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An Assessment of the Practices And Strategies that Contribute to the Success of High School Service-Learning Programs

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES THAT CONTRIBUTE
TO THE SUCCESS OF HIGH SCHOOL SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAMS

by

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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JAMES E. TAYLOR

(Under the Direction of Linda M. Arthur)

ABSTRACT

Service-learning is widely recognized as a form of experiential learning that positively impacts students. Studies have supported academic and inter-personal growth as a result of student involvement in an organized service-learning program. While some educators report that student participation is all that is required, this research demonstrates that the teaching practices implemented and strategies employed are the foundational elements necessary for a successful service-learning program. A successful service-learning project should be intentionally selected and developed with built-in opportunities for preparation activities prior to the service-learning event, a thoroughly planned service-learning opportunity, and planned debrief to solidify student comprehension and application of the learning. This research indicates that the success of the project hinges on this level of intentionality. This study identifies practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs, thus providing educators and service-learning practitioners with practical direction for the design and implementation of service-learning programs on the high school level.

INDEX WORDS: Service, Service-learning, Community service, Volunteering, Service to work, Internship, Applied learning, Community enterprise, Civic application, Experiential learning

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by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my beautiful wife and my two fantastic kids. Karen, you have provided me with a life that has been beyond my wildest imaginations—a life full of fulfilled dreams, and myriad dreams for the future. Your strength and commitment to me has kept me going all these years through the degrees, and the papers, the long nights, and the early mornings. Thank you for believing in me. Thank you for loving me through it all. Your words of encouragement always came at just the right times, and your words of motivation were delivered with loving affection. You are my best friend, and I am proud to be your husband. I thank God that He allowed our paths to cross. I eagerly look forward to a lifetime with you.

Alyssa and Colton, a father could not ask for two better kids. Thank you for being patient with my many, many nights away. You both are an inspiration to me. I love to watch you grow, and explore, and learn. Education is never just about the grade; true education involves craving to know more. Remember that you can be anything that you want to be with hard work and self-discipline. God has a perfect plan for your life but you need to be listening.

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope’”

(Jeremiah 29: 11).

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It has been such a blessing to have had so many remarkable people to lean upon during this dissertation process for intellectual guidance, timely encouragement, and organizational advice. First, I would like to thank my chairperson, Dr. Linda Arthur, for her perpetually positive attitude that allowed me to push on even when my own work schedule seemed too daunting. Dr. Arthur demonstrates a love for the field of education, and a love for her students, that is both infectious and worthy of emulating. Thanks also to Dr. Stephen Jenkins whose level head and balanced perspective always helped me to remember that all data is meant to tell a story. This narrative approach to numbers has kept things in perspective, and provided real substance to my findings. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Kymberly Harris, whose passion for the subject matter of service-learning kept me focused on the big picture. Dr. Harris' suggestion to use the Eyer & Giles survey changed the very fabric of my dissertation. Thanks to all three of you for your guidance and direction.

I would be remiss if I did not also acknowledge a great friend and colleague, Dr. Boyd English. On the very first introductory night of the Ed. D. program we had the good fortune of sitting next to each other without the slightest idea that a life-long friendship had begun. Boyd has been a great sounding board and motivator for accomplishing the task of a completed dissertation. Your friendship and godly advice has been, and will continue to be, a blessing to me as we both pursue our next steps in academic administration and beyond. Thanks for being such a great friend!

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

School violence is devastating our nation, teen pregnancy continues to be problematic to our society, and there is a diminishing perception of the importance of civic involvement, therefore, developing academic opportunities to engage our youth in meaningful character development is enormously important. Seeking to understand how academic opportunities best stimulate character development and a heightened sense of civic duty is essential. Also, having a greater understanding of the best practical applications and implementation of such service-learning programs would be beneficial. While the important effects of service-learning opportunities are well documented (Billig & Conrad, 1997; Cairn, 2000; Furco & Billig, 2002; Morgan & Streb, 1999), identifying best practices and strategies that help promote this student growth would be beneficial to the field of service-learning. In this study, three high school service-learning programs were evaluated from the perspective of best practices utilized and strategies implemented by the teaching staff and students during the service-learning programs. Participating students were surveyed to assess the impact each component of the service-learning project had on their evaluation of the “success” of the project. SPSS software was utilized to analyze the data obtained. This data helped evaluate the importance of both practices and strategies that contributed to the success of high school service-learning programs.

Background

Service-learning projects are a worthwhile development in both public and private schools because of their potential impact on the whole student. Service-learning is a form of experiential learning where students and teachers collaborate with communities to address varying problems and issues. Learning and instruction is shared between teachers and students as they encounter the site and seek to engage the problems that exist (Stewart, 2008). Furco and Billig (2002) emphasize that both teachers and students should be equally involved in the learning process, simultaneously gaining knowledge and skills and advancing personal development. It is essential to balance the impact of the community encounter with a valid learning experience for students and teachers. In this process the teacher ultimately becomes a teacher⇒mentor⇒student, modeling the application of the unique knowledge being gained through the service site not just as an instructor but also as a learner. The student then becomes a student⇒teacher as both parties learn and instruct through their shared experience. In this act of service, the learning that transpires will consist of the following three basic components: pre-studying, the actual service-learning experience, and the academic debrief or summary (Davis & Dodge, 1998; Schwartzman, 2007).

The practices that are applied and the strategies implemented during the service-learning project have tremendous potential impact on the success of the service project for the students involved. Pre-studying is meant to prepare the students through the academic areas that are directly related to the service-learning project that has been designed. These areas might include geography, social science, political science, history, art, accounting/finance, and other academic areas that are translatable to the service-

learning experience (Davis & Dodge, 1998). The second component of a traditional service-learning program is the physical experience of the service-learning project—the actual volunteering activity. While this experience typically begins on a local front, the goal is to allow students the opportunity for foreign service-learning as well, exposing them to the world at large. The final facet of the service-learning project is the important, although according to Hartmann, Maluk, and Riffer (2007) often missed, component of academic debrief where students will complete their chosen projects dealing with one component of the local or foreign experience. This debrief can take the written form of a final paper, or this final step can be orally facilitated by the teaching supervisors (Hartmann, Maluk, & Riffer, 2007). Service-learning becomes a mutual and shared educational encounter between student, teacher, and those at the learning site. The intention of this type of educational experience is to challenge students who now possess global understanding coupled with liberal educations, to apply their knowledge and their passion on the local level. From this applied educational challenge the intended bi-product will be productive, democratically minded citizens who “think globally but act locally” (Morgan & Streb, 1999).

Unfortunately, many service-learning projects do not utilize these three components of a service project because of a lack of knowledge or understanding. Varying levels of success were reported in a study by Davis and Dodge (1998) that evaluated several school-based service-learning programs in Vermont. Several of these programs had been discontinued either because of a lack of interest or a general sense of failure (Davis & Dodge, 1998). Similar results were found by Stewart (2008) who evaluated several service-learning programs based in private Catholic schools in the

United States. While Davis and Dodge (1998) did not delve into the specific reasons for failing service-learning programs, Hartmann, Maluk, and Riffer (2007) suggested that the importance of planning, preparation, and implementation were primary concerns when developing successful service-learning programs. This group of researchers particularly emphasized the importance of the post-study debrief where students have the opportunity to understand and discuss what they have learned. These researchers suggest that without this valuable component students were “just involved in doing good” rather than fully internalizing the good that had been done (Hartmann, Maluk, & Riffer, 2007). When addressing an unsuccessful service-learning program in a private Catholic school, Stewart (2008) also emphasized the importance of realistic expectations for the lead teachers. In service-learning projects, teachers are meant to be facilitators and not traditional educators (Stewart, 2008). This altered educational role can be one that is very difficult for teachers to assume, difficult for students to allow teachers to functionally assume, and challenging for administrators to trust the necessary collaboration between teacher and student (Davis & Dodge, 1998; McClam, Diambra, Burton, Fuss, & Fudge, 2008; Stewart, 2008). Thus, understanding what components are necessary in the creation of a successful service-learning program is essential. From preparation to debrief, there are practices and strategies that can be employed to help ensure the success of such projects (Davis & Dodge, 1998; Hartmann, Maluk, & Riffer, 2007; Stewart, 2008).

A well structured and thoroughly planned service-learning project becomes a powerful teaching tool that links both community-service experiences, and foreign-service experiences, to daily classroom instruction (Furco & Billig, 2002; Shumer & Duckenfield, 2004). Educators and administrators are drawn to service-learning because

of its potentially important educational results for students, schools, and their communities (Stewart, 2008). In individual interviews conducted by Eccles and Barber (1993), students could clearly articulate their observations of the effects of their service-learning experiences. They gave many examples of fellow students becoming more altruistic with those they came into contact with, becoming more predisposed to kindness, and becoming more involved emotionally and physically with community issues that affect others. Students were given the chance to apply their learning in such content areas as social studies, mathematics, anthropology, art, biology, environmental studies, sociology, and many more (Davis & Dodge, 1998). The ability to apply service-learning strategies in various content areas benefits the students because they are encouraged to apply their personalized areas of interest and expertise, and benefits the teachers because crossing the content areas can be natural rather than contrived. These personal changes combined with the application of academic fields, provides one of the best opportunities for educating the whole student (Billig & Conrad, 1997; Stewart, 2008).

It is widely accepted that service-learning has a positive effect on the personal development of youth (Furco & Billig, 2002; Hartmann, Maluk, & Riffer, 2007; Stewart, 2008). Middle and high school students who engaged in well organized service-learning programs that employed proven strategies for success showed increases in measures of personal and social responsibility, communication and a sense of educational competence (Colby, 2007). These students became more involved in the needs of their local communities and were more apt to demonstrate genuine concern for others, often supported with action. Non-participating educators commented on the maturity level of the students after their service experience; these students began taking personal

responsibility for their actions in and out of the classroom (Akujobi, 1997). Students who engaged in service-learning ranked personal responsibility as a more important value and reported a higher sense of responsibility to their school and their families than comparison groups (Eccles & Barber, 1993; Erikson, 1999). Eyler and Giles (1999) state that this increase in responsibility lessens the attitude of victimization by teenagers and allows them to perceive themselves to be more socially competent after engaging in service-learning. These students reported an increased desire to search for answers to social ills that had previously been the problem of another—they began taking a personal interest in the well-being of others (Eyler & Giles, 1999). To put it simply, there appeared to be a reduction in selfishness (Akujobi & Simmons, 1997; Colby, 2007). According to Akujobi and Simmons (1997), a direct result of this increased selflessness is increased self-esteem. Middle school boys reported an increase in self-esteem and fewer behavioral problems after their service-learning program. School administrators and educators noted that these students treated each other with a greater level of kindness, helped each other, and cared about doing their best (McClam, Diambra, Burton, Fuss, & Fudge, 2008). With these results in mind, it becomes even more important to gain a better understanding of what practices and strategies contribute to a successful service-learning project and program.

Statement of the Problem

Service-learning, as a form of experiential learning, allows students and teachers to collaborate with their communities to address varying problems and issues. Learning and instruction is shared between the teachers and students as they physically and

intellectually engage the service-learning site. Teachers and students should be equally involved in the learning process, sharing the roles of teacher and student. In this collaboration the work site is best served by active participants seeking to learn through their applied service. Service-learning then becomes a powerful teaching tool that links these community experiences to daily classroom instruction. Changes that often occur within students include the following: increased civic mindedness, increased academic performance, heightened social consciousness, altruism, and the ability to apply static learning to a perpetually changing world (Sallee, Robinson, & McFarlin, 2007).

Identifying what aspects of a service-learning project best contribute to its overall success is crucial. The organization of a service-learning project typically consists of pre-planning, the actual service-learning project, and post-study. When a facet of the service-learning project is either skipped or minimized, the project is negatively impacted. Pre-planning allows the students to develop a personal vesting in the importance of the project. This step helps to develop ownership in the student while preparing them intellectually for the upcoming service involvement. In the same regard, the post-study portion of the service-learning program allows the students to interpret the impact of the volunteering that was done at the actual site (Allen, 2003). As a component of this final summary the students have the opportunity to personally engage their own learning and interpret that information for others. They can accomplish this through a number of ways such as a written summary paper or an oral presentation/discussion summarizing what they have learned. All three of these components: pre-planning, the actual service activity, and the post-study, are essential to the success of a service-learning project (Grossman, 2008).

Service-learning possesses enormous potential for making a life-altering academic impact on the lives of students (Billig & Conrad, 1997; Cairn, 2000). While many educators feel that project involvement is all that is required, the teaching practices implemented and strategies employed are the foundational elements that are truly necessary to produce demonstrable change in the lives of students. By preparing themselves intellectually and emotionally before entering a service-learning site, students will have a heightened sense of ownership in their labor. Similarly, students who have the planned opportunity for discussion after the service-learning project have a better chance of internalizing the learning (Grossman, 2008). It is intended that ownership be developed before and after the service-learning event. The successful service-learning project is intentionally developed with built-in opportunities for preparation, discussion, and debrief. The success of the project hinges on this level of intentionality (Hecht, 1999). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs.

Research Questions

The researcher will consider the following overarching question in this study:
What practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs?

The following sub questions will be used to answer the overarching question:

Question 1: What do students see as the most valuable components of the service-learning experience?

Question 2: How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?

Question 3: What types of extra-curricular activities were the students involved in, and did this personal involvement impact their service-learning experience?

Question 4: What specific learning objectives in the course impacted the outcome of the service-learning experience?

Question 5: What pre-event and/or post-event educational activities were service-learning students involved in that impacted their service-learning experience?

Significance of the Study

While the impact that service-learning programs make in the lives of high-school students is well documented (Billig & Conrad, 1997; Cairn, 2000; Furco & Billig, 2002; Morgan & Streb, 1999), the identification of specific practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs has been minimally studied (Eyler and Giles, 1999). Successful service-learning programs typically consist of pre-planning, the actual event, and post-study or debrief; however, very little research exists regarding the practical and strategic components of successful service-learning programs (Humbley & Zambo, 1996). The results of this study will help determine what components are most successful and what practices and strategies can be effectively implemented in the service-learning setting.

By studying this specific gap in research, the professional literature addressing high-school service-learning programs will be expanded. There is minimal research that shows any practical, hands-on assistance for the development of service-learning

programs. By researching practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs, those designing and implementing service-learning programs now have a base of knowledge to determine the viability and success of their specific project. This information will help others who seek to educate their students through this unique form of experiential education.

This research provides practical information for all educators and administrators seeking to design a successful high-school service-learning program. By having a better understanding of the practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs, teachers may avoid common pitfalls in the design and implementation of service-learning programs. Administrators may also have a better grasp of the redefined roles that teachers and students assume when collaboration is not just a goal but a requirement. This understanding of practices and strategies ultimately results in a more thoughtful and intentional service-learning program for the students who are meant to be impacted.

This desire to provide a more intentional educational experience for the students involved in service-learning may also impact the policies of high-schools. When evidence can be presented that successful service-learning programs consist of pre-planning, the actual event, and the post-study components, administrators and teachers are encouraged to help promote this organizational style through policy specifications. Specific practices and strategies can then be implemented in accordance with this organizational style. Policy may also be largely influenced through a redefinition of the student-teacher role on service-learning projects. If collaboration were proven to be an essential practice, a strategic policy shift to collaborative education would be called for in

this particular setting. This policy shift could provide an opportunity for teachers and students to collaborate in a new manner contributing to the success of high school service-learning programs.

Finally, the outcomes of the research are significant to the researcher because he is a high school principal at a school where service-learning programs have been used with limited intentionality for more than a decade. The results of this research promote successful practices and strategies to be implemented in the researcher's current service-learning programs. Understanding the potential impact of service-learning on the lives of students provides the motivation to pursue such important research that can help make an overwhelmingly positive educational offering even more life-impacting and successful.

Research Procedures

Research Design

Understanding that there is no absolute truth of knowledge (Phillips & Burbules, 2000) when researching the benefits of service-learning, a postpositive theoretical perspective was adopted when evaluating the overarching question and the related sub questions through a mixed methods approach. Current literature has developed mixed methods to measure the framework of many service-learning projects (Follman, 1998): pre-planning, the event, and post-study; therefore, employing quantitative methods and qualitative methods to measure the practices and strategies of successful service-learning projects was a viable approach. The use of mixed methodology to evaluate the success of a service-learning project based on the opinions of participants is supported by Creswell (2003); Follmam (1998); and Phillips and Burbules (2000). Using a mixed methods

approach rather than relying on strictly quantitative research expanded the understanding of service-learning (Katsulis, 2003). The researcher utilized a survey with quantitative survey questions and qualitative open ended questions to gather data for the study. The survey was developed by Eyler and Giles under a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) and originally published in their work Where's the Learning in Service Learning? (1999). The self-administered questionnaire (Fink, 1995) was delivered with the aid of the sponsoring teachers of three high-school service-learning programs in three different high schools in a voluntary classroom setting. This survey also provided two open-ended questions for students to add any personal comments or reflections relating to specific educational activities used before or after the service-learning experience that were particularly helpful in the learning process.

In addition to the two open-ended questions available to all students, six students were selected (two from each school) to participate in a qualitative interview with the researcher. This qualitative instrument was used to ascertain personal service history, reflection on social issues or problems, and personal reflection on the valuable components of their own service-learning experiences. These students were recommended by each participating school on the basis of student involvement and interest in the field of service-learning or community service.

Population/Sample

The population for this study was comprised of high-school students from three service-learning programs at three separate independent high schools in a southern state. The total estimated population size was approximately 300-450 students (N=300-450).

Every attempt was made to present a balanced sample group using the characteristics of grade level and gender. The three schools involved in the survey, Calhoun High School, Sullivan High School, and Donovan High School (names changed to protect anonymity) agreed to have various classes participate in the survey. Calhoun High School agreed to have the survey administered through their English classes. This represented a student population of nearly 400 students. Sullivan High School administered the survey in five civics classes with a student population of over 100 students. Donovan High School administered the survey in a pre-existing service-learning program with just under 100 students involved at the time of the survey. These three schools provided the population sample for the survey. With a potential population size of nearly 600 students it was estimated that between 300 and 450 students would choose to participate in the survey administration. All of the potential student participants were selected because of their prior experience in the field of service-learning. While the students came to the survey with varying degrees of community involvement, the data is meaningful because all participants were already involved at some level in service-learning in their own communities.

Instrumentation

The mixed methods instrument was a modified version of the survey used in the research conducted by Eyler and Giles sponsored by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), and published in Where's the Learning in Service-Learning? (1999). This research was used to gather data for evaluating the effectiveness of service-learning programs on college students (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Previous

literature by Davis and Dodge (1998), Scales and Blythe (1993), and Stewart (2008) was used as a basis for the modified survey tool implemented. The cross-sectional survey used a Lickert format, and was delivered using a variety of classes and their supervising teachers as the experimenters. There was a qualitative portion of the survey as well delivered to six students (two from each school) who were identified as highly interested or involved in service-learning or community service. Content validity was measured according to Creswell's description to determine whether the items surveyed measured the intended content (2003). Construct validity was measured in accordance with the principles established by Humbley and Zumbo (1996) meant to determine whether the hypothetical concepts were measured appropriately. The major content sections were the cover letter, the Lickert based survey with open ended questions, and the closing instructions. Continuous scales were used to measure levels of agreement or disagreement with survey questions. After modifications were made to the survey instrument, the survey was pilot tested with a small group of ten leadership students who experienced service-learning programs in the past. These students provided additional written and verbal feedback, preliminary reliability data, and their comments were incorporated into the final instrument revisions.

Data Collection

After the survey was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Georgia Southern University, the survey construct was administered in three parts, modified from Salant and Dillman's (1994) processes of survey administration. The first step was an explanation letter sent to each of the service-learning students explaining the purpose of

the survey instrument. This letter had a permission section signed by a parent. The second step was the actual survey administration which was done on a voluntary basis in the service-learning classroom setting one week after the initial letter had been signed and returned. The surveys were collected by the supervising teacher and given to the researcher. The final step was the qualitative portion of the survey delivered to six students (two from each school) who were seen as highly involved or interested in service-learning or community service. Follow up information was sent to the three schools after the data was gathered and analyzed. The researcher used SPSS software to organize the data collected.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the research participants was used to answer the stated research questions for the study. Each stated research question had one continuous dependent variable (practices and strategies leading to the success of high-school service-learning programs) and multiple categorical independent variables relating to the specific research question. The independent variables for research question one were: experiential; for research question two: measurement of success; for research questions three and four: organizational; and for research question five: interpretive application. The purpose of this study was to identify the practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs. This study was meant to assess the extent to which the success of service-learning programs is impacted throughout a variety of categories.

Delimitations

- The participants of this study will be delimited to independent school students in three schools in a southern state. These students were selected because they are accessible to the researcher, and because each school has been involved in service-learning for more than a minimum of five years so this type of program is a part of the fabric of each school.
- The study was a mixed methods study, supported by previous research dealing with service-learning from a mixed methods approach.

Limitations

- There were no comparison data from public schools to private schools in regard to the measurement of success in service-learning programs, potentially limiting the ability to interpret this data with a broader application.
- There could have been a bias in the administration of the service-learning surveys because the students surveyed attend private schools and the service-learning programs are supervised by private school teachers and administrators.
- Adult responses of supervising teachers were not measured so the perspective of another generation is limited in this study.
- The impact of service-learning on the students involved was not measured by any outside observers such as parents, other teachers, or administration.

Summary

Studies regarding service-learning have rarely provided practical design information to identify practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs. Therefore, a mixed-methods study was conducted to assess how specific practices and strategies aid in the success of experiential learning programs on the high-school level. The results of this study have implications for the teachers and administrators designing and administrating service-learning projects, and for the students participating in high school service-learning programs.

This study utilized a mixed methods approach in survey design. The survey was designed using a modified version of the *Service-Learning Assessment* sponsored by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) published in Where's the Learning in Service-Learning? (Eyler & Giles, 1999). This instrument was based on pertinent current literature and was pilot tested with a group of ten leadership students. Content validity was measured to determine whether the items surveyed measured the intended content by using related literature. Construct validity was measured to determine whether the hypothetical concepts were measured appropriately using the principles established in relevant literature. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS software.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature review is organized around three primary lines of inquiry: the historical growth of service-learning, the benefits (intended or realized) of service-learning programs, and the varying organizational structure of service-learning programs. The first area, the historical growth of service-learning, addresses how the field has changed over the years. Four specific areas of the history of service-learning provide background information for understanding this line of inquiry. First, the history of the field of service-learning is explored. Second, the pioneers of the service-learning movement are investigated. Third, the controversy over the comparison between service-learning and volunteering programs is reviewed. Finally, the philosophy of service-learning proponents and detractors is studied. These four areas of inquiry provide the basis for understanding the history of service-learning and the growth that has been witnessed in this field in contemporary education.

