

From Serendipity to Resolve: Graduate Student Motivations to Teach Using Service-Learning

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With the expansion of service-learning has come a concomitant growth in research related to all the stakeholders involved with this pedagogy—students, faculty, community, and higher education institutions. However, no studies have examined the use of service-learning by a strong segment of college instructors—graduate students. To address the dearth of research on the topic, we draw on self-determination theory and organismic integration theory and use qualitative case study analysis to examine the experiences of graduate student instructors teaching with service-learning at a large Southeastern university. The findings indicate that although their introduction to service-learning was serendipitous and initial use was mostly unintentional and often for extrinsically-motivated reasons, graduate students planned to continue to use service-learning in their teaching for more self-determined reasons as a result of the positive effects they observed on their pedagogy, students, and themselves. Graduate student instructors appear to be an untapped teaching population that can further institutional and national efforts to grow service-learning.

In recent years, several scholars have suggested that higher education institutions often fail to engage with their communities (Butin, 2006; Driscoll, 2009; O'Meara, 2007; Ward, 2005). This lack of adequate engagement presents a problem for colleges and universities, as many include the idea of service or engagement in their respective missions. Service-learning is one strategy colleges and universities use to engage with communities and achieve their respective missions and goals (Driscoll & Sandmann, 2001; Kielsmeier, 2010; Zlotkowski, 1996). Most recently, the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement's report, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future*, identified service-learning as an effective, powerful pedagogy to promote civic learning and engagement. This U.S. Department of Education-commissioned report (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2012) has reignited a national dialogue about strengthening civic learning and democratic engagement in higher education. Its findings indicated that approximately 60% of graduating college seniors will experience service-learning before they graduate and that those who participate are more likely to persist in school, obtain skills desired by employers, and develop habits of social responsibility and civic participation.

Although the use of service-learning in higher education by tenure-track and full-time faculty members is well-documented (Clayton & Ash, 2005; Deely, 2010; Eyler & Giles, 1997), current higher education literature fails to address or examine the use of ser-

vice-learning by graduate student instructors (and other part-time faculty). Beckman, Brandenberger, and Shappell (2009) point out that although service-learning has traditionally developed within undergraduate education, many graduate students do, in fact, show interest in using service-learning in their classrooms. Carpio, Luk, and Bush (2013) examined such use of service-learning by graduate students in an American Studies course at the University of Southern California, but their study focused solely on the experience of the undergraduate students in the course and not that of the graduate students teaching the course. No other literature exists on graduate students teaching with service-learning.

This is unfortunate. Graduate students play an important role in teaching undergraduates at many institutions of higher education, particularly research universities. (While individual institutions can ascertain the percentage of courses taught by graduate students, no national dataset with this information is available.) Considering this, we need to better understand graduate students instructors' use of and motivation for teaching with service-learning. What we do know is that there are few professional development opportunities for graduate student instructors and even fewer opportunities specifically focused on service-learning (L. Parkins, personal communication, April 16, 2013). This missed opportunity for graduate students to gain experience with service-learning teaching has implications for those graduate students moving on to become the next generation of the professoriate as they may be less prepared to

engage meaningfully with the community (Austin, 2006; Beckman et al., 2009).

Although it is not typical, some graduate students at one institution are teaching with this pedagogy because service-learning resources have become available. This study, then, sought to explore the motivations and experiences of those graduate students engaged in teaching with service-learning, and it focuses not only on graduate student motivations to begin using service-learning in the classroom but also on their plans to continue using this pedagogy. The results have the potential to aid colleges and universities in further expanding their service-learning efforts, increasing the mission-driven engagement with local communities, providing valuable teaching opportunities to graduate students, and contributing to preparing the next generation of service-learning educators and community-engaged scholars.

Conceptual Framework

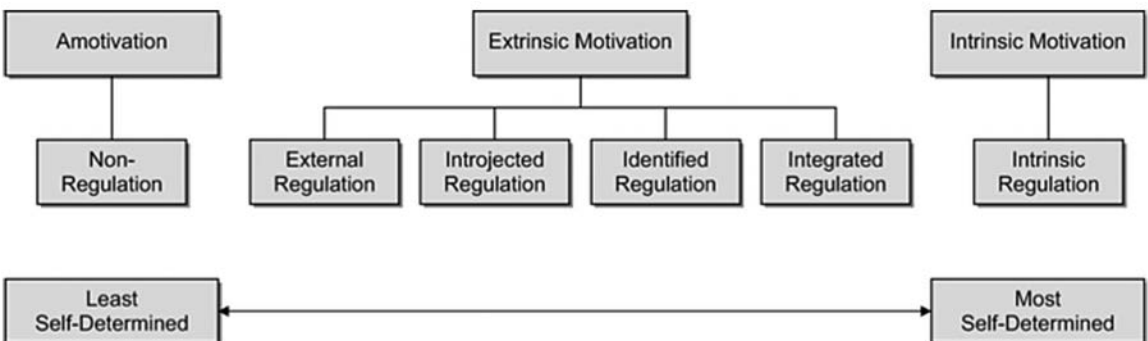
This study utilized self-determination theory and its sub-theory, organismic integration theory (OIT), which examines how extrinsically-motivated behaviors are regulated, to understand graduate student instructors' motivation to use service-learning as well as their plans to continue to use it in the future. Deci and Ryan (1985) define self-determination as “the capacity to choose and to have those choices, rather than reinforcement contingencies, drives, or any other forces or pressures, be the determinants of one’s actions” (p. 38). Thus, where an individual falls on the self-determination continuum is determined by the factors controlling his or her motivation to participate in a desired activity. Self-determination theory also posits that three basic needs contribute to more internalized and self-determined motivations and help determine where individuals will fall on the self-determination continuum: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan).

