of the needs of other people, teamwork, the role of the instructor and the management of diverse groups. It is concluded that it is important to continue these types of programs that promote the relationship of students with the community, considering the type of motivation that leads to this type of work. In addition to standardizing the work methodology, to expand its coverage.

**Keywords:** Social service; Voluntary; Higher education; Learning; Motivation.



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### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this article is to review the learning of the students who participated as volunteers and social service as instructors of a community program of technological literacy. An analysis is also made of the motivational aspects that led them to remain in the program, to generate new strategies for participation and permanence of university students in community service activities, and to support the generation of new learning models.

According to the guidelines of the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) on the provision of social service for students enrolled in higher education institutions (IES), they must provide social service with a temporary and compulsory character such as as a prerequisite to obtain the corresponding academic degree or degree upon graduation (SEP, 1981). According to the ANUIES (1984), the university service has been held out in Mexico for a long time, where students from various disciplines carried out activities corresponding to their field of professional action, in order to be part of the work staff once you obtained your grade degree.

Social service, at present, is an academic activity, which is carried out in an institution or company, according to the area of interest of the student, in a temporary and specific way, oriented to generate a benefit to society, the state and the country (ITSON, 2018). The social service seeks to generate in the professionals in training an awareness of the economic and cultural reality of the society in which they seek to insert themselves, encouraging them to become an agent of change that participates by promoting community development and at the same time, contributing to the Training as a professional and human being. Yusri (2018), agrees on these premises, because, in his studies, he argues that young students, who range between 15 and 24, are perceived as an important source, and fundamental pieces as human capital that contributes to development and growth in potential of a country. With this, the scope of its objectives that support the transformation of its nation is supported.

The study was carried out in a University of Northern Mexico, and within its statutes and guidelines the social service is defined as a training and knowledge application activity. The fulfillment of the service is an indispensable requirement for obtaining the academic degree before graduating, being its duration of 500 hours for all the educational programs of degree and associated professional.

On the other hand, volunteering, as a human action, is an unrequired participation in a specific way (Yusri, 2018), unlike social service, where it is necessary to meet a certain number of hours. Volunteering appears as a specific type of aid, which requires considerably greater planning than spontaneous collaboration and involves the classification of priorities and the adequacy of personal capacities and interests with a particular.

Social service as a volunteer, involves the realization of social benefit actions, are good opportunities for university students to generate important learnings that contribute to vocational training (UNESCO, 2015). On the other hand, Martínez and Sánchez (2013) indicate that social service and volunteering, when it is part of the university, is an institutional responsibility for the society that supports them.

In recent years, talking about the concept of learning-service, Rodríguez (2014) refers to an educational approach where students manage to develop professionally through active participation in service experiences in an organized way for knowledge acquisition. These experiences, when integrated within the academic curriculum, are

also meeting social needs that exist in the environment. Learning-service is considered a form of education based on experiences, where students collaborate in community support activities while learning from their subjects, in turn, professional competencies.

Abul (2016), states that students, with their educational work add value in the learning process by creating and innovating resources to support the needs of their community. This added value ranges from the development of the planning, development and execution skills of academic content that they develop during their career in the university. Once this has been achieved, the main objectives of higher education institutions are being met: training productive professionals to meet the demand of the labor market, locally and globally.

Aramburuzabala (2013), states that the strength of the learning-service model, is based on education through experience and an interest in helping people as well as organizations with needs, is called the potential of social movement Transformer. It is conceived as an innovative educational practice where curriculum learning goals are combined with community service goals. The elements of the learning-service model promote the development of critical thinking and social awareness that turn service activities into transformative experiences, and students into agents of change with a vision of a more actively working to create it Syaiful *et al.* (2018).

Since 2009, at the university of study, there is a free program aimed at the community, which seeks to contribute to the reduction of the digital divide, focusing mainly on the out-of-school population. With this, courses are promoted where the participant receives support from the student who plays the role of instructor, as part of their social service or on a voluntary basis.

This program meets some of the characteristics mentioned by Rodríguez (2014) that describe the programs with the service learning approach, characterized by:

1. Generates opportunities for vocational training and citizen training.
2. Standards for service performance.
3. The realization is always with proper supervision of an expert adult.
4. A service accreditation certificate is granted.
5. It works with the pedagogical, solidary approach and establishes a teaching-learning methodology.
6. Service objectives and learning objectives are proposed.
7. The preparation, action and reflection phases are essential.