The second line of inquiry, the benefits of service-learning, explores the intended benefits versus the realized benefits of these programs. In this section a variety of benefits are explored: civic involvement, character development, collaborative skills, community involvement, reduced discipline issues, increased academic performance, heightened global perspective, greater understanding of necessary career skills, and a less self-centered approach to life. This line of inquiry explores the factors that contribute to these benefits being realized in service-learning programs.

The third line of inquiry, the organizational structure of service-learning programs, considers how the project structure contributes to the success of service-learning programs. First, the pre-service phase where students are prepared academically, intellectually, and personally for the service-learning experience is evaluated. Second, the actual service-learning experience is assessed from an organizational perspective. Third, the post-service component of the service-learning project, when students have the opportunity to debrief and apply the intended learning, is investigated. All three of these areas: the history of service-learning, the potential benefits of service-learning, and the organizational structure of service-learning are all evaluated as the primary lines of inquiry for the larger purpose of assessing the morphing practices and strategies that contribute to the success of service-learning programs in the contemporary school setting.

Historical Growth of Service-Learning

Before assessing the practices and strategies that contribute to successful service-learning programs, it is important to define this field of study. There is much disagreement and controversy over what actually comprises a service-learning experience. Joseph Kahne, a professor of education at Mills College in Oakland, California surveys student involvement for the National Association of Secretaries of State and he warns that volunteering is not enough (Allen, 2003). It is essential to realize that for a project to be considered a service-learning project it must have two components: first, it must answer an academic question related to course content or educational objectives; and second, it must meet a community need (Allen, 2003; Berkas,

1997; Billig & Conrad, 1997; Furco & Billig, 2000; Richardson, 2006). Service-learning, when done correctly, develops the student academically while addressing the needs of the community. This aim is confirmed in a study developed by the National Commission on Service-Learning where the students surveyed also emphasized the importance of student participation in the design, implementation, and evaluation of the project (Allen, 2003). Therefore, true service-learning projects enrich classroom content by providing some level of application through community service and the personal involvement of students (Richardson, 2006). Often schools incorrectly consider any community involvement to be service-learning. Internships and job shadowing do not necessarily meet the qualifications necessary to be considered service-learning unless they meet a community need and advance the public good. In the same respect community service does not necessarily meet the qualifications to be considered service-learning unless the volunteering opportunity also answers an academic question or educational objective. A service-learning project must have both components.

Historical Foundations

It could be asserted that the roots of service-learning can be traced back to the early 1900s with John Dewey's pragmatic approach to education. For Dewey, democracy was at the heart of all education (Fogarty, 1997). He vigorously opposed the authoritarian style of education that was so prevalent during this era, believing instead that students should be active participants in their own education. For education to be beneficial and effective, the student must be a part of the democratic experience of a truly progressive education (Neill, 2005). For many educational philosophers of the age

progressive education meant an unconstrained classroom where students had absolute freedom. This was not the belief of John Dewey. Dewey believed that educators must take into account the individual needs of each student, and these differences should shape the curriculum. Education should be framed by student experience but built on democratic ideals. This educational philosophy embodied the broader social purpose of developing good citizens who are prepared to participate in a democratic society, and this philosophy is clearly evident in the fundamental nature of service-learning (Fogarty, 1997; Wesley, 2000).

Service-learning also borrows from Dewey's philosophy of education when dealing with the area of inclusion. In a period of history that separated students by class, ethnic origin, race, gender, and socio-economic level, John Dewey believed that all learning environments should be inclusive (Ryan & Cooper, 1998; Wesley, 2000). Dewey believed that all mankind is inherently curious about the world around them, and that this curiosity could be fostered in students by encouraging them to work together to test ideas, beliefs, values, and customs (Ornstein & Levine, 2000). In Dewey's work, *Experience and Education* (1916) he emphasized his philosophy that educational effectiveness can only be measured when the needs of the individual are weighed against the needs of the whole. This inclusive mindset is echoed in much of the philosophy that drives the current service-learning field of study. Growth can only occur individually when the needs of the larger body are recognized. Fogarty believes that Dewey advocated the first ideas behind service-learning by emphasizing democracy and inclusion (1997).

During this same era, Dewey's inclusive and applicable approach to learning began to find supporters and advocates in the political sphere as well. In 1914 the Smith Lever Act established a cooperative extension that sought to meet agricultural and community needs through the collaboration of agricultural schools and local farmers. This Act provided funding to agricultural colleges or state colleges whose research found the practical agricultural benefits of study in the fields of agricultural technologies, solar energy, home economics, and rural energy provided this research was in conjunction with the hands-on involvement of the students both in the classroom and in the community (www.reeusda.gov/1700/legis).

This blending of education and service was seen again in 1933 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Emergency Conservation Work Act (ECW), more commonly known as the Civilian Conservation Corp. This federally funded organization put nearly three million young people to work to restore and revitalize the nation through public works projects as a part of the "New Deal." Many of these projects combined the labor of these young men and women with junior college scholarship programs to grant degrees in agriculture, ecology, and conservation (www.cccalumni.org/history).

Both the Smith Lever Act and the Emergency Conservation Work Act fulfilled the two essential components of service-learning: they met a community need, and they had an educational component that permitted the application of their learning. While these acts would not be considered intentional service-learning programs yet, they helped provide some of the recognized foundation for the not-yet-conceived field of service-learning. Both of these acts echo the beliefs of John Dewey who constantly challenged that all education be based on democratic ideals, provide inclusive opportunities for all

students, and that true education provides answers for the societal dilemmas that we face as a nation.

While the underpinnings of service-learning can be traced to Dewey's philosophy of education, it really was not until the concerns and activism of the 1960s and 1970s that service-learning began to truly take shape. During the American industrial revolution student education had become mechanical and goal driven rather than student-centered and democratically focused. For several decades Dewey's philosophies were viewed as passé and outdated. They were replaced by educational goals that mimicked the factory model, producing students who were "identical commodities" (Ornstein & Levine, 2000) growing under strict deadlines and rigid conformity.

But the social needs and problems of the 60s and 70s found educational reformers clamoring for relevant curriculum and teaching strategies that involved the students. They rediscovered the significance of the educational philosophies of John Dewey. In this rediscovery educators began to coin the term service-learning as an approach to education that engaged the student academically while also involving them personally by meeting community needs. This term first surfaced in 1966 when educators Sigmon and Ramsey developed the Manpower Development Internship Program, a program that sought to combine conscious and deliberate academic growth with the accomplishment of community related tasks that met a genuine local need (Neill, 2005). This term became popular because it provided potential answers to educational questions that were largely not addressed at this time. Patriotism and attitudes of public service continued to wane during this era largely due to political and social unrest, but service-learning held an

academic answer to help combat these societal ailments (Goodlad, 1984; Wiggington, 1985).

Again the political climate provided some necessary support furthering the ideals represented in service-learning. In 1961 President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corp whose purpose was to promote world peace and friendship through the intentional service of American men and women. These young men and women applied their education and fields of expertise to help develop trained local manpower for the purpose of meeting the basic needs of these countries. Common projects revolved around new farming techniques, creating irrigation methods, providing internal infrastructure meant to maintain these new civic programs, and training the locals to answer their own unique needs and problems. The Peace Corp program took the research and study of young Americans and applied that learning in answering global concerns. This shift from national interests to global interests provided the ideas and ideals tied to service-learning to be largely expanded and shared (www.law.cornell).

President Kennedy had recognized the need for this type of education—an education that combined learning with service, thus emphasizing and encouraging a philanthropic and humanitarian spirit in education. Contemporary presidents have continued to recognize the benefits associated with the philosophy of service-learning. President Ronald Reagan encouraged the development of Youth Service America, an organization that provided high school students an opportunity to earn college credit for community service (Titlebaum, 2002). President H.W. Bush created the Points of Light Foundation in 1989 creating volunteer organizations meant to link volunteers to community needs. President Bill Clinton passed the King Holiday and Service Act of

1994 transforming the MLK holiday into a national day of service. Then in President Clinton's 4th of July address he emphasized the need for engaging students in the democratic process and named service-learning as a key tool in this involvement. President George W. Bush hosted conferences for the Kellogg Commission and the Annie E. Casey Foundation seeking to provide funding for service-learning programs both domestic and foreign (Titlebaum, 2002). Since service-learning was recognized as a valid and worthwhile pursuit in the early 1960s, every president has supported the advancement of this field. This Presidential support lends credence and support for the continued deliberate growth of service-learning, but the philosophical underpinnings of this field are due to the research of several crucial pioneers in the field of service-learning.

Pioneers of Service-Learning

To properly understand and assess the practices and strategies of current service-learning projects, it is also important to understand where these practices and strategies originated. The pioneers in the field of service-learning come from education, psychology, and social research. While the purpose is not to present an exhaustive list of service-learning pioneers, there are certain individuals who have left an indelible mark on this field that is still felt in current research and service-learning project design. As we have already seen, John Dewey greatly impacted service-learning with his philosophy of education that blended democratic ideals and inclusion (Fogarty, 1997; Ryan & Cooper, 1998; Wesley, 2000). However, his educational assertions were largely developed in collaboration with William Kilpatrick. Kilpatrick's development of the "project method"

of educating students through community application helped shape the foundations of service-learning (Beyer, 1999). This field also owes much to cognitive psychologists Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner who asserted that all learning involves the creation of meaning, and this meaning must be highly individualized to be effective (Feden & Vogel, 1993). Freire (1970) provided a powerful treatise in his publication of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* that continues to motivate and challenge educators to deliberately reach out to disadvantaged cultures through the integration of education and meeting felt societal needs. Finally, in current education there are countless proponents of service-learning but Eyler and Giles would have to be included for their pivotal research seeking to design studies that capture the multi-faceted character of service-learning and prove its worth as a continued educational venture (Eyler & Giles, 1997). Eyler and Giles also provided the impetus behind the annual international conference on service-learning that seeks to discuss methodological approaches and theoretical frameworks that advance the field of service-learning (Braxton, 1999). Each of these pioneers in education, psychology, and social research helped shape the field of service-learning. By looking deeper into their theories and research we better understand the basis of current practices and strategies that contribute to the success of service-learning programs.

While William Kilpatrick is perhaps best known as a colleague and collaborator of John Dewey, Kilpatrick's own theories have been critical in the development of contemporary research in the area of service-learning (Beyer, 1996). His theories have their foundation in the philosophy espoused in Charles Darwin's work *The Origin of Species*, and grasping the educational implications of Darwin's work is crucial to understanding Kilpatrick's own educational philosophy (Beyer, 1996). With the

publication of Darwin's work, change became the basic fact of life—both physical life and social life. Kilpatrick came to understand change as constant, something to be valued and embraced rather than feared. With this understanding of the constant (and positive) nature of change, Kilpatrick began to recognize the enormous educational implications of observing the actions and behaviors of individual students in the classroom environment as a reflection of the “life process” of the group as a whole (Kilpatrick, 1951).

His research aimed to measure the response of an organism to a particular situation, through the impact of effort and interest (Beyer, 1996; DeGarmo, 1903). The response of a student in the classroom setting often elicits wants or desires, and these wants and desires turn into goals and aims. If a teacher directs the educational offering at these individual wants and desires, student interest is created, thus involving the student in their own education. Therefore, the “life process” of the student is intricately tied to the realization that effort and interest is created in the social and physical environment of the classroom. The students' interest is peaked and their desire for further study is developed by the teacher on an individual basis. Recognizing that developing the interests of the individual was vital to the success of the student, Kilpatrick designed the “project method” which embraced the philosophy that student learning should take place in personal projects where students wholeheartedly participate (Beyer, 1996; Kilpatrick, 1918). A teacher can teach ideas such as velocity, air current, and design, or the teacher can permit the student to build a kite—stimulating the interest of the student, and applying the project to the learning process. The key is for the student to be intimately involved in the learning process thus maximizing the effort and interest of the student.

Designing projects that matter and directly impact the student through their own involvement is at the heart of service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 2003; Hecht, 1999; Keen & Hall, 2009). Kilpatrick understood that all education reflects the philosophy of society as a whole (Kilpatrick, 1918). He challenged teachers and administrators to evaluate what kind of social outlook their school management and teaching tended to encourage, what kind of social impact education ought to support, and what educational directives should be adopted to reinforce the desired social impact of education (Kilpatrick, 1951). These educational challenges required teachers to philosophize about their impact on not just grades and academic achievement but on society as a whole. Kilpatrick's research analyzed the individual student response in relation to the whole. He demanded that educators provide worthwhile educational opportunities that would challenge their students to become democratically involved in their society (Kilpatrick, 1951). In Kilpatrick's research we see the foundational elements of contemporary service-learning research that seeks to provide valuable practices and strategies that contribute to the success of service-learning programs, and support the overall mission of education (Beyer, 1996; Hecht, 1999). The echoes of Kilpatrick's impact are felt in the work of contemporary researchers such as Scott Richardson from *Learn and Serve America* whose research evaluates the meaningful development of service-learning projects across our nation. Richardson's research centers around the meaningful application of educational requirements in the field of service-learning (Richardson, 2006). Kilpatrick's project-method and his insistence that educators and administrators provide meaningful, applicable educational opportunities is clearly evident in the philosophical roots of service-learning (Beyer, 1996; Erickson, 2007; Hecht, 1999; Richardson, 2006).

The pedagogy of service-learning has also been greatly encouraged and developed through the research of cognitive psychologists Vygotsky and Bruner (Feden & Vogel, 1993). Although their research is not directly related to service-learning these psychologists emphasized that learning involves the creation of meaning, and that for this meaning to be truly effective it must be developed for the individual student (Vygotsky, 1978). This realization has validated the use of educational experiences that take place out of the classroom to reinforce abstract theories and concepts introduced in the classroom setting (Feden & Vogel, 1993). Vygotsky saw intellectual ability as directly rooted in the culture in which the child was reared. He asserted that students develop as they adapt to their social surroundings. They translate these surroundings based on ever-changing interpretations that are rooted in social values and constructs (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, people are not born with knowledge but instead knowledge is developed in societal contexts with peers and adults (Feden & Vogel, 1993; Hamilton & Ghatala, 1994).

According to Vygotsky the two primary methods of education are social interaction and language (Vygotsky, 1978). Contemporary service-learning researchers have grasped the importance of social interaction and directly applied this contact to the classroom through the use of meaningful projects aimed at involving the student academically through the needs of their community (Fogarty, 1997; Keen & Hall, 2009; Krebs, 2008; Ryan & Cooper, 1998; Wesley, 2000). Abstract theories and concepts are thus taught through the direct involvement of the student in the selection, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the service-learning project as related to educational expectations (Hutchinson, 2005).

Bruner (1960) also emphasized that cognitive structure provides the framework for experiences and the application of knowledge. Bruner's research confirmed that the active process of learning is defined by the learner's own pre-conceived notions regarding the subject, their current knowledge, and past experiences. The learner interprets the new educational material or learning experience through this pre-developed lens (Davydov & Kerr, 1995). This is the challenge and the motivation for service-learning researchers. When the teacher provides the student with an opportunity to develop new concepts about abstract ideas, the student uses their cognitive structure to provide a basis of understanding (Eyler & Giles, 2003; King, 2004). King (2004) calls this challenge "defamiliarization" which is the process of breaking down these assumptions for the purpose of critically evaluating the world. King's research centers around the difficulty associated with training students to critically examine their assumptions about society and their own place in society through the use of an organized service-learning program (2004). Grasping the reality of this cognitive framework reveals the challenge of achieving true equality in service-learning projects. Both those serving and those being served have different cognitive models actively interpreting the presented material and experiences (Koth, 2003; Rosenberger, 2000). Bruner's theories were critical in presenting the foundation for authentic and meaningful service-learning projects (Davydov & Kerr, 1995). His research challenged service-learning project proponents to recognize the cognitive frameworks that exist in every learning project, and to actively engage those serving and those being served in a shared educational experience where both parties experience personal growth, and thus an expansion of their cognitive understanding (Krebs, 2008).

Perhaps the greatest contemporary educational revolutionary to challenge the equality of the educational process was Paulo Freire (Facundo, 1984). Freire's life and his many publications have served as a mantra challenging service-learning proponents to explore new ways to actively engage students in the learning process (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Freire's books are a reflection of a life lived in the pursuit of equality in the educational process for all students, never permitting socio-economic or geographic factors to be excuses for poor educational practices (Lyons, 2001). While Freire's radical pursuit of educational equality began in Brazil, he was jailed for "subversive educational activities" (Heaney, 2001) and eventually expelled from the country. During this time Freire served in several educational positions in Chile, and as a professor at Harvard University before being permitted to return to his home country of Brazil nearly twenty-five years later (Heaney, 1989).

Freire developed reading programs and educational systems that sought to meet the learning needs of all students by engaging them in the democratic pursuit of educational opportunities (Lyons, 2001). John Elias, a Freire scholar and firm advocate of service-learning programs, asserts that the secret to Freire's success lies in the fact that he used the instruction of reading and writing as tools for participation in the political process (1994). Freire instructed the disenfranchised poor using the tangible motivation of reclaiming a voice in the political process of their own country (Greenberg, 2008). This democratic impetus is a clearly definable component of the service-learning method where students are engaged in the learning process, and their labor contributes to the success of the whole (Kieismeier, Scales, Roehikepartain, & Neal, 2004; Krebs, 2008).

There were central components of Freire's philosophy of education that have directly impacted the pursuit and expansion of service-learning programs in school settings. Freire stated (1998) that education should raise the awareness of students to the world around them, and that the method for this engagement should center around training students to think democratically (Lyons, 2001). Freire's opinions on democracy echo the works of John Dewey and William Kilpatrick who each sought to personally engage students in the educational process thus creating a personal vesting in the educational outcome (Fogarty, 1997; Freire, 1998; Kilpatrick, 1951). This shared ideal of applied democracy is reinforced by Freire's philosophy of "second knowledge" (Freire, 1998). For Freire, there is a critical or reflective knowledge shaped by theoretical discussion, and there is an unconscious or practical knowledge that is only revealed by experiencing the subject through personal engagement (Lyons, 2001). Service-learning advocates see this "second knowledge" perfectly addressed in academic projects aimed at answering community and academic needs (Elias, 1994). Thus, service-learning proponents often validate their projects by measuring the intended learning against Freire's definition of knowledge (Elias, 1994). Knowledge, according to Freire, should not be limited to logic and content, or emotions and superstitions, but should seek the connection between understanding and feeling (Freire, 1998).

To apply this blending of logic and emotion Freire emphasized that education has to be democratic in nature. Teaching must be democratic to avoid dependence on the instructor. The learning process is meant to be mutual; teachers must become learners and the learners must become teachers (Freire, 1998). In this shared educational process true knowledge is attained by personally vested learners seeking to blend both the

intellectual discourse common to education with the emotional response of being personally involved (Hecht, 1999; Koth, 2003). The radical nature of Freire's life provides evidence of his authenticity, and this authenticity provides motivation for educators seeking real educational experiences able to shape and change their students present and future (Elias, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Freire, 1998). Freire's impact is evident in many educators who have realized the power of service-learning and the merits of democratically involved students.

Janet Eyler and Dwight Giles are contemporary educators who have spent their lives researching and proving the advantages of a service-learning based education. Their research has been pivotal to the growth of service-learning (Anthony, 2001). Their seminal work: *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* has been a crucial effort in the development of service-learning as a credible field of study, and the evaluation of the true merits of service-learning (Hardy, 1999). The research that this book was based upon was awarded the 1998 Outstanding Research Award by the National Society for Experiential Education (Anthony, 2001; Hardy, 1999). The book is a combination of the findings from two national research projects. These projects involved over fifteen hundred students from over 20 colleges and universities (Eyler & Giles, 1999). The success of their research has spurred myriad researchers onto the pursuit of current research delving into the growing academic area of service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 2003). Eyler and Giles, recognizing the need for coordinated research, founded the Annual National Service-Learning Conference which provides a springboard for research, workshops, and networking (Pernu & Weah, 2007). This conference celebrates its twentieth year in 2009. This convention has been tremendously influential to the

continued growth of service-learning, the increased recognition of the need for service-learning programs, and political support and funding (Markow, Martin & Comey, 2006). Eyler and Giles continue their pursuit of service-learning with challenges to contemporary researchers. Their updated project: “*A Service-Learning Research Agenda for the Next Five Years*” challenges researchers to look at the unanswered questions related to service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 2007). Their proposed gaps in research deal with the student, the faculty and staff, the institutions supporting current programs, the community, and the societal impact of service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 2007). A central area that Eyler and Giles found to be lacking in research is a base evaluation of the actual practices and strategies that contribute to the success of service-learning programs. This gap has become one of the primary motivating factors for this research dissertation. Research is needed to answer the question of the actual application of service-learning programs on the high-school level. This research will help advance the field of service-learning and the practical application of learning projects.

Each of these pioneers contributed to the present definition and understanding of the field of service-learning. While this is not an exhaustive list, each of these researchers contributed to the philosophical base of understanding and knowledge. Although only Eyler and Giles have directly and intentionally contributed to service-learning, each of these researchers have indirectly contributed to the philosophical roots of the field. John Dewey’s work on the importance of developing democratically minded citizens has impacted the very nature of service-learning. William Kilpatrick’s development of the “project method” is also foundational to the idea that students must be personally involved in their own educational process. Service-learning offers a

valuable and directly applicable involvement for students outside the classroom. Vygotsky and Bruner both challenged educational leaders to design service-learning projects with the experiences of the students in mind. Each person views the world through the lens of their own experiences, and for a service-learning project to be successful this lens must be taken into consideration. Freire's radical application of education as a tool for political engagement has been a rallying cry for many service-learning advocates. Proper service-learning answers a felt community need and Freire challenged educators to design educational opportunities with this in mind; education is meant to engage the student in the learning process through personal vesting. Finally, Janet Eyler and Dwight Giles have devoted their lives and their research to authentic and meaningful service-learning experiences. Their seminal research, orchestration of peer collaboration, and their continual challenging of new and necessary fields of research relating to service-learning have contributed to the growth of the field. These teachers, psychologists, and educational leaders have helped shape what we now call service-learning. Understanding the concepts and philosophies that shape the field of service-learning is an important component of assessing the practices and strategies that contribute to successful service-learning programs.

