

The Effects of Service-Learning Courses on Students Participating in Service Projects

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## **Abstract**

Evidence documenting the efficacy of participating in service during the undergraduate years is abundant, however, little attention has been paid to how the effects of service-learning compare with the effects of volunteer service in general (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001). The purpose of this study was to assess and compare the personal, social and academic impact of college students who did and did not enroll in a service-learning course while participating in a community service project. The hypothesis was that there will be no difference in student personal outcomes, student social outcomes, and outcomes related to learning between the student participating in service-learning courses and group of volunteers for the same service project. A causal comparative study was conducted to compare the experience of community service work of college students that participated in service-learning courses and those who did not. In addition to basic participation in community service information, ratings from a survey were obtained to assess student personal outcomes, student social outcomes, and outcomes related to learning. The hypothesis was tested and no statistically significant differences were found for questions that both groups shared.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Overview**

Service-learning is an educational method that is expanding the involvement of colleges and universities in their neighboring communities. Bringle and Hatcher (1995) assert that “service-learning is an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility”( p.112). In this way, service learning represents a potentially powerful form of pedagogy by providing a means of linking the academic with the practical.

In a study of federally funded service-learning programs, it was noted that, “at the institutional level, the most serious obstacle [to expanding and sustaining service programs] is faculty resistance to service-learning. Faculty are reluctant to invest the extra time that teaching service-learning courses entails, and many are skeptical of the educational value of service-learning” (Gray, Heneghan, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000, p.32). In this way, faculty may be more likely to support service-learning if they see evidence documenting its educational value. Therefore, if the effectiveness of service learning can be proven, then greater administrative support and greater financial support might be forthcoming.

In this way, should faculty be expected to adopt service-learning pedagogy, they must not only subscribe to its efficacy, but must also see that the institution will support their efforts for implementing service learning into their curriculum. While the positive outcomes of service-learning can easily reinforce the mission statements of universities, valuing the service-learning will be better received if it is taken into consideration in the tenure or promotion process, or if it

has the financial support of the administration. This is because adopting a new practice can also present a challenging and demanding commitment for faculty.

Another assurance method to reduce faculty reluctance to integrating service-learning into their courses is the existence of staff support, such as a campus service-learning center. The researcher became interested in this issue due to her own participation as graduate assistant in Goucher's Department of Community-Based Learning. She observed the challenges faculty members go through when trying to develop curriculum that embeds service-learning after having taught without it for several years. In short, it is hoped that the results of this study will help to provide a base for both faculty and administrators at Goucher to formulate policy regarding the development of service-learning on campus.

### **Statement of Problem**

Although there is research in support for encouraging students' participation in service-learning, there has been some resistance amongst and within institutions to incorporate service into academic courses. The opposition's arguments are found in faculty that feel the place for service is outside the classroom and in addition to academic hours. This is supported by research that suggests participation in "generic" community service as part of an extracurricular organization or individually, has positive effects on student outcomes (Astin, & Sax, 1998).

Evidence documenting the efficacy of participating in service during the undergraduate years is abundant, however, little attention has been paid to how the effects of service-learning compare with the effects of volunteer service in general (Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001). This study aims to uncover whether engaging in service as part of an academic course has unique benefits over and above those of co-curricular community service.

## **Hypothesis**

There will be no difference in student personal outcomes, student social outcomes, and outcomes related to learning between the student participating in service-learning courses and group of volunteers for the same service project.

## **Operational Definitions**

**Service-Learning** can be defined as “an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility”(Bringle & Hatcher, 1995, p.112).

**Student personal outcomes** reflects the students’ self-reported contentment with their ability to develop personally during their experience.

**Student social outcomes** reflects the students’ self-reported ability to develop a sense of belonging to social groups and society during their experience.

**Student outcomes related to learning** is quantified in this study using the students’ self-reported contentment with their coursework.

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## **CHAPTER II**

### **A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Courses on service-learning at the college level focus on both the academic learning and service experiences. In this way, academic content that is covered in the classroom can be extended to real world application in the service experience, and may then be further analyzed and reflected upon back in the classroom. The intended outcomes of service-learning courses include personal competence, interpersonal relationship and social development, and academic achievement. Therefore, to facilitate a literature review on the topic of service-learning at the college level and its effects on students, an exploration of this topic is divided into three sections: student personal outcomes, student social outcomes, and student outcomes related to learning.