The technological literacy program offered at the University of Study meets the first four characteristics, opportunities for professional and citizen training are generated, social service and voluntary participation are regulated by the institution, there is a teacher who coordinates and advises the activities, in addition to granting a document validated by the institution. The community program of technological literacy has established a teaching-learning methodology, the preparation, action and reflection phases are not fully defined

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Instrument

To carry out this study, an instrument was applied to explore the experiences, perceptions and motivations of the instructors who participated in the technological literacy program, in relation to the contribution of their participation and their professional training (see Appendix A). The questionnaire consists of 15 questions, four questions are intended for the collection of demographic data, such as gender, career of the participant, duration of the provision of their social service and time in which they participated as volunteers. Six of the open-type questions are focus on collecting the different motivating factors of voluntary participation, the relationship that the activity carried out within the program as an instructor had with the career in which they study, the perceived abilities with greater development due to their Participation in the program, the contribution of your participation in your professional training, difficulties encountered, recommendations or suggested changes to the program and the collection of anecdotes that reflects your learning

Four questions are oriented to the self-evaluation and co-evaluation of the own participation and of the fellow instructors. For the values of the articles, one can be scaled one to five, where one was the lowest rating and five the highest awarded to the experience lived throughout their participation in the program.

### 2.2. Participants

The sample was made up of 55 students who provided social service or voluntarily participated as instructors in the technology literacy program, since 2016 to 2019. These students who participated, belonged to the bachelor's degree in Education Sciences, Industrial and Systems Engineering, Software Engineering, Bachelor of Education in Child Education and Bachelor of Psychology.

### 2.3. Procedures

It began by designing an instrument to collect two fundamental elements: the lessons learned by the instructors with their participation in the technology literacy program, and the other was to explore motivations for participation in this program, to the students who provided social service and to whom participated voluntarily. The instrument was validated through the participation of four professors in the area of educational research. The questionnaire was applied anonymously using the Google Drive platform. The answers to the open questions were analyzed by means of the Atlas.Ti software. In this way, 21 codes were generated and separated into 2 categories: learning and motivations. The learning category was subdivided into communication skills development, teaching skills

development, and professional development. The rest of the questions were analyzed using measures of central tendency.

### 3. Results

The instrument was applied to 55 instructors who have participated in the technology literacy program since August 2016 to May 2019. To collect the data, the online forms of the Google Drive platform were used. In this period, 43 female and 12 male students worked in total.

46 instructors were pursuing bachelor's degree in Education Sciences, the rest consists of students of Bachelor's Degree in Child Education, Bachelor of Arts in Administrative Information Sciences, Software Engineering, Industrial Engineering and Bachelor's degree in Psychology.

66% of the instructors surveyed completed their social service in the technological literacy program, this corresponds to two consecutive semesters. 18% provided social service for only one semester. 44% of the instructors continued to participate in the technology literacy program on a voluntary basis, for a semester or more; even after having formally finished his social service and having completed the statutory hours to graduate. Some began their voluntary participation even before meeting the requirements that the institution requests to perform the social service, having performed part of their service in some other program or institution.

98% of the instructors indicated finding an important relationship between the educational program they are taking and the activities and learning they achieved with the provision of social service and volunteering. 100% indicated that they feel at an advantage in terms of their professional training due to their participation as instructors in the technological literacy program.

Team work communication, preparing classes, assessing learning and group management, were the skills they felt they had developed with greater intensity. They performed a self-assessment of their own performance as instructors, they also evaluated their teammates. In this sense, 38 instructors considered their own performance as excellent, 15 as good and two appreciated their performance as sufficient (table 1).

Table-1. Performance self-assessment as an instructor

Individual performance	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	38	69.1
Good	15	27.3
Sufficient	2	3.6
Total	55	100

30 instructors rated the performance of the team of instructors with whom they collaborated as excellent, 17 indicate good performance and six indicate sufficient performance (table 2).

Table-2. Team performance evaluation

Team performance	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	32	58.2
Good	17	30.9
sufficient	6	10.9
Total	55	100

In relation to the lessons learned by the instructors who participated in this program, open responses were analyzed, and categorized into two levels.

The first level consists of learning, all those experiences in which the instructor acknowledges having had the opportunity to improve or practice a skill or acquire new knowledge (Hanin *et al.*, 2019). The second level is made up of the motivations, understood as reasons why you selected the program to fulfill your social service and reasons to remain in the program after the end of the regulatory social service period (Abdulrasheed *et al.*, 2016).

