

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

LEARNING SERVICE S.O.S MARIOLA THE NATURAL PARK ASKS US FOR HELP!

Francisco Pascual Soler

Generalitat Valenciana-

Ministry of Education

Alicante-Spain

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-0774-6049>

Inmaculada Ródenas i Marco

Universidad de Valencia, Education Course

Alicante-Spain

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9692-6044>

Belén Catalán Gregori

Universidad Internacional de

Valencia, Education Course

Valencia-Spain

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4084-0680>

Lucía Granados Alós

Universidad Internacional de

Valencia, Education Course

Valencia- Spain

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8620-8333>

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



Abstract: SOS Mariola is a service-learning project that has been awarded two national awards: the National Service-Learning Award in the Environmental Education modality and the Eco-innovation Award from the Endesa Foundation and the European Society and Education Foundation. In it, fifth grade students (10 years old) and their Science teacher discovered four problems in the Sierra de Mariola Natural Park, the most important by extension in the province of Alicante (Spain). These made reference to nature, heritage, people and animals. To solve them, garbage was removed from 122 km of the green space, eroded paths were recovered and the natural park was reforested; a bell from a sanctuary that had been useless for years was replaced; collaborated in the non-extinction of two autochthonous domestic species (the hen from Alicante, the Valencian sheep, the gallipatos and the crancriform triops); and finally, families most in need were helped by donating 140 liters of olive oil. Services that were structured by the work of the poet Miguel Hernández, thus promoting reading, poetry and the life of the author in the students themselves. The students learned to value the Spanish mountains, discovered the world of manual ringing of bells, collected olives to obtain oil, and learned about the characteristics of endangered domestic and wild animals and what to do for their permanent loss. This way, it was possible to structure a project of empowerment and citizen commitment. The results showed that these educational experiences through service-learning are necessary to return to society in the form of a service all the knowledge acquired in the classroom.

Keywords: Service-learning. Teaching Methodology, Teaching Innovation, Educational Práxis. Emotional education.

INTRODUCTION

The present work shows an Intervention Project in Education towards service-learning (ApS). This proposed intervention, entitled “ApS S.O.S Mariola”, is designed to be applied in the classroom, and the actions would be carried out from the Science subject. Specifically, this project is aimed at 100 students who are in the 5th year of Primary Education at a Primary School in the province of Alicante.

The ApS is an innovative educational project with social utility that integrates service to the community with the learning of content, skills, abilities and values (PUIG et al., 2007; MARTIN et al., 2010).

In addition to different academic contents, social and civic competence, initiative and personal autonomy are developed. Responsibility, effort and commitment are also stimulated, and socio-emotional and proactive skills are strengthened (HERNÁNDEZ, 2019).

In the first place, after a process of reflection, the students identify several social or environmental problems with which they become sensitive. As a consequence, he undertakes and develops different solidarity projects throughout the course. This way, students feel protagonists, so it is an active and meaningful learning. Likewise, by helping others, a positive feeling towards oneself is developed, developing values, in addition, of solidarity and cooperation. The project proposes an applied learning, connected with reality, so it is a lived learning and, consequently, deeper (MENDÍA, 2012).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The ApS is an innovative didactic methodology that consists of students learning curricular knowledge of a specific subject (GARCÍA-PÉREZ, & MENDÍA, 2015). However, it also aims to learn other knowledge that students acquire during

their practice, such as the development of cooperative values while performing a service to society (BATLLE, 2010). In other words, the ApS aims to show help to a vulnerable group to improve the environment that surrounds them. Therefore, pedagogical and social intentionality is combined, demonstrating (by the numerous experiences carried out) that the ApS contributes to a better learning of the contents to be studied and to a better understanding of the world in which we live (DE HEVIA, 2016).

With the present work it is intended to implement the service to the community of an Alicante town, with diverse needs, as a relevant learning resource within the stage of Primary Education.