#### **Service- Learning Defined**

Service-learning is a unique form of experimental learning. In a frequently cited definition, Bringle and Hatcher (1995) assert that “service-learning is an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility”( p.112). In this way, the underlying difference between service-learning opportunities and other experiential approaches to learning is that service-learning opportunities benefit both the student and the recipient of the service while ensuring that the outcomes are equally shared by both parties involved; service is provided while at the same time learning is occurring (Furco, 1996). Most definitions of service-learning include references to carefully crafted course goals or learning objectives that integrate classroom learning and community service, collaboration between the campus and the community, and the opportunity for reflection. Therefore, service-learning programs, unlike volunteer programs, must have some type of academic context to be effective. Thus, members of both educational

institutions and community organizations work together toward outcomes that are mutually beneficial (CACSL, 2014).

### **Student Personal Outcomes**

There is extensive evidence in the literature that illustrates the positive effect of service-learning on student personal gains. For example, Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray (2001) cite 33 articles and dissertations that have connected service-learning with increasing “student personal development such as a sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual growth and moral development” (p.1). Furthermore, it is illustrated in numerous studies that students benefit personally with regards to increased sense of efficacy (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000; Conway, Amerl, & Gerwein, 2009; Eyler, Giles, & Schmeide, 1996). A meta-analysis of 58 service-learning studies found an average increase of 21 points between pre- and post-test evaluations in personal outcomes for students engaged in service-learning activities (Conway et al., 2009).

Although there are students who find these experiences to be frustrating and/or boring, the majority of the students feel that through these experiences, they achieve personal satisfaction for the tangible work they are doing and they feel a sense of accomplishment for what they have contributed (Astin et al., 2000). In this way, students are empowered when they realize how their knowledge in a subject area can benefit the community at large and that they themselves can benefit society—something that they often neglect to realize prior to their experiences within the community (O’Hara, 2001).

### **Student Social Outcomes**

Beyond personal gains, the literature suggests students’ participation in service-learning activities has a significant impact on their social awareness (Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, &

Burkhardt, 2001; Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Ilustre, 2002). A range of studies have found that service-learning has “a positive effect on interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others, leadership and communications skills” (Eyler et al., 2001, p.1). For example, 23 studies linked service-learning with an increase in students’ “sense of social responsibility and citizenship skills” and 26 studies suggesting service-learning positively impacts students’ “commitment to service”. This may be a result of service-learning’s ability to facilitate socially responsible thinking by placing teaching and learning in a social context (Conway et al., 2009, p. 233).

Kezar’s (2002) review of multiple studies found positive connections between service learning and outcomes associated with cultural awareness, tolerance for diversity, altruistic attitudes, moral development, and sensitivity and reasoning. In this way, students’ social awareness of their community and its needs, helps change stereotypical beliefs, reduces ethnocentrism, and increases understanding of social and cultural diversity (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Matthews & Zimmerman, 1999; Borden, 2007; Denby, 2008; Duffy, et al., 2008).

In an extensive study conducted by Astin et al., (2000), qualitative findings suggest that students develop an increased awareness of the world and of their personal values when engaged in service-learning opportunities that allow them to interact with and apply their knowledge to real world problems. Furthermore, Eyler et al., (1996) provide student testimonials clearly illustrating that service-learning helps students connect with each other, with faculty members, and with their communities as they take greater interest in social and community issues and develop commitment to active citizenship.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Many educators who have evaluated service-learning within post-secondary institutions have concluded from their research that service-learning helps students retain more information learned in class, achieve higher course grades, and have greater satisfaction with the course (Astin & Sax, 1998; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000; Gray, Heneghan, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Strage, 2001). Most notably, in Astin, et al., (2000) sub study of 433 students from 19 American post-secondary institutions, 82.8% reported that the service experience enhanced their understanding of the academic course material. Similarly, a meta-analysis of courses incorporating a service-learning component found that students in a course with service-learning had an average increase of 43 points between pre and posttest measures on academic outcomes (Conway et al., 2009). Additionally, a meta-analysis conducted by Novak, Markey, and Allen (2007) showed that across nine studies the addition of a service-learning component produced an overall increase of 53% on learning outcomes attainment for students in these courses compared to students not engaged in service-learning.