Autonomy means to “act volitionally with a sense of choice” (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 15). Competence, on the other hand, is one’s sense of self-efficacy, which is the idea that people are more likely to intrinsically desire completing a task over which they feel they have control and with which they can do well. Relatedness is the need to feel connected with others, or to feel a sense of belonging; according to self-determination theory, this need to feel connected to those around us helps drive our intentional choices to participate in certain activities (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When these three needs are met, individuals are more likely to experience greater intrinsic and self-determined motivations, and thus are more likely to make intentional choices to engage in an activity.

Organismic integration theory enriches self-determination theory by expanding the understanding of how extrinsic motivation is regulated and how it relates to both intrinsic motivation and amotivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The three types of motivations—amotivation, extrinsic, and intrinsic—lie on a continuum of self-determination, are governed through various kinds of influences (regulation), and lead to various qualities of behavior ranging from controlled (or non-self-determined) to self-determined (Standage, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2005). As one moves from left to right on the continuum portrayed in figure 1, behaviors become increasingly more self-determined, with a concomitant increase in autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Amotivation represents a complete absence of motivation and often occurs when individuals are strongly controlled by others. Individuals who fall in the amotivation category often feel they either cannot achieve the desired outcome or they feel they are not in control of the outcome. Extrinsic motivation occurs when an individual is motivated to participate in an activity because it leads to a desired outcome (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Lastly, intrinsic motivation is shown in individuals who participate in an activity solely for

Figure 1
OIT Self-Determination Continuum (Deci & Ryan, 2008)



their own pleasure, interest, and satisfaction. Such behavior is rare, but the interaction between innate abilities and environment can lead to purely intrinsically-motivated behavior (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Extrinsic motivation makes up the majority of the self-determination spectrum. Not all externally motivated or extrinsically-controlled decisions are devoid of self-determined behavior. Deci and Ryan (2008) distinguish four types of extrinsic motivation regulation with increasing amounts of self-determined behavior: external, introjected, identified, and integrated regulation. As each type of regulation increases, an individual's self-determined behavior, autonomy, competence, and relatedness also increase.

External regulation is the least self-determined type of external motivator and exists when an individual undertakes an activity to meet an external demand. It is often associated with external contingences such as the benefits of rewards or threat of punishment, such as a graduate student who chooses to teach a particular course because refusing to do so might result in the loss of his funding/assistantship (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Introjected regulation occurs when an individual meets external demands to avoid fear and shame from others, yet the person also begins to internalize the behavior because he or she understands the potential value of the activity (Deci & Ryan). A graduate student who teaches a course because she feels it is her duty as a graduate student to do so would be experiencing introjected regulation.

Identified regulation represents moderately-high self-determined behavior and occurs when an individual's undertaking of an activity is still due to external motivational factors but the person also sees its value in helping to achieve their own goals. An example of identified regulation would be a graduate student who chooses to teach using service-learning because she sees it is important to her graduate school experience. Finally, the last externally-motivated regulator—integrated regulation—resembles intrinsically-motivated behavior. In integrated regulation, an individual participates in an activity because of a desired outcome, but he or she also experiences many of the positive emotions and feelings associated with intrinsic motivation (Standage et al., 2005). A graduate student choosing to actively teach courses and publish during her schooling because she feels it will help her secure a tenure-track position upon graduation would be experiencing identified regulation.

Several studies have applied self-determination theory to higher education settings (Ballman & Mueller, 2008; Beachboard et al., 2011; Neighbors & Larimer, 2004). These studies and others have shown how relatedness, competence, and autonomy motivate college students both inside and outside the classroom to adopt certain behaviors and achieve cer-

tain outcomes. While these studies have shown self-determination theory and OIT to be valuable in understanding student behavior, current literature does not apply self-determination theory to instructors. This study will contribute to the literature through its focus on graduate student instructors' use of the service-learning pedagogy.