According to Romagnoli and Gallargo, (2018) the human being is a social being and learns by interrelating, which leads to an increase in emotions, however, how to ensure that this emotion in a child is motivated by their learning? With initiatives such as the ApS, the student body, in addition to working oriented, knows first-hand different realities of their environment, which otherwise would go unnoticed by them. The fact of helping others displays an increase in motivation and subjective well-being (GARCÍA, 2016). Among the positive effects of helping others are well-being (mental and physical), decreased stress and increased self-esteem. This perception that we have about ourselves affects our behavior with others, so it can be said that an adolescent used to being supportive is more decisive and a better conflict manager (LUY-MONTEJO, 2019). However, the final objective of the ApS is not only based on specific help to a vulnerable group and to the student's own motivation at a given moment, but to trigger in the students their own awareness that their own perceived well-being when they help people outside his closest circle, can be present throughout his

life (RABANAL, and DE LA CONCEPCIÓN, 2021).

Ethics must be present throughout the curriculum. Thus, students must develop their empathy and forge a critical judgment on human rights, asking questions about how to build a better society. This way, they will reflect before occupying positions that have a direct impact on society (SANMARTÍN, 2017).

In this sense, the relationship and collaboration between people is increasingly necessary due to the variety of resources, sources and communications. Therefore, the school must be redefined, open its doors to all of society and work towards the outside, since our current students are the future of our society (FURCO, 2011). The ApS offers that the opportunity to work in a network goes further; teachers, students and institutions are committed and collaborate to carry out the different proposals (PUIG et al., 2009).

According to Delors (1996), to guide the education of the 21st century, four basic pillars must be proposed; learning to think, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. Traditional education is only oriented towards learning to think, on the other hand, the other three pillars open the door to an education of the human being as a person and member of a society, that is, to an integral formation that serves for a lifetime. Exactly, the ApS intends with its learning to achieve these pillars in the putting into practice of knowledge, teamwork, initiative capacity, communication capacity to face and solve conflicts, understanding of the other and empathy, respect for diversity, tolerance, plurality, autonomous and critical thinking and personal responsibility (PASCUAL-SOLER et al. 2014).

As has been seen after reviewing the scientific literature, the ApS is an educational proposal that combines learning and being

processes. In summary, previous empirical studies such as the one prepared by Puig and Palos, (2006), show that ApS is a teaching and learning methodology, through which children develop their knowledge and skills through a practice of service to the community. In short, service-learning could be defined as a supportive educational project led by students, whose objective is not only to meet a need of the recipients of the activity, but also to improve the quality of school learning (TAPIA, 2001). In this sense, the ApS combines learning with the provision of a service, that is, “service, combined with learning, adds value and transforms both” (HONNET AND POULSEN, 1989, p.1).

Dewey (1926) is considered a pioneer of the ApS, being his fundamental contribution to the gestation of the ApS. His pedagogical thought was based on principles such as activity, interest, experience and “activity associated with social projection”. It is a necessity that education starts from the real experience of the students (who are the protagonists), carried out collaboratively with peers and adults, and that this redounds to the benefit of the community; that is, that it is done for the benefit of the environment.

According to BATLLE (2020), there are currently thousands of initiatives related to ApS around the world. The Ibero-American ApS Network, which was founded in 2005 and now has more than 70 members, is led by the Latin American Center for Solidarity Learning and Service (CLAYSS) in Argentina and the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) in the USA.

Argentina is the country that best develops ApS in the world. Already, since 2009, there is a regulation that prescribes a compulsory practice of ApS in Secondary Education, called “solidarity socio-community projects”. Likewise, in Mexico, since 1945 there has been the obligation of social service as a requirement

to obtain a degree or university degree. And Peru obliges universities to develop their “University Social Responsibility”, with learning based on social projects. Others such as Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Uruguay also include different networks of practices with ApS.

In Europe, however, the practice of ApS has awakened later, but little by little, new initiatives are becoming known. In this sense, there are experiences in Germany Lernen durch Engagement (learning through engagement) as the main organization promoting ApS. Likewise, in the Netherlands, the ApS is mandatory in Secondary Education since 2011, where students must carry out internships with social entities, and in the same way in Hungary the ApS is mandatory in their internships in order to graduate. Finally, in the USA, with the NYLC as a reference organization, a network of schools, teachers, students and entities has been created where information on the different initiatives can be exchanged. (GONZÁLEZ and DE FRUITS, 2021).