Community Service Verses Service-Learning

To properly understand what service-learning is, it is important to understand what it is not. Service-learning is not simply volunteering (Richardson, 2006). Service learning is school competencies applied to community problems (Connolly, 2005; Richardson, 2006). To be considered service-learning there must be an academic

component to the project, and the project must answer a community need (Allen, 2003). Community service is often mistaken for service-learning in schools (Hutchinson, 2005). Community service does not have the intentionality of a service-learning program where students are encouraged to understand the purpose and philosophy behind their service, they are given educational preparation prior to the experience, and they are debriefed after the service-learning experience as a component of the educational process (Julier, 2001).

When this confusion takes place a proposed service-learning project can have a negative impact upon the participants because it strays from its intended academic purpose (Hutchinson, 2005). Hutchinson saw this negative impact first hand when she evaluated the response of college students involved in community volunteering without the service-learning components leading to academic application (Hutchinson, 2005). In her study she evaluated college students who were mandated to serve a varying amount of hours volunteering with several community-based organizations. In her study she found that the majority of students developed an attitude of superiority fostered by their volunteering, they were unable to see the purpose behind their volunteer hours, and they did not state that they felt more involved as a member of the community (Hutchinson, 2005). This research serves to underscore the immense importance of developing service-learning programs that include student involvement in the design of each program. When students are included in each step of the process, and provided the tools to understand the societal challenges faced by each learning site, the students have a better opportunity of engaging the site emotionally and academically (Allen, 2003; Follman, 1998). Hutchinson states: “there must be a way to seek reciprocity and balance

between those serving and those being served” (2005). Without this reciprocity a service-learning project, an active source of learning designed with good intentions, can cause life-long damage to those serving and those being served. A well designed service-learning project provides a level of instruction that enables both parties to cognitively recognize that they are both giving and receiving throughout the service-learning experience. This form of educational experience by nature is beneficial because of the mutuality of the learning; however, mutuality is rarely attained by mandated hours of service with little to no preparation or follow-through.

By involving a student in a complete service-learning experience one can vastly diminish the tendency toward condescension, and patronizing or self-serving behavior because the student has taken the time to understand the problems that exist in the community (Julier, 2001). A thoughtful service-learning program involves students in the preparation for the project; the students have the opportunity to interact with the community organization to frame the problem, grasp the complexity of the need, and organize the educational objectives to match the need (Allen, 2003). A well-developed service-learning project will strive to achieve a level of equality between those serving and those being served by encouraging collaboration and the right mindset for service (Hutchinson, 2005; King, 2004). Finally, service-learning programs seek to apply the learning after the service experience through personal reflection, discussion, writing, and other methods meant to seal the learning (Berkas, 1997). This intentionality of program preparation separates service-learning from community service. Community service, while helpful and necessary in many ways, is no substitute for a well-structured service-

learning program meant to impact and change the community and the participants (Follman, 1998).

The Benefits of Service-Learning

There is a feeling among proponents of service-learning that all service-learning is good, and that any opportunity for student academic growth in a community setting is nothing but positive (Schwartzman, 2003). However, there have been many service-learning projects that have failed to produce any positive results (Giles & Eyler, 1998; Hutchinson, 2005). Student learning must be measurable rather than merely anecdotally positive, and for the educational experience to be considered valid it must be able to be duplicated in another educational setting. This brings to light the importance of well-structured and thoughtfully-designed service-learning opportunities (King, 2004). This also emphasizes the importance of conducting service-learning research that strives to measure and verify student changes that purportedly occur as a result of service-learning experiences (Giles & Eyler, 1998). The very purpose of service-learning should be questioned for a critical edge to be developed in the field; service-learning should not merely aid in career-oriented skills-building, but it should provide a basis for students engaging the social, economic, political, and ideological forces that shape our society (Grossman, 2008; Schwartzman, 2003). The growth of service-learning as a discipline will be far better served by those practitioners who approach the field with a desire to quantify and prove the merits of service-learning rather than those educators who act as blind cheerleaders for this often lauded field (Gardner, 1997; Schwartzman, 2003).

With this validation of the effectiveness of service-learning in mind, there are many potential educational and student developmental benefits of a well-designed service-learning program (Hecht, 1999; Koth, 2003). General proponents of service-learning cite increases in civic involvement, an increased sense of community, and a heightened global perspective (Beyer, 1996; Colby, 2007; Schwartzman, Spiezio, Baker & Bond, 2005). Administratively focused supporters of service-learning provide evidence for reduced discipline, increased academic performance, and a greater awareness of applicable career skills (Anderson, Kinsley, Negroni & Price, 1991; Cairn, 2000). Classroom teachers and those supporting the human sciences find advances in character development, collaborative skills, and a generally less self-centered approach to life through a well designed service-learning program (Eccles & Barber, 1993; Follman, 1998; Grossman, 2008). While there are countless educators, administrators, social scientists, politicians, and psychologists who provide a wholehearted endorsement of the myriad benefits of service-learning, it is crucial to document these benefits through proper research that measures the true academic benefits of service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Schwartzman, 2003; Spiezio, Baker & Boland, 2005). With a heightened level of academic research, the field of service-learning can gain an even greater foothold as a potential transformative educational tool (Giles & Eyler, 1994).

Civic, Community, and Global Engagement

Some of the strongest proponents of service-learning site an ever-decreasing sense of civic engagement and community involvement among the younger generations as a key impetus for service-learning programs. This perceived recent decrease in civic and

community pride has become a rallying cry for many supporters of service-learning programs (Schwartzman, 2003). Involved citizenship is undoubtedly a primary goal of all well-rounded educational opportunities (Freire, 1970; Grossman, 2008). The very roots of the philosophy of service-learning can be traced back to John Dewey who believed wholeheartedly that for education to be effective the students themselves must be a part of a democratic process; the students must be involved in their own educational outcome (Neill, 2005). Dewey defined the goal of this democratic process to produce good citizens who are prepared to participate in a society that needs their voice (Dewey, 1933; Wesley, 2000). Thomas Jefferson held to the idea that each generation of informed citizens had to invent and reinvent democracy. This perspective of democracy can present a problematic view because it assumes a certain level of volatility. However, this same volatility allows for a constant sense of change and an immense level of possibility (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Reinhold Niebuhr agreed with Jefferson and presented the theological application of this concept; he believed that, “human capacity for good is what made democracy possible and that the human capacity for evil made democracy necessary” (Delve, 1990). Whether one believes in a direct participation form of democracy like Jefferson, or one holds to a more representational philosophy of democracy, the key principal is that people must be thoughtfully involved in the process to bring about a favorable societal outcome. Apathy and ambivalence will never accomplish the goal of developing involved citizens (Prentice & Garcia, 2000). This is the heart and soul of the service-learning movement—involving students, giving them a voice in how their own communities can be served and developed (Rubin, 2001).

There are some researchers who believe that the issue of youthful civic apathy has been vastly overstated (Schwartzman, 2003). Many of the strongest service-learning proponents paint a rather dim picture of youth culture that borders on anarchy (Fox-Genovese & Scanlon, 1995). These same researchers seem to present service-learning as the educational answer to a society that has been devastated by a fragmented family structure, political instability, financial upheaval, and a fear of a lack of future opportunities (Pollitt, 1996). This dire perception may be drastically overstated and perhaps even critically incorrect (Schwartzman, 2003). According to the Undergraduate Survey, 64 percent of the more than 3,000 students questioned considered themselves “heavily involved in off-campus public service activities” (Levine & Cureton, 1998). UCLA’s 2001 national survey of college freshmen supports this data with even stronger numbers. Their survey discovered that “82.6 percent of incoming freshmen report frequent or occasional volunteer work, compared to 81 percent last year and a low of 66 percent in 1989. Contributing in part to this rise is the requirement of community service for graduation from many high schools, which has increased from 23.2 to 28.2 percent since the item was first asked in 1998” (UCLA Higher Education, 2002). The argument can be made that merely measuring the number of students involved in mandatory service does not provide an accurate reflection of the state of civic apathy; however, it is undeniable that the number of students who are involved in some capacity in their communities is at least numerically on the rise.

Simply participating in community service is not enough. This is where the very basis for service-learning provides insight to the data presented. For service-learning to be effective, it must be tied deliberately and strategically to the academic subject area

through preparation prior to the service event and opportunities for reflection and application after the service event (Beyer, 1996). This addresses the inherent problem with most service-learning data: there is minimal research that differentiates between true service-learning with a deliberate academic component and mere student volunteering where time spent volunteering counts as service-learning (Schwartzman, 2003). Richard Bradley, a researcher for Ohio State University, actually believes that when community volunteering is conducted apart from the academic application of service-learning students actually suffer a reduction in “responsibility to others, commitment to the community, and perceived relevance of service to the academic coursework (2003). Bradley’s research is a powerful motivator for service-learning being distinguished from volunteer work. Students must be connected to their service intellectually and personally before true change can take place on a personal level (Eyler & Giles, 1999). While more and more students consider themselves involved in service work, true civic engagement and community involvement will only be increased when service-learning replaces the perspective that physical involvement is enough. For students to gain a heightened sense of global involvement they must be challenged to engage their own communities through a deliberate and planned model of service-learning (Allen, 2003).

When students are challenged in a three stage model of service-learning (preparation, service, and reflection), students report a vast increase in civic involvement and a more thoroughly defined global perspective for the needs of the world at large (Spiezio, Baker & Boland, 2005). Perhaps more importantly, this model of service applied to learning is also the key factor in the self-motivated future civic involvement of participants—simply put, when students have the opportunity to thoroughly understand a

societal need they are more apt to assist with similar needs on their own in the future (Caspary, 1996).

Spiezio, Baker and Boland conducted research through the Democracy Project involving 1,243 undergraduate students at four different colleges enrolled in 39 courses from diverse academic programs. Their study found that “faculty can produce measurable and statistically significant changes in student attitudes toward the importance of engaged citizenship when they employ pedagogical strategies and instructional techniques expressly dedicated to the promotion of student engagement” (Spiezio, Baker & Boland, 2005). Through this study they discovered that it is possible to incorporate educational techniques aimed at promoting civic engagement in all academic subject areas that constitute a typical college campus. Their research was also significant because their survey data came both from students who had been involved in structured service-learning programs, and students who simply volunteered to fulfill a pre-established hourly volunteering requirement. When these two different student groups were compared, the students who had been involved in a clearly structured service-learning program were more than twice as likely to participate in community service after their structured, educationally related, service-learning program. These students had gained an insight into the purpose of service-learning and had come away from the experience with a personally vested sense of involvement; whereas the students who simply volunteered to fulfill a requirement did not report any significant personal vesting (Spiezio, Baker, & Boland, 2005). John Dewey believed that this personal involvement in the educational process is accomplished when students have a clear voice in the outcome of their education, and a thoughtfully designed service-learning program

clearly offers tremendous opportunities for this level of student involvement (Beyer, 1996).

School Discipline, Academic Performance, and Career Skills

Many school administrators and teachers have looked to service-learning as a “silver bullet” that promises to decrease school discipline referrals, increase academic performance, and assist in the multi-faceted levels of career skills and vocational preparation (Stewart, 2008). While there are many researchers who believe that service-learning provides the answers to all of these academic problems, there are just as many researchers who have found that service-learning has little to no effect on better behavior or better grades (Gardner, 1997). Much anecdotal evidence is provided in countless research articles about the academic advancements made by students after their participation in a service-learning program, but the fact of the matter is that little to no research exists that can quantifiably prove that student participation in service-learning programs produces any substantial reduction in student discipline or substantial increase in academic achievement (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gardner, 1997; O’Bannon, 1999; Scales & Blyth, 1993).

Several research projects have been designed to measure the academic and behavioral changes in service-learning participants. More than a decade ago a research project named “Project YES” supported the notion that service-learning programs were the answer to increasing student scores on standardized tests (Loesch, 1995). Research was conducted in 4 different city school districts on the east coast under the premise that student participation in a well organized and structured program would increase

standardized test scores, and reduce student discipline. At the conclusion of the study there was no statistical evidence for the improvement of academic output either in GPA accumulation of standardized test scores (Loesch, 1995). While there were several anecdotal stories used to demonstrate that academic achievement was altered in the individual lives of several participating students, there was no quantifiable evidence that could prove that these changes were as a result of their involvement in a service-learning program (Loesch, 1995). In this same study over 70% of the students stated that they understood the problems that existed in their community better after their participation in the service-learning programs, and that they believed it to be their responsibility to have more personal involvement in the progress of their community (Loesch, 1995).

A research project conducted through Indiana-Purdue University sought to measure academic increases and the level of empathy experienced by students. The study found that service-learning students scored “significantly higher” both academically and empathetically than other students not involved in service-learning but required to take the same college level course. Participants included 192 students enrolled in a lifespan developmental psychology course. These students were required to take four exams and complete a term project. The participants were permitted to choose between volunteering for a service-learning project, conducting an interview project, or writing a research paper (Lundy, 2007). All of the students were required to complete The Emotional Empathetic Tendency Scale (EETS) prior to the course measuring a “person’s predisposition to vicariously experiencing the emotions of others (Mehrabian, Young, & Soto, 1988). Students completed the EETS during the second week of the course, and again at the conclusion of the psychology course (Lundy, 2007). An ANOVA conducted on the

student's performance on exams demonstrated a significant effect. The average for the service-learning group for exams 2-4 was 86.93% compared to an average of 82.52% for the interview group, and 84.15% for the research paper group. In addition to marked academic increases, the service-learning students also demonstrated a much higher empathy score on the EETS. The service-learning group increased an average of 12.76% from the beginning of the course, whereas the interview group actually decreased by an average of 5.3%, and the research paper group decreased 9.82% (Lundy, 2007). While the number of students participating in the study is small, and the qualifying data on student self-choice could demonstrate a pre-disposition toward kindness, this is a good example of the kind of data presented meant to prove the academic gains of service-learning projects.

While there is not a large enough body of research that proves service-learning directly impacts academic achievement or student behavior, research does support the notion that service-learning positively impacts the practical area of career skills and career exploration (Billig & Conrad, 1997; O'Bannon, 1999; Perkins-Gough, 2009; Schwartzman, 2003; Stewart, 2008). It is evident, however, that for students to truly gain career skills it is essential that the service-learning project be properly aligned with the career exploration opportunity (Schwartzman, 2003). Service-learning, when intended to develop career skills, must be closely coordinated with student interests and future career opportunities (Richardson, 2006). In a national survey conducted by *Engaged for Success*, 807 high school students who had been involved in at least one service-learning experience were surveyed to discover what would keep them in school, and what learning activities had prepared them with career-oriented skills (Perkins-Gough, 2009). This

survey discovered that relevant, hands-on learning opportunities were the most applicable for career skills and vocational instruction (Perkins-Gough, 2009). More than 75 percent of the students surveyed cited their service-learning experiences as the most influential educational experiences of their high school years. To take this one step further, 82 percent of the students stated that their feelings about remaining in school became more positive after their service-learning experiences (Perkins-Gough, 2009). The data from this survey asserts that students were substantially more apt to remain in school, and find career-related applications for learning when involved in a service-learning program (Perkins-Gough, 2009).

A study conducted by *Adolescent and School Health* found that risky adolescent behavior was reduced by 30 percent in students who were regular participants in a service-learning program (Denner, Coyle, Robin, & Banspack, 2005). This same study found that service-learning students were more than twice as likely to remain in school, and have the ability to explain how their high school learning will apply to the workforce (2005). Service-learning may not be the ultimate solution for increasing academic scores and reducing negative behavior, but research demonstrates that properly applied service-learning programs help students with career skills by allowing them to discover the hands-on application of learning (Perkins, Coyle, Robin, & Banspack, 2005; Schwartzman, 2003).

Character Development and Collaborative Skills

Personal character and collaborative skills are areas of student development that are well-touted as critical goals of education by teachers, administrators, and politicians

alike. Martin Luther King Jr. said: “Intelligence plus character—that is the true goal of education” (Shaffer, Berman, Pickeral & Holman, 2001). Schools across America support character education by teaching values and character skills using curriculum provided by various organizations such as *National Schools of Character*, *Character PLUS*, and the *Character Education Partnership* (CEP, 1995). President Clinton developed the Corporation for National Service during his presidency; President George Bush Jr. supported the Americorp volunteer program by providing the leadership of Stephen Goldsmith, Bush’s top domestic advisor (Milbank, 2001); and currently President Barrack Obama has given new incentives to promote character development through the Martin Luther King Jr. foundation for community service (Newsweek, August, 2009). Providing students with the educational opportunities necessary to develop skills for good citizenship and a sense of community ownership is seen as a vital component of the educational process (Berman, 1997). Accomplishing these goals is the true challenge.

Service-learning has gained much attention on the national policy level and is a rare topic that enjoys bipartisan support as a valid and vital component of the development of the whole student (Milbank, 2001). The connection between community service and character development is a natural and organic fit for contemporary educational institutions. Recent school reform has seen a tremendous emphasis on the connection of academics to the “real world” and service-learning can provide the necessary bridge between the school and the community (Hedin and Conrad, 2001).

As academic institutions seek ways to connect the student with the larger world around them, the prevalence of organized service-learning programs in schools is rapidly

increasing. A study by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) stated that in 1984 only 27% of high school students were involved in some sort of school based service-learning program, by 1999 this percentage had risen to 83%, and by 2004 it was estimated that nearly 91% of all high school students have participated in some type of service-learning opportunity in the school setting (NCES, 2004). These students are developed intellectually, but they also have the opportunity to grow as good citizens. When the community becomes the application point for classroom learning, the student benefits through the learning achieved through textbooks and the learning gained through the experiences of the service-learning site (Milbank, 2001). This educationally orchestrated application of skills develops resiliency, the ability to adjust to changing needs and circumstances, a sense of social responsibility, critical thinking skills, and good citizenship (Brendeis, 1998; Hedin and Conrad, 2001). In a research project funded by NCES researcher Bruce Boston found that there were four distinct reasons that service-learning programs should be encouraged in the school setting:

1. Service-learning renders concrete the abstractions of moral teaching. Engaging in service confronts a young person with immediate and real needs in the real world. Seeing needs “up close and personal” in itself places a moral claim on a younger person, eliciting important moral questions about society’s solutions to problems.
2. The emotional satisfaction students gain from being involved in service to others and from a job well done imparts feelings of self-worth that reverberate beyond their lives. When students learn valuable skills in the process of service-learning projects, those skills can translate into career-forming and life-changing experiences.
3. The structure of service-learning fosters the development of such values as self-discipline, collaboration and team-building, respect for the quality of work done, and respect for others.
4. The experience of many service-learning teachers and programs is that providing the opportunity to serve others can build character in young people and move them in a positive direction (Boston, 1997).

By studying the data of the National Center for Educational Statistics, it was clear to Boston that service-learning provides a genuine opportunity for student growth in the areas of character and collaboration (1997). The key to a successful service-learning project was a well-organized educational offering that provided ample opportunity for the application of concepts (Berkas, 1997). By serving in well-structured service-learning project students were able to find the personal application of educational concepts so vital to solidifying the learning enough to cause personal change. According to these researchers service-learning provides a valid opportunity for genuine character development and the acquisition of the necessary collaborative skills to become a contributing member of society (Berkas, 1997; Boston, 1997; NCES, 2004; Milbank, 2001).

In a study by Gallini and Moely, character development and collaborative skills were further defined. These researchers assessed community engagement, interpersonal engagement, diversity, and political awareness for a group of 142 college students who self-selected a service-learning elective course (Simons and Cleary, 2006). In attempting to answer criticism over the lack of qualified data on service-learning, these researchers evaluated an academic service-learning program (school based) for academic growth, personal outcomes, and social outcomes using a dominant-less-dominant quantitative-qualitative explanatory methods design (Simons and Cleary, 2006). According to Creswell, “an explanatory methods design refers to a sequential phase of data collection and an integrative analysis of quantitative-qualitative data where quantitative results are used to generate questions and provide a context for the qualitative analysis” (2005). Students were measured before, at mid-term, and at the end of the course using this

methodology of data collection. The students were involved in one of two tutoring programs: the first program serviced at-risk students in a public K-6 school during school hours, and the second tutoring site also worked with at-risk students but the setting was an afterschool program for a K-8 public school (Gallini and Moely, 2003). The students received two two-hour training sessions on mentoring and tutoring, and continued help as needed by supervisors at the learning site. At the conclusion of the semester it was discovered that the college students participating in the service-learning course had reduced apprehension levels regarding problematic social issues, an increased desire for community involvement, and they had increased their long-term commitment to remaining involved in community service (Gallini and Moely, 2003). There was minimal evidence for numeric academic growth as a result of their involvement in this service-learning course (Gallini and Moely, 2003). This study is further evidence of the positive impact of service-learning on specific social skills necessary for character growth and increased collaborative skills.

While there is a large body of research that points to the success of service-learning programs on promoting character development and an increased ability for students to work together, not everyone is in favor of using service-learning to develop these skills (Berman, 2000). According to former Washington State Representative Dave Quall, an avid supporter of service-learning, some opponents see this type of education as an opportunity for a minority group to force religious or personal social values on a group of public school students (Shaffer, Berman, Pickeral & Holman, 2001). This fear was evidenced in Washington State when a 2001 state bill that would have required character education passed in the House 88-10 but was rejected in the Senate. Quall blamed the

failure of the bill on a misdirected fear of the term “character education.” Rather than having a fear of political correctness, Quall asserts that we should be emphasizing character education for the benefit of our students without political, religious, or social bias (Shaffer, Berman, Pickeral & Holman, 2001).