In a comprehensive review of service-learning literature conducted in 2001 by Eyler et al., (2001), 31 studies and dissertations were identified that connected service-learning with positive effects on student learning. However, evidence regarding the impact of service-learning on students' grades or GPA is mixed. It has been suggested that because service-learning involves higher-order thinking, grades or GPA are likely to be inappropriate outcomes for measuring the cognitive effects of service-learning experiences (Rama, Ravenscroft, Wolcroft, & Zlotkowski, 2000). Some studies report a positive effect of service learning on students' GPA (Astin & Sax, 1998; Gray, Heneghan, Fricker, & Geschwind, 2000; Markus et al., 1993; Strage, 2001; Tartter, 1996; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2005; Wisconsin Campus Compact, 2010), whereas

other research has found no difference in the effect on GPA between service-learning and non-service-learning students (Boss, 1994; Hudson, 1996; Kendrick, 1996; Miller, 1994; Parker-Gwin & Marby, 1998).

A number of studies look beyond GPA and grades to focus on the assessment of service-learning outcomes related to students' academic development of skills, and task, such as critical thinking, problem solving and citizenship skills. A handful of studies have connected service-learning with positive effects on learning outcomes associated with "complexity of understanding, problem analysis, critical thinking, and cognitive development" (Eyler et al., 2001, p. 4). The development of these skills is further believed to lead to career development, as students have a better understanding of the "real world" and they are better able to apply the knowledge and skills they have learning in their university courses to their future careers. More specifically, Eyler et al. identified evidence across 18 studies that service-learning "improves students; ability to apply what they have learned to the 'real world'" (p.3). It should also be noted however, that after a three year study that surveyed over 1300 students at 28 institutions, , Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray (2001) more cautiously concluded that student participation in service-learning courses had only modest effects on students' civic participation and life skills, but no effects on their academic and career development.

### **Summary**

The intended outcomes of service-learning have an intentional focus on both service experience and academic learning. Many different models for service-learning exist: curricular or extra-curricular, credit-bearing, integrated with course goals, an "add-on" course component, or a separate track within a course. Yet, academic content is covered in both the classroom and the service experience and the service experiences are reflected upon and processed in the

classroom. In this way, different service-learning programs, depending on intention and design, can have different emphases on the primary outcomes of the programs.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS**

#### **Design**

A causal comparative study was conducted to compare the experience of community service work of college students that participated in service-learning courses and those who did not. In addition to basic participation in community service information, ratings from a survey were obtained to assess student personal outcomes, student social outcomes, and outcomes related to learning.

#### **Participants**

The service-learning group included students residing in Baltimore, Maryland who were enrolled at Goucher College and registered for a service-learning course for a full semester. In the comparison group, participants in the same service project as volunteers and not enrolled in a service-learning course were invited to participate in completing the survey.

#### **Instrument**

In order to assess the effects of the service-learning course on students' personal outcome, student social outcome, and outcomes related to learning, a survey was developed (see Appendix A). The survey items asked students to provide some participation in community service information, and respond to items in three sections rating their personal outcomes, social outcomes, and outcomes related to learning. Each section contained 9-11 items and responses were ratings on a scale which ranged from one (not at all true) to five (very true). A few items asked for explanations of responses. For example, one item asked what the service-learning experience teaches specifically about the class discipline.

### **Procedure**

Goucher students who participated in a service learning course at Goucher College and students who volunteered at the Futuro Latino Learning Center were identified and approached in person with the researcher and provided with an overview of the study, along with a request that they complete the survey in person under conditions of voluntary participation and confidentiality. Volunteers perform service hours at the same project site as the service learning students, however, they are not required to volunteer for academic credit. Data was compiled from the survey responses for the two groups and are summarized and compared in Chapter Four.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

This study was designed to assess whether engaging in service as part of an academic course has unique benefits over and above those of co-curricular community service for students. This study was designed to compare a sample of students that are taking a service-learning course and a sample of students who volunteer for the same service project without being enrolled in the course. This was done by asking students in a course that has a service-learning component to complete a survey on their experience and by asking volunteers that participate in service but not in a service-learning course to complete a survey on their experience. In this way, no surveys were completed by students that did not participate in service.

