

International Conference on “Service Leadership Education in Service Economies”

Abstract

Achiever - A Learning Journey to Service Leadership In Co-curricular Context

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The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED)’s “Achiever” Project (The Prospective Service Leaders Enhancement Project) has reached a successful ending after three years. From its very beginning, HKIED established “Achiever” in a co-curricular context based on three core beliefs: (1) Everyone is a leader; (2) Quality service leadership = Competency + Character + Care; and (3) The Server is the Service. During our first year, “Achiever” served as a pilot-run project to test out the training framework of service leadership among 20 selected students. Since then, over 1000 students contributed 73698 hours in 12 designated co-curricular projects.

Aside from the astonishing number of participants and level of expansion, it has a great impact on students with over 90% of participants having agreed that “Achiever” has enhanced their self-awareness, goal-setting skills, and their ability to appreciate others. It is evident that “Achiever” not only offered them a chance to serve, but also to be served. Through their service, students were reminded constantly of the need to improve one’s competencies, abilities, and willingness so as to satisfy others’ need. Moreover, over 70% of students believe that Caring and Compassion are the essential personal qualities to become a successful service leader. We are confident the acknowledgement of such qualities in our young generation will become a great asset to our society as more young compassionate talents are inspired to serve. Some of our participants even went on to share their inspiration in “Achiever” by writing to local newspapers.

We hope to apply “Achiever”’s training model into HKIED’s existing and upcoming projects. It will be served as the foundation and framework in students’ service leadership-relating events and activities. We will also explore the possibilities of applying “Achiever”’s core elements to credit-bearing service learning courses in 2015/16 to ensure the positive effects of “Achiever” will be carried on. During our three-year implementation period of “Achiever”, frequent assessment is the key to improving our program to meet students’ need. We will attempt to use the Service Leadership Knowledge Scale developed by the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to assess students’ learning on service leadership in future projects.

With the valuable experiences of “Achiever”, Student Affairs Office has continued to emphasize nurturing a learning environment, enhancing professional development, and empowering collaboration among persons in charge of various projects. The organization of various co-curricular projects and poster conference allowed our students to learn, understand and reflect on the notion and practice of service leadership. We showed them the importance of self-leadership, and that everyone can be a leader. Our staff also had the opportunity to learn how they could better accommodate students’ need through the holding of study groups and sharing sessions. In

addition, we built up a road map for student development which can be used from now on. Alongside with the presentation platform during international conference, the “Achiever” project truly improved our development professionally, not to mention the strengthened collaboration between our staff during our search for the best practice to integrate service leadership in different projects and areas.

This paper shares our unique experiences of Service Leadership development at HKIED in a co-curricular context and discusses how this approach has been and will be developed for future implementation.

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