Another group of opponents believe that service-learning can actually have a detrimental effect on students by making them feel superior to those being served (Hutchinson, 2005). If a student is not prepared academically and emotionally before entering a service-learning site it is possible for them to leave feeling that those being served were needy because of their lack of skill or hard work, not recognizing the social and societal ramifications of many circumstances (Silcox, 1993). Mary Hutchinson, a researcher for Duke University, emphasizes the need for well-organized service-learning courses with ample preparation before the service activity, and abundant opportunity for reflection after the service activity (2005). Reflection engages students in deliberately pondering their own experiences providing them an opportunity to examine their own values and beliefs in relation to their service-learning experience (Sipe, 2001). This realization emphasizes the need to understand that service-learning is not national service, community service, internships, or field placement. Service-learning must be the hands-on application of academic learning (Eyler and Giles, 1999; Hutchinson, 2005). Laura Giles addresses avoiding a feeling of misguided superiority head on: “There must be some way to seek reciprocity and balance between those serving and those served, an effort to avoid the tendency toward condescension, patronizing or self-serving tenor that so often accompanies ‘charity work’” (2001). Avoiding this possible pitfall of service-learning only emphasizes the need for organized and structured three part service-

learning courses where students are prepared in advance with study topics, group work, and collaboration with the service site prior to the service; prepared for the actual service activity with the personal tools necessary to appropriately serve; and abundant opportunities for reflection after the service-learning activity to concrete the learning (Eyler and Giles, 1999). Service-learning, when properly conducted, is not simply volunteering (Richardson, 2006). Service-learning is the academic application of solving genuine community problems collaboratively (Connolly, 2005; Richardson, 2006). To be considered service-learning there must be an academic component to the project, and the project must answer a community need (Allen, 2003). When we provide our students with this type of well-structured learning opportunity data suggests that heightened character development and collaborative skills are a positive bi-product (Berman, 2000; Hutchinson, 2005; Shaffer, Berman, Pickeral & Holman, 2001; Sipe, 2001).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The impact that service-learning programs make in the lives of high-school students is well documented (Billig and Conrad, 1997; Cairn, 2000; Furco and Billig, 2002; Morgan and Streb, 1999); however, determining specific practices and strategies proven effective in high-school service-learning programs has not been studied conclusively (Eyler and Giles, 1999). Successful service-learning programs typically consist of pre-planning, the actual event, and post-study or debrief. While these three components are widely recognized as foundational to a successful service-learning program, very little research exists regarding the practical and strategic activities of successful service-learning programs (Humbley and Zambo, 1996). The results of this study help determine what activities and components are deemed most effective, and what practices and strategies can be effectively implemented in the high school service-learning setting.

By studying this specific gap in research, the professional literature addressing high-school service-learning programs is expanded. There is minimal research that shows any practical, hands-on assistance for the development of service-learning programs. By researching practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs, those designing and implementing service-learning programs have a base of knowledge to determine the viability and success of their specific project. This information helps others who seek to educate their students through this unique form of experiential education.

This research provides practical information for all educators and administrators seeking to design a successful high-school service-learning program. By having a better understanding of the practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs, teachers may avoid common pitfalls in the design and implementation of service-learning programs. Administrators may also have a better grasp of the redefined roles that teachers and students assume when collaboration is not just a goal but a requirement. This understanding of practices and strategies ultimately results in a more thoughtful and intentional service-learning program for the students who are meant to be impacted.

This desire to provide a more intentional educational experience for the students involved in service-learning may also impact the policies of high-schools. When evidence can be presented that successful service-learning programs consist of pre-planning, the actual event, and the post-study components, administrators and teachers may help promote this organizational style through policy specifications. Specific practices and strategies can then be implemented in accordance with this organizational style. Policy may also be largely influenced through a redefinition of the student-teacher role on service-learning projects. If collaboration were proven to be an essential practice, a strategic policy shift to collaborative education would be called for in this particular setting. This policy shift may provide an opportunity for teachers and students to collaborate in a new manner contributing to the success of high-school service-learning programs.

Finally, the outcomes of the research are significant to the researcher because he is a high school principal at a school where service-learning programs have been used

without tremendous intentionality for more than a decade. The results of this research help promote successful practices and strategies to be implemented in the researcher's current service-learning programs. Understanding the potential impact of service-learning on the lives of students provides the motivation to pursue such important research that may help make an overwhelmingly positive educational offering even more life-impacting and successful.

The researcher considered the following overarching question in this study: What practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs?

The following sub questions were used to answer the overarching question:

Question 1: What do students see as the most valuable components of the service-learning experience?

Question 2: How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?

Question 3: What types of extra-curricular activities were the students involved in, and did this personal involvement impact their service-learning experience?

Question 4: What specific learning objectives in the course impacted the outcome of the service-learning experience?

Question 5: What pre-event and/or post-event educational activities were service-learning students involved in that impacted their service-learning experience?

Design

The effective organization of a service-learning project is vital to the educational success experienced in the lives of the student participants (Furco & Billig, 2002).

Research supports the notion that academic impact is reduced when students are not presented the opportunities to experience a well-structured, thoughtful service-learning program (Billig & Conrad, 1997). A well organized service-learning project provides opportunities for student introspection prior to the service-learning experience, and reflection after the service-learning experience (Casparly, 1996; Colby, 2007). Research demonstrated that these pre and post activities seem to seal in and reinforce the intended learning for students with receptive minds prepared to learn from their service-learning experiences (Magolda & King, 2008).

The vast majority of research on the structural implications of service-learning projects has been done on the undergraduate level; therefore, it was important to explore the similarity or differences of implications in the lives of high school students. To discover the organizational implications of service-learning projects on high school students, a between-subjects approach was used to gain a better understanding of individual student experiences with service-learning programs at three different independent schools in a southern state (Cook & Campbell, 1979). Two of these schools have structured service-learning programs, and the third school stated that they are actively involved in community service (personal communication, January 6, 2010). This approach helped determine the current impact of the organization of service-learning projects, and the various organizational methods being currently utilized as viewed and experienced by participating high school students. By using this approach the

participants provided a variety of interpretations and perspectives to differing service-learning experiences through the survey tool, and the intentionality of each service-learning program was assessed and evaluated (Boruch, 1975).

The survey used for the research project was adapted from a previous mixed methods survey conducted in 1999 by Eyler and Giles of Vanderbilt University and funded by the Fund for the Improvement for Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). This college-level survey was explained in the work, Where's the Learning in Service-Learning? (1999). While the original survey explored the impact and effectiveness of service-learning programs on undergraduate students, this researchers survey was adapted to discover the differences in high school students learning patterns and the impact of organizational elements on the service-learning project.

Subjects answered questions in several different categories to explore the various organizational strategies utilized for high school students by service-learning coordinating teachers. The first section asked demographic questions to ensure the survey was reasonably balanced between each of the high school grades, and further adequately balanced between male and female high school students. This demographic section also sought to determine a basic understanding of the level of organization of past service-learning experiences perceived by the high school students. Further survey sections determined previous activities in high school, types of service, descriptions of this service, what was learned from the service-learning experience, and finally what structural elements occurred in their service-learning programs to encourage this learning. Three independent schools were used to ensure adequate variety in service-learning experiences. Two of the three independent schools purported to have structured

service-learning programs, and the third school stated that their students were actively involved in community service (personal communication, January 6, 2010). This variety and contrast of approach provided valuable insight into the importance of deliberate and intentional organization of service-learning programs.

A postpositive theoretical approach was used when evaluating the primary research question and the related sub questions in relation to the survey instrument (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). A mixed methods approach was used that was adapted from the original Eyler and Giles survey (1999). While the quantitative portion of the survey was used with an intended population of between 300-450 high school students, the qualitative interview portion was used with a select 6 students (2 from each school) who were identified by their teachers as “highly interested” in service-learning. The qualitative portion of the survey primarily sought to determine the motivation of high school students who are already actively involved in service-learning. The questions probe student interest in social issues and problems, and the importance of pre and post service-learning organizational elements such as journaling, presentations, training or orientation, and assigned readings. This qualitative portion involving students who have expressed genuine interest in service-learning programs provided a valuable comparison to the quantitative portion that involved a larger subsection of the student population who possibly did not share the same enthusiasm for service-learning programs. This mixed methods approach provided the right juxtaposition of student interest and awareness in the field of service-learning, and assisted in determining the impact of thoughtful organization on service-learning projects on the high school level.

Subjects

The participants in this study were high-school students from three independent schools in a southern state. The first school was the primary school for gathering data because of the relationship of the researcher at this institution. For research purposes this school was called Calhoun High School. The second participating school was called Sullivan High School, and the third school was called Donovan High School. The estimated total survey population from all three schools was between 300-450 students. Participating students ranged between 14 years of age and 18 years of age.

Calhoun High School reported a student population of 389 students. According to administration most of these students came from a working middle-class family background. Just over 30% of the student population received some level of need-based financial support; the greatest level of possible support was 50% of student tuition. The estimated tuition was between \$6,000 and \$8,000 per year. The greatest distance a student traveled to come to school was one hour and fifteen minutes but most students were within 30 minutes of the school. While most students lived in a suburban setting, some students came from the more urban sections of the community. Calhoun High School reported to have had a service-learning program for 5 years but also stated that community service had been a component of the school curriculum since the school's inception in 1961 (personal communication, January 6, 2010).

Sullivan High School reported a student population of 415 students. In an interview with an administrator the researcher learned that this school also supported a primarily middle-class student population coming from within 45 minutes of the school campus. Most students lived in suburban neighborhoods supported by a suburban school

setting. Several students had privately funded full scholarships, with 35% of the general student population having received some level of need-based financial aid. The estimated tuition was between \$6,000 and \$8,000 per school year. While the school did not report an organized service-learning program, community service was a mandatory component of their school curriculum (personal communication, January 6, 2010).

Donovan High School reported a student population of 309 students. An administrator stated that the average student population came from a socioeconomic background ranging from middle-class to upper middle-class. Most students came from within 45 minutes of the school campus; however there were several students who reportedly traveled more than an hour to school. Most students lived in a suburban home setting. Nearly 45% of the student population received some level of financial aid assistance. The estimated tuition at Donovan High School was between \$14,000 and \$16,000 per school year. The school had an organized service-learning program and a devoted part-time coordinator who worked exclusively with student service-learning activities and trips. The service-learning program was started in 2002 by several interested staff members and parents (personal communication, January 6, 2010).

Students were selected in various ways to participate in the quantitative portion of the service-learning survey. All participating students understood that taking the survey was voluntary and that no punitive actions would be given to a student who decided not to participate. Most of the intended student participants were minors so prior parental permission was gained through the "Parent Consent for Son or Daughter to Participate" form (Addendum A), and the "Minor's Assent" form (Addendum B). These forms were sent home with the students and collected by the voluntary survey administrators at each

school. If these forms were not returned prior to the administration of the survey, other arrangements were made for the supervision of these non-participating students at each school. The English students at Calhoun High School were asked to participate in the service-learning survey in their English classes. The four English teachers agreed to be survey administrators, and because of the relationship of the researcher it was anticipated that the majority of students would agree to participate in the survey. Sullivan High School agreed to have five Civics classes participate in the survey. There was a possibility of 114 student participants in the survey. Two Civics teachers agreed to be the survey administrators. Donovan High School elected to use the students who participated in the existing service-learning program for the survey, and the service-learning director agreed to administer the survey. It was estimated that at the time of the survey administration 91 students were involved in the service-learning program.

The experimenters at all three schools were teachers who had some involvement in service-learning or community service. Five experimenters were female and two experimenters were male. Each experimenter was instructed to read the “Resource A: Survey Instrument” prior to administering the survey (Addendum C). This page described the voluntary nature of the survey, possible benefits of the survey, and directions on how to complete the survey. Each experimenter was instructed not to add to the explanation of the survey thus maintaining the integrity of the variables. The experimenters were blind to the hypotheses that organizational elements of service-learning programs have tremendous impact on the outcome of the projects, and no discussions occurred between researcher and experimenter on this subject. The researcher was onsite for all of the administrations of the surveys to reduce the risk of

variance in administration. After the administration of the surveys the experimenters submitted all survey data to the researcher for review. The experimenters were also asked to provide the names of two students who were considered highly interested and involved in service-learning or community service. These students then participated in the quantitative portion of the survey at a later date.

After the quantitative survey was administered (Addendum D), each school was asked to recommend two students who would be considered highly interested and involved in service-learning to be interviewed for the qualitative portion of the mixed method survey (Addendum E). This portion of the survey explored the motivation and background of high school students already identified as highly interested in the field of service-learning. These six students (two students from each school) were interviewed by the researcher. Notes were taken on the interviews that were later studied and categorized depending on responses. These qualitative interviews provided valuable insight into the necessary organizational elements commonly recognized by students who value the service-learning experience and make the personal choice to remain personally involved in these types of learning projects over and above school expectations for annual community service.

By limiting the grouping to students who already had some prior service-learning or community service experience, the data gained from the survey had a greater level of potential impact. While there were potentially over 1,100 students to survey when tallying all three independent schools, the researcher made the decision to limit the potential number of respondents to the areas of each school where students had some level of prior experience in the field of service-learning or community service. All three

supporting schools chose to administer the survey instrument in a setting where community service was a core component of the established curriculum, and therefore the data gained from the mixed method survey was particularly helpful. By making the decision to include the subpopulation of students with some level of prior experience, students without service-learning experience were excluded; therefore the data pool was more meaningful.

When answering the question of the validity of the number of potential subjects, current literature was reviewed to determine the typical number of survey subjects from other similar research (Rossi, 1990). First of all, very little research existed that studied the impact of service-learning projects on high school students (Delve, 1990). Most research dealt with undergraduate students typically participating in a service-learning course or required program (Eyler & Giles, 1997). Most of the examples of research dealing exclusively with high school students studied the impact of service-learning on just one program, thus providing a very small sample size (Beyer, 1996; Stewart, 2008). There was one research example that dealt with a broader swath of students; however these students were on the elementary level making the research less applicable (Akujobi & Simmons, 1997). There were also three examples of research that dealt with larger populations of students but the sponsoring agency sought to discover the impact of service-learning on the state of residence and from a student-centered perspective not for the purpose of organizational impact (Anderson, Kinsley, Negroni & Price, 1991; Billig & Conrad, 1997; Krebs, 2008). Only a few examples of research studied broader subpopulations across more than one high school program; however none of these research studies dealt specifically with the impact of organizational elements on service-

learning (Cairn, 2000; Eccles & Barber, 1993; Scales & Blyth, 1993; Shumer & Duckenfield, 2004). The number of respondents ranged from a small sample of 28 high school students (Casparly, 1996) to a larger population of over 800 students in Massachusetts (Anderson, Kinsley, Negroni & Price, 1991). With this kind of range in respondent populations, it was asserted that a potential survey population between 300-450 high school students provided a valid sample to make basic assertions about the impact of organization on high school service-learning programs.

Setting and Apparatus

The general context where the research took place was a standard sized classroom with approximately 20-25 chairs in each room. In most of the administering classes the chairs were set up in rows, but in two of the rooms the chairs were set up at an angle facing where the instructor would typically stand. In each of the rooms there were at least one white board and at least one bulletin board. None of the rooms were decorated in a distracting manner to take away from the survey administration. Both Calhoun High School and Donovan High School had projectors or interactive boards in each of the rooms. This technology was not used in the administration of the survey. The administering teacher was instructed to read the section entitled “Resource A: Survey Instrument—About the Survey” (Addendum C). They were also instructed not to add to the instructions with any personal clarification that could possibly skew the results of the survey. Other supervisory arrangements were made at each of the schools for those students not returning the parental consent or the student assent forms. These students were supervised in other classroom locations. In the test administration of the survey

students took between 35 and 45 minutes to complete the survey so one class period was afforded for the administration of the survey to the volunteer participants.

While no technical apparatus was involved in the survey administration, the tool that was used was a mixed method survey. The survey was made up of five different components. The first component was the “Parent Consent for Son or Daughter to Participate” (Addendum A), and the “Minor’s Assent” form (Addendum B). This consent form was given to the students to take home for parents or guardians to read, review and sign one week prior to the administration of the survey. The administering teachers agreed to be responsible for the collection of the consent forms and requested students bring the forms back to school the following day. On the form a parent or guardian had three choices: they could choose to give consent, they could choose to gain more information through a personal contact from the researcher prior to the administration of the survey, or they could choose to not allow their child to participate in the survey. These three choices were clearly spelled out for the parent or guardian. They were required to check the appropriate box and then sign the consent form.

The second component of the survey was the “Resource A: Survey Instrument—About the Survey (Addendum C). This section explained that the survey was interested in the views and opinions of students with vast experience in service-learning and community service and students with minimal experience. It underscored once again that the survey was completely voluntary and that there would be no punitive measures for any student who choose not to participate in the survey. The main goal of the survey was explained as: “to help high schools plan for the most effective kinds of community service opportunities for their students” (Addendum C). The instructions for the survey

were simple: “consider each statement carefully, read the instructions before each subsection to make sure that your choice best reflects your experience or opinion, and then circle your answer directly onto the survey instrument.” Again, one class period was provided to complete the survey instrument.

The third component was the largest section because it was the quantitative survey instrument (Addendum D). The instrument was broken down into several subsections. The first section was the demographic section determining year in high school, gender, service-learning experience, and basic questions on the organizational elements that were included in the student’s prior service-learning experiences. The next section had 45 questions broken down into several subsections: Your Previous Activities, Types of Previous Service, Whom You Worked With, What You Did, Description of the Service, What You Learned from Your Community Service, and How You Learned from Your Community Service. These sections were meant to uncover how the perceived learning experiences were tied to the organization of the service-learning experience for the purpose of gaining necessary data to aid in the future organization of service-learning experiences.

The final section was the qualitative interview section that had been adapted from the Corporation for National Service (CNS) reflection interview section. This same section was included in the primary survey adapted from Eyler and Giles and had been modified for the purpose of applying the survey to high school students rather than college students. For this qualitative portion of the survey, each school was asked to provide two students who were deemed highly interested and involved in service-learning or community service. These students were asked a series of questions by the researcher

in an interview setting to determine the impact of organizational elements on their service-learning experiences. Warm-up questions began the session simply asking about past experiences and how they became involved in the field of service-learning. This warm-up section was meant to uncover experiences and motivation that encouraged these students to continue serving over and above the requirements of their particular school. The second subsection asked these students to delve into their personal reflections of social issues and problems. The primary emphasis of this subsection was on specific personal experiences that surprised them or provided them with some level of clarification about the roots of social issues or problems. Finally, the students were asked to provide specific information on reflection experiences. What were the elements that their instructors included that helped most in their preparation prior to the volunteering experience, and what was included to help solidify the learning after the service experience. Specific examples included journals, discussions, presentations, required reading, lectures, training, guest speakers, and specific orientation to the social problems. These were the sections that comprised the mixed method survey instrument meant to gather data on the implications of organization on service-learning projects on the high school level.

Measures

The survey instrument used in this research was adapted from a previous survey by Eyler and Giles. Eyler and Giles' survey was published in their book Where's the Learning in Service-Learning? published by Jossey-Bass in 1999. The original survey helped uncover the preconceived notions of undergraduate students in regard to their

learning expectations, presented vast amounts of data about the learning process related to service-learning, and explored the ties between the organization of service-learning programs and outcomes. The project was sponsored through a grant by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). The survey conducted by Eyler and Giles was comprised of two basic parts: the quantitative survey written by the authors, and a qualitative survey that had been adapted from a prior survey by the Corporation for National Service (CNS) (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

The original survey was multi-faceted and highly detailed in the collection of data. The study began with student focus groups, interviews, and pilot surveys but was eventually extended to include over fifteen hundred students from twenty colleges and universities. Of these fifteen hundred students, over eleven hundred of them were involved in some type of service-learning program when the survey was administered. The surveys were conducted before a semester long course on service-learning, and at the conclusion of the course to explore the educational and emotional impact of service-learning. In addition to this quantitative survey there was also an indepth qualitative survey that included interviews with sixty-six students from twenty colleges (Eyler & Giles, 1999). This qualitative portion was meant to explore the personal reflections of students who were personally and independently vested in a service-learning program over and above their required school involvement. Eyler and Giles focused on student perception of social issues and problems, and the organizational implications of the service-learning project on the students. The researchers explored with specific detail what learning activities were included in service-learning projects such as the following:

journals, written assignments, discussions, presentations, training/orientation, lectures, group activities, and assigned reading.

For the purposes of the proposed high school survey, the sections of the original Eyler and Giles survey dealing with specific practices and strategies that contribute to the success of service-learning programs were used almost verbatim. The minor adaptations implemented were to ensure that the wording was not directed toward college students, rather than the current intended high school participants. For the qualitative interview portion of the survey, the CNS interview was also used almost verbatim with the only changes being made to ensure the proper wording for the intended high school participants. By using both of these sections, the adapted quantitative portion and the adapted qualitative portion, effective practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs were measured.

The measurement of student responses was conducted using various assessment strategies. In the Community Service History section (Addendum D), students provided basic information about community service or service-learning experience using simple “yes” or “no” answers to describe previous experience. This simplistic measurement strategy was intended to provide a method of categorization for correlating future more complex questions dealing specifically with the structure of service-learning programs. In the Your Previous Experience section (Addendum D) participants answered six questions indicating their level of involvement in specific activities ranging from “Always (each week)” to “Never.” This section helped support pertinent research that states that involved students tend to participate more effectively in service-learning projects due to their proclivity toward participation (Beyer, 1996; Eccles & Barber,

1993). In the Types of Involvement section (Addendum D) students described who they worked with during their service-learning experience and in what types of activities they participated. There were only two questions in this section, and these questions were meant to determine whether the service-learning experiences were or were not school related. The participants had five options for their involvement meant to determine who they worked with: children, teens, adults, peers (people your age), or agency staff. The largest section of the quantitative survey was the What You Did section (Addendum D) meant to describe the student's total community service experience. This section had twenty-four questions with potential answers ranging from "Very Often" to "Never." This section sought to expand on the actual activities of the service-learning experiences as viewed by the student participant. The final two sections of the survey were the What You Learned from Your Community Service and How You Learned from Your Community Service sections (Addendum D). These sections each had five questions with responses ranging from "Most Important" to "Not Important." These questions were specifically related to practices and strategies that have contributed to the perceived success or failure of their service-learning or community service experiences.

To provide an opportunity for students to add their opinions to the practices and strategies that contributed to the perceived success or failure of their service-learning experiences, two open-ended questions were provided for students to add personal reflection on preparative educational tools utilized before the service event, and reflective opportunities used after the service event. By providing these open-ended questions data was gathered that supported information gleaned in the qualitative portion of the survey

conducted with six students (two from each school) recognized to be highly interested and involved in the field of service-learning over and above defined school requirements.

Procedure

This service-learning survey was intended to discover the impact of organizational techniques, methods, and teaching tools that have proven advantageous to high school students with some previous level of experience in the field of service-learning or community service. There are many steps that were taken to ensure the reliability of the data and the validity of the measures. Vast research has been done on the undergraduate level in the field of service-learning; however, limited research has been conducted on the high school level to aid in the creation and development of thoughtful and successful service-learning programs. The researcher has sought to describe the complete process involved in the administration of the survey tool and the measures taken to ensure validity of data.