The analysis of the level of learning was divided into four categories, which grouped 14 different learnings that the instructors managed to develop during the provision of their social or volunteer service. These were the development of communication skills, such as public speaking and voice modulation. The development of teaching skills, those that fall within the scope of the teaching role such as teaching a class, attracting the attention of the participant, prepares classes and writing didactic plans, handling learning styles in the classroom, managing or conducting groups in In general, the management or conduction of diverse groups in terms of age and learning the role of the instructor. They also achieved learning related to the interpersonal field, such as self-confidence and awareness of the needs of others.

These categories coincide with Hago and Idris (2016), who consider that the activities acquired in practice play an important role, as they promote the development of the four basic skills to work in groups, such as speaking, listening, planning and writing. Another of the lessons learned are those related to professional development in general.

The instructors indicated having developed professional skills, learned about responsibility, teamwork and technology. The most significant indicator was sensitivity to the needs of course participants, followed by teamwork, learning the role of the instructor and working with diverse groups (table 3).

**Table-3.** Learnings of the instructions who doing social service or volunteering

Level	Components	Subcategories	frequency
Learnings	Communication skills development	Voice modulation	1
		control the fear of public speaking	3
	Teaching skills development	Impart a class	2
		Capture the attention of the participants	1
		Class preparation and didactic planning	5
		Learning styles	6
		Group management	12
		Work with diverse groups	15
		Learn the roll instructor	16
	Professional development	Practice professional skills	4
		Responsibility	5
		Teamwork	17
		Learn about Technology	1
	Intrapersonal Development	Gain self-confidence	3
		Sensitivity to the needs of other people	20

As for the motivation to start or continue their participation in the technological literacy program, the main reason was to want to help other people, followed by self-satisfaction, coexistence, and make a contribution to society (table 4).

**Table-4.** Motivations of instructors doing social service or volunteering

Level	Subcategories	frequency
Motivational	Meet new people	5
	Get recognition for support	5
	Make a contribution to society	10
	Coexistence	18
	Satisfaction	19
	Help people	31

## 4. Discussion

Participation in social service and volunteer programs allows students of higher education institutions to achieve significant learning for their professional development, this being a way of linking them with the society where they develop, and additionally, making them aware of the realities that they live in context.

It is an ideal opportunity for the development of skills related to the personal-professional field, the coexistence with various groups of people and the possibility of participating in the resolution of community problems. There is a coincidence with the studies of Aramburuzabala (2013), and Ortiz (2019).

When analyzing the motivations, an altruistic vocation is perceived by the students who sought to participate in the technological literacy program. Discovering what motivates the student to participate and stay is a tool that will support the dissemination of this program and similar ones in the institution.

## 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to review the learning of the students who participated as volunteers and social service as instructors of a community program of technological literacy, as well as an analysis of the motivational aspects that led them to remain in the program. Therefore, it is concluded that it is important to give continuity to programs of this type, where the student is linked to the community where it is developed, in addition to taking into consideration the analysis of the motivations and learning achieved in this community project, since with that A standard can be generated on what the student participating in this type of community programs is expected to achieve, and considering expanding the coverage of programs that minimize the digital divide in communities. This study can be the beginning of a structured evaluation that can be certified in the medium term.

## Recommendations

It is recommended to expand this study through the establishment of formal guidelines so that students participating in the technological literacy program adhere to a strategic methodology that can be applied to various groups. The evaluation should then be based on this methodology, as well as the establishment of learning objectives for instructors, such as goals to be achieved and documentation of technological literacy.

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## Appendix A

Questionnaire used in the investigation

### Social and voluntary service in the Technological Literacy Program

1. Gender:
2. Indicate your educational program / career:
3. ¿how many semesters you performed your social service in Technological Literacy?
4. ¿How long you were collaborating with technology literacy after you finished your social service?
5. If you continued to volunteer after you have officially terminated your social Service ¿ what were your reasons for volunteering in tech literacy?
6. ¿How related was the social service you provided in technological literacy to your career?
7. ¿How do you feel about doing social service in tech literacy? gave you some advantage in your vocational training.
8. ¿What skills do you feel you developed most during your service?
9. ¿ how was your experience as a technology literacy instructor was mostly positive or negative?
10. ¿ How you rate your own performance in the program?
11. ¿How you rate the performance of your fellow instructors?
12. ¿How you rate the impact your intervention had on the program?
13. ¿What were the main difficulties you had during your participation in this project?
14. ¿What you suggest or recommend to improve the technology literacy program?
15. Share anecdotes that reflect your learnings as an instructor of the Technology Literacy program