In Spain, the ApS is of recent creation, since it was not until the year 2000 when different initiatives related to this learning methodology began to be developed. Until then, there was only tradition in the solidarity movement, but the link with the curriculum, which is what characterizes the ApS, will not begin until 2003-2004. Today its practice is more than widespread, and it is very valuable, but not as it is not yet mandatory in our country, it is not known exactly how many ApS proposals are being carried out in our country Batllé (2017).

From the creation of the Spanish Service-Learning Network (RedApS), the exchange of experiences at the national level is encouraged, sharing resources, methods and knowledge between the different initiatives. Said RedApS is made up of the seventeen autonomous

communities that make up our national territory. Its members come from educational institutions at all levels from primary education to university and from other institutions of a social nature (REDONDO and FUENTES 2020).

The Organic Law of Education 8/2013, of December 9 (LOE), in force when the project was carried out, states in its preamble that the student body is the center and the *raison d'être* of education, without forgetting that the Education is the engine that promotes the well-being of a country.

Organic Law 3/2020, of December 29, which modifies Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education) is a legislative document that repeals the LOMCE, Education Law of 2013, and that, as its name indicates, updates, modifies and complements the LOE: Educational Law of 2006, also includes that the student body is the center and the *raison d'être* of education. Learning at school must be aimed at training autonomous, critical people, with their own thinking. All the students have a dream, all the young people have talent. Our people and their talents are the most valuable thing we have as a country.

OBJECTIVES

Based on previous empirical evidence, this study aims to apply curricular content, skills and values by doing a service to others. The specific objectives set are the following: promote values such as critical thinking, social responsibility, effort and commitment; promote initiative and personal autonomy; develop social skills such as empathy and assertiveness; work collaboratively; improve self-esteem, and motivate students towards learning.

PROPOSAL/PROJECT

As evidenced in the scientific literature, in order to carry out an ApS project, a problem and a need must arise. In this sense, it was discovered that the Sierra de Mariola natural park was full of garbage, with eroded paths and with endangered plant species, therefore, the first proposal of the Program would consist of walking and cleaning 122 km of natural park. In addition, in one of the outings, it was discovered that the bell of the sanctuary of a town in the area (Agres) was broken and the patron saint festivities could not be celebrated. On the other hand, it was learned that a Third Sector Association in the area had run out of oil supplies for the most vulnerable families and, finally, there was knowledge of a consanguinity problem in the last flock of Valencian sheep in the Sierra de Mariola (Valencian native breed) was in danger of extinction.

This way, the project is specified in the following service-learning proposals:

1. Go on foot and clean, that 122 km of the natural park, recover paths and reforest nature.
2. Replace the old bell of the Sanctuary of Agres
3. Supply olive oil to the most vulnerable families in the Cáritas de Bañeres de Mariola commissary.
4. Address the problem of consanguinity of the last flock of Valencian sheep in the Sierra de Mariola, an autochthonous Valencian breed that is in danger of extinction and the danger of the Alicante hen, the gallipatos and the *crancriform triops*.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology to carry out the ApS experience is characterized by being active and participatory, with the student being the protagonist of their own learning and the teacher acting solely as a guide. It is a methodology in which collaborative work is encouraged. In addition, the learning that is acquired is significant when experienced and connected with reality. Also, the coordination of the entire teaching team is required, in which reflection and continuous evaluation are essential.

Taking into consideration, the main philosophy of service-learning, in addition to giving back to society in the form of a service and solving the problems detected, what the education law establishes in its basic curricular design has been fulfilled. That is, the ApS was linked to the curricular contents of the course through field notebooks, exercises, activities, mental maps, murals, exhibitions, diagrams and videos. Finally, the Aronson Puzzle (formal cooperative) and the informal (Kagan Strategies) and Problem-Based Learning (ABP) were worked on.

TIMING

The project covered a complete school year divided into quarters. In each quarter, one or several social needs were worked on through activities specifically designed for that purpose.