Method

Service University's Service-Learning Program

This case study examined a service-learning program at a large, public, southern university. To maintain confidentiality, the university will be referred to as Service University and its student-run service-learning program will be referred to as Students Using Service Initiatives for Engagement (SUSIE). As the primary researchers, we chose to use Service University as the sole institution in this case study because of its long-standing commitment to service and unique program offerings. As of the fall 2012 semester, Service University had an approximate student population of more than 29,000 students, of which 62% are undergraduates, 29% are graduate students, and 9% are professional students. The SUSIE program's twenty-year history connecting campus and community members to address important local and societal issues has earned it respect and a positive reputation. Because of SUSIE's heavy involvement of graduate students in teaching service-learning courses along with its well-regarded reputation, it was ideal for examining graduate students' use of service-learning in their classrooms.

The uniqueness of Service University also helped bound the case study analysis. Service University's faculty, staff, and students have provided public service to the community for over a century and prioritize using resources to improve the quality of life for all people in their state. Service University also has received recognition for its service efforts—the Carnegie Foundation's Community-Engaged Institution designation and the Corporation for National and Community Service's President's Honor Roll for Community Service. Service University also requires all undergraduate students to complete an experiential education experience such as service-learning before graduation; each year, approximately 2,400 undergraduate students complete a service-learning course at Service University.

The SUSIE program, funded primarily through students fees and receiving some state and private funding, is unique in that it is student-led and staff-supported. Service University faculty and graduate students receive SUSIE staff support for developing service-learning courses, obtaining course development grants, attending professional development institutes,

receiving pedagogical guidance, providing networking opportunities, and assisting with the navigation of Service University's administrative systems. During the 2012-2013 academic year, 88 service-learning courses were taught at Service University by 60 different instructors. Of those 60 instructors, 14—nearly a quarter—were graduate students.

Participants

To gain insight into graduate students' use of service-learning in their classrooms, this study used purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is appropriate for case study research as it allows the researcher to select a sample from which the most appropriate information about the case can be obtained (Merriam, 1998). Morse and colleagues (2002) also point out that appropriate sample size in qualitative research consists of finding participants who best represent and have knowledge of the topic, which describes the respondents in this study. As some Service University's graduate school programs are more committed to and active in SUSIE, the vast majority of SUSIE graduate students come from the fields of Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, Social Work, English, and Communication. To be considered for the sample in this research study, participants must have taught as a graduate student within the last three years and served as the instructor of record.

The researchers obtained a list of the 20 graduate students meeting the two criteria. Ten students responded to an email invitation and agreed to participate in the study. All 10 were female: two in Social Work, two in Communication, four in English, and two in Psychology. Although no males agreed to participate in the study (there were only two in the sample of 20), this is consistent with other service-learning research in which female faculty are more likely than male faculty to use service-learning in their classrooms (O'Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh, & Giles, 2011). Because data saturation was the goal of the study, a total of 10 participants in the sample were deemed sufficient to answer the research questions and achieve saturation (Mason, 2010). In addition, a single institution case study was appropriate for several reasons: Service University offered unique characteristics; all ten participants were very involved in service-learning; and this was the first explorative study of its kind. IRB approval was received for this study.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data collection method (Merriam, 1998). Interviews were conducted at the time and place of each participant's choosing to help ensure comfort and increase the likelihood that participants would be more open and honest about their service-learning teaching

experiences. An interview protocol developed from the conceptual framework and other higher education service-learning literature guided the interviews. Follow-up interviews were conducted on an as-needed basis. Interviews were promptly transcribed to aid in quick reflection on and analysis of the data. Additionally, the researchers used a shared research journal to aid in the collection of data, which Yin (2003) points out is often helpful in case study research. The journal served as a place of reflection for each interview and for initial impressions about the data as well as an audit trail to ensure quality and trustworthiness for the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was guided by Baptiste's (2001) phases of data analysis, a strategy commonly used in case study research because it allows for thorough data analysis. The lead author conducted the initial analysis that then was reviewed by the second author to increase trustworthiness. During the first phase, decisions were made concerning what counted as appropriate data as well as how to record, interpret, and convey data. Data analysis began immediately following each interview by creating field notes and memos in the researcher journal. Accuracy of data was verified through member checking; a copy of each interview transcript was e-mailed to participants to verify accuracy.

The second phase of the data analysis process consisted of tagging and labeling all data followed by grouping similarly tagged and labeled data into categories (Baptiste, 2001). During this process, the researchers re-evaluated data and applied tags and labels to important phrases or passages. Next, similar tags and labels were placed into categories and potential codes. The third phase of data analysis consisted of relating concepts to each other and to existing service-learning literature and motivational theory (Baptiste).

Limitations

While valuable data emerged from the study, the lack of prolonged involvement with the participants served as a limitation of the study, as additional time may have offered more insight into both their use of service-learning beyond their graduate programs as well as any long-term benefits associated with their use of service-learning. While the use of ten participants and one site was appropriate for this study (Mason, 2010), the addition of more participants, including males, from multiple universities and disciplines may have offered additional and/or different insights.