Prior to the survey design, the researcher called and interviewed an administrator from three different schools in a southern state: Calhoun High School, Sullivan High School, and Donovan High School (school names changed to protect anonymity). In this interview the researcher asked certain questions related to the demographics of the school, and asked specific questions about current service-learning programs or community service programs. The researcher asked the following demographic questions:

1. What is the student population of grades 9-12?
2. What is the breakdown of student population in each grade?
3. What is the gender percentage in each grade level?
4. What is the average socioeconomic background of the student's families?

5. How far does the average student drive to attend the school?
6. Is transportation available to all students or is transportation the responsibility of the parents or guardians?
7. Are your average students coming from an urban, suburban, or rural residence?
8. How much is the tuition of the school including fees?
9. Does your school have a community service program or service-learning program?
10. What does service-learning mean to you?
11. How long has your school participated in service-learning or community service?
12. Would you be willing to have a service-learning survey administered in your school meant to help in the creation and administration of service-learning programs in the future?
13. What would be the best setting to administer this type of survey in your particular school?
14. Would I be able to utilize the classes and teachers suggested to administer this survey to the selected student population?
15. Would you like a copy of the results of the survey once all data is calculated and studied?

From these interviews the researcher was able to determine that Calhoun High School would participate through their English department. There would be four experimenters for the administration of the survey, all teachers in the English department. This department had studied service-learning just prior to the survey administration through the correlation of Martin Luther King Day, and challenged the student body to give 8-10 hours of community service over and above the 5 hours per quarter required. Sullivan High School agreed to participate through their Civics department. Five classes were provided for the researcher, and two teachers acted as the experimenters for the survey. While Sullivan High School did not claim to have a service-learning program, they did have mandatory community service hours assigned every quarter. Donovan High School had the most deliberate service-learning program available of the three schools with a dedicated part-time coordinator for service-learning activities and trips. This program

was completely voluntary with nearly 100 students participating annually. The coordinator of the school's service-learning program acted as the experimenter.

The correct amount of parental consent forms and minor's assent forms were personally delivered to each school by the researcher (Addendums A & B). These parental consent forms were sent home with the students and the collection of the parental consent forms were handled by the volunteer experimenters. The experimenters used their class attendance lists to check that all consent forms were returned within a two day period. The consent forms provided the opportunity for parents or guardians to choose from three options: agree for their student to participate, request more information prior to student participation, or deny participation in the survey. Once all participation forms were returned, the researcher collected these forms in person from the volunteer experimenters one week prior to the administration of the survey.

When subjects arrived on the predetermined day for survey administration they were asked to be seated. The experimenter read "Resource A: Survey Instrument—About the Survey" (Addendum C). This information explained the nature of the survey, voluntary participation, and described the researcher. Finally, this section provided instructions for taking the survey. One class period was provided for the administration of the survey (Addendum D). Experimenters were instructed by the researcher not to add to the instructions from their own personal experience thus maintaining the validity of the survey and reducing variances between administration sites. In an attempt to provide blind experimenters with limited bias the researcher did not expound on the purpose of the survey or hypothesis of the survey with the experimenters prior to the administration of the service-learning survey.

Once the administration of the survey was complete, the experimenters read a pre-written statement thanking the students for their participation in the survey. This statement explained that their participation in the survey might help design more effective service-learning programs in the future, and the statement provided an opportunity for any questions to be directed to the researcher via the supervising teacher. This statement ended the formal administration of the survey. The volunteer experimenters collected the surveys and gave them directly to the researcher who was on site for the administration of the survey.

These same volunteer experimenters provided two students from each school who were considered highly interested and involved in service-learning or community service for the administration of the qualitative portion of the survey (Addendum E). Each school provided a conference room for the administration of the qualitative survey. Each survey took approximately 45-60 minutes to administer personally with each student. Each school provided one pre-determined day where each student was permitted to leave class one at a time to have the qualitative survey administered by the researcher. The researcher read the section entitled "Reflection Interview Guide" (Addendum E) to the student and then proceeded with several warm-up questions. The qualitative survey consisted of three sections: personal service history, thinking about social issues and problems, and reflective program experience. Notes were taken from these sessions and these notes assisted in the formulation and comparison of quantitative and qualitative data. Once the interviews were concluded the students were thanked for their participation and sent back to class. The parental permission form that was used in the survey had a section for parents to request a final copy of the research findings. These

student reflections were particularly helpful in juxtaposing the quantitative survey, and provided practical input into what had already been deemed as helpful in motivating students toward continual service-learning involvement.

CHAPTER FOUR

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The methodology utilized in the research process was both a quantitative survey delivered to a larger student population from three independent schools, and an interview conducted with two students from each school. The survey used in the research was adapted from a previous mixed methods survey conducted in 1999 by Eyler and Giles of Vanderbilt University and funded by the Fund for the Improvement for Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). This college-level survey was explained in the work, Where's the Learning in Service-Learning? (1999). While the original survey explored the impact and effectiveness of service-learning programs on undergraduate students, this researcher's survey was adapted to discover the differences in high school students learning patterns and the impact of organizational elements on the service-learning project.

The combination of the quantitative service-learning survey and the personal interviews was intended to discover the impact of organizational techniques, methods, and teaching tools that have proven productive and helpful to high school students with some previous level of experience in the field of service-learning or community service. There were many steps that were taken to ensure the reliability of the data and the validity of the measures. These steps were outlined in the previous chapter and dealt with the specific procedure of survey implementation and interview format. The student reflections from both components were particularly helpful in juxtaposing the quantitative survey, and providing practical input into what has already been proven helpful to motivate students toward continual service-learning involvement. While vast

research has been done on the undergraduate level in the field of service-learning, limited research has been conducted on the high school level to aid in the creation and development of thoughtful and successful service-learning programs. By reviewing the research questions, research design, providing a demographic of the respondents, and presenting the findings and data analysis as related to the research questions, a broader picture of the importance of this data has been created.

Research Questions

As demonstrated by the survey, service-learning possesses tremendous potential for making a life-altering academic impact on the lives of contemporary students. While many educators feel that project involvement is all that is required, the teaching practices implemented and strategies employed are the foundational elements that are truly necessary to produce demonstrable change in the lives of students. By preparing themselves intellectually and emotionally before entering a service-learning site, students will have a heightened sense of ownership in their labor. Similarly, students who have the planned opportunity for discussion after the service-learning project have a better chance of internalizing the learning. It is intended that ownership be developed before and after the service-learning event. The successful service-learning project is intentionally developed with built-in opportunities for preparation, discussion, and debrief. The success of the service-learning project hinges on this level of intentionality. Therefore, the research questions were developed with these goals in mind.

The researcher has considered the following overarching question in this study:
What practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high-school service-

learning programs? The following sub questions have been used to answer the overarching question:

Question 1: What do students see as the most valuable component of the service-learning experience?

Question 2: How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?

Question 3: What types of extra-curricular activities were the students involved in, and did this personal involvement impact their service-learning experience?

Question 4: What specific learning objectives in the course impacted the outcome of the service-learning experience?

Question 5: What pre-event and/or post-event educational activities were service-learning students involved in that impacted their service-learning experience?

These five questions, defined by the overarching question, helped develop the five major correlating findings of the study

While the impact that service-learning programs make in the lives of high-school students is well documented by current research, the identification of specific practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs has been minimally studied. Successful service-learning programs typically consist of pre-planning, the actual event, and post-study or debrief; however, very little research exists regarding the practical and strategic components of successful service-learning programs. The results of this study have helped determine what components are most successful and what practices and strategies can be effectively implemented in the service-learning setting. The data gained through this study has contributed to the research meant to

determine the most effective development and implementation of service-learning programs, and community service opportunities for high school students. By engaging the data using the lense of the aforementioned research questions, clear and applicable suggestions can be made for the future development of programs aimed at engaging students in the learning process through service-learning.

Research Design

As has been stated, the survey instrument used in this research has been adapted from a previous survey by Eyler and Giles. Eyler and Giles' survey was published in their book Where's the Learning in Service-Learning? published by Jossey-Bass in 1999. The original survey helped uncover the preconceived notions of undergraduate students in regard to their learning expectations, presented vast amounts of data about the learning process related to service-learning, and explored the ties between the organization of service-learning programs and outcomes. The project was sponsored through a grant by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. The survey conducted by Eyler and Giles was comprised of two basic parts: the quantitative survey written by the authors, and a qualitative survey that had been adapted from a prior survey by the Corporation for National Service.

The original survey was multi-faceted and highly detailed in the collection of data. The study began with student focus groups, interviews, and pilot surveys but was eventually extended to include over fifteen hundred students from twenty colleges and universities. Of these fifteen hundred students, over eleven hundred of them were involved in some type of service-learning program when the survey was administered. The surveys were conducted before a semester long course on service-learning, and at the

conclusion of the course to explore the educational and emotional impact of service-learning. In addition to this quantitative survey there was also an indepth qualitative survey that included interviews with sixty-six students from twenty colleges. This qualitative portion was meant to explore the personal reflections of students who were personally and independently vested in a service-learning program over and above their required school involvement. Eyler and Giles focused on student perception of social issues and problems, and the organizational implications of the service-learning project on the students. The researchers explored with specific detail what learning activities were included in service-learning projects such as the following: journals, written assignments, discussions, presentations, training/orientation, lectures, group activities, and assigned reading.

The original data utilized by Eyler and Giles was analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression with controls for age, minority status, family income, and a listing of other community service or formalized service-learning that students were involved with prior to the survey experience. Only 22 percent of the college students responding to the survey had experienced any form of service-learning in high school. As a point of direct correlation, 70 percent of the college students reported that their parents had been involved in some level of community service, and 23 percent of these students reported parental involvement at least two or three times each month. Eyler and Giles found a direct correlation between these students with high frequency volunteering parents and the perceived success and merit of current service-learning programs. These students appeared pre-disposed to seeing the value and merit of service-learning for both the recipient and those involved in the service.

Of the students surveyed by Eyler and Giles, 67 percent reported voluntary service during their college years. Freshmen had the lowest percentage of volunteering with only 47 percent, while 82 percent of seniors reported some level of voluntary service during their senior year. Eyler and Giles suggested that the path to service was more frequently traveled as college students progress through their undergraduate years. Simply speaking, there were more upperclassmen who participated in service-learning than underclassmen. These same students were found to have higher scores on the pretest measures for citizenship, political attitudes, and social opinions leading Eyler and Giles to conclude that involvement in service-learning promotes life-long active citizenship (Eyler, 1997).

In the interview portion of the Eyler and Giles survey, there were several pertinent qualitative conclusions. Qualitatively the path to service-learning was most often begun with direct service to children, with 62 percent of the respondents reporting working with elementary age children as their first service experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Even on the college level service directly related to children continued to be the most common form of community service with 36 percent reporting involvement with children as their primary form of service. Respondents also had varied experience with community service ranging from one year to upwards of thirty-two years of volunteer service experience. Of those with extensive service (9 years or more of volunteer service), 79 percent of them chose to be involved in at least one college course as a direct result of the opportunity to be involved with a community service component in the classroom setting (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

These results of the pilot study have helped inform the process and procedure of the current research. For the purposes of the proposed high school survey, the sections of the original Eyler and Giles survey dealing with specific practices and strategies that contribute to the success of service-learning programs were used almost verbatim. The minor adaptations implemented were to ensure that the wording was not directed toward college students, rather than the current intended high school participants. For the qualitative interview portion of the survey, the CNS interview was also used almost verbatim with the only changes being made to ensure the proper wording for the intended high school participants. By using both of these sections, the adapted quantitative portion and the adapted qualitative portion, effective practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs were measured.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The participants in this study were high-school students from three independent schools in a southern state. The first school was the primary school for gathering data due to the relationship of the researcher at this institution. For research purposes this school was called Calhoun High School. The second participating school was referred to as Sullivan High School, and the third school was referred to as Donovan High School. While the estimated total survey population from all three schools was 428 students, the actual number of students who responded to the survey was 371. Participating students ranged between 14 years of age to 18 years of age.

Calhoun High School reported a student population of 389 students. According to the administration most of these students came from a working middle-class family

background. Just over 30% of the student population received some level of need-based financial support; the greatest level of possible support was 50% of student tuition. The estimated tuition was between \$6,000 and \$8,000 per year. The greatest distance a student traveled to come to school was one hour and fifteen minutes but most students were within 30 minutes of the school. While most students lived in a suburban setting, some students came from the more urban sections of the community. Calhoun High School reported to have had a service-learning program for 5 years but also stated that community service had been a component of the school curriculum since the school's inception (personal communication, January 6, 2010).

Sullivan High School reported a student population of 415 students. In an interview with an administrator the researcher learned that this school also supported a primarily middle-class student population coming from within 45 minutes of the school campus. Most students lived in suburban neighborhoods supported by a suburban school setting. Several students had privately funded full scholarships, with 35% of the general student population receiving some level of need-based financial aid. The estimated tuition is between \$6,000 and \$8,000 per school year. While the school does not report an organized service-learning program, community service was a mandatory component of their school curriculum (personal communication, January 6, 2010).

Donovan High School reported a student population of 309 students. An administrator stated that the average student population comes from a socioeconomic background ranging from middle-class to upper middle-class. Most students came from within 45 minutes of the school campus; however there were several students who reportedly travelled more than an hour to school. Most students live in a suburban home

setting. Nearly 45% of the student population received some level of financial aid assistance. The estimated tuition at Donovan High School was between \$14,000 and \$16,000 per school year. The school had an organized service-learning program and a devoted part-time coordinator who worked exclusively with student service-learning activities and trips. The service-learning program was started in 2002 by several interested staff members and parents (personal communication, January 6, 2010).

Students were selected in various ways to participate in the quantitative portion of the service-learning survey. All participating students were informed that taking the survey was voluntary and that no punitive actions would be given to a student who decided not to participate. Most of the intended student participants were minors so prior parental permission was gained through the “Parent Consent for Son or Daughter to Participate” form (Addendum A), and the “Minor’s Assent” form (Addendum B). These forms were sent home with the students and collected by the voluntary survey administrators at each school. If these forms were not returned prior to the administration of the survey, other arrangements were made for the supervision of these non-participating students at each school. The English students at Calhoun High School were asked to participate in the service-learning survey in their English classes with the four English teachers as survey administrators. There were 231 students who completed the survey at Calhoun High School. Sullivan High School agreed to have five Civics classes participate in the survey. There was a possibility of 114 student participants in the survey, and 67 students completed the survey. Two Civics teachers agreed to be the survey administrators. Donovan High School elected to use the students participating in the existing service-learning program for the survey, and the service-learning director

agreed to administer the survey in conjunction with the Upper School Principal. It was estimated that 91 students were involved in the service-learning program, and 73 students participated in the survey.

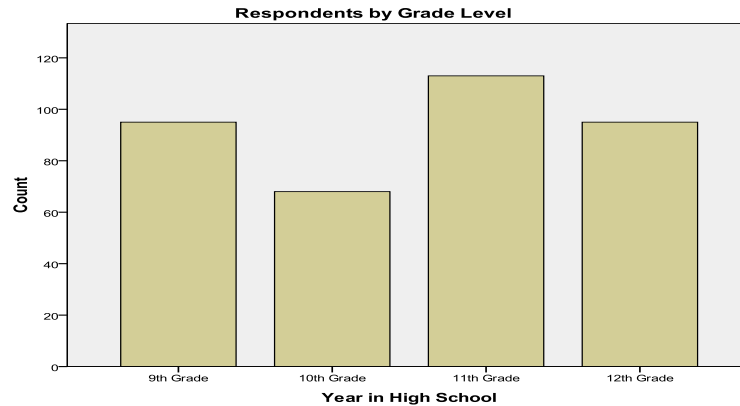
The experimenters at all three schools were teachers who had some involvement in service-learning or community service. There were five female experimenters and two male experimenters. Each experimenter was instructed to read the “Resource A: Survey Instrument” prior to administering the survey (Addendum C). This page describes the voluntary nature of the survey, possible benefits of the survey, and directions on how to complete the survey. Each experimenter was instructed not to add to the explanation of the survey to maintain the integrity of the variables. The experimenter was blind to the experimental hypotheses that organizational elements of service-learning programs have tremendous impact on the outcome of the projects, and no discussions occurred between researcher and experimenter on this subject. After the administration of the surveys the experimenters submitted all survey data to the researcher for review.

After the quantitative survey was administered (Addendum D), each school was asked to recommend two students who would be considered highly interested and involved in service-learning to be interviewed for the qualitative portion of the mixed method survey (Addendum E). There were four female students and two male students selected for this qualitative portion. This portion of the survey explored the motivation and background of high school students already identified as highly interested in the field of service-learning. These six students (two students from each school) were personally interviewed by the researcher. These qualitative interviews provided valuable insight into the necessary organizational elements commonly recognized by students who value

the service-learning experience and made the personal choice to remain personally involved in these types of learning projects over and above school expectations for annual community service.

By limiting the grouping to students who already had some prior service-learning or community service experience, the data gained from the survey has a greater level of potential impact. While there were potentially over 1,100 students to survey when tallying all three independent schools, the researcher made the decision to limit the potential number of respondents to the areas of each school where students should have some level of prior experience in the field of service-learning or community service. All three supporting schools chose to administer the survey instrument in a setting where community service is a core component of the established curriculum, and therefore the potential data gained from the mixed method survey was particularly helpful. By making the decision to include the subpopulation of students with some level of prior experience, students without service-learning experience are excluded; therefore the data pool is more meaningful (Graph I).

The total number of students tested between all three independent schools was 371 students. Of these students 95 students (25.6 percent) were freshman; 68 students (18.3 percent) were sophomores; 113 students (30.5 percent) were juniors; and 95 students (25.6 percent) were seniors (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Survey Respondents by Grade Level

It is worth noting once again that the students surveyed were selected by their schools because of their perceived involvement in service-learning programs. This fact helps inform the findings from the data.

Findings

Introduction

These findings seek to answer the overarching question: *What practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs?* The researcher sought to study this question in response to a perceived increased societal need for academic involvement and student participation. There are many teen-related social problems such as teen violence, teen pregnancy, and a fragmentation of the traditional family structure that continue to be focused on by the media; and as a result of these societal ailments there is a perceived diminishing of the importance of civic involvement. Developing academic opportunities to engage our youth in meaningful character development is enormously important. Seeking to understand how academic opportunities best stimulate character development and a heightened sense of civic duty

is essential. Also, having a greater understanding of the best practical applications and implementation of such service-learning programs would be beneficial. Identifying best practices and strategies that help promote this student growth would be beneficial to the field of service-learning.

Research Questions and Major Findings

The quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey helped provide answers to the questions presented earlier in Chapter 3. There were five sub questions studied meant to support and reinforce the overarching question: What practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs? The five sub questions are as follows: 1. What do students see as the most valuable component of the service-learning experience?; 2. How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?; 3. What types of extra-curricular activities were the students involved in, and did this personal involvement impact their service-learning experience?; 4. What specific learning objectives in the course impacted the outcome of the service-learning experience?; and 5. What pre-event and/or post-event educational activities were service-learning students involved in that impacted their service-learning experience? This section was organized around these five research questions and then correlated to the following major findings discovered through the mixed-method survey.

The major findings are detailed in more depth in the sections that follow; however, a summary of the five major findings are as follows:

1. When students are involved in providing genuine and necessary service, they recognize service-learning as a vital and meaningful component of their personal and academic growth.
2. There is a spiritual component to the activity associated with service-learning that is natural, highly valued by the students, and encourages genuine change.
3. Extra-curricular involvement did not appear to have a significant impact on service-learning involvement in either frequency or attitudinal response.
4. Pre and post event learning activities tied to specific learning objectives are essential to the perceived success of a service-learning program, yet they rarely occur on the high school level.
5. Service-learning at the high school level would benefit from a greater level of organization and intentionality involving pre and post learning activities.

These five major findings will be studied in relation to the five research questions. Both the research questions and the findings are best understood when evaluating them through the lens of the overarching question: what practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs?

Research Question 1: What do students see as the most valuable component of the service-learning experience?

After studying the data related to the first research question, it becomes evident that students value personal involvement in every stage of the service-learning process. It is clear that for the service-learning experience to be viewed as meaningful, the students must be given the opportunity for personal involvement in genuine service

working with people who truly need their volunteer labor. In both the quantitative portion of the survey and in the qualitative portion the students clearly demonstrated that their service needed to be perceived as vital. With 304 of the 371 respondents considering “real service” as at least “Very Important” the picture becomes clear that this form of mutually beneficial service site is crucial to a successful service-learning experience.

The student need for genuine service was reinforced in the qualitative portion of the survey. In the qualitative portion of the survey two students from each school were interviewed. These students were chosen by the survey administrators at each school as students interested and involved in service-learning. In five of the six interviews when the students were asked “what has kept you doing service?”(Question 7) the students answered that they were not involved in “busy work.” For five of six students at three different schools to use this exact term strongly underscores the importance of providing real opportunities for students to use their skills in an environment where their input is necessary, vital, and is at least perceived as changing the service site for the better. Students need to feel needed for them to consider their sacrifice in time and energy worthwhile. From an educational perspective the vitality of the service site, and the active involvement of the students in work that is necessary, is a key component to sealing in the learning and instruction.

This first sub question illuminates the first major finding: *When students are involved in providing genuine and necessary service they recognize service-learning as a vital and meaningful component of their personal and academic growth.* In both the quantitative and qualitative portions there are two clear lessons to be learned when

designing and implementing service-learning programs: learning must be meaningful; and students should be provided the opportunities for organic, natural conversations with peers and other people working at the service site. By providing service sites with hands on opportunities for the students serving, and by orchestrating opportunities for peer discussion, the service-learning program should experience a greater level of success. This success should drive the positive presentation of future service-learning opportunities in the school setting, where potentially more students can be involved and feel that their service was worthwhile.

Students want to be involved in real service that truly matters. There appears to be a direct correlation to the felt and understood need of personal service and the attitudinal response of students who valued the service-learning process. In the table below there are two clear stories that become evident: the need for informal sharing and discussions, and the overwhelming desire to provide real service to people.