ACTIVITIES/ACTIONS

In the first quarter, we worked through the formal and informal cooperative methodology to learn about the Spanish mountains and, solving a PBL job, the roadmap was designed to solve the problem that referred to nature: the cleaning of the Sierra de Mariola, the recovery of eroded paths and the reforestation of the natural park with endangered species. A 3D model of the mountainous system of

Spain was made and it was exposed to the families of the promotion. Awareness posters were made so that hikers do not stray from the official trails of the natural park. Also, in this first quarter, the service to the people was carried out, first going to the fields to make the olives and later acquiring oil for the most needy through the sale of recycled cardboard folders. The poetry *Andaluces de Jaén*, by Miguel Hernández, was recited.

In the second quarter, we worked through guided discovery to learn the manual ringing of bells, learn about art in the Middle Ages, take a tour of the city and manage to structure an economic campaign to replace the useless bell of the Sanctuary of Agres. Oral presentations, board games and many exercises and activities were also carried out, all of them aimed at achieving the final task of the project.

In the third term, through significant learning and completing the field notebook, the species that are in danger of disappearing in the park (Valencian sheep, Alicante chicken, gallipatos and crancriform triops) were studied. An incubator was installed for the chickens to hatch and the school's chicken coop was built to serve as a breeding center. As they have been born, the farmhouses of the natural park have been repopulated. Six fish tanks were also installed to care for the amphibians that the Department of the Environment brought to the school. The entire project was completed in a portfolio of evidence and reflections.

RESOURCES/INSTRUMENTS

For the elaboration of the activities in the classroom, the following resources were required: paper and pencil; iPad and field notebook; video camera; video editing program; projector and wifi; dilemmas; creative stuff; Recycled material; cardboard and markers; and computers and printers.

RESULTS AND SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

The results obtained after the implementation of the project evidenced the importance of the ApS.

Regarding the first problem, it was possible to clear 122 km of the Sierra de Mariola natural park, two eroded paths were recovered and areas in need were reforested. Regarding the second problem, it was possible to raise €5,900 to repair the Sanctuary Bell. Regarding the third problem, it was possible to donate the amount of 140 liters of oil to the needy families of Cáritas de Banyeres de Mariola.

And, finally, the consanguinity problem of Jesús's flock was solved, with the delivery of males from another shepherd in order to renew the genetics of his flock, in addition to

raising and taking care of the Alicante hens, gallipatos and triops in class for avoid the total disappearance of the park.

The project had a high social impact, as it was the winner of two Spanish national awards: the National Award, the National Service-Learning Award in the Environmental Education modality, and the Eco-innovation Award from the Endesa Foundation and the European Society and Education Foundation. For this reason, the national radio programs Historias de la gente, from RNE, directed and presented by Manolo HH, and Agropopular, from COPE, presented by Don César Lumbreras, echoed the work carried out at SOS Mariola. The project was also published in regional, provincial and local media, as well as in other Latin American media.

REFERENCES

- BATLLE, Roser. El ApS en el mundo. **Aula de Innovación Educativa**. Lugar de publicación, n. 102, pág. 66-69, 2017.
- BATLLE, R Roser. (2020). **Aprendizaje-servicio**. Compromiso social en acción. Edición 1. Madrid: Santillana, 2020.
- BATLLE, Roser. Aprendizaje-servicio y entidades sociales. **Aula de Innovación Educativa**, n.192, pág. 66-68, 2010.
- BISQUERRA, Rafael; ÁLVAREZ, Manuel. Modelos de intervención en orientación. **Manual de orientación y tutoría**, Barcelona: Praxis, pág. 331-351, 1996.
- BONA, César. **La Nueva Educación**. Barcelona: Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, 2015.
- DE HEVIA, Isabel Aval. Aprendizaje servicio solidario: una propuesta pedagógica innovadora. **RIDAS. Revista Iberoamericana de Aprendizaje-servicio**. n. 2, pág. 3-32, 2016.
- DELORS, Jacques. **La educación encierra un tesoro**. Informe a la UNESCO de la Comisión internacional sobre la educación para el siglo XXI. Madrid: Santillana/UNESCO,1996.
- FURCO, Andrew. El aprendizaje-servicio: un enfoque equilibrado de la educación experiencial. **Revista Educación Global**, pág. 64-70, 2011.
- LÓPEZ, M^a Lourdes García. **El desarrollo de la orientación educativa en el aprendizaje-servicio**. Un estudio de caso en un instituto de educación secundaria de la Comunidad de Madrid. 2016. Tesis (Doctorado en Educación) - Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Madrid, 2016.
- GARCÍA-PÉREZ, Ángela; MENDÍA, Rafael. Acompañamiento educativo: el rol del educador en aprendizaje y servicio solidario. **Profesorado. Revista de Currículum y Formación de profesorado**, v. 19, n. 1, pág. 42-58, 2015.
- GONZÁLEZ-BENÍTEZ, Natalia; DE FRUTOS, Sonia Valle. **Evaluación del aprendizaje creativo (APCR) y de servicios (APS) en el mundo de GLOCALPRESSURJC**. Jornadas de Innovación Docente. Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, pág. 156, 2021.
- HERNÁNDEZ, Daniel. (2019). La experiencia de aprendizaje-servicio virtual Español En Vivo y su contribución a la mejora del enfoque y la competencia interculturales. **RIDAS. Revista Iberoamericana de Aprendizaje-Servicio**, n. 8, pág. 139-149, 2019.