Findings

Several findings emerged related to graduate student instructors' use of service-learning and their

plans to continue using it in their future teaching. The participants' introduction to service-learning can best be described as accidental or serendipitous. After this serendipitous introduction to service-learning, the graduate students made an intentional choice to use the pedagogy in their classroom because they anticipated its pedagogical benefits, professional benefits, or student impact benefits. After their initial use of service-learning, it was found that pedagogical and professional benefits as well as impact on students were driving their intentions to use service-learning in the future, along with a previously unidentified factor—institutional support.

Before delving into the findings, there are a couple of noteworthy participant characteristics that aid in the understanding of the participants' introduction to service-learning. While 9 of the 10 participants were involved in community service before their service-learning teaching experience, only two of the participants had previous experience with or knowledge about service-learning. For eight of the participants, their first introduction to service-learning occurred at Service University. Additionally, none of the participants enrolled at Service University with the intent to use service-learning in their classrooms. Because none of the participants were actively seeking service-learning, their introduction to service-learning at Service University is best described as serendipitous.

Introduction to Service-Learning

In talking about how they were introduced to or made aware of service-learning, the participants used terms such as “stumbled into” and “fell into.” For three of the participants, this introduction came in the form of being asked directly by a peer or professor to teach a service-learning class that needed an instructor. Two of the participants were introduced to service-learning when they served as teaching assistants for a professor who utilized service-learning. Four participants were made aware of service-learning by peers through both conversations about related topics or by being invited to attend development workshops in which service-learning was discussed. Finally, one participant came to learn about service-learning through conversations with her advisor about her pedagogical ideas for the upcoming semester.

Initial Use of Service Learning

Although the participants' introduction to service-learning at Service University was serendipitous, their decision to use service-learning in their classroom for the first time was very intentional. All the participants could have declined requests to teach a service-learning class or not taken action to incorporate it into their own classrooms after being made aware of the pedagogy. Three main motivations

emerged for why these graduate students chose to intentionally use service-learning in their classrooms for the first time: pedagogical, professional, and impact on students.

Pedagogical motivations. Four graduate students indicated pedagogical reasons for adopting service-learning in their classrooms. Tina¹ (English) commented:

I was planning my first semester courses thinking about, you know, students pretending—pretend you're writing a letter to the editor, pretend you're assigned to do this. Seemed like BS to me, so I wanted to be doing some actual stuff. And I designed this unit and when I showed it to the director he said, this sounds like a service-learning thing. You should partner up with someone to actually do this.

Tina identified a way she wanted to improve her teaching, but at the time was unaware that her proposed change fit with the service-learning pedagogy. She identified the need for relevant activities in her course, discussed this with her program director, and his suggestion led her to try teaching with service-learning. This intentional decision to use service-learning was also true for another English graduate student, Lucy, who stated, “I taught English 101 and 102 several times, and I was looking for more creative ways to do that.”

Both Psychology graduate students had served as teaching assistants for professors using service-learning in their classrooms. Thus, their positive, firsthand experience with service-learning led them to intentionally adopt it in their own classrooms. Meeting pedagogical needs played a crucial role in these four graduate students' decisions to use service-learning in their classroom. Other graduate students, however, were motivated to use service-learning in their classrooms to meet their own professional needs or because service-learning aligned with their social justice values.

Professional motivations. Six graduate students decided to incorporate service-learning into their classrooms after an initial exposure to service-learning to meet their own professional aspirations. Although three graduate students were asked by peers to teach a service-learning class, they ultimately agreed because they saw its potential benefits for themselves. They agreed to teach using service-learning because it could not only give them a different kind of teaching experience but also potentially help them to “grow professionally.” Rachel (Social Work) stated: “I just felt like in terms of my professional development, my capacity to really integrate my learning and kind of my professional goals into my life and into the classroom, that was the best place

to do it.” Rachel not only satisfied a need of her department to teach the course but also met some of her professional development goals.

Student impact motivations. The other three graduate students who decided to use service-learning for professional reasons did so because they anticipated a particular student impact that aligned with their social justice values. Both Audra and Holli (Communication) decided to co-create and co-teach a service-learning class because they felt it enabled them to show students that activism is a form of service and a means to communicate ideas that can push conversations and ultimately affect change. For these two instructors, service-learning offered the opportunity for their students to advocate for causes that were important to their students and improve the lives of the individuals for whom they were advocating. This allowed Audra and Holli to indirectly advance their own social justice values. Similarly, Denise (English) decided to use service-learning because she was looking to get involved with something that matched her “value system” and she thought that teaching with service-learning would do that.

Future Intention to Use Service-Learning

All 10 participants in the study indicated intention to use service-learning in their future classrooms as a direct result of their positive experience with it. Their motivations to do so overlapped with all three areas of motivation identified in discussing their motivations to give service-learning a try—pedagogical, professional, and student impact—and identified a new area of motivation: institutional support.