Given the comparison group, the original null hypothesis that there will be no difference in student personal outcomes, student social outcomes, and outcomes related to learning between the student participating in service-learning courses and group of volunteers for the same service project was retained. Descriptive statistics were calculated and comparisons were made regarding the responses of those who answered the survey by use of crosstabs analyses provided in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). In the case of each question in the survey to which both groups responded there was no statistically significant difference.

#### **Sample Characteristics**

Before completing the survey, participants provided basic demographic information and data about their standing in college, such as their class year. Twenty college students (fourteen first-year, five sophomore, and one junior) who participate in service and completed the survey. Of these participants, ten were also enrolled in a service-learning course. The students reported that they performed service for less than five hours a week during the current semester.

## **Survey Responses**

### **Student Personal, Social and Related to Learning Outcomes**

Responses to the survey assessing student personal, social and related to learning outcomes were collected through a survey distributed by the researcher. The survey used a scale with ratings ranging from 1 = not at all true to 5= very true. Items all were worded positively and students were instructed to select rating reflecting the degree to which they agreed with the statement. The items and descriptive statistics for the ratings on each of the sections of the survey reflecting one facet of outcomes (person, social and related to learning) for students that completed the survey follow in Table 1.

The service-learning students' mean reported 3.18 as rating of the impact of service learning on personal outcomes in comparison to the community service volunteers' mean reported rating 3.08. This suggests that service-learning students were more positively benefited by their service-learning course than the volunteers were by community service alone. Additionally, the range of the ratings was lower (2.7-3.5) as reported by the community service volunteers compared to the range of the service-learning students (3-5.5).

The service-learning students' mean reported 3.98 as rating of the impact of service learning on social outcomes in comparison to the community service volunteers' mean reported rating 3.3. This suggests that service-learning students were positively benefited by their service-learning course greater than the volunteers were by community service alone. Additionally, the range of the ratings was lower (2.9-3.7) as reported by the community service volunteers compared to the range of the service-learning students (4.3-5.6). However, ratings for social outcomes were higher than rating for personal outcomes, suggesting that service-learning classes can enhance student social outcomes more than they can enhance student personal outcomes.

The service-learning students' mean reported 4.16 as rating of the impact of service learning on outcomes related to learning in comparison to the community service volunteers' mean reported rating 3.62. This suggests that service-learning students were more positively benefited by their service-learning course than the volunteers were by community service alone. Additionally, the range of the ratings was lower (3.3-4) as reported by the community service volunteers compared to the range of the service-learning students (3.4-4.7). Since ratings for outcomes related to learning were higher than rating for personal and social outcomes, service-learning classes can enhance outcomes related to learning more than other student outcomes.

**Table 1****Descriptive Statistics for Student Personal, Social and Related to Learning Outcomes**

	Service-Learning Students				Community Service Volunteers			
	N	Mean	Range	St. Deviation	N	Mean	Range	St. Deviation
<b>Student Personal Outcomes</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>3-5.5</b>	<b>0.69385</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>2.7-3.5</b>	<b>0.36644</b>
<i>"The Service-learning project I worked on in this course..."</i>								
1...increased my interest in the subject.	10	3.5	2-5	1.17851	10	3.5	2-5	0.97182
2...increased my interest in this field.	10	3.1	2-5	1.19721	10	3.1	2-5	1.10050
3...was more work than it was worth.	10	1.9	1-3	0.73786	10	2.7	1-5	1.33749
4...meant that this course gave me a greater sense of pride and accomplishment than most courses.	10	3.4	2-5	0.84327	10	3.2	1-5	1.39841
5...helped me be more aware of how I can be of service to the community.	10	4.1	3-5	0.73786	10	3.67	2-5	1.11803
6... helped me be interested in continuing the project as a volunteer or through an independent study.	10	3.5	2-5	0.97182	10	2.875	2-4	0.99103
7...helped me be interested in community service as a career choice.	10	2.8	1-4	1.22927	10	2.78	1-5	1.56347
<b>Student Social Outcomes</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>4.3-5.6</b>	<b>0.37013</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>2.9-3.7</b>	<b>0.35355</b>
8...was an extremely valuable part of this course	10	3.9	2-5	0.87559	10	3	1-5	1.49071
9...definitely met a need in the community.	10	4.3	4-5	0.48304	10	3.7	1-5	1.49443
10...will make a difference to the community/community partner.	10	4.4	4-5	0.51639	10	3.6	1-5	1.07496
11...helped me be more aware of how I can be of service to the community.	10	3.8	3-5	0.78881	10	3.3	1-5	1.05934
12...helped me be more interested in community service.	10	3.5	2-5	1.08012	10	2.9	2-5	1.10050
<b>Outcomes Related to Learning</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>3.4-4.7</b>	<b>0.68702</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>3.3-4</b>	<b>0.31144</b>
13...motivated me to work harder in this course.	10	3.1	2-5	0.87559	10	3.7	3-5	0.82327
14...helped me feel that part of my learning was self-guided and independent of the instructor.	10	4.3	4-5	0.48304	10	3.8	1-5	1.13529
15...was closely linked to the subject of this course.	10	3.9	2-5	1.10050	10	3.3	1-5	1.25166
16...increased what I learned about this subject.	10	4.1	4-5	0.31622	10	4	4-5	0.47140
17...enabled me to really know what it's like to be a practitioner in this field.	10	2.7	1-4	1.15950	10	3.3	1-5	1.33749

