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Title
Nurturing responsible leaders through cross-border service learning programmes

Abstract

Academic institutions are the best breeding ground for nurturing responsible leaders. The campus experience enables students to acquire professional knowledge, and actively apply through experiential learning opportunities such as internship, study abroad, overseas placement and service learning. Operating in one single planet with finite resources, which are shared by generations in the past, present and future, leaders are facing tremendous pressure to identify a sustainable model that could balance operations’ impact on the society, economy and environment. For instance, the scarce freshwater supply does not only impact on the humankind’s basic survival, agriculture and business operations, it also had direct impact on the freshwater species sharing the same natural resources with human (Zoological Society of London & WWF, 2016). In 2017, the Earth Overshoot Day is on 2 August, which implied that human will have used more from what this planet can renew in this particular year from this day onwards, we are withdrawing future credits for nearly a quarter of the year (Earth Overshoot Day, 2018).

Merely disseminate information of these global issues in class may not create the sense of responsibility and encouragement of innovative and practical solutions. Thus, it is important to provide appropriate and relevant experiential learning context and intervention to nurture informed and responsible future leaders. In developed economies like Hong Kong, the pressing environmental and social issues externalized to less developed countries may not be visualized in our daily living, such as sweatshops in the developing countries which manufacture products to satisfied the needs of metropolitan cities, or climate refugees in the island states affected by increasing sea level.
With more than a decade of experience in organizing service learning programmes for the business students attending a university in Hong Kong, we will discuss in this paper the strategies and challenges of developing partnerships with international non-profit charities or academic institutions, in order to enable students to learn in the global village and could sustain the learning in their future career.

The paper will also cover the design, execution, and impacts of cross-border service learning scheme provided to the business students. The participants attended structured service learning programmes overseas, providing service to the communities in need in Asia Pacific and South Africa. The programmes designs include pre-departure intervention, reflection assignments were conducted during and after programme completion to foster sustainability-related concepts such as intercultural communications, corporate citizenship, social enterprise, diversity and social equity.

It is hope that by sharing the knowledge acquired through organizing the programmes, international educators and partner organizations can foster stronger collaboration to nurture responsible future global leaders.

**Keyword**

Cross-border collaboration, service learning, intercultural competence, voluntary work, experiential learning, sustainability