Table 4.2 How You Learned from Community Service

		Statistics				
		Providing real service to people	Teacher presentations	Reflection in journals or writing	Informal sharing and discussions	Formal debriefing sessions
N	Valid	371	371	371	371	371
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.2642	1.6415	1.4609	2.2695	1.9191
Std. Deviation		.87936	.83394	.78531	.93440	.90878

In the quantitative survey section entitled “How You Learned from Your Community Service” students were asked to determine the source of the understood learning in their

service-learning experience. In Table 4.2: How You Learned from Community Service, 185 respondents listed “providing real service to people” as *Most Important*, and 119 students listed this same classification as *Very Important*. Out of 371 respondents, 304 students determined that they learned best when providing real service to people in the service-learning setting. With a mean of 3.26 and a standard deviation of .88, it becomes clear that students want to be involved in service that truly matters. This data becomes even clearer when the other student choices are provided. Students were given the opportunity to choose other options where they perceived real learning to originate: teacher presentations, reflection in journals or written assignments, informal sharing of experiences with other volunteers or classmates, or formal debriefing sessions or class discussions.

There is a clear correlation that surfaces between teacher presentations, written reflections, and formal debriefing— they were all summarily viewed as largely inconsequential components of the learning process with means between 1.46 and 1.92. The respondents in this survey felt strongly that they did not learn from these components of the service-learning process, at least in the manner they were originally presented. The only other choice that held any statistical importance for the students was “informal sharing and discussions” with a mean of 2.27 and a standard deviation of .93. On this quantitative question, 283 respondents felt that having these kinds of informal discussions with other volunteers or classmates was at least “somewhat important.” This question specifically did not include the teacher or instructor in this discussion format to determine whether a more organic level of discussion was what students needed to seal in the learning from the service-learning experience.

When evaluating this section of the quantitative survey it becomes evident that students desire to be personally and actively involved in a service site where they are working with real people, providing real service, and given the organic opportunity to discuss the learning taking place with those serving in the same setting. The challenge placed before teachers and service-learning coordinators is to provide the types of learning sites for students where they can feel involved and necessary, and then provide these same students the opportunity to discuss their feelings and attitudes with each other in an organic and natural manner.

This need for organic involvement is further demonstrated when we juxtapose the aforementioned questions with quantitative data meant to ascertain whether students felt their time was well spent and productive. In the survey section entitled “Describe Your Service” there were several questions interspersed with specific project descriptions that were intended to measure attitudinal response toward their own personal involvement in the service-learning site.

Table 4.3 Personal Involvement Questions

		Statistics				
		Had important responsibilities	Made important decisions	Activity was interesting	Did things myself	Made a real contribution
N	Valid	371	371	371	371	371
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.4016	3.3208	3.8194	3.6604	3.8733
Std. Deviation		1.06943	1.18416	1.15419	1.19595	1.05657

Students were given five choices on this section ranging from “Never” to “Very Often.” With mean scores ranging from 3.32 to 3.87 it is further underscored that students desire to be personally involved in the service-learning site. Of these five questions, there were two questions that resulted in high frequency numbers in the areas of “Fairly Often” and “Very Often.” When asked to determine whether, “What I did was interesting” 107 students marked category number 4 “Fairly Often” and 132 students stated that their service-learning experiences were interesting “Very Often.” Of 371 students responding 239 students felt that the activity was interesting at least, “Fairly Often.” This resulted in a mean of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 1.15. The second question that resulted in high frequency numbers was when students were asked if they, “Felt I made a real contribution.” On this question, 122 students responded “Fairly Often” and 125 students stated “Very Often.” With 371 students responding, 247 students determined that they had made a real contribution to the service site at least “Very Often” resulting in a mean of 3.88 and a standard deviation of 1.06. When evaluating the data from Tables 4.2 and 4.3 it becomes clear that students desire to be personally involved in the service-learning site, make personal contributions that are meaningful, and work at tasks that are both interesting and organic.

Research Question 2: How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?

On both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey it became clear that students perceived their community service as spiritually significant and personally rewarding. Students seemed to make a natural correlation between helping others, and

this assistance being an act that was distinctly spiritual in nature. It is important to note that the comments made were not “religious” in nature, with all the negative connotations associated with this term, but could be considered more loosely “spiritual.” At the conclusion of the quantitative survey students were asked: “What else would you like to share about your community service experiences?” More than half of the students took the time to comment on their experiences from a spiritual perspective, here is a sampling of their comments:

“I get to see the joy on kid’s faces and their parents every Sunday since I was eight when I help with the kid’s programs.”

“When I helped coach the Middle School football camp we conducted a Bible study afterwards and I helped. That was a great experience.”

“That I absolutely love doing community service, and spending time helping others helps build character.”

“I volunteer to help people with disabilities almost every week, it’s spiritually life changing.”

“Community service is something that I take rather seriously because in order for the community to excel we all must do our part. This is why I am grateful that [the] school requires this of us. It changes us.”

“Feeding the homeless people on Christmas was the most rewarding thing I’ve ever done. Not only mentally but spiritually. Everyone was homeless and never guaranteed a meal yet they shared the little food that they had and were grateful.”

“It helped me grow spiritually and made me feel like a better person.”

“It was very fun and exciting. I loved helping others and to put a smile on others faces. It brings peace and warmth in our heart to actually watch others have fun because of our generosity.”

“Not only did they open my heart but they opened my eyes to what the world was like outside our little middle-class bubble.”

“They make you feel blessed because you helped.”

“I helped cancer patients and found that their faith inspired me to give my all in the other parts of my life.”

From this small sample of voluntary student comments, it is obvious that service-learning provides students the opportunity to learn, grow, and make lasting life changes. This realization helped provide the basis for the second major finding: *There is a spiritual component to the activity associated with service-learning that is natural, highly valued by the students, and encourages genuine change.*

What was most intriguing was to see how many students described the personal internal changes that occurred through their service-learning experiences as spiritual in nature. This spiritual act was not traditionally religious in nature for most students. Although there were students who commented on church involvement, students also defined feeding the homeless as spiritual, working with cancer patients as spiritual, helping the disabled as spiritual, and coaching a football camp as spiritually edifying. From their comments students clearly shared a common sentiment that service-learning provides a spiritual opportunity to break out of their “middle-class bubble,” “build character,” and grow on a deeper spiritual level. Students appear to be searching for involvement in activity that has a personal impact and an impact on those around them.

From the data, it appears that service-learning provides one such opportunity for genuine life change. This finding was true quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

The section of the quantitative study titled, “What You Learned from Your Community Service” was intended to measure the second sub question: *How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?* There were five questions in this section intended to measure various personal changes: an internal understanding of the similarity of those serving to those being served, the rewarding nature of service-learning, the spiritual aspect of volunteering, specific skills that were fostered, and whether students viewed social problems differently.

Table 4.4 What You Learned from Your Community Service

		Statistics				
		Those served are like me	Rewarding to help others	Spiritual growth	Specific new skills	Saw social problems in a new way
N	Valid	371	371	371	371	371
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.2480	3.2453	3.0054	2.4447	2.7925
Std. Deviation		1.84331	.86474	.99457	.92651	.91092

When studying this data, two stories seem to emerge: the first is a confirmation of how rewarding the service-learning experience has been on the students involved, and the second involves the spiritual nature of the service-learning experience. When this quantitative spiritual component is combined with the qualitative interviews an interesting picture is presented regarding the change that occurs in students of a spiritual nature.

It is clear from this data that students learned that it is rewarding to help others. Of the 371 students surveyed, 132 students (35.6 percent) felt that the lessons learned from helping others were “Very Important,” and 175 students (47.2 percent) determined these lessons to be “Most Important.” This means that 82.8 percent of the students surveyed determined that it was rewarding to help others through service-learning and volunteering in their communities. With a mean of 3.25 and a standard deviation of .87 the data is clear that students overwhelmingly determined that helping others through community service and service-learning is a tremendously rewarding experience.

The second story that emerges, that of spiritual growth, is potentially a larger story when examined with both the quantitative data and the qualitative interviews. Again, students were asked to measure on a four stage Lickert scale ranging from “Not Important” to “Most Important” whether a lesson learned through service-learning involved spiritual growth. On this question, 119 students (39.4 percent) of the students surveyed listed spiritual growth as “Most Important,” and 146 students (32.1 percent) of the students considered spiritual growth as “Very Important.” Nearly three quarters of the students perceived personal spiritual growth as at least “Very Important.” A mean of 3.01 and a standard deviation of .99 further confirm the importance placed on this form of personal engagement by the students in regard to their service-learning experiences.

A natural secondary question to this finding is to determine what is meant by “spiritual growth” to the students being surveyed. If this spiritual importance was traditionally religious in nature one would anticipate that this same percentage of students would claim to be involved in formal or organized church culture but the data did not prove this to be true.

Table 4.5 Student Involvement in Religious Clubs or Organizations

Religious clubs/groups					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	70	18.9	18.9	18.9
	2.00	71	19.1	19.1	38.0
	3.00	73	19.7	19.7	57.7
	4.00	71	19.1	19.1	76.8
	5.00	86	23.2	23.2	100.0
	Total	371	100.0	100.0	

When students were asked about their extracurricular involvement, 23.2 percent of students said they “Always” went to religious clubs/groups” and 19.1 percent of students said they “Often” attended these same types of venues. In comparison 18.9 percent of the students surveyed said they “Never” attended religious clubs/groups and 19.1 percent of students said they “Seldom” attended religious clubs/groups. So while 42.3 percent of students attended distinctively religious youth organizations, nearly the same amount of students, with 38 percent, claimed that they seldom or never had any association with these types of distinctly religious youth organizations. Yet even with these similar statistics for religious participation, nearly three quarters of the students expressed “spiritual growth” as a primary component of their service-learning experience. It would seem that the students being surveyed considered their experiences as spiritual because they were engaged in something bigger than themselves and witnessed genuine change taking place inside of them and inside of those being served.

In further exploring the spiritual significance of service-learning from a qualitative perspective, it is helpful to describe the students who participated in the

qualitative survey. Two students were interviewed from each of the three schools for a total of six students. Calhoun High School provided one male and one female student, Sullivan High School also selected one male and one female student, and Donovan High School asked two female students to participate in the qualitative portion of the survey. Of these students, five of them mentioned some type of religious affiliation when asked to discuss their previous service-learning experiences. Three of these five came from some type of protestant background and two students came from a Jewish background. The sixth student made it clear that she was not involved in any form of organized religion, and was quite frank in her skepticism regarding things religious in nature. This line of discussion was not fostered by the interviewer but originated from the student's own answer to "what past service-learning experiences had aided her development." The interesting component of the interviews was that all six of the students referred to "spiritual" experiences in service-learning as one of the key components as to why they continue to be involved in service-learning. While these students were not asked to define the term "spiritual," they each presented anecdotal evidence that described their service-learning experience as deeply personal and meaningful. Each student described their service-learning activities by telling experiential stories that helped underscore their own personal and positive experiences, and helped explain how they had changed through their experiences. The student experience ranged from working with a church youth group to feeding the homeless downtown to working with children in an aftercare program. Each of the six students had multiple experiences with volunteering and felt that these experiences were actively shaping them as they approached adulthood.

In evaluating each of the findings it is interesting to note that this specific finding is less specifically tangible or measurable, yet the spiritual significance of service-learning is clearly evident from a quantitative and qualitative perspective. It was clear when reading the voluntary student responses at the end of the quantitative section of the survey that students viewed service-learning as a valuable spiritual exercise. The vast majority of students viewed service-learning as spiritually significant; therefore, the challenge then for educators is to design projects where students have the opportunity for this kind of personal growth. In the qualitative interviews the students largely defined this spiritual growth process as deeply personal and individually meaningful. Using the research already conducted it would be logical to assume that providing students the opportunities before and after the service event to share their own feelings and experiences would be a key factor in solidifying the learning process.

Providing opportunities for students to share their own emotional responses to the service-learning activity could provide for personal and vicarious change. The second sub question speaks to this type of internal change: *How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?* From a qualitative perspective this personal change was well evidenced in the interview with one of the students from Calhoun High School. This student had vast experience in volunteering, community service, and service-learning and could clearly explain the differences between the three types of service in terms of intentionality and organization. This student explained that he goes downtown with a group of individuals who provide dinner for the homeless every Wednesday night in the park. When he first began volunteering he simply did it because it was a “cool thing to do,” but as he continued going he found that he developed an

unhealthy form of “pride from the service.” As he said, “it was like I was better than the people I was serving dinner to, and I felt like I was better than my friends at school because they weren’t doing this kind of stuff.” He explained that this type of pride continued to grow in his spirit until he finally realized his mistake and finally began looking at the people he was serving as “human.” “That seems like an awful thing to say about someone else,” he said. “But before that I looked at my service like going to the mall or going out fishing...it was just another thing to do.” But once he realized that these were real people who were counting on him to help them it was no longer just about serving food but it was about him having the privilege of helping others. He noted that this was a real “spiritual” step for him.

Here the idea of spiritual change is again revisited from an anecdotal perspective where this step of growth is described in similar terms to a personal epiphany. The learning took place for this young man through the process of repeated serving. This realization in and of itself could be a central idea to changing student’s views through service-learning. Educators need to provide the opportunity for frequent and repeated service through various well organized and well planned service events. Students might not be truly impacted in their first attempt at service learning, or their second, or perhaps even their third; student change is more probable with more exposure to the proven teaching tool of service-learning. This student understood the lessons he learned from his community service to be distinctly rewarding and distinctly spiritual in nature.

Research Question 3: What types of extra-curricular activities were the students involved in, and did this personal involvement impact their service-learning experience?

It is commonly held that students who are involved in extra-curricular activities tend to be more purposefully involved in service-learning activities. The basic premise is that a student who is involved in extra-curricular activity is more apt to be involved in community activity because of an assumed recognition of the importance of community. It would appear logical that a student who is involved in school culture athletically or socially, would be more inclined to be involved in a potentially social activity like service-learning. In Eyler and Giles' original survey they found that 64 percent of college students who stated that they had been involved in frequent community service (nine times or more) also described themselves as involved in extra-curricular activities (1991). In comparison, seventeen percent of students who claimed to be involved in frequent community service stated that they had little to no involvement in extra-curricular activities (Eyler & Giles, 1999). This data would seem to indicate that students who were involved in extracurricular activities were four times as likely to also be involved in service-learning.

This correlation of extra-curricular involvement also carried over to the parents of the students in Eyler and Giles' survey. Eyler and Giles found that 70 percent of the college students reported that their parents had been involved in some level of community service, and 23 percent of these students reported parental involvement at least two or three times each month. Eyler and Giles found a direct correlation between these students with high frequency volunteering parents and the perceived success and merit of current service-learning programs. These students appeared pre-disposed to seeing the value and merit of service-learning for both the recipient and those involved in the service (Eyler & Giles, 1999). It would appear that these students were taught the

importance of being involved in additional and meaningful activities from their parents, and that this same desire for community involvement was being translated in the life of the student.

With these previous findings in mind, the data of this researcher's survey did not conclude with the same findings. This data eventually lead to the third major finding: *Extra-curricular involvement did not appear to have a significant impact on service-learning involvement in either frequency or attitudinal response.* This data is evidenced by the following table dealing with previous involvement.

Table 4.6 Your Previous Activities

		Statistics				
		School/clubs/groups	Community service	Athletic Teams	Work for pay	Parents active in SL
N	Valid	371	371	371	371	371
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.8625	3.1860	3.6739	2.9003	2.5553
Std. Deviation		1.30900	1.05545	1.53300	1.44007	1.26877

On the question of parental involvement impacting the service-learning habits of their children, 25.1 percent of high school students surveyed stated that their parents were "Never" involved in community service. In addition, 27.8 percent of students surveyed stated that their parents were "Seldom" involved in any form of community service. This makes 52.9 percent of high school students surveyed (mean of 2.56 and standard deviation of 1.27) whose parents seldom or never participate in any recognized form of service-learning to exemplify the importance of this activity. This lack of involvement is

underscored by the perceived level of involvement of the parents of the students surveyed. Only 9.4 percent of students considered their parents “Always” involved in community service, and 14.6 percent of the students considered their parents “Often” involved. Therefore, only 24 percent of these parents were considered to have made service-learning or community service a component of their regular lifestyle. If it is assumed that “Always” would be defined as a regular monthly pattern of parental community service, then the 9.4 percent findings of this researcher stand in stark contrast to the 23 percent findings of Eyler and Giles’ survey administered to college students.

In regard to the extra-curricular involvement of the students, the data simply does not present a clear picture of the relatedness of other forms of student involvement to the willingness to also be involved in additional service-learning activities. When evaluating the various other recognized activities of the students surveyed percentages of involvement were similar with the exception of athletic involvement. When students were asked about their involvement in athletic teams either for their school or town, 46.4 percent of the students stated they were “Always” involved in athletics, and 16.4 percent were considered to be “Often” involved (mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of 1.53). This 62.8 percent of frequent athletic involvement is quite different from the other statistics. When students were asked about their involvement in school clubs or groups 13.7 percent said they were “Always” involved and 19.7 percent stated they were “Often” involved for a total of 33.4 percent (mean of 2.86 and standard deviation of 1.3). This level of involvement is similar to the 36.7 percent (20.5 percent “Always;” 16.2 percent “Often”) of students who said that they had a part-time job (mean of 2.9 and standard deviation of 1.44). From the current level of data in the present form of collection, there

is no clear correlation between student involvement in extra-curricular activity and their involvement in service-learning.

Research Question 4: What specific learning objectives in the course impacted the outcome of the service-learning experience?

There are myriad learning objectives touted by supporters of service-learning believed to foster a variety of educational goals. However, there are certain commonly understood objectives shared by most researchers when discussing the proposed educational objectives of a well designed service-learning project or program. The first is that those involved in the service-learning experience should be a part of the learning from start to finish. They are not meant to be passive bystanders only involved in the actual service event, but instead active participants who feel ownership because of their involvement in every stage of the activity. This could be as simple as meeting for planning sessions where all participants are free to present their own ideas and discuss the intended benefits of the proposed service-learning experience, or as complex as measuring the changes that have occurred in those serving from an educational and personal perspective. In either case a properly designed and implemented service-learning opportunity should challenge the participants to apply what they have learned in their own social, educational, and vocational roles. There were several questions inserted in the “Describe Your Service” section of the quantitative survey meant to explore these ideas and ideals associated with learning objectives.

Table 4.7 Learning Objectives

		Statistics				
		Volunteers met for seminars	Free to develop ideas	Project met identified needs	Experience challenged opinions	Will apply learning
N	Valid	371	371	371	371	371
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	2.2372	3.1698	3.3342	2.8302	2.6253
	Std. Deviation	1.23368	1.16050	1.23524	1.22176	1.20911

When asked whether the “volunteers met for seminars/formal discussions of the service,” a 2.24 mean with a standard deviation of 1.23 resulted leading this researcher to believe that this type of participatory activity “Rarely” to “Never” took place to any degree of frequency. The data revealed a mean of 3.17 with a standard deviation of 1.16 when asked if students felt “free to develop and use [their] own ideas.” This could reveal that more ownership took place during the actual activity than in the preparation stages prior to the service-learning activity. This assumption would seem to be validated by the question of whether students felt that the “project met needs identified by members of the community.” On this question a 3.33 mean and a 1.24 standard deviation seem to support the idea that ownership was developed on the service site rather than in the classrooms prior to the service-learning. The final two questions are meant to measure the personal impact of the service-learning experience on the participants. Unfortunately, when asked if the “experience challenged [their] previous opinions” the students yielded a 2.83 mean with a standard deviation of 1.22 pointing toward little long-term impact on the student participants. This less than positive response was validated by a 2.63 mean and a 1.21 standard deviation when asked if students “will apply things [they] have learned during service experience to [their] classes.” Very few of the students felt they were involved

in the planning process or experienced long-term changes as a result of the service-learning experience.

The lack of perceived impact leads the research to the fourth major finding: *Pre and post event learning activities tied to specific learning objectives are essential to the perceived success of a service-learning program, yet they rarely occur on the high school level.* While there was some positive feedback on students being permitted to share their own ideas, and student perception that the needs of the service site were being met “sometimes” was moderately affirmative, the data appears clear that learning objectives were not understood by the vast majority of the students. We understand the vital nature of pre and post learning activities, and how these learning activities must be tied to specified learning objectives. While the research clearly points to the potential impact of service-learning, it also underscores the need for well designed service-learning programs where students feel that they are a part of the learning process. The fourth and fifth findings are not mutually exclusive; they are only understood then evaluated together.

Research Question 5: What pre-event and/or post-event educational activities were service-learning students involved in that impacted their service-learning experience?

In the quantitative survey section entitled “Describe Your Service” there were eight questions directly related to the educational events that took place prior to the service event and after the service activity. These questions asked the students whether they had kept a journal, whether the coordinator or teacher had responded to the journal, whether they had completed written assignments about the project or project site, whether the coordinator or teacher had led discussions where the students had the opportunity to

share their feelings, whether the coordinator or teacher had led discussions where the students had an opportunity to analyze community or organizational problems, whether the coordinator or teacher applied the service-learning experience to classroom instruction, whether the students had the opportunity to present their experiences and findings in an oral presentation to other class members, and if the students had the opportunity to discuss their service-learning experiences with the teachers. From the data presented it becomes obvious that pre and post activities rarely took place in any of the three schools that participated in the service-learning survey.

The percentage of students who responded either “Never” or “Rarely” tells a clear story of the lack of pre and post activities being formally utilized on the high school level. When asked if the student was requested to keep a journal 75.7 percent responded “Never” and 7 percent responded “Rarely.” Therefore, 82.7 percent of students rarely or never kept a journal as a component of their service-learning experience. This equates to a mean of only 1.53 and a standard deviation of 1.05. When asked if the coordinator or teacher responded to their journal 79.7 percent responded “Never” and 7.8 percent responded “Rarely” (mean of 1.43 and standard deviation of .96). So it is clear that journals are rarely if ever used and therefore 87.1 percent of students have not experienced any feedback regarding this writing opportunity. Written assignments were also rarely used as a formal source of educational growth either before or after the service event as evidenced by a mean of 1.75 and a standard deviation of 1.17. On this question 64.2 percent of students had “Never” completed a written assignment about the service site, and 12.1 percent of the students said that they had “Rarely” utilized writing as an active component of their learning. Similar percentages are also the case with whether

the coordinator or teacher had ever led discussions where the students had the opportunity to share their feelings about their experience. On this question 52.8 percent marked “Never” and 16.4 percent marked “Rarely.” So 76.3 percent of all students surveyed did not have the opportunity to share their feelings about the service site in an organized fashion. Although data proves that organic discussion prior to and after a service event are vital to the success of the learning, this question yielded a mean of 1.91 and a standard deviation of 1.14.