HONNETT, Ellen Porter; POULSEN, Susan J. **Principles of Good Practice in Combining Service and Learning**. Birkenhead: The Johnson Foundation, 1989.

LUY-MONTEJO, Carlos. El Aprendizaje Basado en Problemas (ABP) en el desarrollo de la inteligencia emocional de estudiantes universitarios. **Propósitos y representaciones**, v.7, n.2, pág. 353-383, 2019.

MARTÍN GARCIA, Xus, *et al.* **¿Qué es aprendizaje servicio? Prácticas de Ciudadanía**, pág.1000-1010, 2010.

MENDÍA GALLARDO, Rafael, *et al.* (2012). El Aprendizaje-Servicio como una estrategia inclusiva para superar las barreras al aprendizaje ya la participación. **Revista de Educación Inclusiva**, v.5, n.1, pág. 71-82, 2012.

PASCUAL-SOLER *et al.* Projecte "Història divertida. Una experiència contada al detall". **Recerques del Museu d'Alcoi**, n. 22, pág. 183-186, 2014.

Puig Rovira, J. M., Batlle Suñer, R., Bosch Vila, C., Cerda Toledo, M. D. L., Climent Castelló, T., Gijón Casares, M.,... y Trilla Bernet, J. (2009). **Aprendizaje servicio (APS): educación y compromiso cívico**. Barcelona: Graó, de IRIF, 2009.

PUIG, Josep María y PALOS, Josep. (2006) Rasgos pedagógicos del aprendizaje-servicio. **Cuadernos de pedagogía**, n.357, pág. 60-63, 2006.

PUIG, Josep María., *et al.* **Aprendizaje Servicio**. Educar para la ciudadanía. Edición 1. Barcelona, Octaedro, 2007.

RABANAL, González; DE LA CONCEPCIÓN, Miryam. El futuro del aprendizaje-servicio: una aproximación desde la experiencia en el ámbito del bienestar. **El futuro del aprendizaje-servicio**, pág. 1-190, 2021.

REDONDO CORCOBADO, Paloma, *et al.* La investigación sobre el Aprendizaje-Servicio en la producción científica española: una revisión sistemática. **Revista complutense de educación**, n. 31, v.1, pág. 69-83, 2020.

ROMAGNOLI, Claudia; GALLARGO, Gonzalo. Alianza Efectiva Familia Escuela: Para promover el desarrollo intelectual, emocional, social y ético de los estudiantes. **Valores UC**, 2018.

RUBIO I SERRANO, Laura; PRATS GIL, Enric; GÓMEZ, Laia. (coord.) **Universidad y sociedad**. Experiencias de aprendizaje servicio en la universidad. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2013..

TAPIA, María Nieves. El valor pedagógico de las experiencias solidarias. **Actas del 3er. y 4to. Seminario Internacional Escuela y comunidad**, pág.10-34, 2001.