**\*p<.05 however, no significance was found for questions 7 through 17 which are the questions both groups shared.**

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

This study examines differences in perceptions of how the effects of service-learning compare with the effects of volunteer service in general. The null hypothesis was that there would be no difference in student personal outcomes, student social outcomes, and outcomes related to learning between the student participating in service-learning courses and a group of volunteers for the same service project. Students responded to a survey to ascertain their perceptions. The hypothesis was tested and no statistically significant differences were found for questions that both groups shared. For both questions shared in common on the surveys and unique questions descriptive statistics for each outcome section were calculated. If there would have been statistically significant differences on questions in common an asterisk (\*) would have been placed to indicate a probability value of less than 5 changes in a hundred due to sampling error ( $p < .05$ ).

#### **Implications of the Results**

All respondents reported that they spent less than five hours a week working on the service project. This suggested that all respondents invested the same amount of time participating in the service project. Moreover, one can imply that respondents did not hold leadership responsibilities in relation to the service project beyond their committed hours.

Questions on the survey were divided into three categories relating to student personal, social and outcomes with regard to learning in order to assess the impact of a service-learning course on students who participated in the course and in the same service project as students who volunteered for the project without enrolling in a service-learning course. The mean rating of student personal outcomes for service-learning students (3.18) and community service volunteers

(3.08) were not significantly different statistically. In this way, respondents' ratings suggested service-learning students felt slightly but not significantly more benefit in the area of personal outcomes than the community service volunteers. The items to which most service-learning student respondents felt was very true was written as "The service-learning project I worked on in this course helped me be more aware of how I can be of service to community," with the mean being 4.1, the range being (3) slightly true to (5) very true and the standard deviation being 0.73786. These data suggest that perhaps self-awareness in the community is heightened by enrolling in a service-learning course. The item on which the mean score was the lowest regarding student personal outcomes for service-learning students was "The service-learning project I worked on in this course was more work than it was worth," with the mean being 1.9, the range being not true at all (1) to slightly true (3) and the standard deviation being 0.73786. These data suggest that perhaps students value the work that goes into a service-learning course.

The mean rating of student social outcomes for service-learning students (3.98) and community service volunteers (2.9) was not significantly different statistically. In this way, respondents' rating suggested service-learning students felt slightly but not significantly more benefit in the area of social outcomes than the community service volunteers. The item to which most service-learning student respondents felt were very true "The service-learning project I worked on will make a difference to the community/community partner," with the mean being 4.4, the range being (4) mostly true to (5) very true and the standard deviation being 0.51639. These data suggest that perhaps enrolling in a service-learning course helps students feel as though they are effectively contributing to social change in the community. The item on which the mean score was the lowest regarding student social outcomes for service-learning students was "The service-learning project I worked on in this course helped me be more interested in

community service,” with the mean being 3.5, the range being somewhat true (2) to very true (5) and the standard deviation being 1.08012. These data suggest that perhaps students participating in a service-learning course are likely to continue with community service.