Pedagogical motivations. Five graduate students identified pedagogical reasons for planning to continue to use service-learning. Catherine (Psychology) believed it would be important to continue using service-learning because it enhanced students’ motivation to learn by “bringing the material to life” and improved the overall classroom experience by increasing the ease with which students learned the material. Rachel (Social Work) expressed similar sentiments about the type of classroom she was able to create through service-learning, stating:

It makes the classroom more permeable, right? It’s “the world becomes our classroom,” and I also think the students are encouraged to be more self-reflective. I think more increasingly students want things quickly—change, you know, good grades, they want it now. And in particular for the class that had the long-term-based project components, they learn that in the real world things don’t quite happen at that speed.

Rachel was able to create practical “real world” situations in her class that benefited her students. For

these graduate student instructors, the teaching-learning benefits were factors in their decision to continue using service-learning.

Professional motivations. Nine graduate students indicated their intention to continue to use service-learning in their teaching because it contributed to their professional goals and aspirations. Tina (English) believed that her experiences with service-learning gave her marketable skills. She indicated “I mean, yeah, that would be important to keep doing it [service-learning] if possible. I think it’s one thing that makes me stand out, so I think any place that would hire me would be into that.” The other eight graduate students also discussed how their decision to continue using service-learning benefited them professionally by allowing them to see how it could fit with a future teaching career in the professoriate. In fact, four of the participants either had secured or planned to seek a tenure-track faculty position. Additionally, five of the participants planned to seek non-tenure track teaching jobs at either liberal arts teaching colleges and/or a community college. While only one graduate student, Catherine (Psychology), did not plan to immediately teach, she hoped to do so in the future. In fact, in speaking about teaching in the future, she indicated, “I can’t imagine teaching a course without incorporating service-learning into it.” The graduate students in this study also indicated that finding a pedagogy they enjoyed would lead them to use it in their future teaching career. Amy, another English graduate student, indicated it would be hard for her to “envision a future teaching career in which she doesn’t at least occasionally return to service-learning.” The participants were clear about their resolve to use service-learning in their future roles as educators.

Student impact motivations. Impact on students in the participants’ classrooms also led the graduate students to plan to continue using service-learning in their classrooms. Two of the graduate students spoke directly about how their use of service-learning helped their students consider more justice-oriented career choices. Helen (Social Work) had this to say: “I’ve had students come up to me at the end of the semester saying they want to go into social work because of their experience.” Audra (Communication) also spoke about the life-changing nature of service-learning for students, as she believed they left her class feeling like they had a “set of tools” to make a difference in the world and expand the possibilities of their future career. She shared:

I think many students at least in communications studies really see their [career] options as graduate school, law school, or who knows, right...and a course like the one Holli and I taught allowed them to see themselves as con-

sultants, as nonprofit managers, or as community-based advocates in paid positions.

Thus for students taking service-learning courses with these graduate students, service-learning helped them to make career decisions, understand additional career opportunities they may not have realized existed, and feel empowered about other career-related decisions in their lives.

Besides career decisions, four graduate students saw service-learning impacting their students by opening their eyes to the “real world.” Holli (Communication) shared that she believed her courses allowed her students to “develop an awareness of the real world.” For Lucy (English) service-learning gave them an awareness that they have a set of real-world tools to “achieve their goals they may have of helping others build a better community.” The impact it has on their students—regarding career and life decisions as well as a heightened awareness of the real world—is thus important to graduate students and helps them make the decisions to continue using service-learning in their classrooms. Even in thinking about their future careers as faculty members, the graduate students in this study indicated that the benefits to their undergraduate students were so significant that it was hard for them to envision a classroom without service-learning. Thus, although their responsibilities and challenges are sure to be different once they transition to full-time faculty work, the graduate students in this study indicate they plan to continue to use service-learning.

Institutional support motivations. The final motivation category identified by nine of the graduate students as a reason to continue to use service-learning in the future was the institutional support offered by Service University’s SUSIE program. This support came in two critical forms: professional assistance and professional development workshops. Helen (Social Work) stated that “you could call on them for anything” and that if she were to go to another university she “hoped their service-learning program would be like SUSIE.” Audra (Communication) indicated that the support given to instructors by Service University also aided their growth and made it easier to continue using service-learning in their classrooms. She indicated that the SUSIE staff members were “so generous with their time and energy.” Examples of personal support given by SUSIE included answering questions, giving encouragement, and assisting with community partners. She and eight other graduate students indicated that the support and feelings of community given to them by SUSIE made it easier for them to continue their service-learning endeavors.

Four of the participants also discussed the impor-

tance of the professional development workshops offered by SUSIE to their plans to continue using service-learning. These workshops covered such topics as administrative tasks, challenges, classroom ideas, and idea sharing. Lucy, an English student, described her experience with these workshops as “fantastic.” Audra (Communication) believed they helped her to become properly oriented to service-learning and helped her to have a positive experience. Amy (English) indicated that her decision to continue using service-learning had “a lot to do with the development workshops that SUSIE held.” For her, hearing people be honest about their experiences and challenges but still being enthusiastic about using service-learning energized her to want to continue to use the pedagogy.