Table 4.8 Pre and Post Evaluative Activities

		Statistics			
		Kept a journal	Teacher responded to journal	Completed written assignments	Teacher encouraged feelings
N	Valid	371	371	371	371
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.5283	1.4286	1.7493	1.9164
Std. Deviation		1.04552	.95981	1.16675	1.14421

When asked whether the teacher or coordinator had led discussions where the students were encouraged to analyze community problems and organizational problems, 45.6 percent said that they had “Never” been provided this opportunity and 21 percent said they had “Rarely” been afforded this educational opportunity for a total of 66.6 percent. This question produced a mean of 2.09 and a standard deviation of 1.56. Similar projections exist when asked if the coordinator or faculty led discussions where the learning taking place in the service site was then related to classroom instruction. This question yielded 56.9 percent answering “Never” and 17 percent answering “Rarely” for

a total of 73.9 percent of students having never been given the opportunity to apply their service-learning to their classroom learning for a mean of 1.83 and a standard deviation of 1.33. The next question also proved to be similar in result to the previous questions. When asked if the student had been given an opportunity to give a speech or presentation to their peers regarding the service-learning experience as a component of the post learning experience 66.3 percent of students stated “Never” and 15.4 percent chose “Rarely.” Only 18.3 percent of students surveyed had any opportunity to orally present their personal experiences and learning regarding the service-learning site. This question yielded a mean of 1.62 and a standard deviation of 1.033. The final question asked whether the students had the opportunity to discuss their experiences with the teachers. On this question more than 69 percent of the students said that they had never or rarely had discussions with their teachers for a mean of 2.26 and a mean of 1.14.

Table 4.9 Pre and Post Evaluative Activities Continued

		Statistics			
		Teacher led analysis of problems	Teacher related service to class	Gave a speech about experience	Discussed with teachers
N	Valid	371	371	371	371
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.0916	1.8329	1.6226	2.2642
Std. Deviation		1.55519	1.13380	1.03345	1.14622

When the frequency, mean, and standard deviation data are evaluated in detail it becomes overwhelmingly clear that students are rarely given the opportunity to seal in the learning

that service-learning provides. This data presents a stark realization that students are not receiving one of the most vital components of service-learning on the high school level.

From the research gathered in earlier chapters it is clear that the pre and post events of a service-learning program are essential to the success of the experience. The research clearly demonstrates that the practices that are applied and the strategies implemented during the service-learning project have tremendous potential impact on the success of the service project for the students involved. Pre-studying is meant to prepare the students through the academic areas that are directly related to the service-learning project that has been designed. The final component of academic debrief, where students will complete their chosen projects and be given an opportunity to apply the learning through various planned activities, is also proven vital to the success of service-learning projects. This debrief can take many forms such as a final paper, or this final step can be orally facilitated by the teaching supervisors. When a service-learning activity is organized in this fashion the service-learning becomes a mutual and shared educational encounter between student, teacher, and those at the learning site. The intention of this type of educational experience is to challenge students to apply their knowledge and their passion on the local level. As every teacher desires, the educational goal of this kind of experiential education is to ultimately produce democratically minded citizens who apply what they have learned in the real world.

Unfortunately, as we can see from this data the service-learning projects studied do not utilize these additional components with any level of consistency although research clearly emphasizes their importance. By neglecting to include the pre and post activities the students are never given the opportunity for a thoughtful and well structured

service activity. Excluding these vital components may reduce the chance of a student being actively involved in service-learning during their adult life. A well structured and thoroughly planned service-learning project becomes a powerful teaching tool that links both community-service experiences, and foreign-service experiences, to daily classroom instruction.

It becomes clear that it is not enough to just know *what practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high school service-learning*, teachers and coordinators must apply this learning to the administration of the service-learning project for the project to be truly successful. It is a challenge to properly execute the many facets of a well organized service learning project. For the most part these 371 students were not given the opportunity to fully experience service-learning. This lack of opportunity is a firm answer in itself. This data, combined with what we already know from research, provides a powerful directive to utilize best practice when designing and implementing service-learning opportunities. Educators must take seriously their role in the development and implementation of service-learning projects. Service-learning provides a remarkable opportunity for students to experience education first-hand and potentially discover personal attributes and skills that could be applied not just in the classroom setting but in future career goals as well. This life-long application best occurs when students have the opportunity for pre and post activities deliberately designed to solidify the learning.

The fifth sub question is addressed under this final finding: *Service-learning on the high school level would benefit from a greater level of organization and intentionality involving pre and post learning activities.* In the qualitative portion of the survey one

specific student response stands out as a perfect example of this applied learning. This student, a 16 year old female, worked with a church affiliated program designed to assist with aftercare needs for elementary aged children. Students were trained with specific childcare skills to provide tutoring, snacks, and games for approximately three hours each afternoon. This student served in this capacity to fulfill a requirement for her psychology course in high school. In class the teacher facilitated many discussions with the students regarding the social development of children. This particular student began asking questions specifically related to the children she was working with at her volunteer aftercare program. The teacher helped explain developmental issues in elementary aged children and this student took these learning objectives and applied them to both written research papers in the class, and two presentations for the psychology class. She felt very strongly that because the learning objectives of her psychology class were tied to her service-learning experiences she was more effective in both areas. She felt that she was a better after school tutor and companion for the children because she had a greater understanding of their developmental needs, and she felt that she was a better psychology student because she had a direct opportunity for applying the concepts being learned in the classroom environment. This helps demonstrate the importance of pre and post educational opportunities for the students involved in service-learning, and the application opportunities that exist.

Summary

These findings have sought to answer the overarching question: *What practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs?*

The quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey helped provide answers to the questions presented earlier in Chapter 3. Some of the answers discovered were in line with current research findings, and others varied from the research. There were five sub questions applied that were intended to support and reinforce the overarching question.

These questions were as follows:

1. What do students see as the most valuable component of the service-learning experience?
2. How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?
3. What types of extra-curricular activities were the students involved in, and did this personal involvement impact their service-learning experience?
4. What specific learning objectives in the course impacted the outcome of the service-learning experience?
5. What pre-event and/or post-event educational activities were service-learning students involved in that impacted their service-learning experience?

These sub questions were used as the basis for the quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey and have helped inform the major findings of the study. The findings were very applicable to further study in the field of service-learning although the findings differed from some other well regarded research projects in specific areas. The most pronounced difference, as has been described, took place with the discovery regarding extra-curricular activities.

The five major findings have been studied in relation to the five research questions. Both the research questions and the findings are best understood when evaluating them through the lens of the overarching question: *what practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs?* The five major findings of the mixed method study are as follows:

1. When students are involved in providing genuine and necessary service they recognize service-learning as a vital and meaningful component of their personal and academic growth.
2. There is a spiritual component to the activity associated with service-learning that is natural, highly valued by the students, and encourages genuine change.
3. Extra-curricular involvement did not appear to have a significant impact on service-learning involvement in either frequency or attitudinal response.
4. Pre and post event learning activities tied to specific learning objectives are essential to the perceived success of a service-learning program, yet they rarely occur on the high school level.
5. Service-learning on the high school level would benefit from a greater level of organization and intentionality involving pre and post learning activities.

These five major findings correspond to the five sub questions explored through the quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey. These major findings are meant to inform future research, and to aid in the development of service-learning projects that are more beneficial for the students involved in service and those receiving service.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Service-learning possesses tremendous potential for making a life-altering academic impact on the lives of high school aged students (Billig & Conrad, 1997; Cairn, 2000). While many educators feel that project involvement is all that is required, this research seeks to demonstrate that the teaching practices implemented and strategies employed are the foundational elements truly necessary to produce demonstrable change in the lives of students. By preparing themselves intellectually and emotionally before entering a service-learning site students will have a heightened sense of ownership in their labor. Similarly, students who have the planned opportunity for various forms of discussion after the service-learning project have a better chance of internalizing the learning (Grossman, 2008). It is intended that ownership be developed before and after the service-learning event. The successful service-learning project is intentionally developed with built-in opportunities for preparation, discussion, and debrief. The success of the project hinges on this level of intentionality (Hecht, 1999).

Research from current literature proves that the practices that are applied and the strategies implemented during the service-learning project have tremendous potential impact on the success of the service project for the students involved. Pre-studying is meant to prepare the students through the academic areas that are directly related to the service-learning project that has been designed. These areas might include geography, social science, political science, history, art, accounting/finance, and other academic areas that are translatable to the service-learning experience (Davis & Dodge, 1998). The

second component of a traditional service-learning program is the physical experience of the service-learning project—the actual volunteering activity. While this experience typically begins on a local front, the goal is to allow students the opportunity for foreign service-learning as well, exposing them to the world at large. The final facet of the service-learning project is the important, although according to Hartmann, Maluk, and Riffer (2007) often missed, component of academic debrief where students will complete their chosen projects dealing with one component of the local or foreign experience. This debrief can take the written form of a final paper, or this final step can be orally facilitated by the teaching supervisors (Hartmann, Maluk, & Riffer, 2007). Service-learning becomes a mutual and shared educational encounter between student, teacher, and those at the learning site. The intention of this type of educational experience is to challenge students who now possess a greater level of global understanding to apply their knowledge and their passion on the local level. From this applied educational challenge the intended bi-product will be productive, democratically minded citizens who “think globally but act locally” (Morgan & Streb, 1999). Unfortunately, research has proven that many service-learning projects do not utilize these three components of a service project because of a lack of knowledge or understanding.

To assess the practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs a mixed method survey was administered. The methodology utilized in the research process was both a quantitative survey delivered to a larger student population from three independent schools, and an interview conducted with two students from each school. The survey used in the research process was adapted from a previous mixed methods survey conducted in 1999 by Eyster and Giles of Vanderbilt

University and funded by the Fund for the Improvement for Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). This college-level survey is explained in the work, Where's the Learning in Service-Learning? (1999). While the original survey explored the impact and effectiveness of service-learning programs on undergraduate students, this researchers survey was adapted to discover the differences in high school students learning patterns and the impact of organizational elements on the service-learning project.

While the important effects of service-learning opportunities are well documented through current research, identifying best practices and strategies that help promote this student growth is beneficial to the field of service-learning. In this study, three high school service-learning programs were evaluated from the perspective of best practices utilized and strategies implemented by the teaching staff and students during the service-learning programs. Participating students were surveyed to assess the impact each component of the service-learning project had on their evaluation of the “success” of the project. SPSS software was utilized to analyze the data obtained. This data helped evaluate the importance of both practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs.

It is clear from the major findings of Chapter 4 that students desire to be involved in service that is genuine and necessary. Time is a real factor for busy students in today's culture and students view their time as precious—just like adults. Therefore, it is crucial to provide service projects where students feel needed, where their skills are being utilized, and where they feel that their time is respected and utilized effectively. The meaningfulness of a project can be greatly impacted by the intentionality of its design. Pre and post activities are enormously important to seal in the learning that transpires

before, during, and after a service-learning event. According to the data gathered from this mixed-method survey these learning activities should be organic in nature where the students have the opportunity to share their feelings and anecdotally share their own stories about the service-learning. This can take the form of written assignments, journals, speeches, and other methods of gathering but the key for the students was their involvement in the whole process rather than being passive participants in a service-learning project that was primarily or exclusively teacher lead. Unfortunately, this level of intentionality simply is not transpiring at the schools surveyed. The challenge for all schools implementing service-learning programs is to ensure that their practices and strategies have the students as active participants in the entire process from planning to debrief.

Of genuine interest was the student response to the spiritual nature of service-learning. Quantitatively and qualitatively the students described service-learning as an experience that was bigger than them and deeply personal. The labeling of “spiritual” did not appear to have the negative connotations associated with organized religion, but instead the students who viewed service-learning as important judged it to be a personal expression of self and spiritual in nature. This spirituality was evidenced quantitatively with several questions, but was overwhelmingly evident in the qualitative portion of the survey with all of the six students identifying the “spiritual” nature of their desire to continue with regular service-learning activities and events.

Perhaps the greatest surprise of the survey was not finding specific proof that extra-curricular activities positively impacted students toward regular service-learning. Much previous research had strongly pointed toward the fact that involved students have

a greater sense of community than students not involved in school or community activities. This discovery could be based on the age of the students being surveyed—the original research dealt exclusively with college aged students. It is possible that high school students are not developmentally prepared to make the correlation between extra-curricular activity and service-learning. This finding could also be attributed to the type of questions being asked and the methods of translating these questions. Certainly more research is warranted to determine fully whether high school students are more inclined to participate in service-learning when they have already been involved in other activities. In tandem with this discovery is the recognition that the high school students surveyed perceived their parents to be much less involved in community service than other students from previous surveys. Both of these components of successful service-learning programs are worthy of further study. However, all five major findings will help to determine the proper design and implementation of service-learning projects as associated with the practices and strategies on the high school level.

Analysis of Research Findings

These findings have sought to answer the overarching question: *What practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs?* The quantitative and qualitative portions of the survey helped provide answers to the questions presented earlier in Chapter 3. Some of the answers discovered were in line with current research findings, and others varied from the research. There were five sub questions applied that were intended to support and reinforce the overarching question. These questions were as follows: What do students see as the most valuable components

of the service-learning experience?; How did the views of the students change after the service-learning experience?; What types of extra-curricular activities were the students involved in, and did this personal involvement impact their service-learning experience?; What specific learning objectives in the course impacted the outcome of the service-learning experience?; and, What pre-event and/or post-event educational activities were service-learning students involved in that impacted their service-learning experience?

These five sub questions lead the researcher to five major findings.

While the findings will serve to be very applicable to further study in the field of service-learning, a couple of the specific findings differed from previous well regarded research projects. The most pronounced difference, as will be described, took place with the discovery regarding extra-curricular activities. The five major findings are as follows:

1. When students are involved in providing genuine and necessary service they recognize service-learning as a vital and meaningful component of their personal and academic growth.
2. There is a spiritual component to the activity associated with service-learning that is natural, highly valued by the students, and encourages genuine change.
3. Extra-curricular involvement did not appear to have a significant impact on service-learning involvement in either frequency or attitudinal response.
4. Pre and post event learning activities tied to specific learning objectives are essential to the perceived success of a service-learning program, yet they rarely occur on the high school level.

5. Service-learning at the high school level would benefit from a greater level of organization and intentionality involving pre and post learning activities.

Each of these findings can further the understanding and direction of intentionally designing the practices and strategies associated with service-learning projects at the high school level. Students desire genuine and personal contact with the service-learning site where a level of ownership has been authentically developed. Each member of the service-learning team including the student, the teacher- facilitator, and those being served should play a role in meeting the defined needs of the service site. These same students appreciate this personal ownership and recognize that their involvement takes on an internally spiritual function. Students grasped the internal change that can occur when they are intricately involved in a project that is worthwhile and potentially life changing.

Of note was the data dealing with students involved in extra-curricular activities. While previous research had strongly indicated a higher level of interest in service-learning among students who were more involved in other activities, this data did not support previous research. The basic premise had been that involved students tended to be more involved in other areas of their life as well. While this might be true on the college level, the data presented for this research project simply did not support this hypothesis.

Perhaps the greatest encouragement in the data came from the overwhelming support for deliberate and planned pre and post activities. The impact of these preparatory and debriefing activities was supported by previous research and further reinforced by this current data. Students need to have the ability to prepare academically,

emotionally, and personally for a learning experience that is quite often vastly different from their own life experience. In like manner, students also need to have the time to digest their learning in post service activities. These post activities should be organic, conversational, and provide authentic opportunities for students to anecdotally share the learning that has transpired as a result of the service-learning project. Service-learning possesses remarkable opportunities for learning when done properly.

Discussion of Research Findings

The data collected throughout this research process (Chapter 4) is directly related to, and supported by, the literature review (Chapter 2). The literature review was organized around three primary lines of inquiry: the historical growth of service-learning, the benefits (intended or realized) of service-learning programs, and the varying organizational structure of service-learning programs. All three of these lines of inquiry were well explored through the collection and analysis of the data for this research project. This collection and analysis of data aided in determining the five major findings intended to drive future research in the field of service-learning and community service.

The first area, the historical growth of service-learning, addressed how the field was developed and how it has changed over the years. Four specific areas related to the history of service-learning provided background information for understanding this line of inquiry. First, the history of the field of service-learning was explored. Second, the pioneers of the service-learning movement were investigated. Third, the controversy over the comparison between service-learning and volunteering programs were reviewed. Finally, the philosophy of service-learning proponents and detractors were studied.

These four areas of inquiry provided the basis for understanding the history of service-learning and the growth that has been witnessed in this field in contemporary education.

The historical background of service-learning helps inform each of the findings in this report to some degree. The controversy between service-learning and community service is perhaps at the center of both the fourth and fifth findings. These findings explore the need for pre and post learning activities, and the need for a greater level of organization and intentionality. Joseph Kahne, a professor of education at Mills College in Oakland, California warned of this inherent problem in many service-learning programs; he warned that volunteering is simply not enough (Allen, 2003). For a project to be considered a service-learning project it must have two components: first, it must answer an academic question related to course content or educational objectives; and second, it must meet a community need (Allen, 2003; Berkas, 1997; Billig & Conrad, 1997; Furco & Billig, 2000; Richardson, 2006). True service-learning should enrich classroom content by providing some level of application through the act of service. This central idea expressed throughout the historical section of the literature review is at the epicenter of the problem that all three surveyed schools experienced. As evidenced through the survey data, all three schools did a poor job with pre and post learning activities that would tie the service-learning experience directly to the classroom. The data was overwhelmingly negative when it came to students determining their level of preparedness and opportunities for debrief after their service experiences. Quite simply if service-learning must answer an academic question related to course content or educational objectives, then the three schools surveyed did not fulfill this commonly agreed upon criteria as defined through the extensive literature review.

The historical portion of the literature review also helped frame the argument for the first finding which emphasized a student's need to be involved in genuine and necessary service where their labor is perceived as vital and meaningful. It was asserted in the literature review that John Dewey's pragmatic approach to education could be considered as the root of service-learning. Dewey vigorously maintained that if education was going to be beneficial and effective the student must be a part of the democratic experience of a truly progressive education (Neill, 2005). Dewey also believed that education should be framed by student experiences but built on democratic ideals (Wesley, 2000). We learn from the survey data compiled that students overwhelmingly desired to be involved in real service where their labor was viewed as important and their tasks directly benefited those being served. This realization led to the first finding, and is supported and reinforced by the historical roots of service-learning and Dewey's philosophy of good education.

The second line of inquiry in the literature review, the benefits of service-learning, explored the intended benefits versus the realized benefits of these programs. In this section a variety of benefits were explored: civic involvement, character development, collaborative skills, community involvement, reduced discipline issues, increased academic performance, heightened global perspective, greater understanding of necessary career skills, and having a less self-centered approach to life. This line of inquiry explores the factors that contribute to these benefits being realized in service-learning programs.

The literature reviews second line of inquiry, the intended benefits of service-learning, helps shed light on the second and the third findings. The second finding

highlights the supposition that genuine change takes place in the lives of students through their involvement in service-learning. This finding explores the frequent and positive student use of the term “spiritual” when describing the internal changes that result from a genuine service-learning experience. This term was defined by students in the qualitative portion of the survey as being involved in something bigger than themselves—being involved in an activity that could truly make a long-term impact. This was a prime area of concern for many researchers in the literature review. Much research had been conducted to combat an ever-decreasing sense of civic engagement and community involvement among the younger generations. This perceived decrease in civic and community pride became a rallying cry for many supporters of service-learning programs (Schwartzman, 2003). Thomas Jefferson held to the idea that each generation of informed citizens had to invent and reinvent democracy (Eyler & Giles, 1999). The famous theologian Reinhold Niebuhr agreed with Jefferson and presented the theological application of this concept: he believed that, “human capacity for good is what made democracy possible and that the human capacity for evil made democracy necessary” (Delve, 1990). He also believed that at the root of democratic involvement was a need for spiritual participation and growth (Delve, 1990; Prentice & Garcia, 2000). This research, gleaned directly from the literature review, is particularly interesting in light of the unanimous need for “spiritual” involvement by each of the students in the qualitative portion and more than 85% of the students on the quantitative portion of the survey. It would appear that in this case the research findings from the literature review directly and specifically support the findings from the data. We learn that apathy and ambivalence will never accomplish the goal of developing involved citizens (Prentice & Garcia, 2000).

This is the heart and soul of the service-learning movement—involving students, giving them a voice in how their communities can be served and developed—and this is a clear reflection of the second finding.

While the data from this research would seem to indicate that extracurricular involvement does not have an impact on high school student participation in service-learning, it does provide a basis for future research. There were three primary research projects studied in the literature review that strongly pointed to the fact that students who were involved in extracurricular activities like sports and clubs were more apt to be involved in service-learning as well (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Levine & Cureton, 1998; Spiezio, Baker & Boland, 2005). The primary research study used for this project was the Eyler and Giles survey that found that students were nearly four times as likely to be involved in service-learning if they were also involved in extracurricular activities (Eyler & Giles, 1999). It is this previous research that makes the third finding so interesting. This finding is apparently a contradiction to the commonly held notion that involved students tend to also be more likely to be involved in service-learning as well. This contradiction does not have to be perceived as negative or even inaccurate. Instead this contradiction provides a basis for future research to question the developmental differences between high school students and college aged students, and to explore how these developmental differences can best be addressed when developing successful service-learning programs. Future research could ask far more detailed questions about extracurricular activity, types of activity, attitudinal differences with participants of different activities, and the impact of these specific activities on the involvement of students of differing ages in service-learning activities. The research gathered from the

literature review informs the third finding because it is a contradiction that motivates future research in the field of service-learning.

The final line of inquiry in the literature review, the organizational structure of service-learning programs, considered how the project structure contributed to the success of service-learning programs. This line of inquiry directly helps further the understanding of findings one, four and five. First, the pre-service phase where students are prepared academically, intellectually, and personally for the service-learning experience was evaluated. Second, the actual service-learning experience was assessed from an organizational perspective. Third, the post-service component of the service-learning project, when students have the opportunity to debrief and apply the intended learning, was investigated. All three of these areas: the history of service-learning, the potential benefits of service-learning, and the organizational structure of service-learning were all evaluated as the primary lines of inquiry for the larger purpose of assessing the morphing practices and strategies that contribute to the success of service-learning programs in the contemporary school setting.