The mean rating of outcomes related to learning for service-learning students (4.16) and community service volunteers (3.62) were not significantly different statistically. In this way, respondents’ rating suggested service-learning students felt slightly but not significantly more benefited in the area of outcomes related to learning than the community service volunteers. The item to which most service-learning student respondents felt were very true, described as “The service-learning project I worked on this course helped me feel that part of my learning was self-guided and independent of the instructor,” with the mean being 4.3, the range being (4) mostly true to (5) very true and the standard deviation being 0.48304. These data suggest that perhaps enrolling in a service-learning course helps students feel as though they can learn autonomously with regards to course work. The items on which the mean score was the lowest regarding outcomes related to learning for service-learning students was “The service-learning project I worked on in this course enabled me to really know what it’s like to be a practitioner in this field,” with the mean being 2.7, the range being not true at all (2) to mostly true (4) and the standard deviation being 1.15950. These data suggest that perhaps students participating in a service-learning course do not feel as though they are experts on issues related to their service project.

### **Theoretical Consequences**

Overall, the respondents indicated that they felt benefited personally, socially and with relation to learning. However, there was not a significant difference statistically between the two groups’ responses. Some of the consequences of this survey are that service-learning courses

appear to be an experience that may need to expand in order to make a greater impact on its participants. Since service-learning student respondents identified a slight relationship between their participation in the class and personal, social and outcomes related to learning, it appears that consideration should be given to offering additional support for students outside of the class after participating in the course to ensure that the benefits have a longer term impact.

Importantly, the participants' responses suggested that it is important that students participate in some form of community service as it has personal, social and outcomes related to learning.

Whether or not they are enrolled in a service-learning class, as all survey respondents reported that they benefited from having participated in the service project.

### **Threats to Validity of the Study**

The sampling of the two groups was a threat to validity, since it was purposive with a small group at a small liberal arts college. While this sample was useful for the action research purpose of shedding light on the perceptions of some student participants in a service experience it certainly can't be representative of all service learning. While the two groups appear to be different from just the descriptive statistics and some inference can be made, there is not a significant statistical difference between the two groups and thus the numbers appearing to be different are in actuality only different due to the errors inherent in drawing two samples that are neither random nor large.

A further threat to validity included maturation. Maturation is a threat to validity because the class standing of the participants varied. Students that were of longer duration in college may have had more past experience with service projects than students who were attending college for a shorter duration. Thus, the duration of one's college experience may impact the degree to which they are mature in participating in service projects. Lastly, self-reported measures of



benefits may have also threatened the validity of results. Students' reports may have been inflated due to the demand characteristic of the survey.

### **Connections to Previous Studies/Existing Literature**

A major difference between this study and previous research is that the researcher compared the effects of service-learning with the effects of volunteer service in general. Most studies found by the researcher only assessed the impact of service-learning on academic outcomes, service-learning pedagogy, and effects in higher education.

In a related study by Vogelgesang and Astin (2000), there is a similarity to this study in that they both directly compare service learning and community service in order to identify the unique contributions. However, Vogelgesang and Astin mainly attempted to understand how service-learning enhances learning. In their study, they found that the opportunity to discuss the service experience with other students gave service-learning students a chance to reflect and receive emotional faculty support appeared to be a powerful component of in service-learning courses that community service does not always provide.

### **Implications for Further Research**

As service-learning courses expand and attempt to positively impact students, support for these courses have been created. In the future, researching the ways in which service-learning courses benefit students long-term with regards to career choice is an important aspect to study. Moreover, this study can be modified and conducted as a longitudinal study to see how students' career choices are influenced by their service-learning experience. Having a longitudinal study may be a way to encounter more nuanced differences between the depth of service-learning course work and volunteer community service. Another way to discovered more specific differences would be to conduct interviews with the students of each group. Consequently, more

service-learning courses and community service volunteers could be asked to participate in similar studies to make comparisons in the outcomes on students. Another aspect that should be investigated are the ways in which service-learning students continue to perform community service with their service project after the class is completed.

### **Conclusion**

Although the hypothesis of comparing service-learning students and community service volunteers for the same project did not reveal significant statistical difference, findings were inferred by the descriptive statistic of survey results. Overall, the results suggested that participants generally agreed that students reported the most impact of the service-learning class on outcomes related to learning (mean being 4.16), then social outcomes (mean being 3.98) and lastly personal outcomes (mean being 3.18) and the differences between the means of the group of volunteers in these outcome areas were not statistically significant. Therefore, the results of this study establish that participating in a service-learning course appears to aid slightly in enhancing a community service experience with regards to student personal, social, and outcomes related to learning.

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