Discussion

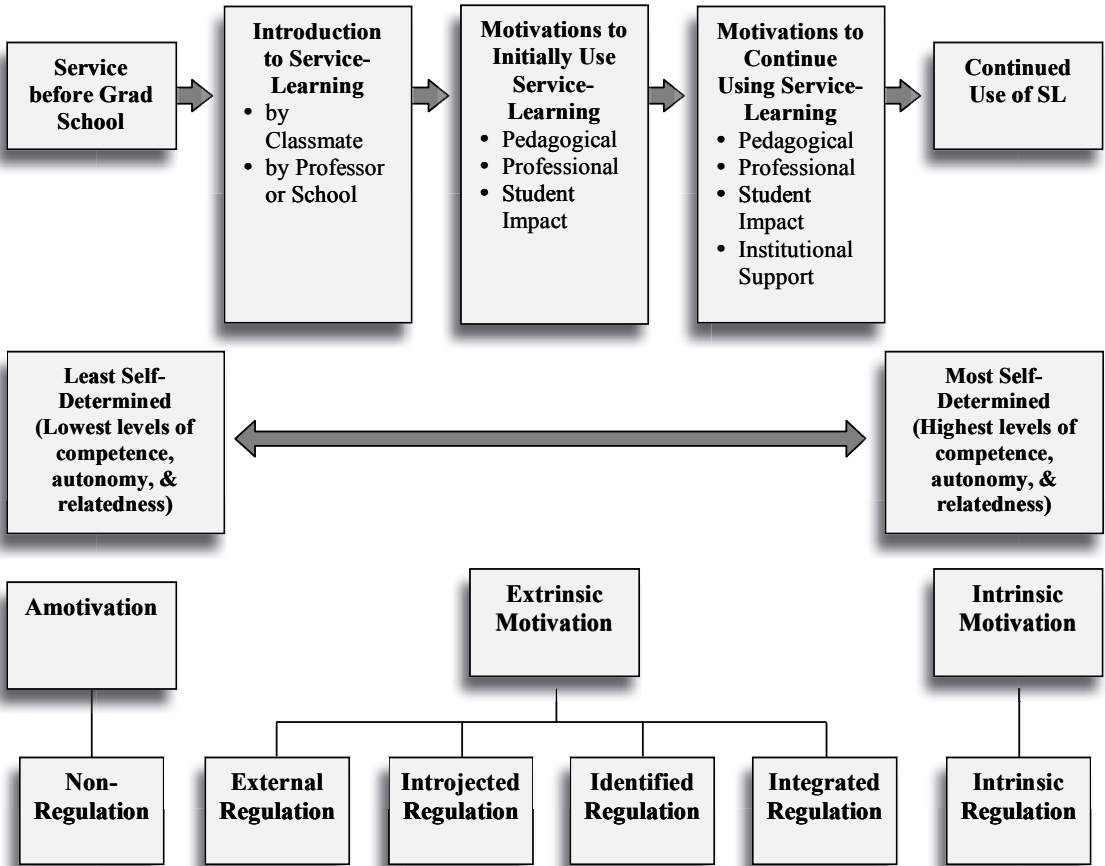
The findings from this research study align with OIT and self-determination theory, indicating that students moved from less self-determined reasons in their introduction to and initial use of service-learning to more self-determined reasons for continuing the use of service-learning. Self-determination theory posits that behavior is more self-determined and internalized when the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met (Beachboard et al., 2011; Deci & Ryan, 2008). Graduate students’ introduction to and decisions to initially use service-learning were less self-determined partly due to their needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness not being completely met. While some graduate students may have experienced autonomy in their initial decisions, thereby leaving them with a feeling that the choice to use service-learning was completely their own, this was not the norm; at the same time, competence and relatedness needs were not met. Only two of the graduate students had any experience (competence) with service-learning before using this pedagogy in their own classroom, thereby unlikely experiencing competence. Additionally, most also lacked relatedness, as many did not connect with other individuals using service-learning until after their decision to use it in their own classroom.

Figure 2 represents the model of graduate student motivations for using service-learning based upon this study’s findings.