Simply participating in community service is not enough. This is where the very basis for service-learning provides insight to the data presented. For service-learning to be effective, it must be tied deliberately and strategically to the academic subject area through preparation prior to the service event and opportunities for reflection and application after the service event (Beyer, 1996). This addresses the inherent problem with most service-learning data: there is minimal research that differentiates between true service-learning with a deliberate academic component and mere student volunteering where time spent volunteering counts as service-learning (Schwartzman, 2003). Richard

Bradley, a researcher for Ohio State University, actually believes that when community volunteering is conducted apart from the academic application of service-learning students actually suffer a reduction in “responsibility to others, commitment to the community, and perceived relevance of service to the academic coursework (2003). Bradley’s research is a powerful motivator for service-learning being distinguished from volunteer work. Students must be connected to their service intellectually and personally before true change can take place on a personal level (Eyler & Giles, 1999). While more and more students consider themselves involved in service work, true civic engagement and community involvement will only be increased when service-learning replaces the perspective that physical involvement is enough. For students to gain a heightened sense of global involvement they must be challenged to engage their own communities through a deliberate and planned model of service-learning (Allen, 2003).

When students are challenged in a three stage model of service-learning (preparation, service, and reflection), students report a vast increase in civic involvement and a more thoroughly defined global perspective for the needs of the world at large (Spiezio, Baker & Boland, 2005). Perhaps more importantly, this model of service applied to learning is also the key factor in the self-motivated future civic involvement of participants—simply put, when students have the opportunity to thoroughly understand a societal need they are more apt to assist with similar needs on their own in the future (Casparly, 1996).

Students strongly desire to be involved in genuine and necessary service where they recognize their work as vital and meaningful (Finding 1). It is clear from past research, and the research from this current project, that for this to be possible pre and

post activities must be tied to specific learning objectives (Finding 4). Unfortunately, this level of organizational intentionality was not evidenced by any of the three schools surveyed (Finding 5). For service-learning to be a successful learning tool where students are positively changed and service sites are authentically impacted, teachers and organizers must take the structure of these programs seriously. Research consistently points to the intentional organization of service-learning programs and projects as the key factor in the perceived success of the projects. For this educational tool to be used most effectively it must be effectively used.

Conclusions

There are several conclusions that can be made through the current and previous research that should help assess the practices and strategies that contribute to the success of high school service-learning programs. The three primary conclusions drawn from this research project are as follows: the critical nature of project leadership, the necessity of stakeholder involvement, and the importance of project selection. These three conclusions are drawn from the sub questions and findings, and as a direct result of the qualitative and quantitative survey associated with this research project.

Leadership is absolutely critical to the success of any service-learning project. The fourth and the fifth findings are directly associated with the structure of the service-learning project, and the intentionality of the service-learning project. These two areas are largely decided and implemented by the project coordinator or facilitator. Unfortunately, it became glaringly evident that none of the three schools surveyed approached service-learning with any measured level of intentionality of leadership. At

Calhoun High School and Sullivan High School the service-learning programs were additions to class work fulfilled by the students when they served a pre-determined amount of hours of community service. In both cases little to no direction was provided by the supervising teachers, almost no explanation or motivation was given as to the importance of volunteering, and the supervising teachers themselves were totally uninvolved with any of the service sites. Therefore, the students were basically left to themselves to select a random service site, personally make the necessary contacts, arrange service times, and then serve independent of the class or the teacher. There was very little preparation prior to the service activity, and even less debrief after the service experience. The students were basically left on their own to interpret the potential learning from their chosen service site with little to no input from the educator associated with their own school. Although there was a dedicated part-time coordinator for service-learning at Sullivan High School, the student data shows very little difference between all three schools surveyed. One would anticipate Sullivan to have much higher results but in the qualitative portions of the survey both students surveyed never referenced the impact of the coordinator on any of their service experiences, and were ultimately responsible for establishing all contact between the service site and the student.

In all three schools students received almost no guidance during their entire service-learning experience as evidenced by the data gathered for the sub questions to the research project. While all of the previous research gathered describes the importance of the deliberate organization and implementation of service-learning projects, none of the three schools surveyed implemented an organizational structure that allowed students the best learning opportunities. This lack of deliberation points strongly to the need for

increased teacher leadership. Teachers have an opportunity with service learning that is unlike almost anything else in the classroom, and if utilized correctly can produce genuine life change (Finding 2). Service-learning in all three schools would greatly benefit from more leadership in the preparation prior to the service event, more teacher involvement in the actual service event, and more opportunities for organic and natural conversations after the service event. With a heightened level of teacher involvement, and a greater organizational intentionality, service-learning at all three schools could be far more beneficial, useful and meaningful.

A primary responsibility of the project leader is to foster an active participation by all of the stakeholders. The teacher, student, and those being served should ideally be a part of the service-learning process from preparation to service to debrief. The three schools surveyed would be positively impacted if the classroom teacher was personally involved in service-learning. This personal involvement would provide a level of credibility with the students and would obviously inform the teacher of the challenges the students are facing in their service-learning experiences. A relationship with the service site could also be fostered with each school. One of the students on the qualitative survey from Calhoun High School commented on the fact that the school conducted a fundraiser each year for the same particular organization where she served. This fundraiser was organized by an administrator at the school, and yet the classroom teacher had almost no contact with the same organization. By aligning the goals of the administration, teaching staff, students, and the service site a more complete service opportunity could be offered and a deeper relationship between the school and the service site could be developed. This consistent involvement of the stakeholders requires a greater level of intentionality

by all those involved in the service project; however, the results would certainly be more beneficial and in greater alignment with previous research.

The final conclusion deals with the need for deliberate service-learning project selection. On the high school level there appears to be two basic types of service-learning activities according to the data gathered: student-selected service meant to fulfill a pre-determined agreement of required volunteer hours, and short-term projects where a team of students serve together to complete a specific task. While the second type lends itself to more structure because it is naturally team oriented, the first type of service-learning was far more common in all three schools surveyed. This leads to the need for service projects where students will have the opportunity to serve in an authentic manner, where their service will be age appropriate, and where the skills necessary will match a student's ability. With these challenges in mind, an increased need for teacher leadership is again emphasized. Student believe that if the coordinating teacher either personally evaluated the service site, or developed an inspection rubric that the students could administer as a component of their service, the service could be far more beneficial and useful to the students. If a service site is not viewed by a student volunteer as meaningful then the student will most likely transfer that view from the service site to their basic perception about service-learning. One of the primary goals of high school service-learning programs is to foster a desire for future volunteering. Without sites that have been deliberately selected and inspected future volunteering will typically be reduced (Pollitt, 1996).

Implications

Service-learning programs on the high school level possess remarkable potential for engaging young adults, allowing them the opportunity to apply classroom instruction to the real world in a philanthropic manner. Service-learning projects are worthwhile in both public and private schools because of their potential impact on the whole student. At the most basic level, service-learning is a form of experiential learning where students and teachers collaborate with communities to address varying problems and issues. Learning and instruction is ideally shared between teachers and students as they encounter the site and seek to engage the problems that exist. In a well designed program both teachers and students should be equally involved in the learning process, simultaneously gaining knowledge and skills and advancing personal development. It is essential to balance the impact of the community encounter with a valid learning experience for students and teachers. In this process the teacher ultimately becomes a teacher, mentor, and student. The teacher should model the application of the unique knowledge being gained through the service site not just as an instructor but also as a learner. The student then becomes a student and a teacher as both parties learn and instruct through their shared experience.

In extrapolating the implications of this study it becomes starkly obvious that if service-learning is going to be perceived by students and teachers as an important component of the educational process, a far more structured and deliberate approach to this learning method must be made. This realization has vast implications on every educator who works in some capacity with service-learning on the high school level. It should be a rallying cry away from mediocrity to a pursuit of excellence. As educators

we are largely missing the benefits of a method of instruction that possesses such remarkable potential for long-term student change. Yet because of our lack of preparation, our virtually total absence of personal involvement in service-learning projects, and the minimal amount of follow up being required of students, service-learning is being largely under-utilized on the high school level.

Future researchers could pursue specific lines of inquiry meant to uncover the teacher's level of involvement in the learning process. Teacher leadership is crucial to the success of service-learning programs. As instructors we must courageously shun the status quo classroom and pursue classrooms that actively seek to provide our students with opportunities for personal engagement and real growth. Most of the research clearly states that "just volunteering" is not enough to seal in real learning for most students (Allen, 2003). As has been mentioned throughout this research project, for a project to be considered a service-learning project it must have two components: first, it must answer an academic question related to course content or educational objectives; and second, it must meet a community need (Allen, 2003; Berkas, 1997; Billig & Conrad, 1997; Furco & Billig, 2000; Richardson, 2006). The teacher's involvement and leadership in ensuring this dual approach to all service-learning projects is essential to their success.

To properly appreciate what service-learning is, it is critical to understand what it is not. Service-learning is not simply putting in a few required hours of volunteering to fulfill a class requirement. Service learning, rather, is clearly defined and beneficial curriculum requirements being authentically applied to real community problems. To be considered service-learning, there must be an academic component to the project, and the project must answer a community need. As is evidenced from this research project,

community service is often mistaken for service-learning in schools. Community service does not have the intentionality of a service-learning program where students are encouraged to understand the purpose and philosophy behind their service, are given educational preparation prior to the experience, and are debriefed after the service-learning experience as a component of the educational process. This role of project organization and teacher involvement is the key implication to unlocking what practices and strategies best contribute to the success of high-school service-learning programs.

Recommendations

For this research study to be most beneficial to future researchers and service-learning practitioners there are certain possible recommendations that could be made dealing with future study, and the implementation of this study on actual service-learning programs.

Recommendations for future study:

1. Research the perceived role of the teacher or project coordinator on the service-learning experience.
2. Research the impact of psychological developmental differences between high school students and college students to determine potentially necessary differences in project organization.
3. Study what is meant by the “spiritual” impact of service-learning on participating students, and as a secondary investigation determine whether there is a geographic impact on this perceived area of growth (Bible-belt verses Northern cities, American verses global).

4. Conduct further research on the impact of extra-curricular involvement on students to determine whether age, and/or educational levels determine the involvement of students in service-learning activities.

Recommendations for the implementation of this study on actual service-learning programs:

1. Teachers must take an active role in the planning, implementation, and follow-up of students involved in service-learning activities. The leadership of teachers is critical to the perceived success of service-learning programs.
2. All stakeholders should play an active role in the preparation for the service event, the actual service, and the follow-up after the service event. By involving all parties the service event should be viewed as a vital and meaningful component of personal and academic growth.
3. Project selection must be made after careful consideration ensuring the projects alignment with student interests, skills, and curriculum relatedness.

Concluding Thoughts

This researcher's motivation for pursuing this subject: *An Assessment of the Practices and Strategies that Contribute to the Success of High School Service-learning Programs*, came as a direct result of reading Paulo Freire's pivotal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). In this work Freire provided a powerful treatise that challenges all people to engage "the other." This term references any people outside of our natural comfort zone who are different in life experience, skin color, dialect, or socio-economic background. Freire asserts that true education, education that changes lives, can only

occur when we step outside of our comfort zone for the purpose of service. This selfless act of service is something that Paulo Freire applied throughout his own life as he lived on the edge of society helping those less fortunate by any means possible.

This selfless approach to education and life also resonated with this researcher's personal faith. So much of the time faith is impersonal and largely unapplied to the real world, yet with Friere, and the most basic teachings of the Bible, we see a pursuit of servant leadership that can shape the life of the receiver for the better if permitted to do so.

This study has helped shape the researcher's resolve to be actively involved in working with students in ways that can help change their lives. The raw pursuit of intellect is empty if we never apply that learning to something worthwhile and life changing. This research project will help shape the researcher's career and life mission in the future as he seeks to authentically live out a life surrendered.

Addendum A

PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Parent or Guardian:

We would like to ask your permission for your son or daughter to complete a questionnaire that will help us understand how to make high school service-learning or community service programs better. The questionnaire is being administered by James Taylor, a doctoral candidate at Georgia Southern University, as a component of his thesis dealing with service-learning on the high school level.

What is involved? Students who participate will be asked to spend a total of about 45 minutes completing a questionnaire dealing with their experiences with service-learning or community service. We will schedule completing the questionnaire so that your son or daughter does not miss important lessons. The focus of the questionnaire is to learn how the organization of community service projects impacts the success of the project.

Potential benefits? One possible benefit of being involved in completing the questionnaire may be that it encourages students to think about how their community service impacts the community at large. Another potential benefit of the questionnaire may be that valuable information is gathered that will help in designing future community service projects that will have even greater impact on the students.

Participation is voluntary. Your son's or daughter's participation in this study is completely voluntary. There will be no penalty if you do not wish your son or daughter to be in this study, and he or she may withdraw at any time during the study and refuse to answer any of the questions. This project has been approved by the administration of your school.

Questions? If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study at any time, please feel free to call James Taylor, doctoral candidate, at 912-667-8809, or Dr. Linda Arthur, advisor, at 912-269-2109.

To contact the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs for answers to questions about the rights of research participants please email IRB@georgiasouthern.edu or call 912-478-0843.

If you are giving permission for your child to participate in the experiment, please sign the form on the back of this page and return it to your student's teacher as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James E. Taylor, Ed. S.
Doctoral Candidate
Georgia Southern University

Please check the appropriate line and send this form back to school with your son or daughter:

_____ I have read and I understand the permission letter. I give my consent for my student to participate in the survey.

_____ I would like more information before giving consent for my student to participate in the study. Please call me at _____.

_____ I do not wish for my student to participate in this study.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Student Name _____

Please send this form back to school with your son or daughter.

THANKS!

Addendum B

Department of Education

Educational Leadership Program

MINOR'S ASSENT

Hello,

My name is James Taylor and I am a doctoral student at Georgia Southern University. I am conducting a study on *An Assessment of the Practices and Strategies that Contribute to the Success of High School Service-Learning Programs*.

You are being asked to participate in a project that will be used to learn about service-learning or community service in your high school. If you agree to be part of the project, you will complete a questionnaire that will help us understand how to make high school service-learning or community service programs better. Students who participate will be asked to spend a total of about 45 minutes completing a questionnaire about their experiences with service-learning or community service.

You are not required to participate. None of the teachers or other people at your school will see the answers to the questions on the survey. All of the answers that you give me will be kept in a locked cabinet, and only I or my supervising professor, Dr. Linda Arthur, will see your answers. We are not going to put your name on the answers that you give us, so no one will be able to know which answers were yours.

If you or your parent/guardian has any questions about this form or the project, please call me at 912-667-8809 or my advisor, Dr. Linda Arthur, at 912-269-2109. Thank you for your participation!

If you understand the information above and want to do the project, please sign your name on the line below:

Yes, I will participate in this project: _____

Student's Name: _____

Investigator's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Addendum C

Resource A: Survey Instrument

About the Survey

This survey has been adapted from a survey conducted for the *Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education* (FIPSE) administered by Dr. Janet Eyster and Dr. Dwight Giles. This adapted survey is intended to find out more about what high school students think about various community service projects. Some students have been involved in these projects for many years; others have been more involved with work, family, or their studies and have not participated in community service projects. We are interested in the activities and views of both. This questionnaire asks about your past experiences and for some of your opinions.

Participation in the survey is completely voluntary. We hope that you will agree to complete the questionnaire fully so that we may have as accurate a picture of community service as possible. You are not required to put your name on the survey, all answers will be confidential, and no teacher on your campus will have access to your individual answers. All results will be reported as grouped data only.

The project is being conducted by James Taylor, a doctoral candidate at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, GA. The information we are collecting will help high schools plan for the most effective kinds of community service opportunities for their students.

Instructions for the Community Service Survey

1. Consider each statement carefully, but don't spend a lot of time deliberating about a single item.
2. For each subsection, read the statement at the beginning of the section. Then read each question and decide which response best represents your experience, actions, or opinions. Circle the corresponding number directly onto the survey provided.
3. Clearly circle all of your answers directly onto the survey provided.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Your Previous Activities

Think about your personal experiences and indicate your usual level of involvement in these activities.

- Always (each week) = 5
- Often (2-3 times a month) = 4
- Sometimes (1 time a month) = 3
- Seldom (1-2 times a term) = 2
- Never = 1

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. School clubs/groups	1	2	3	4	5
2. Community Service (school or personal)	1	2	3	4	5
3. Athletic Teams (school or town)	1	2	3	4	5
4. Work for pay	1	2	3	4	5
5. Religious clubs/groups	1	2	3	4	5
6. My parents are active in community service	1	2	3	4	5

Types of Previous Activities

Choose the number from the lists below to describe who you worked with and what you did in service activities. If you worked in several activities describe the *one most important to you*. If you were not active in community service, leave the item blank.

With Whom Did You Work

- Children = 1
- Teens = 2
- Adults = 3
- Peers (people your age) = 4
- Agency staff = 5

	Children	Teens	Adults	Peers	Agency Staff
7. School related community service	1	2	3	4	5
8. Community service not for school	1	2	3	4	5

What You Did

- Direct involvement with the same person/group
(e.g., tutor, coach, visit) = **1**
- Direct involvement with different people needing service
(e.g., assist at shelter) = **2**
- Assist agency
(e.g., clerical, physical labor) = **3**
- Special project for group
(e.g., church/youth service trip) = **4**

	Same Person	Different Person	Assist Agency	Special Project
9. School related community service	1	2	3	4
10. Community service not for school	1	2	3	4

Describe Your Service

For each item, choose the number that best describes your total community service experiences. If a feature does not apply to your community service experience, mark 1, for “never.”

- Very Often = **5**
- Fairly Often = **4**
- Sometimes = **3**
- Rarely = **2**
- Never = **1**

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Often
11. Had important responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
12. Felt prepared for the tasks	1	2	3	4	5
13. Made important decisions	1	2	3	4	5
14. What I did was interesting	1	2	3	4	5
15. Did things myself instead of observing	1	2	3	4	5
16. Volunteers met for seminars/formal discussions of the service	1	2	3	4	5

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Often
17. Had variety of tasks to do at site	1	2	3	4	5
18. Felt I made a real contribution	1	2	3	4	5
19. Free to develop and use my ideas	1	2	3	4	5
20. People receiving service helped plan service activities	1	2	3	4	5
21. Discussed experiences with teachers	1	2	3	4	5
22. Discussed experiences with volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
23. Discussed experiences with other students	1	2	3	4	5
25. Worked with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
26. Project met needs identified by members of the community	1	2	3	4	5
27. Experience challenged my previous Opinions	1	2	3	4	5
28. Will apply things I learned during service experience to my classes	1	2	3	4	5
29. Kept a journal	1	2	3	4	5
30. Coordinator or teacher responded to my journal	1	2	3	4	5
31. Completed writing assignment about my project or site	1	2	3	4	5
32. Coordinator or teacher led discussions we shared feelings	1	2	3	4	5
33. Coordinator or teacher led discussions where we analyzed community and organizational problems	1	2	3	4	5
34. Coordinator or faculty led discussions where we related our service to what we were learning in class	1	2	3	4	5

35. Gave speech or presentation about my
community service activities 1 2 3 4 5

What You Learned from Your Community Service

Students have identified different things they learned from their community service. Please indicate how important each benefit was to you. Please don't select more than two items as "Most Important."

Most important = **4**
 Very important = **3**
 Somewhat important = **2**
 Not important = **1**

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Most Important
36. That the people I served are like me	1	2	3	4
37. How rewarding it is to help others	1	2	3	4
38. Spiritual growth	1	2	3	4
39. Specific new skills (e.g., carpentry, computers)	1	2	3	4
40. To see social problems in a new way	1	2	3	4

How You Learned from Your Community Service

Rate the importance of these activities in your learning; limit “Most Important” to 1 or 2 items.

- Most important = 4
- Very important = 3
- Somewhat important = 2
- Not important = 1

Much of my learning came from:

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Most Important
41. Providing real service to people	1	2	3	4
42. Teacher presentations	1	2	3	4
43. Reflection in journals or written assignments	1	2	3	4
44. Informal sharing of experiences with other volunteers or classmates	1	2	3	4
45. Formal structured debriefing sessions or class discussions	1	2	3	4

Are There Other Things You Would Like to Share?

Were there any educational activities done before or after your community service that you considered particularly effective and helpful?

What else would you like to share about your community service experiences?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Addendum E

Corporation for National Service (CNS)

Reflection Interview

This is the interview protocol used to explore student experience with reflection. It was used one time with 10 students. These students were viewed by a recommending teacher as being “heavily involved” in service-learning. These interviews provided data for the practitioner’s guide.

Reflection Interview Guide

Interview Number: _____ Date _____

Interviewer: _____

We are interested in your experiences with community service and your views about how this service has contributed to your understanding of social problems and issues. We are also interested in the specific kinds of learning experiences that may have influenced your understanding. We hope to be able to share the insights of high school students about service-learning with people who are planning programs, so we want to explore your learning process in some detail.

Personal Service History

First I’d like to ask you about your personal history of service.

1. What service or volunteering experiences have you had during your high school years? (Warm-up)
2. How did you first get involved? Why did you do this? (probe for motivation)
3. Have you worked with different kinds of volunteering activities? (probe for differences in experience)
4. What has kept you doing service?

Thinking About Social Issues and Problems

5. Has your thinking about social issues or the people you work with in the community changed over time?
6. Can you think of times when you were surprised by something in your volunteering experience, that is, when you suddenly looked at a situation or an issue in a way that you hadn't before and when you realized that you needed the answers to some new questions?
7. Please describe the incident? What made the situation different? How did it influence your thinking? What helped you reflect on the issue?
8. Were there structured discussions, projects, or assignments that helped you think about the issues?

Reflective Program Experience

9. Of these experiences you've had, were there programs or classes where you had opportunity for formal reflection? *(If yes, use probes in Column A. If no, use the probes in Column B.)*

<i>Column A</i>	<i>Column B</i>
<i>Journals? How structured?</i>	<i>Just talking with others? Who?</i>
<i>Written assignments?</i>	<i>Personal journals?</i>
<i>Discussions?</i>	<i>Discussions?</i>
<i>Making presentations?</i>	<i>Group activities?</i>
<i>Projects?</i>	<i>Reading?</i>
<i>Reading?</i>	<i>Listening to others?</i>
<i>Training/orientation?</i>	<i>Training/orientation?</i>
<i>Lectures? Other?</i>	<i>Other?</i>

Were there other reflection experiences? Please describe.

Summary of Learning

10. What have you learned from community service that you might not have learned in the classroom alone?
11. Is there anything else we should know to help us understand the impact of service learning on those who participate?

THANK YOU.

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