As seen in the model, the main motivations for graduate students to initially use service-learning in their classrooms were to meet pedagogical, professional, and student impact needs. These initial decisions to use service-learning most align with introjected and identified regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2008), wherein individuals not only meet external demands to avoid possible fear or negative consequences from others, but they also begin to internal-

Figure 2

Model of Graduate Student Motivations for Initially Using and Planning to Continue Using Service-Learning



ize the behavior because they understand the potential value of the activity (Deci & Ryan, 1985). For graduate students, the fear may manifest itself when they anticipate that their advisors may be less willing to give them future advice if they turn down their requests, or that their advisors may be less willing to work with them if the advisor asks them not to use service-learning but do so anyway. Most graduate students in this study were first introduced to the idea of service-learning through friends or professors. Their acceptance of the task of using service-learning is best described by introjected and identified regulation because they sought to avoid any negative consequences of turning down the request of a friend or a professor, but they also saw the potential benefits for themselves. Thus, such motivations for their behavior are best characterized as non-self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

For example, Tina (English) initially chose to pursue service-learning because the professor in one of her teacher training courses suggested the idea. While ignoring a professor's request may have led to negative consequences, Tina and others also saw the

potential value to meet either their own pedagogical or professional needs. Because the graduate students had limited knowledge of and experience with service-learning before their initial use in the classroom, they lacked the opportunity to truly integrate it with their sense of self, making their behaviors align more closely with introjected regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Graduate students in this research experienced less self-determined behaviors in their initial decision to use service-learning.

Motivations for planning to continue using service-learning, however, are more self-determined in nature. Three reasons illustrate this point. First, the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are required to experience self-determined behavior, were all enhanced through their use of service-learning (Beachboard et al., 2011). All 10 graduate students indicated increased autonomy and competence through their ability to have control in selecting community partners and their students' service experiences as well as through an increased confidence and personal learning that occurred after having taught using service-learning. The institutional

support given to them by the SUSIE was a major contributor to this increase in autonomy and competence. Nine of the graduate students identified SUSIE's support as playing an important role in aiding their learning and helping to build their confidence in the classroom. This was achieved through SUSIE's efforts to both prepare the graduate students for their role as service-learning instructors and through being available to answer any questions. Additionally, while all graduate students indicated they made connections in some way, particularly at the university level, 8 of the 10 graduate students described these connections as meaningful and beneficial to their experiences, helping to meet the need of relatedness. Holli (Communication) shared, "So I definitely met a lot of people across the university. I think it lends itself to interdisciplinarity because it is a method of teaching that can be used across so many different types of majors and it doesn't have to just be very insular to your own field." For Holli, the connections she made with others at the university were meaningful and increased her relatedness by discovering that service-learning is a teaching method useful across disciplines. This opened up the opportunity for her to meet other people outside her department. Again, the institutional support offered by the SUSIE program greatly aided the graduate students' move to make more self-determined decisions by helping to increase their relatedness, as it was SUSIE's professional development workshops which helped connect Holli (Communication) and other graduate students to meet individuals from across the university who were also involved in service-learning.

Another reason for this increase in self-determined motivation is due to the graduate students' experiences in the service-learning classroom. These classroom experiences led graduate students to understand the benefits of service-learning for both their students and themselves. Thus, when graduate students describe the reasons to continue using service-learning, their experiences can best be understood through identified regulation, as they began to identify their plan to continue using service-learning with their sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Helen (Social Work), for example, talked about how serving others is part of the code of ethics for her field. Thus, she saw how service-learning related to her personal identity as a social worker seeking to serve others.

Some graduate students' decisions to plan to continue using service-learning, however, were also associated with integrated regulation, in which individuals motivated by an end result begin to experience many of the emotions and feelings associated with intrinsic motivation (Standage, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2005). Thus, while their use of service-learning led to pedagogical, professional, and student benefits, their use

of words such as "great," "amazing," "fantastic," "awesome," and "incredibly powerful" to describe their service-learning teaching experiences demonstrate some of the feelings associated with intrinsic motivation. One would expect to see an individual use such words when describing intrinsically motivated actions (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Therefore, many of the feelings and words used by the graduate students that are often associated with intrinsic motivation demonstrate more self-determined behavior and reasons for planning to continue to use service-learning after their initial use in the classrooms.

The findings of this study also help support current service-learning literature that speaks to the power of this pedagogy. One of the main reasons the participants in this study chose to initially use and then plan to continue using service-learning was because they expected and then experienced service-learning enhancing the classroom experience and improving student learning. Lucy (English) stated, "I thought it was an incredibly powerful teaching tool...I saw more improvement in their writing as well as just more personal investment in what they were doing." This idea of an enhanced classroom shared by six of the participants is also discussed in the literature, as research suggests that service-learning improves critical thinking skills, writing, test scores, and the GPAs of students who take service-learning courses (Kendrick, 1996; Mettetal & Bryant, 1996; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000).

The participants in this study also spoke about how using service-learning helped to enhance the productivity and learning in the classroom for their students and themselves by creating a richer classroom discussion environment in addition to helping them become more involved in the learning process with their students. This finding is consistent with the literature on faculty perceived benefits of service-learning (McKay & Rozee, 2004), and speaks to graduate students perceiving and experiencing the same benefits as faculty. Finally, scholars have also shown that when done well, the emphasis on reflection in the service-learning pedagogy promotes a deeper understanding of course material and increases classroom discussion (Clayton & Ash, 2005; Deely, 2010).

The results of this study also affirm other research suggesting that students who experience service-learning are more likely to choose and value service-related careers (Eyler & Giles, 1997; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000). Two participants indicated they plan to continue their use of service-learning because they saw how it helped students make career choices. Additionally, the graduate students in this study indicated that several of their undergraduate students who took their service-learning courses indicated a desire

to continue working with their community partners. This, too, is consistent with the literature (Gray, Ondaatje, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000), suggesting that service-learning courses are more likely to increase student involvement in community service.

Besides helping the students in their courses choose careers, the service-learning pedagogy also helped several of the graduate student instructors confirm their desire to continue teaching in the future. In fact, Catherine (Psychology) and others saw service-learning as a significant part of their future teaching career. This finding indicates that in addition to influencing the career choices of undergraduates who take service-learning courses, service-learning can also influence the career choices of graduate students who use the pedagogy in their teaching (Eyler & Giles, 1997; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000).

Implications

The results of this study have several practical implications. First and most importantly, graduate students may be an underutilized group willing to contribute to the engaged teaching efforts of colleges and universities. It is also clear, however, that graduate students do not seek out these opportunities on their own. Thus, it is important for colleges and universities to offer and publicize such opportunities for graduate students. Although offering such opportunities may recruit graduate students to service-learning through less self-determined motivations (external and introjected regulation), this study's findings indicate that when graduate students understand the pedagogical, professional, and student impact benefits of service-learning they most likely will experience more self-determined motivations (integrated and identified regulation) to use and plan to continue using service-learning.

Another practical implication of this study is that institutional support for graduate student use of service-learning encourages continued use. Colleges and universities can increase the use and quality of service-learning at their institutions by broadening institutional support for service-learning efforts through specific offices like SUSIE. Many of the graduate students in this study discussed how the pedagogical and administrative support from Service University's SUSIE Program was significant for them. Thus, even though this study demonstrates that graduate students tend to move toward more self-determined reasons for continuing their use of service-learning, external motivations and incentives are still important to graduate students. Campus offices responsible for growing campus-community engagement activities might consider not only offering service-learning professional development opportuni-

ties to graduate students but also course development grants. Grants are important to graduate students, as Holli (Communication) pointed out: "There was financial support for Audra and me to develop the course over the summer and have a means of support from SUSIE as far as financially supporting ourselves as we worked on this." As a side benefit, widening institutional support of service-learning to graduate students could pique interest in service-learning amongst part-time, contingent, and other faculty members.

Finally, by offering training opportunities and course grants to graduate students, colleges and universities would strengthen graduate students' teaching skills repertoire. This may likely contribute to the national growth in faculty use of service-learning. All the participants in this study indicated they planned to use service-learning in their future teaching careers as a result of having the opportunity to teach with service-learning. Because all participants planned to use service-learning in their future classrooms, the experience of teaching with service-learning as a graduate student appears to affect the future use of service-learning by these students in their future roles.

Future Research

This research opens new lines of inquiry around graduate student instructors' use of service-learning. Previous research (see Abes, Jackson, & Jones, 2002) has focused on faculty and did not consider the role graduate students play in teaching undergraduates, particularly at large research universities. Future research could identify the extent to which graduate students are involved in teaching with service-learning; knowing this could inform future resource allocation decisions.

In addition, future research could explore the level of support graduate students receive from their faculty advisors, departments, and institutions. The level of support, as seen in this research, can influence students' use of service-learning in the classroom. Given the important role a graduate student's major professor may assume in advising graduate students to use or avoid service-learning in their teaching, future research might explore the role of the advisor in facilitating graduate student teaching with service-learning.

This study looked at *intended* use of service-learning by graduate students in their future. We do not know if these graduate students will continue using service-learning. Following these students into the future or looking at another set of students over a longer period of time would offer critical information to the discussion of the value of service-learning to graduate students beyond their graduate

school experience. While all 10 participants in this study indicated a desire to continue using service-learning, longitudinal studies would determine if intentions were realized.

Given that this study focused on one university, future research could include multiple institutions and institutional types as well as a larger variety of disciplines than represented in the current study. Future studies exploring a wider range of institution types and academic disciplines would help give a broader understanding of the role these may play in graduate student use of service-learning. Given that only females were represented in this study, future research projects could look at male graduate students, too.

Conclusion

Graduate students, who teach a good number of university courses, especially at research universities (Austin, 2006), are often introduced to service-learning serendipitously. Yet their decision to continue using service-learning in their current and future classrooms, according to the current study, turns out to be quite intentional. Once graduate students experience the benefits of using the service-learning pedagogy—for themselves and their students—coupled with institutional support, they resolve to continue to use it. Thus, graduate students move from less self-determined behavior in deciding to use service-learning to more self-determined behavior. By introducing service-learning to graduate students through teaching orientations, workshops, and course development grants, colleges and universities may empower graduate students with a pedagogy that the graduate students in this study found to be invaluable in their teaching.

Note

¹ In order to maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were assigned to all participants in this study.

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